

ABSTRACT

Title of dissertation: THE SHADOW OF THE HABSBURGS: MEMORY AND NATIONAL IDENTITY IN AUSTRIAN POLITICS AND EDUCATION, 1918-1955

Douglas Patrick Campbell, Doctor of Philosophy

Dissertation directed by: Marsha L. Rozenblit
Department of History

This dissertation examines how the people of Austria portrayed their past as part of the centuries-old, multinational Habsburg Monarchy in order to conduct a public debate about what it meant to be an “Austrian” during a tumultuous era in Europe’s history. As its main sources, it draws upon the public writings of Austrian politicians and intellectuals, as well as on educational laws, curricula and history textbooks used by the different Austrian governments of the era in order to describe how Austrian leaders portrayed Austria’s past in an attempt to define its national future, even as Austrian schools tried to disseminate those national and historical ideals to the next generation of Austrian citizens in a practical sense. The first section describes how the leaders of the Austrian First Republic saw Austria’s newfound independence after 1918 as a clean break with its Habsburg past, and consequently pursued a union with Germany which was frustrated by the political interests of the victors of World War I. The second section details the rise of an “Austro-fascist” dictatorship in Austria during the mid-1930s which promoted an Austrian patriotism grounded in a positive portrayal of the Habsburg Monarchy in order to remain independent from Nazi Germany. The third section examines Austria’s forcible incorporation into the Nazi German state, and the effort by the Third Reich to completely eradicate the existence of a distinctive Austrian identity by

casting the Habsburg era in a negative light. The final section describes the rebirth of an independent Austrian state at the insistence of the Allied powers after World War II, and the manner in which the leaders of the Austrian Second Republic used memories of the Habsburg Past in order to portray Austrians as the victims of foreign German aggression who bore no responsibility for the crimes of the Third Reich. This study ultimately shows that national identity was variable in post-Habsburg Austria, and that Austrian leaders and educators were able to construct narratives regarding their past which at times argued both for and against Austrian Germanness in response to the changing demands of the European balance of power.

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AUSTRIAN POLITICS AND EDUCATION, 1918-1955

by

Douglas Patrick Campbell

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Advisory Committee

Professor Marsha Rozenblit, Chair
Professor Katherine David-Fox
Professor Jeffrey Herf
Professor John Lampe

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Introduction: Imperial Ghosts, Imperial Shadows

Vienna today is a city in many ways still haunted by the ghosts of the Habsburgs. Walking its streets, one encounters around every corner magnificent reminders of an imperial past which seem rather out of place in the capital city of a prosperous but modest Alpine state of just over eight million inhabitants. These physical remnants of an older Austria— the soaring medieval spires of Saint Stephen’s Cathedral, the gaudy opulence of baroque palaces such as the Schönbrunn and the Belvedere, the sprawling and eclectic nineteenth-century edifices on the Ringstrasse—all serve as mute but nonetheless eloquent testimonies to the fact that Vienna was once the focal point of a vast, multinational empire which played a pivotal role in European affairs for more than five hundred years. That old empire, ruled by the Habsburg dynasty throughout its existence, vanished forever in 1918, shattered by national tensions and a cataclysmic World War. One might well assert that all that remains of Austria’s Habsburg past now are these architectural reminders, which are significant only insofar as they entice tourists to spend their dollars, euros, and yen to the benefit of the Austrian economy. Such an argument might be superficially accurate, yet it glosses over a larger truth: the old Habsburg Monarchy, while extinct for nearly a century, continues to play a significant role in Austrian consciousness, and memories of the Habsburg past played a critical role in the efforts by Austrians to define who they were and their place in the world after 1918.

The collapse of the Habsburg Monarchy was the seminal event in modern Austrian history. When the Habsburg empire— which had stretched from the Alps to the Carpathians, encompassing no less than 11 distinct national groups and several religious

faiths— crumbled, the German-speaking inhabitants of the new Austrian state were thrown into a profound crisis of identity. Once they had been a privileged national population within the old dynastic state, the favorite sons of an empire which had been one of the great political and cultural powers on the European continent for centuries.¹ After 1918, they found themselves cut off from the other territories and peoples of the old Monarchy, and shunted into a small and economically disadvantaged state which wielded none of its previous influence, prestige and power. The inhabitants of this new Austria were forced to ask themselves whether the name “Austria” truly meant anything without the imperial trappings which had been the very essence of that term for so long.

The alternative was to abandon the “Austrian” label for one which also had considerable resonance for the inhabitants of the new state: “German.” As proud as most Austrians had been of the achievements and status of the Habsburg Monarchy, they also felt a kinship with the inhabitants of Germany, with whom an overwhelming majority of the Austrian population shared a language, a culture, and an ethnic lineage. In the aftermath of the old Monarchy’s collapse, many Austrians felt that it no longer made sense for them to live in an independent country, and they argued that their future lay in a union, or *Anschluß*, with the larger and more powerful German state. For these Austrians, there was really no such thing as an Austrian “nation.” The Austrian label applied to their territory, but in all the ways that mattered—language, culture, ethnicity—

¹On the privileged position of German-speakers in the Habsburg Monarchy, see Robert A. Kann, *A History of the Habsburg Empire, 1526-1918* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 204; Robin Okey, *The Habsburg Monarchy* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2001), 10-16, 119-120, 194-195; Adam Wandruszka and Peter Urbanitsch, eds., *Die Habsburgermonarchie, 1848-1918*, vol.6 (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1973), 339-362.

the inhabitants of that region were bound to the German nation and *Volk*.² Other Austrians disagreed, and felt that there was indeed something unique about Austria which was worth preserving in the form of an independent state.

The debate between these two basic factions in Austria was an intense one which lasted for nearly two generations, over a span of time which marked the most dramatic and disturbing period in twentieth-century European history. The argument concerning Austrian national identity changed course repeatedly, and the form which it took was dictated by both the political ideology of the individual participants and by the diplomatic situation in which Austria found itself at any given moment. The one constant feature of this debate, however, was the manner in which both sides were forced to interpret Austria's history as part of the Habsburgs' multinational Monarchy in order to define its contemporary identity. That history was really the only thing which served to distinguish German-speakers in Austria from those in Germany, and participants in this national debate inevitably were forced to make sense of Austria's Habsburg past, no matter how they defined the Austrian people's relationship to the German nation.

This study analyzes the ways Austrian politicians, intellectuals, writers, government officials, and educators used the memory of the Habsburg Monarchy to answer the problematic question of what exactly it meant to be "Austrian" during the tumultuous period stretching from the birth of the modern Austrian state in 1918 to the achievement of a tenuous consensus on national identity in 1955. Ultimately, it will

²The German word "*Volk*" (pl. *Völker*) is most directly translated into English as "people." *Volk* has certain national, ethnic and even racial connotations which are largely absent from its English equivalent, however. This study uses this term in the German sense, to refer to groups of people who perceive themselves to be linked with one another by the bonds of language, culture, ethnicity, nationhood, and destiny.

show that historical memories of the Habsburg past were always an integral part of Austria's effort to resolve its own identity crisis, even if there was never any widespread agreement in Austria about that past. The political and national ideals of the participants in this debate and the shifting diplomatic realities of the Austrian state throughout this period helped dictate how they portrayed the Habsburg past.

The study demonstrates that the debate about Austrian national identity ultimately depended on how Austrians interpreted their own history to a far greater degree than it did upon questions of language, ethnicity, or religion, which were never really in dispute between 1918 and 1955. All Austrians during this time agreed that they spoke German and were ethnically related to other German-speakers. That agreement, however, did not resolve the debate. Austrians continuously appealed to their history as part of the Habsburg Monarchy because that was the only feature which had the potential to support the idea of a separate Austrian nation. Those who argued in favor of Austrian nationhood referred to the Habsburg Monarchy's distinctive history in order to make their arguments. Those who denied Austrian nationhood likewise needed to confront the Habsburg past in order to explain why Austria's distinctive history did not serve to separate Austrian German-speakers from the rest of the German nation.

This study traces how the state of this historical and national debate shifted in response to circumstances and to political ideology as well. Each era in Austria's history between 1918 and 1955—the First Republic of 1918–1933, the *Ständestaat* of 1933–1938, the union with Nazi Germany between 1938 and 1945, and the Second Republic after 1945—featured a different set of circumstances which influenced the course of the debate,

as union with Germany in turn was prohibited by the Entente, loomed as an unwelcome possibility, was forcibly achieved by the Third Reich, and was just as forcibly undone by the victorious Allies. Each of these sets of circumstances forced the participants in the debate to modify their historical arguments, and only the signing of the Austrian State Treaty in 1955, which firmly cemented Austria's place in Europe for the duration of the Cold War, gave the Austrian people the stability which they required to resolve this debate.

In a similar manner, political ideology influenced the way that Austrians used their history to define their modern identity. The conservative-Catholic right, as the Austrian political faction which had most strongly supported the dynasty before 1918, continued to take pride in Austria's Habsburg past throughout the decades after the Monarchy's collapse, no matter whether they were arguing for *Anschluß*, as they did during the 1920s, or for the continued existence of an independent Austria nation after 1945. Likewise, Austria's leftist political parties, the Social Democrats and the Communists, both took a classically Marxist view of Austrian history, portraying the old Monarchy as a reactionary entity which had oppressed all of its subject peoples. Yet these two Marxist groups used their shared view of the Habsburg past to make dramatically different arguments, as the Communists fiercely proclaimed Austria's unique nationhood while the Social Democrats continued to support *Anschluß* until almost the end of the Second World War. A third ideological faction, the Austrian German nationalists, centered their entire political program around the goal of union with Germany throughout this era, and invariably inveighed against the Habsburg Monarchy

for barring the path to German unity and for placing its own political interests above those of the German *Volk*. Some of these political factions changed their opinions on Austrian national identity in response to Austria's changing circumstances between 1918 and 1955 while other groups did not; the broad outlines of each ideological faction's interpretation of the Habsburg past, however, remained remarkably stable throughout this period no matter how their national arguments may have changed.

Thus, ideology and circumstance both had a profound influence on how the Austrian debate on national identity unfolded. No matter how ideology or circumstances influenced the way Austrians interpreted the Habsburg legacy and its national implications for contemporary Europe, however, the necessity of making reference to the Habsburg past was the one inevitable constant in the Austrian debate regarding national identity. Simply put, it is not possible to understand Austrian history or national identity in the first half of the twentieth century without also understanding how Austrians defined and redefined their past as part of the Habsburg Monarchy.

Methodology and Sources

This study seeks to examine the relationship between national identity, historical memory, political ideology, and diplomatic contingencies in Austria between 1918 and 1955. It is designed to illuminate the manner in which Austria's political, intellectual, and pedagogical leaders attempted to influence public sentiments regarding Austrian national identity throughout the radically changing circumstances in which Austria found itself during this time. There are a number of reasons for this focus upon the public statements of Austrian elites regarding this national crisis of identity.

First, I contend that social and political leaders, and the institutions which they dominated, played a decisive role in the formation of Austria's modern national identity. This study agrees with the ideas of such scholars of nationalism and national identity as Ernest Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm, and Benedict Anderson, who argue that nations do not evolve organically, but rather are constructed as intentional creations by governments and social institutions.³ Such national projects may not always follow the precise course intended by the leaders, and indeed, the Austrian case is full of examples of the limits upon the powers of Austria's leaders to build a durable national consensus in a short amount of time. Likewise, nations cannot simply be invented out of thin air by elites, but need to be constructed upon a foundation of historical consciousness and ethnic, cultural, and linguistic relationships.⁴ Nevertheless, I am convinced that nations are constructed entities, and that the emergence of a enduring national identity in Austria was due in large part to the efforts of Austrian elites to manipulate such building blocks of nationhood as language, religion, culture, ethnicity, and, above all, history, in order to argue for a specific vision of Austrian national identity. This process proceeded from the "top" of

³.See Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983); Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (Thetford, Norfolk: The Thetford Press, 1983). See also, Geoffrey Cubitt, ed. *Imagining Nations* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998); Ruth Wodak, Rudolf de Cilia, Martin Reisingl, and Karin Liebhart, eds., *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*, trans. Angelika Hirsch and Richard Mitten (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999).

⁴Indeed, Anderson probably goes too far when he uses the word "imagined communities" to describe the formation of nations. We would also do well to keep in mind the work on nationalism of Anthony Smith, who emphasizes the necessity of pre-existing notions of kinship in the birth of national sentiment. Anthony Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (New York: B. Blackwell, 1987); *idem*, *National Identity* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1991); *idem*, *The Nation in History: Historiographical Debates about Ethnicity and Nationalism* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2000). See also Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

Austrian society downward, as Austria's leaders attempted to mold the views of the Austrian people. Ultimately, the influence of these leaders upon the course of Austria's national debate was decisive.

Second, while an examination of public opinion regarding Austrian nationhood would be an interesting and worthy project, such an enterprise would be extremely problematic for this period of Austrian history. There is simply too little comprehensive evidence regarding the state of popular opinion and its evolution before the era of modern public opinion polling. Indeed, during certain portions of the period covered by this study, there were authoritarian governments in power which were deeply concerned with the topic of Austrian nationhood, and to dissent from the views of those regimes was to risk imprisonment and possibly even death. Thus, it is exceedingly difficult to get at any sort of comprehensive view of the state of opinion of average Austrians concerning their national status. What we are left with, then, are the public and institutional efforts of Austria's leaders to influence Austrian popular opinion. There is some scattered evidence regarding the success of those efforts, and this study takes that information into account. For the most part, however, I focus upon how public intellectuals and politicians attempted to use the Habsburg past to resolve Austria's identity crisis.

In restricting itself to an examination of how Austria's leaders attempted to define the relationship of their people to Germany, this study necessarily omits any detailed treatment of minority groups in Austria whose discussions regarding the notion of national identity were distinctive and complex. The vast majority of the Austrian population after 1918 spoke German and considered themselves ethnically German. The

were, however, small groups of ethnic Czechs, Magyars, and Jews living in Austria who naturally had a more problematic relationship to the debate regarding Austrian nationhood.⁵ In the same manner, this study does not seek to examine regional variations in the Austria's identity crisis, even though many of Austria's individual provinces displayed strong senses of local consciousness. All of these smaller factions within Austria conducted their own distinctive struggles over their national ideals, but those efforts did not affect the broad outline of the Austrian debate concerning national identity at the state level to any significant degree, and thus their stories, while interesting, fall outside the scope of this study.

This study conceives of memory as an intentional, public, and, above all, political act. While the word "memory" can connote a sentimental, passive recollection of the past, what I am examining in this study is a far more active phenomenon. What is interesting about the role of the Habsburg past in the debate over Austrian national identity is not simply that different Austrians remembered their past in different ways. Such a point is certainly a trivial one. What makes the use of the Habsburg past during this era fascinating is the manner in which Austria's leaders formulated a vision of their land's past precisely in order to influence the ideas of their countrymen regarding Austria's character, its place in the world, and its ultimate destiny. This project was not based upon a misty sort of remembering of the past; rather it involved the intentional crafting of historical narratives by Austrians leaders, intellectuals, and teachers in order to

⁵For some information on the national identity of ethnic Czechs living in Austria after 1918, see Michael John, "'We Do Not Even Possess Ourselves': On Identity and Ethnicity in Austria, 1880-1937," *Austrian History Yearbook*, 30 (1999): 17-64. For an examination of the national identity of Austrian Jews, many of whom considered themselves German, during the First World War see Marsha Rozenblit, *Reconstructing a*

tell other Austrians about how they should see themselves and their homeland, and to establish a stable position for the Austrian state in the European balance of power. The very act of creating such historical narratives transforms memory in a public enterprise, rather than a private or personal one.⁶

Given the intensely public nature of the efforts by Austrian leaders to use the Habsburg past to influence the national opinions of the Austrian population, this study relies for the most part upon public, published documents. The published works and public speeches of prominent intellectuals and political leaders, the official party platforms, newspapers, and ideological journals of the major Austrian political parties of the era, and Austria's most important non-partisan periodicals and pedagogical journals provide the body of evidence upon which this study is based. Those sources, calculated to reach and sway a large audience, provide the basic foundation for any comprehensive view of how Austria's leaders, political parties, public intellectuals, and teachers not only attempted to make sense of Austria's past and national status on a personal level, but also sought to disseminate their views in order to influence the state of Austrian opinion regarding such matters.

Additionally, this study seeks to describe the manner in which various, sometimes

National Identity: The Jews of Habsburg Austria during World War I, (New York : Oxford University Press, 2001).

⁶For but a few of the most prominent scholarly studies on historical memory see Pierra Nora, *Realms of Memory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), on the importance of memories of the French Revolution of 1789 for French history, and Paul Fussel, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), and Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), on memory and the First World War. See also Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, ed. and trans. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Michael S. Roth, *The Ironist's Cage: Memory, Trauma and the Construction of History* (New York: Columbia Press, 1995).

competing visions of Austrian history and nationhood were spread to the Austrian population on a practical level through the means of Austria's state educational system. Therefore, it also examines Austrian state educational curricula, laws, and the history and civics textbooks and readers used in Austrian schools in order to evaluate how the broader public debate was translated into classroom instruction for the next generation of Austrian citizens. Thus, this study is conceived of as not only a work of intellectual and political history, but also as an examination of how ideas regarding the Habsburg past and Austrian nationhood articulated by political leaders were transmitted on a more practical and institutional level in order to mold Austria's national ideals.

It is also worth describing briefly the manner in which this study defines the Habsburg past. Obviously this turn of phrase has the potential to encompass an enormous span of Austria's history. Most often, however, this study uses the Habsburg past to refer to two main aspects of Austria's history: the role of the monarchs of the House of Habsburg itself as the political, dynastic rulers of the Austrian lands between the fourteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the Monarchy's status as a large multinational empire in Central Europe, which most properly dates to the addition of the Bohemian lands and Hungary to the Habsburgs' holdings in the sixteenth century. These were the two features of Austria's history before 1918 that featured most prominently in the public debate regarding Austrian national identity after that year, and which therefore constitute a special focus of this study. The participants in the national debate also sometimes used other aspects of Austrian history to make their arguments, however, ranging from Austria's distinguished musical culture during the nineteenth century back

to the establishment of de facto Austrian independence under the leadership of the House of Babenberg nearly a millennium ago. Such elements of Austria's past formed a smaller but still important part of the twentieth-century debate on Austrian identity, and are also examined from time to time in this study. For the sake of simplicity, then, the term "Habsburg past" is used in this study to refer to all of relevant features of Austria's political and cultural history from the medieval period up until the collapse of the Monarchy itself in 1918, but with an emphasis upon Habsburg rule over its multinational, dynastic state from the sixteenth century onward.

The Historiography of Austrian National Identity and Memory

There is already a large and diverse scholarship on Austrian national identity and historical memory to which this study hopes to contribute. For the past generation or so, scholars of Austrian history, both in Austria and abroad, have been particularly interested in the construction of Austrian national identity after 1918. This focus is unsurprising given the many decades during which Austria wavered between professions of Germanness and declarations of Austrian national patriotism. Indeed, the American historian Pieter Judson dates the beginning of these discussions regarding Austrian nationhood to the birth of modern nationalism during the nineteenth century.⁷ Other scholars such as Felix Kreissler, Friedrich Heer, David Luft, Peter Katzenstein, and Michael John have described the longstanding debate carried out by German-speakers

⁷Peter M. Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries: Liberal Politics, Social Experience, and National Identity in the Austrian Empire, 1848_1914* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1997). On issues of the national identity of German-speakers in Bohemia during the last century of the Habsburg Monarchy see Gary Cohen, *The Politics of Ethnic Survival: Germans in Prague, 1861_1914* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1981); Jeremy King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans: a Local History of Bohemian Politics, 1848_1948* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2002).

within and outside of the Habsburg lands over whether or not Austrians were actually Germans in a national sense, and the ramifications of that debate for Austrian national identity for both the Habsburg Monarchy and the Austrian Republic. These scholars are in general agreement concerning the issue of a contested Austrian identity preceding the fall of the Monarchy, although they disagree concerning the extent to which Austrians might also be considered to be Germans in some sense. They also agree that the end of the multinational framework which the Monarchy provided served only to deepen and intensify the crisis of Austrian identity.⁸ In a similar manner, Peter Thaler and Fritz Fellner have described the manner in which this debate was continued after the Second World War, and how supporters of a vision of Austria as a nation separate and distinct from Germany used their ideas to distance the Second Republic from the crimes of Nazi Germany.⁹

Indeed, it is this focus upon the Nazi past which has most characterized the recent scholarship on Austrian historical memory. The majority of these scholars, including Thaler, Anton Pelinka, Heidemarie Uhl, Emil Brix, and Peter Utgaard, have been most concerned with the construction of the so-called “Austria-as-victim myth” by Austria’s leaders after 1945, which portrayed Austria as the “first victim” of “foreign,” German aggression as a means of minimizing or denying Austrian complicity in the crimes of

⁸Felix Kreissler, *Der Österreicher und seine Nation: Ein Lernprozess mit Hindernissen* (Vienna, Cologne and Graz: H. Böhlau, 1984); Friedrich Heer, *Der Kampf um die österreichische Identität* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1981); David S. Luft, “Austria as a Region of German Culture,” *Austrian History Yearbook* 23 (1992): 135-148; Michael John “‘We Do Not Even Possess Ourselves:’ On Identity and Ethnicity in Austria, 1880-1937,” 17-64; Peter J. Katzenstein, *Disjoined Partners: Austria and Germany Since 1815* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976); Anton Pelinka *Zur österreichische Identität. Zwischen deutscher Vereinigung und Mitteleuropa* (Vienna: Ueberreuter, 1990).

⁹Peter Thaler, *The Ambivalence of Identity: The Austrian Experience of Nation_building in a Modern Society* (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2001); Fritz Fellner, “The Problem of the

Nazi Germany during World War II.¹⁰ Some of these scholars have also correctly noted that the final outcome of the Austrian debate on national identity in favor of a non-German Austrian identity was due in large part to these efforts to distance Austria from the German state which had initiated the Second World War and carried out the Holocaust.¹¹

These studies are all valuable, but they do not completely describe the course of the Austrian debate regarding national identity after 1918. Many of the studies on Austrian national identity restrict themselves to making judgements concerning which side of the Austrian national debate was actually right, or in simply documenting the fact that such a national debate occurred and was ultimately resolved. Additionally, most of these studies take a highly periodized view of Austrian history, and describe aspects of the debate during specific epochs of Austrian history such as the First Republic, the

Austrian Nation after 1945,” *The Journal of Modern History* 60 (June 1988): 264-289.

¹⁰Thaler, *The Ambivalence of Identity*; Heidemarie Uhl, “The Politics of Memory: Austria’s Perception of the Second World War and the National Socialist Period,” in *Austrian Historical Memory and National Identity*, ed. Günter Bischof and Anton Pelinka (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 1997), 64-5; Emil Brix, “Zur Frage der österreichischen Identität am Beginn der Zweiten Republik,” in *Die bevormundete Nation: Österreich und die Alliierten 1945-1949*, ed. Günter Bischof and Josef Leidenfrost (Innsbruck: Haymo-Verlag, 1988), 94-5; Anton Pelinka, “Taboos and Self-Deception: The Second Republic’s Reconstruction of History,” in *Austrian Historical Memory and National Identity*, 99-100; Peter Utgaard, *Remembering And Forgetting Nazism: Education, National Identity and the Victim Myth in Postwar Austria* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003); Gerhard Botz and Gerald Sprengengel, eds., *Kontroversen um Österreichs Zeitgeschichte. Verdrängte Vergangenheit, Österreich-Identität, Waldheim und die Historiker* (Frankfurt and New York: Campus Verlag, 1994); Anton Pelinka and Erika Weinzierl, *Das große Tabu. Österreichs Umgang mit seiner Vergangenheit* (Vienna: Edition S., 1987).

¹¹These scholarly examinations of Austria’s failure to deal with the Nazi past are part of a wider historical literature on the Second World War and memory in Europe. See for example Henry Rousso, *The Vichy Syndrome: History and Memory in France since 1944*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991); Jeffrey Herf, *Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the Two Germanys* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997); Charles Maier, *The Unmasterable Past: History, Holocaust and German National Identity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988); Robert G. Moeller, *War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001); Norbert Frei, *Vergangenheitspolitik: Die Anfänge der Bundesrepublik und die NS-Vergangenheit* (Munich: Verlag C. H. Beck, 1996); Mary Fulbrook, *German National Identity After the Holocaust* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1999); Bill Niven, *Facing the Nazi Past: United Germany and the Legacy of the Third Reich* (New York: Routledge, 2002). István Deák, Jan T. Gross, and Tony Judt, eds., *The Politics of*

Ständestaat, the Nazi era, or the Second Republic. In the same manner, the works on Austrian national identity and the Nazi past describe the relationship between the official repression of the Nazi past by the Austrian government after 1945, and the construction of a sense of distinctive Austrian nationhood, but generally do not acknowledge the important links between those efforts and the wider national debate which had been going on in Austria since the collapse of the Habsburg Monarchy. This study will be the first to trace the shifting course of the modern Austrian debate on national identity in its entirety, over the course of several different regimes and sets of circumstances. Each era within Austrian history during this span was indeed distinctive in terms of the manner in which the debate over national identity unfolded, but there was also considerable continuity in the national arguments which key individuals and ideological groups made throughout these periods which has not been adequately appreciated by the historical scholarship.

Moreover, this study will be the first to examine in depth the critical role of interpretations of the Habsburg past in the Austrian debate concerning national identity. Other works have dealt with aspects of the use of that past in Austria's national discussion, but none have really probed the matter in enough depth to reveal how central it was to Austrian life and identity throughout the several decades after 1918.¹² This work will demonstrate that the Habsburg past was indeed the most important part of that Austrian debate, and it will show how all of Austria's major ideological groups and

Retribution in Europe: World War II and its Aftermath (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

¹²See for example essays in Ritchie Robertson and Edward Timms, *The Habsburg Legacy: National Identity in Historical Perspective* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994); Maria Bucur and Nancy M. Wingfield, *Staging the Past The Politics of Commemoration in Habsburg Central Europe, 1848 to the Present* (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2001); Peter M. Judson and Marsha L. Rozenblit, eds., *Constructing Nationalities in East Central Europe* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2005); Bischof and Pelinka, *Memory and National Identity in Austria*.

political factions were inevitably forced to confront and define the legacy of the Habsburg Monarchy in order to advance their arguments concerning Austria's national character, place in the world, and future destiny.

The first two chapters of this study deal with the period of the Austrian First Republic between 1918 and 1933. Despite the fact that the victorious Entente powers had forbidden Austria from joining the German state, most Austrians during this period, aside from a small but vocal minority, considered Austria to be a politically and economically unviable state inhabited by German nationals who belonged with their ethnic brethren in Germany. The major Austrian political factions disagreed sharply concerning whether the old Habsburg state had been a force for good or ill for Austrian Germans, but they did basically agree concerning Austria's German character. The teaching of Austrian history in state schools as a part of the sweep of German history as a whole reflected this initial "Germanist" consensus. The third and fourth chapters deal with the period of corporatist dictatorship between 1934 and 1938, when the conservative right organized itself along authoritarian lines to quell what they perceived as unmanageable opposition from both the Marxist left and the increasingly powerful and rabidly "Germanist" Austrian Nazis. In order to fight the influence of Nazism, the Corporatists attempted to cultivate Austrian patriotism by presenting a view of Austria as a "second German state," which was still essentially German in culture, but which also represented all that was best in that culture due to its distinctive Habsburg past, a past which was emphasized in history education during this era. The fifth chapter examines the period between 1938 and 1945 when Austria became a part of Nazi Germany, which

was characterized by the Hitler regime's assault on the very concept of Austria itself, as the Austrian territory was completely dissolved, and the Habsburg monarchy was portrayed as an oppressive, anti-German dynasty in Nazi history education. The anemic Austrian resistance to Nazism generally rallied behind notions of Austrian patriotism, and often presented visions of a new post-war Austria which frequently recast the old Monarchy in a modern guise. The final two chapters discuss the Austrian Second Republic between the end of World War II in 1945 and the signing of the Austrian State Treaty and the withdrawal of Allied troops in 1955, as the reborn Austrian state struggled to distance itself, both politically and through state educational policy, from the crimes of Nazi Germany against the backdrop of the early Cold War. During this era, the experience of Nazi rule had so tainted the vision of Austrians as part of the German nation that almost all of the Second Republic's political factions developed a new consensus which saw Austrians as a distinct national group, separate from Germans.

Ultimately, this study concludes that the profound and frequent shifts in national identity in Austria between 1918 and 1945 provide a forceful argument for the theories of nationalism that present national identity as variable and constructed, rather than as an immutable ethnic destiny. Additionally this study will also contribute to the growing literature on historical memory, essentially agreeing with the notion that memories of the past are often manipulated in order to influence political developments in contemporary states. Scholarship concerning nationalism and investigations of historical memory are two topics which have generally been kept separate in the historical profession, but this study is unique in the manner in which it illustrates the powerful link between the two fields in the Austrian case. In the end, this study will demonstrate the importance of the Habsburg past to the effort by Austrians after 1918 to define their place in the world, and to make sense of the relationship between their present circumstances and their deeper history. Austrians between 1918 and 1955 repeatedly constructed and reconstructed their national identity out of the raw materials of history and memory, and their example demonstrates the malleable and variable nature of nationhood. The Habsburgs cast a long shadow which continued to influence Austria's definition of itself in a profound manner for decades after the last emperor stepped off of the Austrian throne. This study is the story of Austrian life in that shadow.

Part I. Breaking with the Past?: “German-Austria,” 1918-1933

Chapter 1. Politics and the Habsburg Past in the First Republic

On November 11, 1918, Karl I of the House of Habsburg, Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary, formally renounced further participation in the political affairs of the territories over which he ruled. His proclamation was not actually a formal abdication of his throne, but it nevertheless marked the end of the Habsburg dynasty’s centuries-old sovereignty over a vast multinational empire in Central Europe. The Habsburgs had first come to rule over the territory which eventually became the Austrian Republic in 1276, and in the centuries thereafter the Habsburg line had gradually expanded its dynastic holdings to include Bohemia, Moravia, Hungary, Croatia, Bosnia, Galicia, and the Bukovina. At the time of its dissolution in 1918, the Habsburg Monarchy had a population of more than fifty million, which included inhabitants of five different religious faiths and some eleven different nationalities.¹³

Karl’s renunciation of power was something of formality, however. By November 11 his state had already begun to crumble, as the Monarchy’s Czech, Slovak, Polish, Ruthenian, Slovenian, Croat, Serb, Romanian and Magyar populations dissolved their associations with the empire which they had been a part of for nearly four hundred

¹³Barbara Jelavich, *Modern Austria, Empire and Republic, 1815-1986*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 151-153; Robert A. Kann, *A History of the Habsburg Empire, 1526-1918*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 1-3, 603-608.

years. Although many of the nationalities living in the Monarchy had been dissatisfied to greater and lesser degrees with the imperial government for decades, the ultimate cause of the Habsburg state's disintegration was the Monarchy's defeat in the First World War. The Habsburg empire's government had precipitated the conflict by declaring war on the Kingdom of Serbia following the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the Monarchy's throne, by an Bosnian Serb nationalist, allegedly on the orders of the Serbian government, on June 28, 1914 and the war had eventually spread throughout Europe. The Habsburg Monarchy, along with its allies in the German *Reich*, Bulgaria, and the Ottoman Empire, was eventually defeated by the so-called Entente powers: France, Great Britain, the United States, Italy, Romania and Serbia. In the final months of the conflict in 1918, the Entente forces had encouraged the decision by some of the rebellious national groups within the Monarchy to break away from the dynastic government and form independent states or join other already existing states with which they shared ethnic ties.

On October 16, Hungary declared independence from the Monarchy. The Czechs followed on October 28, and in the ensuing weeks all of the Monarchy's other non-German-speaking nationalities likewise proclaimed their independence from Habsburg rule. By the end of 1918, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Poland had replaced the Habsburg Monarchy on the map of Europe. Italy and Romania similarly had moved to add parts of the Monarchy to their existing holdings as well. Some of these states constituted themselves entirely out of territory formerly ruled by the Habsburgs while others combined portions of the House of Austria's old lands with other territories

which had never been part of the Monarchy, but they all participated in the dismantling of the multinational empire which had dominated Central Europe for centuries.¹⁴ Even the Monarchy's German-speaking regions proclaimed the creation of a new, independent republic on October 24. By the time Karl signed an armistice ending formal hostilities on November 3rd, his empire had in fact already begun to fall apart.¹⁵

In few places was the end of Habsburg rule so dramatically unsettling as in the Monarchy's predominantly German-speaking lands in the Alps and on the Danube. This territory, Austria, had been ruled by the Habsburgs for longer than any other part of the old Monarchy, and its largest city, Vienna, had been the seat of imperial power and the opulent cultural focal point of the empire for more than six hundred years. Now the inhabitants of this region had been suddenly separated from territories with which they had been culturally, economically and historically linked for centuries even as the dynasty which had ruled their own homeland for even longer had abandoned its political role. As German-speakers standing in the ruins of what had been Europe's only German-dominated great power outside of the German *Reich* itself, the people of Austria were now forced by their new circumstances to struggle to redefine their own national identity,

¹⁴Richard Georg Plaschka, Horst Haselsteiner, and Arnold Suppan, eds., *Innere Front. Militärassistentz, Widerstand und Umsturz in der Donaumonarchie 1918*, vol. 2, *Umsturz* (Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1974), 142-315; Hans Leo Mikoletzky, *Österreichische Zeitgeschichte vom Ende Donaumonarchie bis zur Gegenwart* (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1966), 30-44.

¹⁵Most historians agree that the combination of the Monarchy's difficulties in balancing the demands of its constituent nationalities and the political, social and economic shocks which accompanied the Monarchy's defeat in World War I were responsible for the demise of the Habsburg state, although there is considerable debate regarding which of these two problems was most decisive in ending the Habsburg state. Among the best scholarly treatments of the last decades of the Habsburg Monarchy, including its participation in World War I and its ultimate collapse are: Alan Sked, *The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire, 1815-1918*, (London and New York: Longman, 1989), 187-271; Robin Okey, *The Habsburg Monarchy*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2001), 191-400; A. J. P. Taylor, *The Habsburg Monarchy, 1809-1918: A History of the Austrian Empire and Austria-Hungary*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948), 130-261; Oscar Jászi, *The Dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1928), 1-

and to decide what sort of land Austria would be in the future. Were the German-speakers of Austria part of the German nation or were Austrians unique enough because of their distinctive past as part of the old Monarchy to constitute a separate national group? Would Austria pursue a political union with Germany, seek to continue its previous association with the other portions of the old Monarchy's territory in some new form, or simply be content with an independent Austrian state free from any formal relationships with other European states? These were the sorts of questions which the inhabitants of Austria faced after the collapse of the Habsburg state. From the very moment the last Habsburg ruler stepped off of the throne, however, the subsequent course of Austria's identity crisis would be in large part dictated by how Austrians defined the legacy of Habsburg rule in Austria as their circumstances shifted time and again throughout the next several tumultuous decades of their history.

The Monarchy's old imperial parliament, which had previously shared legislative authority with the Habsburg monarch, and which still included German-speaking members from Bohemia and Moravia, and Silesia, regions over which the newborn Czechoslovak and Polish republics, respectively, had already claimed sovereignty, was the body which made the initial postwar choices regarding Austria's course after the end of the Great War.¹⁶ The first decision made by Austria's representatives was to confirm Karl's renunciation of power by once again proclaiming on November 12 that Austria was to be governed democratically by a parliament which derived its authority from the Austrian people. Thus, the Austrian First Republic was born from the ashes of the old

23; Kann, 367-519.

¹⁶Jerry W. Pyle, "Austrian Patriotism: Alternative to the *Anschluss*," in *Conquering the Past: Austrian*

Monarchy. The representatives did not stop with their proclamation of republican rule, however. They also declared that the Habsburg Monarchy's predominantly German-speaking lands were a "constituent part" of Germany, a state which was also experiencing a transition from monarchical to republican form of government. The Austrian representatives even used a name for their land, "*Deutschösterreich*" (German-Austria), which emphasized the territory's national kinship with Germany. Thus, a union of Austria with Germany, generally referred to by the German term "*Anschluß*," was the path which the territory's government envisioned in 1918.¹⁷

If the Austrian parliament's decision had been allowed to stand, then Austria's crisis of national identity might well have been a short one. The Entente powers, however, had sacrificed the lives of millions of their citizens in the struggle to defeat Germany, the most powerful of the Habsburg Monarchy's allies, during World War I, and they wanted both to punish their German antagonists and to prevent any territorial changes which might have had the effect of reinvigorating German power in Europe. The addition of the territory and population of "German-Austria" to that of the new German Republic in 1918 certainly would have represented just such a change, and for this reason, the governments of the Entente states forbade the *Anschluß*. The Entente backed up its decision with military force, and ultimately forced the Austrian Republic formally to abandon the goal of *Anschluß* in the Treaty of Saint Germain, the diplomatic agreement which formally ended the war between Austria and its enemies in September of 1919. The treaty went so far as to compel "*Deutschösterreich*" to change its name to

Nazism Yesterday and Today, ed. F. Parkinson (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989), 72-90.

¹⁷John Swanson, *The Remnants of the Habsburg Monarchy: The Shaping of Modern Austria and Hungary*,

the less nationally contentious label “*Österreich*” (Austria).¹⁸

It would not be the last time that Austria found its internal debate on national identity decisively influenced by outside forces. Over the next several decades Austria would frequently find itself forced to comply with desires of other powerful European states concerning its own national destiny, whether in the form of the prohibition of *Anschluss* by the Entente powers during the First Republic, the military invasion and forced *Anschluss* enacted by Nazi Germany in 1938, or the reestablishment of Austrian statehood by the Allied states which presided over the recreation of a new European order following the Second World War. In all of these instances, Austrians had to react to the decisions concerning their fate made by far more powerful countries. Yet the internal Austrian debate concerning national identity was no less vigorous for being influenced by external forces.

In the immediate aftermath of the First World War, Austrians began their attempts to define what it meant to be an Austrian after the collapse of the Habsburgs’ multinational Monarchy. This question could not be answered without reference to Austria’s Habsburg past, nor could the new state be founded without a thorough debate over the meaning of Austrian history. As we shall see, in 1918 the majority of the Austrian population believed that Austrians were indeed Germans, and that, in the absence of the dynastic structure which had separated Austrian Germans from the rest of their national brethren for so long, Austria should become part of Germany, no matter

1918-1922 (Boulder: East European Monographs, 2001), 13-41.

¹⁸The Treaty did provide that *Anschluss* might occur if it were to be approved by the League of Nations, a newly created international organization. Given the domination of the League by the Entente powers, however, such approval was never a very likely prospect. Jelavich, 156-157; Alfred D. Low, *The*

what other European states might think.

The matter of Austria's national identity was far from the only concern facing the new state in the immediate postwar period, however. The people of Austria had just suffered a humiliating defeat in the most devastatingly destructive conflict the human race had yet seen, and had been forced, along with the other Central Powers, to accept the blame for a conflict which had cost so many Austrian lives. Most Austrians felt that they had been no more responsible for the conflict than the Entente powers, and they burned with resentment at what they viewed as the Entente's failure to deliver upon its promises for an equitable peace and a new European order based upon the principle of national self-determination. In the aftermath of the war there were also persistent shortages of food, coal, and other basic requirements for survival. The postwar situation was made even more difficult by the fact that Austria had been severed from the other regions of the old Monarchy with which it had formed an economic unit for centuries. None of the other successor states, given their own straitened circumstances, were very willing, nor even particularly capable of providing Austria with the economic necessities upon which it had previously depended. Austria's separation from the Habsburg state's industrial heartland in Bohemia, which was now part of Czechoslovakia, was a particularly difficult economic blow for Austria, and left the new Austrian state dependent upon the comparatively small industrial sector centered around the capital in Vienna, which was inadequate to supply the new Republic's economic needs, especially in an era of soaring inflation. To make matters still worse, the shortages and economic chaos that

accompanied the war and the end of the Monarchy created a perfect climate for the spread of infectious disease, and numerous epidemics, including the global influenza pandemic of 1918, ravaged Austria as well.¹⁹ Thus, the first years of the First Republic were exceedingly difficult for its citizens, as they were subjected to endemic poverty and shortages, ravaging diseases, and an international treaty arrangement which they perceived to be humiliating and unjust.

¹⁹Swanson, 163-188, 221-250; Hans Leo Mikoletzky, *Österreichische Zeitgeschichte vom Ende Donaumonarchie bis zur Gegenwart* (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1966), 60-92.

Austrians did not agree with one another concerning how best to meet these challenges, and the new Republic's political factions quarreled bitterly about which policies would help the state achieve stability. The major political factions of the Austrian First Republic were the same ones which had dominated Austrian political life during the Habsburg Monarchy's last decades. The Christian Social Party (*Christlich Sozial Partei*, CSP) was the major party of the political right, and had fervently supported dynastic rule in Austria in the Monarchy's twilight years. In 1918, the CSP reluctantly accepted democratic rule in Austria, but it remained staunchly conservative and Catholic in its outlook during the era of the First Republic. The predominant party of the left was the Social Democratic Workers Party (*Sozialdemokratische Arbeiter Partei*, SDAP), a Marxist group which sought to promote democracy, social justice and the interests of the Austrian working class, as well as *Anschluß* with Germany. The remainder of Austria's postwar political landscape was filled by numerous different smaller parties. The most important of these were the various German nationalist parties, which banded together to form two larger political organizations during the early 1920s, the Great German People's Party (*Großdeutschen Volkspartei*, GDVP) and the *Landbund* (Agrarian League), and which fervently sought to achieve *Anschluß*. This faction was generally anti-Marxist and thus firmly opposed the agenda of the Social Democrats, but it was also far from comfortable with the traditionalism and Catholicism of the CSP. The Christian Social Party, the Social Democratic Party and the Austrian German nationalist camp were the three basic political factions of the early First Republic, and they debated incessantly over the appropriate relationship between the Catholic Church and the state,

social policy, diplomacy, and the content of Austrian education.²⁰

The First Republic was thus faced with severe difficulties and endemic political strife, and never entirely stabilized during the course of its existence. Its first few years were hard ones, as the government struggled to draft a constitution and to improve the state's economic situation. The Social Democrats won a narrow plurality in the Republic's first election in February of 1919, and ruled in coalition with the CSP, which was only slightly less popular with the voters. Together, the two parties drafted a constitution, approved in 1920, which created a bicameral legislature which governed a federal state in conjunction with a weak presidency. This achievement would mark the end of cooperation between the Republic's two largest parties, however. At the first election after the approval of the Constitution in 1920, the CSP won a plurality, and would remain the most popular of the Austrian political factions throughout most of the rest of First Republic. The CSP never achieved an outright electoral majority, however, and was always forced to govern in coalition with the GDVP or some combination of the other, smaller political parties. The Social Democrats for their part were never again able to command a preeminent statewide electoral position, but they continued to wield considerable influence on national affairs as the major opposition party, and they

²⁰There were of course other political parties as well, but they commanded far less support than did these three main political blocks. The Communist Party of Austria (KPÖ) was founded in 1918, and would eventually become an important, more radical Marxist alternative to the SPD after the creation of the authoritarian *Ständestaat* in 1934. For the time being, however, they were eclipsed by the Social Democrats, and failed to gain any parliamentary representation during the First Republic. Two other factions on the political right, the conservative militia group known as the *Heimwehr*, and the radically German nationalist National Socialist Party also had their origins during the First Republic, but failed to develop into mass political movements until the 1930s. See later chapters of this study for a more detailed discussion of all of these groups.

consistently dominated the local government in the state capital of Vienna.²¹

The First Republic's economic situation gradually improved, especially after the signing of the Geneva Protocol, a loan to Austria from various other states which was secured by the Christian Social Chancellor Ignaz Seipel in 1922. In order to gain this assistance, however, Seipel was forced to pledge that Austria would not pursue *Anschluss* with Germany for a period of twenty years. Despite Seipel's economic successes, the Socialists and German nationalists were outraged at his renunciation of a union with Germany, and his government fell two years later. Even as Austria's financial circumstances brightened, the political situation continued to be tense, and the right and left adopted increasingly intractable stances regarding social and religious issues. By the mid-1920s, both the anti-Marxist right and the Marxist left had formed "defensive" paramilitary groups, and in 1927, a clash between the two militia factions prompted a massive strike by the Social Democrats in Vienna which resulted in the destruction by arson of the Austrian Ministry of Justice building. Even as the tensions between the two major ideological camps sharpened, the First Republic's still fragile economic health took a dramatic turn for the worse as the global economic depression of 1929 hit Austria. Unemployment and inflation increased catastrophically, and the Social Democrats gained a plurality of votes in the 1930 election, only to be denied control of the government by a tenuous coalition between the CSP and the right-wing paramilitary *Heimwehr* block. The new governing coalition was highly unstable, however, and subsequent governments rose

²¹Jelavich, 165-170; Walter Goldinger, "Der geschichtliche Ablauf der Ereignisse in Österreich von 1918 bis 1945," in *Geschichte der Republik Österreich*, ed. Heinrich Benedikt (Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1954), 15-144; F. L. Carlsten, *The First Austrian Republic 1918-1938* (Cambridge: Gower/Maurice Temple Smith, 1986), 1-96.

and fell with alarming regularity. In March of 1933, the Christian Social Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuß, in response to the abrupt resignation of the legislature's leadership, dissolved the Parliament and reconstituted the government along authoritarian lines, effectively ending the Austrian First Republic after a decade and a half of instability and strife.²²

Throughout this difficult and ideologically charged period, however, all of Austria's major political factions returned time and again to the issue of Austrian national identity. Despite the official prohibition of *Anschluss* by the Treaty of Saint Germain of 1919 and the Geneva Protocols of 1922, which might have been expected to settle the matter, prominent Austrians continually discussed Austria's relationship with Germany, and whether *Anschluss* might or might not solve the endemic economic, social, and political problems which the First Republic faced. Invariably, these discussions were forced to refer to Austria's history as part of the old multinational Habsburg Monarchy, and to come to grips with Austria's past in order to make recommendations for the course which the new Republic ought to follow in the future.

Initially, all of Austria's political factions, in a rare instance of unanimity, were united in support of *Anschluss*. Indeed, the vast majority of the Austrian population seemed to see the prospect of an independent Austrian state as economically and politically unviable option, and enthusiastically supported union with Germany.²³ The

²²Jelavich 179-195; Goldinger, 104-288; Carlsten, 97-178.

²³For example, a plebiscite held in 1921 in the Austrian province of Tyrol showed heavy support for *Anschluss*. Interestingly, the same voters had two years earlier spoken in favor of Tyrolean independence, and the province of Vorarlberg had voted in 1919 to join Switzerland. Such electoral positions probably say more about the Tyrolean fear that part of their province would be claimed by Italy (which did in fact subsequently occur), and the Vorarlbergers' doubts concerning the viability of an independent Austria than they do about the existence of any Tyrolean or Swiss national sentiment within the Austrian First Republic.

major parties all agreed that Austrians were part of the German *Volk* and that *Anschluß* was a desirable goal, but they differed sharply concerning the relationship of Austrian Germans to their Habsburg past. Indeed, the stance of all three political camps regarding the old dynastic state had changed little since the time when the Habsburgs still sat on the throne. The Christian Social Party took an essentially positive view of the old Monarchy, and argued that the Habsburg state had done a great deal to advance the cause of both the German *Volk* and Western civilization as a whole in Europe. The CSP lamented the demise of the old dynastic state, and declared that modern Austrians were the heirs of a great and valuable Habsburg legacy. Since the Monarchy no longer existed, however, the Christian Socials argued that an independent small Austrian state could not possibly prosper on its own, and that a union with Germany made good practical as well as national sense. The Social Democrats on the other hand, took an overwhelmingly negative view of the old Monarchy. Prominent Social Democrats portrayed the Habsburg state as an oppressive, reactionary entity which had acted against the interests of the real progressive force in human history: the working class. The Socialists saw the Monarchy as a “prison of the peoples,” which had denied the rights and liberties of all of the nationalities living within its territory, including German Austrians. As orthodox Marxists, the Social Democrats envisioned *Anschluß* in the context of a progressive, democratic great-German Republic dominated by the German working class. Indeed, the SDAP argued that *Anschluß* had only been prevented by the imperialistic bourgeoisies of

By the early 1920s, both regions had become hotbeds of German nationalism and pro-*Anschluß* sentiment. Jelavich, 159-162; Swanson, 35-37, Low, 326-328. On national identity in Tyrol before 1918, see Laurence Cole, “Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland.” *National Identität der deutschsprachigen Bevölkerung Tirols, 1860-1914* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2000).

the victorious Western nations. The German nationalists who made up the GDVP and the *Landbund* took a similar view of the old Monarchy, but they abhorred the Socialists' Marxist ideology. These right-wing German nationalists wanted no part of a Socialist Republic, but rather called for Austria to become part of a powerful great-German nation state which would right the wrongs done to the German *Volk* by the French, and by the treacherous Slavic nationalities of the old Monarchy. These nationalists most often saw the Habsburg dynasty as a princely house which had betrayed the German *Volk* in order to maintain its own political power, and which had worked against German interests in order to preserve its domination of Central Europe. For many Austrian German nationalists, the Habsburg state in its last years had been an odiously pro-Slavic and pro-Magyar institution, and they argued that contemporary Germans were better off now that the old state had disintegrated. A smaller group of Austrian German nationalists did in fact acknowledge that the Habsburg Monarchy had provided Austrian Germans with some real benefits, but even they argued that the memory of the old multinational state offered no solutions to the problems facing Austria after 1918. Thus, without the Habsburgs to stand in their way, the nationalist faction hoped that the German *Volk* might finally achieve its ancient dreams of unity in a true "*Volksgemeinschaft*" (community of the [German] people).

The views of some of these political factions regarding *Anschluß* and the Habsburg past changed somewhat as the First Republic slowly became more stable during the decade of the 1920s, however. These changes reflected the practical difficulties involved in supporting a German union which had been prohibited by the

great powers of Europe as well as fears regarding the growing potency of radical right-wing German nationalist factions such as the National Socialist Party in Austria and Germany. The CSP never formally repudiated the notion of *Anschluss* as a matter of principle, but by the middle of the 1920s it had largely abandoned the notion as impractical. The CSP's leading figure, and periodic chancellor of the First Republic, Ignaz Seipel, was instrumental in the movement of the conservative Austrian right away from its emphasis upon union with Germany. In the place of their previous advocacy for *Anschluss*, many Austrian conservatives substituted a fervent Austrian patriotism, which paid tribute to Austria's past as part of the old multinational and Catholic Habsburg state. While the traditional Austrian right did not deny that Austrians were Germans, many conservatives began to argue that the Austrian people could best live up to their historical inheritance and preserve their unique variety of German culture within the confines of an independent Austrian state. The Social Democrats, on the other hand, changed neither their support for *Anschluss* nor their criticisms of the Habsburg dynasty, but they did adopt a more moderate tone in their national discussions in response to the rising tide of anti-Marxist German nationalism at the end of the decade. During the last years of the First Republic, the Socialists continued to support the idea of union with a democratic and socialist German state, but they took greater pains to distinguish between their progressive national aims and the chauvinistic nationalism of the radical right. Only the Great German People's Party and the *Landbund* failed to substantially modify their rhetoric as the First Republic matured. Austrian German nationalists continued to advocate *Anschluss* and to criticize the old dynastic empire, even as increasing numbers of

Austrian German nationalists in the early 1930s began to look to Hitler's radical Nazi movement in Germany as a more appealing model for right-wing German national sentiment.²⁴

Thus the debate regarding Austrian national identity and the meaning of the Habsburg past raged throughout the era of the First Republic and was never satisfactorily resolved. The initial consensus regarding the essential German character of Austria did not disappear entirely, but as the Republic matured, the passion with which at least some Austrians argued for *Anschluss* diminished significantly, and the conservative right in particular moved toward a position of patriotic support for Austrian independence grounded in the memory of the old Habsburg Monarchy. In 1933, this newfound conservative commitment to Austrian independence became the official policy of the authoritarian *Ständestaat* which replaced the Republic, and which repressed both the Social Democratic and German nationalist camps in order to better indoctrinate Austrian citizens in the ideals of Austrian patriotism and self sufficiency. While the more pluralistic First Republic endured, however, arguments concerning Austrian identity and history were conducted freely, and were a persistent feature of public discourse in Austria.

i. Austrian Conservatives and the Habsburg Past in the First Republic.

The conservative Austrian right demonstrated far more dedication to a vision of Austria which was grounded in its past as part of the old Habsburg Monarchy than any of the other factions in the First Republic's political spectrum. Such dedication was hardly

²⁴Bruce F. Pauley, "The Austrian Nazi Party before 1938: Some Recent Revelations," in *Conquering the*

surprising. The Christian Social Party, the major political association of the conservative camp, had been founded during the 1870s in old Austria as a Catholic-oriented, anti-capitalist, anti-Marxist, and anti-Semitic party which sought to capture the votes of the Viennese *petit-bourgeoisie*. By the first decade of the twentieth century, however, the Christian Socials had combined their previous program with an outspoken advocacy for Habsburg rule and Austrian tradition. Thus, from its relatively humble beginnings as a small urban party interested in non-Marxist social reform, the Christian Social Party gradually became a conservative *Reichspartei* (Imperial party) which commanded broad support from both the Austrian countryside and the urban middle class, and which was the most staunchly loyal of all of the old Monarchy's political organizations to the House of Austria. Needless to say, the collapse of the Habsburg's vast multinational Empire came as a severe shock to this faction.²⁵

This study uses the term "conservative" to refer to the members and supporters of the CSP and its post-1945 successor, the Austrian People's Party. That label did not apply to the CSP when it was first founded, but by 1918 the Party's adoption of a staunchly traditionalist stance and its advocacy for the religious and political values that the Habsburg dynasty, the aristocracy, and the Church had represented during the Monarchy's last century made this term a better fit, and indeed one which the Catholic right often used to describe its ideology. It is also worth noting that during the time period under discussion here, the meaning of conservatism in Europe was itself in a state

Past, 34-56.

²⁵On the origins and history of the CSP see John W. Boyer, *Political Radicalism in Late Imperial Vienna: Origins of the Christian Social Movement, 1848-1897* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 184-410; *idem*, *Culture and Political Crisis in Vienna: Christian Socialism in Power, 1897-1918*

of flux. The term, which during the nineteenth century had connoted support for aristocratic culture, a close relationship between Church and state, and a monarchical form of government, had by 1945 come to signify a political ideology which was less dependent upon the traditions of the *ancien regime* and more compatible with liberal-democratic government.²⁶

Of course not all Austrian conservatives were entirely comfortable with the populist rhetoric or the concessions to republicanism of the Christian Social Party. The proponents of the more classical conservatism which had flourished in Austria during the nineteenth century, especially among the aristocracy and the upper level clergy, were deeply hostile to the new political and social order in Austria after 1918 which had weakened the position of the Church, abolished aristocratic privilege, and, in some cases, confiscated aristocratic lands. Many of these figures, and particularly Church leaders, were willing to compromise to a certain degree, and supported the CSP as the one major party which came the closest to representing their political and religious beliefs.²⁷ Others, however, refused to make ideological accommodations and joined smaller political movements in order to pursue their more classically conservative vision of Austrian society. Although most on the Austrian right recognized that the opposition of the Entente powers as well as a large portion of the Austrian population made the prospect of a restoration of the Monarchy completely impractical, there were a number of conservative organizations dedicated to placing a Habsburg on the throne once more, and

(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 444-462.

²⁶Adam Wandruszka, "Österreichs politische Struktur," in *Geschichte der Republik Österreich*, ed. Heinrich Benedikt (Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1954), 307-317. On the evolution of European political conservatism in the twentieth century, see Roland M. Stromberg, *European Intellectual*

these attracted strong support from members of the old Austrian aristocracy.²⁸ Other aristocrats found a home in the *Heimwehr* (Home Guard) movement, a cluster of authoritarian militia groups which were far more antagonistic to democratic rule than the CSP, and which, while not a very significant political force during the 1920s, eventually played an important role in the foundation of the right-wing *Ständestaat* dictatorship in 1933.²⁹ Thus, while most conservatives supported the Christian Social Party, not all did, and, as we shall see, some individual conservative intellectuals and leaders articulated ideas concerning Austrian national identity and the Habsburg past which went further than those espoused by the CSP itself.

With the birth of Austrian democracy out of the ashes of the old Monarchy, most Austrian conservatives supported *Anschluss*, as did most other Austrians, but the traditional right's ardor for union with Germany cooled fairly quickly, and by the end of the era of the First Republic, the conservative camp for the most part advocated the continued existence of an independent Austrian state as the best way to preserve the cultural uniqueness which the Austrian people had developed as a result of their long history as part the Habsburg multinational state. Austrian conservatives never denied that Austrians were Germans in a national sense, but as the First Republican era wore on, they

History Since 1789, 6th ed. (Engelwood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1994), 49-53, 267-270.

²⁷Wandruszka, 307-317; Boyer, *Culture and Political Crisis in Vienna*, 410.

²⁸Blair R. Holmes, "The Austrian Monarchists, 1918-1938: Legitimism versus Nazism," in *Conquering The Past*, 91-109.

²⁹Ernst Rüdiger von Starhemberg and Kurt von Schuschnigg were two conservatives from aristocratic families who became heavily involved in the *Heimwehr* and the *Ständestaat*. See Ernst Rüdiger Starhemberg, *Memoiren*, (Vienna and Munich: Amalthea Verlag, 1971); Kurt von Schuschnigg, *Dreimal Österreich*, trans. John Segrue (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1938); "Allgemeine politische Grundsätze des Heimatblockes, 1930," in *Österreichisch Parteiprogramme, 1868-1966*, ed. Klaus Berchtold (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1967), 403-408; C. Earl Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics, 1918-1936* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1978), 3-6.

were increasingly willing to argue that Austrian Germans did not necessarily need to belong to the same political state as other Germans in order to act in the interests of the German *Volk*. This stance essentially represented a continuation of the CSP's pre-1918 national views, which cast Austrians as Germans and yet saw no inherent contradiction between loyalty to both the German *Volk* as a whole and the Habsburg state.³⁰

From the very beginning of the republican era, Austrian conservatives were not completely comfortable with the idea of democratic rule in Austria. Even as late as October of 1918, many party members had still hoped to preserve the old Monarchy, and it was only with considerable reluctance that the Austrian right agreed to cooperate with the other parties to found the First Republic.³¹ The first party platforms issued by the CSP in the early months of the Republic all acknowledged the legitimacy of democratic rule on the basis of popular sovereignty and full suffrage. At the same time, however, these documents expressed the fears of Austrian conservatives that the new state would decline into endemic class conflict or even civil war if their chief antagonists on the left, the Social Democrats, were allowed to pursue their agenda unfettered.³² Ignaz Seipel, a Catholic clergyman and the principal ideological leader of the CSP, noted that democratic rule could be used for good or bad ends, and that the majority was not always necessarily right in its judgements. Therefore, he argued that the formal apparatus of democracy could never be an end in itself for Austria, but rather had to be a means toward social

³⁰Boyer, *Culture and Political Crisis in Vienna*, 214-218.

³¹Wandruszka, 317-322.

³²“Kundgebung der Christlich Sozialen an die Parteiangehörigen,” “Das Aktionsprogramm der Christlichsozialen Vereinigung, 1919,” “Das Parteiprogramm der Wiener Christlichsozialen, 1919,” in *Österreichisch Parteiprogramme*, 355; 359; 365-371.

unity, morality, and sound spiritual judgement.³³ Thus, the Austrian conservative camp did not celebrate the birth of democracy in Austria as the Social Democrats did, but rather acknowledged that republican government was simply the only realistic solution for the Austrian territory in the aftermath of the Monarchy's collapse.

The Christian Social Party was determined to ensure that the new Republic reflected the traditional ideals which it had supported for decades. As a party which was closely tied to the Catholic Church in Austria, the Christian Socials insisted that there was a necessary relationship between Church and state, in direct opposition to the Socialists' attempts to base the new government upon firmly secular grounds. In particular, the CSP insisted that religious instruction was an important part of education for Austrian children, and argued that students should be obligated to receive religious education in their respective religious traditions.³⁴

The Party likewise maintained the anti-Semitic stance which had been part of its official program since its foundation in the late nineteenth century, and argued that Austrian Jews, as a separate, non-German "nation" living in a nationally German territory, could not be allowed to dominate or oppress the German *Volk* of Austria. Thus, the CSP's various political platforms during the First Republic called for a limit on

³³Iganz Seipel, "Das Wesen des demokratischen Staates," *Reichspost* (Vienna), November 20, 1918; "Die demokratische Verfassung," *Reichspost* (Vienna), November 21, 1918; "Das Volk und die künftige Staatsform," *Reichspost* (Vienna), November 23, 1918; "Die große Linie der gestigen Entwicklung unserer Zeit," in *Seipels Reden in Österreich und anderwärts*, ed. Josef Getzl (Vienna: Verlag "Heroes", 1926), 89-93.

³⁴While the vast majority of the Austrian population was Roman Catholic, there were significant Protestant and Jewish religious minorities which had the right to religious instruction in their own traditional faiths. "Das Wahlprogramm der Christlichsozialen Partei, 1918," "Das Programm der Christlichsozialen Partei, 1926," in *Österreichisch Parteiprogramme, 1868-1966*, 356-359; 374-376; "Das Aktionsprogramm der Christlichsozialen Vereinigung, 1919, 361; Seipel, "Kirchliches und staatliches Organisationsprinzip," in *Seipels Reden in Österreich und anderwärts*, 196-199.

Jewish influence in Austrian economic life and restrictions on the number of Jewish teachers in Austria as well.³⁵

The Austrian conservative camp also proposed a system of social legislation to protect the interests of the poor and disadvantaged in Austria. This stance had been quite characteristic of the CSP during the last decades of the Monarchy as well. The Christian Socials were always careful to note their support for the principle of private property, however, and to oppose the sort of class warfare which they saw as the basis of the more radical social legislation proposed by the Social Democrats.³⁶ Thus, Austrian conservatives opposed Marxism and Jewish influence in the Austrian First Republic, and supported democracy in Austria only with some reluctance. They recognized republican rule as legitimate, but argued that Austrian religious and cultural traditions needed to be nurtured by the new Republic, rather than uprooted or abandoned.

Austrian Conservatives and the Question of Austrian Germanness.

During the first years of the First Republic, the Christian Social Party defined its position concerning Austrian nationhood, a position which would remain consistent until 1938. The Party proclaimed that Austrians were part of the German *Volk*, and shared interests and characteristics in common with the other Germans of Europe. None of the

³⁵“Das Wahlprogramm der Christlichsozialen Partei, 1918,” 356-359; “Das Parteiprogramm der Wiener Christlichsozialen , 1919,” 364; “Der ‘Linzer Programm’ der christlich Arbeiter Österreichs,” in *Österreichisch Parteiprogramme, 1868-1966*, 374. The CSP’s ideological anti-Semitism, though prominent, was largely rhetorical and was not generally accompanied by the sort of substantial legislative efforts to discriminate against Austrian Jews which had been characteristic of the Party before 1918. Most likely the strength of the Social Democratic opposition during the First Republic made any such efforts prohibitively difficult to pursue at a time when the CSP had to struggle to advance even the most important aspects of its agenda.

³⁶“Kundgebung der Christlich Sozialen an die Parteiangehörigen,” 355; “Das Aktionsprogramm der Christlichsozialen Vereinigung, 1919,” 359; “Das Parteiprogramm der Wiener Christlichsozialen , 1919,”

First Republic's Christian Social leaders devoted much effort to systematic explorations of the issue of Austrian Germanness. They simply accepted Austria's German character as fact which did not require much theoretical justification or discussion. The Party's statements about Austrian Germanness generally eschewed the sort of racial or *völkisch* language typical of the Austrian German nationalist parties, however, invoking instead Austria's history and culture as the key aspects of its German character. The CSP's early political platforms expressed solidarity with the rest of German *Volk*, and urged the protection of the national interests of the allegedly oppressed ethnic German minorities living within the old Monarchy's successor states, especially in Czechoslovakia.³⁷ Indeed, the Viennese chapter of the Party neatly summarized the national views of the entire movement when it proclaimed itself to be founded upon "Christian, German, and anti-Semitic" principles.³⁸

Initially at least, the Party accompanied its declarations of Austrian Germanness with statements which supported *Anschluss* with Germany. The party's spokesman at the June, 1919 meeting of the Austrian National Assembly, Johann Hauser, proclaimed that the CSP supported a union with Germany, and angrily denounced the Entente's prohibition of *Anschluss* as unfair and as a direct contradiction of the victors' own professed dedication to the principle of national self-determination. Hauser also argued that a small Austria state, severed from its historical ties with the remainder of the former territory of the Habsburg Monarchy, could never hope to support itself economically, and

365-371. "Das Programm der Christlichsozialen Partei, 1926," 374-376.

³⁷"Das Wahlprogramm der Christlichsozialen Partei, 1918," 356-359; "Das Aktionsprogramm der Christlichsozialen Vereinigung, 1919," 359.

³⁸"Das Programm der Wiener Christlichsozialen, 1919," 364.

that *Anschluß* was the only course which could secure prosperity for Austria.³⁹ The Party's "Action Program" of the same year reiterated these points, and even called for the Austrian Republic's laws to be adjusted so as to be in harmony with the legal structure of the German *Reich* in anticipation of an eventual great-German union.⁴⁰

Alexander Spitzmüller, a former economic official in the old Habsburg government, likewise served as an early conservative advocate for *Anschluß*. In his 1919 book, *Political Breakdown and the Anschluß Question*, Spitzmüller discussed the reasons why he believed that a union with Germany represented the most promising option for post-Habsburg Austria. Unlike many advocates of *Anschluß* of other political orientations, Spitzmüller acknowledged that such a union actually might harm Austrian economic interests in the short run because Austrian industries were generally less competitive and efficient than those of Germany. In the long term, however, he argued that a great-German union would help orient the Austrian economy toward trade with more economically robust regions in north and western Europe while at the same time serving as a far better advocate for continuing German economic interests in Central and Eastern Europe than an independent small Austrian state. Spitzmüller still found the multinational ideals of the Habsburg state very attractive, but he asserted that after the Monarchy's collapse, *Anschluß* constituted a far more practical option for Austria than fanciful dreams of a Danubian economic union with the very same national groups which had undermined the old state before 1918, and which remained hostile to German

³⁹Johann Hauser, "Unser Friede! Die Kundgebung der Deutschösterreichischen Nationalversammlung in der Sitzung vom 7. Juni 1919," *Flugblätter für Deutschösterreichs Recht* 33 (1919), 24-25.

⁴⁰"Das Aktionsprogramm der Christlichsozialen Vereinigung, 1919," 361.

interests in the postwar era.⁴¹

As we have seen, however, the Entente powers were unwilling to permit *Anschluß* because they wished to avoid any concomitant increase in the potential military might of Germany. The Geneva Protocols which Seipel negotiated in 1922 further cemented the Austrian separation from Germany in exchange for loans which helped Austria to maintain its tenuous economic existence. *Anschluß* was never a realistic goal for Austria during the 1920s, and the conservative movement appeared to make peace with this fact far sooner than Austria's other political camps. The CSP's 1926 political platform demonstrated the Austrian right's increasing moderation on the national issue by taking a small step back from the Party's previous declaration of support for union with Germany. In this document, the Party simply stated that it sought "equality for the German *Volk* within the European family of *Völker* and the organization of the relationship to the German *Reich* on the grounds of the right to self determination."⁴² Certainly the 1926 Party Platform still implied that an Austrian union with Germany might be desirable, but its language was far more vague than the Party's previous statements on the matter, and considerably more ambiguous than the policy positions of either the Social Democrats or the German nationalist camp during the mid-1920s.

More than any other figure on the Catholic right, Ignaz Seipel, the CSP's ideological and spiritual leader, was the key figure in promoting acceptance of the Austrian independence among conservatives. Seipel, a Catholic priest and academically trained scholar, was by far the most outspoken and intellectually sophisticated theorist in

⁴¹Alexander Spitzmüller, *Die politische Zusammenbruch und die Anschlußfrage* (Vienna: Manzische Verlags- und Universitäts-Buchhandlung, 1919), 28-31.

the Christian Social camp. As the chancellor who had led the negotiations on the Geneva Protocols, Seipel received considerable criticism from Austrians of all political allegiances for giving in to the Western powers and renouncing *Anschluss* on Austria's behalf.⁴³ Seipel, however, defended his decision vigorously, and stated that he simply opposed all solutions to Austria's problems which were not realistic. He argued that because the international community had refused to assist Austria unless it abandoned the goal of *Anschluss*, he had been forced to choose Austria's welfare over a token stance in favor of union with Germany which the rest of Europe had no intention of ever allowing.⁴⁴

Seipel certainly did not deny that Austrians were part of the German *Volk*. He agreed that Austrians were indeed Germans, but he also argued that nationality was primarily a cultural characteristic, rather than a political one. He asserted that Austrian culture had always thrived within a larger German context, and could not be separated from that context, no matter what the territorial boundaries happened to be.⁴⁵ Seipel argued that the dramatic differences of opinion between Western and Central Europe regarding the degree to which the nation and the political state were expected to correspond to one another lay at the root of the *Anschluss* debate. He noted that historically the German lands had never shown the sort of overlap between nationality and political statehood found in England or France. Seipel affirmed that Austrians could be simultaneously loyal to the German nation and the Austrian state, as they had been

⁴²“Das Programm der Christlichsozialen Partei, 1926,” 76.

⁴³Wandruszka, 389.

⁴⁴Seipel, “Die erste Regierungs Erklärung,” in *Seipels Reden in Österreich und anderwärts*, 19-21.

⁴⁵Seipel, *Die Aufgaben der deutschen Hochschule in Österreich gegenüber dem deutschen Volke* (Vienna:

throughout the history of the old Monarchy, which had encompassed only a part of the German *Volk*. Seipel even questioned the prevailing state of opinion in Europe in favor of the nation state as political form. He argued that national minorities were not always mistreated when they lived in states with other, more numerous national populations, and indeed sometimes benefitted from such a situation. He further asserted that nation states sometimes went against the logic of historical cultural and economic ties between *Völker*, and if pursued too single-mindedly could lead to great conflict and upheaval, as the past decade had amply shown.⁴⁶

Indeed, Seipel elsewhere argued that a Europe composed of nation states was simply an impossibility. He noted that the *Völker* were too intermixed in various territories, and especially in the lands which the Habsburgs had ruled before 1918, ever to permit a pure correspondence between nationality and state government. For that reason, he argued that it made no sense for Austrians to be outraged by the prohibition on *Anschluss*. Despite the rhetoric of the Entente powers, political and geographic realities ensured that the ideal of the nation state could never be more than just an ideal. He thus argued that Austrian foreign policy needed to be realistic, and work within the existing system.⁴⁷

For Seipel, the real issue facing Austria was not whether or not *Anschluss* would ever occur, but rather whether postwar Europe could ever establish a continental order which ensured justice and a durable peace. He urged his Austrian countrymen to resist

Erste Wiener Verein-Buchdruckerei, 1925), 5-7.

⁴⁶Seipel, "Die gesitige Grundlagen der Minderheitfrage," and "Probleme des deutschen Staates," in *Seipels Reden in Österreich und anderwärts*, 160-164; 286-289.

⁴⁷Seipel, "Die Neugestaltung Europas," in *Seipels Reden in Österreich und anderwärts*, 178-187.

the temptation to become bitter in response to the postwar treaties. Such resentments were not productive, he argued. They merely led to the vengeful desire to reverse the postwar order, a desire which, in Seipel's opinion, only could lead to another continental war. The actual problem with the postwar treaties according to Seipel was not that they were fundamentally unjust, but rather that they had not been fully enforced. If the Entente powers simply fulfilled the promises regarding fairness, economic cooperation, and the protection of national minorities which they themselves had made at the end of the war, then the Germans of Central Europe, whether in Austria, in Germany, or in any of the old Monarchy's successor states, would be satisfied, and the tumultuous postwar era would settle into a lasting period of peace. According to Seipel, national unrest in Austria had far less to do with national boundaries than with the First Republic's precarious financial and material situation after the severing of its economic ties with the Habsburg Monarchy's other successor states. If the German *Volk* was actually allowed to secure its economic and national interests, he argued, then the *Anschluss* debate would cease to have any urgency.⁴⁸

While most Austrian conservatives followed Seipel's lead and did not dispute that Austrians were Germans in a national sense, a small but vocal minority of conservative Austrian patriots made a more radical argument concerning Austrian nationhood. For example, Oscar Schmitz, a *Reich* German who had immigrated to Austria and become a staunch Austrian patriot in the process, took great pains to distinguish between Austrians and Germans in a 1924 work entitled *Der österreichische Mensch (The Austrian Man)*.

⁴⁸Seipel, "Der Weg zum Frieden im Volk und unter den Völkern," "Das wahre Antlitz Österreichs," and "Das neue Österreich," in *Seipels Reden in Österreich und anderwärts*, 166-176; 290-29; 308-311.

In this book, Schmitz argued that Austrians, thanks to their pious Catholicism and unique blend of baroque-aristocratic and peasant values, constituted a group which was dramatically different from other German-speakers. Indeed, Schmitz used this opportunity to launch into a polemic against Prussia, which he argued had been molded by the success of the Protestant Reformation and the unusual strength of its bourgeoisie into a brutally individualistic land which always sought to impose its will. The Austrian ideals of easy-going sensuousness, communal spirit, toleration, and above all, understanding for other *Völker* were thus worlds apart from the sort of national culture which predominated in the German *Reich*.⁴⁹ Schmitz never explicitly denied that Austrians were part of the German nation as a whole, but he certainly implied as much given the single-mindedness with which he drew his contrast between Austrians and Prussians.

Another conservative patriot, Oswald Straub, made a similar ambiguous argument concerning Austrian nationhood which also went a bit further than the position of the conservative mainstream. Straub argued that the Habsburg Monarchy had in fact been a nation as well as a state, and that all of old Empire's various *Völker* had been justifiably loyal to this "Austrian nation." Straub did, however, make a fine distinction between the terms "nation" (*Nation*) and "nationality" (*Nationalität*), asserting that Austrian German-speakers had always simultaneously served the interests of both their Austrian nation and the German nationality. Straub lamented the state of national consciousness in the Austrian First Republic as well, arguing that the Austria's inhabitants had recently

⁴⁹Oscar A. H. Schmitz, *Der österreichische Mensch, zum Anschauungsunterricht für Europäer, insbesondere für Reichsdeutsche* (Vienna: Wiener Literarische Anstalt, 1924), 21-25, 49-55.

overemphasized either their Germanness or their loyalty to their particular local *Heimat* (homeland). Straub argued that what contemporary Austria really needed was a true sense of Austrian nationhood on the part of its citizens. He denied that such a patriotic identification with the Austrian nation amounted to treason to the German *Volk*, and he warned that Austria's unique brand of German culture would inevitably be destroyed in the event of *Anschluß* with Germany.⁵⁰ Neither Schmitz nor Straub made any appreciable impact on the debate regarding Austrian nationhood in the First Republic, but their arguments foreshadowed the pride in Austria's distinctiveness which ultimately became an important part of conservative ideology during the *Ständestaat* and the early Second Republic.

Thus, all Austrian conservatives essentially maintained that Austrians were in some sense also Germans, even if there was some difference of opinion regarding the degree of difference between Austrians and other Germans. Invariably, however, the traditionalist Austrian right was far more willing than either the Social Democratic or German nationalist camps to emphasize Austria's cultural and historical distinctiveness, and the Christian Social Party was the only one of the First Republic's political factions to make peace with the idea of Austria's independence as a state separate from the rest of the German *Volk*. This willingness to embrace Austrian patriotism undoubtedly stemmed from the ideological heritage of Austrian conservatism, which had never recognized any real conflict between pride in Austrian Germanness and devotion to Austria's own distinctive brand of German culture and to the Habsburgs' multinational state.

⁵⁰Oswald Straub, *Um Österreichs Zukunft, ein Streitschrift für Österreich* (Vienna: Paul Kaltschmid, 1930), 18-30.

Austrian Conservatives' Portrayals of the Habsburg Monarchy.

Indeed, Seipel and other Austrian conservatives were perhaps more easily able to dispense with the idea of *Anschluss* than other Austrian political factions because they looked to Austria's past as part of the Habsburg state as an essential part of Austrian identity as a whole. For them, Austria was not simply a German land which had been ruled by the Habsburgs, but rather had been the very core of great Catholic Empire which had served a valuable function in Central Europe. Thus the conservatives did not advocate a narrow focus upon the issue of nationality alone as did Austrian German nationalists, or propose a vision of the German *Volk* as a participant in a wider socialist revolution as did the Social Democrats. Rather, Austrian conservatives were able to embrace all of Austria's Habsburg past, and envisioned modern Austria as the heir to the old Habsburg state's centuries-old tradition of service to Catholic Christianity and Western civilization above and beyond the simple interests of the German *Volk* alone. At the same time, however, Austrian conservatives argued that the old dynasty had never been in any sense an anti-German entity. In fact, they asserted that the Habsburg state had done more to advance the position of the German *Volk* in Central Europe than any other single entity.

To be sure, the CSP's earliest postwar statements about the Habsburg past did sometimes attempt to distance contemporary Austria from the legacy of the old Monarchy. For example, in the Austrian National Assembly in 1919, Hauser argued that Austria should not be the sole party saddled with guilt for the wartime actions of the old Monarchy by the Entente powers. He proclaimed that while Austrian Germans had

fulfilled their duty to the dynasty with bravery, they were not responsible for the Monarchy's decision to enter the war.⁵¹

⁵¹Hauser, "Unser Friede! Die Kundgebung der Deutschösterreichischen Nationalversammlung in der Sitzung vom 7. Juni 1919," 24-25.

Such statements appear to have been designed to secure a more favorable settlement in the postwar peace negotiations, however, and once Austrian conservatives realized that Entente would indeed blame Austria for the supposed sins of the old Habsburg state, they became more willing to embrace the legacy of the Monarchy. Indeed, Straub argued as much in 1930, proclaiming that while Austria had been forced by the Entente powers to accept the blame for the war, nobody had forced Austrians to repudiate their great history as part of the multinational Habsburg state. Straub thus issued a call to the Austrian people to reclaim their historical inheritance, a call which many conservatives were already heeding.⁵²

Some of the ways in which the traditionalist Austrian right attempted to emphasize the continuity between the First Republic and the old Monarchy were purely symbolic. For example, in 1928, the Christian Social government decided to replace the Austrian national anthem which had been adopted immediately after the fall of the Habsburg state. That initial republican anthem had lyrics penned by the Social Democratic president of the Republic, Karl Renner, set to a totally different piece of music than the anthem used by the Monarchy. In the place of the Renner anthem, the conservative government decided to use a new patriotic song which emphasized Austrian patriotism in much the same way Renner's lyric had, but which also returned to the melody Joseph Haydn had composed for the old Habsburg anthem.⁵³ The Social

⁵²Straub, 16.

⁵³Interestingly, the Haydn melody was also the basis for the "*Deutschlandlied*," the national anthem of Germany, and the government was careful to warn Austrian schools not only to discontinue use of the previous republican anthem, but also to ensure that instructors and students did not instead sing the words to the German anthem, which of course had German nationalist connotations. "Einführung der österreichischen Bundeshymne in den Schulen," *Verordnungsblatt für den Dienstbereich des Bundesministeriums für Unterricht* (February 1, 1930), 33-4; "Einführung der österreichischen

Democrats were incensed, arguing that the Haydn melody was tainted by its association with dynastic rule, but the Christian Socialists nonetheless made the change, explicitly emphasizing contemporary Austria's continuity with the old Monarchy.⁵⁴

Other conservative efforts to emphasize such continuity were even more explicit. Seipel himself regularly referred to the Habsburg state in his statements about contemporary Austria. Indeed, Seipel had been part of the Monarchy's last government, and had helped draft Emperor Karl's statement renouncing political power in 1918. As Chancellor of the First Republic, Seipel acknowledged that this previous service to Monarchy before its collapse might cause some Austrian democrats to suspect him. Indeed, he proclaimed that he had sacrificed a great deal for the cause of the old multinational state, and would have given almost anything to preserve it. Ultimately, however, he had failed, and he admitted that the Monarchy would never return. Thus, Seipel in 1926 declared his dedication to the welfare of the German *Volk* and to the new Austrian Republic.⁵⁵

Seipel's new allegiances did not prevent him from admiring the old dynastic state, though, and he continually presented the Habsburg Monarchy as a model for the modern Austrian Republic. Seipel argued that the Habsburg state had never been opposed to the German nation. Rather, it had sought to keep order and to advance the cause of Christianity and the interests of all its subjects. German Austrians living under the Habsburg scepter had never had any difficulty in cultivating their national interests while at the same time supporting the dynastic, supranational state. Indeed, the existence of

Bundeshymne in den Schulen," *Verordnungsblatt* (February 15, 1930), 51.

⁵⁴"Was machen wir zur Republikfeier?" *Die Sozialistische Erziehung* (1930): 211-12.

national oppression in a supranational entity such as the Habsburg Monarchy was almost an impossibility because no one nation had really ever dominated the government. To the contrary, all of the different national groups in old Austria had been free to pursue their own cultural and national interests under the protection of Habsburg rule.

According to Seipel, Austrian Germans had played an important role in the great cultural work of the German *Volk* throughout the centuries. Seipel admitted that some cultural movements, such as Baroque art, had involved all of old Austria's *Völker*, but he argued that Austrian Germans had been part of a wider German culture which extended beyond the Monarchy's borders. That larger German culture had not included the dynastic state's other subject nationalities, which had most often cultivated their own distinctive cultures. Seipel insisted that Austrian Germans had indeed been the cultural leaders of the Habsburg state, but at the same time had encouraged the Monarchy's other nations to nurture their own cultural uniqueness.⁵⁶

Spitzmüller, another former imperial official, agreed with Seipel about the positive characteristics of the old Monarchy, even if he also advocated *Anschluß* as the most realistic course for Austria in the post-Habsburg era. Spitzmüller, writing in 1919, declared that, as an economic policy maker in the old Monarchy, he had always supported the ideal of a multinational Central European state under German leadership, and he lamented the Monarchy's demise. He argued that the Habsburgs had always served as the best protector of German interests in the region, and asserted that their state

⁵⁵Seipel, "Die erste Regierungs Erklärung," in *Seipels Reden in Österreich und anderwärts*, 15-23.

⁵⁶Seipel, "Die geistige Grundlagen der Minderheitsfrage," "Probleme des deutschen Staates," and "Österreich, wie es wirklich ist," in *Seipels Reden in Österreich und anderwärts*, 160-162; 286-288; 312-324.

essentially had represented a positive example for the European continent of how different national groups might cooperate for mutual benefit, rather than wasting their energies fighting with one another. According to Spitzmüller, the rise of nationalistic politics during the nineteenth century had served to unravel the Monarchy's benevolent multinational balance. Spitzmüller harshly criticized the Czechs and especially the Magyars for abandoning the interests of the Habsburg state as a whole in order to pursue positions of privilege for their respective *Völker*. He did not exempt the Austrian German nationalists of the late imperial era from his criticisms, however, and charged that they not only had rejected the Monarchy's felicitous multinational ideals but also in fact had undermined the very imperial government which had served as the protector of the German *Volk* throughout Austria's history. Spitzmüller ultimately supported *Anschluß* not out of some idealistic attachment to the dream of German national unity, but rather because he believed that Austria could better serve as an advocate for German interests in Central Europe as part of a great-German state than it could as a small and relatively impotent independent entity surrounded by hostile neighbors.⁵⁷

⁵⁷Spitzmüller, 4-6, 27-41.

Schmitz likewise presented a very positive view of the old Monarchy, and argued that its patriarchal oversight of a Catholic, multinational state at the heart of the European continent had provided the only conceivable model for peace in Europe in the future. Schmitz certainly acknowledged that the Habsburg dynasty had made its share of mistakes, and he particularly criticized Joseph II and his successors for attempting to centralize the Monarchy's political structure at the expense of the regional diversity and freedom which had always been its greatest strength. Indeed he argued that such centralization had actually weakened the imperial government by alienating the Monarchy's various national groups and thus encouraging the sort of centrifugal nationalism which eventually had destroyed the Habsburg state in 1918. Ultimately, however, old Austria's strengths had outweighed its weaknesses in Schmitz' opinion, and he argued that positive aspects of the Habsburgs' multinational empire might be translated into a peaceful European confederation of states in the contemporary era. Schmitz asserted that even a small Austrian state still had a vital role to play in the forefront of such an enterprise, and he urged modern Austria to return to the values of understanding and cooperation among the *Völker* which had always represented the very essence of Habsburg rule.⁵⁸

Other Austrian conservatives emphasized the continuity between contemporary Austria and the Habsburg Monarchy in their comments about individual Habsburg rulers. For example, a 1930 *Reichspost* article by Josefine Widmar on Maria Theresa emphasized the eighteenth-century Austrian empress' "motherly" love for all of her subjects, regardless of their nationality, and presented her as a reform-minded and

⁵⁸Schmitz, 13-15, 35-40.

devoutly Catholic ruler who, along with her son and successor, Joseph II, had helped move Austria into the modern age. Indeed, Widmar argued that Maria Theresa's example was relevant even in republican era, and urged modern Austrians to look back on her legacy with pride and gratitude.⁵⁹

Similarly, the former imperial minister Max Hussarek presented Franz Josef, the Habsburg ruler of Austria from 1848 to 1916, as a pious, dedicated, and conscientious ruler who had embodied the best ideals of the Habsburg tradition. Hussarek described Franz Joseph as the direct successor to other pragmatic and successful Habsburg rulers throughout Austrian history, such as Rudolph von Habsburg, the founder of the dynasty, Marie Theresa, and Karl V. Hussarek also contrasted Franz Joseph's dedication to the prosperity of all of the Monarchy's nationalities and to the strength of the Austrian state with what he perceived as the endemic squabbling and irresponsibility of contemporary Austria's political leaders in parliament, and argued that the Emperor's love of the Austrian Fatherland and his willingness to make sacrifices for the greater good of the state provided a model for all contemporary Austrians. Hussarek closed his reflections on Franz Joseph by arguing that the Habsburg ruler had been, "honorable as a man, great as a statesman, true to his duty as a ruler, and, above all, everything which providence and birth had called him to be: an emperor."⁶⁰

One figure who inspired a great deal of commentary from Austrian conservatives was the Monarchy's last emperor, Karl, who had died in exile a little less than four years after relinquishing his throne. Austrian conservatives reacted strongly to Karl's death,

⁵⁹Josefine Widmar, "Die letzten Tage Maria Theresas," *Reichspost* (Vienna), November 29, 1930, 3.

⁶⁰Max Hussarek, "Franz Josef I.," *Reichspost* (Vienna), November 21, 1926, 3.

and indeed sometimes used melodramatic terms to describe his demise. For example, an article reporting Karl's death in the *Reichpost*, the CSP's daily newspaper, likened his life to a Greek tragedy, and bitterly lamented his sad fate. The article denied that Karl had ever been the enemy of the Germany *Volk* that some critics had accused him of being, and instead asserted that the emperor had always worked for the welfare of all of his subjects, no matter what their nationality. The piece portrayed Karl as a pious and dedicated man who had been martyred by the proponents of force-based politics, and even compared his death, allegedly due to the inhospitable climate of the island to which he had been exiled, to the murder of the last Romanov ruler and his family by the Bolsheviks in the Russian Revolution of 1917. Indeed, the author argued that the circumstances surrounding Karl's demise constituted a "a disgrace.. . which will ring throughout the centuries." The article closed by noting that those who wished to truly serve the Austrian Republic ought to embrace the figure of Karl as part of Austria's historical inheritance, and thus heal some of the political wounds which had troubled the new Austrian state.⁶¹ An accompanying biographical sketch in the same edition of the *Reichspost* described Karl's studious nature and brave military service to the Monarchy during the war, and contrasted his characteristically Viennese friendliness with the strict formality of his imperial predecessor, Franz Joseph. The piece also noted that in the last days of his reign Karl had been concerned not with his own fate, but rather with the plight of his people, who had been so devastatingly affected by four years of war.⁶²

Ten years later the positive conservative view of Karl had not changed at all.

⁶¹"Tod in der Verbannung," *Reichspost* (Vienna), April 2, 1922, 1.

⁶²"Aus dem Leben Kaiser Karls," *Reichspost* (Vienna), April 2, 1922, 1-4. See also Spitzmüller, 21.

Writing in the *Reichspost*, Karl Zetzner-Spitzenberg described the last Habsburg as an ardent Catholic, who had worked toward the cause of peace and reconciliation between the *Völker* of Europe. In fact, according to Zetzner-Spitzenberg, Karl had been the only figure besides Pope Benedict XV who had truly proven himself to be dedicated to the idea of a negotiated peace based upon understanding between the warring powers, rather than one founded on vengeance.⁶³ The monarchist writer and politician Wilhelm Schmid used similar religious language to describe Karl, and indeed referred to the manner of his death as “biblical,” drawing an implicit parallel between Karl’s largely thankless sacrifices for his Fatherland and the martyrdom of Jesus and his apostles.⁶⁴ Above all, conservatives portrayed Karl as something of a symbol of the centuries of Habsburg rule in Austria, and they defended his reputation after his death with the same vigor with which they defended the legacy of the Monarchy as whole. In their minds Karl represented the inextricable bond between Austria’s past and its ruling dynasty. As one conservative wrote, “In the young Habsburg there lived, despite everything, a belief in the mission of this wondrous creation [the old Monarchy], to which in glory and pain the fate of his House was linked.”⁶⁵

Given their lingering affection for the Habsburg state, and their suspicions regarding democratic rule, conservatives described the Republic which had replaced the old Monarchy in ambiguous terms. For example, Austrian conservatives commenting on the tenth anniversary of the birth of the First Republic displayed decidedly mixed feelings about the new Austrian state. While these commentators did indeed argue that the new

⁶³Karl Zetzner-Spitzenberg, “Kaiser Karl zum Gedanken,” *Reichspost* (Vienna), April 1, 1932, 1-2.

⁶⁴Wilhelm Schmid, *Gross österreichische Gemeinschaft* (Vienna: Vaterland-Bücherei, 1930), 10.

Republic had accomplished a great deal in the face of severe hardships, and professed their hopes for a brighter future for their homeland, they also found the occasion melancholy. As one conservative writing for the *Reichspost*, noted, November 11 marked the “the death day of old Austria [as well as] the birthday of the new.”⁶⁶ Another writer remarked that the birth of the First Republic could not be separated from the catastrophic circumstances which had accompanied its founding, including the demise of the Monarchy and the forcible separation of German Austrians from their national brethren in the Empire’s successor states.⁶⁷

A number of figures on the Austrian right indeed argued that the tenth anniversary was being used by the Social Democrats to advance their own Marxist agenda, rather than to celebrate the loyalty of the Austrian people to their Fatherland. These writers noted that despite the Socialists’ attempts to portray the foundation of the First Republic as the result of a social and national “revolution” against the dynasty, the Monarchy had in fact only ended because of its defeat in World War I. Indeed, one Christian Social writer even charged that the Social Democrats had in fact aided the cause of Austria’s enemies with their bitter criticisms of Habsburg rule during the last years of the war. The new Republic was, in the eyes of conservatives, best seen as an heir to the old dynastic state, and not a revolutionary new creation which had been forged by the Austrian left. For conservative writers, the aspect of the new state which was most appropriate to celebrate was not the fact that it was a republic, but rather the fact that it was still the

⁶⁵“Tod in der Verbannung,” *Reichspost* (Vienna), April 2, 1922, 1.

⁶⁶“O Heimat!” *Reichspost* (Vienna), November 11, 1928, 1-2.

⁶⁷“Gedanken,” *Reichspost* (Vienna), November 11, 1928, 1-2.

Austrian Fatherland, just as it had been under Habsburg rule.⁶⁸

Several conservatives even emphasized the continuity between the old Monarchy and the new state to such a degree that they argued that the roots of the First Republic lay as much with the Emperor Karl's October, 1918 plan for a federal reorganization of the Monarchy, which would have awarded a measure of political autonomy to the state's major national groups, as it did with his actual renunciation of power. As usual, Seipel led the way in making these arguments. He asserted that the modern Austrian state had really begun when Karl had, for the first time since the Middle Ages, designated the German-speaking lands of the Monarchy as a single political unit in his federal scheme. The creation of the new republican government on November 11 and the signing of the Treaty of Saint Germain in 1919 had completed the creation of modern Austria, but Seipel stated quite clearly that he saw the initial impetus toward Austrian statehood in Karl's plan.⁶⁹

Other conservatives made similar arguments. For example, a 1922 *Reichpost* article asserted that the Karl's plan had been a "warm-hearted invitation to his people to collaborate in the rebuilding of the state," and argued that had these measures been implemented but one year earlier, the catastrophic collapse of the Habsburg Monarchy might have been avoided. Even as a failed attempt to save the larger multinational state, however, Karl's federal plan had been, according to the article's author, thoroughly in line with Woodrow Wilson's "Fourteen Points," and had essentially reorganized the Monarchy on the basis of national autonomy and popular sovereignty, the same concepts

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, 4 2; Ernst Streerwitz, "Tradition und Zukunftswille," *Reichspost* (Vienna), November 11, 1928, 3; "Dissonanzen an die Staatsfeiertag," *Reichspost* (Vienna), November 13, 1928, 1.

expressed in the First Republic's constitution.⁷⁰ Hussarek likewise emphasized Karl's attempt to federalize the Monarchy, and noted that the dynasty had in fact been part of the movement to transform Austria rather than an opponent of reform.⁷¹ Indeed, it seems that many on the traditional Austrian right tried to portray the last Habsburg ruler as one of the founders of the Austrian First Republic, rather than the last obstacle to its creation.

The most radical Austrian conservatives, however, denied that the First Republic had ever been a good idea. For example, Wilhelm Schmid, the leader of a small faction of Austrian monarchists, published a pamphlet in 1930 which argued for the reestablishment of Habsburg rule in Austria. Schmid argued that contemporary Austria had lost its faith in its own identity and character, and had fallen prey to the rampant selfishness and individualism implicit in a republican state. He bitterly denounced the Social Democrats, and argued that Austria needed to return to its roots in sincere and fervent Catholicism and dynastic monarchy. He repudiated democracy itself in favor of an authoritarian state, just as he denounced both nationalism and capitalism. Indeed, Schmid vigorously opposed *Anschluss*, and saw union with Germany as move which would subject Austria to a foreign people and culture, and which would represent "a final breach with our past."⁷² Certainly most conservatives did not go as far as did Schmid in his total rejection of democracy and *Anschluss*, or in his call for an actual Habsburg restoration, but they did at least agree with him that the Habsburg Monarchy had been a positive force in the history of Europe and had represented the best qualities of the

⁶⁹Seipel, "Das neue Österreich," 308; "Österreich, wie es wirklich ist," 312.

⁷⁰"Aus dem Leben Kaiser Karls," *Reichspost*, (Vienna), April 2, 1922, 1-4.

⁷¹Max Hussarek, "Aus den letzten Wochen des alten Oesterreich," *Reichspost*, (Vienna), November 11, 1928, 3 4.

Austrian people.

Austrian Conservatives and the “Austrian Mission.”

Another way in which Austrian conservatives attempted to emphasize the link between contemporary Austria and the Habsburg past was by proposing the existence of an “Austrian mission” which had motivated the policies of the Habsburgs during Austria’s past, and which continued to be a relevant concept even in the present. As we shall see, the notion of an Austrian mission was to be an enduring feature in the rhetoric of those individuals, and especially of those conservatives who supported Austrian independence, and this idea invariably served to define the ways in which Austrians differed from other German-speakers. Various conservatives described the Austrian mission in a variety of ways, but most of them identified two complementary but distinct historical “functions” for Austria. The first element of the Austrian mission involved the old Austrian state’s role as the defender of either the German *Volk* or Western civilization as a whole from military invasions from the east. The Austrian mission’s second aspect emphasized Austria’s function in facilitating cooperation between the various national groups of Central Europe, and in encouraging the cultural development of the region’s non-German nationalities. Conservatives employed this second facet of the Austrian mission to emphasize the paternalistic role Austrian German-speakers had played in helping the other, supposedly less advanced *Völker* of the Habsburg lands to enhance their cultural and material prosperity. Individual conservatives might refer to one or the other of these aspects of the Austrian mission, but the two elements frequently appeared

⁷²Schmid, 1-19.

together, and were often proposed by these commentators as complementary Austrian functions. Invariably, the notion of an Austrian mission depended heavily upon references to the Habsburg dynasty and the old imperial state, which had overseen and guided Austria's attempts to fulfill its supposed historical role throughout the centuries.⁷³

Schmitz was one of the most forceful conservative proponents of the second aspect of the Austrian mission during the First Republic. He used the idea of a special Austrian European mission to make the argument that Austrians were different from other Germans, and especially from Prussians, and thus should not regard *Anschluß* as a desirable goal. Schmitz' basic argument revolved around the frequent accusation that Austrians lacked efficiency and competence (*Tüchtigkeit*) in comparison to their north German neighbors. While this charge was usually meant to denigrate the Austrian character, Schmitz never disputed its validity. Rather, he argued that Austrians possessed other characteristic virtues which were in fact far more valuable than Prussian or north German *Tüchtigkeit*. Schmitz argued that too often the vaunted north German passion for efficiency had found its ultimate expression in violence and brutal wars of conquest. For Schmitz the real genius of the Austrian people derived from their very lack of such passionate efficiency, and from their "softness" in comparison to the Prussians' drive to impose their own will on any given situation. Austria's real talent, Schmitz argued, had always lain in its willingness to understand the cultures which surrounded it, and to build bridges between the German culture of the West and the other cultures of the East. The valuable transmission of German culture which Austria achieved had been made possible

⁷³The figures who made these arguments variously used the German terms "*Aufgabe*," "*Sendung*," or "*Mission*" to describe Austria's historical function in Central Europe. In this context, the sense of all three

by the Austrian people's willingness to adapt to new circumstances, and to react creatively, rather than attempting to bludgeon their way toward a preconceived plan in the Prussian manner. In essence, Austria's lack of *Tüchtigkeit* gave it a more gentle, yielding outlook which had allowed it to be a successful cultural bridge builder, and indeed had made Austria the "heart of Europe." According to Schmitz, Austria's unique gifts made it the birthplace of the "pan-national idea" of various peoples working together within the framework of a state for their mutual benefit.⁷⁴

Schmitz also asserted, however, that Austria in the modern era had lost confidence in its own character and mission. During the Great War, Austria's better understanding of affairs meant that its leaders had known far earlier than Prussia that the conflict was unwinnable, yet Austria's doubts about its lack of *Tüchtigkeit* had lured it to follow Prussia's lead anyway. Schmitz argued that once the Monarchy collapsed, Austria lost some of its traditional culture, so that contemporary Austrian life, especially in Vienna, now seemed to resemble the hectic, characterless pace of Prussian or even American society. Yet Schmitz had confidence that Austria could find its way back to its traditional values. Ultimately, he foresaw a new a Central European block arising to take the place of the old Monarchy, in which Austria would play a vital role as the core of a "United States of Europe," delivering the continent from its endemic wars and bloodshed.⁷⁵

According to Schmitz, the one circumstance which Austria had to avoid at all costs was *Anschluss* with Germany. Such a move would have the effect of diluting

of these words is best represented by the English word "mission."

⁷⁴Schmitz, 7-13.

Austria's unique character, perhaps permanently, and of making the Austrian people just a small body of German-speakers within a characterless great-German *Reich*. Austria's real destiny lay not with Germany, but rather in its old role as a bridge builder, which could make Vienna the very heart of Europe once more. Ultimately, for Schmitz, Austria had to return to the traditions which had made the old Monarchy so great: its Catholicism, its talent for understanding other *Völker*, and its felicitous blending of aristocratic and peasant culture.⁷⁶

Other conservative intellectuals used both aspects of the Austrian mission in their arguments. As usual, Seipel was at the forefront of these discussions, arguing that the "eastern mission" which the old Monarchy pursued for so long had not ended. Seipel asserted that the Austrian Republic could not afford to simply orient itself toward its German neighbor to the north; it needed to continue the efforts which had been begun by the Habsburgs to spread the benefits of German culture to the other *Völker* to the east and south. He assured his audience that Austria would not alienate northern Germans through such activities. On the contrary, such efforts were in the interests of the entire German *Volk*, and constituted a duty which only Austria could perform for the German nation.⁷⁷ Seipel also emphasized the defensive function which the Austrian had played as well, noting that in the past, Austria had served as a barrier to Islamic expansion into Europe and had helped to move Hungary and parts of the Balkans into the cultural circle of Christian Europe. Austria continued to serve a similar function even after 1918, as it

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, 1 7, 63-68.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, 1 7, 63-68.

⁷⁷Seipel, *Die Aufgaben der deutschen Hochschule in Österreich gegenüber dem deutschen Volke*, 11-12.

helped to prevent the spread of Bolshevism into Central Europe.⁷⁸

Hussarek, the former imperial minister, presented a similar vision of a dual Austrian mission in 1926. Hussarek remarked that the old Monarchy had created a zone of peace and prosperity in Central Europe which had served both to turn back “Asian barbarism” and to ensure the spread of Christian culture to the peoples of the region. According to Hussarek, this double mission had been implicit in the Holy Roman Imperial crown which the Habsburgs had worn for so many centuries, and had resulted in dynastic rule in the Habsburg lands, serving the good of the entire continent, rather than just the narrow interests of the German *Volk*.⁷⁹ Straub agreed, arguing that the old Monarchy had served to transmit the classical and Christian ideals of the West eastward even as it stood as a shield against eastern “unculture.” He noted that Austria’s service to the region had been necessary, even if modern German nationalists had given the state little credit for its efforts, and he argued that contemporary Austria needed to pursue its historic mission by cultivating ties with the Monarchy’s other successor states while standing as a barrier against the expansion of Bolshevism.⁸⁰

Thus many conservatives used the notion of Austrian mission to proclaim Austrian uniqueness, and to offer visions of the appropriate role of an independent Austrian state in Europe. Such statements were part of a broader tendency among Austrian conservatives to emphasize the continuity between the modern Austrian state and the Habsburg Monarchy, and to invoke the memory of the Habsburg past in order to bolster their arguments regarding the best course for Austria in the present. While

⁷⁸Seipel, “Österreich, wie es wirklich ist,” 316.

⁷⁹Hussarek, “Franz Josef I.,” *Reichspost* (Vienna), November 21, 1926, 3-4.

Austrian conservatives were initially just as vehement as the First Republic's other political factions in calling for *Anschluß*, their ardor for a union with Germany cooled relatively quickly. The conservative right for the most part never really denied that Austrians were Germans, but rather argued that they represented a special variety of Germanness thanks to their long historical experience within the Habsburg's multinational Catholic state. Thus most Austrian conservatives quickly made peace with the notion of Austrian independence, which they saw as the best way to preserve the traditions and historical heritage which modern Austria had inherited from the Habsburg state. The First Republic's other two major political factions, however, disagreed sharply with the conservatives regarding Austrian national identity and the legacy of Habsburg rule.

ii. The Social Democratic Party and the Habsburg Past in the First Republic

The Austrian Social Democratic Party, like the Christian Social Party, was a political organization which the First Republic inherited from the Habsburg Monarchy. The Party had been founded as a union of various socialist and labor groups at a meeting in the Austrian city of Hainfeld in 1889 under the leadership of Viktor Adler. From that point, the Social Democrats quickly became one of the leading political factions in the German-speaking regions of the Monarchy. The Party was, of course, profoundly influenced by the writings of Marx and Engels and served as the major advocate for Marxist ideology within the Habsburg state. The Social Democrats were always nominally dedicated to the notion of a revolutionary seizure of power by the Austrian working class, but, like Social Democratic parties throughout Europe, they attempted to

⁸⁰Straub, 20-31.

achieve that dramatic change through peaceful, democratic means, rather than through a violent proletarian uprising. Likewise, the Party's leaders railed against what they saw as the repressive and exploitative tendencies of the Monarchy's dynastic government in their rhetoric, but at the same time were willing to pursue its program of reform within the bounds of that very government. Thus, the Social Democratic Party worked patiently for a variety of political and social reforms in late imperial Austria such as universal suffrage, improved working conditions, trade union rights, and various state-sponsored social welfare programs.⁸¹

The Social Democrats did not limit their activities to the campaign for practical reforms, however. The Party also included a group of notable Marxist intellectuals, including Otto Bauer, Karl Renner, and Max Adler, collectively known as the "Austro-Marxists," who produced a body of distinguished theoretic work which discussed sociology, science, law, and nationalism from a Marxist perspective and which garnered attention not just in Habsburg Austria but throughout the European continent. While the Austro-Marxists were always socialist thinkers first and foremost, their ideas also were influenced profoundly by the vibrant intellectual environment of late-imperial Vienna, and particularly by Austrian neo-Kantianism, the scientific positivism of Ernst Mach, and the economic ideas of the so-called "Vienna Circle."⁸² While Viktor Adler himself did not live to see the end of the Habsburg Monarchy and the foundation of the First Republic, Bauer, Renner and Max Adler did, and they provided the Social Democratic

⁸¹Wandruszka, 423-431; Jelavich, 162-173; Melanie A. Sully, "Social Democracy and the Political Culture of the First Republic," in *The Austrian Socialist Experiment: Social Democracy and Austromarxism, 1918-1934*, Anson Rabinbach, ed. (Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1985), 57-70.

⁸²Tom Bottomore, "Introduction," in *Austro-Marxism*, ed. and trans. Tom Bottomore and Patrick Goode

Party with leadership which was as interested in theoretical matters as it was with practical parliamentary maneuvering.

During the years of the Austrian First Republic, the Social Democrats' political platform preserved the policies and goals which the Party had set out for itself during the last years of imperial rule. The Social Democrats remained committed to progress toward a socialist society through peaceful and democratic means, and they were the staunchest supporters of Austrian democracy of all of Austria's political parties. Some of the Party's previous aims, such as full suffrage and a political system based upon the ideal of popular sovereignty, had been achieved in 1918. The Social Democrats were not satisfied with these successes, however, but rather sought to build upon them in order to craft a still more perfect and just society. The Party's "Action Program" of 1919 and its "Linz Program" of 1926 laid out the ideals to which the Social Democrats dedicated themselves: expanded social welfare programs for Austrian workers, freely available education for all Austrian citizens, women's rights, the separation of Church and state, and the protection of the rights of national minorities in Austria and abroad. The Party also pledged itself, in good Marxist style, to fight against the forces of capitalism, imperialism, and militarism in Austrian society.⁸³ The Social Democratic Party's agenda was of course in almost total opposition to that of the Christian Social Party, and the conflict between the two political groups only became more heated and fractious as they

(Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 1-43; William M. Johnston, *The Austrian Mind, An Intellectual and Social History, 1848-1938* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 99-114.

⁸³"Das Aktionsprogramm des Verbandes sozialdemokratischer Abgeordneter, 1919," and "Das 'Linzer Programm' der Sozialdemokratischen Arbeiterpartei Österreichs, 1926," in *Österreichisch Parteiprogramme, 1868-1966*, 233-235, 247-264; Karl Renner, "Persönliche Erinnerungen und politische Bemerkungen vom 12. November 1918 und den Jahren vorher und nachher," *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), November 11, 1928, 1-2.

each sought to achieve their goals during the First Republic.

The leaders of the Social Democratic Party greeted the end of the Habsburg Monarchy with applause, and saw the establishment of a democratic government as a great victory for the forces of progress in Austria. The Social Democrats were firm proponents of *Anschluß*, however, and were dismayed when the Entente powers refused to allow an Austrian union with Germany. The Party's leaders regarded Austrians as Germans who possessed no national identity apart from the German nation, and they argued that Austria's destiny was to become part of a great-German socialist republic which would safeguard the interests of the entire German working class. The Social Democratic leadership portrayed the Habsburg Monarchy as an oppressive entity which had not only sought to keep its working class in a state of perpetual economic bondage, but which also had frustrated the national aspirations of all of its constituent nationalities in order to preserve the political power of the House of Habsburg and its allies in the old nobility, the Church, and the Austrian bourgeoisie. In contrast to this vision of the Monarchy as an agent of social, political and national subjugation, the Social Democrats presented their own historical counter-narrative which emphasized the working class and its Marxist leadership as the only real proponents of progress and justice in Austria's past. Thus, the Social Democratic Party cast the Habsburgs as the villains of Austrian history and argued that the fall of the Monarchy and the establishment of democracy in Austria in 1918 represented a positive but intermediate step on the road to German national unity in the form of a peaceful and socialist great-German republic.

The Social Democratic Party and Austrian National Identity

Like all of the First Republic's other political parties, the Social Democratic Party announced its support for union with Germany immediately after the fall of the Habsburg Monarchy. The Social Democrats' first political platform of the Republican era, the Action Program of 1919, declared that the Party sought *Anschluß* as soon as possible with Germany, and the document even contained a provision which recommended that the organization lay the ground work for an anticipated merger with the German Social Democratic Party. Unlike the Christian Social Party, however, the Social Democrats' enthusiasm for *Anschluß* did not wane after the stabilization of the First Republic. The Party's Linz Program of 1926 retained the call for *Anschluß* with Germany through peaceful means. Indeed the Party's official commitment to an Austrian union with Germany remained a part of the Party's platform until the Nazi seizure of power in Germany in 1933, and even then most Social Democrats still hoped for an eventual *Anschluß* once the Third Reich fell, as they believed it inevitably would.⁸⁴

The Social Democrats based their call for *Anschluß* upon their firm stance that Austrian German-speakers were part of the German *Volk*, and thus properly belonged in a German state with their national brethren. The Party's two most prominent leaders, Otto Bauer and Karl Renner, both proclaimed their belief in Austrian Germanness in no uncertain terms. Bauer argued that all of Austria's recent history had revolved around the conflict between the German national feeling of Austrian Germans and their loyalty to the Habsburg state. With the collapse of the old Monarchy, however, Bauer asserted that

⁸⁴“Das Aktionsprogramm des Verbandes sozialdemokratischer Abgeordneter, 1919,” “Das ‘Linzer Programm’ der Sozialdemokratischen Arbeiterpartei Österreichs, 1926,” and “Der Parteitag der Sozialdemokratischen Partei im Jahre 1933 (14. bis 16. 10. 1933),” in *Österreichisch Parteiprogramme*,

Austrians were simply a part of the larger German nation, even if they were kept apart from the rest of their *Volk* by the hegemonic interests of the Western capitalist powers.⁸⁵ Renner agreed, and argued that the old Austrian state had never been a nation in its own right, but rather had represented a collection of various different nations living in a political union with one another. He noted that, even within the confines of this multinational empire, Austrians had always been Germans, and that Vienna had for many centuries been the capital of the German *Reich* as well as of the Habsburgs' own lands. The separation between Austria and Germany had been a recent phenomenon which Renner dated to Austria's exclusion from Bismarck's German unification movement in 1866. With the end of the Monarchy, Austrians had to decide their own national destiny, which he argued lay in the form of a union with Germany. As he proclaimed in 1930, "We [Austrians] are a great tribe of the great German nation, no more, but also no less!"⁸⁶

The stance of these two Austro-Marxist leaders in favor of *Anschluß* after 1918 is interesting considering the fact that both men had produced plans for the reorganization and improvement of the Habsburgs' multinational state before the Monarchy had ended. Austro-Marxism had always been unique among European Socialist factions in its acceptance of national liberty as part of the wider cause of socialism. The Social Democrats' Brünn Program of 1899 had recognized the legitimacy of the claims of the

1868-1966, 234-5, 247-264.

⁸⁵Otto Bauer, *The Austrian Revolution*, trans., H. J. Stenning (New York: Burt Franklin, 1924), 24; "Die Internationale und die deutsche Zollgemeinschaft," *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), May 7, 1931, 1-2.

⁸⁶Karl Renner "Was soll aus Österreich werden?" *Der Kampf, sozialdemokratische Monatsschrift* 23 (February, 1930):52; "Anschluß Österreich-Deutschland. Alle Parteiführer Österreichs sind einstimmig für Vereinigung. Appell an das amerikanische Volk," in *Karl Renner in Dokumenten und Erinnerungen*, Siegfried Nasko, ed. (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1982), 87-88; "Persönliche Erinnerungen und politische Bemerkungen vom 12. November 1918 und den Jahren vorher und nachher," *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), November 11, 1928, 1-2.

Monarchy's various *Völker* for national rights and had urged federal reform along national lines within the Habsburg state at a time when most Marxists in Europe dismissed nationalism as a weapon used by the bourgeoisie to divide the international working class.⁸⁷ Indeed, both Bauer and Renner had, during the last decades of the Habsburg era, recognized the old Monarchy's multinational character as one of its most positive features, and had argued then for national reform within the old state rather than for that state's dismemberment and a subsequent Austrian union with Germany. Both Bauer's *The Nationalities Question and Social Democracy*, published in 1907, and Renner's *The Struggle of the Austrian Nationalities for the State*, published in 1902, envisioned a reorganized federal Habsburg Monarchy in which representation would be determined according to a given nationality's proportion of the state's population, rather than on the basis of territorial divisions.⁸⁸ Neither Austro-Marxist leader advocated *Anschluß* while the Monarchy still existed.

Both men recognized that their new position regarding a German union might be construed as a change in their overall ideology, but they argued that circumstances had changed dramatically after the fall of the Monarchy. Renner thought that the Social Democrats' position on Austrian nationhood had always been misunderstood, and he noted that German nationalists during the last decades of the Monarchy had accused the Party of "national treason," because of the Socialists' dedication to the reform of the national, social, and political organization of the old state. The dynasty and its

⁸⁷ Kann, 436; Okey, 308; Schlomo Avineri, "Marxism and Nationalism," *Journal of Contemporary History* 26, No. 3/4 (September, 1991): 653-654.

⁸⁸ *Austro-Marxism*, 30-36, 102-125; Bauer, *Die Nationalitätenfrage und die Sozialdemokratie*, 2d ed. (Vienna: Wiener Volksbuchhandlung, 1924), 509-521; Renner, *Der Kampf der österreichischen Nationen*

supporters, on the other hand, had charged that the Social Democrats were German nationalists without loyalty to the Habsburg state because of the Socialists' persistent dedication to the international German workers' movement. In reality, according to Renner, the Socialists' stance had always been consistent. They had supported the rights of all nationalities while at the same time maintaining a focus upon the cause of Austrian working class as a part of the German proletariat as a whole. The Socialists had advocated this position with equal zeal both before and after 1918. Renner proclaimed that the Socialists were dedicated to the cause of democracy and social justice, and that national rights, including those of the German *Volk*, were a part of that cause.⁸⁹ Bauer agreed, noting that the Social Democrats' stance was, above all, a pragmatic one, and that the Party had always sought the means which might best serve the interests of the Austrian working class, whether through reform within a multinational state or *Anschluß*.⁹⁰

The Social Democrats always drew a clear distinction between their own conception of Austrian Germanness and that of other Austrian German nationalists. Bauer defined the nation as a "the totality of men bound together through a common destiny into a community of character," and identified language, culture, and history as the chief traits which served to tie members of the nation together.⁹¹ Apart from his repudiation of race as an element of nationhood, Bauer's definition was not especially different from those proposed by German nationalists who were not affiliated with the

um der Staat (Leipzig and Vienna: Franz Deuticke, 1902).

⁸⁹Renner, "Persönliche Erinnerungen und politische Bemerkungen vom 12. November 1918 und den Jahren vorher und nachher," *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), November 11, 1928.

⁹⁰Bauer, "Das neue Europa," *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), October 17, 1918, 1-3.

Social Democratic Party. Yet the Social Democrats did not regard the nation or the interests of any one national group as ends in themselves. Rather, they argued that the right to national self determination was something which had to be pursued in the context of Marxism's wider crusade for the rights of the international working class. Thus, the Party's stance regarding Austrian national identity always placed the ideal of German national unity alongside such other Social Democratic ideals as internationalism, pacifism, and support for democratic government.

Party leaders argued that the Socialist theory of the nation was far removed from chauvinistic, bourgeois nationalism which inevitably led to conflict between national groups. Indeed, many Social Democratic commentators asserted that bourgeois German nationalism had caused the recent cataclysmic war.⁹² Social Democrats eschewed such chauvinism in favor of more peaceful, cosmopolitan national ideals. As one 1932 article in a Social Democratic pedagogical journal argued, Socialism denied "nationalism" as a conspiracy of the greedy bourgeoisie, which stood to profit from war, even as it embraced "the nation" as a valuable and natural aspect of human life.⁹³ By the early 1930s, the Party was particularly concerned with the rise of National Socialism in Germany and Austria, and took pains to specifically repudiate the Nazis' racial and militaristic vision of national identity as well.⁹⁴ According to the Social Democrats, the Marxist view of the

⁹¹Bauer, *Die Nationalitätenfrage und die Sozialdemokratie*, 514.

⁹²Friedrich Austerlitz, "Schuld und Mitschuld am Weltkrieg," *Der Kampf* 13 (January, 1920): 8-17; Andreas Schrott, "Die 'nationale Frage' in der sozialistischen Erziehung," *Die Sozialistische Erziehung* 8 (August, 1922): 186-8; Friedrich Adler, "Die Lüge der Kriegsunschuld," *Der Kampf* 17 (October, 1924): 437-436; "Die Friedensverträge," *Die Sozialistische Erziehung* (November, 1932): 225-6.

⁹³"National und International," *Die Sozialistische Erziehung* (November, 1932): 228-9.

⁹⁴Fritz Brügel, "Nationsozialistische Ideologie," *Der Kampf* 24 (March, 1931): 105-111; Hugo Illius, "Rassenforschung und Rassenfrage," *Der Kampf* 24 (May, 1931): 220-225; Renner, "Was will die Partei?" *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), November 17, 1931, 1.

nation as a necessary part of larger internationalist order of peace and social justice provided the only ideological means through which Austrians might achieve *Anschluß* without triggering another horrific European war.

The Social Democratic Party's call for *Anschluß* was also in part based upon more pragmatic concerns. Just as other Austrian proponents of union with Germany during the First Republic argued that an independent Austria was economically unviable, so too did Social Democratic leaders assert that the new Austrian state was simply too small to survive on its own once it had been severed from the other more economically developed regions of the old Monarchy. At a 1919 meeting of the Austrian National Assembly, Bauer presented a litany of reasons why Austria could not survive on its own, including the allegedly unfair and insuperable reparations which the Entente powers had foisted upon the First Republic, the flood of impoverished refugees from the other regions of the old Monarchy who were totally dependent upon the support of the Austrian government, and the confiscation of vital German Austrian property and resources by the governments of the other successor states. Bauer argued that Austria was simply in no position to meet all of the obligations which it had been forced to assume, or even to sustain its own existence, and he cautioned the world that a nationally resentful and economically oppressed Austria could become the incubator for another European war in much the same way that circumstances in a similarly disadvantaged Serbian state had served as the spark which set off the First World War in 1914.⁹⁵

⁹⁵Bauer, "Unser Friede! Die Kundgebung der Deutschösterreichischen Nationalversammlung in der Sitzung vom 7. Juni 1919," 15-23; For similar arguments see Friedrich Adler, "Unser Friede! Die Kundgebung der Deutschösterreichischen Nationalversammlung in der Sitzung vom 7. Juni 1919," 30-32, and Renner, "Zollunion und Anschluß," *Der Kampf* 24 (May, 1931): 194-201.

Yet Bauer also clearly stated that Austrian Social Democrats did not merely hope for *Anschluß*, but rather envisioned an Austrian union with Germany under the auspices of a socialist, republican government. Indeed, Bauer noted in 1927 that such an outcome for the German *Volk* might only be possible once the imperialistic, bourgeois regimes in France and Italy, which had prevented *Anschluß* for so long, had been replaced by socialist governments which would allow the principles of justice and national self-determination to truly apply throughout Europe, and not merely to serve the interests of the capitalists in the west.⁹⁶ Ultimately, the Austrian Social Democratic Party did not support a union with Germany for the sake of an idealized vision of national unity, but rather because they thought such a step was both economically necessary for Austria and an important part of the progress of history toward a more just and democratic socialist order.

Social Democratic Portrayals of the Habsburg Monarchy

In making their arguments regarding Austria's bright future as part of a socialist great German Republic, the Social Democrats also invariably portrayed Austria's Habsburg past as a bitter story of exploitation and subjugation for the workers and nations of Central Europe, and they celebrated the collapse of the Habsburg dynasty's power in 1918 as a positive achievement for the region. For the Social Democrats, the House of Habsburg simply was the enemy of progress in Austrian history. Whether standing alongside the Austrian aristocracy and the Catholic Church as the chief proponent of a feudal, agrarian social order during the early modern period, or working in

⁹⁶Bauer, "Drei Gruppen in Anschlußlager," *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), July 7, 1927.

a close alliance with the Austrian bourgeoisie to support the growth of capitalism during the latter half of the nineteenth century, the dynasty which had dominated the Austrian lands for so long had always been a reactionary, oppressive entity. Party leaders argued that any progress for the downtrodden majority during the imperial era had occurred despite the efforts of the Habsburgs rather than because of them. Thus, the Social Democrats viewed 1918 as the point when the cruel Habsburg yoke had finally been thrown off, and they portrayed the birth of the First Republic as a clean break with the Habsburg past and a fresh start for the Austrian working class. They also opposed any plan for postwar Central Europe which invoked the legacy of the Habsburg past, whether explicitly or implicitly.

Most Socialist commentators argued that the old Monarchy was an oppressive institution which had consistently worked against the interests of the working class and of the various subject national groups which lived under the Habsburg scepter. From their first seizure of authority in Austria during the medieval period to their brutal suppression of political, social, and national liberty during the Revolutions of 1848 to their participation in the imperialist competition which had triggered the First World War, the Habsburgs and their agents invariably appeared in Social Democratic accounts as the enemies of justice, freedom, and progress in Austrian history.⁹⁷ While most Socialist commentators focused upon the dynasty's role in supporting the unjust feudal and capitalistic social order, many Social Democrats also assailed the Habsburgs' role in thwarting the national aspirations of their various subject *Völker*. One 1932 Socialist

⁹⁷See for example, Bauer, "Habsburg vor den Toren," *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), October 23, 1921, 1-2; Emil Strauß, "Die nationale Revolution in Deutschböhmen 1848," *Der Kampf* 20 (January, 1927): 31-37;

article referred to the Habsburg Monarchy as a “*Völkerkerker*” (prison house of the peoples), while Renner and Bauer both remarked upon the manner in which the House of Habsburg had stood in the way of German unification during the nineteenth century in order to further its own dynastic interests.⁹⁸

Indeed, Bauer argued that the Habsburgs were by no means unique in their opposition to national liberty, but rather represented typical dynastic rulers who oppressed their subjects in order to maintain their own political power. Bauer placed the Habsburgs alongside the Hohenzollerns of Prussia and the Romanovs of Russia in the ranks of royal houses which had opposed the rights of national minorities. According to Bauer, the Habsburgs were no better and no worse than any other European imperial dynasty; their oppressive habits were simply inherent in the monarchical system which had served to subjugate Europe’s lower classes throughout the centuries.⁹⁹ In a 1930 article in the Socialist monthly *Der Kampf*, the young Social Democratic (and later Communist) intellectual Ernst Fischer took Bauer’s analysis even further, arguing that capitalism in the era after 1918 actually functioned as a sort of analogue to absolutist monarchy which robbed even the bourgeoisie of the valuable liberal achievements which it had managed to gain during the early capitalist era. Fischer’s rather unorthodox argument was quickly corrected in a subsequent issue of *Der Kampf* by Heinrich Soffner, who reminded him that capitalism was the creation of the bourgeoisie and always served their interests, but Fischer’s comment still illustrates the manner in which the very notion

Strauß, “Aus dem letzten Tagen der Monarchie,” *Der Kampf* 21 (January, 1928): 6-11

⁹⁸“Die 12. November,” *Die Sozialistische Erziehung* (November, 1932): 248; Renner, “Persönliche Erinnerungen und politische Bemerkungen vom 12. November 1918 und den Jahren vorher und nachher,” *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), November 11, 1928, 1-2; Bauer, *The Austrian Revolution*, 63.

of monarchy could easily be associated with all forms of oppression in the minds of Austrian Socialists.¹⁰⁰

Social Democrats also frequently attacked the Habsburg Monarchy by blaming it for the Great War. At the 1919 meeting of the Austrian National Assembly, Friedrich Adler vigorously denounced the Entente powers for forcing the workers of German Austria to accept the blame for the destructive conflict which the deposed Habsburgs had begun with the help of the bourgeoisie.¹⁰¹ Another Social Democratic commentator, Anton Tesarek, noted that all war occurred because of injustice, and that the Austrian emperor, as the head of an unjust order, could never extricate his state from the devastating war which he had helped start. Only a republican revolution led by the workers' movement had the ability to achieve such an end.¹⁰² Socialist leaders generally exonerated both the workers and the Party itself of any blame for the conflict, and they argued that the dynasty and its government had led the old state into the conflagration which had ultimately consumed it, with the new Republic left to deal with the consequences of Habsburg mistakes.¹⁰³

The Social Democrats obviously greeted the demise of the Habsburg Monarchy and the creation of the First Republic as a triumph for the Austrian working class, and the

⁹⁹Bauer, "Das neue Europa," 1-3.

¹⁰⁰Ernst Fischer, "Das absolute Königtum des Kapitalismus," *Der Kampf* 23 (January, 1930): 16-23; Heinrich Soffner "Der entthronte Kapitalismus— absoluter König," *Der Kampf* 23 (April, 1930): 173-177. By the end of World War II, Fischer had joined the Austrian Communist Party and eventually became one of the most prominent exponents of the Communists' negative view of the Habsburg past and proud proclamations of Austria's unique nationhood during the first decade of the Second Republic.

¹⁰¹Adler, "Unser Friede! Die Kundgebung der Deutschösterreichischen Nationalversammlung in der Sitzung vom 7. Juni 1919," 30-31.

¹⁰²Anton Tesarek, "Der 12. November und unsere Kinder," *Die Sozialistische Erziehung* (September 15, 1921): 13-15.

¹⁰³Austerlitz, "Schuld und Mitschuld am Weltkrieg," 8-17; Friedrich Adler, "Die Lüge der Kriegsunschuld," 437-436; Seitz, 518-520.

Party's leaders did their best to ensure that the new Republic was cleansed of all vestiges of the old dynastic state. The Party's first postwar program stated in no uncertain terms the Socialists' support for republican rule and popular sovereignty, and demanded that the new Austrian government declare that the House of Habsburg was deposed in Austria for all time. It likewise called for the new Republic to abandon its use of Habsburg imperial symbols, to cease granting titles of nobility, to confiscate the property of the dynasty in Austria, and to punish any citizens found to be working for Habsburg restoration.¹⁰⁴ The prominent Party intellectual, Max Adler, stated the basic Socialist view on the demise of dynasty in particularly passionate terms in 1919:

And above all, the Socialist proletariat must leave no one in doubt that for us the Habsburgs belong to the ranks of the dead, and we will throw anyone else to the dead who wishes to put them or any other contenders upon the throne. We would rather perish in our own defense than to endure such a disgrace ever again.¹⁰⁵

The Social Democrats viewed the end of the House of Habsburg's rule in Central Europe as a positive achievement for the working class, and they dedicated themselves to ensuring that the dynasty would never return to power.

The Party was not completely satisfied with the state of affairs after the dynasty's collapse. As we have seen, the Social Democrats were indignant that Austrian Germans had not been allowed the same right to national self determination as the old Monarchy's other nationalities, and indeed many Socialist commentators accused the Entente powers of replicating some of the worst aspects of the Habsburg state in their postwar redrawing of the territorial boundaries of Central Europe. In 1919, Friedrich Adler angrily

¹⁰⁴“Das Aktionsprogramm des Verbandes sozialdemokratischer Abgeordneter, 1919,” 233.

¹⁰⁵Max Adler, “Zum 12. November,” *Der Kampf* 12 (November, 1919): 746.

denounced the Entente's refusal to allow Austria to proceed with *Anschluß*, and he accused Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Italy of adopting the Habsburgs' imperialistic methods in order to seize German Austrian territory and oppress the German people.¹⁰⁶ That same year Bauer criticized the governments of two of Austria's neighbors for claiming territories inhabited by German national majorities, arguing that Czechoslovakia's seizure of the Sudetenland and German Bohemia, and Italy's annexation of South Tyrol, all regions with sizable German-speaking populations, amounted to ill advised attempts to recreate the Habsburg Monarchy's system of national oppression. Bauer alleged these regions were tied by the history, geography, and nationality to German Austria, and he warned that refusing to grant the right of national self determination to the inhabitants of Central Europe had the potential to lead to another war which might be even more destructive than the previous one.¹⁰⁷

If the Social Democrats were critical of the new Central European order because it replicated elements of the old Monarchy, so too did they denounce any proposals which might have even more forcefully reproduced features of the Habsburg state. In particular, many Social Democrats feared that suggestions to create a Danubian customs union or federation among the Monarchy's successor states had the potential to open the door to a Habsburg restoration. Bauer was especially critical of these proposals and argued that any such a scheme represented a covert attempt by Austrian monarchists to recreate the old Monarchy. He noted that if a Danubian federation ever became a reality, it would

¹⁰⁶Friedrich Adler, "Unser Friede! I. Die Kundgebung der Deutschösterreichischen Nationalversammlung in der Sitzung vom 7. Juni 1919," 31.

¹⁰⁷Bauer, "Unser Friede! Die Kundgebung der Deutschösterreichischen Nationalversammlung in der Sitzung vom 7. Juni 1919," 5-15.

essentially recreate all of the national strife which had plagued the old Monarchy, only without the favorable position accorded to Austrian Germans under Habsburg rule. Additionally, the proposed union would lead to capitalistic competition between states and hence would be thoroughly incompatible with Socialist principles. Bauer concluded that none of the successor states would be interested in joining a federation with a national group which they had seen as their oppressors before 1918, so the plan was unrealistic and utopian in the first place.¹⁰⁸

One Socialist writer, Paul Szende, did defend the idea of a Danubian federation as a realistic and progressive idea in a 1932 article in *Der Kampf*. Szende argued that *Anschluß* was in fact not a realistic option for Austria given the dogmatic opposition of France to any potential expansion of German power. A Danubian federation offered Austria the possibility to represent the interests of the German working class and to advance the cause of democratic government in an increasingly reactionary and authoritarian part of the continent. He even asserted that any such federal arrangement would actually deter a Habsburg return to power anywhere in Central Europe by granting any one federal member state a veto over a dynastic return in any other constituent state.¹⁰⁹ Szende's position was exceedingly rare in Social Democratic circles, however, and in the next issue of *Der Kampf* Karl Appel rebutted Szende's arguments, attacking the Danubian federal plan as dangerous and reactionary.¹¹⁰ As early as 1918, Bauer also provided a forceful articulation of the Party's basic views about the possibility of a continuing association between Austria and the other successor states, arguing that

¹⁰⁸Bauer, "Zollunion?" *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), December 25, 1919, 1-2.

¹⁰⁹Paul Szende "Die Donauföderation," *Der Kampf* 25 (August/September, 1932): 344-349.

Austria was not willing to put its interests at risk for the sake of a Central European federation which could easily recreate the old Monarchy's system of national exploitation:

The old Austria is dead. We German Social Democrats wish to build a new one, which should be a union of free peoples. But if the other nations of Austria do not wish such a community with us, or if they only wish so under conditions and forms which would not guarantee our economic interests or our right to national self-determination. . . . then the German-Austria will be forced to choose *Anschluß* with the German *Reich* as a special federal province.¹¹¹

The Social Democrats were of course even more vociferously critical of any overt attempts to return the Habsburgs to the throne. The establishment of a right-wing “regency” in Hungary by the government of Miklós Horthy in 1920, even if the Entente and the other regional powers never actually permitted a Habsburg to sit upon Hungary's vacant throne, naturally caused considerable alarm in Austrian Social Democratic circles. The Party was concerned that such a Habsburg restoration might also spread to Austria itself. Sigmund Kunfi argued that the simple fact that a Habsburg return could be contemplated by any of the national groups in the region which had previously been oppressed by the dynasty for so many centuries was ample evidence of the “unhealthiness” and injustice of the postwar order which the Entente had established in Central Europe.¹¹² Another Socialist commentator argued that those who were nostalgic for the trappings of the old Monarchy were a dying breed in Austria at least, and he predicted that soon there would be no more Austrians who identified with the old

¹¹⁰Karl Appel, “Donauföderation?” *Der Kampf* 25 (October, 1932): 405-408.

¹¹¹Bauer, “Deutschland und wir,” *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), October 16, 1918.

¹¹²Sigmund Kunfi, “Das Haus Habsburg zum Viertenmal,” *Der Kampf* 19 (February, 1926): 49-56.

clerical-dynastic state rather than the working class and the German *Volk*.¹¹³

Bauer took the threat of a restoration more seriously, however, warning that a Habsburg return would not simply stop with the Hungarian crown of Saint Stephen, but would inevitably lead to war in Central Europe. He declared that “a Habsburg at the gates” would never be tolerated by the people of the successor states, including Austria, who had only recently thrown off the “Habsburgs’ bloody yoke.” Bauer even saw monarchists trying to coopt the *Anschluß* movement by enticing Austrians with the prospect of a reborn Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation which would both unite the Germans and rule over the other Danubian peoples.¹¹⁴ By the early 1930s Karl Renner was also suspicious of the right-wing *Heimwehr* movement, which he argued aimed to restore the old Monarchy and to return Austria to its dynastic relationship with Hungary at the center of a Central European federal empire.¹¹⁵

The Social Democratic Historical Narrative

The Social Democrats vigorously opposed even the hint of a Habsburg restoration after 1918, and they firmly denounced the dynasty as the epitome of reaction and oppression in Austrian history. For the Social Democratic Party, the Habsburgs had always been the enemies of the Austrian working class, and the imperial house constituted the main villains in Austria’s historical narrative. The Social Democrats did not view the past solely as the story of one dynasty’s attempts to oppress its subjects and

¹¹³Johann Hieronymus, “Der vaterländische Dichter als Denker,” *Der Kampf* 18 (June, 1925): 211-219.

¹¹⁴Bauer, “Habsburg vor den Toren,” *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung*, (Vienna), October 23, 1921, 1-3; “Drei Gruppen in Anschlußlager,” *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), July 7, 1927, 1-2; “Die Bourgeois Republik in Österreich,” *Der Kampf* 23 (1930), 193-208; *The Austrian Revolution*, 225.

¹¹⁵Renner, “Bedrohung und Verteidigung der Republik in Österreich,” in *Karl Renner in Dokumenten und Erinnerungen*, 114-117.

stifle the forces of progress, however. Rather, Social Democratic leaders proposed a historical counter-narrative of their own in which the true protagonists of Austrian history– the Austrian working class and the Social Democratic Party itself– had opposed the Habsburg dynasty and had worked to advance the cause of peace, democracy and social justice.

The Social Democrats generally began their progressive historical narrative with the Austrian Revolution of 1848. The Social Democratic Party itself of course had yet to be founded at that point, and indeed the Austrian working class itself had still been quite small, but modern Austrian Socialists identified quite strongly with the democratic and national ideals of the revolutionaries nonetheless. Bauer and Renner both argued that the Social Democratic Party had been in part inspired by the ideals of the Revolution, and had built upon them in its pursuit of freedom and justice.¹¹⁶

Other Socialist writers interpreted the significance of the Revolution of 1848 for contemporary Austria in a variety of ways. For example, Emil Strauß argued that the Revolution had represented the true German national ideals of the inhabitants of Austria, Bohemia, and Moravia. Those ideals had subsequently been forgotten by most of the Monarchy’s German-speakers as the House of Habsburg had crushed the Revolution and sought to overcome the national sentiment that had caused it by encouraging dynastic patriotism. Ultimately, Strauß argued, the workers had been a significant progressive force over the course of the Revolution, but they had been betrayed by the Austrian bourgeoisie which had wanted to continue its economic exploitation the Monarchy’s

¹¹⁶Bauer, “Das neue Europa,” *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), October 17, 1918, 1-2; Renner, “Persönliche Erinnerungen und politische Bemerkungen vom 12. November 1918 und den Jahren vorher und nachher, “

other *Völker* rather than to achieve German national unity under democratic auspices. After 1918, however, the working class had become the dominant force in Austria, and Austrians had rediscovered the national and democratic principles which were the legacy of the 1848 Revolution against the Habsburgs.¹¹⁷ Another article in *Der Kampf* in 1919 reprinted the statement of one of the representatives in the revolutionary Parliament in Frankfurt, Arnold Ruge, from July of 1848, noting that Ruge's comments prefigured the modern disarmament and League of Nations movements, which the Austrian Social Democrats supported.¹¹⁸ The Party's leaders thus argued that its ideological lineage extended back to the barricades of 1848 and they claimed to embody the ideals of the revolutionaries who had sacrificed so much in their heroic but futile struggles against Habsburg oppression.

Even more than the Revolution of 1848, however, the Social Democrats dated the beginning of real progress in Austrian history to the foundation of their own Party at their first Party Assembly in the city of Hainfeld in 1889. A variety of Social Democratic intellectuals and writers credited the Party's first leader, Viktor Adler, with forging the previously disparate and chaotic collection of Austrian workers' organizations into a disciplined and powerful political movement. Adler's Party almost immediately began to achieve real success in its efforts to attain practical social and legal benefits for Austrian workers, becoming one of the Monarchy's most influential political movements almost from the very first moment of its existence. The modern Social Democratic Party thus

Die Arbeiter-Zeitung (Vienna), November 11, 1928.

¹¹⁷Strauß, "Die nationale Revolution in Deutschböhmen 1848," 31-37.

¹¹⁸"Eine Stimme in der Frankfurter Nationalversammlung (1848) für Abrüstung und Völkerbund," *Der Kampf* 12 (May, 1919): 315-320.

cast itself as the true defender of democracy and social justice in Austria, and celebrated its foundation some three decades earlier as the first time when the Habsburgs found themselves faced with an organized and powerful antagonist willing to act in defense of the interests of the working class.¹¹⁹

Other Social Democrats celebrated the origins of the modern Austrian workers' movement in a slightly different manner. For example, in 1920, K. L. Müller wrote an article in *Der Kampf* which commemorated the first organized May Day march in Vienna in 1890 by the Social Democrats and the Austrian workers. Müller argued that this first demonstration of the power of the Austrian working class had terrified the dynasty and its bourgeois and clericist allies and marked the beginning of the erosion of the power of the capitalist middle class in Austria. A 1932 article in the Socialist pedagogical journal, *Sozialistische Erziehung*, confirmed the historical importance of the May Day holiday for the Austrian workers' movement, and placed it alongside the birthday of the Republic as the most important holiday in the Socialist calendar.¹²⁰

Indeed, the birth of the Republic represented the most significant achievement for the Austrian workers' movement in the eyes of contemporary Social Democratic commentators. If all of the working classes' previous accomplishments had come as a result of long years of struggle against the reactionary Habsburgs and their allies, then the collapse of the dynastic government in Austria stood as a great victory which had

¹¹⁹Bauer "Der Rythmus der Arbeiterbewegung," *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), October 23, 1925, 1-3; Bauer, "Viktor Adler, der Parteiman," *Der Kampf* 21 (March, 1929): 135-139; Michael Schacherl "Der Geist von Hainfeld," *Der Kampf* 22 (January, 1929): 1-4; Emile Vandervelde, "Viktor Adler und die Internationale," *Der Kampf* 22 (January, 1929): 5-8; "Der Hainfelder Parteitagung," *Die Sozialistische Erziehung* (November, 1932): 248-249.

¹²⁰K. L. Müller, "Die erste Maifeier und die altösterreichische Regierung," *Der Kampf* 13 (April, 1919): 121-126; "Die 12. November," *Die Sozialistische Erziehung* (November, 1932): 248.

removed a major obstacle from the path of progress. The Social Democrats viewed the destruction of the Monarchy and the creation of the First Republic as the achievement of their own Party. While Socialist writers certainly acknowledged that the defeat in World War I had played an important part in the collapse of the Habsburg state, most of them agreed with Bauer when he characterized November 12, 1918 as a “revolution” which had been consciously pursued by the Austrian workers.¹²¹

In 1919 Bauer argued that the Austrian Republic ought not to be seen as the “heir” of the old Monarchy. To be sure, Bauer was primarily complaining that the Treaty of Saint Germain had imposed onerous and unfair penalties upon Austria, yet at the same time he still articulated an argument which was to be the typical stance of the Social Democrats throughout the subsequent decades. He asserted that the First Republic was no less of a new creation than Czechoslovakia or Yugoslavia, and that it could not be held responsible for the wartime actions of the Habsburg state. The old Monarchy had been something against which the Austrian Socialists had struggled. The new Republic, on the other hand, was their own creation, and represented a sharp break with the Habsburg past.¹²² Indeed, to emphasize the extent to which he envisioned the modern Austrian Republic, including its orientation toward *Anschluß* with Germany, as a solely Socialist creation, Bauer argued that it had been only the working class which had supported the creation of a great-German Republic in 1918. He asserted that the Austrian

¹²¹Bauer, *The Austrian Revolution*, 53-78. In its “Linz Platform” of 1926, the Party specifically claimed the credit for the creation of the First Republic. “Das ‘Linzer Programm’ der Sozialdemokratischen Arbeiterpartei Österreichs, 1926,” 251. Interestingly, in a private letter to Peter Waller, Karl Renner denied that any Social Democratic leader had ever really wanted or worked toward the demise of the Habsburg Monarchy, and argued that the Socialists could not be blamed for that event. “Sozial Demokraten wollten den Untergang des Donaureiches nicht,” in *Karl Renner in Dokumenten und Erinnerungen*, 95-96.

¹²²Bauer, “Kein Erbe der alten Monarchie,” *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), May 27, 1919, 1-2.

bourgeoisie had wanted to preserve the old supranational Monarchy in some form, the better to continue exploiting the other *Völker* of Central Europe. Later they embraced the idea of union with Germany, but with other, decidedly more reactionary ends in mind than the Socialist goal of a democratic and Marxist great-German republic.¹²³

Despite the fact that they regarded the First Republic as their sole creation, the Social Democrats did not control the Austrian government after their electoral defeat in October of 1920. The Party denounced the relatively more popular Christian Social Party for using the bourgeoisie's economic influence to seize control of the Republic, and portrayed the CSP as the inheritor of the Habsburg dynasty's old role as the primary enemy of the working class.¹²⁴ The Party held out hope that one day it would reclaim control of the Republic which it had founded from the Christian Social Party's "*Bürgerblock*." As the future Social Democratic mayor of Vienna, Karl Seitz, wrote in 1928:

The Republic will once again be ours, however. There will come a day when the fury of the people will sweep away the *Bürgerblock* regime and fulfill the promise, there will come a day when the Republic will be renewed in power and beauty, and will take us across into a better future— to our goal— to Socialism!¹²⁵

Thus, the Social Democratic Party viewed itself as part of the march of the forces of progress in Austria toward an eventual great-German socialist republic. The awakening of the working class had started during the revolutionary strife of 1848, and the working

¹²³Bauer, "Wandlungen und Probleme der Anschlußpolitik," *Der Kampf* 20 (1927), 297-307; Bauer, *The Austrian Revolution*, 115-117, 278-279.

¹²⁴Indeed, Social Democratic writers portrayed the late nineteenth-century founder of the CSP, Karl Lueger as "black-gold" to his core, and argued that this major party of the right had always served as the close ally of the Habsburg dynasty in its efforts to oppress the Austrian working class. Paul Gustav, "Dr. Karl Lueger," *Der Kampf* 19 (December, 1926): 536-541; Renner, "Bedrohung und Verteidigung der Republik in Österreich," in *Karl Renner in Dokumenten und Erinnerungen*, 112-119.

¹²⁵Seitz, 520.

class began to use its power in earnest after the birth of the Party itself 1889. Under the leadership of the Party, the Austrian workers had deposed the Habsburgs and created a more just and more democratic Austrian state. The First Republic was never an end in itself, however, but merely an important step on the road to true democracy and socialism throughout the world.¹²⁶

Of course, the Austrian Social Democrats did not view their cause entirely in the context of Austrian history, but also saw themselves as part of the wider Marxist revolutionary movement. The Social Democratic monthly journal, *Der Kampf*, abounded with articles dedicated to the works and personalities of Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, and Ferdinand Lassalle, the seminal figures in the history of European Socialism.¹²⁷ Likewise, the Social Democrats envisioned themselves as the heirs of all of Europe's revolutionary causes throughout history. Such a position meant that Austrian Socialists saw their lineage as encompassing not only Austrian events such as the Revolution of 1848, but also the French Revolution of 1789 and the Paris Commune of 1870.¹²⁸ Indeed, the Social Democrats harkened back not only to Austrian figures such as Viktor Adler, and to European Socialists of international reputation such as Karl

¹²⁶Bauer "Der Rythmus der Arbeiterbewegung," *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), October 23, 1925, 1-3; Julius Grünwald, "Die Sozialgesetzgebung im alten Oesterreich," *Der Kampf* 13 (May, 1920): 199-202.

¹²⁷See for example Kathe Pick, "Der Staat im kommunistischen Manifest," *Der Kampf* 12 (August, 1919): 551-555; Max Adler, "Engels und die Soziale Revolution," *Der Kampf* 13 (December, 1920): 433-443; Bauer, "Marx als Mahnung," *Der Kampf*, 16 (February, 1923): 81-88; Helene Bauer "Zur Theorie der Marktpreise bei Marx," *Der Kampf* 18 (June, 1925): 219-225; Karl Kautsky, "Friedrich Engels," *Der Kampf* 18 (August/September, 1925): 331-338; Renner, "Zum 100. Geburtstag Ferdinand Lassalles," *Der Kampf* 18 (April, 1925): 121-125.

¹²⁸Alfred Seidel, "Ein Vergleich zwischen der großen Französischen Revolution und der heutigen (1789-1919)," *Der Kampf* 12 (June, 1919): 393-396; Bauer, "Die Bourgeois Republik in Österreich," *Der Kampf* 23 (May, 1930), 193-208; Zoltán Rónai, "Die Kommune und die Revolutionen unser Zeit," *Der Kampf* 24 (March, 1931): 131-137. Of course such a view of the historical lineage of Socialism was quite typical of twentieth-century Marxists. See François Furet, *The Passing of an Illusion: The Idea of Communism in the Twentieth Century*, trans. Deborah Furet (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), 1-

Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, but also to non-Marxist European prophets of liberation such as Voltaire and Goethe.¹²⁹ Thus, the Austrian Social Democrats did not have a narrow vision of their own inheritance, but rather saw themselves as part of a broad European struggle for freedom and social justice.

This larger context of course encompassed Austrian membership in the German *Volk* as well. As we have seen, the Social Democrats saw Austrians as Germans, and presented Austrian history as part of the wider history of the German nation as a whole. The Party attested to this fact by using the November 1928 issue of *Der Kampf* to commemorate not only the tenth anniversary of the Austrian First Republic, but also the tenth anniversary of the German Weimar Republic as well.¹³⁰ Yet this very same issue also revealed that the Austrian Social Democrats saw more continuity between the old Monarchy and modern Austria than they were willing to admit. The same issue also contained pieces assessing the progress of democracy in Czechoslovakia ten years after the Monarchy's collapse and lamenting the reactionary dictatorship which had succeeded dynastic rule in Hungary.¹³¹ Clearly, there was still some sense of lingering kinship with these regions, despite the Party's firm declarations of Austrian Germanness.

The Austrian Social Democratic Party dedicated itself to the goal of *Anschluss* with a democratic and socialist great-German state, and never lost its enthusiasm for that

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¹²⁹Max Adler, "Karl Liebkecht und Rosa Luxemburg," *Der Kampf* 12 (January 1919): 11-15; Oda Olberg, "Voltaire als Erzieher," *Der Kampf* 19 (April, 1926): 173-179; Vandervelde, "Viktor Adler und die Internationale," 5-8; Alfred Apsler, "Goethe, des Bürgertums großer Sohn," *Der Kampf* 25 (March, 1932): 133-137.

¹³⁰Seitz, 518-520; Heinrich Ströbel, "Zehn Jahre deutsche Revolution," *Der Kampf* 21 (November, 1928): 538-545.

¹³¹Siegmond Kunfi, "Die Besiegten," 21 (November, 1928): 545-553; Johann Polach, "Zehn Jahre Tsechoslowakische Republik," 553-560.

project even as the First Republic stabilized after the economic and social tumult following its creation. The Social Democrats bitterly assailed the memory of the old Habsburg Monarchy, and portrayed the dynasty and its allies as the enemies of not just democracy and social justice in Central Europe, but also of the national rights of all of the region's *Völker*, including the Germans. In contrast to this portrayal of the House of Habsburg as the villains of Austrian history, the Social Democrats presented the workers' movement and their own Party as the true agents of progress, justice and liberation in Austria's past, who had finally deposed the oppressive dynasty and replaced it with the First Republic. For the Social Democrats, the Habsburgs had left no legacy for modern Austrians beyond the happy fact of their defeat at the hands the working class. Austria's future belonged to the workers, and those workers would one day live in a socialist Germany, as part of a peaceful, democratic, and socialist world order.

iii. Austrian German Nationalists and the Habsburg Past in the First Republic

Austrian German nationalists formed the third major ideological faction in the Austrian First Republic. Unlike the other two dominant ideological camps, the German nationalist movement was quite diverse politically. While both the Austrian conservative and Social Democratic factions discussed Austrian national identity within the context of reasonably well defined and coherent views concerning religion, social relationships, and politics, Austrian German nationalists defined themselves first and foremost through their fervent support for *Anschluß* and their largely racial or *völkisch* vision of Germanness. All Austrian German nationalists argued that the inhabitants of Austria were simply Germans whose ultimate destiny was to become part of a great-German state. Beyond

that profession of Austria's essential Germanness, however, Austrian German nationalists possessed no defining political ideology.

The largest of the Austrian German nationalist political parties, the Great German People's Party, was anti-liberal, anti-Semitic, anti-Marxist, and anti-Catholic. The other prominent German nationalist organization, the *Landbund* (Agrarian League), shared those ideals, but also emphasized the special concerns of the Austrian peasantry. Many individual Austrians argued that *Anschluss* with Germany was the most pressing concern for Austria in 1918, yet at the same, however, did not share the political principles of either of the major German nationalist political factions. As we have seen, the vast majority of Marxists doggedly advocated *Anschluss* throughout the republican era, but only as a part of their broader world view of progress toward socialist democracy. Similarly, some Austrian German nationalists fervently advocated *Anschluss* without necessarily endorsing the political programs of either GDVP or the *Landbund*.

Austrian German nationalists did tend to present similar arguments concerning Austria's Habsburg past, however, even if they did not always agree with one another concerning political, social, or religious principles. Most Austrian German nationalists took an essentially negative view of the old Monarchy. The most radical critics from the nationalist camp portrayed the dynasty and its multinational state as anti-German, and argued that the Habsburgs had pursued their own political interests at the expense of Austria's German inhabitants and of the cause of German unity. Even those Austrian German nationalists who were not quite so hostile toward the Monarchy still argued that the Habsburg state was dead and gone, and that its legacy offered no guidance for a

modern Austria which needed to pursue a new beginning in the form of a union with Germany. All Austrian German nationalists certainly took great pains to present *Anschluss* as the only option which offered the Germans of Austria any hope of peace and prosperity. Many of these nationalists vigorously attacked other possible paths for contemporary Austria such as a Danubian federation, a pan-European Union, or continued Austrian independence separate from Germany. Most often, nationalist critics of these alternatives to *Anschluss* argued that these other options essentially recapitulated some of the negative aspects of the Habsburgs' old multinational state in one form or another. For the Austrian German nationalist camp then, *Anschluss* stood either as the antidote to centuries of Habsburg misrule or as a positive new path for Austria in an era in which the old Monarchy's multinational ideals had become irrelevant. Thus, Austrian German nationalists, no matter what their individual political preferences might be, often not only argued for *Anschluss*, but in doing so also presented a view of Austrian history which criticized or at least devalued the importance of the old Habsburg Monarchy.

German Nationalist Political Parties

While Austrian German nationalists might have professed a wide variety of political, social, and religious views beyond their shared support for *Anschluss*, the two major nationalist political parties, the Great German People's Party and the *Landbund*, did articulate clearly defined political platforms. Of the two, the Great German People's Party was the most popular, and garnered anywhere from five to ten percent of the seats in the Austrian parliament during the First Republic. The *Landbund*'s electoral support was generally about half that of the GDVP, but both nationalist factions habitually won

enough seats to be courted by the Christian Social Party in its periodic efforts to form governments in the absence of an outright parliamentary majority.¹³²

The Great German People's Party officially formed in 1920, and represented the union of a number of Austrian German nationalist factions which had existed during the last half century of Habsburg rule. German nationalism during the Habsburg era had been no less politically diverse than it was after 1918, and the GDVP brought a number of different nationalist ideologies, represented by dozens of small nationalist parties and associations, into one unified organizational framework. The most radical of the major nationalist ideological streams which fed into the GDVP was that of Georg von Schönerer, the ardently racist, anti-Semitic, and anti-Catholic critic of Habsburg rule who founded his Pan-German Party in 1879. Schönerer's wing of the German nationalist movement had vehemently denounced imperial rule in Austria and unabashedly proclaimed its loyalty to Wilhemine Germany. Schönerer's Party represented only a minority within the Austrian German nationalist community, but it had commanded a level of influence that outstripped its popular support thanks to its leader's great charisma and the stridency of its rhetoric. The other major pre-1918 nationalist bloc, which had gone by a variety of names throughout its decades of existence, was led by Otto Steinwender, and was much more willing to compromise with the imperial government. Steinwender was no less dedicated to the German nationalist cause than Schönerer, but his faction's anti-Semitism and political rhetoric were far more mild than the that of the Pan-German Party.¹³³ Both of these leaders died in 1921, just months after the formation

¹³²Jelavich, 175-176, 186-188; Wandruszka, 382-394.

¹³³Andrew G. Whiteside, *The Socialism of Fools: Georg Ritter von Schönerer and Austrian Pan-*

of the Great German People's Party, and despite their personal differences in approach, left behind a political movement unified behind a platform of basic political principles.

The first of these principles, obviously, was *Anschluss*. In its first party platform, the "Salzburg Program" of 1920, which remained in place until 1934, the Great German People's Party proclaimed that a union with Germany was its primary goal. The Party declared in unequivocal terms that Austrian German-speakers were part of the racially-defined German *Volk* and that the establishment of a great German nation state and a true *Volksgemeinschaft* represented the highest priority for Germans everywhere.¹³⁴ Beyond this simple profession of Austrian Germanness, the Party dedicated itself to a number of other ideals.

Politically, the Great German People's Party's ambivalence toward the liberal principles of the First Republic's constitution resembled that of the Christian Social Party. The Salzburg Program proclaimed that the GDVP supported democracy, and indeed avowed that the German *Volk* possessed a particular national affinity for democratic rule. At the same time, however, the program vehemently denounced liberalism for its supposedly pernicious emphasis upon selfishness and individualism at the expense of communal spirit. Likewise, the Salzburg Program called for restrictions upon such characteristically liberal ideals as freedom of the press and free markets. The

Germanism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 107-326; Wandruzska, 381-383. Steinwender argued that Jewish assimilation into German culture and society could essentially solve the "Jewish problem," while Schönerer's racist and more virulent stance against the Jews denied the possibility of such a solution. Adolf Hitler's own murderous anti-Semitism was in part inspired by Schönerer's views. On Austrian liberalism's turn toward German nationalism and anti-Semitism, see Peter M. Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries: Liberal Politics, Social Experience, and National Identity in the Austrian Empire, 1848-1914* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1997), 193-266.

¹³⁴ "Das 'Salzburger Programm' der Großdeutschen Volkspartei, 1920," in *Österreichisch Parteiprogramme, 1868-1966*, 439-440.

Party thus repudiated liberal democratic ideals in favor of a more nationalistic brand of democracy which emphasized the unity and interests of the German *Volk* above individual liberties.¹³⁵

Just as the Party denounced liberalism, so too did it repudiate both Marxism and Roman Catholicism. The Salzburg Program portrayed Marxism as an outgrowth of liberal ideology which placed the interests of economic class above those of the community of the *Volk*. According to the nationalist ideologues of the Great German People's Party, Marxist class conflict was a pernicious concept which sowed divisions within the German nation, and which diluted the appropriate loyalty of the German workers of Austria to their *Volk*. The Party's criticisms of Roman Catholicism followed similar reasoning, and argued for a strict separation between Church and state in Austria. The Salzburg Program characterized the Catholic Church as a "foreign" institution which worked against German unity in the name of internationalism and the fallacious assumption that all nations and peoples were equally valuable. The Great German People's Party proclaimed that all nations were in fact not equal, and it unsurprisingly argued that the German *Volk* represented the highest and most worthy national community in Europe. Thus the Salzburg Program denounced the egalitarianism inherent in liberalism, Marxism, and Catholicism, and asserted that the Austrian government needed to dedicate itself to the interests of the German *Volk* as a whole.¹³⁶

The Party's political platform also contained a lengthy section concerning the dangers which Jews allegedly posed to the German *Volk*. The list of the Party's concerns

¹³⁵*Ibid.*, 447-449, 454-455.

¹³⁶*Ibid.*, 441-445.

basically regurgitated the sort of political anti-Semitism which had been all too common in Central Europe since the end of the previous century. The “Salzburg Program” accused the Jews of dominating the Austrian press, theater, and finance, and charged that the Jews had created liberalism, capitalism, and socialism, which the Party naturally saw as pernicious anti-German ideologies. Indeed, the Great German People’s Party argued that liberal democratic rule itself was a premeditated Jewish plot to reduce both the power of the state and the German communal spirit in order to allow the Jews to assume a dominant position in Austrian society. The Program charged that Jews were first and foremost individualists to whom the sort of characteristically German communal ethic expressed in Kant’s categorical imperative was utterly foreign. The Jews were a parasitic, foreign race which abhorred real labor. Unable to create a workable society on their own, the Jews thus had to exploit the German *Volk*. The Salzburg Program did caution Party members, in what must have seemed like cold comfort to Austrian Jews, that hateful speech against the Jews was to be avoided, and that even if the Jews could not be allowed to dominate Austrian society, so too they should not be oppressed by Austrian Germans.¹³⁷

The *Landbund*, the other major political faction within the Austrian German nationalist camp, professed similar principles. Founded in 1923 in a merger of a number of different agrarian parties, the *Landbund* was no less anti-liberal, anti-Marxist, or anti-Semitic than the Great German People’s Party. The main difference between the two German nationalist parties lay in the *Landbund*’s determination to serve as the advocate for Austrian farmers and agrarian workers. While such a stance might seem like the sort

¹³⁷*Ibid.*, 444, 456, 478-482.

of factionalism which the GDVP argued was so corrosive to German national unity, the *Landbund* argued that the interests of the Austrian countryside were in fact identical to those of the *Volk* as a whole. According to the *Landbund*, the liberal parliamentarians, Marxists, and Jews, concentrated in Vienna, worked against the ideals and values of the German national community. In place of such liberal individualism and class conflict, the *Landbund* pledged to serve the simple, anti-materialistic national values of the Austrian peasant, offering the promise of national renewal and *völkish* unity. Indeed, the *Landbund*'s political platform of 1923 denounced the liberal republican order entirely, and called for the reorganization of political representation in Austria on the basis of corporatist *Berufstände* ("professions" or traditional social blocks), rather than according to individual votes for political parties.¹³⁸ The *Landbund* also emphasized the value of religion to a greater degree than the GDVP, and the 1923 platform asserted that the party's politics needed to be based upon the "national and Christian world view," albeit without specifying whether or not such a Christian perspective included Roman Catholicism or not.¹³⁹

Thus both of the major Austrian German nationalist political parties combined their staunch advocacy for *Anschluß* with anti-liberal, anti-Marxist, and anti-Semitic political principles. Union with Germany, however, remained the core of their political program throughout the First Republic, and it was this determined support for *Anschluß*

¹³⁸Interestingly, when the Christian Social Party ended republican rule in Austria in 1933, the new authoritarian government which they instituted basically followed the corporatist model advocated by the *Landbund*, yet at the same time took a firm stance in favor of Austrian independence. See Chapter 3.

¹³⁹Such ambiguity was probably intentional and calculated to avoid alienating the firmly Catholic Austrian countryside at a time when the Christian Social Party stood as the staunchest supporter of the Catholic Church's role in Austrian public life. "Politische Leitsätze des Landbundes für Österreich, 1923," in *Österreichisch Parteiprogramme, 1868-1966*, 482-483.

which, along with their stance against the Catholic Church and their racist version of anti-Semitism, served to distinguish between the German nationalist parties and the otherwise fairly ideologically similar Christian Social Party. Indeed, as both of the nationalist parties entered into coalition governments with the Christian Socials during the early and mid 1920s, they were hard pressed to explain to their constituents how they could claim to stand for union with Germany and yet at the same time lend their support to cabinets which were willing to bargain away *Anschluß*, as the Seipel government did in the Geneva Protocols. Therefore, by the late 1920s, both the Great German People's Party and the *Landbund* saw their electoral support dwindle as German nationalist voters realized that neither party was in any position to further the cause of German unity. By the beginning of the 1930s, those voters increasingly threw their support behind more radically anti-republican political entities such as the *Heimwehr*, which encompassed both German nationalist and patriotic Austrian wings, and the small but rapidly growing National Socialist Party.¹⁴⁰

Austrian German Nationalist Portrayals of the Habsburg Monarchy

As we have seen the German nationalist camp in First Republican Austria was a politically diverse group. Neither the Great German People's Party and the *Landbund*, nor their more radical alternatives in the early 1930s could claim to really represent the political ideals of all Austrians who supported union with Germany. Certainly anti-liberalism, anti-Marxism, anti-Catholicism and anti-Semitism were very prevalent in

¹⁴⁰Wandruska, 389-394; Jelavich, 182-190. For more on the *Heimwehr*, see Chapter 3. For more on the Austrian National Socialists, see Chapter 5.

Austrian German nationalist circles, but they were far from universal, and some Austrians who saw *Anschluß* as the primary goal of the German *Volk* in Austria made their arguments without reference to the political and social ideals of the German nationalist parties. The sole idea which really served to unify Austrian German nationalists was their shared desire for *Anschluß*, and their collective conviction that Austrians were Germans first and foremost.

To illustrate this fact, one need only examine a collection of short essays arguing in favor of *Anschluß* published in 1919 entitled *Deutschland, wir kommen!* (*Germany, We are Coming!*). Some of the authors represented in this collection were certainly right-wing nationalists of the sort who later founded the GDVP and the *Landbund*. Other authors, however, displayed no particular political ideology beyond their fervent advocacy for union with Germany. These authors included university professors, engineers, doctors, architects, writers, and artists. The collection even included a selection by Otto Bauer, the leader of the Social Democratic Party. The essays amounted to a sustained series of polemics about why Austria's destiny necessarily lay in a union with a great-German nation state. The authors emphasized the bonds of national kinship which served to link German-speakers in Austria with the rest of the German *Volk*, and they often also presented various reasons why they believed an independent Austrian state would never be viable. The common thread which linked this diverse array of authors was the notion that Austrians were Germans who did not need to fear the loss of any sort of a distinctive Austrian culture in a political union with the rest of the German nation. According to all of the authors, *Anschluß* would represent a homecoming for

Austrian Germans, not a collision between different cultural groups.¹⁴¹

Beyond this shared dedication to *Anschluß* and the common sentiment that Austrians were part of the German *Volk*, it is possible to speak of one further ideological orientation which most Austrian German nationalists shared: they all tended to attack, or at least minimize the importance of, the Habsburg Monarchy's legacy. For most German nationalists, the old multinational Habsburg state had represented a profound aberration in an era in which the flow of history seemed to be moving inexorably toward a system of European nation states. Many nationalists were quite hostile to the memory of the Monarchy, and argued that the Habsburgs had habitually persecuted their German subjects and deliberately worked against the cause of German national unity in order to enhance their own dynastic power. Even Austrian German nationalist writers who did not display such outright hostility toward the old Monarchy at the very least still argued that the Habsburgs' multinational experiment, whatever its relative merits might have been, had ceased to have any relevance for Austria in the postwar era of ascendent nationalism and the predominance of the nation state ideal. Thus, in order to make their arguments for *Anschluß* and Austrian Germanness, Austrian German nationalists invariably also had to argue that Austria's Habsburg past represented a historical dead end which could offer no guidance to modern Austrians attempting to fulfill their national destiny after 1918.

As early as 1919, Franz Dinghofer, the spokesman for the Great German Party, a precursor to the GDVP, argued in the Austrian National Assembly that the Habsburg dynasty had sought to keep the German *Volk* from achieving national unity in order to

¹⁴¹*Deutschland, wir kommen!* (Haale: Richard Mühlmann Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1919), 1-44.

serve its own selfish political interests. Indeed, Dinghofer was indignant that the Entente powers had forced the postwar Austrian state to adopt the same name as the Habsburg state, and accused the victors of the war of seeking to persecute the German *Volk* just as the old dynasty had done. By creating a small and economically unviable Austrian state, necessarily dependent upon Czechoslovakia and Hungary for its very economic survival, the Entente powers had simply recreated the old Monarchy in a slightly new form, but under Slavic and Magyar rather than Habsburg leadership.¹⁴²

Other German nationalists also repeatedly charged that the Habsburgs had deliberately sought to stifle the nineteenth-century movement toward a unified German state. These nationalists argued that the Habsburg dynasty had seen the prospect of German unity as the end of its dynastic rule over a multinational empire in Central Europe. The Habsburgs simply could not afford to allow their German subjects, who had always been the real source of the Monarchy's cultural and economic vitality, to leave the Danubian empire, and thus had worked against the project of German unification. Many Austrian German nationalists also expressed their resentment at the Habsburgs' apparent favoritism toward the Monarchy's non-German nationalities, and charged that the dynasty had betrayed the one national group most responsible for Austria's historical power and influence. That betrayal of German interests had ultimately been enshrined in the postwar peace settlement which victimized Austrian Germans even as it privileged the Monarchy's Slavic peoples. As Erwin Stransky bitterly noted, the Monarchy's German subjects had "maintained loyalty to their last breath, for which we German-Austrians and only we were thanked as a last testament with all sorts of terrible treatment,

¹⁴²Dinghofer, "Unser Friede!," 26-29.

in comparison to the favor which the Slavs, and only the Slavs. . . were granted at our expense.”¹⁴³

Austrian German nationalists did not always restrict their criticisms to the Habsburgs, but also sometimes targeted the Hohenzollerns of Prussia in their jeremiads. The Hohenzollerns’ refusal to take the German crown in 1848 did not escape the notice of these nationalist commentators, nor did the efforts of the Prussian chancellor Bismarck during the 1860s to create a German state which deliberately excluded Austrian Germans. Many Austrian German nationalists accused both dynasties of placing their mutual competition for power and influence in Central Europe above the national aspirations of the German *Volk*, and of standing in the way of the movement toward a true *großdeutsch* state.¹⁴⁴ Yet most nationalist commentators saved the greater part of their venom for the Habsburgs themselves, and devoted more energy toward criticizing the old Austrian Monarchy, which they argued had opposed any sort of German nation state, than toward denouncing a Hohenzollern Prussian state which had at least taken a preliminary step toward German unity by creating the Wilhelmine *Kaiserreich* in 1871.¹⁴⁵

The Austrian intellectual Friedrich Kleinwaechter provided one of the most elaborate Austrian German nationalist critiques of the Habsburg Monarchy in his 1926 book *Der deutschösterreichische Mensch und der Anschluß* (*The German-Austrian Man and Anschluß*). Kleinwaechter was inspired to write this work in response to Oscar

¹⁴³Erwin Stansky, “Mahnworte eines deutsch-österreichischen Arztes,” in *Deutschland, wir kommen!*, 6.

¹⁴⁴Edmund Bernatzik, Josef Engelhart, Eugen Oberhümmer, in *Deutschland, wir kommen!*, 16-17, 24-26, 36-37; Dinghofer, 28.

¹⁴⁵See for example Friedrich F. G. Kleinwaechter, *Der deutschösterreichische Mensch und der Anschluß* (Vienna: Eckert-Verlag Adolf Luser, 1926), 153-156; Richard Paltauf, “Deutsches Volk von Österreich,” in *Deutschland, wir kommen!*, 30-32; A. Schwoner, *Sollen wir uns an Deutschland anschliessen?* (Vienna: Verlag von Leopold Heinrich, 1919), 11.

Scmitz' 1924 book, *The Austrian Man*, which, as we have seen, argued in favor of Austrian cultural uniqueness and independence. Kleinwaechter's book provided a point by point rebuttal of Schmitz' assertions in order to argue the opposite position that Austria was a German land which ought to pursue a union with Germany. Kleinwaechter also provided a set of criticisms of the old Habsburg state which countered Schmitz' enthusiastic endorsement of the old Monarchy as the source of a distinctive Austrian national culture.

Like other Austrian German nationalists, Kleinwaechter argued that Austrian German-speakers were indeed part of the German *Volk* and had shared a common language, culture, ethnicity, and history with the other Germans of Europe for many centuries. He took umbrage at the fact that the contemporary Austrian German state had been forced by the Entente powers to adopt the name "Austria," which he argued had properly belonged only to the old Habsburg multinational state. He stated,

Old Austria was a state composed of eight nations, in which Germans were a minority. It is therefore senseless to regard its German regions as a sort of smaller old Austria, as if one could dissolve the alloy brass into its component parts of zinc and copper, and yet continue to call zinc by the name of brass. The Czechoslovak Republic, which includes Czechs, Slovaks, Germans, Ruthenes, Poles and Magyars, could actually be called "Austria" with much more justification. The Provisional National Assembly had the correct view when it argued that the new German-Austrian state was an original creation which had as little to do with the old state as any of the remaining ruins of the Monarchy. With the Treaty of Saint Germain, the Entente has, against our will and against the logic of the facts, declared us to be the continuation of old Austria and has forced us to adopt the name "Austria."¹⁴⁶

Clearly, Kleinwaechter wanted no part of the name which he associated with the Habsburg state, and he argued that the Austrian Republic's name had been selected in

¹⁴⁶Kleinwaechter, 61.

order to force Austrian Germans to bear the blame for the Habsburg dynasty's war even as they were kept from joining their countrymen in a great-German state.

Not only did Kleinwaechter repudiate the name "Austria" as a relic of the old Monarchy, but he also vigorously attacked the Habsburg state as an anti-German entity which had acted against the interests of the German *Volk*. In Kleinwaechter's opinion, the Habsburg Monarchy had oppressed all of its constituent nationalities and had obstructed the movement toward national consciousness and self determination that all of Central Europe's *Völker* experienced during the second half of the nineteenth century. If Schmitz presented a relatively lenient view of the national resentments of the Monarchy's Slavs and Italians while castigating the conduct of Austrian German nationalists during that era, Kleinwaechter took the opposite position, arguing that Austrian Germans had been blameless for the unrest during the Monarchy's last decades even as the Czechs and Magyars had acted ruthlessly to enhance their own power within the Habsburg state. Kleinwaechter noted that despite the efforts of the Habsburgs to strangle German national aspirations, Bismarck had gotten far more enthusiastic applause from the people in Vienna during his 1892 visit than the Habsburg Emperor Franz Joseph ever received.¹⁴⁷

Kleinwaechter did acknowledge that German Austrians possessed a unique and distinctive culture, but he disagreed strongly with Schmitz' argument that such uniqueness was enough to justify Austrian independence. Kleinwaechter asserted that Austrians were ultimately no different from Germans in Germany proper than any of the German tribes were from one another. He also downplayed the traits which Schmitz had identified as the key components of Austria's supposed national distinctiveness.

According to Kleinwaechter, baroque culture had never been a purely Austrian movement, but rather had encompassed both the Monarchy's other nationalities and Germans outside of the Habsburg state's boundaries. He did acknowledge that a hard core of old Austrian patriots still existed, particularly in the Austrian military and in Vienna, but he denied that their views represented the true ideals of most Austrians. Ultimately, Kleinwaechter looked forward to the time when a new generation of Austrian Germans who had never known Habsburg rule would come of age and shake off the fetters of the past.¹⁴⁸

Kleinwaechter also took aim at two of the favorite targets of the Austrian German nationalist political parties, the Catholic Church and the Jews, opposing Schmitz' thesis that the Church had served as a unifying force in Austria which helped to distinguish between Austrians and Germans. Kleinwaechter presented his own view of German history in which the originally freedom-loving yet highly communal German *Volk* had inherited an "absolutist" and "despotic" imperial government and Catholic religion from the Roman Empire, which the Romans had in turn unfortunately acquired from their Asiatic neighbors. According to Kleinwaechter, both the imperial ideals which the Habsburgs had embodied and the Catholic religion were ill-suited to the German character, and in many ways historically had served to retard or damage German cultural development. The Protestant Reformation thus represented at least a partial reassertion of the characteristically German love of freedom in the face of the absolutist Catholic corruption of Jesus' teachings. According to Kleinwaechter, the continued dominance of

¹⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 153-163.

¹⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 35-56.

Catholicism in the south German population was due to the relatively weaker German blood there as a result of racial mixing. Even so, he argued that the “Catholicism” of Austrian Germans was merely nominal, as religion had declined in significance. In any case, religion was a less divisive issue in Austria than it was in Germany itself.

According to Kleinwaechter, national *Weltanschauung* was more important than religion, which was fading into irrelevance in the modern era.¹⁴⁹

In his discussions of the “Jewish problem” in Austria, Kleinwaechter went out of his way to discuss the matter “scientifically.” In the end, however, he simply blamed the strength of anti-Semitism in Austria upon the Jews themselves, arguing that the Jews would not be faced with such opposition were it not for their own determined attempts to cultivate their own distinctive culture and separation from German society. He charged that the Jews ultimately constituted a pernicious influence in Austria, dominating economic life and pushing the press in an increasingly sensationalistic and even pornographic direction. In the end, Kleinwaechter could see no solution to the “Jewish question” other than Jewish migration or total Jewish assimilation into German culture and society. Kleinwaechter was careful to assert that the Jews should not be the targets of violence or political discrimination, but he also argued that they could not make the issue of anti-Semitism go away by simply denouncing it as evil. He believed that anti-Semitism constituted an understandable German response to Jewish separateness, and would continue until the Jews themselves took steps to solve the problem which they had created. Needless to say, Kleinwaechter included the Jews among those who were allegedly standing in the way of the *Anschluss* movement, and who had aided the Entente

¹⁴⁹*Ibid.*, 143-151.

powers in their attempts to continue the Habsburg legacy of oppression of the German *Volk*.¹⁵⁰

Other Austrian German nationalists took a less hostile view of the Habsburg Monarchy, even if they argued that the old state was no longer relevant for contemporary Austrians. The “Austrian mission,” which Kleinwaechter had dismissed as an idea with no appeal for Austrian Germans in search of national unity, appeared in the writings of some nationalist polemicists as a positive ideal.¹⁵¹ For example, A. Schwoner, in his 1919 pamphlet on the *Anschluss* question, at least acknowledged that the Austrian mission had represented a necessary function for Austrian Germans throughout the medieval and early modern eras. Schwoner argued that once the brief period of Babenberg hegemony and stability in Central Europe had ended, a union of the German-Austrian, Bohemian, and Hungarian territories became an appealing option in the face of Turkish incursions in the region. He asserted, however, that Bohemia and Hungary had sought protection from the Habsburgs not because of that family’s own merits, but rather because of their leading role in the wider German *Reich*. The Habsburg imperial office in essence offered the Monarchy’s non-German crownlands their only hope in averting Turkish conquest. From that initial union in the early sixteenth century, the “Austrian idea” had developed further, incorporating the ideals of the defense of the Catholic faith and the notion of a supranational Monarchy as an important element in the European state system. Only after the French Revolution did the various nationalities, inspired by more modern ideas, begin to struggle against this Austrian idea. Ultimately the dynasty itself, according to

¹⁵⁰*Ibid.*, 112-118.

¹⁵¹*Ibid.*, 210.

Schwoner, was too weak and too lacking in great personalities to defend its own historical mission, and hence perished in 1918. In the aftermath of the Monarchy's collapse Austrian mission which the Habsburgs had pursued had lost its relevance. While the Monarchy had existed, its Austrian mission had been a worthy endeavor, and had even been worth the abandonment of German national unity by the German *Volk* in Austria. The Turks no longer stood at the gates of Vienna, however, and the alliance of the Central European crownlands had ended, never to return. Thus, *Anschluss* was the only realistic option left for Austria in the postwar era.¹⁵²

Karl Gottfried Hugelmann made a similar argument regarding the Austrian mission in 1919 as well. He asserted that the real bond which had linked all of the Habsburg lands together was their function as a bulwark against Turkish expansion and as a cultural bridge between East and West. Hugelmann argued that this historical Austrian calling had been a necessary and valuable one so long as the Monarchy lasted. By the nineteenth century, however, the Austrian mission had changed. The new danger came from Russia, a thoroughly Asiatic power with an aggressively pan-Slavic ideology, and it became Austria's duty to oppose the Russian Empire's expansionism in Central Europe. Austrian policy in this new era actually sharpened tensions in the area as it drove the Slavs of the Balkans into the arms of Russia. The First World War had seen the West allied with Russia in a struggle against the Germans of Central Europe, and against the Austrian mission in the east. Hugelmann argued that German-Austrians had served the dynasty loyally and sacrificed themselves for the Austrian mission, even in the face of this final, horrific conflict. With the collapse of the Monarchy, however, the mission had ended,

¹⁵²Schwoner, 9-15.

and it was only natural for German-Austrians to return to their German “mother *Volk*.”¹⁵³

Most Austrian German nationalist writers were not so generous to the memory of the old Monarchy and its mission. The view of the majority of these writers is probably best expressed by Stefan Edler, who simply charged that the “eastern mission” which the Habsburgs had pursued had ultimately been “fruitless.”¹⁵⁴ All of these German nationalist commentators, whether they openly attacked the Habsburg Monarchy as a virulently oppressive, anti-German entity, or merely as relic of history which had passed into misty irrelevance, argued that the memory of the old dynastic state offered no solutions to modern Austrian problems. Moreover, most Austrian German nationalists asserted that the Habsburg Monarchy’s unique qualities, whatever their relative merits, had never eclipsed the fact of Austrian Germanness. These nationalist polemicists argued that Austrians were Germans, and that the even the old Monarchy itself had been a part of Germany in some sense until the nineteenth century. Some commentators located the moment of separation between Austria and Germany at the Habsburgs’ forced abdication of the Holy Roman imperial throne by Napoleon in 1804, while others argued that Austria’s defeat at the hands of Bismarck in 1866 and subsequent exclusion from north German affairs during the wars of German unification had marked the moment of divergence. All agreed, however, that any separation between Austria and Germany in an official sense was a recent phenomenon. They also all agreed that Austria’s distinctive history as part of the Habsburg Monarchy was not sufficient to justify the existence of an

¹⁵³Karl Gottfried Hugelmann, “Der Anschluß Deutschösterreichs an Deutschland,” *Flugblätter für Deutschösterreichs Recht* 18 (1919), 5-6. Hugelmann’s usage of the term “mother” here is peculiar. Most German nationalists called Germany their “Fatherland,” and used patriarchal language to describe the individual German’s relationship to the German *Volk* and nation as a whole.

independent Austrian state after the Monarchy's collapse, or to support the idea that Austrians were not part of the German *Volk*.¹⁵⁵

Austrian German Nationalists' Arguments for *Anschluß*

The manner in which Austrian German nationalists during the First Republic made their arguments for *Anschluß* also generally demonstrated their attitudes toward the Habsburg Monarchy. Such arguments did not merely describe the expected benefits which Austria would receive from union with Germany, but also often argued against other options, such as the formation of a Danubian federation with the Monarchy's other successor states, participation in a broad, multinational pan-European union, or continued Austrian independence. Austrian German nationalists frequently portrayed all of these alternatives to *Anschluß* as attempts to in some way reconstitute or emulate the Habsburgs' multinational state, and they invariably characterized these options as being just as impractical or even detrimental to German interests as the Monarchy itself had been.

The idea of a Danubian federation presented the most obvious target for nationalist critics of the old Monarchy. Such a scheme was never a very realistic option given the stance of both the Entente powers and the Monarchy's other successor states. Indeed such a plan was rarely seriously proposed by even the most diehard Habsburg nostalgists during this period. The idea was more seriously considered by Austrian patriots during the era of the *Ständestaat* between 1933 and 1938, when the government

¹⁵⁴Stefan Edler, in *Deutschland wir kommen!*, 37-38.

¹⁵⁵Otto Wagner, Hans Uebersberger, and Eugen Oberhummer, in *Deutschland, wir kommen!*, 10-11, 13-14, 36-37; Kleinwaechter, 156-163; Schwoner, 9-10; Hugelmann, 3-4.

overtly invoked the legacy of the Habsburg Monarchy to support its own legitimacy, and by the conservative resistance movement to Nazi rule between 1938 and 1945.¹⁵⁶

Nevertheless, just as Bauer and the Social Democrats critiqued the notion of a Danubian union as a covert attempt to restore the structure of the Habsburg Monarchy, so too did Austrian German nationalists attack the idea as an obstacle to the fulfillment of their dreams of German national unity.

In his comments regarding the prospect of a Danubian federation, Kleinwaechter clearly stated that he saw such a proposal as a means of both preventing *Anschluss* from ever occurring, and of reconstituting the Habsburg Monarchy in a new form.

Kleinwaechter argued that the notion of a Danubian federation implicitly rested upon the unstated premise that the Habsburg state had been a necessary Central European institution rather than an entity created in order to further the House of Austria's own dynastic interests. As we have seen, Kleinwaechter regarded the Monarchy as a the fruit of Habsburg political interests, so he vigorously disputed the desirability of a new Central European union. While some portions of the Monarchy had been united by the Danube as a natural feature of their geography, other regions within the old state had been oriented toward other geographic features such as the Elbe, the Alps, or the Carpathian Mountains. Thus, the Monarchy had been a collection of economically and geographically diverse territories which had come together because of the Habsburgs' political and military successes. In his opinion, the old Monarchy had never been a natural or necessary entity by any means.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁶See Chapters 3 and 5.

¹⁵⁷Kleinwaechter, 199-211.

Furthermore, Kleinwaechter argued that the Monarchy had collapsed precisely because its constituent nationalities no longer desired to be a part of it. To assert that some natural bond existed among the various successor states which required a continuing union was to deny that historical reality. Indeed, he argued that the only way to make such a federal or economic union work was to create some sort of supra-governmental organization which would essentially return the region to an approximation of its prewar status. None of the Monarchy's successor states had the slightest interest in renewing the association which they had viewed as an instrument of their own national oppression before 1918. Those national groups had merely grown further apart since the Monarchy had collapsed. Furthermore, only Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary were direct territorial descendants of the Monarchy, and other postwar states such as Poland, Romania, and Yugoslavia, which had gained territory when the Monarchy collapsed, would have to return that territory or at least relinquish some of their own autonomy in order to truly reconstitute the Habsburg state's economic functions. Moreover a number of important European states, such as Germany, Russia, and Italy would regard such a Danubian union as a threat to their own economic interests and would inevitably prevent it from ever becoming a reality. In the end, he noted that Austria was really the only state in Central Europe which needed to become part of some larger entity to secure its own economic viability. Kleinwaechter concluded that union with Germany was a far more realistic proposition which had the support of a majority of the Austrian population. He argued that there was simply nothing to be gained by pursuing a the proposal of a handful of nostalgic monarchists which would simply replicate the mistakes of the Habsburg

Monarchy and reignite the still smoldering national resentments from the last half century of the old state's existence into new flame.¹⁵⁸

Schwoner took a similarly dim view of the Danubian federal proposal, and argued that the old hatreds between the Monarchy's nationalities would make such an option practically unworkable as well. He also argued, however, that even if the successor states could abandon their mutual animosities in order to attempt such a union, that the outcome would actually work against the interests of Austrian Germans. Whatever its faults, Germans had been a privileged group in the Monarchy. In a new Danubian federation, the weight of numbers would be on the side of the Slavs, and Austrian Germans would be at their mercy, and perhaps even forced at some time in the future to act against their national brethren in Germany on the orders of the anti-German majority. At best, Schwoner argued that German-Austria would become a provincial state in such a federation, and at worst an outright possession of the Czechs.¹⁵⁹

Schwoner also looked to the last decades of the Habsburg Monarchy for evidence that such a proposal was entirely unrealistic. He argued that after the power sharing agreement between the dynasty and its Hungarian crownlands in 1867, the so-called "*Ausgleich*," the Habsburg state had been paralyzed by the Magyars' attempts to preserve and enhance their position *vis-à-vis* the other nationalities. According to Schwoner, a new Danubian federation would multiply the problems inherent in the *Ausgleich* sevenfold, as each of the old Monarchy's nationalities attempted to insure that they would not be victimized by the new arrangement. No matter which nation predominated,

¹⁵⁸*Ibid.*, 199-211.

¹⁵⁹Schwoner, 5-8.

Austria would be the loser thanks to its comparatively smaller population and power.

Schwoner thus concluded that the federal proposal was a delusion which did not take into account the real interests and experiences of either Austria or the other peoples and states of the region.¹⁶⁰

Other Austrian German nationalists generally concurred with Kleinwaechter and Schwoner's assessments, and argued that a Danubian federation was an unrealistic idea which would simply recreate the worst aspects of the Habsburg Monarchy. Indeed, some nationalist commentators took the argument a step further, and argued that a new union of the lands on the Danube would be even worse than the old state. Whatever their many faults might have been, the Habsburgs at least had been a nominally German princely house. Some nationalist writers feared that a new Danubian federation would end up as an instrument of Slavic imperialism in which Austrian Germans would be persecuted and victimized by their national "enemies." Even if outright oppression of Germans in Austria was not the end result of such a union, at the very least such an agreement would require that Austrian Germans abandon their advocacy on the behalf of their German brethren living in Bohemian and Moravia in order to secure the cooperation of Czechoslovakia.¹⁶¹

One Austrian German nationalist, Kleinwaechter, also criticized the idea of a pan-European union as an alternative to *Anschluss*. The pan-Europa movement had been founded by the Austrian aristocrat Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi in 1923, and was based

¹⁶⁰*Ibid.*, 21-24.

¹⁶¹"Der tschechische Imperialismus und Deutschösterreichs Schicksal," *Flugblätter für Deutschösterreichs Recht* (1919), 3-6; Erwin Stransky, Alphonse Dopsch, Wilhelm Suida, Franz von Dafert, Ernst Kraufte, Paul von Hock, in *Deutschland, wir kommen!*, 6-7, 22-24, 27-29, 32-33, 43-45.

upon the notion that the only way to secure European peace and prosperity after the First World War was to move away from the nationalistic notions which had contributed to the conflict toward a continent-wide federal union. Kleinwaechter did not attack Coudenhove-Kalergi's ideas outright, and indeed he professed to find them commendable and attractive. Kleinwaechter did, however, vigorously dispute the manner in which Oscar Schmitz had used the pan-European proposal in order to argue against *Anschluß*.¹⁶² Kleinwaechter noted that if such a European union were to be founded under Austrian leadership, it would appear very much like an attempt to recreate the Habsburgs' patriarchal, multinational empire to the inhabitants of the successor states. Thus, all of his criticisms regarding the prospect of a Danubian federation applied to a pan-European federation as well. Moreover, Kleinwaechter argued that if European unity was truly the eventual goal of such a movement, then it really would not matter if Austria joined such an association outright or as part of a great-German union which might be founded in the meantime. According to Kleinwaechter, *Anschluß* was no obstacle to an eventual united Europe, and he accused Schmitz of using a noble aim in order to advance his own anti-*Anschluß* rhetoric. Kleinwaechter acknowledged that a pan-European federation was a worthy idea, but he argued that it should not be used to perpetuate Habsburgist fantasies of a renewal of Austrian hegemony in Central Europe at the expense of the unity of the German *Volk*.¹⁶³

Austrian German nationalists of course opposed the notion of continued Austrian

¹⁶²Coudenhove-Kalergi later revealed himself to be an opponent of *Anschluß*, and he proclaimed that the Pan-Europa movement was based in part upon the multinational example of the Habsburg Monarchy. See Richard N. Coudenhove-Kalergi, *Österreichs Europäische Sendung* (Vienna: Paneuropa-Verlag, 1934), 2-24.

independence. As we have seen, many of them took umbrage at the fact that the First Republic had been forced by the Entente to bear the name of the Habsburg state in the first place. Their arguments against Austrian independence in fact denied any meaningful continuity between the Habsburg Monarchy and postwar Austria. Simply put, Austria was not the heir to the Habsburg Monarchy and had no basis for a separate existence apart from Germany now that the dynastic state which had divided the German *Volk* for so long had finally collapsed. Moreover, these German nationalists argued that an independent Austria was economically unviable. Some commentators admitted that an Austrian German state might have been feasible if it had included areas of dense German settlement in Bohemia and Moravia, as its leaders had originally intended. Those regions had been claimed by Czechoslovakia, however, and the German Austrian heartland could never survive for long on its own, severed from the economic network which had nurtured it during the Habsburg era. Indeed, Austrian German nationalists pointed to Seipel's Geneva Protocols as evidence that foreign loans were the only thing keeping the First Republic's economy alive. *Anschluß*, they proclaimed, was the only option left for Austrian Germans.¹⁶⁴

Indeed, union with Germany was the only ideal which served to link the Austrian German nationalist camp together during the First Republic. The Great German People's Party, the *Landbund*, and later the Austrian National Socialist Party and elements of the *Heimwehr* represented the most potent nationalist political organizations, but Austrian

¹⁶³Kleinwächter, 212-221.

¹⁶⁴Wilhelm Winkler, "Die zukünftige Bevölkerungsentwicklung Deutschösterreichs und der Anschluß an Deutschland," *Flugblätter für Deutschösterreichs Recht* 31 (1919), 3-8; Schwoner, 15-16; Suida, 27-29; Hugelmann, 8-9, Kleinwächter, 223-240.

German nationalism encompassed a circle of public advocates which extended beyond the membership of those groups. Beyond its support for German unity, the Austrian German nationalist camp lacked a strong collective vision for Austrian society and politics. Most Austrian German nationalists did at least agree that the legacy of the Habsburg Monarchy did not offer contemporary Austrians any sort of guidance regarding what path they should take in the postwar era. Furthermore, many nationalist commentators attacked the old Monarchy as a historically anti-German institution, and firmly rejected any proposed solution for Austria's contemporary problems which looked to the Habsburg state as an example or model. For Austrian German nationalists, the drive toward German unity in the form of a great German nation state was the essence of Austria's history, and the Habsburg Monarchy simply had no place in any sort of modern definition of Austrian identity. *Anschluß* was the future; the Habsburg Monarchy was part of a past best forgotten.

The Austrian First Republic saw a fairly stable consensus among the major political factions concerning Austrian national identity. The entire political spectrum, ranging from the Marxist left to the Catholic right, affirmed that Austrians were Germans, and attempts to argue for the existence of an Austrian nation separate from the German *Volk* were exceedingly rare. The opinions of the various political camps regarding the question of *Anschluß* were somewhat more diverse, however. In the first years after the collapse of the Habsburg Monarchy, all of Austria's political leaders called for *Anschluß*, and argued that an independent, small Austria was economically unviable,

and all of the major factions maintained this stance, although the Christian Social Party eventually combined its proclamations of Austrian Germanness with firm declarations of Austrian patriotism.

There was no similar consensus among the parties concerning the Habsburg past. The Christian Social Party, as the major organization of the traditional right in Austria, looked to the old Monarchy as a positive institution which had lamentably crumbled as a result of its defeat in the Great War. The Social Democrats disagreed vehemently, and cast the dynasty and its multinational state as a “prison of the peoples” which had opposed the forces of progress, freedom and social justice at every turn. The Social Democrats saw their own Party and the Austrian working class as the true heroes of Austria’s history, and they argued that the First Republic had been founded by the revolutionary workers as a clean break with the Habsburg legacy of tyranny and subjugation. The Austrian German nationalist camp was somewhat divided regarding the Habsburg past. Some portrayed the dynasty as an oppressive entity which had opposed the historical movement toward German unity in order to preserve its own political power. Other German nationalists viewed the Monarchy as a less anti-German entity, but one which had passed from the stage of history nonetheless. All of the various leaders and intellectuals in the Austrian German nationalist camp agreed that the legacy of the old Monarchy had no lessons to teach contemporary Austria, which was destined to become part of a great-German state.

The debate regarding the significance of Austria’s Habsburg past was not conducted in a vacuum, however, but rather was a part of the larger argument concerning the appropriate course for the Austrian state. The political parties did not just argue about

the meaning of Austrian history, but also struggled with one another concerning the relationship between Church and state, the value of democracy, and the necessary level of social welfare to be provided by the government. Indeed these ideological arguments only became more intense as the Republican era wore on, and were at the root of the collapse of democracy in Austria in 1933.

One topic of particularly fierce debate among the First Republic's political camps was the content of Austrian education. As the parties vied with one another to determine the fate of Austria in the postwar era, they also struggled to influence the content of the Republic's educational curricula, textbooks, and classroom instruction. Unsurprisingly, the political camps' various visions of Austrian national identity and of the meaning Austria's history as part of the Habsburg Monarchy featured prominently in these educational debates. These struggles to reshape the Austrian education between 1918 and 1933 offer a clear view of the extent to which these factions sought to inculcate their national and historical views in Austrian schoolchildren.

Chapter 2. Education and the Habsburg Past in the First Republic

The leaders of the First Republic not only argued about Austrian national identity and the legacy of the Habsburg past, they also attempted to use Austria's state education system to disseminate those ideas to the next generation of Austrian citizens. All of Austria's major political factions in 1918 agreed that Austrian education needed to be reformed to take into account the state's new circumstances after the collapse of the Habsburg Monarchy. The various camps disagreed sharply with one another concerning the precise form and appropriate extent of educational reform, however, and acrimonious debate regarding Austrian educational policy continued throughout the life of the First Republic. The two major factions in this ongoing argument regarding educational policy were the two largest political parties, the Christian Socials and the Social Democrats, and the debate encompassed not only the best way to educate students about Austria's Habsburg past, but also the role of religion in education and the manner in which the school system ought to be organized.

The basic consensus about Austrian Germanness was indeed reflected in the First Republic's educational laws, curricula, and textbooks. Austrian educational policies emphasized the essential German character of the Austrian people, and portrayed Austrian history as part of the wider history of the German *Volk*. Beyond this basic agreement concerning Austrian membership in the German nation, however, Austrian leaders and educators had difficulty agreeing on how Austria's Habsburg past ought to be presented to Austrian students. The pedagogical stances of the two main political parties naturally

corresponded quite closely with their basic views about the legacy of the Habsburg Monarchy. Conservative politicians, teachers, and pedagogical theorists most often argued that Austrian children ought to be taught to see the First Republic as the inheritor of the proud historical legacy of the old Monarchy, and to internalize the Catholic religious principles which had featured so prominently in the Habsburgs' multinational state. Socialist leaders and educators, on the other hand, argued that Austrian education needed to move away from its previous strong focus upon dynastic, political, and military history, and they proposed educational reforms which sought to inculcate students with a devotion to democracy and egalitarianism. Such an educational perspective inevitably presented the old Monarchy and its leaders in a negative light and emphasized the manner in which the First Republic represented a new beginning for the Austrian people.

This debate about how to teach Austria's history was never satisfactorily resolved, and neither major political faction fully instituted its pedagogical ideals. Even after the Socialists' initial parliamentary dominance in the First Republic gave way to a succession of conservative coalition governments after 1920, the federal structure of the Austrian state allowed the SDP to influence educational policy on the provincial and local levels, especially in Vienna. Indeed, even at the national level, the Christian Socials never commanded a firm enough governing majority to completely ignore Social Democratic opposition to its policies. Thus, both sides had to compromise, and the new Republic's educational policies reflected some of the ideas of both Austrian conservatives and Social Democrats. Meaningful education reform did take place, however, and the development of new educational legislation and official state curricula during the republican era

reflected a view of Austrians as a German people. Austrian education did not present a consistent view of Austria's past, however, sometimes portraying the First Republic as a completely new entity, while at other times casting it as the heir of the old Monarchy. The revised history and civics textbooks used by the state's schools likewise emphasized the German character of the Austrian people. Some of these texts, however, presented students with a fairly hostile view of the old Monarchy, while others highlighted the continuity between the old state and the new, and lauded the Habsburgs' positive historical achievements. The Austrian pedagogical community debated these issues further, and could come to no more of an agreement regarding the meaning of Austrian history than the First Republic's educational policy makers or textbook authors. Ultimately, the debate on Austria's Habsburg past and the content of Austrian education during the First Republic reflected the wide ideological differences between the state's major political factions regarding politics, society, and the meaning of Austrian history, and it would be these very differences which would ultimately result in the destruction of Austrian democracy in 1933.

i. Austrian Educational Reform Between 1918 and 1933

The debate over how Austria's history ought best to be taught to students was but one of several disagreements between the two major parties regarding educational reform during the First Republic. The Social Democrats, who dominated local school boards in Vienna and other large Austrian cities throughout the First Republic as well as the entire state's educational bureaucracy during the Republic's first year and a half, sought to

transform Austrian education into a more secular and egalitarian endeavor based upon democratic and Socialist ideological principles. The Christian Social Party vigorously opposed the left's reform program, and after its electoral success in 1920 was in position to ensure that a more conservative vision predominated in the Ministry of Education. The various German nationalist political parties for the most part lacked a coherent educational agenda, and frequently supported the conservative right's educational program when they joined various anti-Socialist coalition governments throughout the 1920s.¹⁶⁵ Thus the Austrian First Republic saw repeated conflicts between the Socialists and conservatives regarding the scope of state educational reform.

The relationship between the Catholic Church and state educational policy was one area of particularly heated debate. The Social Democrats wanted to ensure that the new Republic was a secular one, and they sought to limit the role of the Church in Austrian schools. In particular, the Socialists argued that parents ought to have the right to exempt their children from religious education, which had been mandatory in state schools before 1918. The Catholic Church vehemently opposed this idea, and viewed it as an infringement upon its historical role in Austrian education. In 1919, the Socialist Undersecretary for Education, Otto Glöckel, issued a decree which exempted students from religious education courses upon parental request, and even future conservative

¹⁶⁵The German People's Party and the *Landbund* largely agreed with the Christian Social Party's social ideals, and thus frequently supported the CSP's educational agenda throughout the Republican era despite their continuing unease with the conservative emphasis upon a close relationship between the state and the Catholic Church. "Das 'Salzburger Programm' der Großdeutschen Volkspartei, 1920," and "Politische Leitsätze des Landbundes für Österreich, 1923," in *Österreichisch Parteiprogramme, 1868-1966*, ed., Klaus Berchtold (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1967), 439-483; Adam Wandruszka, "Österreichs politische Struktur," in *Geschichte der Republik Österreich*, ed. Heinrich Benedikt (Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1954), 381-383; Michael J. Zeps, *Education and the Crisis of the First Republic* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1987), 45-47, 55.

governments continued this policy. Throughout the early 1920s, the Christian Social Party was divided between a faction which urged a return to mandatory religious education, and a more moderate wing which did not want to risk alienating the Party's anti-Catholic, German nationalist political allies in parliament by restoring the old system. Ultimately the moderate faction won the debate, but this victory came only after considerable acrimonious wrangling within the Party. The most profoundly conservative and religious members of the Christian Social Party remained deeply dissatisfied with the so-called Glöckel Decree, and they continued to criticize this state of affairs until the decree was finally repealed by the authoritarian *Ständestaat* government in 1934.¹⁶⁶

The Social Democrats also wanted to institute major reforms in the structure of the Austrian school system in order to make it more egalitarian. In 1918, the Austrian educational system was still organized according the old imperial Constitution of 1867, which provided for a three track educational system that divided students according to academic ability. Under this system, the least promising students studied in terminal, eight year primary schools or *Volksschulen*. More talented children, especially in urban areas, could, after four or five years in a *Volksschule*, move on to receive instruction in more advanced primary schools called *Bürgerschulen*. Only the most gifted Austrian children progressed from the *Volksschulen* to the secondary level in a variety of *Mittelschulen* which provided advanced technical or academic education in order to prepare them for entry into universities or professional schools. This system forced

¹⁶⁶Zeps, 38, 58-60, 75, 83-103; Ernst Papanek, *The Austrian School Reform: Its Bases, Principles and Development— The Twenty Years Between the Two World Wars* (New York: Frederick Fell, Inc., 1962), 49-57; "Das 'Linzer Programm' der Sozialdemokratischen Arbeiterpartei Österreichs, 1926," in *Österreichisch Parteiprogramme, 1868-1966*, 258-261.

parents and teachers to make decisions regarding children's prospective career paths by the time students were ten years old.¹⁶⁷

The Social Democrats, led by Glöckel, criticized this hierarchical set of educational paths as inherently unfair, and argued that the system discriminated against lower class children who did not have enough opportunity to demonstrate their talents by the young age required in order to gain access to the highest levels of academic education. After 1918 the Socialists advocated the creation of the *Einheitsschule*, or unified school. Under this proposed reform, state education in Austria would be split into three periods of four years, as all students attended, in turn, a primary-level *Volksschule*, an intermediate *Mittelschule*, and finally a secondary-level *Oberschule*. Students within this system would be divided into two tracks, one for average and advanced, university-bound students, and one for less talented pupils. The Social Democrats argued that such a system would allow intelligent but economically disadvantaged students access to higher quality education. Most conservatives, and many secondary school teachers and university professors, however, opposed the *Einheitsschule* proposal on the grounds that it did not take into account the distinctive needs of students of varying abilities, and that it would inevitably lead to a decline in the level of education offered in Austrian state schools.

The debate over the *Einheitsschule* continued throughout most of the Republic's first decade, and was not resolved until the passage of the educational reform laws of 1927, which represented only a partial step toward the unified school system which the Social Democrats envisioned. These laws limited attendance in *Volksschulen* to five years, and transformed the *Bürgerschulen* into *Hauptschulen*, schools which offered less talented

¹⁶⁷Zeps, 23, 70-71.

students a lower level secondary education for the first time. *Mittelschulen* remained the domain of the most gifted Austrian pupils, who could receive a liberal arts education, including the study of the classics in Greek and Latin, at *Gymnasien*, or pursue a rigorous program of science, mathematics and modern foreign languages at *Realschulen*, or attend *Realgymnasien*, institutions that combined elements from the programs of both *Gymnasien* and *Realschulen*. Additionally, the reforms created *Frauenoberschulen*, secondary schools which for the first time offered a more advanced academic education for gifted young women. The program of instruction in the lower classes of the various types of *Mittelschulen* resembled that offered in the *Hauptschulen*, and, in theory, after four years of distinguished academic performance an ambitious *Hauptschule* student could transfer to a *Mittelschule* for the remainder of his secondary education. In practice, however, the demanding foreign or classical language requirements of the upper levels of the various *Mittelschulen* prevented most *Hauptschule* students, who usually did not receive the same early and intensive program of language instruction as students in the first four grades of the *Mittelschulen*, from making the leap to the higher educational track. Still, the 1927 reform laws enabled the Social Democrats to argue that they at least had begun to move the Austrian educational system in the direction of a more egalitarian structure, even if they had failed to create a true *Einheitsschule* system.¹⁶⁸

The disputes between Austrian Social Democrats and Catholic conservatives about school organization and religious instruction in schools, combined with their

¹⁶⁸Zeps, 71; Papanek, 87-91; "Lehrpläne für die Hauptschulen," *Volkserziehung, Nachrichten des Österreichischen Unterrichtsamtes* (1928): 2-4; "Lehrpläne für die Mittelschulen," *Volkserziehung*, (1928): 5. Educational reformers in Germany during the 1920s also unsuccessfully sought to create *Einheitsschulen* in order to reduce the class bias inherent in the similarly hierarchical German school

disagreements over how Austrian history ought to be presented to Austrian students, helped make educational policy a particularly charged political issue during the Austrian First Republic. While the Social Democrats never gained a majority of the seats in parliament, they still commanded extensive electoral support throughout Austria, and the CSP's governing coalitions with the German nationalist factions were usually too fragile to permit the conservatives simply to impose its will over the left's objections. Acrimonious debate and prolonged negotiations over matters of educational policy were thus constant during the First Republic. The two sides did reach at least tentative compromises concerning these educational controversies, but the ideological stalwarts in both camps were often dissatisfied with the manner in which the disputes were resolved. Ultimately the authoritarian *Ständestaat* which succeeded the First Republic in 1933 undid many of the Republic's reforms of the Austrian school system, but only after the Austrian politicians and educators had engaged in a wide ranging debate concerning the best way to teach students about Austrian national identity and the meaning of Austria's Habsburg past.

State Educational Curricula and National Education

All of the First Republic's policy makers and educators, no matter their political ideology, agreed that some manner of curricular reform was necessary for Austria after the collapse of the Habsburg Monarchy, even if they often disagreed regarding the precise form such revisions ought to take. The new state's educational leaders were unanimous,

system. Fritz K. Ringer, *Education and Society in Modern Europe* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979), 42-43.

however, in their view of Austrian national identity. They all argued that Austrians were part of the German *Volk*, and that the program of instruction in history, geography, and civics in Austrian state schools needed to emphasize that Austrians were Germans. All of the various provisional curricula for schools during the First Republic's early years as well as the new official curricula drafted as a part of the sweeping educational reform laws of 1927 reflected this consensus concerning national identity and explicitly provided that students needed to be made aware of Austria's Germanness. The vision of the Habsburg past presented in these curricula was far less well defined, however. The new history curricula naturally included the Habsburg period, but presented no precise instructions about which interpretation of Austria's pre-1918 history ought to be taught. Thus, the new curricula clearly stated that Austria was German land, and that Austrian history was best understood as part of the wider history of Germany, but beyond those ideals, they were mute regarding whether Austrian students ought to be taught to regard the old Monarchy as a positive or negative part of the First Republic's heritage.

The policy makers and pedagogical theorists of the First Republic all agreed that education embodied more than a simple transfer of information and skills. For them education involved teaching children character and identity as well. For example, in 1919 the Socialist Undersecretary of Education, Otto Glöckel, issued a decree stating that the basic goal of state education was the spiritual, ethical, and artistic development of Austrian children.¹⁶⁹ Likewise, a manual for teachers in Austrian *Mittelschulen* from nearly a decade later presented a similar conceptualization of the purpose of Austrian

¹⁶⁹“Erlaß des deutschösterreichischen Unterstaatssekretärs für Unterricht vom 16. Juni 1919, Z. 15151, betreffend Schule und Volksbildungsstrebungen,” *Volkserziehung*, Official Section (1919): 174-177.

schools: “Educational institutions must develop the spiritual, moral, and physical powers of the children entrusted to them and educate young people in a social, civic, national, and moral-religious spirit.”¹⁷⁰ The First Republic’s educational laws envisioned education as an enterprise in which all of the subjects taught to students were organically related, and some of the state’s curricula explicitly stated that education should not be dominated by any particular political ideology, but rather needed to be directed toward helping students to contribute to the welfare of the Austrian state and the German *Volk* as a whole.¹⁷¹

Indeed, the idea that Austrian students needed to be taught that they were a were part of the German *Volk* featured prominently in many of the First Republic’s educational laws and curricula. Of course these laws and curricula also noted that Austrian children needed to be taught loyalty to the Austrian state as well, and at times the language used in these laws and curricula was somewhat ambiguous. For example, the term “*Volk*” (people) was most often used to refer to people who were members of the German nation, but the word was also used without national connotations to describe just the people living in the Austrian state. In a similar manner the word “*Vaterland*” (fatherland) could refer to either Austria itself or the German nation as a whole, just as the term “*Heimat*” (homeland) might describe Austria proper or the provinces which made up the Austrian state. Such terms were often used without modifiers in Austrian educational documents, and sometimes these sources did not offer enough context to make clear in which sense the terms were being used.

¹⁷⁰Peter Mosser and Theodor Ritterer, eds., *Die Mittelschulen in Österreich: Ein Handbuch für Schule und Schulverwaltung* (Vienna and Leipzig: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1929), 227.

¹⁷¹“Lehrpläne für die Mittelschulen,” 7-8; “Lehrplanentwürfe für allgemein bildende Oberschulen,” *Volkserziehung*, Pedagogical Section (1924): 39; “Lehrpläne für die Mittelschulen,” *Volkserziehung*,

More frequently, however, the First Republic's educational laws and curricula quite explicitly argued that Austrian students needed to be taught to see themselves not only as citizens of the Austrian state, but also as proud members of the larger German nation. One proposed curriculum from 1921 for history education in secondary schools stated that, "the end goal of a total historical education is a recognition of the uniqueness and significance of the German *Volk* as well as a historically-derived sense of individual ethical responsibility."¹⁷² This document also referred to a prewar text from the German *Kaiserreich* which asserted that Germany really included all of the German *Volk*, whether they lived in Germany proper, Austria, or as national minorities in other European territories. Similarly, a 1924 curricular outline explicitly stated that it was one of the most important goals of Austrian education to teach students that they belonged to the German *Volk*, no matter what the political boundaries in contemporary Europe happened to be, and that they had a duty to the entire *Volk*.¹⁷³

The new official curricula drafted for upper level schools in 1927 were similarly explicit regarding Austrian national identity, and argued that instruction ought to emphasize German language and culture, as well as the history of both the German *Volk* and Austrian Fatherland. The introductory comments to the curricula for *Mittelschulen* argued that in addition to a sense of social responsibility to the wider community and loyalty to the Austrian state, Austrian education must be explicitly national in order to transform students into "conscious members of the cultural community of their *Volk*." By

(1928): 3.

¹⁷²"Lehrplanentwurf für den Geschichtsunterricht an achtklassigen Oberrealschulen," *Volkserziehung*, , Pedagogical Section (August 1, 1921): 342-4.

¹⁷³"Lehrplanentwürfe für allgemein bildende Oberschulen," *Volkserziehung*, Pedagogical Section (1924):

providing students with examples of the great men and women from the past, whether Austrian or German, such an education would acquaint them with the history, achievements, and worthiness of their *Volk*. In one area, the document even noted in passing that Austrian education policy was designed to produce “educated Germans” through rigorous instruction in the German language, “the first and strongest bond for the great German *Volk*.”¹⁷⁴

The emphasis upon Austrian Germanness found in many of the First Republic’s curricula did not, however, preclude an appreciation of the unique virtues of the Austrian homeland. During his tenure as Undersecretary for Education, Glöckel issued a number of decrees which defined the awakening of children’s love for their *Heimat* and Austrian Fatherland as an important goal of Austrian state education. Glöckel argued that such education was as much a spiritual (*geistlich*) and moral (*sittlich*) matter as it was a geographical one. In a 1920 curricula for *Volksschulen*, Glöckel recommended that teachers use German language fairytales and folktales as well as descriptions of Austria’s natural beauty and historical monuments in order to help children to appreciate the special qualities of the “Austrian Alpine *Volk*.” Curricula for *Volksschulen* after Glöckel had resigned his office continued to focus on cultivating students’ loyalty and affection for their Austrian homeland as well. These sorts of statements were especially prominent in the guidelines for *Volksschulen*, but they appeared in some form in curricula for all of the levels of Austrian education. Almost all Austrian school curricula also clearly stated that education regarding Austrian distinctiveness necessarily had to take into account Austria’s

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¹⁷⁴“Lehrpläne für die Hauptschulen,” 2, 41; “Lehrpläne für die Mittelschulen,” 2-4.

larger context as part of the German cultural community and *Volk*.¹⁷⁵ In certain instances, decrees or curricula issued by the Austrian Ministry of Education mentioned the need to help students to love their Austrian Fatherland without also specifically emphasizing Austria's membership in the German nation, but such documents were so rare that they only serve to underscore the frequency with which Austrian policy makers linked the notions of students' loyalty to the Austrian state and their duty to the German *Volk* as a whole.¹⁷⁶ Thus, the leaders of the First Republic wanted to make young students aware of their valuable and distinctive Austrian heritage, but such an awareness was never designed as a denial of Austria's essential Germanness.

The First Republic's Ministry of Education also emphasized Austria's continuing ties to other German-speakers in a number of other ways. For example, a 1919 Ministry decree provided that the results of university entrance exams from Germany would be recognized by Austrian universities.¹⁷⁷ In 1926, the Ministry issued a decree which allotted state funds to help Austrian students study in Germany (although the Austrian government provided similar funding for student trips to Budapest as well, indicating some sort of a continuing link between Austria and at least one of the Monarchy's

¹⁷⁵“Erlaß des deutschösterreichischen Unterstaatssekretärs für Unterricht vom 16. Juni 1919, Z. 15151, betreffend Schule und Volksbildungsanstrebungen,” *Volkserziehung*, Official Section (1919): 174-177; “Erlaß des mit der Leitung des Unterrichtsamtes betrauten Unterstaatssekretärs vom 13. August, 1920 Z. 16047, betreffend die versuchsweise Einführung neuer Lehrpläne an den allgemeinen Volksschulen,” *Volkserziehung*, Official Section (1919): 542; “Lehrpläne für allgemein Volksschulen,” *Volkserziehung*, Pedagogical Section (1924): 100; “Lehrplan für die 1. bis 5. Schulstufe der allgemein Volksschulen,” *Volkserziehung*, Official Section (September 1, 1926): 58-59.

¹⁷⁶“Vorläufiger Lehrplan für die erste Klasse der österreichischen Hauptschulen,” *Volkserziehung*, Official Section (August 15, 1927): 130-134; “12. November 1928, Schulfeiern,” *Volkserziehung*, Official Section (October 15, 1928), 159-60.

¹⁷⁷“Erlaß des deutschösterreichischen Unterstaatssekretärs für Unterricht vom 7. Juni 1919, B. 9560/a, betreffend die Anerkennung der Mittelschulen des Deutschen Reiches abgelegten Reifeprüfungen,” *Volkserziehung*, Official Section (1919): 140-1.

successor states).¹⁷⁸ Austrian pedagogical journals frequently published articles written by German pedagogical theorists and reported the latest news regarding the state of educational policy and debate in Germany.¹⁷⁹ In 1929, the Austrian government even followed the lead of the German Ministry of Education in declaring March 22 to be the “day of the good book” in order to impress upon students the importance of German language literature.¹⁸⁰ All of these measures amply demonstrate the commitment of the First Republic’s educational policy makers to a view of Austria as part of the wider community of the German *Volk*.

The First Republic also designated several specific academic subjects as particularly useful for cultivating students’ sense of a German national identity. History was the most important of these subjects. The First Republic’s earliest provisional and proposed curricula for historical instruction in state schools almost always explicitly stated that an important part of the purpose of history education in Austria was to teach students to love not just their Austrian Fatherland, but also the German *Volk* as a whole. Similarly, these curricula all conceived of Austrian history as part of the wider sweep of German history, and recommended that teachers present historical developments in Austria in the context of the history of all Germans throughout Europe.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁸“Kundmachungen– Erste heimatkundliche Osterstudienfahrt ins Reich,” *Volkserziehung*, Official Section (March 15, 1926): 32-3, 175.

¹⁷⁹See for example, Johannes Kühnel, “Die Hauptaufgabe der neuen Erziehung,” *Monatsheft für Pädagogische Reform* 69 (1919): 284-288; “Geschichtsunterricht,” *Der Neue Weg* 5 (1924): 217-19.

¹⁸⁰“Tag des guten Buches,” *Volkserziehung*, (March 15, 1929): 46.

¹⁸¹“Entwurf eines Lehrplanes für die vier Klassen der allgemeinen Mittelschule,” *Volkserziehung*, Pedagogical Section (May 15, 1922): 203; “Lehrplanentwürfe für die Landschulen,” *Volkserziehung*, Pedagogical Section (1923): 49; “Lehrplan für drei- und vierklassige Volksschulen,” *Volkserziehung*, Pedagogical Section (1923): 76; “Lehrplan für fünf- und mehrklassige Volksschulen,” *Volkserziehung*, Pedagogical Section (1923): 96; “Lehrpläne für allgemein Volksschulen,” *Volkserziehung*, Pedagogical Section (1924): 107; “Lehrplanentwürfe für allgemein bildende Oberschulen,” *Volkserziehung*, Pedagogical Section (1924): 38; “Normal-Lehrplan des Reform-Realgymnasiums (5. bis 8. Klasse),”

The series of comprehensive official curricula for all levels of Austrian education promulgated in 1927 continued to present historical instruction as a medium for transmitting a sense of Austrian Germanness to students. While the program for historical instruction for *Volksschulen* focused upon the history and geography of the students' immediate *Heimat* and of Austria as a whole, the historical curricula designed for older students contained more nationally oriented material.¹⁸² The curriculum for *Hauptschulen* defined history education as the "history of the *Heimat* and the German *Volk*" and argued that history instruction should awaken "respect for great men and deeds, and love of *Volk* and Fatherland."¹⁸³ The curriculum for *Mittelschulen* contained identical language, and further provided that history ought to be used to educate the oldest and most gifted Austrian students about the economic, social, and political aspects of Austrian life in order to enable them to participate in "public life and the destiny of the *Volksgemeinschaft* (the community of the [German] *Volk*)."¹⁸⁴

Such presentations of Austrian history obviously reflected a real historical link between historical developments in Austria and Germany. After all, the Habsburgs themselves had been the customary bearers of the German imperial crown for hundreds of years, and the old Austrian Monarchy had been heavily involved in German affairs until the middle of the nineteenth century. Still, historically Austria had been as closely linked

Volkserziehung, Official Section (August 1, 1925): 147; "Lehrplanentwurf für die einheitliche allgemein bildende Oberschule," *Volkserziehung*, Pedagogical Section (September 15, 1925): 64; "Lehrplan für die 1. bis 5. Schulstufe der allgemein Volksschulen," *Volkserziehung*, Official Section (September 1, 1926): 60.

¹⁸²The relatively complicated topic of Austria's national identity was presumably seen by the Austrian government as a topic for older, more sophisticated pupils. "Erläuterungen zum Lehrplan für die 1. bis 5. Schulstufe an allgemeinen Volksschulen," *Volkserziehung*, Pedagogical Section (October 15, 1927): 90-94; "Die Lehrpläne für die allgemeinen Volksschulen," *Verordnungsblatt für den Dienstbereich des Bundesministeriums für Unterricht* (1930): 10.

¹⁸³"Lehrpläne für die Hauptschulen," 13.

with the Slavic and Magyar lands in central and eastern Europe as it had been to the other German-speaking regions of the continent. The First Republic's historical curricula sometimes overlooked or minimized this fact, however. Indeed, one 1924 *Mittelschule* curriculum actually recommended that the history of the Monarchy's successor states be taught only in so far as that information was necessary to help students understand the modern Austrian republic. Clearly, educational policy makers wanted to emphasize their vision of Austria as a German land, even at the expense of acquainting students with their homeland's historical relationship with other states which had once been ruled by the Habsburgs.¹⁸⁵

The actual content of history education set out in these curricula obviously contained a great deal of material on Austria's Habsburg past, but they also invariably presented Austrian history in a wider German context. For example, a 1926 curriculum for *Volksschulen* began its narrative of Austrian history with an instructional unit entitled "How the *Heimat* became the soil of the German *Volk*."¹⁸⁶ Other historical curricula included topics in their programs of instruction which emphasized the relationship between Austrian history and that of Germany as whole with titles such as "the *Volk* and its members," "Migration of the Germanic peoples," "Christianization of the Germans," "The Cultural Work of the Germanic peoples," "The German City in the Middle Ages," "The Development of German trade," "The Era of the Enlightenment in Austria and Germany," "The Foundation of the "Prussian-German *Reich*," and "The Struggle for

¹⁸⁴“Lehrpläne für die Mittelschulen,” 30-31, 80, 148, 199.

¹⁸⁵“Vaterlandskunde; Umgrenzung des Lehr- und Prüfungsstoffes, 5. April 1924,” *Volkserziehung*, Official Section (1924): 63-64; “Lehrpläne für die Hauptschulen,” 13-14, “Lehrpläne für die Mittelschulen,” 30-31; 79-81, 146-148, 198-200.

Democracy in Austria and Germany (From the beginning of the Revolution in the Year 1848 to the new foundation of state relationships in the year 1918),”¹⁸⁷ These historical curricula did indeed generally trace the development of Austria from a small alpine duchy in the Middle Ages to a vast multinational empire under the rule of the Habsburgs, but they always presented Austria as a quintessentially German land which had been intimately linked to the other areas of German settlement in Europe throughout its history.

Some of these curricula also contained provisions which called for history teachers to place much less emphasis upon dynastic, political, and military history than they had in the past. Instead, these curricula recommended that Austrian history education focus upon culture and the experiences of the Austrian population as a whole. Such recommendations were particularly common during the early years of the First Republic when the Social Democrats dominated the Ministry of Education, but even later Christian Social governments sometimes provided for at least a more judicious balance between political and cultural history than had been characteristic of history education during the last decades of the Habsburg Monarchy.¹⁸⁸ Obviously such a change in the focus of history education had the potential to minimize the role of the Habsburgs and their dynastic state in Austria’s past while simultaneously highlighting the importance of German culture as a

¹⁸⁶“Lehrplan für die 1. bis 5. Schulstufe der allgemeine Volksschulen,” 60.

¹⁸⁷“Lehrplan für fünf- und mehrklassige Volksschulen,” 97-98; “Lehrpläne für allgemeine Volksschulen,” 108; “Normal-Lehrplan des Reform-Realgymnasiums (5. bis 8. Klasse),” 147

¹⁸⁸“Erlaß des mit der Leitung des Unterrichtsamtes betrauten Unterstaatssekretärs vom 8. Juni, 1920 Z. 10738, betreffend die versuchsweise Einführung der Lehrpläne für die vierklassige Grundschule sowie des Übergangslehrplanes für das 5. Schuljahr und betreffend die Verfassung von Stundenplänen an Bürgerschulen,” *Volkserziehung*, Official Section (1920): 325-6; “Normal-Lehrplan des Reform-Realgymnasiums (5. bis 8. Klasse),” 148; “Lehrplan für fünf- und mehrklassige Volksschulen,” 100; “Lehrplanentwürfe für allgemein bildende Oberschulen,” 38. This emphasis upon cultural history was quite typical of efforts to reform the content of history education throughout Europe during this era. Ringer, 32-69, 157-259.

historical bond between Austrians with the rest of the German *Volk*.

The First Republic's curricula for geography similarly emphasized the links between Austria and Germany. Indeed, most of these curricula throughout the republican era presented Austria and Germany as a single geographical unit to be studied by Austrian school children. For example, the program for instruction in geography in secondary schools in 1921 defined Austria as part of the "region of German settlement in Central Europe," while a 1923 curricular outline provided that students would study the geography of "Austria and the other areas of German settlement."¹⁸⁹ The 1927 official curricula preserved this language. In addition, the new curricula added provisions mandating instruction concerning "*Auslandsdeutschtum*" (Germans living in states other than Austria or Germany), and advised teachers to focus only upon the geography of regions which were either globally important, or which had close ties to either Austria or Germany.¹⁹⁰ These curricula had the effect of minimizing Austria's geographical relationship to the Habsburg Monarchy's other successor states, with which Austria had been closely associated for many centuries, while at the same time emphasizing Austria's ties to the other German-speaking regions of Europe.

Civics was the final subject which the educational policy makers of the First Republic used in order to emphasize Austrian Germanness. As might be expected, the majority of the program of instruction in Austrian civics classes during this era focused

¹⁸⁹“Lehrplänenwurf für den Erdkundeunterricht an achtklassigen Oberrealschulen.” *Volkserziehung*, Pedagogical Section (August 1, 1921:), 345; “Lehrplänenwürfe für die Landschulen,” *Volkserziehung*, Pedagogical Section (1923): 47. For similar language emphasizing Austria's geographical position as part of the German region of settlement in Central Europe, see “Lehrplan für drei- und vierklassige Volksschulen,” 74-75; “Lehrplan für fünf- und mehrklassige Volksschulen,” 94-5; “Lehrplänenwürfe für allgemein bildende Oberschulen,” 46; “Lehrpläne für allgemein Volksschulen,” 105-106.

¹⁹⁰“Lehrpläne für die Hauptschulen,” 14-15, 54-55; “Lehrpläne für die Mittelschulen,” 31-32, 82-83, 148-

upon the political organization of the First Republic's government and the structure of Austrian society. The curricula for education in civics also generally mandated that students be taught not just about of Austria's constitution, however, but also that of Germany as well.¹⁹¹ Such instruction highlighted the kinship shared by Austrians and Germans, and even prepared Austrian students for the eventual union with Germany for which many Austrian political leaders so ardently hoped.

Education in the First Republic reflected the consensus of Austria's major political factions that Austrians formed part of the German *Volk*, and was designed to impart that conviction to the next generation of Austrian citizens. The state's education curricula for history and geography also at least implicitly de-emphasized the importance of the Habsburg Monarchy, even as they explicitly highlighted the historical and geographical relationship between Austria and the other German-speaking regions of Europe. Beyond a 1920 law which mandated an end to the displays of reverence for Habsburg symbols required of students in the old Monarchy, the First Republic's Ministry of Education was remarkably silent on the matter of how the Austria's Habsburg past itself was to be taught to students.¹⁹²

This silence is easily explained. While all of the First Republic's important political camps agreed about Austria's Germanness, there was no similar consensus about the meaning or proper interpretation of Austria's Habsburg past. It was fairly easy for the various political factions to agree upon a broad outline for the teaching of Austrian

149, 200-201; "Die Lehrpläne für die allgemeinen Volksschulen," 24, 39.

¹⁹¹"Lehrplanentwurf für die einheitliche allgemein bildende Oberschule," 64; Normal-Lehrplan des Reform-Realgymnasiums (5. bis 8. Klasse)," 147-148; "Lehrpläne für die Mittelschulen," 31, 81, 148, 200.

¹⁹²"Erlaß des mit der Leitung des Unterrichtsamtes betrauten Unterstaatssekretärs vom 2. März, 1920 Z.

history. The specific view of the old Monarchy which ought to be taught to Austrian students was a considerably more controversial matter, however. Thus, the First Republic's Ministry of Education never provided teachers in state schools with any concrete guidelines concerning how the Habsburg past should be portrayed, leaving considerable leeway for local school boards and individual educators and theorists to address that topic in their own way.

ii. The First Republic's Pedagogical Community and the Habsburg Past

The First Republic's educators and pedagogical theorists did debate the meaning of the Habsburg past for contemporary Austria, a topic which the government's educational laws and official curricula had not addressed. In general, this debate within the pedagogical community reflected the same differences of opinion regarding the legacy of the Habsburg Monarchy which divided the First Republic's major ideological factions in the sphere of public political discourse. Of course, not all Austrian educators and political theorists were overtly affiliated with any specific political party, but most often the discussion concerning the Habsburg legacy in Austria broke down along lines which corresponded to the wider political debate concerning the past and Austrian national identity. The First Republic's two most important political parties, the Christian Socials and the Social Democrats, both had affiliated pedagogical organizations and journals, which, needless to say, translated in a fairly obvious manner the ideological positions of their respective political camps into a body of educational policy recommendations.

1502, betreffend die Außerkraftsetzung der auf Kaiserhaus bezugnehmenden Bestimmungen der Schulgesetze und Verordnungen," *Volkserziehung*, Official Section (1920): 137.

Most Austrian educators and pedagogical theorists agreed that Austrians were members of the wider German *Volk* in Europe, and they argued that state education in Austria needed to impart a German national consciousness to young Austrians in the First Republic's classrooms. There was, however, room for debate within the Austrian pedagogical community about the degree to which an Austrian sense of Germanness needed to be emphasized to students, and concerning the precise content of national education. Individual educators differed even more about the meaning of the Habsburg past for modern Austria. Some educators and theorists tended to view the Habsburg Monarchy as a relic of the past which Austria was best advised to leave behind. These educators usually celebrated the First Republic as a step on the path to *Anschluß*, and argued that history education needed to move away from its previously narrow focus upon political and military matters toward an emphasis upon cultural and social history, which more properly reflected the real experiences of the entire German *Volk*. This view of the Habsburg past was especially pronounced within the Socialist pedagogical community which, unsurprisingly, argued that the students ought to be taught to view the old Monarchy as an oppressive and reactionary entity which had been defeated by the Austrian working class. Other teachers and theorists, however, and especially those affiliated with the conservative Catholic camp, argued that Austria was the inheritor of a proud and valuable legacy from the old Habsburg Monarchy, and they asserted that the Habsburgs' Catholic, multinational empire in Central Europe ought to be presented to students as a positive example which had continuing relevance for the modern Austrians. All educators could at least agree that some aspects of the Habsburg past, such as

Austria's impressive historical contributions to art and music, could still be celebrated and claimed as part of the modern state's heritage.

Of course, these educational discussions did not occur in an ideological vacuum, but were rather part of a larger pedagogical debate between the left and right wings of the Austrian political spectrum. The Social Democratic leaders, theorists, and teachers were first and foremost concerned with providing children with a secular and egalitarian education. They argued that state education was an important tool which could be used by the Social Democratic Party to help the Austrian working class to become conscious of its own true interests and goals. Thus they vigorously supported the idea of *Einheitsschulen* which would ensure the access of all levels of Austrian society to quality education.¹⁹³

Socialist pedagogues and indeed a number of other educators without any overt ideological affiliation had also been profoundly influenced by the recent catastrophic world war, and argued that the First Republic's educational system needed to teach students the value of pacifism and reconciliation between the nations of Europe.¹⁹⁴

Conservative educators, on the other hand, were much less enthusiastic about the *Einheitsschule* proposal, and asserted that such egalitarian educational reforms overlooked the distinctive needs and abilities of individual Austrian students in their zeal for social leveling. Likewise, the Catholic pedagogical community adamantly opposed the

¹⁹³Johannes Kühnel, "Die Hauptaufgabe der neuen Erziehung," *Monatsheft für Pädagogische Reform* 69 (1919): 284; "Ein Jahr republikanische Schulreform in Deutschösterreich," *Monatsheft für Pädagogische Reform* 69 (1919): 370-374; Eduard Burger, "Hussarek auf dem Kriegspfade," *Monatshefte für Pädagogische Reform* 70 (1920): 49-64; Marriane Pollak, "Wer soll das Proletarierkind erziehen?" *Die Sozialistische Erziehung* (May 15, 1921): 17; Fritz Kanitz, "Karl Marx und sozialistische Erziehung," *Die Sozialistische Erziehung* (March 1933): 51-2.

¹⁹⁴Burger, "Neue Zeit— Unsere Zeit!" *Monatsheft für Pädagogische Reform* 69 (1919): 3-10; W. A. Hammer, "Friedens Pädagogik, 1.," *Monatshefte für Pädagogische Reform* 70 (1920): 20-5; "Nie wieder Erziehung zum Krieg!" *Die Sozialistische Erziehung* 4 (July 1924): 249; Josef Weinberger, "Deutsches

Socialists' efforts to allow certain students to be exempt from religious education, and charged the left (and in some cases Austrian Jews) with conspiring to remove religion from Austrian schools entirely. Conservative educators argued that religious instruction was an important part of the wider goal of state education to impart good character and spirit (*Geist*) to students, and they regarded religious education as an indispensable part of the Austrian educational system.¹⁹⁵ Thus, the issue of how the relationship between Austria's Habsburg past and Austrian national identity was to be presented to students was but one of several controversial issues discussed by the First Republic's pedagogical community.

Austrian Educators and Austrian National Identity

Educators and pedagogical leaders and theorists in the First Republic all generally agreed that imparting a sense of German national consciousness to students was an important part of state education in Austria. This consensus is certainly not surprising. As we have seen, all of the First Republic's major ideological groups argued that Austrians were part of the German *Volk*, and even the most ardent Austrian patriots within the conservative Catholic camp never really denied Austria's German identity. Likewise, the Republic's educational legislation and official curricula all highlighted the necessity for Austrian state education to help inspire students to feel love for and a sense of duty to the German *Volk* as a whole. Still, this broad agreement concerning Austrian Germanness left

Bildungsideal und Humanität," *Der Neue Weg* 8 (August, 1927): 396-403.

¹⁹⁵Rudolf Hornich, "Grundzüge zu einem Schulprogramm der katholischen Lehrerschaft Deutschösterreichs," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (February 5, 1919): 17-22; "Die Wahlen in die Nationalversammlung und unser Schulprogramm," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (March 5, 1919):

individual educators some room to argue about precise manner and context in which Austria's German character ought to be taught to students.

During his brief but highly influential tenure as Undersecretary for Education, the leading Socialist educational theorist, Otto Glöckel, clearly defined the basic view of the Social Democratic Party regarding national education in Austrian schools. Glöckel argued that the dissolution of the old Monarchy and the final separation of Austrian Germans from the Habsburg state's other *Völker* after 1918 necessitated an educational approach which presented the history of the Austrian *Heimat* as part of Germany. Glöckel asserted that the next generation of Austrian citizens had to be made aware of and taught to treasure their own German history, and he argued that the essential Germanness of Austria had been an enduring fact throughout the centuries. For Glöckel, Austria belonged to Germany, no matter how the current borders might be drawn. He did not, however, advocate a narrow or chauvinistic German nationalism in Austrian education. Rather, he asserted that students also had to be taught to appreciate the interrelationships between all *Völker* and the necessity for those groups to work together. According to Glöckel, such an appreciation was best achieved through an understanding of one's own *Volk* in all its myriad social classes, professions, and strata, and of the bonds which served to unite all of those parts into a coherent national whole. Consciousness of one's own *Volk* and its unity, he argued, was a prerequisite for any successful education in civics or history.¹⁹⁶

Another leftist educator and Ministry of Education official during the early

37-40; "Soll unsere österreichische Volks- und Burgerschule ausgebaut oder zerstört werden?" *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (January/February, 1920): 11-12.

¹⁹⁶“Erlaß des deutschösterreichischen Unterstaatssekretärs für Unterricht vom 10. September 1919, Z. 19557, betreffend mit welchem Richtlinien für den Gebrauch der deutschen Lehrbücher und für den

years of the First Republic, Eduard Burger, agreed wholeheartedly with Glöckel. He argued that after the collapse of the Habsburg Monarchy and the severing of Austria's previous ties to eastern lands, Austria now had to look to the community of the German *Volk*. He asserted that even if Austria was a political entity separate from Germany, it was no less a part of "Mother Germania." Burger was however careful to note that "real" nationalism eschewed national chauvinism, and instead fostered peace, cosmopolitanism and world citizenship. Thus, it was the true ideals of peaceful and cooperative German nationalism which should be taught in Austrian schools.¹⁹⁷

Indeed, Socialist pedagogues insisted that while a sense of German nationhood was an important ideal to be presented in Austrian classrooms, such national sentiments could be dangerous if they were not taught in the context of Marxist internationalism and pacifism. Without such an internationalist perspective, German nationalism in Austrian education might too easily degenerate into the sort of crude bourgeois chauvinism which had led to the First World War. For Socialist educators then, internationalism and the solidarity of the world's working classes were more important values than German national unity. Austrian state education should cultivate dedication to the German *Volk*, but also had to avoid sowing the seeds of national animosity.¹⁹⁸

Conservative Catholic educators agreed at least in part with the Socialist stance regarding national education. For example, the inaugural postwar issue of the Catholic

Unterricht in der Geschichte und Vaterlandskunde an den dem Staatsamt unterstehenden Schulen Deutschösterreichs gegeben werden," *Volkserziehung*, Official Section, (1919): 263-264.

¹⁹⁷Burger, "Neue Zeit– Unsere Zeit!" *Monatsheft für Pädagogische Reform* 69 (1919): 3-10.

¹⁹⁸Andreas Schrott, "Die 'nationale Frage' in der sozialistischen Erziehung," *Die Sozialistische Erziehung*, 8 (August, 1922): 186-8; Marriane Pollak, "Wer soll das Proletarierkind erziehen?" 17-19; Ortum Burger, "Die österreichische Schulreform im systematischen Aufbau," *Die Quelle* (1928), 713-716; "Nie wieder Erziehung zum Krieg!" 249; "Nationale Schularbeit," *Die Sozialistische Erziehung* (March, 1930): 62.

right's pedagogical journal referred to the Central Powers during the First World War as a single unit, "Germania-Austria," and declared that teachers had a duty to fulfill toward *Volk* and Fatherland.¹⁹⁹ Likewise, the ideological and spiritual leader of the Christian Social Party, Ignaz Seipel, avowed that education in Austria had to serve to interests of the entire German *Volk* rather than just the narrower interests of the Austrian state itself. In other ways, however, the Austrian right displayed their own more conservative concerns in their discussions of national education. Seipel for example argued that the state educational system, as a German institution, ought not to provide its services to any foreign-born Jew living in Austria.²⁰⁰ Another Catholic educator argued that German national consciousness and the Christian religion were inextricably linked. He advocated that the text of Wagner's overtly Christian opera *Parsifal* be taught by Catholic teachers in classrooms to help win ardent Austrian German nationalist families to the Christian Social Party's cause.²⁰¹

The First Republic's non-partisan pedagogical journals also urged a German national perspective in Austrian state education. Numerous educators and theorists used the pages of these journals to proclaim their firm belief in Austrian Germanness, and to argue that Austrian students needed to be taught to feel love for and a sense of duty to the German *Volk*. These authors all agreed that devotion to the German nation was just as important as love of the Austrian Fatherland and loyalty to the Austrian state. They also asserted that teachers needed to put aside their individual political beliefs and dedicate

¹⁹⁹“Auf zur neuen Arbeit im neuen Staate!” *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (January 15, 1919): 1.

²⁰⁰Ignaz Seipel, *Die Aufgaben der deutschen Hochschule in Österreich gegenüber dem deutschen Volke* (Vienna: Erste Wiener Verein-Buchdruckerei, 1925), 6, 27-30.

²⁰¹“Die Wahlen in die Nationalversammlung und unser Schulprogramm,” *Österreichische Pädagogische*

themselves to providing an education which emphasized the national interests of the German *Volk*. Many of these authors were also careful to state that their conception of German nationalism did not involve hostility toward other national groups, but rather served as a necessary precondition for peaceful cooperation among all of the *Völker* of Europe.²⁰²

Many Austrian educational theorists were convinced that the teaching of history provided a vital opportunity to help students to attain the necessary sense of dedication to the German nation. They argued, in accordance with the First Republic's guidelines for history education, that the history of Austria needed to be presented as part of the broad tapestry of German history. A 1927 handbook for Austrian history teachers argued that the history of the Austrian *Heimat* in fact could not be appropriately understood separately from the history of the German *Volk*. In the same manner, the authors also argued that the history of an individual *Volk* was unintelligible apart from a study of the history of other *Völker* as well. Thus, they presented Austrian history as one strand in the web of German history, which in turn was inextricably linked to that of the other nations of Europe.²⁰³

Other educators advocated a more narrow focus upon Austria's historically German character, however. For example, Franz Scheidl took a critical view of the recent educational emphasis upon *Heimatsgeschichte* (history of the [local] homeland) by some

Warte (March 5, 1919): 39.

²⁰²Franz J. Scheidl, "Einige Bausteine zum Neubau unseres Geschichtsunterrichtes," *Volkserziehung*, Pedagogical Section (November 1, 1920): 383-409; Burger, "Das ganze Deutschland soll es sein!" *Monatsheft für Pädagogische Reform* 69 (1919): 329-331; Karl Woynar, "Der Geschichtsunterricht an den Mittelschulen," *Volkserziehung*, Pedagogical Section (February 15, 1927): 38-47; Leopold Lang, "Vom Geschichtsunterricht und Geschichtsbuch," *Der Neue Weg* 5 (May, 1927): 224-9; Josef Weinberger, "Deutsches Bildungsideal und Humanität," *Der Neue Weg* 8 (August, 1927): 396-403.

²⁰³Oskar Kende, Otto Bauer, Hellmuth Schmidt-Breitung, and H. Loewe, *Geschichtsphilosophie und Geschichtsunterricht*, vol. 1, *Handbuch für den Geschichtslehrer* (Leipzig and Vienna: Franz Deuticke,

Austrian pedagogical theorists. He affirmed that such education was indeed important, but he also argued that this topic could tell Austrian students very little about their place in the world, if it were not also placed within the broader context of the history of the *Volk* as a whole. Likewise, he argued that recent attempts by the pedagogical community to discuss “world citizenship” sounded good, but that in practice such a concept was vague and abstract, and far less necessary for students to learn about than the reality of their membership in the German *Volk*.²⁰⁴

Another educational commentator, Karl Meixner, also advocated a more forceful emphasis upon Austrian Germanness in the teaching of history, arguing that some teachers were placing too much emphasis upon classical antiquity at the expense of a properly expansive treatment of Austria’s roots in the civilization of the early Germanic tribes. He asserted that German culture was the highest culture ever achieved by humanity, and that the ancient Greeks and Romans had unfairly denigrated the Germanic tribes, who in fact had been their cultural superiors. Thus, Meixner argued that even if ancient historians had portrayed the earliest Germans as barbarians, Austrian students needed to be made aware of the superiority of their national culture in order to cultivate their loyalty to their *Volk* and to the Austrian state.²⁰⁵

Other Austrian educators thought that there was already a bit too much emphasis placed on the relationship between Austria and Germany in Austrian history classrooms. One pedagogical theorist, Wilhelm Waldstein, writing in the government educational

1927), 273-279.

²⁰⁴Scheidl, 404-409.

²⁰⁵Kurt Meixner, “Der Geschichtsunterricht auf falschem Wege,” *Monatsheft für Pädagogische Reform* 69 (1919): 53-58.

journal *Volkserziehung* in 1924, disagreed with what he saw as the excessively narrow focus on German nationalism in Austrian history education. While he allowed that it was indeed important for the state's schools to inspire students to love their *Volk* and Fatherland, Waldstein argued that the First Republic's curricula had placed too much weight upon Germanic antiquity in the teaching of history. Arguing in direct opposition to Meixner's position, he asserted that the state's curricula needed to balance its teaching of Austria's national origins with more material on classical Greek and Roman culture and ideas. According to Waldstein, Austria's heritage included not just its German national roots, but also the classical legacy that had so profoundly influenced Western civilization as a whole. To focus too narrowly upon Germanic history then was to do Austrian students a disservice by keeping them from becoming familiar with their entire cultural inheritance.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁶Wilhelm Waldstein, "Zur Frage des Geschichtsunterrichts an der Deutschen Mittelschule," *Volkserziehung*, Pedagogical Section (1924): 71-74.

One progressive educator, Heinrich Scherer argued that Austrians should not just be educated about their membership in the German *Volk*, but also their relationship to the *Völker* of Central Europe. While he acknowledged that the German *Volk* exercised a dominant influence in the region, Scherer proclaimed that all of the region's *Völker* had shared a common history, and still needed to cooperate in the modern era. He even advocated the formulation of a model Central European school for the region which could be adopted by all of the region's states and thus help serve the cause of such cooperation. According to Scherer, this project might help the states of Central Europe live together peacefully without abandoning their distinctive national features. W. A. Hammer agreed, arguing in 1920 that even if the Monarchy had ended, Austria still had an enduring relationship to the former territories of the Habsburg state in Central Europe which needed to be reflected in the teaching of history and geography in the new Republic.²⁰⁷

Thus, educators and pedagogical theorists in the First Republic all basically agreed that Austrians were Germans, and that students needed to be made aware of this fact by the state's educational system. This basic consensus, however, left ample room for disagreement regarding the precise amount of weight that ought to be placed upon national education, and concerning the context in which Austrian membership in the German *Volk* ought to be presented. These teachers and theorists regarded history education as an important tool in the efforts by the Austrian state to impart German national consciousness to students. Beyond this basic consensus, however, the First Republic's teachers and pedagogues often disagreed sharply about how to teach Austria's Habsburg past in the

²⁰⁷Heinrich Scherer, "Mitteleuropäische Kultur und Schule," *Monatsheft für Pädagogische Reform* 69 (1919): 20-23, 105-106; W. A. Hammer, "Friedens Pädagogik, 2.," *Monatshefte für Pädagogische Reform*

schools.

Austrian History Education and the Habsburg Past

The entire Austrian pedagogical community affirmed that the study of history was a vital part of the state's efforts to educate the next generation of Austrian citizens. All educators agreed that history education helped young Austrians to understand their place in society and the world, and prepared them deal with the political, social and economic concerns with which they would be confronted as mature Austrian citizens.²⁰⁸ Yet individual educators had difficulty agreeing upon the precise manner in which Austria's history as part of the Habsburg Monarchy ought to be presented to students. Such concerns were a part of a somewhat wider debate concerning the most appropriate focus of upper level history education. Some pedagogues in the First Republic argued that state history education needed to move away from its previous focus upon political and military history toward a more culturally focused presentation of Austria's past. Others asserted that the territory's history would simply be unintelligible without a reasonable description of the political events and military conflicts which had so profoundly influenced the lives of the Austrian people in the past.

These different visions of history education roughly corresponded to two competing views of the Habsburg Monarchy. Some Austrian educators, and particularly those affiliated with the Social Democrats, cast the old Habsburg state as a reactionary or

70 (1920): 72-73.

²⁰⁸Valentin Pollak, "Grundforderungen eines modernen Geschichtsunterrichts," *Volkserziehung*, Pedagogical Section (1919): 197-99; 203; Scheidl, 383-409; Josef Gütter, "Die Gegenstände der sprachlich-historischen Gruppe an einer Versuchsklasse der Bürgerschule," *Volkserziehung*, Pedagogical

nationally oppressive entity, and argued that an educational focus upon cultural history would place the actual experiences of Austrian Germans in the foreground, rather than their dynastic overlords. Another group of more conservative educators and theorists argued that the Habsburgs and their state had been a positive force in the history of Central Europe, and they wanted to highlight the political history of the old Monarchy as a means of helping students appreciate its valuable legacy. These ideological divisions within the First Republic's educational community were not chiseled in stone, however, and individual educators sometimes argued for a presentation of Austrian history which represented a compromise between the extremes.

Almost from the very beginning of the First Republic, some leaders of the educational community made a vigorous argument in favor of an approach to history education which would minimize political and military topics in favor of a focus upon the culture and social organization of people of Austria. Otto Glöckel, the influential Social Democratic educational theorist, was at the forefront of these efforts to reform history education in Austria. Glöckel argued that the teaching of history in the new Republic needed to reflect the circumstances and opportunities which faced Austria after the catastrophic war and the collapse of the Habsburg Monarchy. He lambasted the approach to history education favored by the old imperial government, an approach which he asserted had deliberately used descriptions of war and dynastic politics to inspire students with a facile patriotism and a sense of dependence upon the House of Habsburg. Glöckel charged that, with Austria's rebirth as a democratic state, such history education had become obsolete. Now, presentations of history in this new era ought to focus to a much

greater degree on the historical experiences of the people and their everyday lives.

Glöckel did allow that the story of rulers, wars, and politics remained an important part of understanding the past, but he argued that the economic, cultural, and intellectual forces which shaped and influenced those events needed be more thoroughly acknowledged in Austrian history classrooms.²⁰⁹

Other members of the First Republic's pedagogical community heeded Glöckel's call to move away from political and military history. Valentin Pollak agreed with the Undersecretary's assessments regarding the problems with the old Monarchy's approach to teaching history, and vigorously argued in favor of a program of historical instruction which highlighted the importance of culture and of social and economic relationships in Austria's past. Pollak was particularly critical of the teaching of military history, which he regarded as "unessential." He optimistically asserted that just as the horrible experience of the Great War had removed war from the body of policy options available to the new Austrian state once and for all, so too should military history be radically de-

²⁰⁹Glöckel, "Erlaß des deutschösterreichischen Unterstaatssekretärs für Unterricht vom 10. September 1919, Z. 19557, betreffend mit welchem Richtlinien für den Gebrauch der deutschen Lehrbücher und für den Unterricht in der Geschichte und Vaterlandskunde an den dem Staatsamt unterstehenden Schulen Deutschösterreichs gegeben werden," 260-263. These recommendations were a staple of educational reform throughout the West. See Ringer, 32-69, 157-259.

emphasized in Austrian history classrooms.²¹⁰

²¹⁰Valentin Pollak, "Grundforderungen eines modernen Geschichtsunterrichts," 203.

While not all Austrian educators shared Pollak's rather naive view that war had become irrelevant after 1918, many at least shared his opinion of the appropriate focus for history education. Even as late as 1927, many Austrian educators continued to recommend that history teachers devote most of their energies to teaching students about culture, which served as a unifying force for the German *Volk*. Military and political history were to be taught only insofar as they encompassed truly significant events which had a genuine impact upon the people of Austria and Germany as a whole. These educators argued that the era of rote memorization of insignificant battles, treaties, and dates in history classrooms had come to an end. It was now time for history education to help student to understand truly important changes in the lives of the people.²¹¹

Of course, not all history teachers and pedagogical leaders agreed with these educational strategies. In a 1920 article in the Ministry of Education's pedagogical journal *Volkerziehung*, Richard Raithel charged that Pollak had gone much too far in his recommendations to teachers to sharply de-emphasize political and military history in the Austrian history curriculum. Raithel argued that the teaching of history could not omit political and military matters and still acquaint students with the most important aspects of Austria's past. Raithel worried that the elimination of military history from the curriculum would prevent teachers from informing young Austrians about the oppression of the German *Volk* in the aftermath of World War I, and he went so far as to term Pollak's arguments regarding military history as "*volksfremd*" (foreign to the *Volk*). Raithel also argued that Pollak linked political and military history far too closely with the

²¹¹Kende, Bauer, Schmidt-Breitung and Lowe, 263-268; A. Hofbauer, "Das Schülerbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht an Bürgerschulen," *Der Neue Weg* 6 (June, 1927): 299.

notion of dynastic history. He asserted that history teachers could certainly still present students with a patriotic view of political and military history which did not fall prey to the sort of dynastic fetish which Pollak abhorred.²¹²

In a similar manner, Franz Scheidl took aim at the vogue for cultural history, arguing that while such a historical focus sounded appealing, most educational theorists had not actually bothered to define what exactly “cultural history” actually encompassed. Scheidl noted that too frequently cultural history simply seemed to be used by pedagogical theorists as an excuse to neglect political history. In reality political developments were too important, and indeed too inextricably linked to cultural developments, to be left out of any classroom accounts of Austrian history.²¹³

Karl Woynar, writing in 1927, agreed. He argued that despite the efforts of Austrian teachers to emphasize the history of the people as whole at the expense of the lives dynastic rulers, such a strategy could not really do a good job of presenting Austria’s historical development because the people were so often influenced by their rulers. Furthermore, he noted that the textbooks from the last decades of the Monarchy which so many postwar educators had criticized as overly deferential to the interests and reputation of the dynasty in fact had generally provided a far more impartial view of dynastic figures than their critics gave them credit for. Indeed, Woynar cautioned that modern history education needed to strive for similar impartiality, to the point of avoiding judgements about the best form of government, even if, as he noted pointedly, some particular political

²¹²Richard Raithel, “Stellungnahme zu Pollaks ‘Grundforderung eines modernen Geschichtsunterrichts,’” *Volkserziehung*, Pedagogical Section (November 1, 1920): 415-18.

²¹³Scheidl, 394-400.

system happened to be enjoying success in the present.²¹⁴

Clearly political ideology played no small part in these disputes over how to teach history in Austrian schools. Still, some educators issued pleas to maintain a non-partisan educational system in Austria in which no one set of political beliefs dominated. Such calls in fact at times came from partisans in both major political camps. Pollak, for example, despite his leftist orientation, argued that both the more traditional historical approach of Leopold von Ranke and Marxist materialism had a place in Austrian history education. Pollak argued that history teachers ought to be open about their individual political beliefs, although they should never impose those beliefs upon students or allow their ideology to supersede a dedication to historical truth. In similar manner, piously Catholic educators such as Rudolf Hornich avowed that there should be a balance between different of points of view and approaches in Austrian history education.²¹⁵

Yet at the same time, some politically oriented educators avowed that they did indeed hope to use education to disseminate their views. In a 1933 article in the Socialist pedagogical journal, *Die Sozialistische Erziehung*, Desider Hort disagreed with the premise that education should or even could be de-politicized, arguing that many educational endeavors were inherently and unavoidably ideological. Hort declared that the bourgeoisie was simply afraid that any real social analysis presented by the educational system would inevitably lead children toward socialism, and thus sought to preserve their hegemony by spreading their own propaganda in classrooms even as they

²¹⁴Wojnar, 41-43.

²¹⁵Pollak, "Grundforderungen eines modernen Geschichtsunterrichts," 201-203; Rudolf Hornich, "Grundzüge zu einem Schulprogramm der katholischen Lehrerschaft Deutschösterreichs," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (February 5, 1919): 17; See also Kende, Bauer, Schmidt-Breitung and Lowe, 269;

issued shallow calls for non-partisan education.²¹⁶

Scheidl, 391-403.

²¹⁶Desider Hort, "Erziehung zum politischen Denken," *Die Sozialistische Erziehung* (December 1933): 217-219. See also Hugo Schulz, "Das Problem des Geschichtsunterrichtes," *Der Kampf, sozialdemokratische Monatsschrift* 18 (February, 1925): 59-64.

Similar accusations came from the Catholic conservative educational camp as well. For example, Arnold Winkler argued that Socialist educators and historians had used the first years of the Republican era to produce books and articles which lauded democracy and popular sovereignty as the natural outcome of historical development. According to Winkler, any arguments which presented one form of government organization as the inevitable end point of history transformed education into political propaganda, and he noted that the Socialists themselves had habitually denounced similar teleological views of history which presented the old Monarchy rather than democracy as the “goal” of history. Winkler argued that such denunciations were evidence of Socialist hypocrisy when it came to Austrian educational policy.²¹⁷ Of course by 1933, the Catholic educational community would itself participate in the transformation of Austrian education into an overtly propagandistic ideological mouthpiece for the conservative, authoritarian government which ultimately replaced the First Republic.

The Austrian pedagogical community was thus bitterly divided over matters of political ideology, and charges of bad faith flew from all sides. It was in this politically charged environment that educators and theorists debated exactly which vision of Austria’s Habsburg past ought to be presented in history classrooms. Unsurprisingly, the issue was a controversial one, and continued to be a matter of acrimonious disagreement throughout the First Republic.

Socialist educators of course, argued that the old Monarchy had been an oppressive and reactionary entity which had stood in the way of the legitimate social and national

²¹⁷Arnold Winkler, “Zur Methodik des Geschichtsunterrichtes, 1,” *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (January, 1921): 4-5; “Zur Methodik des Geschichtsunterrichtes, 2,” *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte*

aspirations of all of its various subject peoples. They generally regarded the Austrian Republic as a new creation which had been forged by the Austrian working class, and they celebrated the fall of the old Monarchy as a positive achievement. They argued that Austrian history education ought to reflect this point of view, and, as we have seen, they urged history teachers to highlight the experiences of ordinary Austrians in the past rather than the dynastic machinations of the House of Habsburg.

Glöckel used his position as Undersecretary of Education as a pulpit to advocate for the Socialist view of the Habsburg past. During the imperial period, the Monarchy had been presented as if it were the natural and necessary culmination of Austria's historical development. Now, however, teachers and historians could see the Habsburg Monarchy for what it truly was: a conscious and intentional project which the Habsburgs worked to create, and which in reality had lasted only from the eighteenth-century reign of Joseph II to the death of Franz Joseph. Glöckel certainly acknowledged that a natural economic bond had existed between the lands of the Monarchy, but he argued that the political bond was a construction rather than a historical necessity. Thus, teachers needed to modify or correct the old historical narrative to emphasize this new perspective.²¹⁸

Glöckel urged teachers to focus first and foremost upon German-Austria, and secondarily upon Germany and the other German-speaking regions of Europe. Of the former Habsburg lands, Glöckel argued that teachers ought to deal with Czechoslovakia in depth because of that state's large German population and its role as an indispensable part

(February, 1921): 3-7.

²¹⁸Glöckel, "Erlaß des deutschösterreichischen Unterstaatssekretärs für Unterricht vom 10. September 1919, Z. 19557, betreffend mit welchem Richtlinien für den Gebrauch der deutschen Lehrbücher und für den Unterricht in der Geschichte und Vaterlandskunde an den dem Staatsamt unterstehenden Schulen

of Austria's economic geography. The remaining regions formerly possessed by the Habsburgs, however, should merely be treated as part of the "rest of Europe," as no important relationship remained between them and Austria.²¹⁹

Writing in the first issue of the pedagogical journal *Monatsheft für Pädagogische Reform*, the journal's editor Eduard Burger essentially agreed with Glöckel's assessment regarding the Habsburg Monarchy, arguing that Austrians had previously placed far too much blind trust in the old state, which had seemed indestructible at the time, but which had ultimately crumbled due to the obstinance and highhandedness of the ruling dynasty. According to Burger, memories of the Monarchy were the path to the past; deliverance lay through an education which emphasized German cultural unity, republican values, and the reconciliation between Europe's *Völker* in the context of a fair international settlement.²²⁰

Other educators and theorists on the political left took an even more radically critical view of the old Monarchy. Socialist pedagogues charged that the old Monarchy had been a "Völkerkerker" (prison house of the peoples) which had been responsible for the catastrophic World War which had wracked Central Europe. The people of Austria, fed up with the subjugation and suffering that had been their lot under the militaristic yoke of the Habsburgs, had finally risen up and destroyed the old Monarchy. These leftist educators argued that while the Habsburg state had existed, it had attempted to perpetuate itself through propagandistic history education. The Republic required no such crude artifice however; simple historical truth would suffice to give students an accurate view of

Deutschösterreichs gegeben werden," 162-163.

²¹⁹*Ibid.*, 164.

the evils of Habsburg rule.²²¹

Indeed, Socialist educators, like Socialist political leaders, regarded the new Austrian Republic as a clean break with the Habsburg past, and urged to teachers to teach their students to celebrate the birth of democracy out of the ruins of the old Monarchy. They argued that history teachers ought to use the example of the foundation of the First Republic to impart democratic values to school children, as well as to inoculate them against the forces of political reaction which still lingered in modern Austria.²²² In one particularly vivid example, a 1930 article in *Die Sozialistische Erziehung* presented a sample political dialogue between an adult Social Democrat and a child which explained the Socialist stance concerning the First Republic. In this dialogue, the adult, through a series of questions, leads the child toward the conclusion that the end of the old Monarchy had served the interests of the majority of the Austrian people, and that those who wished to restore the Monarchy, such as the wealthy, the aristocracy and the *Heimwehr* militia, wanted to do so in order that they might return to the system of exploitation of the working class which had been characteristic of the old Habsburg state.²²³

Of course, not all educators who wished to commemorate the foundation of the First Republic did so out of an overt commitment to Socialist ideology. Some Austrian teachers simply regarded the new Austrian state as something which ought to be

²²⁰Burger, "Neue Zeit– Unsere Zeit!" 3-10.

²²¹Pollak, "Grundforderungen eines modernen Geschichtsunterrichts," 201-202; Heinrich Scherer, "Mitteleuropäische Kultur und Schule," *Monatsheft für Pädagogische Reform* 69 (1919): 26-7; Anton Tesarek, "Der 12. November und unsere Kinder," *Die Sozialistische Erziehung* (15 September, 1921): 13-15; "Was machen wir zur Republikfeier?" *Die Sozialistische Erziehung* (1930): 211-12; "Die 12. November," *Die Sozialistische Erziehung* (November, 1932): 248.

²²²Tesarek, "Der 12. November und unsere Kinder," 13-15; "Was machen wir zur Republikfeier?" 211-12; "Die 12. November," 248.

²²³Sepp Pözl, "Politische Gespräche mit Kindern. Was unsere Kinder von der Republik wissen," *Die*

celebrated in their class rooms in a non-partisan manner in order to cultivate loyalty and devotion to the Republic on the part of their students. As one article marking the Republic's fifth anniversary put the matter, students needed to be taught to appreciate the positive aspects of "our free, German Fatherland, our beloved Austria!"²²⁴ Indeed, for many members of the Austrian pedagogical community, loyalty to the new state was not equivalent to a repudiation of the legacy of the old Habsburg Monarchy. Many teachers and educational theorists presented the First Republic as the genuine heir to the great culture and positive achievements of the Habsburgs' multinational state. For them, modern Austria did not represent a clean break with the Habsburg past so much as it did a continuation of much that was valuable in the old state.²²⁵

Some educators went even further, highlighting aspects of the Habsburg past which had been superior to the situation in which contemporary Austria found itself. For example, in a 1927 article in the pedagogical journal *Die Quelle*, Otto Lehmann and Erwin Hanslick described the old Monarchy in unambiguously positive terms, arguing that the Habsburg state had represented the imperial heritage which the German *Volk* had inherited from the Roman Empire, and which had served a critical economic, cultural and political role in the border region between Western Europe, Eastern Europe, and the orient. Ultimately they argued that the old Monarchy and its valuable supranational ideals of cooperation between *Völker* had been foolishly dismantled by the Entente in 1918, leaving

Sozialistische Erziehung. (January, 1930): 16.

²²⁴Mathilde Peyrer, "Zum 12. November. Ein Gespräch zwischen den Schülerinnen Agnes, Anna, Liese, Poldi, Resi," *Die Quelle* 10 (1924): 899-902; See also Leopold Faltner, "Die Festtage unsers Staates," *Der Neue Weg* 4 (April, 1927): 186-188; Karoline Pensimus, "Der Geburtstag unsere Fahne," *Die Quelle* 10 (1932): 77.

²²⁵Hammer, "Friedens Pädagogik, 2.," 72-73; Faltner, "Die Festtage unsers Staates," 186-188.

the relationship between cultures dangerously out of balance.²²⁶

Such positive portrayals of the Habsburg Monarchy were of course even more frequent and pronounced within the conservative Catholic community. These educators and theorists generally maintained that the old dynastic state was an important part of modern Austria's heritage, and that it had offered the German *Volk* in Austria protection and a privileged position which they certainly lacked in the new and relatively powerless modern Austrian state. One Catholic theorist, Bernard Merth, writing in 1919, illustrated the extent to which German national sentiment and conservative loyalty to the old dynasty might go hand in hand. Merth decried the subjugation of German-speaking minorities in the new Czechoslovak state, and argued that the unstable and straitened circumstances in Central Europe offered ample evidence of how beneficial the old imperial union had been not just for Austria, but also for Bohemia and Hungary as well.²²⁷ In a subsequent article, Merth turned to the issue of the demands for Czech language education of Czech minorities living in Vienna. Merth was indignant, and argued that the Germans of Austria, as "Aryan" Europeans, had a duty to raise their children to be nationally conscious German students through the use of German language education, and that such education could only be beneficial to Czech minorities, who would become bilingual as a result. Merth still held out the hope, however, that Austrian German and Czech speakers, as "Christian brothers," might abandon their unproductive squabbling and unite against the

²²⁶Otto Lehmann and Erwin Hanslick, "Abriss der Weltkunde und Darstellung der Lage Wiens an der Weltkulturgrenz Europas," *Die Quelle* (1927): 644, 732-734, 807.

²²⁷Bernard Merth, "Nationalismus und Humanität," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (April 5, 1919): 49-50.

common threats facing them: communism, liberalism, and the “Jewish press.”²²⁸

For Merth, German nationalism and Austrian patriotism were complementary concepts rather than contradictory ones. He was more than willing to refer to Austrians as “we Germans” and to proclaim his fierce dedication to *Anschluss* and his bitter resentment toward the Entente powers which had forced the German lands to accept blame for a war in which the German cause had been just. Yet in the same breath, he also expressed his pride in Austria’s historical role as a leading cultural force in Central Europe, arguing that even though the old Monarchy was gone, the bond between Austria and the other successor states remained strong. Indeed, even as he declared his support for *Anschluss*, he also proclaimed that “the eagle of Austria will exist until the end of days.”²²⁹ Such sentiments amply demonstrated that the German nationalism of the Catholic pedagogical community was a complex phenomenon which could also accommodate expressions of passionate Austrian patriotism, even as early as 1919.

Other Catholic educators, however, were less eager to proclaim their dedication to the House of Habsburg, especially during the early years of the First Republic. Such reticence came in part as a response to the criticisms from the Socialist left that previous Austrian education had been slavishly devoted to the old dynasty. One article in *Die Pädagogische Warte* proclaimed that the Austrian right’s patriotism even before 1918 had been focused upon the *Heimat* and *Volk*, rather than on the dynasty itself. In the postwar period, the author argued that Austrian Catholics ought to dedicate themselves to keeping Jews and Socialists from dominating the new state, rather than working to defend the

²²⁸Merth, “Zur Frage der tsechischen Schulen in Wien,” *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (November 1, 1919): 186-9.

reputation of a dynasty which had been deposed.²³⁰

As the First Republic wore on and the divisions between the political right and left grew more pronounced, however, conservative educators became increasingly willing to rally to the defense of the old Monarchy. This tendency reflected the turn away from overt German nationalism and direct advocacy for *Anschluß* toward firm professions of Austrian patriotism by the Christian Social Party in the political arena. More and more, conservative teachers and pedagogical theorists presented the Habsburg state as the embodiment of the Catholic ideals and traditional culture which they viewed as having come under attack by liberals and Marxists in modern Austria. The defense of those ideals required these educators to look to the proud example of the old Monarchy as a potential source of new strength for Austrian conservatism, even if this newly potent Austrian patriotism came at the expense of the Catholic pedagogical community's earlier enthusiastic German nationalism.

For example, a 1929 article in the Catholic educational journal, *Die Pädagogische Warte*, by Josef Krauter denounced the Enlightenment as an assault upon the Catholic Church which had had a devastating impact upon European culture. Krauter singled out Voltaire, D'Alembert, and Frederick the Great of Prussia as the three historical figures who had helped lead this assault upon Christianity. He was especially hostile to Frederick and north German Protestantism, and appeared to have little concern for the effect of his comments on German unity. Krauter also lambasted the deleterious effects which Enlightenment ideas had upon Austria and Vienna, and he castigated Joseph II for

²²⁹Merth, "Zum. 12. November," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (November 1, 1919): 191-5.

²³⁰"Soll unsere österreichische Volks- und Burgerschule ausgebaut oder zerstört werden?" *Österreichische*

abandoning the staunch Catholic piety of his mother, the Empress Maria Theresa. In Krauter's estimation then, Joseph had deviated from the traditional role of the House of Habsburg as defenders and nurturers of the Catholic faith. While this deviation did not negate the positive view Krauter had of the Monarchy itself, his criticisms of Joseph, a popular figure among Central European German nationalists, illustrate the extent to which the Austrian right had become more concerned with opposing republicanism, liberalism, and socialism than with nursing German nationalist resentments about the postwar treaty system.²³¹

Another article in the same journal on the Austrian baroque by Wilhelm Prastorfer demonstrates the same transition toward Austrian patriotism within the conservative Catholic camp. Prastdorfer attributed the tremendous cultural flourishing in Austria between 1650 and 1750 to the Habsburg state's successful defense of Catholic values from threats from both Protestantism and the Ottoman Empire. In doing so, he highlighted the Catholic camp's increasing emphasis upon Catholic religiosity as a defining element of Austria's distinctive character. While Prastdorfer still affirmed that Austrians were a German "tribe," he lavished considerable attention on the elements which made the Austrian branch of the German *Volk* distinctive and worthwhile, and urged Catholic history teachers to present this view to Austrian children. Such portrayals of Austria were relatively rare at the beginning of the era of the First Republic, but were increasingly

Pädagogische Warte (Jan./Feb., 1920), 11-12, 28.

²³¹Josef Krauter, "Die Aufklärung und ihre Folgen für die Kulturwelt," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (March, 1929): 64-66. On Joseph II's popularity among German nationalists, see Nancy M. Wingfield, "Statues of Emperor Joseph II as Sites of German Identity," in *Staging the Past: The Politics of Commemoration in Habsburg Central Europe, 1848 to the Present*, Maria Bucur and Nancy M. Wingfield, eds. (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2001), 178_201.

common by its end.²³²

A more overt statement of the right's reassertion of Austrian patriotism came from the Tyrolean educator Ambros Mayr, who in 1930 responded to critics who argued that the inhabitants of Tyrol had too often emphasized their own culture and distinctiveness at the expense of Austrian unity. Mayr acknowledged that Tyroleans were proud of their culture, but he also noted that they had also been fervently loyal to the House of Austria throughout history. He argued that the people of Tyrol, just like all of the inhabitants of Austria, had only recently rediscovered their "Austrian souls" after the upheavals and deprivations of the Republic's first decade. He then affirmed the loyalty of Tyrolean teachers to the "Ostmark-Austrian idea" and to imparting a sense of "*Österreichertum*" (Austrianness) to students in Tyrol. Again, Mayr portrayed Austrians and Tyroleans as branches of the wider German *Volk*, but he also repeatedly emphasized Austrian distinctiveness and national pride in a manner which had been much rarer earlier in the Republican era.²³³

Such patriotic emphases were not universal, however, in the Catholic pedagogical community even in the later years of the First Republic. For example, one article on history education in *Die Pädagogische Warte* from 1930 criticized the individualism, materialism, and political bickering in Austrian society and recommended the use of educational policy to help ameliorate these problems. Yet at the same time, the author also proclaimed the "mission" of the German *Volk* to show the rest of the world the

²³²Wilhelm Prastorfer, "Österreichischer Barok," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (September, 1929): 217-22.

²³³Ambros Mayr, "Österreichertum und Tiroler Lehrer," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (December, 1930): 310-11.

solution to these difficulties and called for a revision in the post-war European order to correct the injustices perpetrated upon the *Volk*.²³⁴ By 1930, however, such expressions of German nationalism were somewhat out of step with the conservative pedagogical mainstream, which had come to regard the old Monarchy as a more important part of Austria's heritage than Austria's membership in the German *Volk*.

In 1931, the historian Heinrich Srbik published an article on Franz Joseph which bridged the extremes between the main ideological camps concerning the legacy of the Monarchy. According to Srbik, Franz Joseph had been a hardworking, pious monarch who had genuinely desired the best for his subjects. Despite his many admirable qualities, however, the Habsburg emperor had ultimately been too firmly embedded in religious and dynastic traditionalism to lead Austria successfully into the modern era. Srbik argued that Franz Joseph was best understood as the last bearer of the Habsburgs' centuries-old, supranational political principles and the dynasty's determination to preserve Austria's great power status, ideals which had ultimately been unable to stand against the tide of twentieth-century modernity.²³⁵

Such evenhandedness in dealing with the legacy of the Habsburgs was fairly rare in educational circles during the Republic. By the last years of the First Republic, history education and the Habsburg past had increasingly become political tools that were used in the ideological struggle between the Social Democrats and the Christian Social Party. The Socialist left in Austria regarded the old Monarchy as an oppressive relic of the past, and argued that students of history in Austrian classrooms needed to be taught the democratic

²³⁴M. Florian, "Welche Forderungen stellt die heutige Zeit an den Geschichtsunterricht?" *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (November, 1931): 258-9.

values and German national consciousness which Socialists viewed as incompatible with any positive assessment of Habsburg rule. Conservative Catholic educators, on the other hand, regarded the Habsburg Monarchy as an important part of Austria's historical heritage, and as an entity which had usually served to safeguard the religious faith and the traditional Austrian culture which they cherished. This turn toward an Austrian patriotism on the part of the Catholic educational community came at the expense of that group's previous enthusiastic professions of German nationalism. While this group certainly never abandoned the premise that Austrians were Germans, their increasingly intense professions of pride in Austria's distinctive history and culture meant that they no longer emphasized those national ideals to the extent they once had.

If the political aspect of Austria's Habsburg past was a matter of ideological dispute within the First Republic's educational community, then other aspects of the history of the old Monarchy were less controversial. Most Austrian teachers and pedagogical theorists, regardless of their political orientation, could at least agree that the Habsburg Monarchy had presided over an impressive set of cultural and artistic achievements in Austria during its last several centuries. In particular, many educators highlighted the distinguished group of classical and romantic musical composers who had flourished in Austria, and especially in its capital, Vienna, as examples of a historical heritage which the modern Austrian state might embrace.

For example, Karl Kobald portrayed Vienna as the musical capital of the world, and in important part of Austria's cultural identity. Kobald provided brief descriptions of the careers of Vienna's most important musical artists such as Haydn, Schubert,

²³⁵Heinrich Srbik, "Franz Josef I.– Wie er wirklich war," *Die Quelle* (1931): 952-3.

Bruckner, Strauß, Mahler, Schönberg, and especially Mozart, whom he described as a cultural treasure of global stature, comparable to the ancient Greeks, Shakespeare, Goethe, or Wagner. Indeed, Kobald also associated the German composer Wagner with Viennese music, and noted that his opera *Parsifal* had been received with more enthusiasm in Vienna than in any other European city.²³⁶ An entire 1924 issue of the pedagogical journal *Die Quelle* dedicated to the history and culture of Vienna made a similar set of arguments, as a number of authors celebrated the music, Baroque architecture, and immense political influence of the Austrian capital, and gave considerable credit for those developments to Habsburg rulers.²³⁷

Other educational authors focused more on individual composers and their significance to Austrian culture. In 1931, the one hundred and fortieth anniversary of the death of Mozart was commemorated in Austria, and a number of articles in *Die Quelle* urged educators to pay more attention to him as a figure of enormous importance to Austria's culture.²³⁸ Similarly, 1928 marked the one hundredth anniversary of Schubert's death, and the journal published a host of pieces lauding his contributions to Austrian music, including one which portrayed him as the symbol of the "eternal Austrian mission" for world culture as part of the German *Volk*.²³⁹

At least one other specialist in the history of music discussed two prominent

²³⁶Karl Kobald, "Wien als Musikstadt," *Die Quelle* 6 (1924): 589-594.

²³⁷H. Montzka, "Zur Geschichte von Wiens politischer Bedeutung," *Die Quelle* 6 (1924): 540-53; Max Eisler, "Das Barocke Wien," *Die Quelle* 6 (1924): 557-66; Karl Kobald, "Wien als Musikstadt," *Die Quelle* 6 (1924): 589-594.

²³⁸"Das Jahr 1931. Ein Mozart-Jahr," *Die Quelle* (1931): 111-112; Mena.Blaschitz, "Mozart und unsere Jugend," *Die Quelle* (1931): 243-247.

²³⁹Hans Rupprich, "Franz Schubert und die Literatur seiner Zeit," *Der Neue Weg* 4 (1928): 175; Ferdinand Soeser, "Die Schubertfeier in der Schule," *Der Neue Weg* 4 (1928): 199-207; Leopold Vockenhuber, "Franz Schubert. Eine Lebensschilderung für die Schule," *Der Neue Weg* 4 (1928): 208-12.

composers who worked in Vienna, Ludwig van Beethoven and Joseph Haydn, in terms of their significance to German, rather than to Austrian culture. In a 1927 article, Alfred Orel presented Beethoven as an example of the greatness of the German *Geist* and *Volk*, and as a figure who sprang from German culture, even if he had also had a profound influence on musical developments throughout the world. Yet Orel also dwelled upon the decisive influence of the Viennese environment, and of such great Austrian composers as Mozart and Haydn upon Beethoven's work. For Orel, there was no conflict between the presentation of Beethoven as a German cultural product and a discussion of his work in the context of the Viennese milieu: Austria was simply a German land. Indeed, Orel devoted no attention to whether Beethoven was best considered German or Austrian, but rather noted the debate concerning whether the composer was defined more by his career in German lands or by the Dutch background of his family.²⁴⁰ Similarly, Orel discussed Haydn in the context of German culture and claimed that the composer had freed German music from Italian influences. At the same time, however, he presented Haydn as the leading figure in a "south German" musical movement centered on Vienna which was distinctive, and referred to him as a seminal figure of the "Austrian-German *Volkstum*."²⁴¹

Indeed, many Austrian educators were also quite willing to celebrate cultural figures such as Goethe and Wagner as part of Austria's historical heritage despite the fact that those artists had spent their careers entirely outside of Austria.²⁴² Such celebrations

²⁴⁰ Alfred Orel, "Beethoven," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (March, 1927): 55-61.

²⁴¹ Orel, "Joseph Haydn," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (March 15, 1932): 57-61; For a similar portrayal of Haydn, see Franz Trczka, "'Papa' Haydn?" *Die Quelle* 3 (1932): 290-293.

²⁴² Daniel Siebert, "Siegfrieds Werdegang in Richard Wagner's 'Ring des Nibelungen,'" *Der Neue Weg* 2 (1933): 59-66; Heinrich Peter, "Goethe und Österreich," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (February 15, 1932): 35-7; A. Jalkotzy, "Goethe," *Die Sozialistische Erziehung* (March, 1932): 50; Joseph Jung, "Zur 100. Wiederkehr von Goethes Todestage," *Die Quelle* 2 (1932): 174-178.

were not solely the work of individual educational authors either. The First Republic's Ministry of Education set aside time for the commemoration of the one hundredth anniversary of Goethe's death in Austrian classrooms in much the same way as it instructed teachers to celebrate significant anniversaries for such prominent Austrian sons as Schubert and Haydn.²⁴³ Such support for prominent non-Austrian German cultural figures was not a partisan issue. Goethe was claimed as part of the conservative right's vision of Austrian history just as he was by the Social Democrats in their leftist view of the past. Clearly, teachers in the First Republic saw Austria's historical heritage as encompassing all of German history, above and beyond specifically Austrian cultural movements.

Thus, all of the First Republic's teachers and pedagogical theorists saw Austrians as Germans, and viewed Austrian history as part of German history. In a similar manner, they could agree that at least some aspects of the Habsburg past, and particularly elements of Austria's cultural history, were valuable and worth preserving as part of a modern Austrian identity. There was no consensus concerning the political aspects of the Habsburg past. Conservative educators saw the Habsburgs as the symbol of their own modern struggles against liberalism, Marxism, and secularism, and they argued that students needed to be taught to appreciate the Habsburg legacy which the new Austrian state had inherited. Leftist and nationalist teachers, on the other hand, saw only national oppression and absolutist rule in the Habsburg past, and they thought Austrian children ought to be educated in the democratic principles which had supplanted Habsburg rule in

²⁴³"100. Todestag Franz Schuberts," *Volkserziehung*, Official Section (April 1, 1928): 85; "Goethe-Gedenkfeier," *Verordnungsblatt* (January 1, 1932): 7; "Haydn Gedenkfeier," *Verordnungsblatt* (February

1918. Not all educators saw the Habsburg past in such black and white terms, but by the end of the Republican era, history education in Austria had become intensely politicized. Beyond a broad agreement on Austrian Germanness and the importance of history education, the Austrian educational community could not agree upon how Austria's Habsburg past ought to be presented to the next generation of Austrian citizens.

iii. The First Republic's History Textbooks and the Habsburg Past

Despite the acrimonious ideological debates between the First Republic's various political factions concerning the appropriate content of history education in Austria, the new state did oversee the production of several new or revised history textbooks. It is perhaps unsurprising given the depth of the disagreement in Austria regarding the meaning of its past that the authors of these history texts frequently did not agree with one another, but rather provided students with a contradictory views of Austrian history. This diversity in fact reflected the deep divisions within Austrian society concerning the meaning of the Habsburg past for contemporary life, and the lack of consensus among these textbook authors meant that state history education could ultimately offer little help in bridging the ideological divide in Austria about the Habsburg legacy.

The one area where most of the new history textbooks did agree was on the subject of Austrian national identity. The First Republic's history texts all portrayed Austria's history as part of the larger history of the Germany, and portrayed Austrians as part of the German *Volk*. Beyond such professions of Austrian Germanness, however, the new textbooks offered students a number of different narratives of Austria's past. Some

essentially recast material from history education before 1918 in a slightly newer form, portraying the Habsburgs as leading German dynasty which had done its best to safeguard German interests and to advance Austria's unique culture in central and eastern Europe throughout the centuries. Others, however, provided a more critical view of Habsburg rule, and argued that Habsburgs had at times worked against the project of German unity in the name of its own selfish dynastic interests. The remainder of the First Republic's history texts fell somewhere in between these two extremes, and took a more neutral point of view regarding the role of the Habsburgs in Austrian history. All of these works attempted to trace the historical development of the German *Volk* in Austria from the early Middle Ages to the First Republic, but the manner in which individual authors presented that Austrian historical narrative varied considerably.

The First Republic's History Textbooks and Austrian Germanness

After the fall of the Habsburg Monarchy, Austrian educational policy makers realized that the First Republic required a set of new history textbooks which would help students grasp Austria's new circumstances in the postwar era. Almost all Austrian educational leaders and pedagogical theorists agreed that the old history texts which had been used during the last decades of the imperial era were simply no longer appropriate, and needed to be revised or even replaced entirely. In 1919, the Socialist Undersecretary of Education Otto Glöckel argued that the old Monarchy's history textbooks were out of step with the pedagogical ideals of the modern era and had been used by the imperial government to inspire loyalty to the Habsburgs. Now that the Habsburgs had been

deposed, Glöckel urged historians and authors to move as quickly as possible to produce a round of more modern textbooks for all educational levels which would discard the outdated emphasis upon political, military, and dynastic history of previous texts in favor of cultural history and Austrian Germanness. Glöckel of course recognized that such revisions could not be made immediately, and in the interim he recommended that history teachers supplement the old textbooks with material which would reflect Austria's contemporary situation more accurately.²⁴⁴ Other educators agreed, but even in 1927, there were still some Austrian educational theorists who argued that the process of revising Austria's history textbooks had proceeded far too slowly, and urged more vigorous work on this enterprise.²⁴⁵

It is worth noting that these criticisms regarding history textbooks used in Austrian classrooms during the last decades of the Habsburg Monarchy appear to be exaggerated. While such textbooks did indeed present a view of Austria's political history which emphasized the role of the old Habsburg dynasty, their basic content was not dramatically different from the texts used during the First Republic. They did not ignore cultural history, nor did they fail to portray Austrians as part of the German *Volk*.²⁴⁶ Still, by the end of the republican era in Austria, a set of new or revised history textbooks had indeed

²⁴⁴Glöckel, "Erlaß des deutschösterreichischen Unterstaatssekretärs für Unterricht vom 10. September 1919, Z. 19557, betreffend mit welchem Richtlinien für den Gebrauch der deutschen Lehrbücher und für den Unterricht in der Geschichte und Vaterlandskunde an den dem Staatsamt unterstehenden Schulen Deutschösterreichs gegeben werden," 259-264; "Ausführungen über den Stand der Schulreform in der Sitzung des Ausschusses für Erziehung und Unterricht am 22. Oktober 1919," *Volkserziehung*, Pedagogical Section (1919): 1-3. For a similar call to reform textbook contents, see also "Ein Jahr republikanische Schulreform in Deutschösterreich," *Monatsheft für Pädagogische Reform* 69 (1919): 370.

²⁴⁵Kende, Bauer, Schmidt-Breitung and Lowe, 252-254.

²⁴⁶See for example Emil Hannak and Hermann Raschke, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Neuzeit für Oberklassen der Mittelschulen*, eighth ed. (Vienna: Alfred Hölder, 1907), 70-80, 115-122; Gustav Rusch, Alois Herdegen and Franz Tiechl, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte* (Vienna: Pichlers, 1911), 246-257; Karl Woynar, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte für die Unterstufe der Mädchenlyzeen*, vol. 3 (Vienna, 1919), 70-87, 94-

appeared, and these new texts at least partially reflected the new views regarding Austrian history and national identity of the First Republic's various ideological groups.

The First Republic's federal administrative structure makes it difficult to discern exactly where and how extensively individual textbooks were used in Austria. While the Republic's Ministry of Education instituted general curricula for the entire state, and reserved the power to approve which textbooks were acceptable for use in Austrian schools, it fell to Austria's federal provinces and local boards of education to select which specific works their schools would use from the list of approved materials. Thus, educational authorities on the local level had a significant amount of latitude to choose texts in order to reflect the political and national views of the dominant political party of their region. Vienna, for example, was governed by a solid Social Democratic majority throughout the First Republic, and its provincial educational system reflected the SDP's progressive and egalitarian pedagogical aims even after the Party lost its ability to dominate the Republic's educational agenda as a whole when it lost its parliamentary majority in 1920. In a similar manner, German nationalist parties enjoyed strong support in the provinces of Styria and Carinthia, and undoubtedly influenced the content of history education in the classrooms of those regions.²⁴⁷ All we can say for certain, however, is that the First Republic's Ministry of Education approved a body of textbooks which contained a wide variety of views regarding Austria's Habsburg past, and that individual school boards were able to select materials from this body of approved works as they saw

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²⁴⁷Timothy Kirk, "Fascism and Austrofascism," in *The Dollfuss/Schuschnigg Era in Austria: A Reassessment*, eds. Günter Bischof, Anton Pelinka and Alexander Lassner (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 2003), 15.

fit.²⁴⁸

All of the Republic's new textbooks, however, did emphasize a consistent view of national identity which portrayed Austrians as part of the German *Volk*, and which cast Austrian history as part of the history of Germany. Some of these textbooks' statements regarding Austrian Germanness were fairly explicit. For example, Oscar Kende in his 1928 text for lower level *Haupt-* and *Mittelschule* students, *Einführung in den Geschichtsunterricht*, stated that Austrians "are German, and belong to the German *Volk*." He also discussed what he saw as the difference between the common linguistic distinction between "Germans" and "Austrians," and the actual German *Volk*, who were "one of the greatest in the world" and comprised not just Germans living in Germany, but also in Austria, Switzerland, and other parts of Europe. Kende noted that Germans had different traditions and even dialects, but these differences did not change the essential fact of their national unity.²⁴⁹ Other textbook authors were perhaps not quite so explicit as Kende in their statements regarding the German character of the Austrian people, but they nevertheless clearly stated that they regarded Austrians as a "*Stamm*" (tribe) of the German *Volk*.²⁵⁰

These textbook authors typically located the beginning of Austria's history in the settlement of the Alpine and Danubian regions of Central Europe, or the "*Ostmark*," by

²⁴⁸Papnek, 85-107; Zeps, 69.

²⁴⁹Oskar Kende, *Einführung in den Geschichtsunterricht, für die unterste Klasse der österreichischen Mittelschulen und Hauptschulen* (Vienna: Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1928), 6-8.

²⁵⁰Karl Czerwenka and Alfred Bohmann, *Lehr- und Lesebuch der Geschichte für die Unterstufe der Mittelschulen*, vol. 1 (Vienna and Leipzig: Österreichischer Bundesverlag für Unterricht, Wissenschaft und Kunst, 1930), 61-65; Heinz Obendorfer, Fritz Herndl and Hans Ernst Butz, *Aus Vergangenheit und Gegenwart. Ein Lehr- und Arbeitsbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht an österreichischen Hauptschulen*, vol. 4 (Vienna and Leipzig: Österreichischer Bundesverlag für Unterricht, Wissenschaft und Kunst, 1931), 24; Andreas Zeehe and Adam Schuh, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte für die oberen Klassen der Mittelschulen*,

Germanic settlers in the tenth century. Several of the authors explicitly referred to these Germanic migrants as the “forefathers” of modern Austrians, and Karl Czerwenka and Alfred Bohmann referred to the old *Ostmark* as the “nucleus” of the modern Austrian Fatherland in their 1930 history text for lower level *Mittelschule* students.²⁵¹ The author of several *Mittelschule* textbooks featuring an especially pronounced vision of German nationalism, Uto Metzger, made a particular point of emphasizing the role of early medieval Germanic migrations in the foundation of Austria, and he took pains to highlight the manner in which the *Ostmark* was created as a bastion of Germanic civilization against the Slavs and “predatory” Magyars who also inhabited the region at the same time.²⁵² All of these descriptions of the origins of Austrian history served explicitly to emphasize Austrian Germanness to students, and to link the history of Austria with that of the German *Volk* as a whole.

The First Republic’s textbook authors used other periods of Austrian history to portray the intimate link between Austria and the other German lands of Europe as well. Many authors cast the Thirty Years War in the seventeenth century, for example, as a time of trouble and disunity not only for Austria, but for the entire German *Volk*, as France and

vol. 4 (Vienna: Ed. Hölzel, 1933), 16-17.

²⁵¹During the era of National Socialist Rule in Austria, the term “*Ostmark*” would assume a definite political implications, as it was this term which Hitler’s government used to replace the name “Austria” in its attempts to completely integrate the territories of the former Austrian state into the Third Reich. Before 1938, however, the “*Ostmark*” label lacked such connotations, and was used interchangeably with “Austria” to describe the German-speaking lands in the Alps and on the Danube during the medieval period. Karl Czerwenka and Alfred Bohmann, *Lehr- und Lesebuch der Geschichte für die Unterstufe der Mittelschulen*, vol. 2 (Vienna and Leipzig: Österreichischer Bundesverlag für Unterricht, Wissenschaft und Kunst, 1930), 138; Heinz Obendorfer, Fritz Herndl and Hans Ernst Butz, *Aus Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*, vol. 2 (Vienna and Leipzig: Österreichischer Bundesverlag für Unterricht, Wissenschaft und Kunst, 1929), 52-53.

²⁵²Uto Metzger, *Kurzes Lehrbuch der Geschichte, Merk- und Wiederholungsbüchlein* (Graz: Verlag der Alpenland-Buchhandlung Südmark, 1930), 15-17.

a number of outside powers conspired to break German power in Europe.²⁵³ Likewise, many authors described the efforts of Eugene of Savoy and the House of Austria to turn back the Turkish invasions (abetted, of course, by a hostile French state) later in the same century as a successful defense not just of Vienna, but of all of Germany.²⁵⁴ These accounts also cast the early nineteenth-century wars against Napoleon in a similar light, and presented the efforts of the Habsburg Monarchy and Prussia to break the French emperor's hold upon Europe not as a matter of state politics, but as a spontaneous uprising of the entire German *Volk* against French domination.²⁵⁵

The historical era which these history textbook authors used to argue most forcefully for Austrian Germanness was, of course, the recent world war. Once again, most of them portrayed the conflict as one in which the Germans of Germany and Austria made common cause in a nationalistic struggle against France and its allies. These accounts presented the German soldiers fighting for the Central Powers as valiant warriors overcome by the superior numbers of the Entente, betrayed by the treacherous Slavic nationalities of the Habsburg Monarchy.²⁵⁶

Some of the textbooks managed to describe the postwar settlements in relatively

²⁵³Obendorfer, Herdl and Butz, *Aus Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*, vol. 3 (Vienna and Leipzig: Österreichischer Bundesverlag für Unterricht, Wissenschaft und Kunst, 1929), 63-65; Metzger, *Kurzes Lehrbuch der Geschichte, Merk- und Wiederholungsbüchlein*, 22-3; Zeehe and Schuh, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte für die oberen Klassen der Mittelschulen*, vol. 2 (Vienna: Verlag Ed. Hölzel, 1929), 172-173.

²⁵⁴Obendorfer, Herdl and Butz, vol. 3, 68-72; Zeehe and Schuh, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte für die oberen Klassen der Mittelschulen*, vol. 3 (Vienna: Verlag Ed. Hölzel, 1930), 16; Czerwenka and Bohmann, *Lehr- und Lesebuch der Geschichte für die Unterstufe der Mittelschulen*, vol. 3 (Vienna and Leipzig: Österreichischer Bundesverlag für Unterricht, Wissenschaft und Kunst, 1930), 128-133.

²⁵⁵Obendorfer, Herdl and Butz, vol. 3, 106-108; Zeehe and Schuh, vol. 3, 79-8; Metzger, *Kurzes Lehrbuch der Geschichte, Merk- und Wiederholungsbüchlein*, 25.

²⁵⁶Metzger, *Kurze deutsche Geschichte für Bürgerschulen*, vol 3, *Vom westfälischen Frieden bis zur heutigen Zeit* (Graz: Verlag der Alpenland-Buchhandlung Südmark, 1923), 64-68; Zeehe and Schuh, vol. 4, 64-69.

neutral terms, but the majority voiced their deep resentment of the treaties.²⁵⁷ Several texts specifically mentioned the manner in which postwar Austria had been forced to abandon the name “German-Austria” and the goal of union with the Germany, and a number even avowed that *Anschluss* remained the aim of the Austrian people, despite the opposition of the Entente powers.²⁵⁸ Andreas Zeehe and Adam Schuh provided a particularly vehement denunciation of the postwar state of affairs in their 1930 textbook for upper level *Mittelschule* students, which proudly proclaimed Austria’s commitment to *Anschluss* and railed against the peace settlement which had left so many of the Germans who had formerly been Habsburg subjects living under “foreign domination.”²⁵⁹

Even with such a firmly German nationalist outlook, however, some of these history textbooks also indicated the distinctiveness of the Austrian branch of the German *Volk*. Several texts referenced the “Austrian mission,” albeit in a manner which was calculated as much to emphasize Austria’s service to the German *Volk* as a whole as it was to inspire Austrian patriotism. The textbooks by Metzger and by Obendorfer, Herdl and Butz both prominently discussed Austria’s historical mission to protect all of the Germans of Central Europe against eastern invasions.²⁶⁰ Other texts highlighted the manner in which Austria had helped to spread German culture to the supposedly less developed

²⁵⁷For a fairly neutral discussion on the war and its aftermath, see Hannak and Georg A. Lukas, *Vaterlandskunde für die unteren Klassen der Mittelschulen* (Vienna: Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky A.G., 1924), 18-20; Karl Goll, *Die Republik Österreich: Ein Behelf für den Unterricht in der Vaterlandskunde* (Vienna: Österreichischer Schulbuchverlag, 1923), 38-39.

²⁵⁸Metzger, *Kurze deutsche Geschichte für Bürgerschulen*, vol 3, 69-70; Czerwenka and Bohmann, vol. 1, 64-65; Obendorfer, Herdl and Butz, vol. 4, 65; Metzger, *Kurzes Lehrbuch der Geschichte, Merk- und Wiederholungsbüchlein*, 29-32.

²⁵⁹Zeehe and Schuh, vol. 4, 95.

²⁶⁰Obendorfer, Herdl and Butz, vol. 3, 68-72; Metzger, *Kurzes Lehrbuch der Geschichte, Merk- und Wiederholungsbüchlein*, 15-17.

peoples of Eastern Europe throughout the centuries.²⁶¹

One “*Vaterlandskunde*” (patriotic education) textbook for lower level *Mittelschule* students which had been used in Austrian classrooms during the imperial era but had been subsequently revised in 1924 provided a particularly thorough description of the Austrian mission for young Austrians. In this account, the authors described Austria’s geographic position at the crossroads between cultures in Central Europe, and argued that the inhabitants of the territory had served as both the defenders of the continent against invasions by the Avars, Magyars, Mongols, Turks, and Russians, and as mediators between East and West. The authors asserted that Austria had made the advantages of Eastern culture, never really defined, available to the West even as they helped spread German economic prosperity and “*Geisteslebens*” (spiritual life) to the peoples of the east. The authors made certain, however, to define this Austrian function in the context of German history, and called Austria a “room” within the German *Vaterhaus* (paternal house).²⁶²

Descriptions of distinctively Austrian qualities or characteristics were remarkably rare in the First Republic’s history textbooks. A 1930 text by Karl Czerwenka and Alfred Bohmann, for example, contained a brief discussion which noted that many foreign observers had mistaken the Austrian love of spectacle for superficiality and hence had missed Austria’s deeper virtues and capability for work (*Arbeitstüchtigkeit*).²⁶³ That passage represented the entirety of their description of the Austrian character, however,

²⁶¹ Czerwenka and Bohmann, vol. 2, 160-161; Metzger, *Kurze deutsche Geschichte für Bürgerschulen*, vol 3, 48-49.

²⁶² Hannak and Lukas, 1-3, 19.

²⁶³ Czerwenka and Bohmann, vol. 3, 144.

and the authors made no effort to contrast those characteristics with those of other Germans or to use them as an argument for Austrian national uniqueness.

Another, more peculiar discussion of Austrian distinctiveness can be found in Czerwenka and Bohmann's description of Andreas Hofer's unsuccessful early nineteenth-century uprising against Napoleonic rule in the Austrian province of Tyrol. The authors characterized Hofer's struggle as a patriotic one, but they argued that it had been conducted not in the name of the German nation or the Habsburg Austrian state, but rather as a defense of his Tyrolean *Heimat*. This textbook, itself published in Tyrol, portrayed Hofer as a true symbol of the "Tyrolean *Volk*." Such a description of Hofer was exceedingly unusual given the fact that so many other Austrian history textbooks written between 1918 and 1955 usually cast the Tyrolean leader as a symbol of either German or Austrian national or patriotic sentiment. When considered alongside their professions of Austrian Germanness elsewhere, Czerwenka and Bohmann's depiction of Hofer as a regional rather than a national patriot probably indicates the relative weakness of specifically Austrian national sentiment during the First Republic.²⁶⁴

Apart from rare statements of Austrian distinctiveness, the First Republic's history textbooks all emphasized the Germanness of the Austrian people and invariably described Austrian history as part of the history of the German *Volk* as a whole. From Austria's medieval Germanic origins to such events of wider German significance as the Thirty Years War, the siege of Vienna, the Napoleonic wars, and World War I, these texts all took care to highlight the link between Austrian and German history. Some even used the aftermath of the First World War as an occasion to emphasize Austria's German character

and to urge students to support *Anschluss* as the only reasonable destiny for Austria. While the First Republic's history texts all agreed that Austrians were historically a German people, however, the appropriate portrayal of Austria's Habsburg past was a more problematic issue.

The First Republic's History Textbooks and the Legacy of the Habsburg Monarchy

There was little consensus among the First Republic's history textbook authors over how to describe the old Habsburg Monarchy to students. Certainly all of the authors agreed that the old Monarchy had been historically significant, and that its development and the actions of various Habsburg rulers needed to be taught to students. They could not agree, however, upon whether the House of Habsburg and its multinational state had represented a positive or a negative force in the history of Austria. Some textbooks continued the basic approach of the imperial era, depicting the old Monarchy as a benevolent entity which had served the interests of the German *Volk* in Central Europe. Other texts were considerably more ambivalent concerning the old dynastic state, though, and sometimes were even overtly hostile toward Habsburg rule. Some authors lauded individual Habsburg rulers and the basic function of their Monarchy, but also criticized the Habsburgs vehemently when they stood in the way of democratic or national reform. The differences in historical interpretation of these textbooks did not correspond to any particular pattern in terms of their target audience, and various views could be found in either *Hauptschulen* or *Mittelschulen*, where the bulk of history education took place, as well as at both the lower and upper levels of those institutions.

²⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 170-172.

The authors who took a positive stance regarding the Habsburgs and their state tended to dwell upon individual Habsburg monarchs or their most distinguished political and military subordinates. Their accounts crafted historical narratives which portrayed the old Monarchy as a benevolent institution which had worked to secure the interests of the German *Volk* in Central Europe while at the same time helping to increase the cultural level and material prosperity of the other *Völker* of the region. These accounts put the Habsburgs at the forefront of such benevolent works, and often praised them for their dedication and good character. Such a positive view of the old dynasty was generally presented in the context of serving the interests of the German *Volk* in Europe, however, and the authors made it clear they did not regard Habsburg rule as a positive end in itself, but rather saw it as something which was good only in so far as it served German interests.

Medieval Habsburg emperors such as Rudolph I, Rudolph IV, and Maximilian I emerged in these narratives as generally praiseworthy rulers, albeit ones with significant flaws. Oberdofer, Herndl and Butz, and Czerwenka and Bohmann praised these figures for their religious piety, sense of honor and personal courage, and their efforts to build their state into a culturally vibrant and economically prosperous force to safeguard German interests in a region full of other, potentially hostile national groups. Their rule was patriarchal and heavily influenced by the Catholic faith, but it laid the groundwork for the next several centuries of Austrian prominence on the continent.²⁶⁵ Even Zeehe and Schuch, typically more critical of the dynasty, praised the reign of Maximilian I as one which laid the groundwork for the Habsburgs' multinational state, which would dominate

²⁶⁵Obendorfer, Herndl and Butz, vol. 3, 6-10, 22-25; Czerwenka and Bohmann, vol. 3, 6-8.

Central European affairs for the next several centuries.²⁶⁶

Maria Theresa and her son Joseph II were another set of Habsburg monarchs frequently praised in the First Republic's textbooks. Obendorfer, Herndl and Butz for example, depicted the Maria Theresa as a religious, dedicated, and shrewd "mother of her subjects" whose reforms helped modernize her territory.²⁶⁷ Czerwenka and Bohmann likewise provided a laudatory depiction of the Austrian empress, and focused on her efforts to centralize her government, encourage the growth of culture, and to defend her territory against the severe military challenges which faced it.²⁶⁸ In a similar manner, both of these narrative accounts praised Joseph II as a commendable if ultimately unsuccessful ruler who attempted to extend his mother's reforms, and to put the Austrian state to work in the service of his subjects. Interestingly, none of these authors emphasized Joseph II's efforts to establish German as the language of administration throughout his realm, which made him a beloved figure for German nationalists in Czechoslovakia during this time. The Austrian right's increasingly strident emphasis upon Catholic values during the First Republic and its correspondingly diminished interest in German nationalism perhaps explains the more conservative authors' lack of enthusiasm for Joseph, who had drastically weakened the position of the Catholic Church in Austria during his reign.²⁶⁹

These descriptions of Austrian history during the eighteenth century are notable, however, for their lack of animosity toward the Prussian monarchs who so often worked to oppose the foreign policy efforts of Maria Theresa and Joseph. As we shall see, later

²⁶⁶Zeehe and Schuh, vol. 2, 145.

²⁶⁷Obendorfer, Herndl and Butz, vol. 3, 73-80.

²⁶⁸ Czerwenka and Bohmann, vol. 3, 140-143; See also, Zeehe and Schuh, vol. 3, 49-53.

²⁶⁹Obendorfer, Herndl and Butz, vol. 3, 80-83; Czerwenka and Bohmann, vol. 3, 143-146; Wingfield,

Austrian textbooks that sought to inspire Austrian patriotism often crafted polemics against Frederick the Great and other Hohenzollern rulers as anti-Austrian aggressors. The First Republic's authors, presumably interested in instilling German national sentiment in Austrian students, generally did not mount any such rhetorical attacks on eighteenth-century Prussia. One exception to this tendency was the Marxism-tinged textbook of Zeehe and Schuch, which took a dim view of dynastic rulers in general, and castigated the Hohenzollerns for their lust for power and lack of understanding of German interests in Europe.²⁷⁰

The pro-Habsburg authors also praised the Habsburg leadership for its role in helping to end French oppression of the German *Volk* during the Napoleonic era, and for presiding over a period of peace, stability, and cultural development in Austria during the nineteenth century. Czerwenka and Bohmann, and Obendorfer, Herndl and Butz even went out of their way to mention some of the positive cultural features of the reign of Emperor Franz and his foreign minister, Klemens von Metternich, which was frequently portrayed in a far less sympathetic light by more critical authors.²⁷¹ These authors, however, also portrayed the movement toward German national unity during Metternich's era and during the subsequent Revolution of 1848 in an extremely positive light, and they emphasized these aspirations as part of a larger awakening of the German *Volk*. Ultimately, of course, the Habsburgs themselves had opposed the German nationalists,

"Statues of Emperor Joseph II as Sites of German Identity," 178_201.

²⁷⁰Zeehe and Schuch, 43-53.

²⁷¹Czerwenka and Bohmann, vol. 3, 169-170, 179-180; Obendorfer, Herndl and Butz, vol. 3, 104-1, vol. 4, 7-19.

and here these authors indulged in some muted criticisms of the dynasty's policies.²⁷²

The authors who presented the Habsburgs in a more favorable light cast the demise of Austria's dynastic Monarchy in 1918 as a tragedy for the German people. They argued that Habsburgs in general had done their best to serve the interests of the German people, and they approvingly noted the attempts of the last Emperor, Karl, to reform his multinational state along federal lines in order to preserve the Monarchy's positive functions in Central Europe.²⁷³ Ultimately, however, 1918 was a catastrophe for the German *Volk* not so much because of the collapse of the Habsburg state, but rather because of the straitened circumstances in which so many of the Monarchy's German subjects found themselves after the war. Ultimately for these authors, although the Habsburgs had served the cause of the German nation admirably throughout the centuries, it was that national cause itself which was the appropriate focus of Austrian history, not Habsburg rule.

Other textbook authors were far less charitable when it came to the subject of Habsburg rule in Austria. In particular Uto Metzger, and Andreas Zeehe and Adam Schuch tended to criticize the Habsburgs and their policies throughout Austrian history. Whereas Czerwenka and Bohmann, Obendorfer, Herndl and Butz, and even Karl Goll saw the Habsburgs as a princely house which had done its utmost in the service of German interests, this other group of textbook authors generally argued the opposite point, and charged that the old Austrian dynasty had habitually done what it could to stymie the cause of German national unity in favor of its own selfish political interests. In making

²⁷²Czerwenka and Bohmann, vol. 1, 60-61; Obendorfer, Herndl and Butz, vol. 3, 24-25.

²⁷³Goll, 5-7; Obendorfer, Herndl and Butz, part 4, 47.

these arguments, Metzer generally reflected the point of view of the German nationalist political faction in the First Republic, while Zeehe and Schuch presented a more Marxist view of history which harmonized well with the Social Democrats' vision of the Habsburg past.

Metzer's textbooks provided Austrian students with an ardently nationalistic account of Austrian history which frequently portrayed the Habsburgs as the enemies of the German *Volk*. Metzer's narratives displayed many of the key traits of Austrian German nationalist views of history, including anti-Catholicism and hostility towards the non-German nationalities of the old Monarchy. For Metzer, the German people were the true protagonists of Austrian history, and he evaluated their dynastic leaders according to how well they had served German interests. Such an interpretation of the past meant that Metzer did occasionally have some kind words for Habsburg rulers such as Maximilian I if he felt they had served the cause of the German *Volk*. More often, however, he castigated the Habsburgs, and indeed other German dynastic houses in Europe, for what he saw as their tendency to put their own political interests ahead of those of the German nation as a whole.²⁷⁴

Metzer was most critical of Habsburg conduct during the nineteenth century, the era when German nationalism flourished in Central Europe. In Metzer's estimation, the House of Austria had been the dedicated enemy of German nationalism and of the movement toward German unity. For example, he excoriated Metternich for his

²⁷⁴ Metzer, *Kurze deutsche Geschichte für Bürgerschulen*, vol. 2, *Von der kaiserlos Zeit bis zum westfälischen Frieden* (Graz: Verlag der Alpenland-Buchhandlung Südmark, 1922), 32-3; Metzer, *Kurzes Lehrbuch der Geschichte, Merk- und Wiederholungsbüchlein*, 24. Metzer's books were published, and probably used, in Styria, a hotbed of German nationalist sentiment. Kirk, "Fascism and Austrofascism,"

implacable opposition to German national ideas and the cause of German freedom. In a similar manner, he also railed against the conduct of the Habsburg Monarchy's other national groups during the Revolution of 1848, and presented a particularly venomous view of the efforts of the Magyars to expand their cultural and political influence within the old state at the expense of the German *Volk*. According to Metzger, the Habsburg rulers of the nineteenth century were far too willing to sacrifice the interests of their German subjects in order to mollify the increasingly strident demands of the Monarchy's other national groups, and too proud to accept any Prussian assistance which might have helped to keep the non-German peoples at bay.²⁷⁵

Indeed, Bismarck and the other Prussian leaders who presided over the creation of a unified north German state emerged in a much more positive light in Metzger's account of Austrian history than did the Habsburg Emperor of the same era, Franz Joseph. Metzger lauded Bismarck's relatively mild treatment of the Habsburg Monarchy in the aftermath of the Austro-Prussian War of 1866, and he praised the German state which the Prussian Chancellor helped found in 1871 for its economic prosperity, its progressive social legislation, and its military might. For Metzger, Bismarck was a true servant of the German *Volk*, defending its interests and increasing its standing in Europe in a way that the Habsburgs had rarely done. In comparison, Metzger argued that the Habsburgs' German subjects had continually demonstrated their willingness to make sacrifices for the interests of the old Monarchy as a whole, only to be repaid with disloyalty from the state's non-German *Völker* and indifference from the dynasty itself. It was no surprise that, according

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²⁷⁵Metzger, *Kurze deutsche Geschichte für Bürgerschulen*, vol. 3, 40-43, 49; Metzger, *Kurzes Lehrbuch der*

the Metzer, the Germans of Austria often felt a strong affinity for Bismarck's German state and had supported it vocally even when the Austrian government had not.²⁷⁶

Zeehe and Schuch presented a somewhat different version of Austria's history, but their narrative also focused upon the German *Volk* living in Austria and frequently portrayed the Habsburgs in a negative light. Their textbook displayed a Marxist approach to history in which class conflict and economic interests frequently appeared as the driving forces behind past events.²⁷⁷ These authors generally displayed little affinity for any dynastic rulers, whether in Austria or in other German lands, and they were quick to criticize various monarchs for policies which opposed the interests of the German *Volk*.

At times, however, Zeehe and Schuch were willing to make positive comments about individual Habsburg rulers so long as their policy choices were progressive and designed to improve the lot of the people, rather than calculated to bolster their own dynastic power. For example, the authors praised Prince Eugene of Savoy for his successes in defending the Germans of Europe against French and Turkish invasions, even as they acknowledged that his achievements also served to orient the Habsburg Monarchy away from Germany toward southern and eastern Europe. Likewise, Zeehe and Schuch lauded the centralizing and modernizing reforms of Maria Theresa and Joseph II for the manner in which they helped improve the situation of all of the subjects of the Habsburg Monarchy.²⁷⁸

Like Metzer, Zeehe and Schuch criticized Habsburg policies during the nineteenth

Geschichte, Merk- und Wiederholungsbüchlein, 28-29.

²⁷⁶Metzer, *Kurze deutsche Geschichte für Bürgerschulen*, vol. 3, 43-49.

²⁷⁷For example, they cited capitalistic and imperialistic competition between the European great powers as one of the primary causes of World War I. Zeehe and Schuch, vol. 4, 62-63.

century. They cast Metternich as a canny statesman who was nevertheless a committed enemy of “*Volksfreiheit*” (freedom of the people), and portrayed his Habsburg patron Franz I as an arch-reactionary opposed to any and all political reforms. For these authors, the Revolutions of 1848 in Austria represented a flowering of national sentiment and liberal politics, and they argued that the movement toward German national unity had ultimately failed because of the dynastic rivalry between the ruling houses of Austria and Prussia. In the aftermath of the uprising, the national aspirations of the Monarchy’s *Völker* gradually undermined the stability of the Austrian state, and the Habsburgs demonstrated themselves powerless to stop this process. While Zeehe and Schuch did note the impressive cultural development over which the Habsburg government presided during the latter half of the nineteenth century, they argued that the Habsburgs ultimately represented a medieval style of rule incapable of coping with the needs of a modern society, and which had long fostered disunity within the German lands of Europe. For these authors, the end of Habsburg rule in 1918 represented the end of an state which had too often acted against the true interests of the German *Volk*.²⁷⁹

The new history textbooks produced in the First Republic all declared that the Austrian people were part of the German *Volk* and that their history was a German one, but beyond that consensus they did not present a uniform view of Austria’s Habsburg past. Some texts lauded the Habsburgs as the true defenders of German interests in Central Europe while others charged that the House of Austria had historically only been concerned with its own political power and had often worked against the cause of German

²⁷⁸Zeehe and Schuch, vol. 3, 14-16, 49-53.

²⁷⁹Zeehe and Schuch, vol. 3, 101-103, 113-118, vol. 4, 41-64.

national unity. Each of the major ideological factions of the First Republic, whether conservative Catholic, Social Democratic, or German nationalist, saw its views of Austrian history represented in individual history textbooks, but no one political camp's historical vision predominated in Austrian classrooms. The meaning of Austria's Habsburg past as portrayed in the First Republic's history textbooks was a profoundly contested topic, just as it was in the realm of Austrian politics.

The debate on how state education ought to present Austrian national identity and Austria's Habsburg past to students occurred as part of the wider and increasingly acrimonious dispute over education in general in the First Republic. The wrangling between the Christian Social Party and the Social Democrats over the appropriate relationship between the Church and the state, and the relative merits of a more egalitarian social order provided the political backdrop for these educational discussions. All of the First Republic's ideological groups agreed that Austria was a German land, and that Austrian history ought to be taught to students as part of the history of Germany. There was no agreement, however, on how the old Monarchy ought to be portrayed in Austrian classrooms, or whether the new Republic ought to be presented as the inheritor of the Habsburg Monarchy's positive legacy or as a clean break with an oppressive and reactionary dynastic state. The First Republic's educational laws and curricula show that Austria's political leaders could agree on a broad set of pedagogical principles, but an examination of the contents of the Republic's educational journals and history textbooks reveals the extent to which Austrian educators vehemently disagreed with one another concerning the meaning of the Habsburg past.

These educational documents demonstrate the extent to which the First Republic's political leaders from various ideological camps were successful in disseminating their ideas regarding national identity and the meaning of Austrian history to the Austrian public in a practical sense. They show that the initial consensus among Austria's major political parties concerning Austria's essential Germanness was indeed imparted to students, and some educational materials even urged young Austrians to regard *Anschluss* as the most natural eventual outcome of Austrian history. The lack of agreement among the First Republic's political factions concerning the meaning and legacy of the Habsburg past was similarly reflected in these educational documents. All of the major ideological groups were able to provide some representation of their views on Austria's history in Austrian classrooms, but no one faction was able to secure the predominance of its preferred historical narrative. History education in the Austrian First Republic was thus just as much an occasion for fractious and impassioned debate as was Austrian politics in general.

The one ideological principle which was notably not reflected in the First Republic's debates on history education was the Christian Social Party's increasingly firm profession of Austrian patriotism toward the end of the republican era. Some articles in the Party's pedagogical journal reflected the conservative Catholic camp's patriotic turn during the late 1920s and early 1930s, but the Republic's educational curricula and history textbooks generally continued to espouse ardently nationalistic German ideals which were significantly out of step with the newer stance of the CSP. Textbook reform had really only just begun by the final years of the First Republic, and the CSP's change in tone was

still too recent to have had an effect on the content of Austria's history texts. The fall of the First Republic and the creation of the conservative and authoritarian *Ständestaat* in 1933, however, ultimately served to bridge this gap between the traditional Austrian right's historical and patriotic ideals and the visions of Austrian national identity and history presented in the state's classrooms. With the creation of a new political system in Austria, the conservative right cut through the Gordian knot of divisive partisan parliamentary debate by dismantling Austrian democracy entirely. The *Ständestaat* defined the Social Democrats and the Austrian German nationalists, who were increasingly represented politically by the Austrian Nazi Party, as enemies of the Austrian state, and it would subsequently work to exclude the historical and national views of these ideological groups from the state's educational system. After 1933, a staunch Austrian patriotism which presented the Habsburg Monarchy as the pious and benevolent representative of the very finest German ideals would be the order of the day in both Austrian politics and education.

Part II. The Past as a Patriotic Foundation: The “Second German State,” 1933-1938

Chapter 3. Politics and the Habsburg Past in the *Ständestaat*

In March of 1933, the simmering political rivalries which had plagued Austria since the collapse of the old Monarchy in 1918 finally reached a boiling point. The Christian Social Party (CSP), which had been ruling on the basis of an extremely narrow parliamentary majority in coalition with the paramilitary *Heimwehr* (Home Guard) faction since 1932, suddenly found itself faced with an strange set of circumstances when the Austrian parliament’s president and his deputies resigned on March 4th, leaving the legislature without a presiding officer. Instead of calling for new elections, the Christian Social Chancellor, Engelbert Dollfuß, used the opportunity to declare that the parliament had dissolved itself, effectively ending the Austrian First Republic.²⁸⁰

²⁸⁰Barabara Jelavich, *Modern Austria: Empire and Republic, 1815-1986* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 195; Walter Goldinger, “Der geschichtliche Ablauf der Ereignisse in Österreich von 1918 bis 1945,” in *Geschichte der Republik Österreich*, ed. Heinrich Benedikt (Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1954), 199-201.

This action came at a time of tremendous economic hardship and political uncertainty in Austria. The Great Depression had robbed Austria of what little economic progress it had made since the First World War, and in the early 1930s the Christian Social Party had lost the electoral support necessary even to maintain its narrow parliamentary predominance, let alone to pursue its legislative agenda effectively. The CSP had always been skeptical about the merits of democracy during the First Republic, and Dollfuß regarded republican rule as incapable of protecting the religious and social values which he and other Austrian conservatives cherished. Thus, the events of March 4th offered him the chance to replace the First Republic with a system which he felt would be better able to guide Austria through the challenges with which it was faced.²⁸¹ Afterwards, Dollfuß, and, after his murder in July 1935, his successor, Kurt von Schuschnigg, presided over a new, authoritarian government, the so-called *Ständestaat*.

This new Austrian government claimed to establish a “new” or “real” democracy which would replace the partisan strife and political obstructionism of the old parliamentary order with a byzantine system of indirectly elected advisory councils which theoretically represented the major sectors or “professions” (*Berufstände*) of the Austrian economy. This form of political organization was based upon the views of the Viennese intellectual Othmar Spann, whose work had profoundly influenced not just Dollfuß, but also right-wing authoritarianism throughout Europe.²⁸² In practice, the *Ständestaat* was a

²⁸¹Timothy Kirk, “Fascism and Austrofascism,” and James William Miller “Engelbert Dollfuss and Austrian Agriculture,” in *The Dollfuss/Schuschnigg Era in Austria: A Reassessment*, eds. Günter Bischof, Anton Pelinka and Alexander Lassner (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 2003), 10-31, 122-142.

²⁸²Miller, 125-126; Stanley G. Payne, *A History of Fascism, 1914-1945* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), 247; Othmar Spann, *Der wahre Staat. Vorlesungen über Abbruch und Neubau der Gesellschaft, gehalten 1920 in Wien* (Leipzig: Quelle und Meyer, 1921).

dictatorship which represented the combined interests of the Christian Social Party and the *Heimwehr*, and which sought to build an independent Austria which was Catholic, patriotic, and anti-Marxist. From its very beginning, the Dollfuß regime saw itself as fighting a two front battle for power in Austria.²⁸³ On the one hand was the Austrian's right's old opponent, the Social Democratic Party, which the new government still suspected of harboring the ambition to destroy the traditional order and replace it with a proletarian dictatorship. On the other front was a more recent enemy, the Austrian National Socialist Party, which had been making steady gains on both the state and provincial levels during the early 1930s. The corporatist regime feared that the Austrian Nazis would seize control of the state, and move to unite it with the recently born Nazi regime in Germany. Thus, the new government pursued economic policies which it hoped would undercut the support of the working class for the Socialists, while at the same time it attempted to inculcate the Austrian population with a sense of Austrian patriotism which the regime hoped would neutralize the German nationalistic appeal of National Socialism.²⁸⁴

In pursuing this second task, the leaders of the *Ständestaat* built upon the view of Austrian national identity which had been espoused by many on the Austrian right during the era of the First Republic. The new regime presented a vision of Austrian national identity which was complex, conservative, and ultimately based upon Austria's historical traditions. The new leaders held that Austria was indeed essentially a German state, as

²⁸³“Bundeskanzler Dr. Dollfuß vor dem Wiener Christlich sozialen Parteirat,” *Reichspost* (Vienna), March 14, 1933, 3.

²⁸⁴Jelavich, 195-200; Kirk, 10-31; Payne, 250. On Austrian Nazism during the *Ständestaat*, see Bruce F. Pauley, *Hitler and the Forgotten Nazis: A History of Austrian National Socialism* (Chapel Hill: University

had many conservatives previously, but at the same time they also affirmed Austria's role as a special and distinctive part of the German nation. Austria was smaller and less powerful than its northern German neighbor, and it possessed its own distinctive historical heritage and mission, but it was no less German for all that. Indeed, the *Ständestaat's* vision of national identity saw Austria's place in the world as one which was based upon Austria's historical traditions and which was nested in a hierarchy of concentric cultural "circles." First and foremost Austria was Austrian as a cultural and political entity, but it was also part of the German cultural nation, and, beyond that, part of Western civilization's deeply rooted Christian heritage. All three of these "cultural circles" were part of Austria's identity, and the *Ständestaat* committed itself to defending Austria's role and membership in all three. The leaders of the *Ständestaat* were also quick to argue that Austria in many ways represented the true essence of Germanness, an essence which was Christian, Western, diverse, peaceful, and "free," in contrast to the brutal, dogmatic, racist and anti-Catholic corruption of German values found in Nazi ideology.

In order to make its case for an Austrian national identity which was patriotically Austrian, yet also Christian, German, and Western, the *Ständestaat's* leadership relied heavily upon the memory and the symbols of Austria's Habsburg past. The government portrayed the new Austrian state and political system as the heir of the Habsburg legacy. In drawing upon a traditional view of religion's place in society and upon old notions of social hierarchy, the new regime attempted to ground its foundational ideology in Austria's past stretching back to the Middle Ages. On a symbolic level, the new government restored the second head which the First Republic's founders had lopped off

of the old Monarchy's double-headed eagle insignia.²⁸⁵ On less superficial level, however, the *Ständestaat*'s leaders strived to kindle Austrian loyalty to the Fatherland by reminding the Austrian people of their state's deep historical past. The new government's public statements made frequent references to the legacy and achievements of the Habsburg Monarchy, and drew upon the familiar ideas of the "Austrian man" and the "Austrian mission" in order to bolster support for Austrian independence in the face of the Nazis' aggressive German nationalism. The corporatist regime also aggressively reformed Austria's educational system, redrawing curricula for historical and civic education and rewriting history textbooks, so as to educate Austrian children to be patriotic Austrians who were thoroughly aware of Austria's rich and distinctive historical inheritance. In all of these efforts, the new government portrayed the old Monarchy as a bastion of Western, Christian, German, and Austrian culture, and argued forcefully that the *Ständestaat* represented the fulfillment of this Habsburg legacy after a failed republican interregnum.

The new Austrian government was an authoritarian one which repudiated the free political culture of the First Republic and suppressed opposition from the Austrian National Socialists, Communists, and Social Democrats. The regime's restrictions on political speech were not absolute, however, and there was some room for those not affiliated with the regime to present alternative arguments concerning Austrian identity and the Habsburg past. First of all, there was a group of Austrian Catholic intellectuals such as Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi and Ernst Karl Winter, who, while sympathetic in many ways to the goals and values of the new regime, made arguments concerning

²⁸⁵As pictured on the title page of the new corporatist Constitution of 1935, among other places. *Die österreichische Verfassung und die Konkordat vom 1. Mai 1934*, ed. Hugo von Baltz_Balzberg (Graz:

Austrian identity which were independent and sometimes dramatically different from those coming from the government itself.²⁸⁶ The aristocratic Coudenhove-Kalergi's conservative Pan-Europeanism and Winter's overt yet patriotic opposition to the *Ständestaat's* suppression of the Austrian workers' movement in many ways stemmed from the same ideas that underlay the ideology of the ruling regime. Yet these men used those ideas to make arguments which did not always harmonize with the majority view within the body of Austrian conservatism. The Social Democrats also voiced their opposition, overtly until their failed rebellion in February of 1934, and afterwards from underground, illegal groups as well as from exile in Czechoslovakia. The Social Democrats, represented most vigorously and prolifically by their political and intellectual leader, Otto Bauer, maintained their basic stance from the republican era that Austrians were Germans whose destiny lay in a unified and Socialist German state, and they criticized the new Austrian government for its attempt to return to what the Austrian left viewed as the essentially oppressive methods of the reactionary Habsburg state. Finally, the Austrian Communists, also suppressed by the corporatists and operating secretly, combined the anti-Habsburg rhetoric of the Social Democrats with firm advocacy of a distinctive Austrian national identity apart from Germany, a sense of identity which they hoped would help avert what they saw as the gravest danger facing Austria: *Anschluß* with Nazi Germany.²⁸⁷

These alternative views concerning Austrian national identity and the Habsburg

Styria Verlag, 1934).

²⁸⁶Kirk, 23.

²⁸⁷The Austrian National Socialist Party also obviously presented a vision of a Germanist national identity and a hostility toward the Habsburg past that was profoundly at odds with that of the views of the leaders

past, while significant, were generally suppressed by the authoritarian regime, however, and thus were far less visible to the Austrian population than the statements coming from the government itself. Ultimately, the leaders of the *Ständestaat* sought to create a political system in Austria which would safeguard the historical traditions of Austria against Marxism, while at the same time preserving Austrian independence in the face of the rising tide of aggressive German nationalism promoted by Nazis in both Austria and Germany. Indeed, the threat posed by the Nazis to Austria's independence inspired the *Ständestaat*'s leaders to declare their Austrian patriotism in a far more firm and unequivocal manner than the leading figures of the First Republic ever had. References to Austria's Habsburg past played a crucial role in this corporatist endeavor. In the end, the *Ständestaat* was unable to prevent *Anschluß* with Nazi Germany, but its efforts to articulate a vision of Austrianness which was simultaneously Austrian, German, Christian, Western and grounded in the legacy of the Habsburgs laid a partial foundation for the reawakening of Austrian patriotism in the Second Austrian Republic, which rose from the rubble of the Third Reich's *Ostmark* after Hitler's defeat in 1945.

i. The Rise and Fall of the *Ständestaat*

The transition from the First Republic's parliamentary democracy to a conservative dictatorship was not a premeditated step by Dollfuß, but rather happened as a result of an unusual concatenation of circumstances. Consequently, although Dollfuß moved swiftly in March of 1933 to suspend parliamentary rule, he essentially improvised

of the *Ständestaat*. That political faction, however, took its ideological directives from the Hitler regime in Nazi Germany, and will be discussed as part of the Nazi seizure of power in Austria in Chapter 5.

his seizure of power. Dollfuß initially ruled on the basis of the wartime Economic Enabling Act of 1917 passed by the old Monarchy, a fitting beginning for a regime which would ultimately base its legitimacy upon the legacy of the Habsburg dynastic state. It took the Dollfuß government more than a year to draft a new constitution which cemented Austria's authoritarian and corporatist course. Until then, Dollfuß proceeded in a somewhat piecemeal manner, ruling by decree with the support of the Austrian army, the *Heimwehr*, and the patronage of Fascist Italy.²⁸⁸

Indeed, leftist critics at the time frequently charged that the Dollfuß government was “fascist,” and some subsequent historians have also applied the label of “Austro-fascism” to the *Ständestaat*'s government.²⁸⁹ Such a description of the regime is not entirely accurate. It is certainly true that the regime abandoned democracy in favor of authoritarian rule, and shared a tendency toward strident anti liberal and anti-Marxist rhetoric with the genuinely “fascist” governments or political factions of the day in Europe such as the Italian Fascists (from whom the label derives), the German and Austrian National Socialists, the Romanian Iron Guard, and the Hungarian Arrow-Cross. At the same time, however, the corporatist regime which seized power in Austria did not share the virulent nationalism, the anti-conservatism, or the goal of completely transforming its society which were the hallmarks of the truly radical fascist right throughout Europe.

²⁸⁸Jelavich, 195-200; Ulrich Kluge, *Die österreichische Ständestaat 1934-1938. Entstehung und Scheitern* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1987), 52-62; Gottfried- Karl Kindermann, *Hitlers Niederlage in Österreich. Bewaffneter NS-Putsch, Kanzlermord und Österreichs Abwehresieg, 1934* (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1984), 9, 50.

²⁸⁹Kirk, 10-31; Jelavich, 192-220; Adam Wandruszka, “Austrofascismus,” in *Demokratie und Diktatur. Geist und Gestalt politischer Herrschaft in Deutschland und Europe*, Manfred Funke, ed. (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1987), 221; Gerhard Jagschitz, “Der österreichische Ständestaat 1934-1938,” in *Österreich, 1918-1938: Geschichte der Ersten Republik*, Kurt Skalnik and Erika Weinzierl, eds. (Graz: Styria Verlag, 1983), 499.

Rather, the new government had a vision of Austrian society which was not far removed from the conservative ideals espoused by the CSP during the First Republic. The *Ständestaat* sought to maintain order, secure economic prosperity for the Austrian people, and preserve the Christian and Western traditions and values that it saw as the historical essence of Austria. Dollfuß was pressured by his Italian patron, Mussolini, and by the government's junior partners, the relatively more radical *Heimwehr* militia movement, to move the Austrian state in the direction of a fascist vision of society. Ultimately, however, his relatively mild dictatorship always had more in common with the governments of other conservative authoritarians such as Francisco Franco, Józef Pilsudski, and Miklós Horthy than with the "totalitarian" right-wing radicalism of Mussolini or Hitler.²⁹⁰ The Dollfuß government ultimately adopted some of the aesthetic trappings of fascism, such as its endorsement of a uniformed paramilitary force and its strident use of patriotic symbols and slogans, but the fact that it also so vehemently opposed National Socialism and ultimately dismantled the *Heimwehr* as an independent movement lends credence to the argument that the *Ständestaat* was a conservative, authoritarian entity, rather than a genuinely fascist one.

Given the new government's commitment to conservative social values, its distaste for republicanism, and its continual references to the Habsburg state as the source of many of its ideals, it is perhaps surprising that the *Ständestaat* made no attempt to restore the Monarchy. As we shall see, many of the new regime's leading figures portrayed the end

²⁹⁰For a discussion of the difference between fascism and conservative dictatorships in Europe during the interwar period, as well as an overview of Austrian corporatism, see Payne, 14-19, 245-252; and Kirk, 10-31. The American scholar of the *Heimwehr*, C. Earl Edmonson basically agrees with Payne's assertion that the *Ständestaat*'s government was different from real fascism, even as he argues that the *Heimwehr* itself

of the old dynastic state as a catastrophe for Austria, and continued to venerate the memory of the Habsburg rulers. Ultimately, however, all of the *Ständestaat*'s leaders recognized the practical impossibility of any attempt to restore the House of Habsburg. Not only would the regime's opponents within Austria have received such an act with outrage, but many of the Monarchy's other successor states and especially Nazi Germany would also have seen it as a threatening and provocative move. As a state which was involved in a precarious diplomatic balancing act to maintain its very existence in the face of Nazi expansionism, the *Ständestaat* simply could not afford the risk of a restoration. Indeed, both Schuschnigg and the *Heimwehr* leader Ernst Rüdiger von Starhemberg mentioned in their memoirs that, while they personally were sympathetic to the idea of placing Otto von Habsburg upon the Austrian throne during the 1930s, they recognized that such ambitions were not realistic given Austria's diplomatic position.²⁹¹ Of course, some conservative intellectuals such as August Maria Knoll and Ernst Karl Winter did indeed openly support a return to Habsburg rule, but they spoke as individuals and were not actual political leaders responsible for making policy in Austria.

Even if the new Austrian government did not restore the Habsburgs, however, it did move quickly to dismantle the trappings of Austrian democracy which had been the result of so much struggle and debate since 1918. The new government based its claims to legitimacy upon the argument that the parliamentary government of the First Republic had failed to represent the wishes and best interests of the Austrian *Volk*. The new

was indeed fascist. C. Earl Edmondson, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics, 1918-1936* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1978), 3-6, 233-234.

²⁹¹Schuschnigg, *Ein Requiem in Rot_Weiß_Rot*, trans. Franz von Hildebrand (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1946), 88-89, 152-153, 194-196; Ernst Rüdiger Starhemberg, *Memoiren* (Vienna and Munich: Amalthea

government's leaders, and their mouthpieces in the conservative press, repeatedly made the claim that the liberal and capitalistic values which had been expressed in Austria's republican constitutions had ultimately served to create a system of political demagoguery and obstructionism in which the political parties fought for their own interests rather than those of the Austrian people.²⁹² In an address on September 11, 1933, Dollfuß argued that Austria's people had lost confidence in the old Republic, and yearned for a return to authority in which leaders, motivated by a sense of responsibility and self-sacrifice, would return Austria to the proper values of community, Christian neighborly love, and social harmony. Such leaders would transcend the class conflict and empty materialism of the old era and return Austria to its true, traditional self. The Austrian dictator also warned that while his government would not use force arbitrarily, neither would it fail to defend the Austrian Fatherland from those who wished to do it harm.²⁹³

Dollfuß was of course not merely speaking rhetorically; he had two key "anti-Austrian" factions in mind. First, the new regime blamed the old ideological antagonists of the Austrian right, the Social Democrats, for the country's recent history of social strife and argued that the Socialists possessed no loyalty to the Austrian Fatherland.²⁹⁴ While Dollfuß acknowledged that the workers in Austria did have legitimate interests which the government would protect, he declared that he would not tolerate the class strife which constituted Marxism's response to the old capitalist order.²⁹⁵ The other faction that the

Verlag, 1971), 230-235.

²⁹²"Ständische Aufbauversuche in der Gegenwart," *Reichspost* (Vienna), November 11, 1933, 5; Otto Ender, "Die Werdegang der Verfassung," *Reichspost* (Vienna), May 1, 1934, 2-3.

²⁹³Engelbert Dollfuß, "Das neue Oesterreich," in *Dollfuß an Oesterreich, Eines Mannes Wort und Ziel*, ed. Edmund Weber (Vienna: Reinhold-Verlag, 1935), 29-35.

²⁹⁴"Wahre Volksgemeinschaft," *Reichspost* (Vienna), November 12, 1933, 1.

²⁹⁵Dollfuß, "Das neue Oesterreich," 34.

new government viewed as a threat was the Austrian Nazi party. Dollfuß asserted that National Socialism sought to erase the diversity, creativity, religiosity, and freedom which were the essential features of Austrian Germandom, and to replace these beneficial qualities with its own narrow and oppressive nationalistic dogmas.²⁹⁶ Dollfuß viewed the Austrian Nazis as a grave danger to the continued independence of Austria, and while he was always careful to proclaim his desire for friendly relations with Nazi Germany, he also bluntly warned that state to stay out of Austria's internal affairs, including its relationship to the Austrian National Socialists.²⁹⁷

The new regime's main tactic for dealing with its opponents was to restrict, and ultimately to prohibit their political activities entirely. In May of 1933, the *Ständestaat* outlawed the Communist Party of Austria (KPÖ), the smaller but more militant of Austria's two Marxist political parties. The official prohibition of the Austrian Nazi Party followed in June of the same year. The government allowed the Social Democrats to operate for a time, although it ordered them to dissolve their paramilitary wing, the *Schutzbund*, prohibited them from holding public meetings and parades, and heavily censored their official daily newspaper, *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung*. For a group which was at least rhetorically still committed to the cause of proletarian revolution, the Austrian Social Democrats were curiously passive in the face of Dollfuß' progressively harsher restrictions and his abandonment of the democratic, parliamentary system which they had helped create. The Socialists did eventually revolt against the regime in February of 1934, but even this uprising was unplanned, poorly coordinated, and easily crushed by the

²⁹⁶Dollfuß, "Oesterreichs Weg in die neue Zeit," in *Dollfuß an Oesterreich*, 50-57.

²⁹⁷Dollfuß, "Das neue Oesterreich," 36-44; "Oesterreichischer Patriotismus," in *Dollfuß an Oesterreich*,

regime with only minimal bloodshed. After this failed revolt, the regime finally outlawed the Social Democratic Party as well.²⁹⁸ All three opposition parties continued to operate both secretly and from exile in other states, but their official dissolution left Dollfuß with no legal challengers to his regime.

On May 1, 1934 the Dollfuß regime proclaimed a new constitution for Austria which enshrined the new government's authoritarian power and moved in the direction of a "corporate" Austrian state organized according to the anti-liberal, anti-Marxist, and anti-capitalist ideals of Spann and the Catholic Church's 1931 papal encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno*. The Constitution of 1934 replaced the old parliamentary system with a new political order in which the Chancellor ruled with strong executive authority in consultation with several complex and relatively powerless layers of political councils, which in turn were elected by seven "corporations" representing Austrian economic and social sectors including agriculture, industry, manufacturing, commerce, banking, public service, and the free professions. Austrian citizens were theoretically able to elect representatives, but they were organized according to their economic professions rather than on the basis of their political beliefs. In reality, however, the new Austrian political system actually eliminated any meaningful political participation on the part of the Austrian people and basically placed all executive, legislative, and, to a great extent, local authority in the still nominally federal state in the hands of the chancellor and his cabinet. The constitution also eliminated the last vestiges of the old party system, as the Christian

70-71.

²⁹⁸Jelavich, 198-202; Payne, 249-250. For an in depth discussion and critique of the Socialist revolt of 1934, see Anson Rabinbach, *The Crisis of Austrian Socialism: From Red Vienna to Civil War, 1927_1934* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).

Social Party merged with Dollfuß' allegedly non-partisan Fatherland Front, the only recognized political association in Austria other than the *Heimwehr*.²⁹⁹

The Constitution of 1934 opened with the words, "In the name of God almighty, from whom all that is right derives, the Austrian *Volk* proclaims the constitution for its Christian German federal state on a corporate basis," a preamble which amply indicated the ideological direction of the new state.³⁰⁰ The architects of the new constitutional order claimed that Austria finally had turned its back on the liberalism, capitalism, materialism and class conflict which had characterized the First Republic. They argued that the new system would nurture social harmony and the sharing of economic burdens, and truly represent the interests of the Austrian people, while at the same time safeguarding the independence of a state which was true to Austria's historical heritage.³⁰¹ The *Ständestaat*'s leaders saw Catholicism as a key component of the renewed Austria, and the government also signed a new concordat with the Vatican in 1934, affirming Catholicism's status as the primary religion in Austria and undoing much of the secularizing work of the Socialists during the First Republic. The new regime depended upon the Church in Austria as an ally, and enhanced its role in education and matrimonial law. The state, however, continued to uphold the First Republic's previous guarantees of Austrian citizens' freedom of religion for Protestants and Jews, and it did not actually share political power with the Church to any meaningful degree.³⁰² Kurt von Schuschnigg,

²⁹⁹Jelavich, 202; Payne, 249; Edmondson, 234-236; Helmut Wohnout, "A Chancellorial Dictatorship with a 'Corporative' Pretext: The Austrian Constitution Between 1934 and 1935," in *The Dollfuss/Schuschnigg Era in Austria*, 141-159.

³⁰⁰"Der 1. Mai 1934," in *Dollfuß an Oesterreich*, 223.

³⁰¹"Der wahren Volksgemeinschaft entgegen," 2; Robert Hecht, "Volksvertretung und Staatsführung in der neuen Verfassung," *Reichspost* (Vienna), May 1, 1934, 3.

³⁰²Wohnout, 143.

the Minister of Education and the man who would eventually succeed Dollfuß as chancellor, asserted that the new constitution, in keeping with the government's vision of an organic, universalistic approach to society and culture, returned the old balance between individual freedom and communal responsibility which had been upset by the First Republic's rampant and selfish individualism. The newfound emphasis upon religion, especially in Austrian schools, would serve as a key component of this restored social balance.³⁰³

The restrictions placed upon Austrian political and social life by the new constitution did not, however, eliminate opposition to Dollfuß' government. On July 25, 1934, a cabal of Austrian National Socialists, operating with the covert approval of Nazi Germany, attempted to seize control of the state by attacking a meeting of the Austrian cabinet. The attempted coup ultimately failed, but in the melee, Dollfuß was fatally wounded. The chancellor's murder sharpened relations between Austria and Germany, and prompted the new Austrian leader, Schuschnigg, to tighten the regime's control upon the state and to present Dollfuß as a patriotic martyr for the cause of Austrian independence.³⁰⁴ After a protracted power struggle with the *Heimwehr* following Dollfuß' death, Schuschnigg was gradually able to exclude the leaders of that organization from positions of power, and eventually to disband it in October of 1936, leaving the government and its Fatherland Front as the sole locus of political power in the state. Needless to say, the *Ständestaat*'s persecution of the now underground Austrian Nazi

³⁰³Kurt von Schuschnigg, "Kulturpolitik in Verfassung und Konkordat," *Reichspost* (Vienna), May 1, 1934, 4.

³⁰⁴Schuschnigg, *Dreimal Österreich*, trans. John Segrue (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1938), 14-150; "Bundeskanzler Dr. Dollfuß einem Mörderhandstreich erlegen!" *Reichspost* (Vienna), July 26, 1934, 1;

movement intensified after Dollfuß' murder.³⁰⁵

In reality, however, the *Ständestaat* was never powerful enough to completely determine its own fate. Since the time of Dollfuß' initial seizure of power, Austria had sought protection and economic aid from Mussolini's Fascist Italian state. The Italian dictator for his part saw corporatist Austria as a satellite state which could be molded in the Fascist image and used to curb any desires by Nazi Germany for expansion into East-Central Europe.³⁰⁶ In October of 1936, however, Mussolini concluded an alliance with Germany in response to Italy's ostracism by the liberal democracies of Western Europe following his invasion of Ethiopia. By 1937, the *Duce* had essentially offered Hitler a free hand in Austria in exchange for a German renunciation of any claims to the linguistically and culturally German region of South Tyrol in Italy. The foundation of the "Rome-Berlin Axis" meant that Austria had lost its major source of international protection against a Nazi German regime which had plans to absorb Austria into the Third Reich.³⁰⁷

Schuschnigg's freedom of action was profoundly circumscribed by the new balance of power in Central Europe, and he found himself repeatedly forced to make concessions to Hitler's government. In July, 1936, after being told by Mussolini to reach an accommodation with Nazi Germany, Schuschnigg acquiesced to the coordination of his foreign policy with that of Germany in exchange for a German recognition of Austrian independence and sovereignty. In order to smooth tensions between the two states, Schuschnigg allowed moderate German nationalists such as Edmund Glaise-Horstenau

Walter Adam, "Trauer und Zuversicht," *Reichspost* (Vienna), July 25, 1935, 2.

³⁰⁵Jelavich, 208-210; Edmondson, 245-263; Pauley, 150-192.

³⁰⁶Starhemberg, *Memoiren*, 140-141; Jelavich, 205-209; Payne, 249.

³⁰⁷Jelavich, 210-213, Goldinger, 246-272.

and Odo Neustädter-Stürmer into his cabinet, and eased his persecution of the Austrian Nazis. Such measures did not satisfy Hitler, however, and in January, 1936, the German dictator summoned Schuschnigg to a meeting in Berchtesgaden, Germany, where he angrily berated the Austrian leader, and demanded amnesty for Nazi political prisoners, freedom of expression for Nazi political ideas in Austria, and the inclusion of Austrian Nazis in Schuschnigg's government. The final chapter of the *Ständestaat* came in March 1938, when Schuschnigg announced his plan to hold a plebiscite in Austria on the issue of Austrian independence. Hitler threateningly denounced the move, and on March 11, Schuschnigg resigned in favor of a new, Austrian National Socialist Chancellor, Arthur Seyss-Inquart. The next day, the German *Wehrmacht* crossed the Austrian border after an "invitation" from the new government to help "restore order."³⁰⁸ Both the authoritarian *Ständestaat* and Austrian independence were at an end.

The *Ständestaat* represented an attempt by Austrian conservatives to protect their state's independence and its vision of Austria's traditional heritage and values from perceived enemies on both the political right and left. This conservative dictatorship failed in its mission in large part because it lacked any sustained international support which might have kept Nazi Germany from invading. At the same time, as several

³⁰⁸The Austrian Nazi Party had already begun to seize power in the Austrian provinces when Seyss-Inquart was appointed, and the invitation was only issued at the prompting of the Third Reich. The Austrian Party was confident in its own ability to secure control of Austria, and was taken by surprise by the swiftness of both the German decision to intervene and the subsequent *Anschluss*. Afterwards, Hitler's government generally preferred to use *Reich* Germans rather than Austrians in the higher echelons of administrative leadership, much to the resentment of the Austrian Nazis. See Chapter 5 and Pauley, 210-215; John Berbaum, "Nazi Control in Austria: The Creation of the Ostmark, 1938-1940" (Ph.D. Diss., University of Maryland, 1972), 51-52, 106-108, 246; 54; Jelavich, 211-228; Maurice Williams, "Captain Josef Leopold: Austro-Nazi and Austro-Nationalist?" in *Conquering the Past: Austrian Nazism Yesterday and Today*, F. Parkinson, ed. (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989), 57-71. For Schuschnigg's perspective on these events see, Schuschnigg, *Ein Requiem in Rot_Weiß_Rot*, 3-57.

contemporary critics of the regime noted, the corporatist government was probably unwise to forcefully crush the anti-Nazi left in Austria, which still commanded a great deal of popular support from the Austrian working class, and which could have been a potent ally against Nazism. In the end, however, the regime decided to strike at both camps of its perceived enemies, and saw the failure of its ultimate goal as a consequence. While it still existed, however, the *Ständestaat* government attempted to forestall *Anschluss* with Nazi Germany through a vigorous presentation of Austrian patriotism, both in public statements and in educational policies and materials. Such efforts to inculcate Austrian patriotism invariably depended upon the invocation of the legacy and memory of the old Habsburg Monarchy.

ii. The *Ständestaat* and the Habsburg Past

In its efforts to deal with the grave difficulties facing Austria in the mid-1930s—unemployment, inflation, social unrest, class conflict, and the lure of *Anschluss* with Germany—the corporatist regime attempted to create an atmosphere of Austrian patriotism so that it might better preserve both Austria's new political order and its independence. The government hoped that by encouraging the Austrian people to be proud of their state and its heritage, it could lay the foundation for a stronger, more stable and more harmonious Austrian state, and avert the Nazi-led *Anschluss* which it feared might occur. In its attempts to create this desired surge of Austrian patriotism and loyalty, the *Ständestaat*'s leaders explicitly sought to link the small post-1918 Austrian state to old Habsburg dynastic state, and to portray modern Austria as the legitimate heir of the

Monarchy's conservative values, grandeur, and great achievements. As we shall see, the new government used educational policy in its attempts to establish this sense of identification with the Habsburg past in the minds of Austria's people. No less important, however, were the public statements made by the regime's leaders and representatives in the state-sanctioned press. Such statements made continual reference to the greatest figures and events of the Habsburg era, and sought to portray the new political order in Austria as the natural heir of the old Monarchy's values and ideas.

The *Ständestaat* and Austrian National Identity

In order to bolster Austrian patriotism, however, the leaders of the new government first had to grapple with the issue of who Austrians were in a national sense. During the First Republic, many Austrian politicians and intellectuals, and indeed a large portion of the Austrian population, felt that Austrians belonged to the German nation. Many of these individuals used this sense of Germanness to argue for the desirability of an Austrian union with Germany after 1918. Austrian conservatives, however, were always more comfortable than the other political parties with the idea of Austrian independence, and they argued that Austria's distinctive cultural heritage and tradition of pious Catholicism were just as important a part of its identity as its membership in the German nation. After Hitler's seizure of power in Germany in 1933, the patriotism of Austria's conservative leaders deepened still further, and they committed to preserving Austrian independence against the threat of union with a German state dominated by a racist and anti-religious ideology which they abhorred. At the same time, however, those

conservative leaders were never willing to abandon the notion that Austrians were also in some sense Germans.

As a result, the *Ständestaat*'s government presented the Austrian people with a complex vision of Austrian national identity which essentially conceived of Austrians as Germans while at the same time emphasized Austria's unique qualities. The new government argued that Austria was a "second German state," which shared historical, cultural, and linguistic ties to the rest of the German *Volk*. The *Ständestaat*'s leaders, however, saw no contradiction between Austria's basic Germanness and the distinctive culture, history, and Catholic heritage which set it apart from other German lands. Indeed, the new government not only presented Austrians as special Germans, but in many cases portrayed them as the "real" Germans, who stood for all that was best in the German tradition at a time when such great qualities had been eclipsed by National Socialism in Germany. Furthermore, the representatives of the *Ständestaat* also took great pains to present Austrian culture as part of the wider circle of Western and Christian culture, and to define continuing Austrian independence as necessary to defend Western civilization from both internal and external threats.

The regime's definition of the essential qualities of the German *Volk* and its Austrian branch also conspicuously lacked the *völkisch* or racist element which was such a prominent feature of the Nazis' portrayal of Germanness. Indeed, the *Ständestaat*'s conservative leaders found National Socialism's racist conception of national identity, along with its hostility toward Christianity (and especially Catholicism), repugnant. Neither the presence of a sizable number of Catholics within the Third Reich, nor indeed

Hitler's own nominally Catholic religious background affected the opinion of Austrian conservatives about National Socialism. For them, Nazism was an incorrigible, anti-Christian ideology which sought to eclipse the cultural and religious heritage which constituted the greatness of the German *Volk* with its own crude, racist vision of nationhood. Ethnicity certainly played a role in the *Ständestaat*'s vision of Germanness, but it never trumped the other qualities which corporatist leaders saw as more important to any genuine description of the German *Volk*. The new regime's definition of Austrian Germanness as a product of not just ethnicity and language, but also of culture, history, and religion was certainly not completely new; Ignaz Seipel and other conservative Austrians had argued along similar lines during the First Republic. Yet under the corporatist government, these ideas were forcefully emphasized and repeated with a zeal that was indeed new.

Naturally enough, Dollfuß took the lead in arguing for a vision of Austrian nationhood which was simultaneously Austrian, German, Western, and Christian. Dollfuß never questioned the idea that Austrians were Germans. Even in 1932, before the end of parliamentary rule, he had argued that if Austria was able to solve the daunting social and economic problems which faced it, that achievement would represent a "German deed" which would resonate far into the future.³⁰⁹ As Austrian dictator, Dollfuß affirmed in various public statements that Austria was "self-evidently" a German state, connected to its great "brother *Reich*" by the bonds of language, history, and culture, and he committed his government to the advancing the cause of the German *Volk* and *Deutschum*

³⁰⁹Dollfuß, "Eine deutsche Tat," in *Dollfuß an Oesterreich*, 79.

in Europe generally.³¹⁰ In his view, Austria's history had begun when it had first been settled by a "pure" German population of immigrants whose descendants had affirmed their Germanness throughout Austria's many centuries of history, and it was Austria's continuing duty to look after the interests of German minorities in the Monarchy's various successor states.³¹¹

At the same time, however, Dollfuß was quick to declare that the fact that the Germans of Austria lived in a small state did not mean that they were in any way "second rate" Germans in comparison to the Germans of the Third Reich. On the contrary, he asserted that Austrians possessed a distinctive historical legacy which made them special, and which set them apart from Germans living elsewhere in Europe. First of all, he argued that being a German in Austria also meant being a Christian. For Dollfuß, Christianity as embodied in the teachings and institutions of the Catholic Church, and indeed in the traditions of Western civilization, was just as integral a part of Austria's heritage as its Germanness, and as such was well worth defending and preserving.³¹² Likewise, Dollfuß emphasized the diversity within German national culture, noting that just as the individual German "tribes" (*Stämme*) were culturally different from one another, so too were the cultures of even the individual Austrian provinces remarkably distinctive. For Dollfuß, this variety of culture within the German nation was advantageous and something to be celebrated. He contrasted his vision of German diversity with the narrow and dogmatic German nationalism propounded by the Nazis in order to make the argument that

³¹⁰Dollfuß, "Oesterreichischer Patriotismus," 36-44; "Das neue Oesterreich," 70-71; "Für ein unabhängiges deutsches Oesterreich," in *Dollfuß an Oesterreich*, 86-87.

³¹¹Dollfuß, "Oesterreichs Weg in die neue Zeit," 50-57; "Deutsche Freiheit in Oesterreich," in *Dollfuß an Oesterreich*, 82-83.

Anschluss with Nazi Germany would inevitably represent a threat to Austria's distinctive brand of Germanness. He proclaimed that it was the duty of all Austrians, as "good Germans," to eschew any form of exaggerated nationalism and to cling to the history and traditions which made Austria great.³¹³ Indeed, while his own regime was certainly a dictatorship, Dollfuß saw a very meaningful difference between his own *Ständestaat* and the Nazi regime. Dollfuß conceived of the *Ständestaat* a means of providing Austria with a firm, authoritarian leadership which would protect its cultural, social, and religious traditions in the face of liberalism and Marxism, but he still viewed his government as one which preserved Austrian freedom and which was based upon the rule of law. In contrast, he saw National Socialism as an ideology which had no regard for either tradition or freedom, and which was founded on naked violence.³¹⁴ Thus, Dollfuß defined Austria not only within the context of the German nation, but also as part of a long and unique legacy of Austrian, Christian, and Western culture which was at odds with the crude and racist German nationalism and political brutality of Nazi Germany.

The other leading figures of the *Ständestaat* basically followed the template of Austrian national identity set down by Dollfuß. Dollfuß' successor as chancellor, Schuschnigg, was if anything even more fervent than his predecessor in his identification of Austrian identity with Catholicism, and he argued that Austria's national culture was as firmly bound to Catholicism as it was to Germany. In fact Schuschnigg noted that Austria's sense of law, duty, individual freedom, and communal responsibility was

³¹²Dollfuß, "Gleichmacherei ist undeutsch," 88-89; "Deutschtum und Christentum," 92-93; "Deutsche Freiheit in Oesterreich," 82-82.

³¹³Dollfuß, "Das neue Oesterreich," 36-44; "Für eine österreichische-vaterländische Front," in *Dollfuß an Oesterreich*, 72-73.

derived from the combination of its German heritage and the Catholic faith. He regarded any attempt to break with such a notion of Austrian culture as a “crime against our national spirit.”³¹⁵ Similarly, the prominent *Heimwehr* leaders Ernst Rüdiger von Starhemberg and Emil Fey also expressed their commitment to a vision of Austria as a German, Christian state which possessed a unique historical heritage which set it apart from Nazi-style German nationalism.³¹⁶

³¹⁴Dollfuß, “Oesterreichs Weg in die neue Zeit,” 50-57; Dollfuß, “Gleichmacherei ist undeutsch,” 88-89.

³¹⁵Schuschnigg, *Dreimal Österreich*, 210-211.

³¹⁶Starhemberg, *Memoiren*, 78-80; “Oesterreichs Wehr in Isonzo und heute,” *Reichspost* (Vienna), November, 1, 1933, 5.

Catholic intellectuals not overtly affiliated with the regime also joined their voices to the government's chorus in defining Austrians as not merely members of the German nation, but also as a distinctive and valuable cultural group in their own right. For example, in a work published by the government-sponsored Pedagogical Institute of Vienna, professor of geography at the University of Vienna, Hugo Hassinger, affirmed that modern Austrians were essentially the descendants of members of the Bavarian "tribe" who had settled in the Danube valley a millennium ago. Yet, according to Hassinger, those original settlers, by the force of their new geographic position in Europe developed beyond their initial Bavarian roots into a unique group of German-speakers committed to the cause of cooperation between the *Völker* of their region.³¹⁷ Likewise, the legitimist Catholic intellectual August Maria Knoll argued that Austria was a German state, rather than a mere German "*Gau*," and noted that while Austrians did indeed have "mother-love" for Germany, that affection was necessarily subordinated to their Austrian "Father *Geist*" to be the bearers of the German spirit of order in the Danubian region.³¹⁸

The "Austrian Man" and the "Austrian Mission"

The *Ständestaat*'s leaders further clarified their general position concerning Austrian nationhood through repeated references to two ideas which sometimes had been used by Austrianists during the First Republic: the "Austrian man," and the "Austrian mission." By restating, and, in many cases, modifying these familiar themes, the leaders of the new Austrian state sought to describe exactly how Austrians were different from

³¹⁷Hugo Hassinger, "Oesterreich im mitteleuropäischen Raum," *Schriften des Pädagogischen Institutes der Stadt Wien* 7 (1935): 9-11.

other Germans, and, more importantly, how Austria's unique history obligated an independent Austria to perform a special function on the Europe continent. As always, the *Ständestaat's* representatives used Austria's Habsburg past in order to define the Austrian man, and the mission of his Fatherland for the German *Volk* and Western civilization.

The new government's desire to preserve Austrian independence and to kindle a sense of Austrian patriotism within the Austrian people was given a particular sense of urgency by the success of National Socialism in Germany, and by the concurrent surge in activism and popularity of the Austrian Nazi Party. This urgency also underlay the statements of the regime's representatives concerning the "Austrian man." For the first time in postwar Austrian history, defining the "Austrian man" after 1933 was not merely a matter of sorting through the stereotypes which marked out the differences between Austrians and other Germans; now, the Austrian man had a dangerous new counterpart in the form of the "Nazi man." Commentators at the time never used the specific term, "Nazi man," but nevertheless their descriptions of the qualities of the true Austrian were always implicitly, and sometimes explicitly, juxtaposed with the sorts of values and characteristics which the Nazis supposedly embodied.

As we have seen, Dollfuß drew a sharp distinction between Austria's heritage and the ideals of Nazism. According to the Austrian chancellor, Austrians celebrated German diversity and valued Western traditions and Christian piety while National Socialists turned their backs upon tradition and religion, insisting upon a narrow, brutal cultural conformity which trampled upon the ideals of German freedom. The Austrian sought peace and cooperation between peoples, but the Nazi emphasized militarism and

³¹⁸August M. Knoll, *Ziel und Glaube, der Weg einer Generation*, (Vienna: Reinhold-Verlag, 1936), 24.

chauvinism.³¹⁹ Echoing Dollfuß, many supporters of the regime presented Austrians as the embodiment of a broader ideal of German nationhood which stood opposed to more radical formulations of German nationalism. For example, in a 1933 speech Ernst Hoor defined the Austrian as a cosmopolitan citizen of the world, who was nevertheless a proud patriot and loyal to his own national culture. This Austrian saw chauvinism and all other forms of nationalistic excess as fundamentally foreign ideals. Ultimately for Hoor, the Austrian man was one who recognized that there were other peoples with their own legitimate national interests beyond his state's borders. Moreover, a great Austrian was also simultaneously a true German, contradicting the habitual Nazi accusation that Austrian patriotism amounted to treason against the German nation.³²⁰

Unsurprisingly, after his assassination, the *Ständestaat* presented Dollfuß himself to the Austrian people as an exemplary model of what it meant to be a true Austrian. A *Reichspost* article commemorating the anniversary of Dollfuß' murder dubbed the fallen dictator "the Austrian," a man in whom all the unique qualities of the Austrian national character were to be found: a Mozart-like brightness and easiness of spirit, an unshakable instinct in distinguishing truth and genuineness from falsity and rhetorical pompousness, and German honesty and honor paired with a moderate, "southern" temperament. The piece further praised Dollfuß as a leader who had reminded the Austrian people of the importance of their millennium of history and of their special calling to serve as the representatives of *Deutschtum* in southeastern Europe, a leader who had restored Austria to its previous position at the center of Europe. Indeed, Dollfuß appeared as a good

³¹⁹Dollfuß, "Oesterreichs Weg in die neue Zeit," 50-57; "Das neue Oesterreich," 36-44.

³²⁰"Schwedische Anteilnahme an Oesterreichs Erneuerung," *Reichspost* (Vienna), November 1, 1933, 3.

European as well, following in the old Austrian tradition which combined moderate German nationalism with a dedication to defending the Christian character of the West. The article described Dollfuß as a man from “German peasant” stock, a front fighter and a pious defender of Christian ideals against relativism. It also explicitly placed Dollfuß alongside Austria’s other great historical statesmen– the Babenberg and the Habsburg monarchs, Kaunitz, Stadion, Metternich, Felix Schwarzenberg, Lueger, and Seipel– as the heir to a long lineage of principled and dedicated Austrian leaders. The author of this piece concluded by reminding his readers that the ideals which Dollfuß fought for lived on, even as the fallen leader had given his own life for the Austrian cause.³²¹

Just as the leaders of the *Ständestaat* were eager to define the distinctive and worthwhile qualities which made the “Austrian man” special, so too were they interested in presenting arguments concerning the necessary mission which an independent Austria was called upon to perform in the service of both the German nation and Western civilization as a whole. The government’s statements concerning the “Austrian mission” were calculated to remind the Austrian people of the historical achievements of their state, and to encourage all Austrians to rededicate themselves to the conservative and religious ideals of the Habsburg Monarchy which the *Ständestaat* claimed to have restored to Austrian life. Such statements also explicitly stood as an argument against *Anschluß* with Nazi Germany, which would allegedly render Austria incapable of performing its historical mission in Europe.

The leaders of the government frequently discussed the “Austrian mission” in terms that had been used by Austrianists during the First Republic. The vision of Austria

³²¹“Engelbert Dollfuß, der österreichische Mensch,” *Reichspost* (Vienna), July 25, 1935, 1-2.

as a “bulwark” against threats to Germany and Western Europe, as representative of German culture to the non-German *Völker* of Central and Eastern Europe, and as a cultural “bridge” between East and West were all familiar to the Austrian people, and the government now officially endorsed these arguments. The regime’s emphasis upon these ideas as part of the official ideology of the Austrian state was something new, however, as previous Austrian governments had tended to avoid strong statements concerning an Austrian mission, mostly leaving such arguments to independent Austrian intellectuals. The *Ständestaat*’s spokesmen formulated their presentation of the “Austrian mission” in a manner which emphasized not only Austria’s service to the German nation, but also to Western civilization and Christendom. Such an emphasis had certainly not always been so blatant in earlier articulations of the “Austrian mission.”³²²

The *Ständestaat*’s insistence on an Austria mission to serve as a bulwark against threats to Germany and Europe inevitably harked back to role the old Monarchy had played in stemming the advance of various invasions from the East throughout its history. An article in the conservative newspaper *Reichspost* commemorating the anniversary of Dollfuß’ murder noted that the fallen chancellor had returned Austria to its historical mission to function as a “dam” against the forces of negation and destruction. The piece argued that Austria had been founded one thousand years earlier to serve as a bulwark of the Christian West against the Mongols and the Huns, and had stood throughout its long history against attacks on Christendom from Islam and even against the decidedly non-Eastern but no less threatening assaults upon the traditional order from the Protestant

³²²For a discussion of conservative views on the “Austrian mission” during the First Republic, see Chapter 1.

Reformation and the wars of the French Revolution and Napoleon.³²³

The regime used the occasion of the 250th anniversary of the breaking of the Turkish siege of Vienna on September 12, 1683 to celebrate this aspect of the Austrian mission. In a 1933 speech, Dollfuß himself praised this successful defense of Europe and German-Christian culture from the Turks.³²⁴ A *Reichspost* article from September 12, 1933 explicitly identified the ideals of the new “corporatist, Christian, German, and Austrian state” with those of the seventeenth-century defenders of the city, and reported that Dollfuß had invoked the “Spirit of September 12” to remind Austrians of their duty to defend their Fatherland against the new dangers it faced.³²⁵ Indeed, the new government made the argument that just as Austria had been called to protect Europe from the Turks in the past, so too was it now summoned to join the struggle to defend the West’s traditional, conservative ideals against new, revolutionary threats such as Marxism and National Socialism.³²⁶ Thus the Dollfuß and his government translated the old defensive Austrian mission into a contemporary task to preserve the traditional culture of the West against new ideological rivals.

While the *Ständestaat*’s leaders made references to the old Austrian mission to serve as a defensive bulwark for Western civilization, they devoted even more attention to the idea that part of Austria’s mission was to stand as a representative of German culture and as a transmitter of that culture to the other *Völker* of Central and Eastern Europe. Dollfuß, as always, took the lead in presenting such a conception of the Austrian mission,

³²³“Der Ueberwinder der Revolution,” *Reichspost* (Vienna), July 25, 1935, 3.

³²⁴Dollfuß, “Das neue Oesterreich,” 19-20.

³²⁵“Neues Österreich,” *Reichspost* (Vienna), September 12, 1933, 1

³²⁶“Der Ueberwinder der Revolution,” 3.

and noted that Austria, even in its new, smaller form, was the heir to a glorious history, and could serve as a bearer of German culture to the other *Völker* of Europe, thus continuing the old Monarchy's service to the cause of all *Deutschtum*. Obviously, Dollfuß' conception of *Deutschtum* must be seen in the light of his comments concerning German diversity and freedom. Germanness for him was something broader than the nationalistic chauvinism of the Nazis, who indeed opposed the *Deutschtum* embodied in Austria's history.³²⁷

For Dollfuß, the Austrian mission involved more than just serving the cause of the German nation; it involved performing a service for all of Europe by using the diversity of German culture to foster cooperation between peoples. According to the Austrian dictator, an important part of Austria's mission was to continue to assert a uniquely beneficial Austrian variety of Germanness in Central Europe, and indeed on the continent as a whole, in order to foster economic and cultural cooperation between *Völker*. Such a task was part of the Habsburg legacy since the Monarchy had served as a facilitator of cooperation between nations, cultures and peoples in the Danubian region. Dollfuß explicitly contrasted this vision of a German nation which encompassed cultural and political variations and which sought to bring *Völker* together in a spirit of cooperation with Nazi-style *Gleichschaltung* (coordination) which aimed to eradicate differences of opinion and spark national conflicts in Europe.³²⁸

In a speech in New York in November of 1933, Dollfuß addressed Austria's European mission in even more explicit terms. He argued that contemporary Austria still

³²⁷Dollfuß, "Das neue Oesterreich," 43-44; "Für eine österreichische-vaterländische Front," 72-73

³²⁸Dollfuß, "Oesterreichs Weg in die neue Zeit," 50-57.

had the same calling that it had throughout its many centuries of history: to serve as a mediating force between German culture and the cultures of other realms. He asserted that Austria had been the oldest and most distinguished bearer of German culture in Europe and had always been at the center of the most important events in the continent's history. Austria had always attempted to foster understanding among the various peoples of Europe. After all, for more than six centuries the Holy Roman German emperor had ruled from Vienna in the service of both German interests and the cause of peaceful coexistence between *Völker*. Dollfuß also mentioned Austria's military, artistic, and musical achievements as evidence of its profound cultural importance to Europe. In order to pursue this necessary historical mission, Austria needed to preserve its independence and the purity of its distinctive culture. The collapse of the old Monarchy had deeply shaken Austria, on both economic and spiritual levels, but Dollfuß declared that the *Ständestaat's* renewal of Austria's sense of its true self and its historical mission put it in a position to resume the mediating work that had always been central to the old Habsburg state.³²⁹

Kurt von Schuschnigg built upon the arguments of his predecessor, proclaiming in a 1935 speech that his government had an interest in preserving Austria's distinctive culture, which indeed stood as the last true representative of Western culture in Europe. This culture represented the harmonious blending of the traditions of Greek and Roman antiquity, Catholic Christianity, and the culture of the old German tribes of Europe. Schuschnigg argued that if any one of these elements were to be lost, Austrian culture would cease to be truly Western (and clearly Schuschnigg's implication was that such a

³²⁹Dollfuß, "Oesterreichs europäische Aufgabe," in *Dollfuß an Oesterreich*, 63-69.

fate had befallen Nazi Germany). He declared that Austria's centuries of service as both a defender and transmitter of the West's cultural and religious heritage made it uniquely qualified to serve that same function in a modern world infected by liberalism, Marxism, and Nazism. Preserving Catholicism in Austria was of particular importance for Schuschnigg, who thought that a pious population would help Austria to perform its age-old functions. He also argued that a firm Austria attachment to its traditional religion would also serve to counteract the recent tendency on the part of rabid European nationalists to "deify" the *Volk* and the state.³³⁰

In his 1936 memoir, Schuschnigg asserted that there was still a way for Austria to perform its old historical function in the area formerly ruled by the Habsburg Monarchy. He allowed that the Austrian mission certainly could not now be accomplished through the old method of imperial rule, and affirmed that Austria had abandoned any ambitions to once again reign over the lands of the old Monarchy. Yet at the same time, he asserted that the Monarchy's mission could still live on in a new form. The new Austria, so small in terms of territory and political power, might still help lead the region in the realm of *Geist* (spirit). Ultimately, Schuschnigg's conception of the "spiritual" component of the Austrian mission was familiar. He argued that Austria had a calling to serve as the representative of German culture and civilization, functioning as a cultural mediator in a region which contained many different languages and nationalities. Such a mission would now be accomplished through diplomacy and advocacy, however, rather than through political power.³³¹

³³⁰Schuschnigg, "Oesterreichs abendländische Sendung," *Reichspost* (Vienna), November 11, 1935, 2.

³³¹Schuschnigg, *Dreimal Österreich*, 15-23.

Even the *Heimwehr* leaders, frequently less systematic in their pronouncements about the ideological foundations of Austrian nationhood, made some attempt to deal with the idea of an Austrian mission. Starhemberg, for example, argued that Austria had historically stood as the protector of Central Europe, and hence of all of European civilization, which was for him defined by a combination of classical and Roman imperial ideals and the Christian world view of the Catholic Church. As such, Austria was obligated to perform a “mission” in Danubian Europe, which for Starhemberg involved serving as an unselfish defensive bulwark for both Germany and all of Christendom and Western civilization.³³² Similarly, Emil Fey noted that Austria had a mission to serve as an outpost of Christian and German culture in the Danubian region which it has not lost even after being shorn of much of the old Monarchy’s territory and population.³³³

Catholic intellectuals who supported the regime also offered descriptions of an “Austrian mission” involving a duty to mediate between the peoples of East-Central Europe. Hugo Hassinger, always the geographer, argued that such a mission had evolved naturally for the German Austrians of Central Europe as a result of their physical location at a cultural crossroads between various *Völker* in the Danubian region. Princely houses from both Bohemia and Hungary had tried to create a supranational state in the region, but it was only the Habsburgs who had succeeded. After doing so, the old Austrian monarchy had been called to serve the cause of European peace by facilitating communication between Germans and non-Germans, and by helping the various national groups within their territory to cooperate for mutual advantage. Hassinger argued that

³³²Starhemberg, *Memoiren*, 78-80; 180; “Die österreichische Idee,” in *Österreich, Volk und Staat* (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1936), 113-117.

such a mission was still the appropriate goal for contemporary Austria, which continued to sit astride the same crossroads, even after the old Monarchy, which had first given rise to such aspirations, had collapsed.³³⁴

August Maria Knoll put an interesting metaphorical spin on the idea of an Austrian mission by invoking the old double headed eagle which had been the symbol of the Habsburg Monarchy for so many centuries. He argued that each head of the eagle represented a different aspect of the Austrian mission. One head looked from the Danube northward to the Rhine river, and stood for the Austria's role as the old German *Ostmark* to protect Germandom from invasions from the East, whether in the form of the Ottoman Empire centuries ago, or in the guise of more contemporary threats, such as Bolshevism. The other head looked from the Danube downstream, and represented the Austria's function as a "bridge" or "gateway" between cultures. Whereas other advocates of an Austrian mission often emphasized Austria's role as a mediator just between East and West, Knoll's formulation presented Austria as the heart of all of Europe. For Knoll, Austria had always been the ground where the French, Italian, Slavic, and Germanic cultural circles met one another and intermingled. Thus Knoll argued that the "bridge" of Austria did not just link east and west, but also north and south. Austria was indeed primarily a German land, but to Knoll it represented a different type of German culture than the German *Reich* to the north, one which was more open to other cultural influences than the rest of Germany. Knoll argued that Austrian independence was vital so it could serve in this particular cultural role. Austria served German interests, but it simply could

³³³“Oesterreichs Wehr in Isonzo und heute,” 5.

³³⁴Hassinger, 9-13.

not be part of a larger Germany and still maintain the particular variety of Germanness which made it unique. Knoll asserted that even Bismarck had recognized this reality, and thus had attempted to maintain the independence of a strong Austria even as he excluded that state from his newly unified German *Reich* in 1871.³³⁵

Knoll argued that Austria's two missions had ultimately served the cause of both Germany and Europe as whole. Thus, whoever served the cause of Austria also helped Germany and Europe to be stronger. Knoll asserted that these Austrian functions were ultimately the true expression of the House of Habsburg's own imperial ideals. The old dynasty was, in Knoll's estimation, simultaneously Austrian, German, and European, in the best senses of all of those terms. The Treaty of Saint Germain of 1919 had attacked that imperial ideal, and was as much an anti-European document as it was anti-German and anti-Austrian. The small Austrian state which remained after the war was still, however, the core of the old Habsburg territories, and could still serve the same functions as the old state had. Knoll asserted that Austria remained what it had always been: the imperial sword of the German *Volk*, which had been wielded from the quintessential European capital of Vienna to assure that Germans and the other *Völker* of the Danubian region could live together peacefully and to mutual benefit.³³⁶

The *Ständestaat*'s Historical Narrative

Beyond their arguments concerning the "Austrian man" and the "Austrian

³³⁵Knoll, 5-7. For a nearly identical argument see the work of another conservative Catholic, Hans Karl Zetzner-Spitzenberg, *Österreichs staatliche Geschichte* (Vienna: Arbeitsgemeinschaft österreichischer Verein, 1935), 1-32.

³³⁶Knoll, 3-9.

mission,” the leaders and representatives of the *Ständestaat* made frequent references to Austria’s Habsburg past in more general terms as well. Their portrayal of the old Monarchy was for the most part unambiguously positive, and they attempted to cast the new corporatist state as the inheritor of all that was good in the Habsburg state. The *Ständestaat*’s ideologues presented a historical narrative which emphasized three particular eras of Austria’s past. This narrative began with a highly romanticized vision of the medieval period in Austria as an ideal model for society and as the source of the new regime’s corporatist ideals. The *Ständestaat*’s leaders and supporters, however, did not employ the term “medieval” with any particular historical precision, but often used it to refer to Austrian society from the early Middle Ages up into the Theresian age in the early eighteenth century. Their narrative presented the eighteenth-century Enlightenment as the beginning of more than a century of catastrophic social corrosion as capitalism, liberalism, Marxism, and nationalism gradual disrupted the old harmony of Austrian life. For these corporatist commentators, the collapse of the Monarchy in 1918 represented the triumph of these destructive forces in Austrian history, which were themselves supposedly vanquished by Dollfuß in 1933. The architects of this corporatist historical narrative sought to use Austria’s rich historical legacy to inspire the Austrian people to renewed patriotism and fervent support for the *Ständestaat*. As Dollfuß proclaimed in 1933, “Our state does not merely desire to be valued as a museum of admirable historical memories. Rather we wish to be recognized through our work as a worthy member of the European family of *Völker* and thus to be able to contribute to the necessary rebuilding of Europe.”³³⁷

³³⁷Dollfuß, “Lebendiges Oesterreich,” in *Dollfuß an Oesterreich*, 60-61.

While many liberal or socialist Austrians generally saw the old Monarchy during the medieval era as an oppressive, reactionary entity which only began to struggle toward modernity after the Enlightenment, the corporatist government argued that the Middle Ages represented a golden age of social harmony and Catholic piety in Austria. The new regime invariably portrayed the medieval Monarchy as a benevolent realm, in which order and social harmony had been guaranteed by religion and an appropriate sense of hierarchy. The feudal order, far from being oppressive, had been a system in which every Austrian had known his place in the economic and social fabric of the state through membership in a *Berufstand*, and had had no thought of turning against his countrymen to disrupt the system.³³⁸ For the leaders of the *Ständestaat*, Austria's medieval past had been an era in which Catholic piety and German culture had combined to produce a truly harmonious society, a society which the new government sought to restore after its destruction by disruptive and toxic modern ideologies.

Dollfuß frequently alluded to the Habsburg Monarchy's medieval period in order to argue for the legitimacy of his own dictatorship. For example, 1933 marked not only the 250th anniversary of the siege of Vienna but also the 500th anniversary of the building of St. Stephen's cathedral in the Austrian capital. Dollfuß used the religious symbolism and imposing Gothic architecture of this medieval edifice as an example of the German culture and Catholic values which Austria had defended from the Turks in 1683.³³⁹

Dollfuß argued that his corporatist government represented an attempt to recapture the

³³⁸The German word *Berufstand* may be loosely translated as a "profession" or "trade," but in the sense of Austria's medieval past connotes an individual's economic position and function in the social hierarchy more than simply his or her vocation, and is thus better rendered as "estate." It was from the old medieval *Berufstände* that the Austrian "*Ständestaat*" of the 1930s derived its name.

social harmony and the Christian and German traditional values of the medieval Habsburg state. The Constitution of 1934, he noted, expressed these ideals of the old “German *Ostmark*” which had provided the foundation for all of Austria’s subsequent history. More than any document in Austria’s recent history, the new corporatist constitution, according to Dollfuß, harked back to old Germanic law and the harmonious coexistence of the social and economic *Berufstände* which had dominated Austrian life during the medieval period. Dollfuß even argued that the Constitution of 1934 allowed the mayors of towns in contemporary Austria to perform a similar function to that of the princely electors of the old Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, helping to chose the Austrian president just as the electors chose the German emperor. Despite the actual powerlessness after 1934 of the Austrian presidency, which was in a practical sense a symbolic office subordinate to the chancellor, the comparison between the nominal Austrian head of state and the old German imperial title, which the House of Habsburg usually possessed, was of course no coincidence.³⁴⁰

The monarchist intellectual Knoll, in a rare case of disagreement with the regime, did not share Dollfuß’ opinion about the close correspondence between the medieval Habsburg system of *Berufstände* and the modern *Ständestaat*. Knoll agreed that an authoritarian *Ständestaat* represented Austria’s best hope to transcend the social pitfalls of both liberal capitalism and its Marxist antithesis. He traced the lineage of corporatism in the Austrian right from Karl von Vogelsang through Karl Lueger to Ignaz Seipel and Othmar Spann, and finally to Dollfuß and Schuschnigg. This new, but thoroughly

³³⁹Dollfuß, “Das neue Oesterreich,” 20-26.

³⁴⁰Dollfuß, “Der 1. Mai 1934,” 233-240.

Austrian, form of government, could deliver the Austrian state from the evils of obstructionist parliamentarism and class conflict into a new era of community and solidarity. Yet he differed from the *Ständestaat's* government precisely because he argued that corporatism was indeed new. Unlike other proponents of corporatism, Knoll argued that this form of government was not in fact very similar to medieval social organization. Knoll denounced the feudal order as a form of oppression by the nobility, which had been every bit as bad as the liberal-capitalist order which had replaced it. Corporatism was, according to Knoll, a form of social organization which replaced the old societies of privilege, whether noble or bourgeois, with a new Catholic communal vision of society. Knoll's distaste for feudalism did not translate into outright antagonism toward the Monarchy as a historical entity, however. He merely noted that the old *Reich* had been a basically benevolent state which had nevertheless had its flaws. Indeed, Knoll's description of corporatism as a modern theory of government was certainly a much more realistic view than that of those who presented it as the rebirth of a highly romanticized vision of medieval society. In the end, however, Knoll supported the modern *Ständestaat* enthusiastically, even if he presented its roots differently than the Dollfuß-Schuschnigg government.³⁴¹

Another Catholic intellectual, Hans Karl Zetzner-Spitzenberg, described the medieval and early modern Monarchy in more unambiguously positive terms, arguing that as early as the Babenberg period, the Austrian state had fulfilled a special function in Europe to preserve the peace and to defend the Christian West against outside threats. Zetzner-Spitzenberg reserved most of his praise for Rudolf IV and other members of the

³⁴¹Knoll, 9-17.

House of Habsburg, however, and argued that the imperial family's drive to craft a multinational, Catholic state in the heart of Europe had not been the result of dynastic ambitions, but rather had come in response to the needs of the continent as a whole. For Zetzner-Spitzenberg, the Habsburg Monarchy had been a "historical necessity" for Europe and had stood firm against Turkish invasions, separatist German religious uprisings, and destabilizing Prussian and French military adventurism. Through it all, the old Monarchy had acted not in the cause of its own political power, but rather to advance economic prosperity and cultural development throughout its lands.³⁴²

Schuschnigg also sang the praises of the medieval Monarchy as a benevolent institution, although he focused more closely upon its system of national balances than upon its purported social harmony. In his memoir, Schuschnigg argued that the old dynastic state had never been the oppressive, reactionary entity its critics had charged. Instead, he noted that the Habsburg rulers of the state had always felt obligated to use their power to unite and peacefully govern their subjects of numerous different nationalities and cultures, and to spread German culture and Catholicism throughout their realm. Schuschnigg regarded this Habsburg function not as hegemonic or imperial, but rather as patriarchal, with the dynasty as the guardian of the best interests of all the various national groups. According to Schuschnigg, most of the Monarchy's inhabitants had not really understood how important this Habsburg mission had been. Only after 1918 did the Austrian people truly begin to appreciate what had been lost when the Monarchy collapsed.³⁴³

³⁴²Zetzner-Spitzenberg, 1-21.

³⁴³Schuschnigg, *Dreimal Österreich*, 15-23

Hassinger too argued that the Monarchy had been impressive in its ability to work for harmony among the various nationalities. Indeed the Monarchy's particular genius according to him lay in the fact that a state dominated by Germans had been able to use its power in medieval and early modern Europe to forge a genuinely supranational community, in which the interests of all nationalities were protected and advanced. This felicitous situation existed not despite German predominance, but rather because of the empathetic, mediating features that were integral to the German Austrian national character. Hassinger argued that only in the modern era did such a harmonious balance between patriarchal German dominance and the interests of the Monarchy's other *Völker* start to break down.³⁴⁴

Supporters of the corporatist regime also sought to make clear the historical linkages between the old dynasty and the Catholic faith. In a *Reichspost* article in 1933, Max Hussarek, a former imperial prime minister, emphasized the Catholic character of the dynasty since the reign of Ferdinand III during the Middle Ages. He argued that the German "religious revolution" of the Protestant Reformation had seriously damaged Christian unity, especially in Bohemia, and that it was only through the Counter-Reformation led by the Habsburgs and the Jesuits that Austria regained the religious harmony necessary to fulfill its historical mission defending Europe against the Turks. Hussarek asserted that even the Enlightenment-based absolutism of Joseph II had been widely misunderstood as anti-religious, when in reality that monarch had been a pious man who had sought to regularize and strengthen the position of Catholicism within the Austrian state. Even in the modern era, the link between the Catholic faith and the ruling

³⁴⁴Hassinger, 10-13.

imperial House had remained unshakable. Hussarek praised Franz Joseph's efforts to conclude a concordat with the papacy after 1848, even if that document had been repudiated by the liberal Austrian government in 1870. Only Franz Joseph's wisdom in reaching an agreement with the anti-Catholic liberals had allowed Austria to escape a disruptive *Kulturkampf* like the one which had destabilized Wilhelmine Germany. According to Hussarek, this agreement had mollified the liberals while still preserving much of the Church's influence in Austria, and had given the conservative-Catholic right a period of calm in which to rebuild its political strength. Hussarek affirmed that even Karl, the last Habsburg monarch, had been a very pious Catholic, just like his dynastic forebears. For Hussarek, Austria was, and remained a Catholic state, despite the efforts of liberals and Socialists to deny that fact.³⁴⁵

Indeed, all of the new corporatist regime's leaders and supporters agreed with Hussarek that the beneficial qualities of the old Monarchy began a steady disintegration with the advent of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution of 1789. Whereas liberal and Marxist commentators had generally seen the Revolution and the ideas which had inspired it as the beginning of Europe's development toward a more free, more egalitarian form of society, the Austrian conservatives had always seen the modern era in a more negative light. The representatives of the *Ständestaat* were no different, and asserted that the rise of capitalism and political liberalism had upset the harmonious balance of the old medieval social order, even as the rising tide of modern nationalism had inspired the peoples of the supranational Monarchy to demand new rights and privileges from the dynastic state.

³⁴⁵Max Hussarek, "Oesterreichs geistiger Urgrund," *Reichspost* (Vienna), September 12, 1933, 4-5.

Dollfuß asserted that the era of Maria Theresa in the early eighteenth century had represented a particular high point of Austrian power and prestige. In accordance with corporatist ideology, he also argued that during the Theresian period there had been no class conflict of the sort that had plagued Austria during the modern age. Nevertheless, the *Berufstände* had become ossified and overly formalistic by the end of the eighteenth century, and, Dollfuß argued, this rigidity had encouraged the popularity of capitalism and Enlightenment rationality, which some saw as a means of breaking free from the increasingly burdensome old order. The next century had brought considerable and beneficial technological progress, but only at the expense of the soul and Christian values. Dollfuß asserted that political liberalism, the natural ideological offspring of capitalism and the Enlightenment, disguised a tendency toward the arbitrary use of political and economic power beneath its rhetoric of liberty and freedom. Liberal abuses of power had caused class divisions, which in turn gave birth to the brutal materialism of Marxism. World War I represented the destructive culmination of the fetishism of technology and rationality in Europe. Thus, Austria had gained certain material benefits since the late eighteenth century, but only at the price of the religious and moral awareness which had given its history real meaning. Now it was time for Austrians to return to the old social order which so many of them had ill advisedly abandoned rather than reformed.³⁴⁶

Schuschnigg too lamented the rise of class conflict and social unrest in the last century of the old Monarchy, but argued that the problem of the balance between the nationalities was an even more pressing problem for the Habsburg state. Indeed, in

³⁴⁶Dollfuß, "Das neue Oesterreich," 20-26, 32. For a similar argument, see also Zetzner-Spitzenberg, 22-25.

Schuschnigg's estimation, it was precisely these problems that had led to the Habsburg Monarchy's demise, and he allowed that even if World War I had not occurred, the old supranational state might still have crumbled. The 1867 *Ausgleich* and dualism, although crafted to save the Monarchy by mollifying the Magyars, ultimately prevented national reform in the rest of the state, especially *vis-à-vis* the relationship between ethnic Czechs and Germans. Schuschnigg also criticized German nationalists in Austria for being too attached to their nationality to see the real benefits provided by the Monarchy. In an interesting point, he noted that if Austrian Germans, as the dominant nationality of the Monarchy, had not been able to subordinate their national interests to those of the state as a whole, then they could hardly have expected any of the Monarchy's other, less privileged *Völker* to abandon their own national demands.³⁴⁷

Ultimately, however, Schuschnigg saw no basic incompatibility between loyalty to both the Habsburg state and the German nation which transcended state boundaries. Schuschnigg saw Austria as a German state, and maintained that even though the old Holy Roman Empire had collapsed, there had been a natural connection between Austrians and the Germans of the Wilhemine *Reich*, which had obviously been mirrored in the Austro-German alliance of the late nineteenth century. He reminisced about the various colors flown in the pre-war Monarchy, and noted that the Slavic peoples sometimes displayed the blue, white, and red banner which symbolized their nationality just as Austrian German-speakers often flew the black, red and yellow of Germany. Yet such displays, according to Schuschnigg, had never represented disloyalty to the black and gold flag of the dynasty,

³⁴⁷Schuschnigg, *Dreimal Österreich*, 24-49.

which was also often proudly flown by these groups as well. So Schuschnigg did not see differing national loyalties in and of themselves as detrimental to or incompatible with the existence of the Habsburg Monarchy. The eventual elevation of such principles above the interests of the state was what ultimately had doomed old Austria in his eyes.

Schuschnigg also noted that before the war, even those national groups least satisfied with Habsburg rule had not seriously imagined their future outside of the confines of the Monarchy.³⁴⁸

For Austrian conservatives then, 1918 represented the cruelest blow of all, the dismemberment of the old Monarchy. It was bad enough that Austria had been shorn of most of its territory and large segments of its German-speaking population. Far worse, was the replacement of the old monarchical system with a new republic which was tinged with socialism and which displayed little dedication to the notion of preserving an independent Austrian Fatherland. For the conservatives who supported the *Ständestaat*, the First Republic represented a decisive victory for just the sorts of negative forces which had undermined the benevolent old dynastic state in the first place: liberalism, Marxism, and excessive German nationalism.³⁴⁹

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 24-49.

³⁴⁹ Dollfuß, "Das neue Oesterreich," 20-26, 32; Hecht, "Volksvertretung und Staatsführung in der neuen Verfassung," 3; "Wahre Volksgemeinschaft," 1.

Schuschnigg was especially forceful in laying the blame upon Otto Bauer and the Austrian Social Democrats for the end of the Habsburg state and its replacement with the First Republic. He argued that even though the Socialists had been quick to argue that the working class itself had driven the “Revolution of 1918,” the workers had known that their economic well being was best secured through law and order, and thus actually had not actively sought the end of the Habsburg state. According to Schuschnigg, it was the Austrian Socialists who, animated by their fanatical hatred of the Habsburgs, had acted against the interests of the working class in creating a new, anti-religious government in place of the old German-Christian Monarchy. Indeed, Schuschnigg argued that the Socialists had been extremely hostile to the very idea of an Austria independent from Germany, and would have dissolved the Austrian Fatherland into the German *Reich* if the Entente powers had allowed them.³⁵⁰

The *Heimwehr* leader, Ernst Rüdiger von Starhemberg, described the events of 1918 in a particularly gripping manner in his 1938 memoir, presenting its effects from his perspective as a young, *kaisertreu* soldier returning home after the war. He characterized the collapse of the old monarchy as the “first great tragedy” of his young life. This young scion of an ancient aristocratic family with intimate historical relations with the old dynasty recounted how he had been thoroughly immersed in old Austrian patriotism as a child. He had regarded the emperor Franz Joseph with a nearly religious sense of awe as a youth, and he claimed that he could not then imagine a time when the Habsburg empire might not exist and command the heartfelt loyalty of all of its subjects. Starhemberg was shaken to the core by the disintegration of the Habsburg state, and thrown into a profound

³⁵⁰Schuschnigg, *Dreimal Österreich*, 50-65.

spiritual crisis which ultimately led him to embrace pan-Germanism and National Socialism for a time. While he later called his nationalistic dalliance an error, he argued that many young Austrian soldiers had experienced a crisis of patriotic faith similar to his own. Even when he was involved with Hitler's nascent Nazi movement in Munich, however, Starhemberg claimed to have nursed a secret hope that the Habsburg heir would eventually be restored to the throne as the head of a new, *großdeutsch* monarchy.³⁵¹

As for the First Republic, Starhemberg argued that the new democracy had never actually commanded the support of the major Austrian political factions. The Social Democrats had merely seen the Republic as the first step on the path to a Soviet-style proletarian dictatorship, while the Bismarck-venerating liberal-*bürgerlich* intelligentsia wanted to place Austria under the domination of Germany. The Christian Social Party had only accepted the new state reluctantly, and out of fear of more radical solutions. The old officer corps, the old imperial bureaucracy, and the landed aristocracy for their part had fervently hoped that the new Republic would be a brief interregnum which would end with a Habsburg restoration. Thus, Starhemberg presented the destruction of the Habsburg Monarchy as the work of those who had hated the old state and who had no intention of supporting democracy, and argued that their efforts had the grievous effect of shaking the Austrian patriotism of even those who had earlier been absolutely dedicated to the Austrian cause. For Starhemberg, the *Ständestaat* thus merely replaced a sham republic with a form of government which was more in line with what the truly loyal Austrian political factions had always desired, and which would renew the Austrian

³⁵¹Starhemberg, *Memoiren*, 33, 37-38, 48.

people's lost faith in their Fatherland.³⁵²

Ultimately it was Knoll who best summarized the corporatists' attitudes toward the past century of Austrian history. He argued that the old Monarchy had represented the noble, Christian, and German character which was the true soul of Austria, and it had done its best to serve Austria's European and German mission of cultural communication and cooperation between *Völker*. The Habsburg state had, however, been gradually undermined by liberalism, Marxism, and nationalism. Now the *Ständestaat* had created a new order which aimed at restoring Austria to its true, historical path, dedicated to fighting the poisonous, materialistic, and anti-Austrian ideals of 1848, 1871, and 1918.³⁵³

The supporters of the corporatist regime naturally glorified several figures from the Habsburg past as representatives of the traditional order which had been eroded after the Enlightenment. They portrayed dynastic figures such as Maria Theresa, Joseph II, Franz Joseph, empress Elisabeth and even Karl, the star-crossed last emperor of the old Monarchy, as pious defenders of Austria's Christian German character and its European mission.³⁵⁴ Likewise, they lauded other great Austrian leaders who had served the throne such as Kaunitz, Stadion, Metternich, Lueger, and Seipel.³⁵⁵ They singled out Eugene of Savoy, the victorious general who helped turn back the Turks from the gates of Vienna in 1683, for special emphasis during the celebration of that event in 1933. Knoll in particular held up Eugene as the very personification of the Austrian mission. He remarked that the general had been the "paladin" of three "German-European" emperors. For Knoll, Eugene

³⁵²*Ibid.*, 184-185.

³⁵³Knoll, 20.

³⁵⁴Karl Emmerich Baumgärtel, "Unvergeßliches Erlebnis," *Reichspost* (Vienna), September 12, 1933, 2-3; Hussarek, 4-5; Schuschnigg, *Dreimal Österreich*, 63-65; Dollfuß, "Das neue Oesterreich," 20-26.

combined Italian blood, French culture, and the German *Geist* (spirit), representing the very best of these three European peoples in his defense of the continent against the Turks. Knoll also noted rather wryly that it had occurred to no one during Eugene's era to accuse the great general of treason to any of the *Völker* whom he represented, as narrow twentieth-century nationalists might have done had Eugene been a contemporary figure. Knoll also saw Eugene a symbol of the hope that contemporary Germany, France, Italy and Austria might put aside their mutual animosities in favor of European unity.³⁵⁶

Thus, the leaders and supporters of the *Ständestaat* used the memory of the old Monarchy continually in order to argue for the legitimacy of their new political regime and for the continuing independence of an Austrian state in the face of the threat of *Anschluss* with Nazi Germany. They invoked the leaders of the Habsburg dynastic state, and the qualities and mission which that state supposedly represented, in order to make the case for a new Austria which was called to stand against the contemporary threats of liberalism, Marxism, and National Socialism. In many ways, the spokesmen of the new government portrayed their corporatist reorganization of Austria as the rebirth of the Western, Catholic, German, and Austrian ideals which they thought the Habsburg Monarchy had represented before it was shattered by these corrupt modern ideologies.

iii. Opponents of the *Ständestaat* and the Habsburg Past

The *Ständestaat* had its opponents, however, and these opponents not only attacked the new regime, but also disputed its narrative of the Habsburg past. Certainly,

³⁵⁵“Engelbert Dollfuß, der österreichische Mensch,” 1-2; Dollfuß, “Das neue Oesterreich,” 20-26; Knoll, 9-17.

given the dictatorial nature of the corporatist government, overt opposition to the regime was circumscribed. Yet the government's opponents did have some opportunity to spread their messages, whether from exile, through illegal, underground publications, or by carefully making use of the few remaining legal outlets for the public expression of dissent. In order to criticize the government's policies, dissenters also had to grapple with the manner in which the regime invoked the memory of the old Habsburg state in order to support its arguments. One group, the rather small Catholic opposition, essentially agreed with the *Ständestaat* leaders about the positive aspects of the old Monarchy, yet they often disagreed with the regime about how to apply the lessons of Austria's dynastic past. The Social Democrats and the Communists, on the other hand, disputed the corporatist argument that the old Monarchy had been a benevolent entity, arguing instead that it had opposed the progress of freedom and social equality as embodied by the working class. Yet these groups used their shared critique of the Habsburg past to make diametrically opposing arguments concerning Austrian national identity. The Socialists continued to maintain, even in the face of the Nazi domination of Germany, that Austrians were Germans whose destiny ultimately lay in a German nation-state, while the Communists argued that Austrians had developed into a distinctive national group despite lingering linguistic affinities with other German-speakers of different nations. A fourth group, the Austrian National Socialists, also vigorously opposed the corporatist regime and portrayed the Habsburgs as anti-German oppressors who, out of lust for dynastic power, had prevented the Germans of Austria from fulfilling their dream of *völkisch* unity in a great-

³⁵⁶Knoll, 3-4. See also Dollfuß, "Das neue Oesterreich," 19-20.

German state.³⁵⁷

Conservative Dissent and the Habsburg Past

The conservative Catholic right tended to align itself with the leaders of the *Ständestaat*, and generally affirmed the regime's new form of government and vision of the Austria's past. Two notable exceptions to this trend were Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi and Ernst Karl Winter. Coudenhove-Kalergi, the descendent of an old aristocratic Austrian family, was the architect of the Pan-European movement, which advocated the construction of a federal, continent-wide European government. In many ways, Coudenhove-Kalergi's ideas prefigured the system of economic and political treaties which would ultimately lead to the creation of the European Union in the late twentieth century. Coudenhove-Kalergi's movement was very much a product of its own times, however, and the Pan-Europeanist leader shared many ideals with the Austrian conservative-Catholic camp from which he had emerged. From the very beginning, for example, he was critically concerned with protecting Western and Christian civilization from both the internal threat of destructive nationalism, as well as from the "Eastern" danger of Bolshevik revolution, just like the leaders of the *Ständestaat*. He also thought, just as they did, that the solution to protecting both Austria and the West from such threats lay in the example of Austria's Habsburg past. He differed with the Austrian regime significantly, however, in his proposed solution.³⁵⁸

³⁵⁷The Austrian Nazi view of the Habsburg past was identical to that of the National Socialist German government which seized control of Austria in 1938. See Chapter 5.

³⁵⁸Richard N. Coudenhove-Kalergi, *Österreichs Europäische Sendung* (Vienna: Paneuropa-Verlag, 1934), 8-9.

While the leaders of the corporatist regime found the key to the defense of the West against Nazism and Marxism in the creation and maintenance of an independent, authoritarian Austria, Coudenhove-Kalergi saw the salvation of the West in the foundation of a unified European state, which he loosely compared to the Swiss example of heterogeneous national federalism. Only such a European state could prevent a second catastrophic European war in the space of a generation, which had the potential to plunge the continent into a period of destitution and chaos much like the era after the collapse of Charlemagne's empire. Such a united federal Europe would also enable the West to stave off the expansion of Russian Bolshevism, and to allow Europe to compete economically with Russia, the United States, East Asia, and the British Empire.³⁵⁹

The real model for Coudenhove-Kalergi's ideas was not Switzerland, but the old Austrian Monarchy. He argued that the Habsburg state, with its centuries of supranational government, uniting numerous nationalities in peaceful cooperation for mutual benefit, had set the model for Europe's future. Indeed, according to Coudenhove-Kalergi, it was only Austria, and its storied capital, Vienna, which could provide the basis for the future Pan-Europa. Only Vienna was a metropolis great enough, yet still relatively untarnished by French or German nationalistic and hegemonic aims, to provide the necessary center for a federal Europe. Only the "Austrian man" with his mixed ethnic background and his innate talent for understanding "foreign cultures, foreign souls, and foreign *Völker*" could shepherd such a movement to successful completion. Only the imperial Austrian past, in which the Habsburg emperor had been a sort of "Emperor of Europe," successfully defending the continent against Eastern invasions from the Avars, Magyars, and Turks,

³⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 8-9.

could serve as the template for a Europe unified in the face of external rivals.

Coudenhove-Kalergi also invoked the notion of the “Austrian mission,” arguing that Austria’s very essence had represented a millennium-long defense of Europe, simultaneously protecting the West from external threats while cultivating internal cooperation among the continent’s *Völker*. In the contemporary era, this continuing mission could best be served by moving toward the rebirth of the old Holy Roman Empire in a new form: Pan-Europa.³⁶⁰

Coudenhove-Kalergi was quick to note the benefits of his plan for Austria itself. As matters stood during the mid-1930s, Austria’s “German question” could really only be settled in two ways: through *Anschluss* with Germany or through *Anschluss* with all of Europe. Coudenhove-Kalergi asserted that any union with Nazi Germany would inevitably place Austria and Europe upon the path to yet another apocalyptic war. European unity, however, would preserve Austria’s unique blend of German and European traditions and values, while simultaneously safeguarding peace on the continent as a whole. Indeed, Coudenhove-Kalergi was careful to proclaim his support for the preservation of the national cultures of all of the European *Völker*, arguing that a continental union would in fact deepen national distinctiveness by removing the threat of destructive nationalistic wars. In such a future state, Europe’s *Völker* would be free to cultivate their own unique qualities to the fullest without fear that their distinctive cultures would be erased by belligerent neighboring national groups. Coudenhove-Kalergi also affirmed that his ideal of European collective security was apolitical, able to accommodate the democratic, fascist, or monarchical governmental forms of its various members with

³⁶⁰*Ibid.*, 4-12.

ease so long as all agreed to a common community based on free trade, the protection of ethnic minorities, and the federal independence of its component states.³⁶¹

Coudenhove-Kalergi's ideals obviously differed from those of the leaders of the *Ständestaat*, but that fact did not prevent him from using Vienna as the center for his movement during the 1930s. The corporatist regime for its part allowed Coudenhove-Kalergi to disseminate his ideas freely, as they harmonized to an extent with an image of Austria which it wished to encourage. Indeed, Schuschnigg himself at times encouraged the movement, even if its vision of unified Europe did not exactly correspond to his own foreign policy goals.³⁶² In the end, however, Coudenhove-Kalergi's Pan-European movement did not draw much substantial support in either Austria or Europe during the 1930s, despite its clear anticipation of much of Europe's subsequent history.

Another conservative Austrian who demonstrated a prescient understanding of the forces at work in Austria, yet whose advice was largely ignored by the *Ständestaat*, was the scholar and political polemicist Ernst Karl Winter. Like both Coudenhove-Kalergi and the leaders of the *Ständestaat*, Winter venerated the memory of the old Habsburg Monarchy, convinced that Austria's Habsburg past offered a model through which contemporary Austria might escape its profound troubles. Indeed, for a time Winter actually worked as an agent of the corporatist government, serving as the deputy mayor of Vienna and as the head of the regime's attempt to attract the support of the Austrian working class, known, appropriately enough, as the "*Aktion Winter*."³⁶³ Yet Winter was

³⁶¹*Ibid.*, 11-24.

³⁶²Alexander Novotny, "Österreich unter Europäischen Gesichtswinkel in der Schule," *Pädagogischer Führer* (1935): 538.

³⁶³Winter's motto for his "Action" was "to stand on the right, and think to the left." For a summary of the

from the very beginning deeply and vocally critical of the regime's authoritarian course, and his frequent condemnations of its policies and his dogged articulation of his own peculiar brand of liberal monarchism unsurprisingly caused him to fall out of favor with the regime by 1936. Winter was indeed a rather marginal figure in Austrian politics during the *Ständestaat* era, yet over the course of his several years of writing editorials in the pages of the *Aktion Winter*'s official newspaper, *Die Aktion*, and in his own independent weekly, *Wiener Politische Blätter*, he proved himself to be an exceptionally penetrating and articulate analyst of Austria's political situation. He was also more prolific and more articulate in his discussions of the meaning of the Habsburg past for contemporary Austrian identity than any of his more influential contemporaries. Ultimately, Winter's ideas went largely ignored, both by the authoritarian regime and by the Austrian working class which he wished to influence. Yet subsequent events in Austria would demonstrate the worth of Winter's arguments, and many of his recommendations would belatedly find their expression under the Austrian Second Republic, albeit only after the catastrophic European war and Nazi subjugation of Austria which Winter had so desperately desired to prevent.

Winter remained committed to the ideals of conservatism, Catholicism, and monarchism throughout his life, and he was deeply sympathetic to many of the goals of the *Ständestaat*. Above all, he was an Austrian patriot who had fought for the old state in World War I, and was profoundly shaken when it collapsed in 1918.³⁶⁴ He shared the corporatist regime's abhorrence of National Socialism, and joined them in their critique of

Aktion Winter's main goals, see Winter, "Unser Zehn Punkte," *Die Aktion* (Vienna), October 6, 1934.

³⁶⁴For Winter's own description of his background, see "Die österreichische Idee," *Wiener Politischer*

Marxism. Yet Winter differed sharply with the new government about how best to preserve Austria's independence and historical traditions. Whereas the regime saw Austria as beset by two equal ideological foes, National Socialism and Marxism, Winter argued that Nazism was by far the greater threat. Indeed, despite his repudiation of Marxism doctrine, Winter was sympathetic to the aims of the Austrian workers' movement, and his understanding of Marxism was scholarly and subtle. Unlike the corporatist regime, he distinguished between the truly democratic ideals of the Austrian Social Democrats and the dictatorial tactics of Soviet-style Communism, and he continually argued that the *Ständestaat* had made a grave error in outlawing the Socialist Party at a time when it desperately needed allies in the struggle against Nazism. Indeed, Winter was in many ways more critical of the Austrian right than he was of the left, and he repeatedly argued that the anti-Marxism which the right had embraced since the era of Ignaz Seipel had led Austria down the path of dictatorship at a time when a democratic system which embraced a loyal opposition offered the state its only real hope of resisting Nazism.³⁶⁵ Thus, although he was deeply conservative, Winter advocated a liberal form of government in order to preserve Austrian independence. Even when he eventually came to the conclusion that a restored Austrian monarchy offered the last hope of preventing a forcible *Anschluß* with Nazi Germany, Winter envisioned a "social monarchy" which would combine the Catholic piety and true conservatism of Austria's Habsburg past with a socialism-tinged concern for egalitarianism and social justice which would hopefully secure its future.

Blätter (August 27, 1933): 1-2.

³⁶⁵Winter, "Die Staatskrise in Österreich," *Wiener Politischer Blätter*, April 16, 1933, 1-12.

Despite his personal idealism, Winter was very pragmatic in his analysis of Austrian politics, and in his efforts to bring about a reconciliation between the forces of Austrian conservatism and the Austrian working class. Winter's most pressing goal was the preservation of Austrian independence, and in order to accomplish that aim, he advocated the abandonment of ideological squabbling between the left and the right. For him, the state was in fact the highest ideal, and was "eternal" and "religious." Notions of the nation or the *Volk* were for him always necessarily subordinate to the state.³⁶⁶ Catholicism too was deeply important to him, but Winter warned of the dangers of politicizing Christianity, and he viewed faith as personal matter rather than as a political banner to rally around.³⁶⁷

Ultimately, Winter regarded National Socialism as the greatest danger to Europe. He saw Nazism as an brutal, anarchistic form of naked oppression which would ultimately trample all that was of value in the Western tradition. Not only did National Socialism displace the primacy of the state, it also functioned as a secular religion which competed with Christianity itself for the spiritual loyalties of Germans and Austrians. Ironically enough, Winter asserted that Nazism was itself deeply indebted to Judaism's concept of the divine "chosenness" (*Auserwählung*) of the Jews as the special people of God, which the Nazis had transfigured into German national terms in order to portray the German *Volk* as a nation destined for greatness. Winter also fiercely criticized Nazi irrationalism, which allowed the Nazi leaders to affirm various contradictory ideas simultaneously. Thus, Nazi leaders claimed fidelity to German law while they overtly pursued a "putschist" policy of

³⁶⁶Winter, "Für ein freies, unabhängiges Oesterreich," *Die Aktion* (Vienna), September 14, 1934, 1-2.

³⁶⁷Winter, "Monarchie und Arbeiterschaft," in *E.K. Winter. Ein Katholik zwischen Österreichs Fronten*,

governance, and Hitler professed goodwill and peace toward other European nations like France and Poland, even while he portrayed their efforts to protect their own security as grave insults to German honor and grounds for a coming, horrific war. Ultimately, Winter found National Socialism to be a noxious, anti-Christian ideology which represented an unparalleled danger to both Austria and the West as a whole.³⁶⁸

Winter had a much more positive view of Marxism, which the corporatist regime abhorred as vehemently as it did National Socialism. For Winter, while Marxism undeniably had its flaws, it was ultimately grounded in a legitimate concern for the real oppression faced by the working class at the hands of capitalism.³⁶⁹ Winter approved the social legislation enacted by the Austrian Social Democrats, and he even argued that socialism was a necessary force in Austrian society, serving to counterbalance any excesses on the part of the Catholic Church or conservative state authority. Indeed, Winter expressed a certain personal sympathy with the Socialist leader Otto Bauer (in marked contrast to Winter's deep personal antipathy to the much lauded, late conservative leader Ignaz Seipel), and went so far as to compare Bauer's decisions in 1933 with those of the Emperor Karl in 1918. Just as Karl had abdicated the imperial throne against his better judgement, and realized his error too late to reclaim his title, so too did Bauer hesitate too long between the establishment of an authoritarian state in Austria in 1933 and the Socialist revolt in February of 1934.³⁷⁰

Winter even found Bolshevism, which he regarded as a vulgar corruption of

1933-1938 (Vienna: Hermann Böhlau, 1984), 317-320.

³⁶⁸Winter, "Österreich und der Nationalsozialismus," *Wiener Politischer Blätter*, December 3, 1933, 10-13.

³⁶⁹Winter, "Die Krise des Marximus," *Wiener Politischer Blätter*, June 16, 1933, 2-11.

³⁷⁰Winter, "Die Katastrophe des Austromarxismus," *Wiener Politischer Blätter*, May 20, 1934, 1-3.

Marx's original ideals, less objectionable than Nazism. In 1936, Winter argued that the Soviet Union's Leninist ardor for a revolutionary transformation of society had gradually cooled into a dictatorial, but relatively more stable Stalinist government. Bolshevism's previous anarchistic tendencies had been replaced by what he described as a sort of Russian "neo-conservatism" which saw the Soviet Union pursuing foreign policy goals which were recognizably grounded in Russia's traditional diplomatic aims.³⁷¹ Winter saw no such evolution toward stability in the policies of Nazi Germany, and he thus regarded it as a far more dangerous antagonist for the West than the Soviet Union. Indeed, he even held out the hope that the USSR might be enlisted in an alliance with the West order to combat the common Nazi enemy.³⁷²

Despite his nuanced view of Marxism, Winter criticized the Social Democrats for their passivity in the face of corporatist restrictions and for the ideological squabbling which had destabilized the final years of the First Republic. More importantly, he argued that the Austrian Socialists had never demonstrated any real loyalty to the Austrian state after 1918, misguidedly believing that the state was the enemy of the working class. On the contrary, Winter asserted that the state was a necessary medium for any efforts to improve the lot of the Austrian workers, as the Social Democrats themselves had demonstrated through their political achievements over the previous half century, which he noted never would have been possible in Nazi Germany. Austrian Socialists had too much class resentment to ever provide for the "deliverance" of the Austrian working class.

³⁷¹The similarity between Winter's ideas concerning the evolution of Soviet foreign policy, and those of the American diplomat George Kennan as described in his celebrated "X Article" of 1947, is striking. Winter, "Monarchie and Arbeiterschaft," 333-335; "Die Krise des Marximus," 1-13.

³⁷²Winter, "Dollfuß," *Wiener Politischer Blätter*, December 23, 1934, 15.

Only Christianity, with its emphasis upon forgiveness and reconciliation could offer the workers a means out of the angst characteristic of the modern era.³⁷³

If the Socialist left in Austria had an appropriate commitment to democracy and social justice, but lacked any loyalty to the Austrian Fatherland, Winter argued that the authoritarian right had the opposite problem. Winter appreciated the corporatist government's firm support of Austrian independence and Dollfuß' unflagging personal efforts to reawaken a sense of patriotism in the Austrian people.³⁷⁴ Such measures were undoubtedly necessary if Austria were to resist Nazism. Yet Winter argued that in abandoning democratic rule in favor of oppressive state power, the regime had deprived itself of its best defense against the Nazis. By giving in to crude anti-Marxism and fascist style, authoritarian government, the new regime was left with little which clearly distinguished it from Hitler's political system in Germany.³⁷⁵ More to the point, the *Ständestaat's* suppression of the workers' movement had alienated precisely the faction best equipped to help it stand against the Nazis. Winter argued that it was not enough for Austria to be a *Ständestaat*; it was also necessary for it to be a *Rechtstaat* (state of law). Only an Austria which combined loyalty to the Fatherland with a government which incorporated a loyal, leftist opposition within a legitimate constitutional framework could truly be strong enough to prevent a National Socialist seizure of power.³⁷⁶

Just like the leaders of the *Ständestaat*, Winter believed that correct understanding of both Austrian national identity and the Habsburg past were vital to any attempts to

³⁷³ "Die Katastrophe des Austromarxismus," 1-14.

³⁷⁴ Winter, "Die österreichische Nation," *Die Aktion* (Vienna), May 4, 1935, 1-3; "Dollfuß," 4-10.

³⁷⁵ Winter, "Die Stunde des Konservatismus," *Wiener Politischer Blätter*, June 18, 1933, 1-3, 10-14.

³⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 7 9; Winter, "Die Staatskrise in Österreich," *Wiener Politischer Blätter*, April 16, 1933, 1-7;

rescue Austria from its precarious contemporary position. Yet Winter argued that the government had failed to really comprehend the true legacy of the old Monarchy, and to articulate a clear vision of Austrian national identity. According to Winter, these twin failures ultimately threatened to undermine the very Austrian independence that the corporatists claimed to defend.

In his 1936 work on Austrian politics and national identity, *Monarchie und Arbeiterschaft*, Winter argued that there were basically two distinct theories of Austria. The first, which he supported, and which he rested on a solid political, sociological, and historical basis, held that Austria was a nation, a nation state even, like any other in Europe. It was composed of German-speakers, but had its own distinct history, culture, and folklore. This theory acknowledged a common origin in the Middle Ages which Austria shared with Germany, but held that the intervening centuries had witnessed the separation of Germany and Austria, and their differentiation into two separate national groups. The other theory of Austria held that Austrians merely formed a German *Stamm* with no distinct culture, history, or folklore. This was the ideology of the “*Ostmark*,” which saw Austria as a piece of Germany, politically separate only through an accident of history, and destined to return to the German national fold.³⁷⁷

Winter charged that both Dollfuß and his successor Schuschnigg had been far too ambivalent about Austrian national identity. He argued that both leaders had ultimately been unwilling simply to affirm that “Austria is not Germany,” and had attempted to play both sides of the national question for political advantage. According to Winter, there

“Monarchie und Arbeiterschaft.” 306-316; “Was ist die Aktion Winter?” *Die Aktion* (Vienna), October 6, 1934, 1-4.

could be no equivocation on this issue without risking a dangerous ambiguity which might encourage Nazi activism in Austria. One simply could not simultaneously emphasize both Austria's national distinctiveness and its Germanness. He warned that the hour of decision was approaching, and Austria had to make a clear pronouncement concerning its national identity.³⁷⁸

Ultimately, however, Winter was no less ambivalent concerning Austrian national identity than were Dollfuß and Schuschnigg. Even Winter acknowledged that Austria shared a culture, language, and history with Germany, and that Austrians in general were proud of their *Deutschtum*. Indeed, in an article in *Die Aktion* immediately following Dollfuß' assassination, Winter gave the fallen dictator credit for forging a strong and distinctive Austrian sense of national identity where none had existed before!³⁷⁹ It seems that despite his criticisms of the regime's vision of Austrian nationhood, Winter's position was not especially different. He argued that Austria had a unique culture and history of which it should be proud, and he firmly supported the state's continued independence. Yet at the same time, he did repeatedly admit that Austria was part of the German cultural circle, and indeed had a "mission" to serve as the representative for all German-speakers outside Germany and to stand as an example that German culture was not defined by the

³⁷⁷Winter, "Monarchie und Arbeiterschaft," 333-341.

³⁷⁸*Ibid*, 333-341; Winter, "Österreich und der Nationalsozialismus," *Wiener Politischer Blätter*, December 3, 1933, 24-30.

³⁷⁹Winter's apparent inconsistency in this instance might be ameliorated by noting that *Die Aktion* was a government-sponsored newspaper in which Winter was generally less critical of the government than in his other publications. This fact, combined with the emotional environment following Dollfuß' murder, might account for the effusive praise which Winter here devoted to a person toward whose statements about national identity he was previously and subsequently so critical. Winter, "Die österreichische Nation," *Die Aktion* (Vienna), May 4, 1935, 2-5.

crude chauvinism of the National Socialists.³⁸⁰

Winter's differences with the corporatist regime concerning the meaning of the Habsburg past were more well defined, however. Winter argued that the old Monarchy had not simply been the creation of a hegemonic, Germanic dynasty, but rather represented a unique historical blending of the interests and fortunes of the Austrian, Bohemian, and Hungarian crownlands. The union of these lands, the Austrian system, arose as the result of a set of historical imperatives which were economic, social, and political as well as dynastic. This process of unification was not different in Winter's eyes from the forces that brought other European states, such as Great Britain, a union of England, Scotland, and Wales, into existence. The Austrian system itself also served an important function in Europe as a south-central node of power with strong ties to Spain and Italy as well as to Germany, and had helped to counterbalance French power in the West. Indeed, it was this function which had made Austria valuable to Prussia (and later to the unified Germany), rather than the German ethnicity of some of its inhabitants. Austria had its roots as a German "tribe," but it developed into a necessary and integral part of the European state system independent of Germany. The dynasty, and with it, the inhabitants of the imperial city of Vienna, represented the faction of the monarchy which most properly understood what Austria actually was, and the vital role which it served. This faction did its best to communicate this understanding to the rest of the Monarchy.³⁸¹

Indeed, Winter argued that the representatives of the regime were mistaken when they argued for the existence of one "Austrian man." Winter asserted that what the regime

³⁸⁰Winter, "Die österreichische Idee," 19-24; "Die Staatskrise in Österreich," 2-4; "Monarchie und Arbeiterschaft," 269-272.

had not realized was that there were really two sorts of “Austrian man:” the “old Austrian man,” conditioned by the old, large-empire Habsburg tradition, and the “Alpine Austrian man,” a more provincial sort. These two varieties had little in common with one another other than their name, and the “Alpine man” rejected the cosmopolitanism, culture, bureaucratism, and affinity for the traditional trappings of Austria displayed by the “old Austrian” variety. The “old Austrian” man was most at home in Vienna, the great capital city, and Winter argued that Austromarxism, despite its traditional hostility toward the Habsburg state, was the faction which has done the most to cultivate this variety of Austrian humanity.³⁸²

In suppressing the Socialist opposition, then, the regime had trampled on part of the very Austrian identity which it wished to cultivate, and placed too much faith in the hands of provincial Austrians who were more susceptible to Nazi propaganda than left-leaning Viennese. Indeed, it was precisely in this area that the old Monarchy had possessed a genius that the *Ständestaat* conspicuously lacked. Winter argued that the old state had pursued an “Austrian course” of politics which involved the ability of the Habsburg regime to co-opt various opposing interests, and to use their power to drive the state. By paying attention to the needs and demands of, for example, capitalism and feudalism, or the church and worldly concerns, without completely giving in to any of them, the governments of old Austria were able to forge workable, realistic government policies. So long as it excluded the Social Democratic left, ignoring the demands of workers and the interests of red Vienna in favor of its traditional foundation in the

³⁸¹Winter, “Die österreichische Idee,” 3-6.

³⁸²Winter, “Die Stunde des Konservatismus,” 2-4.

provinces, Winter argued that the regime would be doomed to fail. No matter how much it emphasized its links to the old Monarchy through the revival of Habsburg symbols, the regime ultimately had missed the real character and strength of the Habsburg past.³⁸³

For Winter, the strength of monarchism lay in the fact that it was able to balance between demands for democracy and authority, two interrelated ideas with deep historical roots in Western civilization.³⁸⁴ Indeed, according to Winter, it was only the institution of monarchy in Europe which allowed ideals of liberty and democracy to fully develop, despite the claims of the left to the contrary. Winter argued that absolute monarchy had been necessary in order to break the power monopoly of the Church, and to set the stage for the building of the modern state. Without this function, parliamentarism and democracy would not have been able to bloom, nor could capitalism and its counterweight, socialism, have appeared. Indeed, constitutional monarchies such as England, Belgium, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark were quite stable and even in areas that had undergone recent political crises, such as Bulgaria, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Greece, only monarchy had served to ameliorate the inveterate bickering of the political parties. Thus, Winter argued that Austria's traditional roots lay in monarchical institutions which had nurtured democracy while balancing such freedom with firm authority. He ultimately argued the Austria's Habsburg past had more in common with the democratic West than with Fascist authoritarianism, and he warned that the Austrian corporatist government was unwittingly aligning itself more closely with Nazism than with the

³⁸³Winter, "Österreich und der Nationalsozialismus," 38-45.

³⁸⁴Winter, "Für eine Neue Demokratie," *Die Aktion* (Vienna), October 6, 1934, 1-3.

traditions which it claimed to represent.³⁸⁵

The old Monarchy had another great strength beyond its ability to balance democratic impulses and provide a stabilizing authority. The Habsburg Monarchy had embodied “the Austrian idea.” This idea, simply put, was the principle of multinationalism which advocated the cooperation between *Völker* in order to pursue mutual interests.³⁸⁶ Unfortunately, the old Monarchy had been dismantled by its own citizens, who had not realized the value of its mediation between its member nationalities. Yet Winter asserted that the Austrian idea was as important during the 1930s as it had been before World War I. Interestingly, Winter argued that the Austrian idea was just as much a part of the heritage of the Monarchy’s other successor states as it was of the Austria itself. Indeed, the Bohemian lands, which had been so unjustly and unwisely frozen out of the power structure of the state in the last fifty years of the old Monarchy, were now in the postwar era reasserting the “Austrian idea” in south-Central Europe, building the “Little Entente” into a “Fifth Great Power.” Prague, which had previously been the disadvantaged focal point in the Austria-Hungary-Bohemia monarchical axis, was, now, with the help of France, doing its best to reconstitute Old Austria’s role in the European balance of power.³⁸⁷

Winter argued, however, that Austria could still play a necessary role in the postwar order. The crownlands of the old Monarchy were now divided in to two camps: a Franco-Czech liberal-democratic alliance and a Magyar-Italian fascist block. In addition there was also the new Polish state, which was also historically linked to Habsburg

³⁸⁵Winter, “Monarchie und Arbeiterschaft,” 321-324.

³⁸⁶Winter, “Die österreichische Idee,” 1-3.

legacy, and which had strong reasons to be suspicious of Germany. Austria, according to Winter, had to shake off the passivity and reactivity which had characterized its postwar foreign policy. It should become a mediator in the region, bridging the gap between the liberal, fascist, and Polish camps, uniting them as a bulwark against Nazi Germany. Austria's historical connection with Latin Europe, that is, with Spain, France, and Italy, left it uniquely equipped for such a task. Such a mission was imperative for independent Austria, and also served the needs of Europe as a whole.³⁸⁸ Cooperation between the lands of the old Monarchy was also crucial in this endeavor. In a 1934 article in *Die Aktion* he argued that Czechoslovakia and Austria, along with Hungary, should put aside their lingering animosities and work closely together to secure the combined patronage of Italy and France in a Central European alliance to stand against Nazi Germany. Winter hoped that such a Central European block could convince Germany to rejoin the peaceful community of European nations, but if such efforts failed, the states of the old Habsburg Monarchy had a common interest in opposing German predation on the continent.³⁸⁹

Winter saw the renewal of a Danubian confederation, aligned with France and Italy, as the only means of preventing German aims in southeastern Europe. Germany might tempt the various states of the region into alliances through the prospect of trade with the Nazi state, but in the end, such German "peaceful penetration" of the region could only conceal the imperial ambitions of the Third Reich, which represented the antithesis of the mutually beneficial community of nationalities embodied by the Habsburg Monarchy. Winter insisted that Austria was the key to Hitler's plan. If he were able to absorb its

³⁸⁷*Ibid.*, 9-12.

³⁸⁸*Ibid.*, 12-16.

territory, then southeastern Europe would be defenseless against his hegemonic advances. If, on the other hand, Austria could lead the other states of the region into an economic and diplomatic system of alliances, then the “Austrian idea” would truly be reborn, and would immunize southeastern Europe from Nazi aggression.³⁹⁰

In the aftermath of his dismissal by the corporatist government and the dissolution of the “*Aktion Winter*,” in 1936 Winter shifted his position from one which called for Austria to emulate the best aspects of the old Monarchy to one which advocated the outright restoration of the Monarchy itself. Winter had simply lost hope that the Schuschnigg regime would ever realize the folly of its authoritarian, anti-Marxist course, and he now argued that a new, “social monarchy” represented the last chance for Austria and Europe to prevent the coming Nazi catastrophe. Such an institution would build upon the foundations of the old Habsburg state, with the Habsburg heir, Otto, sitting upon the throne. The new Habsburg Monarchy, however, would combine the traditions of the old dynastic state with a pronounced concern for the plight of the working class, and it would enact social legislation derived in large part from Social Democratic demands. Indeed, Winter thought that such a course would be in line with the ideas that the last Habsburg Emperor, Karl, had hinted that he supported, and that his son Otto likewise advocated. Winter’s vision of a reborn Habsburg state comprised only the territory of contemporary Austria, but he hoped that the new Monarchy would be able to sit at the center of his proposed anti-Nazi Danubian economic federation, and thus stem the advances of the Third Reich. Winter knew that such a proposal would be difficult for both the Austrian

³⁸⁹Winter, “Prager Eindrücke,” *Die Aktion* (Vienna), February 23, 1934, 1-3.

³⁹⁰Winter, “Monarchie und Arbeiterschaft.” 336-341.

left and the old Monarchy's successor states to accept, but he argued that it was ultimately in their own self interest to set aside their suspicions and join a new Habsburg Austria against a mutual mortal enemy. Indeed, Winter cited a number of Nazi sources which worried about Habsburg restoration as evidence of the soundness of his plan.³⁹¹

However perceptive Winter's political and historical insights might have been, his plan was profoundly unrealistic. None of the old Monarchy's successor states, let alone Fascist Italy or Nazi Germany, were willing to tolerate the notion of a Habsburg restoration. In Austria, Winter became the object of suspicion of both the left and right, as he himself noted on a number of occasions.³⁹² Neither his plan for a new Monarchy at the center of a Danubian federation, nor even his more modest goal of an Austrian government which balanced the concerns of both conservatives and the working class in order to combat Nazism found an audience with those in power. Still, even as a voice in the wilderness, Winter was able to present a clear vision of the traditions of the Habsburg Monarchy as the ultimate antidote to National Socialism in Austria and Europe, and his discussion of the interrelationship between the Habsburg past and Austrian national identity was thorough, articulate, and clearly foreshadowed the debates about these matters which would be held in Austria after 1945. In the short term, however, Winter was a political failure, and he immigrated to the United States in 1938 to flee the Nazi catastrophe which he had so desperately wished to avert.

Austrian Marxists and the Habsburg Past During the *Ständestaat*

The Marxist opposition took a much different position than the conservative

³⁹¹*Ibid.*, 338-339.

³⁹²*Ibid.*, 306-316.

dissenters in formulating its attacks upon the corporatist regime. While figures like Coudenhove-Kalergi and Winter generally agreed with the leaders of the *Ständestaat* that the old Monarchy had been a benevolent entity which offered a potential model Austria could follow to escape its contemporary problems, but disagreed with the regime's official interpretation of the Habsburg past, the Austrian left argued that the Habsburg state had been an oppressive, reactionary force in Austrian history. In doing so, the leftist opposition basically agreed with the new government's claims that it represented the essence of the Habsburg legacy. In the eyes of Austrian Marxists, the difference between the modern *Ständestaat* and the old Monarchy was merely one of degree and circumstance. Both the corporatists and the Habsburgs were reactionary oppressors, and both were the enemies of the working class. Indeed, many leftists made little distinction between the old Monarchy's oppressive tendencies and those of the decidedly anti-Habsburg National Socialists. Interestingly, the Social Democrats and the Communists both used their similar portrayals of the Habsburg past to make diametrically opposing arguments concerning Austrian national identity. The former asserted that Austrians were Germans, and they hoped to see the union of Austria and Germany in a socialist, great-German state, while the latter presented a vehement defense of an Austrian nation separate from Germany.

The Austrian Social Democratic Party had been the major party of the left in Austria for nearly half a century, and during the First Republic it had represented the greatest competitor of the Christian Social Party. Given its long history of opposition to the forces of Austrian conservatism, it is somewhat surprising that the Social Democrats

offered so little resistance to the dismantling of the First Republic's democratic system. After a belated and feeble attempt to mount an armed uprising against the *Ständestaat* in February of 1934, the leaders of the party for the most part fled the country.³⁹³ The Party's leadership operated out of Brno in Czechoslovakia for the remainder of the regime's existence, while much of the organization's membership continued to operate illegally in Austria under the new name of the Revolutionary Socialist Party.³⁹⁴

While the Austrian Socialists still counted many distinguished leaders from the last decades of the old Monarchy among their ranks, such as Karl Renner and Max Adler, as well as a younger generation of rising stars such as Oscar Pollack, the party's leading political and intellectual figure undeniably remained Otto Bauer. Indeed it was Bauer, writing from exile in Brno in the pages of the party's official newspaper, *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung*, and in its ideological monthly, *Der Kampf*, who provided the Revolutionary Socialist Party with the most frequent criticisms of the corporatist regime in Austria and with the most extensive discussion of national identity and the meaning of the Habsburg past. Bauer was ultimately a tragic figure, who had seen considerable success in advancing the party's aims under his leadership after 1918, only to witness those gains erased by Dollfuß and Schuschnigg after 1933. He did live to see the *Anschluß* with Germany for which he had so long argued before his death in 1938, but only under the auspices of a Nazi regime in Germany which represented the antithesis of his most

³⁹³ Anson Rabinbach, "Red Vienna: Symbol and Strategy," in *The Austrian Socialist Experiment: Social Democracy and Austromarxism, 1928-1934*, ed. Anson Rabinbach (Boulder and London: Westview, 1985):187-194.

³⁹⁴ The name change of the Party indicated the leadership's position that after 1934, there could be no question of merely restoring a "bürgerlich" democracy which had proven itself to be a failure. A true revolutionary and socialist democracy was now to be the Party's ultimate goal. "Um der Namen der Partei," *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Brno), May 27, 1934, 1.

cherished ideals.

The Social Democrats simply argued that the corporatist regime was fascist. Bauer and the other Socialist leaders invariably described the Austrian right after 1933 not only as “clericist” and “reactionary,”—pejorative terms which they had long used—but also as, in a newly minted turn of phrase, “Austrofascist.”³⁹⁵ They argued that the Dollfuß and Schuschnigg regimes were oppressive and anti-democratic, and the Austrian working class thus had to oppose them with revolutionary force. Indeed, it was perhaps a critical error of the Austrian Socialist movement that its leading theorists so frequently failed to draw any meaningful distinction between the Austrian corporatists and National Socialists in Austria and Germany. As early as 1933, Oscar Pollack, a young party functionary, proclaimed in *Der Kampf* that the Austrian working class was trapped “between two fascisms,” and he argued vehemently that the Social Democrats must refuse to give in to pressure to choose between the lesser of the two evils, Dollfuß or Hitler.³⁹⁶ Such denunciations became even stronger after the failed uprising and legal proscription of the Social Democratic Party in 1934, as the Party’s leadership was forced underground or into exile. While the corporatist government admittedly gave the Socialists little reason to suspect that their assistance would be welcomed or even permitted in the struggle against any Nazi threats, the Social Democrats for their part frequently repudiated any notion that the workers should help the authoritarian Austrian government in its efforts to stave off

³⁹⁵Otto Bauer, “Die Verfassung des Austro-faschismus,” *Otto Bauer, Werkausgabe*, vol. 7, ed. Hugo Pepper et al. (Vienna: Europa Verlag, 1979), 737-740.

³⁹⁶Oscar Pollack, “Zwischen zwei Fascismus,” *Der Kampf, Sozialistische Monatsschrift* 26, no. 7 (July, 1933): 276-281.

such dangers without a full return to democracy and freedom in Austria.³⁹⁷

The Social Democrats were most critical of the regime's repudiation of democracy, which they argued had left it completely unable to prevent Austria from falling prey to the predations of Nazi Germany. In 1933, the Socialist theoretician Karl Kautsky argued that what set Socialism apart from fascism was its firm commitment to democracy, and he asserted that true socialism would only occur through democratic means.³⁹⁸ Bauer concurred, and noted that the Austrian workers' movement had always been committed to using constitutional, legal means to pursue its aims, as evidenced by the peaceful transition from the old Monarchy to the First Republic in 1918.³⁹⁹ The corporatists on the other hand, had brazenly discarded democracy in 1933 in the name of security and Austrian independence. In doing so, they had gained neither, as evidenced by both Dollfuß' assassination and Schuschnigg's increasingly close alignment with Nazi Germany after 1936. Bauer also criticized the corporatist state's dependence upon anti-democratic, Fascist Italy, which had only served to drive Austria toward the arms of Nazi Germany at a time when the Austrian state would have been much better served aligning itself with the bourgeois but still dependably anti-Nazi Western democracies. Bauer ultimately echoed Winter's lament that the corporatist government had deprived itself of the most powerful adversary of National Socialism in Austria by suppressing the workers' movement. Indeed, Bauer feared that the regime might actually have driven some

³⁹⁷Bauer, "Die Revolution geht weiter!" *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Brno), July 29, 1934; *idem*, "Starhembergs Sturz," *Der Kampf* 27, No. 6 (1936): 234; *idem*, "Österreichs Ende" *Der Kampf* 5 (January, 1938): 121-131.

³⁹⁸Karl Kautsky, "Demokratie und Diktatur," *Der Kampf* 6, No. 2 (February, 1933) 45-58.

³⁹⁹Bauer, "E. K. Winter gegen die AZ," *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Brno), July, 8 1934; *Der Aufstand der österreichischen Arbeiter, seinen Ursachen und seine Wirkungen*, in *Otto Bauer, Werksaufgabe*, vol. 7 (Vienna: Europe Verlag), 961-963.

Austrian workers to embrace Nazism simply out of their shared hatred of Dollfuß. Bauer argued that in the end, “only a free people can protect its independence,” a fact which in his view explained Schuschnigg’s eventual failure to accomplish his most basic aim of forestalling a Nazi *Anschluss*.⁴⁰⁰

Even in the face of Nazi domination of Germany, the Austrian Social Democrats never abandoned their support for the prospect of an eventual *Anschluss* between Austria and Germany. Bauer’s stance remained the same as it had been throughout the the First Republic. He considered Austrians to be members of the German nation, and he did not regard Austrian independence as something which was worth preserving except under exceptional circumstances. The existence of a National Socialist government in Germany did naturally constitute just such a circumstance for Bauer, and he and his party did devote considerable energy toward advocating Austrian independence.⁴⁰¹ This stance did not, however, mean that the Social Democrats did not still fervently hope for the day when the severed German nation might become whole as a democratic, socialist, great-German state.⁴⁰² Another Austrian Socialist in exile, Karl Czernetz, concurred with Bauer, and denounced efforts by the Austrian Communists to martial Austrian nationalistic opposition to Nazism by specifically rebutting their arguments. In this rebuttal, he proclaimed that Austria was not its own nation, and never had been. Czernetz too hoped for an Austrian union with Germany after Hitler was vanquished.⁴⁰³

In his advocacy of Austrian independence before the *Anschluss*, Bauer still

⁴⁰⁰Bauer, “Österreichs Ende,” 131; “Die Revolution geht weiter!”; “Kann Österreich noch gerettet werden?” *Der Kampf* 5 (January, 1938): 181-190

⁴⁰¹Bauer, “Österreichs Ende,” 121-131.

⁴⁰²Bauer “Der Sozialismus und die deutsche Frage,” *Der Kampf* 4 (Jan.1937): 1-9

emphasized the Austrian state's continuing Germanness. In an article in *Der Kampf*, Bauer argued that Austria could only be saved if it abandoned the authoritarian "path of Dollfuß" and instead proceeded in a more democratic fashion. Bauer envisioned this democratic path as a "German Piedmont" which would stand for the best of Germany's democratic traditions in the face of Hitler's oppression. This Austria would have to be committed to defending itself through purely constitutional means, as the natural heir of the members of the anti-Prussian German national council of 1838 to 1865. Bauer argued that such an Austria would command the support of both Austrian conservatives and Austrian workers, and thus would be able to present a strong defense against Nazism.⁴⁰⁴

In an earlier article, Bauer also expressed his fear that the inevitable war between Nazi Germany and the democratic West would have grave consequences for the German *Volk*. Bauer admitted that a victory for Nazi Germany would be a near fatal catastrophe for European socialism, democracy, and freedom. But he also cautioned that a victory by the "imperialist-capitalist powers" could be almost as bad, and would only lead to the ultimate destruction and dismemberment of Germany as the West endeavored to make sure a large German state could never embark on any further catastrophic wars. The only solution, according to Bauer, was for German workers to use the coming war as an opportunity for socialist revolution in much the same way as Russian workers started a revolution during World War I. Then a red coalition of Germany and the Soviet Union would be able stand against the imperialist powers and prompt the other workers of the

⁴⁰³Karl Czernetz, "Gibt es eine oesterreichische Nation?" in *Alfred Klahr zur österreichischen Nation*, eds. Walter Baier and Winfried R. Garscha (Vienna: Globus Verlag, 1994), 157-180.

⁴⁰⁴Bauer, "Kann Österreich noch gerettet werden?" 181-190.

continent to rise, thus bringing about a socialist Europe.⁴⁰⁵

Bauer also argued that German events invariably influenced what happened in Austria, citing how the failed Revolution of 1848, the brief triumph of political liberalism during the 1860s, the conservative turn from liberalism during the 1870s, the implementation of social welfare legislation in the last decades of the nineteenth century, and the collapse of the monarchies in 1918 all seemed to happen in both regions more or less simultaneously. Bauer argued that such developments explained the Austrian dictatorship of 1933, which followed on the heels of Nazi success in Germany. While the corporatist regime was aristocratic rather than National Socialist, it was undoubtedly influenced by Hitler's anti-Marxism in its attempts to crush the Austrian workers' movement.⁴⁰⁶ Thus for Bauer, both the forces of progress and those of reaction tended to move simultaneously in both Germany, and Austria. A socialist victory over the Nazis in Germany would thus lead almost inevitably to the sort of peaceful socialist *Anschluß* which Bauer envisioned.

The *Anschluß* which did occur in 1938 simultaneously confirmed Bauer's worst fears and suggested a path toward his fondest dream. In evaluating this situation shortly before his death, Bauer argued that too often in German history the forces of counterrevolution had coopted the drive toward German unification in order to achieve things which the agents of progressive revolution had been unable to attain on their own. Bismarck's success in creating a small German state in 1871 after the failure of the revolutionaries of 1848 to carry through such a project was but one example of such a

⁴⁰⁵Bauer "Der Sozialismus und die deutsche Frage," 1-9.

⁴⁰⁶Bauer, *Der Aufstand der österreichischen Arbeiter*, 992.

tendency. Now Bauer argued that Hitler's success in building a great German state after the revolutionaries of 1918 had been stymied by the imperialistic ambitions of the Entente powers represented a similar example. For Bauer, however, 1938 brought not a real *Anschluß*, but rather a brutal annexation at gunpoint. Still, the situation was not without its opportunities, and he reacted scornfully to the notion that the Austrian conservatives who had been driven from power in Austria might go abroad and try to mount campaigns to restore Austrian independence. He argued that such activities were foolish. Now that the future of the Austrian working class lay with their German brethren, and they would never again be separated. The Austrian workers could only be free if all of the German workers were free. Thus for Bauer and many other Social Democrats observing the events of 1938, the future of the "German-Austrian" working class seemed to be the future of the German socialist revolution, and they assumed that Austrian independence was a thing of the past.⁴⁰⁷

Bauer was no less vehement in his denunciations of the old Habsburg Monarchy than he was in his criticism of the corporatist regime or his proclamation of Austrian membership in the German nation. In response to the efforts by the leaders of the Austrian government to invoke the legacy of the old Monarchy in order to legitimize the new social order, Bauer painstakingly assaulted their positive presentation of Austria's dynastic past. Bauer countered their assertions most forcefully in a 1934 article in *Der Kampf* entitled "*Habsburg vor den Toren?*" (A Habsburg at the Gates?) with a summary of what he viewed as the House of Habsburg's real historical legacy. In the modern

⁴⁰⁷Bauer, "Österreichs Ende," 121-131. Karl Renner made a similar argument. Karl Renner, *Karl Renner in Dokumenten und Erinnerungen*, ed. Seigfried Nasko (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1982), 132-

period, he argued, Austria's economic development had continually lagged behind that of the rest of Europe and the Monarchy had been the most backward state on the continent. Moreover, the Monarchy frequently suppressed political reform, liberalism, and the rights of its national minorities, and had brutally quashed the 1848 Revolution. That year, which had brought democracy to so many regions of Europe brought only reaction in Austria. Indeed, Bauer insisted that during its last century and a half the Monarchy had been an incorrigible police state which censored the press and persecuted the workers' and the national movements. Austria also had lagged significantly behind France, England, and Germany in terms of voting rights. In the late nineteenth century, these other regions had achieved universal manhood suffrage or at least greatly expanded voting rights, but only a narrow sector of Austrians, the traditional elites and the upper middle class, had any real electoral power. Only in 1905, when Emperor Franz Josef considered instituting full manhood suffrage in Hungary to curb the power of anti-Austrian magnates, did the German workers' movement finally assert itself, demanding that the reluctant monarch grant them the same privileges which he contemplated using to mollify his Magyar subjects. Indeed, according to Bauer, it was really the Russian revolution of 1905 which prompted Franz Josef finally to give in on Austrian suffrage two years later in order to avoid similar upheaval in his own realm.⁴⁰⁸

Likewise, Bauer noted that social reforms such as health care and shorter working hours came to Austria only long after such reforms had been established elsewhere in Europe, and again only due to the prompting of the Social Democrats. Indeed, he

137.

⁴⁰⁸Bauer, "Habsburg vor den Toren?" *Der Kampf* 2 (May 1934), 97-111.

remarked that the Monarchy had been able to resist the Socialists' 1899 plan for federal reform to ameliorate the nationalities issue until the last days of the old state, when the young emperor Karl had realized the wisdom of the proposal far too late to save his crown. Thus, the old Monarchy had been reactionary in every sense of the word, never allowing social or political progress unless the workers forced the issue. Bauer urged Austrian workers not to forget the "oppression, exploitation and torment" to which the House of Habsburg had subjected them.⁴⁰⁹

Bauer did have a few positive things to say about the old Monarchy, at least in comparison to the corporatist regime. In 1934, he argued that the regime's new constitution actually provided less freedom than the Habsburg constitution enacted in 1867 (which had indeed been the basis of the First Republic's Constitution of 1920). In Bauer's opinion, the 1867 constitution had represented the high point of liberalism in the Monarchy, protecting a number of important liberal rights which the Socialists regarded as positive achievements. By contrast, the new corporatist constitution, while nominally guaranteeing civil liberties such as freedom of the press, freedom of religion, and the equality of citizens under the law, also in every such instance added a subsequent sentence or two to the previous language which actually abrogated those very freedoms. Thus the new regime gave the appearance that it was enshrining the liberties which the Habsburg state had protected, while in reality it was repealing them.⁴¹⁰ A younger Socialist theorist, Oskar Pollack, agreed, arguing in 1933 that Dollfuß had already succeeded in overturning the work of the Revolution of 1918, the real achievement of the workers' movement.

⁴⁰⁹*Ibid*, 99-111; "Österreichs Ende," 127-131; see also Czernetz, 166-167.

⁴¹⁰Bauer, "Die Verfassung des Austro-faschismus," 738-740.

Pollack charged that the corporatists' ultimate goal was to turn back the clock of liberty to Metternich's reactionary era.⁴¹¹

Bauer even accused the corporatist regime of conspiring to resurrect one of the more reprehensible acts of the Monarchy: the so-called Holy Alliance between the Habsburg state, Prussia, and Tsarist Russia during the first half of the nineteenth century to preserve a conservative order in Europe. In 1935 Bauer charged that Mussolini, with the willing participation of the *Ständestaat*, was attempting to create a Fascist version of the Holy Alliance comprised of Italy, Hungary, and Austria to use as a barrier against Nazi expansion in Central Europe. Bauer argued that a Socialist victory over Austrian Fascism would provide a far surer path to European peace than an Italian fascist renewal of old aristocratic ideals in a new Holy Alliance.⁴¹²

In contrast to his intensely negative portrayal of the old Monarchy's policies, and of the attempts by the *Ständestaat* to emulate or even exceed those policies, Bauer presented a vision of the Austrian workers' movement as the real bearer of progress in Austria's past. Whereas the old Monarchy and the new authoritarian regime which invoked it represented reaction and oppression in Austrian history, the workers, and of course their leaders in the Social Democratic Party, had forced the decrepit old aristocratic order to move in the direction of liberty and social justice. Contemporary Austrian Socialists could be justifiably proud to be the heirs of Viktor Adler's generation, which had fought for universal suffrage, trade unions, and reduced working hours. Indeed, according to Bauer, this same generation of Socialists had chased the Habsburgs from

⁴¹¹Pollack, "Zwischen Zwei Faschismus," 276-281.

⁴¹²Bauer, "Eine Heilige Allianz für Mitteleuropa," *Der Kampf* 4 (January 14, 1935): 251-253.

power in 1918, founding an Austrian Republic based on political freedom and social legislation to the benefit of the working class. Now in more dire straits, Bauer called for a “Second Hainfeld” to restore the unity and sense of purpose of the working class which Adler first brought together under one banner at the Hainfeld Congress of 1888.⁴¹³ Bauer hoped that even the Austrian Communists would join this struggle, and he fervently wished that the failed revolution of 1934, like the “glorious” but similarly unsuccessful Paris Commune of 1870 or the abortive Russian Revolution of 1905, would be the defeat that spurred Austrian workers to ultimate victory.⁴¹⁴

Thus, in response to the *Ständestaat*’s narrative of Austria’s Habsburg past, Bauer presented the Social Democrats’ version of Austrian history in which the workers’ movement had opposed the reactionary and oppressive Monarchy. This movement, united in the Social Democratic Party by Viktor Adler, had mounted a fifty year campaign to fight for basic political and economic liberties, democracy, and social welfare legislation. The culmination of this progressive movement was the dismantling of the Monarchy itself, and its replacement by the First Republic in 1918.⁴¹⁵ Now the *Ständestaat* was attempting to erase those achievements, and the Social Democrats argued that the workers needed to rally around the true legacy of Austria history, not merely to restore the status quo of the First Republic, but to create a socialist great-German state within a peaceful, socialist Europe.

⁴¹³Bauer, “Zu einem zweiten Hainfeld,” *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Brno), July, 8 1934, 1-2.

⁴¹⁴Bauer, “Neue Wege zum alten Ziel,” *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Brno), March 18, 1934, 1-2.

⁴¹⁵Bauer, *Der Aufstand der österreichischen Arbeiter*, 961-963; Pollack, 281; Other Social Democratic theorists noted that the other nationalities of the old Monarchy also deserved a fair amount of credit for ending the old Monarchy. For example, Emil Strauß described how democracy in Czechoslovakia was relatively stronger than in Austria or Germany in part due to the Czech state’s roots in a progressive “war of liberation” against the Habsburg Monarchy. See Emil Strauß, “Demokratie in der Tschechoslovakei,”

With such a goal, the Austrian Socialists presented themselves as the successors to a great movement toward progress which had begun in Europe in 1789. Indeed, the pages of Socialist periodicals contained not just approbation for Adler and the Revolution of 1918, but also invocations of the French Revolution, the Paris Commune, and Marxism in general.⁴¹⁶ For example, in March of 1933, *Der Kampf* celebrated the seventy-fifth anniversary of the publication of Marx's *Communist Manifesto* featuring numerous articles by various theoreticians and commentators on the significance of Marx's work for the proletarian cause in Austria, Germany, and Europe as a whole.⁴¹⁷

At the same time, the Socialists felt the need to distance themselves from their main political competition for the loyalties of the Austrian working class on the left, the Austrian Communist Party. The Social Democrats criticized the Communists on a number of fronts. First of all, the Austrian Communist Party was affiliated with the Soviet Union, which the Socialists regarded with some ambivalence. Bauer cautiously supported the efforts of the USSR to forge a revolutionary new socialist society in Russia, and sympathized with the great difficulties in doing so in the face of the hostility of the capitalist and fascist powers of Europe, but he worried about the abuses of democracy and workers' rights in Russia since 1917.⁴¹⁸ Kautsky went further, attacking Bolshevism as

Der Kampf 26 (June, 1933): 252-253.

⁴¹⁶Schiller Mamorek, "Robespierre und die Nachwelt," *Der Kampf* 26 (February, 1933): 69-79; Heran Wendell, "St. Robespierre," *Der Kampf* 26 (May, 1933): 226-228; Bauer, "Neue Wege zum alten Ziel," 1-2.

⁴¹⁷Heinrich Leonard, "Zur Geschichte des Kommunistischen Manifest," *Der Kampf* 26 (March/April, 1933): 171-174; Karl Kautsky, "Marx und seine Schüler," *Der Kampf* 26 (March/April, 1933): 155-154; Karl Renner, "Marxismus und Anti-Marxismus," *Der Kampf* 26 (March/April, 1933): 81-90; Edgar Zisel, "Die gesellschaftlicher Wurzeln der romantischen Ideologie," *Der Kampf* 26 (March/April, 1933): 154-164. See also Bauer, "Friedrich Engels, ein Lehrer unserer Zeit," *Der Kampf* 2 (1935): 337-345.

⁴¹⁸Bauer, "Der Moskauer Prozeß," *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Brno), August 30, 1936; "Nach Zwanzig Jahren," *Der Kampf* 4, No. 11 (1936): 45-57.

another form of dictatorship which the forces of Social Democracy had to oppose, just like National Socialism. So the Austrian Communist Party's ties to the Soviet Union were problematic at best for the Socialists.⁴¹⁹ More disturbing to Bauer, however, was the Communist Party's failure to give aid to, and indeed its readiness to mock, the efforts of the Socialists to oppose the Dollfuß regime in their 1934 uprising.⁴²⁰ Such a position, along with the Communists' support for Austrian nationalist sentiment, generally caused the Austrian Socialists to regard the KPÖ as an adversary rather than an ally.⁴²¹

⁴¹⁹Kautsky, "Demokratie oder Diktatur," 45-56.

⁴²⁰"Der Kampf gegen die Nazis in Österreich" *Der Kampf* 3 (January, 1936), 346-359.

⁴²¹This rivalry between Marxist factions mirrored the lack of cooperation between Social Democratic and Communist Parties all over Europe during the 1920s and early 1930s. Comintern, the Soviet-dominated international Communist organization, did shift its stance in 1934, urging Communists throughout Europe to cooperate with Social Democratic and liberal parties in order to prevent the spread of fascism. This shift in policy came too late, however, to offer any opportunity for the Marxist parties in Austria, which had already been suppressed by the *Ständestaat*, to craft a "Popular Front" movement like the one found in France during the mid-1930s. On Comintern policy and the French Popular Front, see Francois Furet, *The Passing of an Illusion: The Idea of Communism in the Twentieth Century*, trans. Deborah Furet (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1999): 209-266.

Bauer also had to deal with at least one Social Democrat whom he considered an apologist for the Habsburg Monarchy: Emil Frankel, a German-speaking Socialist member of parliament in Czechoslovakia. Frankel had published a book in 1935 entitled *Abendländische Revolution (Revolution in the West)* in which he claimed that the roots of real Socialism were to be found in the traditions of discipline and organization of the Germanic tribes of antiquity as well as in medieval Christianity's emphasis upon neighborly love and human equality. Frankel held that the old Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, and the Habsburg dynasty which had held the imperial title for so long, had historically encouraged these proto-socialist values. The rise of capitalism and with it, liberalism, however, gradually had eroded such beneficial social ideals. Bauer argued that Frankel was a "Romantic Socialist" of the sort derided by Marx in *The Communist Manifesto*, and he also criticized Frankel for his opposition to Protestantism and Prussia and for his sympathies for the old Habsburg Monarchy. Bauer reiterated that the Monarchy had been a repressive, feudalistic force, even if the liberal movement which accompanied the rise of capitalism had achieved certain civil and political rights for the citizens of Central Europe, rights which Socialists cherished. Bauer allowed that the bourgeois liberal order was not an entirely beneficial development in human history, but he asserted that in the Marxist tradition Socialists viewed liberalism as progress from the feudal order, and as an important step toward socialist society. Frankel's contempt for liberalism left him powerless to help Social Democracy defend the achievements of political liberalism against the fascists who desired a more noxious form of capitalist hegemony. Ultimately for Bauer, Frankel's romantic nostalgia for medieval monarchy

put him outside the bounds of Marxist orthodoxy. Indeed, according to Bauer, Frankel had more in common with socially-minded conservatives such as Ernst Karl Winter than with Social Democracy's mainstream.⁴²²

Bauer regarded Winter and those like him as almost as grave a threat to Austria as the Nazis. Despite the fact that Winter's proposals for a restored Habsburg Monarchy were never well received by the leaders of the *Ständestaat*, Bauer apparently thought that such a restoration was the ultimate goal of the corporatist regime. According to Bauer, the corporatists' bloody suppression of Marxism in Austria had removed the only major obstacle to the Monarchy's rebirth. Bauer argued that the Austrian government was completely dominated by a loose coalition of "monarchist-Habsburgist oriented" aristocrats, the old "*k. und k.*" generals who commanded the *Heimwehr*, and the hierarchy of the Church, who had all aspired to make Austria the center of a Catholic imperial restoration in Central Europe. Thus, Bauer asserted that the leaders of the *Ständestaat* desired not only to dominate Austria, but also to advance the Catholic cause in Central Europe at the expense of Prussian Protestantism, Magyar Calvinism, and democratic rule in Czechoslovakia. This monarchist faction had dynastic designs on those areas, as well as on Yugoslavia. In order to accomplish their goals, conservative forces in Austria, which did not have a political ideology *per se*, were relying on a "surrogate ideology" based upon Habsburg traditions, history, and memory, in order to create the basis for their dominion. If such a restoration were to occur, Bauer argued that it would have to include Hungary, and Hungary's revisionist territorial claims would inevitably lead to war with

⁴²²Bauer, "Marxismus oder Romantik?" *Der Kampf* 3, No. 5 (1936): 119-128.

the Little Entente powers which had so recently thrown off the Habsburg yoke.⁴²³ Even those who merely advocated a Danubian economic federation without Habsburg participation were nevertheless “black-gold monarchists,” nursing a reactionary, utopian dream. For Bauer *Anschluß* was the desire of all of the progressive, democratic and socialistic forces in Austria, and any other solution was not acceptable.⁴²⁴

Bauer took pains to rebut the argument that the Western powers and the members of the Little Entente, which had collectively dismembered the Monarchy in 1918, would never allow a Habsburg restoration to occur. He argued that those states were currently far more concerned with the threat to European peace provided by Nazi Germany than with Austria itself. In addition, the West had devoted its energies to international peace and disarmament conferences, and had few resources to use in an intervention in Austrian affairs. Ultimately Bauer thought that the revocation of the laws prohibiting Habsburg rule in Austria would, at first, be an internal Austrian concern. Indeed, he noted that the corporatist constitution of 1934 had already repealed some republican laws confiscating the property of the old imperial house as well as that of many of the old state’s aristocratic families, giving some substance to his fears.⁴²⁵ He warned that the monarchists in Austria recognized that their path was relatively open, and were trying to win the support of the Austrian people for the restoration through the reintroduction of Habsburg symbols and nostalgia for the old Monarchy. He likewise noted the appeal that legitimists such as Winter made to the old Monarchy’s supposed progressive tendencies as well as their

⁴²³Bauer, “Österreich und Europa,” in *Otto Bauer, Werkausgabe*, vol. 7, 729-732; “Der Sozialismus und die deutsche Frage,” 1-9; “Habsburg vor den Toren?” 97-111.

⁴²⁴Bauer, “Österreichs Ende,” 121-131.

⁴²⁵Bauer, “Die Verfassung des Austro-faschismus,” 737-740.

attempts to present Franz Josef as the benevolent *Wahlrechtkaiser* who had introduced universal male suffrage and various other social reforms designed to improve the lot of the working class to Austria.⁴²⁶

Bauer of course had nothing but contempt for both Winter and his sometime corporatist patrons. He regarded Winter's proposals for a democratic, "social monarchy" as a thinly veiled Trojan horse for the Austrian working class, who would only be subjected to a combination of the old Monarchy's reactionary oppression and the newer domineering tendencies of Austrofascism once Otto was restored to the throne. Such a reborn monarchy could never be an effective deterrent to Nazi Germany, and indeed would only bring war more rapidly to Central Europe.⁴²⁷ Thus, the *Arbeiter-Zeitung* in Brno noted with approval the anti-Habsburg tenor of working class Austrian protests against the Schuschnigg government in 1936: "Neither Hitler nor Habsburg! Neither brown nor black fascism!"⁴²⁸ Bauer summarized the Socialist position concerning the Habsburg past with similar succinctness himself in an article in *Der Kampf* in the same year, writing that while the Austrian workers were mortal foes of Nazism, they still refused to ally themselves with the "Beelzebub" of the old Habsburg dynasty in order to fight the "devil," Hitler.⁴²⁹

The Austrian Communist Party agreed with the Social Democrats about the Habsburg past and the Schuschnigg regime but they made quite a different argument about Austrian national identity. The KPÖ had first been organized in 1918, in the aftermath of

⁴²⁶Bauer, "Habsburg vor den Toren?," 97-111.

⁴²⁷*Ibid.*, 107-111; "Der Kampf gegen die Nazi in Österreich," 346-359.

⁴²⁸Brown was the color of the Nazis' paramilitary organization, the *Sturmabteilung* (Stormtroopers), while black was the color commonly associated with the Habsburg dynasty and the Austrian conservative

the successful Bolshevik revolution in Russia in 1917 and the widespread strikes in Vienna which had threatened to topple the Habsburg government. The Party had been founded to advocate Soviet-style armed revolution in the name of the working class, behavior which the more reform-minded Austrian Social Democrats had never been willing to pursue. Indeed, the Austrian Communists, like Communists throughout Europe, regarded the Social Democracy with intense hostility, and at times seemed more intent on attacking their rivals on the left than their adversaries on the right. Despite the patronage of the Soviet government, however, the Austrian Communists lacked significant political influence in the First Republic, and were never even able to garner enough electoral support to be represented in parliament, let alone mount a broadly based workers' revolution. Nevertheless, the crackdown by the corporatist government upon the Austrian left (indeed, the Communists were the first political faction banned by that regime in May of 1933) combined with the economic ravages of the Great Depression and the Nazi seizure of power in Germany, prompted a surge in support for the KPÖ. In the face of the authoritarian government's use of force against the left, the Communists' activist stance was apparently more appealing to many leftist radicals and workers than the relatively more passive activities of the Social Democrats. By all accounts, the KPÖ's ranks swelled throughout the *Ständestaat* and Nazi periods in Austria, although it is impossible to tell exactly how much, given the illegal status of the Party. While the Communists' strength certainly never rivaled that of the Socialists, the KPÖ vigorously opposed the corporatist regime and became a much more significant force within the Austrian political spectrum

factions. *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Brno), July, 29 1936.

⁴²⁹Bauer, "Starhembergs Sturz," 234.

during the 1930s than it ever had been before.⁴³⁰

Given its close ideological dependence upon the Bolshevik orthodoxy of the Soviet Union, the Austrian Communist Party produced few dynamic original thinkers or leaders of its own. One exception to this tendency, however, was the young Party activist and theoretician Alfred Klahr. Klahr, the well-educated child of a poor Viennese Jewish family, made a name for himself as the preeminent Austrian Communist theorist of Austrian nationhood. He was involved with Communist organizations from his earliest days as a student, and by the time Dollfuß seized power in 1933, he had become one of the Party's leading figures. Imprisoned and subsequently released by the corporatist regime in 1933, he fled the country to spend the period between 1935 and 1937 as a lecturer in Moscow, before moving to Prague to write for the underground Communist movement in Austria. From there, he penned a number of short, but highly influential articles in various Communist publications which defined the position of the KPÖ on Austrian national identity and the Habsburg past.⁴³¹

Klahr argued that Austria was its own nation, with a national identity, history, and culture, distinct from Germany. Klahr obviously wrote in the Bolshevik tradition concerning nationalism, and based his ideas on Josef Stalin's *Marxism and the National*

⁴³⁰Jelavich, 162-168, 230-231; Goldinger, 25-26; Walter Baier and Winfried R. Garscha, "Vorwort," in *Alfred Klahr zur österreichischen Nation*, 7-10; Hans Hautmann, *Die verlorne Räterepublik: Am Beispiel der Kommunistischen Partei Deutschösterreichs* (Vienna, Frankfurt, Zurich: Europa Verlag, 1985); Adam Wandruszka and Peter Urbanitsch, eds., *Die Habsburgermonarchie, 1848-1918*, vol.6 (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1973), 359-360.

⁴³¹Günther Grabner, "Zur Biographie von Alfred Klahr," in *Alfred Klahr zur österreichischen Nation*, 190-195; Klahr was not the only Party member to advocate Austrian independence and nationhood. For similar but less systematic statements from Austrian Communists in 1937 and 1938, see Johann Kopenig, "Nationaler Kampf gegen die drohende Annexation;" *idem*, "Die nationale-fortschrittliche Bedeutung des Unabhängigkeitskampfes;" Erwin Zucker-Schilling, "Grundlagen und Aufgaben der Unabhängigkeitskampfes;" Ernst Fischer, "Die Entwicklung des österreichischen Volkes nach 1866," in *Die Kommunisten im Kampf für die Unabhängigkeit Österreichs* (Vienna: Stern Verlag, 1955), 13-25, 45-

Question (which, fittingly enough, had been written during the future Soviet dictator's brief residency in Vienna in 1912). Klahr argued that Stalin had been the thinker who had really defined the concept of the nation according to the terms of true "Marxist historical materialism." This materialistic definition identified territory, language, economic and political development, culture, and historical circumstances as the fundamental components of nationhood, and provided the ideological foundation for the cultural autonomy which the Soviet Union had allowed its constituent nationalities during the 1920s and 1930s.⁴³² Klahr argued that too many Austrians had mistakenly equated the nation with a mere community of language, or a vaguely defined notion of culture, and had thus ignored the other key elements of national belonging in order to classify Austrians as Germans. While language was indeed a keystone of nationality, Klahr asserted it was not itself sufficient to define a nation apart from other more decisive factors such as culture and history, as evidenced by the examples of Switzerland and the USA. Klahr was particularly interested in rebutting Bauer's ideas of national identity, which he argued were "idealistic," "unhistorical," and therefore "thoroughly un-Marxist."⁴³³ Indeed, Klahr argued that the Austrian working class, despite Bauer's claims, had never really felt itself to be German, and had been at best "indifferently cool" toward the prospect of *Anschluß*, even in 1918.⁴³⁴ Of course, Klahr's Stalinist definition of

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⁴³²Josef Stalin, *Marxismus und nationale Frage* (Vienna: Stern-Verlag, 1949), 10-11; Schlomo Avineri, "Marxism and Nationalism," *Journal of Contemporary History* 26, No. 3/4 (September, 1991): 653-654; Heinz Gärtner, ed., *Zwischen Moskau und Österreich: die KPÖ, Analyse einer sowjetabhängigen Partei* (Vienna: Braumüller, 1979).

⁴³³Alfred Klahr, "Zur nationalen Frage in Österreich (I)." *Weg und Ziel. Monatschrift für Theorie und Praxis des Marxismus-Leninismus* 2, no. 3 (1937):126-133.

⁴³⁴Klahr, "Die nationale Frage und die Stellungnahme der Kommunisten in Österreich," in *Alfred Klahr zur österreichischen Nation*, 45-60.

nationhood was not in fact dramatically different from that of Bauer, who also emphasized the significance of culture and historical experience.⁴³⁵ In the end, the decisive difference between the Communist and Austromarxist conceptions of Austrian national identity lay not in their theoretical approach, but rather in the opposing conclusions which each faction reached about Austrian Germanness. Ultimately, the Communists' proclamations of Austrian nationhood probably depended more upon the Soviet Union's increasingly desperate efforts during the mid-1930s to contain the threat of Nazi Germany than they did upon genuine nationalistic or patriotic sentiment. It was simpler for Stalin and his clients in the KPÖ to fight *Anschluss* by denying Austrian Germanness that it was for them to oppose such an expansion of Nazi influence in Central Europe while maintaining that Austrians were still in some sense part of the German *Volk*.

Klahr did allow that there had certainly been a relationship in the past between Austria and Germany. Indeed, his ideas displayed the same sense of ambiguity which plagued the work of even the most "Austrianist" of national theorists, as he grappled with the question of whether or not Austria had at some point in the past been part of the German nation. Klahr seemed to affirm that at one point there had at least been the potential for Austria and Germany to be part of the same nation, and he admitted that Austria had participated in the nineteenth-century drive toward German unity. Yet he argued that the failure of Austria to unite with Germany proper during that era had had the effect of encouraging the development of a distinctive Austrian national consciousness. He also asserted that Austria had never really been an actual part of Germany in the past, but had always been oriented toward its own concerns, which were different than those of

⁴³⁵ Avineri, 652-653.

northern German-speakers. Klahr also vigorously disputed the notion, advanced by Bauer, that German unity, as a bourgeois project, was a necessary first step toward a proletarian revolution, which allegedly had to follow the historical stages outlined by Marx. Klahr argued that the working class could adapt to contemporary circumstances, and that the separate historical paths of Germany and Austria during the nineteenth century had served to solidify the differences in character which had already existed due to Austria's particular culture.⁴³⁶

Indeed, Klahr believed that 1848 had been the decisive year in the final separation between Germany and Austria. It was at that point when the unification of all the German-speakers of Europe had been a real possibility. There had been three options for those who pursued such a project. The first, which Klahr termed the only "real *großdeutsch* path," involved the unification of all German *Stämme* in a democratic, republican, progressive great-German state, a move which would have allowed the other nationalities of the Habsburg Monarchy to pursue their own republican interests separately. The remaining options, which Klahr termed the *kleindeutsch*-great-Prussian, and the great-Austrian paths, respectively, would have seen the partial unification of various parts of Germany and the Habsburg state under the reactionary hegemony of either the Hohenzollerns or the Habsburgs. Klahr asserted that history had taken the path it had because the bourgeois classes in both Germany and Austria had allied themselves with reactionary interests rather than with the progressive goals of the working class, which on its own still was too weak to accomplish democratic unification. The defeat of Austria

⁴³⁶ Klahr, "Zur nationalen Frage in Österreich (II)," *Weg und Ziel* 2, no. 3 (1937):173-181; "Gegen der Pangermanismus in die Arbeiterbewegung," *Weg und Ziel* 4, No. 1, (1939): 3-4.

by Prussia in 1866 had thus represented a triumph for reaction, as the way was cleared for a Prussian, *kleindeutsch* solution to the German problem.⁴³⁷

Writing in the months following the March 1938 *Anschluss* with Nazi Germany, Klahr argued that the Nazi's success in forging a great-German state at gunpoint represented the bitter fruits of the selfishness and abandonment of the appropriate progressive historical mission of both the Austrian and German middle classes. Yet Klahr also noted that in 1848 the Austrian farmers had shown a burgeoning progressive consciousness which he hoped ultimately would prove useful in forming a modern coalition of progressive interests in Austria to combat Nazi domination and win back Austrian independence. According to Klahr, the real progressive path in 1938 involved support for Austrian independence and self-determination, which was inextricably linked to the independence of the other states of the Danubian region. He viewed Bauer's continuing support for a union of the "entire German people" even after the *Anschluss* as serving the interests of Nazi Germany. Such rhetoric could not advance the cause of socialism if it played so directly into Hitler's hands. Klahr compared the promise of March of 1848 to the tragedy of March of 1938, and proclaimed his faith in the future victory of the Austrian working class with the hopeful statement that, "All Marches have not yet come."⁴³⁸ Interestingly, however, Klahr did allow in other writings that someday Austrians might voluntarily choose to join Germany, albeit never under the auspices of

⁴³⁷Klahr, "März 1848- März 1938- Noch sind nicht alle Märzen vorbei" *Weg und Ziel*, 3, no. 3/4 (March/April, 1938): 138-139

⁴³⁸*Ibid.*, 134-141; Klahr, "Zur Diskussion über die Annexion" *Weg und Ziel* 3 No. 8 (August, 1938): 304-314.

fascist oppression.⁴³⁹ Thus, even though Klahr was among the most forceful proponents of his time of the existence of a distinctive Austrian national identity, he still displayed some lingering notion of a national kinship between Germans and Austrians.

Klahr and the Austrian Communist Party firmly opposed not just the Austrian Social Democrats and the National Socialists, but also the *Ständestaat*. For him, the corporatist state was clearly fascist, and he denounced the authoritarian government for its suppression of the workers' movement. He also inveighed against the government's portrayal of the old Habsburg state as a benevolent institution. On this matter at least, Klahr was in full agreement with Bauer. He argued that the old Monarchy had been a force of oppression, and the corporatist regime was merely demonstrating the reactionary roots of the new Austrian order by invoking the Habsburg legacy. The old Monarchy had invariably stood against the forces of progress, whether by opposing the peasant revolts of 1526 and 1626, or by stifling the more recent uprisings by the working class in 1848 and 1918.⁴⁴⁰ He also disputed the claims of the *Ständestaat*'s leaders that the dynasty had been sympathetic to the interests and demands of the state's various nationalities, proclaiming that "the Habsburgs are equally foreign to, and equally the enemies of all nations, and stand as the oppressors of all nations, including that of German Austrians. Therefore, 'never [again] will the fate of Austria be united with the Habsburg crown.'"⁴⁴¹ According to Klahr, any steps toward progress in terms of democracy, social justice, or national rights had occurred despite the efforts of the dynasty, and what little had been achieved in

⁴³⁹ Klahr, "Zur nationalen Frage in Österreich (II)," 173-181; "Österreichs Freiheitskampf und die deutsche Revolution," in *Alfred Klahr zur österreichischen Nation*, 95-109.

⁴⁴⁰ Klahr, "Die nationale Frage und die Stellungnahme der Kommunisten in Österreich," 55-56.

⁴⁴¹ Klahr, "Zur nationalen Frage in Österreich (II)," 176.

those matters had come through the brave efforts of the working class and the freedom fighters of the subject nations.⁴⁴²

Klahr, like Bauer, feared that the ultimate aim of the corporatist regime was to restore a Habsburg to the throne, and to create a reactionary, south German, Catholic monarchy in Central Europe. He argued that any claims that a new dynastic state would be a “social *Volksmonarchie*,” were merely attempts by monarchist agitators to seduce the working class into permitting the return of a noxious institution which had devoted centuries of effort to stifling progress and justice in the region. Indeed, at times, Klahr was willing to characterize the old dynasty and its successors in the *Ständestaat* as part of the same reactionary movement as National Socialism. Klahr argued that “the [Communist] Party sets the propaganda of proletarian internationalism against the chauvinism of the Habsburg and Hitler agitators, and sets the solidarity of the struggle of the Austrian *Volk* with the anti-fascist forces in Germany and neighboring states against Schuschnigg and Habsburg, Hitler and Mussolini.”⁴⁴³ Yet, in general, Klahr and the Austrian Communist Party were frequently more realistic in their stance than the Social Democrats, and despite this rhetoric, Klahr proclaimed that Austrian workers were willing to help the Schuschnigg regime oppose the Nazi threat.⁴⁴⁴

Thus, Klahr presented on the behalf of the KPÖ an interpretation of the Habsburg past which was remarkably similar to that of Bauer and the Social Democrats. Both factions within the Austrian left agreed that the old Monarchy had been an oppressive

⁴⁴²*Ibid*, 175-176; Klahr, “Die nationale Frage und die Stellungnahme der Kommunisten in Österreich,” 55-56.

⁴⁴³Klahr, “Die nationale Frage und die Stellungnahme der Kommunisten in Österreich,” 55.

⁴⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 45-47.

force, which had been opposed by the true agents of progress in Austrian history, and especially by the working class, once it developed during the nineteenth century. Klahr used this vision of Austria's past to make a strikingly different argument concerning Austrian national identity, however, as he asserted that Austrians were not Germans, and possessed their own distinctive history and culture which ought to preclude any thought of *Anschluss*. Klahr of course was no more successful than Bauer when it came to actually preventing the forcible unification of Austria and the Third Reich in 1938, and he was murdered at the Nazi extermination camp at Auschwitz in 1944. Still, Klahr's convictions concerning Austrian national identity provided a template for the Austrian Communist movement's official views after his death, and he stands with Winter as a figure whose ideas would resonate more strongly in Austria during the era of the Second Republic than in his own time.⁴⁴⁵

Thus, although the leaders of the *Ständestaat* were successful in restricting the public debate concerning Austrian national identity and the meaning of the Habsburg past, they were not able to suppress it completely. Individual Austrian conservatives and the leaders of the illegal Austrian left still could advance opinions about Austrian identity and the appropriate lessons of Austria's history that differed significantly from the official view. Still, the corporatist government held an impressive advantage in its competition between these alternative viewpoints due to the fact that it controlled the entire legal and state apparatus in Austria. This was an advantage which the leaders of the *Ständestaat* put to good use between 1933 and 1938. One area of state power which those leaders put to

⁴⁴⁵Grabner, 190-195. For discussions of the enduring influence of Klahr's ideas, see Baier and Grascha, 7-10; Michel Cullen, "E. K. Winter, A. Klahr et des origines de la culture politique de la seconde

particular use was the government's domination of the Austrian educational system.

During the time which it was in power, the corporatist regime used the educational system to advance its views about Austrian nationhood and the meaning of Austrian history. It is to these efforts in transforming education in Austria into an outlet for corporatist propaganda that we now turn.

Chapter 4. Education and the Habsburg Past in the *Ständestaat*

The leaders of the Austrian *Ständestaat* knew that they were facing an uphill battle when it came to building popular support for their government and its official ideology. Despite their claims to represent the interests and ideals of the majority of the Austrian population, the leaders of the corporatist regime had been forced to seize power because they were unable to cement a durable and stable majority under the First Republic's parliamentary system. The fact that the corporatist government moved within the first year of its existence to outlaw the Austrian National Socialist, Communist, and Social Democratic Parties amounted to an implicit admission of the fact that it lacked broad support from the Austrian population. The *Ständestaat* thus mounted an intensive campaign of public propaganda to convince Austrians of the legitimacy of the new corporatist order. They crafted a vision of a religiously Christian, culturally German, and Western Austrian state anchored in the history of the old Habsburg Monarchy.

The corporatist government was not content merely to rely upon public propaganda and the restriction of dissent, however. The *Ständestaat* also looked to the state educational system as a vital means of insuring that Austrian children would be molded into a generation of mature Austrian patriots loyal to corporatist ideals and willing to defend Austrian independence. Thus, the corporatist government embarked upon a series of ambitious reforms of Austrian education which sought to indoctrinate Austrian students with the regime's official views concerning patriotism, government, social organization, and religion, as well as with its cultural conception of Austrian Germanness and its reverence for the

Habsburg Monarchy and its legacy. These reforms included new provisional and, in 1935, heavily revised official curricula for education, as well as new laws concerning the behavior of teachers and students in the classrooms, and revised standards for textbooks to be used in the Austrian school system. This flurry of reforms was also accompanied by vigorous discussion within the Austrian pedagogical community concerning how best to implement the regime's vision of Austrian education.⁴⁴⁶

It is unsurprising given the manner in which the *Ständestaat* attempted to ground its legitimacy in Austria's Habsburg past that policy makers and educators focused most intently upon history education. The regime's new educational laws and curricula emphasized historical instruction as one of the most important means of helping Austrian students to internalize official views concerning Austria's traditions and special character and calling. Austria's pedagogical theorists likewise focused upon history education as a crucial tool in achieving the government's educational goals, and by the last years of the corporatist regime's existence a new series of history textbooks and readers had begun to appear which reflected the official view of Austria's past. Ultimately, the *Ständestaat* was not successful in preserving Austrian independence in the face Nazi Germany's nationalist expansionism, and it is indeed unlikely the government's educational reforms had enough time to effect any appreciable ideological change in the Austrian population.⁴⁴⁷ Yet the

⁴⁴⁶On the efforts of the *Ständestaat* to reform Austrian education, see Carla Esden-Tempska, "Civic Education in Authoritarian Austria, 1934-1938," *History of Education Quarterly* 30 (Summer 1990):187-211; R. John Rath, "Training for Citizenship, Austrian Style," *Journal of Central European Affairs* 3 (April, 1943): 132-140; Ernst Papanek, *The Austrian School Reform: Its Bases, Principles and Developments—The Twenty Years Between the Two World Wars* (New York:Frederick Fell, Inc., 1962), 107-116; Michael J. Zeps, *Education and the Crisis of the First Republic* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1987), 167-186.

⁴⁴⁷Carla Esden-Tempska argues that the corporatist regime had largely failed to inspire patriotism and loyalty to the government in the Austrian population by the time of the 1938 *Anschluss*. She asserts that

corporatist government was at least successful in achieving an impressive shift in the content of Austrian history education in a relatively short period. By the end of Austrian independence in March of 1938, the state's educational system did indeed, on an official level at least, reflect the ideals of the corporatist leadership.⁴⁴⁸ More importantly, the *Ständestaat's* efforts to reform the content of Austria's education clearly foreshadowed the Second Republic's own efforts after 1945 to present a view of history in schools which

this failure was due to the regime's equivocation between Austrian patriotism and German cultural nationalism, a position which did not present a clear enough argument concerning why *Anschluß* with Germany was undesirable. The fact that so many Austrians warmly greeted the *Anschluß* with Germany seems to confirm her argument, but it is still worth noting how little time (a mere five years) the *Ständestaat* had in order to attempt to achieve a substantial transformation of Austrian public opinion. As Esden-Tempska admits, it is simply impossible to tell with any certainty whether or not the government's educational reforms were too inherently flawed to achieve their goals, or if they might have been more effective had they be given more time. Esden-Tempska does not deal with the role which invocations of the Habsburg past played in the *Ständestaat's* educational reforms Esden-Tempska, 187-188, 210-211.⁴⁴⁸The matter of whether such reforms were actually faithfully implemented by Austrian teachers is of course a different issue. The scholar of Austrian education during the Nazi era, Herbert Dachs, notes that a significant number of Austrian students and teachers embraced National Socialism and anti-Austrianist German nationalism during the era of the *Ständestaat*, despite the official stance of the Austrian educational system. As we shall see, a number of the corporatist regime's own laws and statements seem to indicate that the system did suffer from significant opposition from within the ranks of Austrian teachers. Still, in terms of actual policy and the official content of instruction, by 1938 the regime had succeeded in transforming Austrian education. See Herbert Dachs, "Schule und Jugenderziehung in der 'Ostmark,'" in *NS-Herrschaft in Österreich 1938-1945*, Emmerich Tálos, Ernst Hanisch, and Wolfgang Neugebauer, eds. (Vienna: Verlag für Gesellschaftskritik, 1998), 239.

emphasized Austria's national distinctiveness.

i. The *Ständestaat*'s Educational Reforms

From the very beginning of the new order in Austria, the *Ständestaat*'s leaders argued that education was central to their goal to raise a generation of Austrians which would be patriotic, Christian, and loyal to the corporatist government. Dollfuß proclaimed on a number of occasions that the children of Austria were the state's greatest treasure and that it was vital for them to be educated in manner which helped them to love their Fatherland and to be willing to defend it. Indeed, Dollfuß argued that education was a matter of the state's very existence.⁴⁴⁹ Schuschnigg, a former Minister of Education, likewise repeatedly emphasized education's critical importance for Austria's survival both before and after he became the state's leader.⁴⁵⁰ Such breathless proclamations concerning the need for appropriate education were not confined to the *Ständestaat*'s leadership. Robert Krassner, an Austrian pedagogical theorist and teacher, for example, also warned that the correct sort of education was not just a matter of producing knowledgeable Austrian adults, but was rather a question of life or death for the Austrian state.⁴⁵¹

All of the leaders of the *Ständestaat* agreed that religion was a crucial element in their efforts to transform the state's educational system. The Catholic character of the new order had been enshrined in the new constitution and concordat of 1934, and the government

⁴⁴⁹Engelbert Dollfuß, "Worte des Kanzler Dollfuß," *Die Österreichische Schule, österreichische Monatsheft für pädagogische Forschung und Bildung*, 12 (1935): 403; "An die Jugend Oesterreichs," in *Dollfuß an Oesterreich, Eines Mannes Wort und Ziel*, ed. Edmund Weber (Vienna: Reinhold-Verlag, 1935), 245-252.

⁴⁵⁰Kurt von Schuschnigg, "Geleitwort," *Die Österreichische Schule*, 11 (1934): 153-154; "Führer-Worte zur österreichischen Schulen," *Die Österreichische Schule* 12 (1936): 1-3.

⁴⁵¹Robert Krassner, "Ständestaat und Schule. Grundsätzliches zur österreichischen Schulererneuerung,"

sought to make sure that this religious viewpoint was reflected in its educational reforms. Thus, the Ministry of Education once again made religious education compulsory for Catholic children, just as it had been in the Monarchy. Despite its strong emphasis upon Austria's Catholic character, the *Ständestaat* did not restrict or persecute Austria's religious minorities to any significant degree. The Ministry did, however, require that children of these faiths receive religious instruction in their own respective religious traditions. More importantly, the regime made it clear that religion was not restricted only to actual religious education courses; rather, it was an integral part of all Austrian education, to be studied in history and patriotic education classes as well.⁴⁵² Dollfuß himself proclaimed that it was a betrayal of Austria's children to give them a purely secular education without any references to a higher power and to their responsibility to their community, as the First Republic allegedly had done. He asserted that religious education was a necessity for the new Austrian order.⁴⁵³

Just as important to the leaders of the *Ständestaat* as religious education was the idea that Austrian schools should inculcate students with a love for their Austrian Fatherland. A January 8, 1934 decree in the official journal of the Austrian Ministry of Education, *Verordnungsblatt für den Dienstbereich des Bundesministeriums für Unterricht*, stated that the Austrian state was responsible for transmitting the ideals of both the "Fatherland" and the Catholic religion to students, and subsequent educational laws demonstrated that

Schriften des Pädagogischen Institutes der Stadt Wien 7 (1935): 4.

⁴⁵²Esden-Tempska, 193-195; "Religiöse Übungen an den Mittelschulen und an den Lehrer- und Lehrerinnenbildungsanstalten," *Verordnungsblatt für den Dienstbereich des Bundesministeriums für Unterricht* (January 8, 1934): 6; "Vaterländische Erziehung der Jugend; Beitritt der Lehrer zur Vaterländischen Front," *Verordnungsblatt* (January 8, 1934): 7.

⁴⁵³Dollfuß, "Das neue Oesterreich," in *Dollfuß an Oesterreich*, 28-29.

corporatist leaders took this obligation quite seriously.⁴⁵⁴ The final revisions to the state's official educational curricula in 1935 proclaimed these goals openly, stating that Austrian children were to be educated to "feel, think, and act in a manner which was religious-moral, social, and true to the *Volk*."⁴⁵⁵ The new Austrian educational guidelines emphasized love of *Heimat*, Fatherland, and the Austrian people, and it glorified Austrian contributions to both German culture and the culture of the world. Such an education also sought to give Austrian children a sense of social solidarity with their fellow citizens at the same time as it urged obedience to the law and the transcendence of Marxist class conflict.⁴⁵⁶

As a means to this end, the regime placed patriotic symbols in Austrian schools and urged both teachers and students to join its patriotic Fatherland Front. In 1934, every school had to create its own flag in order to affirm its allegiance to the Fatherland. These flags might display either the traditional symbols and colors of the individual province in which the school was located, or those of the state as a whole, but the emphasis of the law was clearly upon the patriotic value which might be attached to such banners. The regime also required Austrian teachers to wear the insignia of the Fatherland Front, and indeed, in 1936, the Ministry saw fit to remind Austrian educators that only official patriotic insignias produced with the approval of the government were permitted, and that unofficial

⁴⁵⁴"Vaterländische Erziehung der Jugend; Beitritt der Lehrer zur Vaterländischen Front," *Verordnungsblatt* (January 8, 1934): 7.

⁴⁵⁵It is impossible to tell from the context of this statement whether it intended to refer to the Austrian *Volk* or the German *Volk*. Given the *Ständestaat*'s insistence that Austrians were both part of the German *Volk* and a distinctive group in their own right, this ambiguous language may well have been intentional. "Lehrplan für die österreichischen Hauptschulen," *Verordnungsblatt* (June, 1935): 68-69; "Lehrplan für die Mittelschulen," *Verordnungsblatt* (July, 1935): 124-125.

⁴⁵⁶"Lehrplan für die österreichischen Hauptschulen," 68-69; "Lehrplan für die Mittelschulen," 124-125; Mittelschulen, neue Lehrpläne, übergangs maßnahmen," *Verordnungsblatt* (July, 1935): 531.

reproductions of such insignias were expressly proscribed.⁴⁵⁷ In a 1934 statement clearly directed against the Austrian Nazis, the government likewise prohibited student membership in any “anti-Fatherland” groups, and warned teachers that they were not allowed to disseminate any “anti-Austrian propaganda” in classrooms.⁴⁵⁸ In 1937, the Ministry of Education even went so far as to restrict state financial aid at the university level to students who were demonstrably loyal to Austria and its government. Taken collectively, these measures certainly testify not only to the *Ständestaat*’s efforts to inspire loyalty in its schools, but also to the fact that the regime thought that disloyalty to the regime was a persistent problem there as well.⁴⁵⁹

Beyond such broad patriotic and religious goals, the new curricula which the regime introduced were explicitly designed to reverse many of the educational changes which had been instituted by left-leaning educational officials during the First Republic. Perhaps the most significant reversal was the *Ständestaat*’s abandonment of the First Republic’s attempt to create a somewhat more unified and egalitarian school system, a project which had long been unpopular among the conservatives who now completely dominated the Austrian state. The *Ständestaat* now returned to the Monarchy’s old system, which tracked students into academic or vocational education relatively early in their academic careers. As we have seen, the *Ständestaat* likewise restored the education system’s previous emphasis upon

⁴⁵⁷“Vaterländische Erziehung in der Schule,” *Verordnungsblatt* (July 7, 1934): 152-3; “Vaterländische Erziehung der Jugend; Beitritt der Lehrer zur Vaterländischen Front,” 7; “Vaterländisches Schülerabzeichen,” *Verordnungsblatt* (October 28, 1936): 135.

⁴⁵⁸“Vaterländische Erziehung der Jugend; Beitritt der Lehrer zur Vaterländischen Front,” *Verordnungsblatt* (January 8, 1934): 8.

⁴⁵⁹“Studiengeberührenbegünstigungen an den Hochschulen, vaterlandstreues Verhalten als Voraussetzung,” *Verordnungsblatt* (February 15, 1937): 15.

religious education.⁴⁶⁰ The new educational guidelines also drew a clear distinction between male and female students, arguing that Austrian girls should be educated with an eye toward their future as Austrian mothers and homemakers, leaving such subjects as gymnastics, geometry, and pre-military education to the boys. The government's new educational framework was thus designed to reverse the First Republic's policies, and to return Austrian education to its pre-1918 form. Moreover, the *Ständestaat* infused Austrian education with its own ideology in order to transform students into loyal Austrian patriots and supporters of the regime.⁴⁶¹

After the introduction of the new state educational curricula in 1935, the corporatist Ministry of Education also sought to revise the textbooks used in Austrian classrooms. In a December decree, the Ministry reminded teachers of their duty not to use textbooks which worked against the goals of Austria's new educational guidelines, or which had been prohibited by the government. It also required them to abandon previous editions of texts, revisions of which had since been approved by the state. The Ministry singled out history textbooks for special scrutiny since history was central to building student patriotism. The decree exempted arithmetic texts and German and foreign language readers from the need for specific approval. At the end of each issue of the Ministry's published journal of educational decrees, a list appeared of new texts and teaching materials which had been

⁴⁶⁰“Die neuen Lehrpläne für die Abschlussklassen der Volksschule und für die Hauptschule,” *Pädagogischer Führer* (1935): 915-916; For a discussion of education during the First Republic, see chapter 2 and Papanek, 46-106; Zeps, 25-166.

⁴⁶¹“Lehrplan für die österreichischen Hauptschulen,” 69-70; “Lehrplan für die Mittelschulen,” 131. Private schools in Austria, most of which were religious, also had to comply with state curricula and regulations involving instructional materials in order to obtain accreditation. See “Verordnung der Bundesregierung vom 23. März 1934, betreffend die Mittelschulen,” in *Lehrplan für die Abschlussklassen der Volksschule und die Hauptschule*, ed. Anton Simonic (Vienna and Leipzig: Deutsche Verlag für Jugend und Volk, 1935), 6-7.

approved by the government. The Ministry also cautioned teachers that only educational materials produced in Austria, including maps, were permitted in Austrian classrooms.⁴⁶² Such laws once again provide testimony to the fear of the corporatist government that its official standards for education would be subverted by teachers who disagreed with the regime's stance on Austrian national identity.

In terms of content, the new educational system which the *Ständestaat* created introduced a number of new policies. Concerning national identity, the Ministry of Education avowed that there was no opposition between Austrianness and Germanness, but rather proclaimed that the two qualities were complimentary.⁴⁶³ Such a declaration was certainly in keeping with the views of the state's leaders that Austria was a German state. Yet at the same time, the regime moved to introduce material into Austrian education which emphasized the positive aspects of Austria as a particularly worthy German land. Such an emphasis necessarily required the Austrian educational system to eliminate its previous focus upon the German *Reich*, especially given the Nazi domination of Germany after 1933. For example, in 1934, the Ministry announced that classes in civics would no longer present students with a detailed discussion of both the Austrian and German federal constitutions, but would rather give a brief historical overview only of Austria's constitutional development, no doubt pending the regime's efforts to craft a more suitable constitutional document to reflect its own authoritarian and patriotic ideals.⁴⁶⁴ With the implementation of

⁴⁶²“Lehrbücher an allen dem Bundesministerium für Unterricht unterstehenden Schulen,” *Verordnungsblatt* (September, 1935): 575-6; “Verordnung der Bundesregierung vom 23. März 1934, betreffend die Mittelschulen,” in *Lehrplan für die Abschlussklassen der Volksschule und die Hauptschule*, 5; “Noch immer antiösterreichische Schulbücher!” *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (May 5, 1935): 120; “Anbot nicht approbierter ausländischer Lehrmittel,” *Verordnungsblatt* (December 1, 1936): 205.

⁴⁶³*Verordnungsblatt* (January 8, 1934): 7.

⁴⁶⁴“Bürgerkundlicher Unterricht an Mittel- und Hauptschulen,” *Verordnungsblatt* (February 6, 1934): 34.

that new constitution in 1934 and the new official educational curricula in 1935, the corporatist government established its position on how Austrian Germanness would be reflected in the Austrian educational system. The new curriculum for *Mittelschulen* provided the most comprehensive statement on this issue. The introduction to this document avowed that Austrian students needed to learn about the Austrian contribution to German culture and to the German *Volk* as a whole, but at the same time underlined the government's desire for children to gain an appreciation of Austrians as a "special group" of Germans. The same document also explicitly cast the Austrian *Mittelschulen* within the long Western tradition of humanistic education, and proclaimed Austria's dedication to Western civilization, which linked it not only to Germany, but also to England, France and Italy.⁴⁶⁵ Thus, the curriculum reflected the regime's ideas concerning an Austria which was culturally German, but also part of Western Christendom, and unique in its own right.

German language instruction in Austrian schools represented an area of some difficulty for the regime in terms of its ideals of Austrian nationhood. Such difficulties were unsurprising given the fact that the German language was one of the topics which Austrian "Germanist" nationalists emphasized in order to argue that Austrians were Germans who were destined one day to join a great-German state. The Provisional Curriculum for Austrian *Hauptschulen* for the 1934/1935 school year set forth guidelines for the study of the German language which recommended that students be exposed to old Germanic folk tales and sagas, and especially those which described life in Austria. Yet the Ministry of Education was also careful to warn teachers not to include nationalistic German propaganda when they taught folklore, and recommended that instructors instead focus purely on matters

⁴⁶⁵ "Lehrplan für die Mittelschulen," 125-7.

of grammar and linguistic style.⁴⁶⁶ Such a warning seems to indicate that the Ministry suspected that German language classes were in fact being used to spread nationalistic ideas which were at odds with the government's desire for Austrian independence. Interestingly, the 1935 curriculum for *Mittelschulen* made a special point of reserving instruction about the history and culture of Austria's earliest Germanic forebears mostly to German language classrooms. The curriculum ordered history teachers to present only a brief overview, leaving detailed presentations on such more folkloric topics to German language instructors. Thus, Austrian German language classes included material which history education in Nazi Germany emphasized, while actual history courses in Austrian schools focused on the classical Greek, Roman, and Christian roots of Austria's history, a focus which was certainly more in line with the official ideology of the *Ständestaat*.⁴⁶⁷

Indeed, the government concentrated on history education especially closely, and designed the new guidelines for the teaching of history to disseminate the *Ständestaat's* ideals of Austrian distinctiveness. The new curricula, again taking history education before 1918 as their guide, heavily weighted history classes toward political and military matters, portraying the old Habsburg Monarchy as the bearer of a special sort of Germanness which defined Austria's continuing role in the contemporary world. The provisional curricula for all Austrian schools for the 1934/1935 school year recommended that historical instruction begin the narrative of Austrian history in Roman antiquity, emphasizing the development and expansion of Christianity. Instruction on Austria itself began with the founding of the

⁴⁶⁶“Vorläufiger Lehrplan für die erste Klasse der österreichischen Hauptschulen,” *Volkserziehung, Nachrichten des Österreichischen Unterrichtsamtes*, official section (August 15, 1927): 130. “Vaterländische Erziehung in der Schule,” *Verordnungsblatt* (July 7, 1934): 152-3. For an overview of historical instruction in Nazi Germany, see Chapter 5.

Ostmark, and included descriptions of the lives of the various Babenberg and Habsburg monarchs, as well as the biographies of the “great men” of the Austrian past. The curricula also described the origins of Austria’s red-white-red flag during the Babenbergs’ participation in the crusades, highlighting the historical link between dynastic rule in Austria and Christianity.⁴⁶⁸

The official revised curricula of 1935 discussed history education in more detail. The new guidelines for all levels of Austrian education certainly emphasized Austrian topics to greater degree than those of the First Republic, but they also maintained a certain focus upon German historical topics as well. For example the new curricula listed “The Christianization of the Germans,” and “The German City in the Middle Ages” as important themes. Likewise, they urged teachers to present Austrian children with a description of the Austrian contributions to the German *Volk* and culture. On the other hand, the curricula enjoined teachers to make a special effort to acquaint students with the achievements and personalities of “great Austrians” in order to awaken in them a love of the Austrian Fatherland. The curricula described the time of the Turkish siege of Vienna as “Austria’s heroic age,” and emphasized the heroism of Austrian soldiers during the Napoleonic wars and World War I. They also highlighted Austria’s musical tradition and contributions to Baroque art and culture as areas for specific focus within history education. The curriculum for *Gymnasien*, the elite secondary schools that focused on the classics, placed a particular emphasis upon Austria as part of Western Civilization dating back to the Roman era, an

⁴⁶⁷“Lehrplan für die Mittelschulen,” 170.

⁴⁶⁸“Vorläufiger Lehrplan für die erste Klasse der österreichischen Hauptschulen.” 130-134. “Vorläufiger Lehrplan für die erste Klasse der österreichischen Mittelschulen, gültig für das Schuljahr 1934/1935,” *Verordnungsblatt* (May 18, 1934): 85; “Vorläufiger Lehrplan für die Abschlußklasse an Volksschulen,

emphasis which was present, but less explicitly defined in the curricula for the other Austrian secondary schools.⁴⁶⁹ Even in the Austrian *Handelsakademien* (business schools), institutions in which history education focused almost totally upon economic history, the new curricular framework briefly discussed how trade had served the Fatherland throughout history, and how history education might strengthen patriotic sentiment among commercial students.⁴⁷⁰

One particular innovation which the *Ständestaat* initiated in education involved the transformation of the class in *Staatsbürgerkunde* (civics) in the oldest cohort of *Mittelschule* students into a course in *Vaterlandskunde* (patriotic education). The civics course in the First Republic had generally focused on topics such as Austria's constitution, administrative structure, and legal system. The new class was much more overtly ideological, however, and sought to transform the brightest Austrian students into proud patriots. There was considerable overlap in subject matter between *Vaterlandskunde* and history and geography, but the former explicitly lauded Austria's special character and great qualities. Indeed, the guidelines for instruction in *Vaterlandskunde* amounted to a restatement of the *Ständestaat*'s views concerning the "Austrian mission," even employing the term "mission" in describing Austria's role in the contemporary world. This program of study cast Austria as the defender of Europe against eastern invasions throughout history, describing it as "the borderland of Germany against the east", "a supporter of Catholic culture," and "a bulwark against the [Islamic] crescent." The Babenbergs and Habsburgs emerged as benevolent

gültig für das Schuljahr 1934/1935," *Verordnungsblatt* (June 18, 1934): 120.

⁴⁶⁹“Lehrplan für die österreichischen Hauptschulen,” 82-84; “Lehrplan für die Mittelschulen,” 168-170, 259-262; 341-347, 407-409; “Lehrplan für die Abschlußklassen,” 452-3.

ruling dynasties which had helped create a state which had always defended the West against outside threats. The curricula particularly lauded the Habsburgs for their efforts to protect Central Europe and to encourage German unity, even in the face of the destructive and selfish German nationalism of the nineteenth century which had sought to dismantle the Habsburg state and to sabotage its historical mission. Above all, the new curricula for patriotic education described Austria as state with a unique culture, history, and calling, and as a place which was linked with Europe and the West no less than with Germany.⁴⁷¹

The government also revised the educational standards for the study of geography to conform with its ideals concerning Austria's place in the world. The provisional curricula of 1934 and 1935 replaced the presentation of Austria as part of Germany so typical of the educational guidelines of the First Republic with a program emphasizing Austria in a broader European context.⁴⁷² In expanding the Ministry's guidelines concerning geography, the official curricula of 1935, however, revealed that the old German emphasis had not entirely disappeared. For example, the fourth class of Austrian *Hauptschulen* received instruction concerning the geography of Switzerland, the German *Reich*, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary, a combination which not only focused upon Austria's immediate territorial neighbors, but also emphasized Austria's continuing ties to both the Habsburg Monarchy's most important successor states and to Germany.⁴⁷³ The curriculum for *Handelsakademien*, however, simply mandated that students learn about the "former Austro-Hungarian

⁴⁷⁰“Lehrplan für die Handelsakademien,” *Verordnungsblatt* (July, 1935): 501.

⁴⁷¹“Lehrplan für die Mittelschulen,” 174-175, 265-266, 347-348, 413-414; “Mittelschulen, neue Lehrpläne, übergangs maßnahmen,” *Verordnungsblatt* (July, 1935): 531.

⁴⁷²“Vorläufiger Lehrplan für die erste Klasse der österreichischen Hauptschulen,” 134; “Vorläufiger Lehrplan für die erste Klasse der österreichischen Mittelschulen, gültig für das Schuljahr 1934/1935,” 85; “Vorläufiger Lehrplan für die Abschlußklasse an Volksschulen, gültig für das Schuljahr 1934/1935,” 120.

⁴⁷³“Lehrplan für die österreichischen Hauptschulen,” 85; “Lehrplan für die Mittelschulen,” 171-172, 261-

Monarchy as an economic realm.”⁴⁷⁴ The new geography guidelines thus conformed to the regime’s view of Austria as the heir to a history which was German and at the same time imperial and Western.

The *Ständestaat* instituted a wide variety of educational reforms which were designed to accomplish a number of specific goals. First, these reforms rolled back a number of the educational innovations of the First Republic, giving Austria a school system which resembled that of the old Monarchy which the new government so frequently invoked in order to bolster its own legitimacy. Second, the corporatist reforms emphasized the importance of religion in the new Austrian state and aggressively sought to instill a sense of Catholic piety in students. Finally, while the new educational reforms never denied Austrian membership in the German nation, these measures sought to emphasize Austria’s distinctiveness, attempting to transform school children into Austrian patriots who would support Austria’s independence and resist the lure of the *Anschluss* advocated by the National Socialists. These reforms consisted mainly of attempts by the regime to transform Austrian education into an intensively ideological enterprise. History education, German language instruction, geography and patriotic education represented a crucial tool in this educational transformation, and the corporatist government attempted to invoke the legacy of the Habsburg Monarchy in Austrian education for the same reasons that it did so in its public rhetoric: to enforce a vision of Austria which was culturally German, religiously Christian, and historically Western.

262, 410-412; “Lehrplan für die Abschlußklassen,” 452-3.

⁴⁷⁴“Lehrplan für die Handelsakademien,” 501.

ii. The Pedagogical Community and the Habsburg Past in the *Ständestaat*

In its attempts to reform Austrian education to reflect its official ideology, the *Ständestaat* enlisted the aid of educators and pedagogical theorists. In doing so, of course, the authoritarian government was careful to ensure that this pedagogical community truly reflected corporatist ideals. Although the corporatist regime did not embark upon a thorough purge of Austria's educational ranks in quite the same zealous manner as the Nazi dictatorship did in Nazi Germany or in Nazi Austria after 1938, it did take measures to make sure that Austrian teachers and pedagogues conformed to its official ideological standards. For example, in 1934 the corporatist regime removed the sitting leaders of the school board and dissolved the various teachers' and parents' associations in Vienna, which had long been bulwarks of Socialist education during the First Republic. The government reorganized these organizations with new leaders who belonged to the regime-sanctioned Fatherland Front. Likewise, in 1935 the central government assumed jurisdiction over the appointment of personnel for Austrian schools, previously a matter controlled by Austria's provincial governments, and required that new applicants' patriotism and ideological fitness be certified by the Fatherland Front. The corporatist regime also replaced the editorial boards of various Austrian pedagogical journals with educators who were loyal to the government and its ideology.⁴⁷⁵ Thus, by 1935 the *Ständestaat* had asserted its dominance over the Austrian educational community, excluding expressions of overt dissent, and putting in place a group of pedagogical leaders who would disseminate its ideals.

The corporatist government did not have to look especially hard to find a cadre of educators and theorists sympathetic to its cause. The *Ständestaat*'s educational ideas

resembled those espoused by conservative and Catholic teachers and politicians during the First Republic, and many of the leading figures within the Austrian educational community during the 1930s were Catholic-conservative stalwarts from that earlier era. The new educational leadership in Austria embarked upon its task with enthusiasm, and the new state's various pedagogical publications soon contained articles arguing in favor of corporatist ideology and discussing the best way to ensure that Austrian students adopted the ideals of the new government. Naturally, these publications sought to spread the government's views of Austrian national identity and the Habsburg past, and they discussed the manner in which such ideas were most effectively to be presented to Austrian schoolchildren.

From the very beginning of the *Ständestaat*, the state-sanctioned pedagogical community advocated a style of education which helped students grasp and internalize the basic values of the new corporatist order. Various educators defined these ideals in different ways, but there was general agreement among pedagogical theorists that Austrian corporatism sought to emphasize community, order, honesty, heroism, self-sacrifice, religion, and an ideal of authority based upon Christian notions of responsibility to God and love of one's neighbor.⁴⁷⁵ In their discussions of corporatism, however, Austrian educational theorists not only defined its values, they also invariably contrasted the ideals of corporatism with those of the liberal republican order which the *Ständestaat* had replaced. These theorists argued that liberalism had placed far too high a premium upon the needs of the

⁴⁷⁵Esden-Tempska, 190-193.

⁴⁷⁶Karl Schimka, "Vaterländische Erziehung und Bildung in der Schule," *Pädagogischer Führer* (1935): 606-608; M. Laireiter, "Vom Wesen der echten Autorität," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (March, 1937): 81-86.

individual, and had not paid sufficient attention to the religious and communal interests of the Austrian population. Likewise, they argued that the First Republic had not made any real effort to cultivate Austrian patriotism, so that the Austrian people had little pride in their Fatherland, and insufficient patriotic motivation to defend Austrian independence. Austria's new pedagogical leaders rejected the alleged materialism and relativism of liberal education and argued that the educational efforts of the *Ständestaat* would address these failings and produce a new generation of patriotic, religious, and loyal Austrian citizens ready to do their duty for the Fatherland and for Western civilization.⁴⁷⁷

A 1934 article in the pedagogical journal *Die Österreichische Schule* by Kurt Dra articulated these arguments most succinctly. Dra argued that the *Ständestaat*'s new educational order held that teaching was based on "*Gesinnung*" (basic convictions) and world view, and should impart the ideals of religiosity and patriotism to students. Ultimately such notions depended not just upon love and a positive appreciation of certain values and ideas, but upon hatred of and opposition to various precepts as well. Teachers thus needed to explicitly repudiate relativism, individualism, and the substitute religion of Socialism in favor of Catholicism, communal solidarity, and loyalty to the Fatherland. Dra noted that an authoritarian state was far better suited to such a goal than a democracy.⁴⁷⁸ Other educational theorists such as Ludwig Hänsel and Ernst Görlich took such arguments a step further, asserting that *Gesinnung* could never be a matter of neutrality for a strong state. They argued that liberal states were too entangled with their fetishism for neutrality,

⁴⁷⁷Schimka, 606-608; Laireiter, 83-86; Anton Simonic, "Die österreichische Schule," *Die Österreichische Schule* 11 (1934): 155-161; "Heimat und Vaterland als Wertbegriffe in der Pädagogik," *Pädagogischer Führer* (1935): 502-504.

⁴⁷⁸Kurt Dra, "Weltanschauung und Gesinnung." *Die Österreichische Schule* 11 (1934): 550-553.

objectivity, and the desire for a balance of opinions to provide an effective political education. The *Ständestaat*, however, could and would provide such instruction to its students, moving beyond mere civics into an education which truly indoctrinated students with corporatist ideals and Austrian patriotism.⁴⁷⁹

Corporatist educators did not just oppose the old liberal order, however, but also vehemently criticized the political and educational ideals of Nazi Germany, which they found to be chauvinistic and tyrannical. For example, Hänsel argued that Austrian education stood not just against liberalism, but also against nationalistic totalitarianism which sought to enforce compliance with a narrow ideology, and which elevated racial notions above *Geist* (spirit) in order to deny fair and equal treatment to non-German *Völker* of Europe. Another educator, Robert Krasser, concurred, and asserted that there was indeed a vital distinction to be made between totalitarianism, which grounded power in one narrow group or leader, and benevolent corporatist authoritarianism which derived responsible authority from God's laws. According to Krasser, Austria, with its Christian concept of authority wielded with a sense of responsibility and neighborly love, had opposed Prussia's princely absolutism in the past, and now stood against liberalism, Marxism, and Nazism.⁴⁸⁰ Thus, corporatist educational theorists drew a fine distinction between their own dictatorship's ideals of education and more oppressive Nazi views.

⁴⁷⁹Ernst Joseph Görlich, a young man in the 1930s, became a conservative intellectual and educator of considerable prominence during the first decade of the Austrian Second Republic. By that time he had of course abandoned his disdain for democracy and vigorously defended the new postwar liberal order in Austria. Ernst Görlich, "Politische Bildung," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (September 15, 1935): 185-6; Ludwig Hänsel, "Vaterländische Erziehung," *Schriften des Pädagogischen Institutes der Stadt Wien* 6 (1935): 7-9.

⁴⁸⁰Hänsel, 8-12; Robert Krasser, "Ständestaat und Schule. Grundsätzliches zur österreichischen Schulererneuerung," 8; Friedrich Wotke, "Ständestaat und Schule," *Pädagogischer Führer* (1936): 257-260.

The ideological character of corporatist education depended heavily upon a deeply conservative view of society, which encompassed notions of gender as well as politics. The *Ständestaat* sought to educate girls to become wives and mothers, and it designed their educational path to differ from that of male students. Nevertheless, education for females still focused corporatist ideals, and sought to produce young Catholic women dedicated to the government and the Fatherland, even if the methods used to achieve such an end depended more on home economics than upon the military training which Austrian boys received.⁴⁸¹ Educators even sought to indoctrinate the youngest Austrian children with corporatist ideas. For example, a 1937 issue of the pedagogical journal *Die Österreichische Schule* published the rules of a game in which young Austrian children, each representing a part of one of Austria's corporate *Berufstände*, would stand in a circle and sing verses regarding the role that each *Stand* played in the harmonious functioning of Austrian society.⁴⁸² Thus, education in the *Ständestaat* attempted to present all students, young and old, male and female, with an education which inspired loyalty to the government and to its vision of an independent, corporatist Austria.

All educational theorists agreed, however, that the state could not accomplish such aims on its own. It required the help of a dedicated corps of teachers who would serve as examples of loyalty and good character to students. Austria's educational leaders argued that teachers could not be content to be mere transmitters of knowledge; they also had to exemplify the regime's value system and inspire their students to take the *Ständestaat's*

⁴⁸¹Peter Schmitz, "Das Pflughafte in der vaterländischen Erziehung der Mädchen," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (February 15, 1935): 27-32; Schimka, "Vaterländische Erziehung und Bildung in der Schule," 610.

⁴⁸²Erich Stenutz, *Österreichs Stände: Ein Spiel für Schuljugend* (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag,

ideology to heart. The new state thus prioritized the character and personal qualities of teachers over their scholarly expertise.

Richard Schmitz, an educational official in Vienna, asserted that even outside the classroom, the Austrian teacher needed to demonstrate good character and dedication to the community in order to serve as an example to impressionable students. Objectivity was of no use to teachers when it came to presenting the correct view of *Heimat* and the Austrian Fatherland to students. Instructors could not be dispassionate, but rather had to inflame the patriotic ardor of their young charges. In such an enterprise textbooks could provide an aid, but never a substitute for the inspirational qualities and good judgement of the teacher. Teachers, and especially teachers of history, needed to have “a real German, real Austrian heart,” and be able to inspire students, as well as to transmit information to them.⁴⁸³ Grete Wiesinger further argued that Austrian teachers also had to be fully aware of the traditional deficiencies and virtues of the Austrian character and needed to provide a good model which discouraged the former and encouraged the latter. Wiesinger noted that Austrians were prone to nervousness and a lack of national consciousness, but they were also traditionally tactful, courteous, informal, and tasteful. More importantly, Austrians had historically been a moderate people, well suited to science, art, and understanding other *Völker*. According to Wiesinger, teachers had the duty to embody these positive Austrian qualities.⁴⁸⁴

Needless to say, all of these educational theorists reminded instructors that such

1937), 1-8.

⁴⁸³Richard Schmitz, “Die Bedeutung der Schule für den Neuaufbau Österreichs,” *Pädagogischer Führer* (1935): 11-14. See also Michael Klieba, “Vaterländische Erziehung,” *Die Österreichische Schule* 11 (1934): 163-166; Wilhelm Goigner, “Erziehender Unterricht,” *Die Österreichische Schule* 14 (1937): 327; Kaspar Enthofer, “Vaterländische Erziehung der Landjugend,” *Die Österreichische Schule* 14 (1937): 12; Hänsel, 16-17; Krasser, 24; Dra, 552-3; Dollfuß, “Worte des Kanzler Dollfuß,” 403;

⁴⁸⁴Grete Wiesinger, “Wie erziehen wir unser Schüler zu rechten Österreichern?” *Pädagogischer Führer*

teachings had to be in line with the state's official corporatist principles. Indeed, Anton Simonic argued that teachers who were liberals or relativists lacked the necessary qualities to teach in Austrian schools, no matter how knowledgeable they might be. Correct ideology and values were simply more important to the government than mere expertise.⁴⁸⁵

Corporatist pedagogical theorists all wanted to instill a sense of Austrian patriotism in students. This goal went beyond just providing a defense of corporatist values in the school system, and depended heavily upon presenting a view of Austria as a distinctive region of German culture which, while unique in its own right, also had historically provided, and indeed continued to provide, a valuable service to both the German *Volk* and to Western civilization as a whole. Corporatist educators recognized that history classes would provide the ideal setting for disseminating the *Ständestaat's* view of Austria as German, Christian, and Western in Austrian schools. Thus many such educators argued that teaching Austrian history was important not just to acquaint Austrian students with the past history of their state, but to inspire them toward a passionate love of their Fatherland, a quality which had been conspicuously absent in Austria since 1918.⁴⁸⁶

Not all educators agreed on exactly how to accomplish this aim. Hugo Klotzinger argued that teachers needed to emphasize the significance of the Babenburg and Habsburg houses and their importance for all of Germandom.⁴⁸⁷ Michael Klieba, on the other hand,

(1936): 126-130.

⁴⁸⁵ Anton Simonic, "Die österreichische Schule," *Die Österreichische Schule* 11 (1934): 161.

⁴⁸⁶ Ernst Butz, "Der neue Lehrplan für Geschichte an Hauptschulen," *Pädagogischer Führer* (1935): 1040-1041; "Geschichte und Heimat," *Die Österreichische Schule* 13 (1936): 371-373; Gustav Rotter, "Österreich. Grundlagen der vaterländischen Erziehung," *Pädagogischer Führer* 87 (1937): 34; Ferdinand Tremel, "Der Geschichtsunterricht an der österreichischen Arbeitermittelschule," *Pädagogischer Führer* 87 (1937): 646-9; Heinrich Kotz, "Der Geschichtsunterricht in der Landschule mit Abteilungsunterricht," *Die Österreichische Schule* 2 (1938):102.

⁴⁸⁷ Hugo Klotzinger, "Wege der Praxis im Geschichtsunterrichte der Hauptschule," *Die Österreichische*

asserted that history education should not in fact focus on just the history of the ruling houses, but rather needed to emphasize the past of the Austrian branch of the German *Volk*, which he argued represented the “real story” of Austria.⁴⁸⁸ Such minor differences of opinion were not unusual within the corporatist educational community, and Austrian educators differed slightly about which individuals and what events needed to be emphasized in Austrian history courses. Nevertheless, all of these educational theorists agreed that history education could and should be used to inflame a sense of patriotism in Austria’s young people and to spread the government’s ideas about Austria’s role in Europe.

Corporatist pedagogues also recognized that the new class in patriotic education provided them with a natural opportunity to help awaken a sense of patriotism in Austrian students. Wilhelm Illing was quick to sing the praises of this new program of patriotic instruction, and argued that it, along with the restored classes in religious education, represented the *Ständestaat*’s most important contribution to a better sort of education for Austria’ children. After all, in such a class students would trace the development of the Austrian “state idea” and Austria’s dedication to German culture and to the German *Volk* from antiquity to the present.⁴⁸⁹ Another educational theorist, Karl Enthofer, thought that the new course might be especially useful in recapturing the patriotic allegiance of rural youth. The Austrian peasantry, he insisted, had traditionally been the most loyal and most Austrian faction within the state, even when they lacked the education to express their ideals systematically. In order to rekindle the patriotic spirit of rural youth, Enthofer

Schule 11 (1934): 258.

⁴⁸⁸Klieba, 163-166.

⁴⁸⁹Wilhelm Illing, “Die Vaterlandskunde im neuen Lehrplan für die Mittelschulen,” *Pädagogischer Führer* (1935): 1016-1018.

recommended an emphasis upon religion, Austrian Germanness, and repeated reference to the heroic deeds of individuals from students' own specific *Heimat*, including those of soldiers during World War I. In this manner, he argued, the new regime could regain the loyalty of a solidly conservative and traditional group which had always provided the firmest foundation for the Austrian state.⁴⁹⁰

Yet not all corporatist theorists unambiguously praised the new class. In a review of the first year of the patriotic education course, Josef Neumair expressed his fears that the class could not succeed in its aims because Austrian teachers lacked experience in teaching such a subject. Moreover, the class spent too much time on narrow provincial matters and on Austria's place in the German nation. He wanted teachers to focus on Austria itself, in all its cultural uniqueness. He urged teachers to use the new textbooks which the state had prepared in order to fulfill the goals of the course more completely.⁴⁹¹ Such criticism did not deny the potential usefulness of the new class; it merely sought ways to optimize its effectiveness in patriotic indoctrination of students.

Teachers and educational theorists also wanted the explicit use of the corporate state's symbols as teaching aids in Austrian classrooms. One such symbol was Austria's red-white-red flag, which supposedly had its origins in the Babenberg dynasty's participation in the crusades to recapture the Christian holy sites from the Muslims. Pedagogical theorists argued that teachers could use this symbol to inspire students to live up to their proud historical heritage.⁴⁹² Austrian educators also noted that the "*Kruckenkreuz*

⁴⁹⁰Kaspar Enthofer, "Vaterländische Erziehung der Landjugend," *Die Österreichische Schule* 14 (1937): 8-12. See also Kotz, 101-9.

⁴⁹¹Josef Neumair, "Zur Vaterlandskunde," *Die Österreichische Schule* 14 (1937): 601-603.

⁴⁹²Alois L. Sedlacek, "Gedanken zur Vaterländischen Erziehung," *Pädagogischer Führer* (1936): 349;

(crutched cross),” the insignia of the Fatherland Front, was another symbol which should be used inspire patriotism in students. In a 1935 article, Karl Grauer provided a brief historical background for this symbol, arguing that it had deep roots in Christian history. He argued that the *Kruckenkreuz* had been used first by the Ostrogoth leader Theodoric as the emblem of a “Christian-supranational imperial idea,” an idea later enthusiastically adopted by the Habsburg Monarchy. The Western crusaders and Rudolph von Habsburg, the first Holy Roman Emperor from the Habsburg house, later had also used this symbol. For Grauer, the *Kruckenkreuz* ultimately stood for Western, Christian, and German knightly ideals, which he contrasted with the pre-Christian, “eastern” paganism embodied by the *Hackenkreuz* (swastika), the emblem of the Nazi movement.⁴⁹³ Maria Vettori discussed both of these symbols, as well as the double eagle, first used by Friedrich Barbarossa as the symbol of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation and later adopted by the Habsburgs and the *Ständestaat*. The one-headed eagle of the Austrian First Republic, which had grasped a sickle in a nod to Marxist symbolism, had represented a repudiation of Austria’s traditions, but she asserted that the *Kruckenkreuz*, the Red-White-Red banner, and the double eagle stood for Austria’s Christian, Austrian, and German heritage, respectively. The new government’s restoration of these emblems would serve as a reminder to young Austrians of the great historical legacy which they had inherited.⁴⁹⁴

Corporatist educators went beyond the discussion of classes and symbols to provide somewhat more tangible suggestions to inspire greater Austrian patriotism. For example, in

Maria Vettori, “Die Symbole des neuen Österreich,” *Die Österreichische Schule* 13 (1936): 31.

⁴⁹³Karl Johann Grauer, “Das Kruckenkreuz: seine Bedeutung in Geschichte und Gegenwart,” *Pädagogischer Führer* (1935): 828-830; Vettori, 29-30.

⁴⁹⁴Vettori, 29-31; Sepp Strasser, “Der Doppeladler in der Schule,” *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte*

May of 1935, Viennese educators sponsored a “Fatherland Week” in Viennese schools which featured the display of patriotic emblems, patriotic readings in German language classes, celebrations of Austria’s natural beauty, presentations on “Austria, the *lebenfähig* (viable) state,” and musical programs based upon the Austrian musical tradition.⁴⁹⁵ Such efforts, largely symbolic, reveal the pedagogical community’s commitment to encourage patriotic sentiment among young Austrian students.

The Austrian pedagogical community in the *Ständestaat* also discussed Austrian national identity. Obviously, these discussions were related to the regime’s efforts to use education to help forestall a Nazi *Anschluss*. Ultimately most of the educators who commented on such topics agreed with the government’s argument that Austria was a German state, but one with a distinctive heritage and mission. Such support is certainly unsurprising given the fact that the two main factions which argued against Austrian independence, the Austrian National Socialist and Social Democratic Parties, had been outlawed by the government in 1933 and 1934. Still, not all conservative educators agreed about the precise balance the schools should strike between Austrian Germanness and Austrian distinctiveness.

All of the Austrian educators who voiced their opinions publically in the state’s pedagogical journals agreed that Austrians were part of the wider body of the German *Volk*. Some commentators simply made note of Austria’s historical contributions to German culture and to the defense of the German people and territory. They believed that loyalty to

(February 15, 1935): 37-8.

⁴⁹⁵Karl Schimka, “Vaterländische Erziehung und Bildung in der Schule,” *Pädagogischer Führer* (1935): 603-613; Viktoria Fenzl, “Die ‘Vaterländische Woche’ in der Volksschule,” *Pädagogischer Führer* (1935): 527-529.

an independent Austrian Fatherland and loyalty to the German *Volk* were complementary positions, rather than contradictory ones, as critics of Austrian independence argued. For these educators, it was Austria's duty to remind the world that Nazi Germany did not have the right to stand as the sole representative of Germanness, and they argued that Austria was no less German for its stubborn opposition to Nazi expansionism.⁴⁹⁶ Apart from such apologetics, though, Austria was simply a German land. Hans Ernst Butz, for example, portrayed Austrians as Germans from the very founding of the *Ostmark* by the Germanic Franks, and argued that Austrians had defended German interests up until the German *Volk* had "lost its freedom" with the collapse of the old Monarchy in 1918.⁴⁹⁷ Dra made similar arguments, even if he also made a point of emphasizing Austria's Catholic character. For him, one of contemporary Austria's major tasks was to simply to return the German *Geist* and soul to the world in an era when National Socialism had corrupted the true meaning of such concepts.⁴⁹⁸ The pedagogical journal *Die Österreichische Schule* supported such positions by periodically printing patriotic poems which emphasized Austria's Germanness.⁴⁹⁹ These points of view, as we have seen, were thoroughly consistent with the *Ständestaat's* stance on Austria's essential German character.

Other corporatist pedagogues were not content merely to defend Austria's German character, however, even if they did agree that Austria was a German state. These educational theorists thought that the schools had to present students with a forceful

⁴⁹⁶Hänsel, 14; Krasser, 17; Schimka, 608; Matha Grohmann, "Die österreichische Lehrerin von heute als Erzieherin," *Pädagogischer Führer* (1936): 351; Sepp Burgstaller, "Die Lehrwanderung im Dienste der Erziehung zu Volk und Staat," *Die Österreichische Schule* 14 (1937): 265-269.

⁴⁹⁷Hans Ernst Butz, "Der Geschichtsunterricht an Hauptschulen und an Abschlussklassen und das Wehrwesen," *Pädagogischer Führer* 87 (1937): 710.

⁴⁹⁸Dra, 553.

⁴⁹⁹See for example Heinrich Waldeck, "Österreichisches Freiheitslied," *Die Österreichische Schule* 12

definition of Austria's unique qualities in order to convince them of the necessity of Austrian independence. Their definitions still acknowledged that Austrians were part of the German *Volk*, but they also took pains to describe the unique qualities which served to distinguish Austrians from other Germans. According to these theorists, the unique qualities embodied by the Austrian branch of the German *Volk* made the existence of a separate Austrian state a precious commodity well worth preserving and defending. These definitions of the Austrian character generally included values based upon Austria's past at the core of the Habsburgs' multinational state, such as toleration and understanding of other *Völker*, which were allegedly lacking in other, more northerly German lands.⁵⁰⁰

Ludwig Battista's work provides a good example of this sort of argument. In a 1937 article, Battista used Vienna as an emblem of the sort of Germanness which the regime wished to encourage, as he traced the capital's cultural achievements from its initial foundation to the present day. Battista argued that Vienna had always possessed a distinctively German character, despite the numerous immigrants of different nationalities who had made their home there more recently. Yet at the same time, as a result of its geographic location and the efforts of the Habsburg monarchs, Vienna had become a great cultural center for the whole world. For Battista, Viennese culture was cosmopolitan and adaptable, much more so than the culture of other German cities, and this unique culture served as a unifying force even for the city's non-German inhabitants such as Slavs or Jews. Thus, Battista's discussion of Vienna's German qualities constituted an implicit repudiation

(1935): 245.

⁵⁰⁰Klieba, 163-164; Eduard Buxbaum, "Vaterländische Gesinnungsbildung," *Die Österreichische Schule* 11 (1934): 382; Josef Neumair, "Deutsche Dichtung in Österreich," *Die Österreichische Schule* 13 (1936): 4-5.

of the Nazis' racial notion of German culture as something which could not, by definition, ever be truly adopted by non-Germans.⁵⁰¹

The corporatist civil servant and education theorist Oskar Benda provided perhaps the most detailed and sophisticated description of what was unique about the Austrian branch of the German *Volk*. To begin with, Benda avowed that Austrians were not in fact Germans in a biological or ethnic sense, but rather were the product of ethnic mixing between the *Völker* of the old Monarchy. Benda warned his readers in a 1935 article in the *Pädagogischer Führer* that they needed to avoid crudely materialistic or racial conceptions of nationhood such as those espoused by the Nazis. Indeed, Benda even eschewed such widely acknowledged markers of nationhood as state, history, and geography in favor of a theory of nationalism which was based upon *Geist* (spirit). Even then, he was careful to distance himself from what he regarded as caricatures of national spirit, such as the facile identification of Austria with baroque art, or the presentation of regional stereotypes as the definition of the Austrian *Geist*. For Benda, *Geist* was something ephemeral and difficult to express, a quality which resisted naive generalizations. He simply asserted that it existed, and that it served to distinguish the inhabitants of Austria from other Germans. In the end, Benda still accepted the premise that Austrians were Germans, but he argued the German nation was broad enough to encompass numerous, even contradictory ethical and spiritual points of view.⁵⁰²

Benda also dismantled the common stereotype that Austrians were superficial pleasure seekers, arguing that the legendary charm, chivalry and lust for life of the Austrian

⁵⁰¹Ludwig Battista, "Die Kultur Wiens und die Schule," *Pädagogischer Führer* 87 (1937): 609-17.

⁵⁰²Oskar Benda, "Was heist österreichischer Geist?" *Pädagogischer Führer* (1935): 22-35; "Erziehung und

masked the deeper struggles within his soul. According to Benda, the Austrian man ultimately possessed a unique stability and flexibility which was alien to the restless romanticism of the Prussian character. He argued (in manner which indeed seems perilously close to the sort of stereotyping he wished to avoid) that the Austrian *Geist* was best expressed by the Catholic humanism and universalistic love of the sort found in the examples of Francis of Assisi and Rilke, and proclaimed that such an ideal was more valuable to the world than the more individualistic humanist north German or Prussian *Geist* exemplified by George and Nietzsche. For Benda, this Austrian *Geist* represented the best tradition within Germandom, and, together with Austria's millennium old "state idea," had to be the foundation of Austrian education.⁵⁰³

One education theorist took great pains to define Austria not just as a German land, but also as one that was thoroughly European. In conjunction with the meeting of the fourth Pan-European Congress in Vienna in 1935, Alexander Novotny presented a brief description of Austria's vital links with the Christian, Western tradition. In doing so, he argued that the great statesmen of Austria Maximilian I, Maria Theresa, Metternich and Seipel – had always been dedicated Europeans as much as they had been Austrians and Germans. According to Novotny, this European orientation offered a potential solution to the issue of Austrian identity, which had always been culturally distinctive, but which unfortunately had also generally lacked a strong patriotic aspect. He argued that the European outlook of the great leaders in Austria's past, and of the Pan-European movement in the present, could provide an alternative to destabilizing conflicts between France and Germany and help

Bildung in österreichischem Geist," *Schriften des Pädagogischen Institutes der Stadt Wien* 9 (1936): 3-23.

⁵⁰³Benda, "Erziehung und Bildung in österreichischem Geist," 11-15.

contemporary Austria return to its traditional historical function.⁵⁰⁴

Indeed, corporatist educators vigorously discussed Austria's historical function or mission. The notion of an Austrian mission remained central to the corporatist government's rhetoric about Austrian nationhood and patriotism. Naturally then corporatist educators used it in their discussions about the Austrian schools. The precise definition of the Austrian mission differed from theorist to theorist, and these differences generally mirrored the variations in emphasis in educational discussions concerning Austrian Germanness. Some Austrian educators presented the Austrian mission as a German one, while others argued that such a mission took place in the broader context of Christendom and Western civilization. Once again, both of these versions of the Austrian mission were consistent with the *Ständestaat's* public stance on such matters, and both depended heavily upon references to Habsburg past.

Many Austrian educators defined Austria's historical mission as an effort to defend both the German *Volk* and the West as a whole. Such arguments inevitably referred to the Austrian territory's medieval status as the "*Ostmark*" (eastern march) of the Germanic Carolingian Empire which had stood against successive invasions by the Avars and Magyars. The Habsburg state's more recent successes in repelling the advances of the Ottoman Turks into Central Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries likewise featured prominently in such descriptions. Some educators argued that these actions had been undertaken to protect the territory and interests of the German *Volk*,⁵⁰⁵ while others

⁵⁰⁴Alexander Novotny, "Österreich unter Europäischen Gesichtswinkel in der Schule," *Pädagogischer Führer* (1935): 536-538.

⁵⁰⁵Schimka, 608-9; Buxbaum, 382; Hänsel, 13; Hans Gamper, "Staatspolitische Schulung an Beispielen," *Die Österreichische Schule* 14 (1937): 92-96.

portrayed them as part of a more broadly based attempt to protect all of the Christian West from Islam.⁵⁰⁶ One historian, Arnold Winkler, even asserted that Habsburg Austria had served to protect German Central Europe not just from Turkish invasions, but also from French military adventurism which likewise threatened the security of the German *Volk*.⁵⁰⁷ While such arguments emphasized different aspects of the Austrian mission, they agreed that Austria, first under the rule of the Babenbergs and then under the Habsburgs, had served a vital defensive function throughout its history.

Discussions of the Austrian mission among educators sometimes also cast the old Austrian Monarchy as a force for cultural development and cooperation between the *Völker* of the Danubian region. Once again, some of these formulations of the Austrian mission emphasized the German character of Austria's activities, while others argued for a broader European or Western context for such functions. Those theorists who emphasized the specifically German character of such a mission, argued that Austria's German culture had represented the medium through which the Monarchy had encouraged the economic and intellectual development of non-German *Völker*. These educators portrayed the old state as the historical "bridge" through which German culture had spread to southeastern Europe.⁵⁰⁸ Arnold Winkler, for example, argued that the late medieval Habsburg rulers had done a great service for the cause of Germandom by creating a multinational state in the Danubian region under German auspices at a time when both Czech and Magyar princes were trying to create a similar state under the domination of their own respective *Völker*. In doing so,

⁵⁰⁶Illing, 1017-1018; Kotz, 101-9.

⁵⁰⁷Arnold Winkler, *Österreichs Weg. Die ideellen und geschichtlichen Grundlagen des Staates* (Mainz: Verlags und Universitäts-Buchbehandlung, 1936), 68-75.

⁵⁰⁸Schimka, 608-9; Karl Reishofer, "Die kulturpolitische Bedeutung des österreichischen Buches," *Die*

Austria had not only secured the borders of the German lands of Europe, but had also created a benevolent state which spread the benefits of German culture throughout the region.⁵⁰⁹

Other pedagogical theorists were simply content to note that the old multinational Monarchy had represented a beneficial entity which had encouraged all of its subjects, whether German or non-German, to live together in a state of mutual cooperation and understanding.⁵¹⁰ Werner Tschulik presented precisely such a picture of the old Habsburg state, arguing that what he termed the “Austrian imperial idea” had been a force which bound the Monarchy’s various *Völker* together in peace. Tschulik argued that old Austria ultimately had created a Christian community in Central Europe, embodied in such organizations as the Holy Roman Empire and the nineteenth-century Holy Alliance, forerunners to the modern Pan-Europa movement and the League of Nations.⁵¹¹

All of these various presentations of the Austrian mission corresponded to the corporatist government’s official view that Austria was a German, Christian, and Western land which had historically served its own interests and those of the German *Volk*, and all Christendom simultaneously. Indeed, none of the differing conceptions of the Austrian mission really contradicted any of the others, and individual Austrian educators sometimes argued for some, or even all, of these views simultaneously. No matter their exact stance, however, all of these educational theorists agreed that such a mission had represented a vitally important part of Austrian history which continued to define what it meant to be

Österreichische Schule 12 (1935): 100-101.

⁵⁰⁹Winkler, 54-55, 64-68, 73-75.

⁵¹⁰Gamper, “Staatspolitische Schulung an Beispielen,” 92-96; Krasser, 6; Hassinger, 10-11.

⁵¹¹Werner Tschulik, “Grillparzer als Erzieher zu Oesterreich,” *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte*

Austrian. As such, the notion of an Austrian mission needed to be presented by teachers in Austrian history and patriotic education classes in order to help students to realize the proud lineage which they had inherited, and thus to adopt the appropriate patriotic outlook desired by the government.⁵¹²

The Austrian mission as a concept obviously depended to a large extent upon Austria's past as part of the Habsburg Monarchy, and as we have seen, the leaders of the *Ständestaat* portrayed their new political and social order as the direct heir of the old Habsburg state. Therefore, Austrian educators concerned themselves with exactly how to portray Austria's Habsburg past in the schools, and particularly in history courses. In terms of the Habsburg state itself, conservative educators eagerly agreed with the regime that the old Monarchy had been a benevolent state that had sought over its many centuries of existence to uphold the ideals of multinational cooperation, Christian community, and German culture. They asserted it had fulfilled this role in the face such noxious modern ideas as liberal individualism and relativism, Marxist materialism, and chauvinistic nationalism which had struck at the very heart of Western civilization. Corporatist educational theorists thus argued that historical instruction in Austrian classrooms ought to portray the Habsburg Monarchy, and through its lineage, the contemporary *Ständestaat*, as the representatives of the West's best ideals, and as institutions which always served the best interests of Europe's German population.⁵¹³

(January 15, 1935):3.

⁵¹²Buxbaum, 382; Fritz Herndl, "Erziehung im Dienste der Heimat," *Die Österreichische Schule* 11 (1934): 639-642.

⁵¹³Herndl, 639-642; Emma Formanek, "Die paneuropäische Bewegung," *Die Österreichische Schule* 12 (1935): 427-430; Elisabeth Bauman, "Der österreichische Gedanke im neuen Erbkundplan für Hauptschulen," *Die Österreichische Schule* 12 (1935): 676-677; Alexander Hampell, "Der neue Lehrplan für die Abschlussklassen," *Die Österreichische Schule* 12 (1935): 742-743; H. Wiesner, "Die

Indeed, many Austrian education theorists during this period took particular pains to argue against historical narratives which cast the House of Habsburg as a princely family which, concerned with its own power above all, had undermined the movement toward German unity. Such an interpretation of Austrian history formed an important component of the Nazi historical world view, and constituted an argument against the very legitimacy of Austrian independence. Thus, Austrian educators felt compelled to challenge this interpretation, and to rebut it with a vision of Austrians generally, and of the Habsburgs more specifically, as the most dedicated servants of the German *Volk*. Such arguments invariably took aim at Prussia and the House of Hohenzollern, the frequent historical antagonists of the Habsburgs and the customary heroes of the “Germanist” view of history.

Hans Gamper in particular tried to rebutt what he viewed as mistaken or even deliberately misleading conceptions of Austrian history which cast the House of Habsburg as a family concerned purely with dynastic power that had transformed Germans within their territory into a persecuted minority. In reality, Gamper argued, the Habsburgs had done far more for the German *Volk* than any other German princely family. He was particularly critical of Prussian monarchs such as Frederick II who had indeed put the interests of their own power ahead of those of Germans as a whole, even setting the unfortunate precedent for the carving up of German territories in Austria in 1918 with his seizure of Silesia during the eighteenth century. For Gamper, the old Habsburg state had represented a unique cultural entity which had always served the cause of the West, defending it from the gravest of

geschichtlichen Grundlagen der österreichischen Verfassung, ein Beitrag zur gedeihlichen Gestaltung des Geschichtsunterrichtes an Hauptschulen,” *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (November, 1936): 298-304; Josef Hendrych, “Der religiöse Gedanke im Geschichtsunterricht,” *Die Österreichische Schule* 13 (1936): 17-29.

threats. He even cast Austria after 1918 as having fulfilled the same purpose, as it stood against the Bolshevik revolutions which had threatened to engulf Central Europe.⁵¹⁴

Arnold Winkler advanced a similar anti-Hohenzollern polemic, arguing that the eighteenth-century Habsburg monarchs Maria Theresa and Joseph II had worked to secure the interests of the German *Volk* against the assaults of Louis XIV's France, but also against the efforts of Prussia to upset the balance of power in the German lands of Europe. Winkler argued that Frederick II of Prussia had hated Austria, and that his efforts had ultimately served to severely damage Germany's ability to defend itself against outside threats. Subsequent Habsburg emperors such as Franz I (whom Winkler argued was too often unfairly demonized in historical literature as a reactionary tyrant) and Franz Joseph had attempted to carry on in defense of the German lands even in the face of continued French predation and Prussian selfishness. Thanks to the persistent efforts of the Habsburgs, Winkler argued, the catastrophic fruits of Frederick II's campaign against Austria were not fully apparent until the twentieth century, when the German lands finally proved unable to stand against French assaults during the First World War.⁵¹⁵

Ludwig Hänsel, however, advocated a reconciliation among Germans by avowing that while Austrians could be proud of their history as a German people, they still should not accuse even enemies of the Austrian state such as Frederick II of actually betraying the German *Volk*. Hänsel thus attempted to emphasize the brotherly bond between all Germans and repudiated any attempts to transform the historical conflicts between Austria and Prussia

⁵¹⁴Hans Gamper, "Österreichs deutsche und europäische Aufgabe," *Die Österreichische Schule* 14 (1937): 624-629.

⁵¹⁵Winkler, 103-147.

into a polemic about which state was most authentically German.⁵¹⁶ Hänsel was definitely in the minority, though, and many corporatist theorists used historical arguments against Prussia in order to bolster patriotic education in contemporary Austria in the face of the increasingly aggressive nationalistic advances of the man whom they considered to be Frederick II's anti-Austrian heir, Adolf Hitler.⁵¹⁷

Austrian educational theorists generally agreed that one particularly effective means of using the Habsburg past to inspire patriotism in Austrian students was for teachers to invoke the example of great Austrians from that past. As Oskar Benda argued, "just as we do not reduce the Prussian *Geist* to its *Piefke*⁵¹⁸ caricature, but rather to Frederick II, Kleist, Menzel, Moltke, and Fontane, so may one only boil down the mass of the Austrian *Geist* to its great representatives: a Maximilian, a Maria Theresa, a Mozart, a Grillparzer, a Schubert, a Bruckner and similar figures."⁵¹⁹ Ernst Butz, agreed, noting that a focus upon the great personalities from Austria's past, particularly in the context of Austrian cultural achievement, was a promising means of bolstering patriotic sentiment, and corresponded well to the regime's authoritarian *Führerprinzip* (leader principle).⁵²⁰ Thus, Austrian

⁵¹⁶Hänsel, 14.

⁵¹⁷See also for example, Herndl, 639-642; Benda, "Deutschnational Bildung. 1," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (February 15, 1935): 25-7; "Deutschnational Bildung. 2," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (March 15, 1935): 51-3; "Deutschnational Bildung. 3," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (April 5, 1935): 74-77.

⁵¹⁸"Lout," or "damn German," an Austrian pejorative term for Prussians.

⁵¹⁹Benda, "Erziehung und Bildung in österreichischem Geist," 10.

⁵²⁰Ernst Butz, "Der neue Lehrplan für Geschichte an Hauptschulen," *Pädagogischer Führer* (1935): 1040-1042. Neither Butz nor any of the *Ständestaat*'s other educational theorists mentioned Joseph II's efforts to forcibly make German the main language of administration throughout the Monarchy, which made the eighteenth-century emperor a popular figure with German nationalists. Given the *Ständestaat*'s dedicated opposition to the political agenda of those nationalists, the corporatist pedagogical community's collective lack of interest in that aspect of Joseph's reign is unsurprising. See Nancy M. Wingfield, "Statues of Emperor Joseph II as Sites of German Identity," in *Staging the Past: The Politics of Commemoration in Habsburg Central Europe, 1848 to the Present*, eds. Maria Bucur and Nancy M. Wingfield (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2001), 178_201.

education theorists recommended students study biographies of notable Austrians, especially figures from the old dynasty and their servants such as Rudolph I, Maximilian I, Karl V, Eugene of Savoy, Maria Theresa, Joseph II, the Archduke Karl, Andreas Hofer, Klemens von Metternich, Joseph Radetzky, Felix von Schwarzenberg, and Franz Joseph, as well as notable cultural figures such as Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, Bruckner, Grillparzer, and Raimund.⁵²¹ Some of these recommendations even took on a slightly more populist cast, recommending that teachers use the examples of the nameless patriotic soldiers who had fought for Austria against the Turkish and Magyar invasions during the early modern period or more recently in the trenches of World War I.⁵²² Of course, the corporatist educational system did not merely restrict itself to drawing upon the legacy of famous Austrians, but was also willing to celebrate figures from the German *Reich* such as Johann Sebastian Bach or Friedrich Schilling as part of Austria's broader German heritage.⁵²³

Thus, the leadership of Austria's pedagogical community in the *Ständestaat* served as a vigorous advocate for the corporatist government's educational reforms. They argued for an intensively ideological educational system which would rectify the liberal failings of

⁵²¹Kotz, 107; Günther Buxbaum, "Österreichs Geschichte in der Erzählung," *Die Österreichische Schule* 13 (1936): 652-663; Josef Tille, "Prinz Eugen, zum 200. Todestag des österreichischen Feldherrn und Staatsmannes," *Die Österreichische Schule* 13 (1936): 240-251; Hugo Hofmannsthal, "Maria Theresa," *Die Österreichische Schule* 13 (1936): 159; Maria Lang-Reitstatter, "Bedeutende Österreicher," *Pädagogischer Führer* (1935): 216-221; "Das neue Geschichtsbuch für Hauptschulen," *Pädagogischer Führer* (1936): 639-43; Robert Konopassegg, "Heldengedenkrede," *Die Österreichische Schule* 14 (1937): 541-543; Werner Tschulik, "Unsere österreichischen Klassiker und die neue österreichische Schule," *Die Österreichische Schule* 12 (1935): 410-419; Werner Tschulik, "Grillparzer als Erzieher zu Oesterreich," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (January 15, 1935): 1-4; Oskar Wolfschneider, "Vater Radetzky," *Die Österreichische Schule* 2 (1938): 165-7.

⁵²²Enthofer, 10; Robert Konopassegg, "Vaterländische Geschichte und wir," *Die Österreichische Schule* 12 (1935): 34-42.

⁵²³Mena Blaschitz argued that Austrians had appreciated Bach's cultural significance earlier and more completely than other Germans, in essence claiming him as an Austrian cultural figure. Mena Blaschitz, "Johann Sebastian Bach zum Gedächtnis," *Pädagogischer Führer* (1935): 252-255; "Schulfeieren anlässlich des 175. Geburtstages Friedrich Schillers," *Verordnungsblatt* (October 17, 1934): 195.

Austrian education under the First Republic, and which would impart the principles of corporatism, Catholicism, and Austrian patriotism to Austrian children. They likewise supported the government's goal of using historical and patriotic instruction in order to present students with a vision of an Austria which was culturally German, religiously Christian, and traditionally Western, and which continued to have a historically defined mission on the European continent. Educational portrayals of Austria's Habsburg past represented an important means to achieve these goals, and the corporatist educational community argued forcefully in favor of historical interpretations of that past which cast the old Monarchy in a positive light as a benevolent, multinational, socially harmonious empire which had defended the best ideals of both Germany and the West. Ultimately, however, the public writings of the corporatist educational community can give only a suggestion of the material which was actually being taught in Austrian classroom. For a more complete view of what students were really learning about Austria and its past, we must now examine the series of history textbooks and readers produced under the auspices of the *Ständestaat*.

iii. History Textbooks and the Habsburg Past in the *Ständestaat*

The corporatist government in Austria had very little time to supervise the writing of new texts which supported its distinctively ideological vision of education, especially considering the fact that it only implemented new official curricula for Austrian schools in 1935, a mere three years before the *Anschluss* with Nazi Germany. Nevertheless, a number of textbooks and readers did appear in these years which reflected the government's goals. As we have seen, both the corporatist regime and the leaders of the state-sponsored

pedagogical community considered historical instruction to be an especially important component of the *Ständestaat*'s educational efforts, as they sought to use the legacy of the Habsburg Monarchy to inspire a generation of young Austrians toward proud support for an independent, corporatist Austrian state. The new series of history textbooks and readers show that the regime was at least partially successful in its efforts to present Austrian students with material which accurately reflected its ideas about national identity and the Habsburg past. In most cases, these new educational materials conformed with the corporatist government's stance on these matters, and offered school children a vision of an authoritarian and independent Austrian state grounded in the old Monarchy's Catholic, German, and Western traditions.

The authors of the state's new history textbooks and readers essentially agreed with the view of the corporatist leadership that the old Monarchy, which had been a force for peace, Christianity, and German culture throughout history, had been undermined and finally destroyed by the various ideologies unleashed in the aftermath of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. Some of these textbooks also attacked the efforts of Hohenzollern Prussia beginning in the eighteenth century to usurp the leadership of Europe's Germans from Austria, although such arguments appeared less frequently. The ultimate goal of these textbook narratives was to present a view of Austrian history which portrayed the *Ständestaat* as the final victory over the Enlightenment ideals and materialistic Marxism embodied by the First Republic. Some of these narratives also cast both Habsburg Austria and the modern *Ständestaat* as the firm opponents of the dangerous, Prussian-flavored German nationalism, expressed in its ultimate form in the Nazi German state. All

of these educational materials tended to use specific Austrian monarchs and political figures as positive examples which would hopefully inspire Austrian school children toward a firmer, more dedicated sense of Austrian patriotism.

The new history textbooks tended to locate Austria's historical roots in the German settlement of the Alpine and Danubian territories during the early medieval period. A number of these texts and readers argued that the defensive function performed by German settlers ultimately set the precedent for all of Austria's subsequent defense of Germany and the Christian West from both the Ottoman Turks and other threats in Europe such as Prussia or revolutionary France.⁵²⁴ Yet while these initial settlers, as well as the Babenberg dynasty which soon came to rule the Austrian territory, provided the opening chapters of the Austrian narrative, the Habsburg dynasty, which inherited the Austrian lands during the thirteenth century, was the main focus of these textbooks' historical narrative.

Thus, Rudolph I von Habsburg, the first Holy Roman Emperor from the House of Austria, provided a particularly attractive figure upon which the textbooks could focus. Rudolph, with his chivalrous values and Catholic religiosity, represented the sort of character that the textbooks typically associated with the Habsburg monarchs, and many authors praised his efforts to bring peace, stability, and German cultural hegemony to Central Europe. For example, Hans Leo Schleicher, Leopold Lang, Karl Janhuber and Josef Prüger, the authors of the 1936 history text for *Hauptschulen, Zeiten und Menschen* (Eras and Men), emphasized Rudolph's religious piety and knightly values, and lauded the first

⁵²⁴Wilhelm Schier, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte für österreichische Hauptschulen*, vol. 1, *Einführung: Unser Vaterland im Wandel der Zeiten* (Vienna and Leipzig: Österreichischer Bundesverlag für Unterricht, Wissenschaft und Kunst, 1935), 34-37; Hans Leo Schleicher, Leopold Lang, Karl Janhuber and Josef Prüger, *Zeiten und Menschen. Handbuch für Hauptschulen*, vol. 1, 4th ed. (Vienna: Österreichischer

Habsburg ruler of Austria for defeating the Slavic King Ottokar of Bohemia and for rescuing Germany from a dark era of leaderlessness and disorder. They also explicitly contrasted Rudolph's patriarchal medieval Monarchy and the harmonious *Ständestaat* of the Middle Ages with the despotic absolutism of Louis XIV of France and Frederick II of Prussia.⁵²⁵ Alexander Novotny, the author of a selection on Rudolph in the reader *Helden der Ostmark* (Heroes of the Eastern March), similarly presented Rudolph as a true man of the people, who was simple, dutiful, and practical, and who had shared the same unshakable piety that all of his Habsburg successors had possessed.⁵²⁶

Indeed, many textbooks presented Rudolph as the founder of the unique, multinational Danubian state which would endure for so many centuries. The textbook author Franz Eibelhuber portrayed the early Habsburg period as a struggle for benevolent German dominance in this region of many *Völker*. Eibelhuber argued that the centuries after Rudolph featured notable attempts by Habsburg rulers to follow his example and to solidify their control over the lands of alpine Germany, Bohemia, and Hungary, which culminated in the achievement of what he called the "Austrian state idea." Eibelhuber noted that there had been a real threat that such a Danubian *Völkerstaat* might occur under Czech or Magyar auspices, rather than German ones. The fact that the Habsburg succeeded ensured that Germandom would be protected and that German culture would nurture prosperity and development for all the *Völker* of the region.⁵²⁷ Subsequent Habsburg monarchs, such as

Bundesverlag für Unterricht, Wissenschaft und Kunst, 1936), 53-54; Hermann Zerzawy, "Zeite Türkenbelagerung Wiens," in *Helden der Ostmark* (Vienna: Verlag Zoller, 1937), 65; Winkler, 68-75.

⁵²⁵Schleicher, Lang, Janhuber and Prüger, vol. 1, 72-74, vol. 4, 3-5, 170.

⁵²⁶Alexander Novoty, "Rudolph von Habsburg," in *Helden der Ostmark*, 28.

⁵²⁷Franz Eibelhuber, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte für die Oberstufe der Mittelschulen*, vol. 2, *Geschichte des Mittelalter und der Neuzeit vom Anfang des fränkischen Merowingerreiches bis zum Beginn der französischen Revolution* (Innsbruck, Vienna and Munich: Tyrolia-Verlag, 1936), 77-79; Novotny,

Rudolph IV “the founder” and Maximilian I, would continue to build upon the paternalistic multinational state model which Rudolph I had established, solidifying Austria’s regional power even as they introduced innovations which ultimately brought the state into the modern age of centralized government.⁵²⁸

Many textbook authors also emphasized the role of Eugene of Savoy. This general, who had broken Ottoman power in the Balkans and opposed the expansionism of Louis XIV, invariably appeared in these accounts as a true Austrian patriot and champion, despite his foreign birth and non-German ethnicity. The author of a selection on Eugene in *Helden der Ostmark*, Ignaz Dengel, characterized Eugene as an example of the sort of German qualities that the modern *Ständestaat* sought to embody, despite the fact that the military leader had not actually been German by birth. Dengel argued that Eugene had been deeply suspicious of Prussia, and dedicated to serving the Habsburg emperor and Christianity. Dengel avowed that, “Above all this foreigner who became the best of Austrians showed a German mind and German nature, not in a strong nationalist sense, but rather as a German and at the same time a European by conviction, who saw Germanness as epitomized by the Christian-Western imperial idea and the Habsburg imperial line.”⁵²⁹ Such portrayals of Eugene were fairly typical, and Eugene was clearly a felicitous example of precisely the sort of cultural or even spiritual Germanness that the corporatist leaders wished to contrast with the racist German nationalism of the National Socialists.⁵³⁰

The era of Maria Theresa likewise provided considerable material for historical

“Rudolph von Habsburg,” *Helden der Ostmark*, 26-29; Winkler, 54-55, 64-68, 73-75.

⁵²⁸Schleicher, Lang, Janhuber and Prüger, vol. 1, 78; Eibelhuber, 81-83.

⁵²⁹Ignaz Dengel, “Prinz Eugen, der edle Ritter,” in *Helden der Ostmark*, 76.

⁵³⁰See also Schleicher, Lang, Janhuber and Prüger, vol. 1, 87; Eibelhuber, 144.

accounts which sought to juxtapose the qualities of Austrian Germanness with the proto-Nazi militarism of Frederick II of Prussia. Most textbook authors praised Maria Theresa as a skillful and pious empress, and as a “mother” to her people who displayed heroic courage and strength in difficult times. They also frequently contrasted her virtues with the absolutism of Frederick II, who had allegedly sought only to expand his own personal power at the expense of the independence of the German *Stände*.⁵³¹ Eibelhuber criticized Frederick II less than other authors, but he similarly lauded Maria Theresa as a courageous, dedicated, clearheaded, and motherly monarch who had defended Austrian interests and rekindled Austrian patriotism at a time when it was on the wane. She also, he noted, continued the slow dismantling of the medieval corporatist order which had been underway since the sixteenth century, a process which he argued had produced both positive and negative results for Austria.⁵³² No matter whether or not individual authors presented students with specific condemnations of the policies of Frederick II, their accounts always portrayed the era of Maria Theresa as a period when Austria flourished in the face of severe difficulties. Indeed the praise for Maria Theresa in textbook accounts was also frequently extended to the Empress’ clever chief diplomat, Prince Wenzel Anton Kaunitz, for his successes in preserving Austria’s prestige and influence, and to her son, Joseph II, who invariably appeared as a true *Volkskaiser* (people’s Emperor) and a well-intentioned, if largely unsuccessful, reformer.⁵³³

The wars against revolutionary and Napoleonic France in the late eighteenth and

⁵³¹Schier, vol. 1, 73-74; Schleicher, Lang, Janhuber and Prüger, vol. 1, 88-91; Heinrich Kretschmayr, “Maria Theresa,” in *Helden der Ostmark*, 88-96.

⁵³²Eibelhuber, 149-157.

⁵³³Alexander Novotny “Fürst Kaunitz,” in *Helden der Ostmark*, 97-100; Schleicher, Lang, Janhuber and

early nineteenth centuries provided a similar opportunity for textbook authors to cast Austria in a heroic light, albeit against French antagonists rather than Prussian ones. The figures from this era most frequently singled out for their contributions to Austrian history were Andreas Hofer and General Joseph Radetzky. Hofer, the Tyrolean leader of an unsuccessful uprising against Napoleon, appeared in these narratives as a man who, along with his fellow Austrian patriots, Josef Speckbacher and Joachim Haspinger, had always remained loyal to the “beloved” Habsburg Emperor Franz I. Various authors argued that, even after his execution, Hofer’s Catholic piety, undying loyalty, and unshakable will to fight against Napoleon’s tyranny had been an example which had helped inspire both Austrians and Germans to defeat the French Emperor, and which might also inspire Austrian patriotism in the contemporary *Ständestaat*.⁵³⁴ Various authors lavished similar praise upon “Father Radetzky” as a talented general and a paternal figure to his troops during the struggle against Napoleon and in Austria’s efforts to suppress the liberal Revolution of 1848. These authors described both Radetzky’s military successes and his goodwill and understanding for common soldiers, and noted that the general had been celebrated by another great Austrian, Johann Strauß the elder, in the famous musical composition “The Radetzky March.”⁵³⁵ Wilhelm Schier even went so far in his history textbook as to remind Austrian students of a rather more unlikely Austrian heroine of the era of the French Revolution: Marie Antoinette, the French queen and daughter of Maria Theresa, whom he presented as yet another example

Prüger, vol. 1, 94-96; Eibelhuber, 157-159.

⁵³⁴Schier, vol. 1, 79-81; Franz Kolb, “Tirols Heldenkampf im Jahre 1809,” in *Helden der Ostmark*, 133-139. German nationalists also venerated Hofer, but portrayed him as German patriot in the fight against the French, rather than a loyal Austrian. See chapters 1, 2, and 5.

⁵³⁵Schier, vol. 1, 81-84; Schleicher, Lang, Janhuber and Prüger, vol. 1, 104. The “Radetzky March” is almost a second national anthem in Austria, and provided the title for Joseph Roth’s 1932 novel and elegy for the Habsburg Monarchy. Joseph Roth, *The Radetzky March*, trans. Joachim Neugroschel (Woodstock,

of Austria's sacrifices in order to defeat the French threat.⁵³⁶

The *Ständestaat's* textbook authors, however, could not agree on how to portray Count Klemens von Metternich, Austria's foreign minister between 1815 and 1848. As we have seen, the corporatist state counted Metternich among the great heroes of the Habsburg past. Some textbook authors did not present the Austrian diplomat in such a positive light. For example, despite characterizing the *Vormärz* era as a time of relative peace and cultural development, Schleicher, Lang, Janhuber and Prüger condemned Metternich himself as the "dictator of Germany" who had favored disunity and princely rule over the legitimate demands for a single German state and constitutional rule that eventually drove him from power in 1848.⁵³⁷ Alexander Novotny, on the other hand, took a more sympathetic view of the Austrian foreign minister, and praised him for his keen diplomatic skills and his efforts to build a stable and peaceful European order. Novotny did admit that Metternich had been unable to respond to the changes which were sweeping Europe, arguing that the diplomat had been unwilling to take the legitimate demands of the German *Volk* in Austria seriously thanks to his paternalistic and archaic outlook. Above all, however, Novotny argued that Metternich had been far more just in concluding a peace with vanquished France in 1815 than the vengeful French had been when the shoe was on the other foot in 1918.⁵³⁸ For his part, Schier simply presented Metternich as the opponent of the democratic and constitutional demands of the revolutionary "storm" of 1848 without providing much

NY: The Overlook Press, 1995).

⁵³⁶Schier, vol. 1, 74-76.

⁵³⁷Schleicher, Lang, Janhuber and Prüger, vol. 4, 78.

⁵³⁸Novotny, "Fürst Metternich," in *Helden der Ostmark*, 151-156.

interpretive commentary on his personality or historical significance.⁵³⁹

The movement toward German political unity which began with the Revolution of 1848 and which culminated in the creation of a German state under Prussian leadership without Austria in 1871 was no less controversial a topic for the *Ständestaat*'s history textbooks. Both Schier's and Schleicher, Lang, Janhuber and Prüger's textbooks basically agreed that the Frankfurt Parliament of 1848 had witnessed a conflict between a *großdeutsch* faction, which desired a state comprising all Germans led by the oldest, greatest German power, Austria, and a *kleindeutsch* group which wanted a limited German state under Prussian rule. Schier, however, continued in his narrative to denounce Austria's subsequent forcible exclusion from Germany in 1866 by its enemy, Prussia, despite the laudable valor of Austria's soldiers in the conflict between the two states. Indeed, Schier noted that Bismarck had been a dedicated opponent of Austria since 1848, and, while the author did acknowledge the Prussian chancellor's diplomatic skill, he argued that Bismarck's creation of a Prussian-dominated small German state had actually harmed the position of the Germans living in Austria, who subsequently became minorities in a multinational state when Austria's formal links with the rest of Germany were severed.⁵⁴⁰ Schleicher, Lang, Janhuber and Prüger, on the other hand, simply recounted the events between 1848 and 1871 dispassionately, and did not provide any denunciations of Prussian conduct during that period.⁵⁴¹

There was no such discord in the textbooks' accounts of Franz Joseph, the

⁵³⁹Schier, vol. 1, 84.

⁵⁴⁰Schier, vol. 4, 89-95.

⁵⁴¹Schleicher, Lang, Janhuber and Prüger, vol. 4, 79-80, 88-91. Indeed their textbook provided a more favorable view of Prussia and Germany than any of the others produced in the *Ständestaat*, and apart from

penultimate Habsburg monarch of Austria, and emperor-king of the old multinational state for the nearly seven decades between 1848 and 1916. The authors unanimously portrayed Franz Joseph as a dedicated sovereign who had wished only the best for all of his subjects, no matter what their nationality, and indeed as a man who could truly understand his people given his mastery of so many different tongues. Although Franz Joseph's personal life was deeply troubled, most authors emphasized his positive contributions to Austria, arguing that his era had been one of peace and economic development. Schier in particular asserted that the emperor had given Austria a constitution and representative government, and had encouraged the growth of Vienna's splendor as a city of monuments to Austria's past. Franz Joseph's reign saw the rise of numerous nationalist movements in Austria-Hungary, and Schier characterized their aspirations as "harmful and dangerous" for the old state. Schier also noted in passing that the Christian Social mayor of Vienna during the Habsburg's state's twilight years, Karl Lueger, had been Franz Joseph's best collaborator.⁵⁴² Alfred von Baldass even praised Franz Joseph's assassinated wife, Elisabeth, proclaiming in rather purple prose that the fallen Empress had been an "angel" for all the nationalities of the old Monarchy.⁵⁴³

If Franz Joseph's reign had represented an era of peace and prosperity for old Austria, the World War which ultimately destroyed the Monarchy was an unmitigated disaster. Schier argued that the war had been a great catastrophe for Austria, which had ultimately faced too many enemies to emerge victorious. These enemies were able to tempt

its praise of the corporatist regime, it contained material which would have fit comfortably alongside texts produced during the First Republic.

⁵⁴²Schier, vol. 1, 84-87; Schleicher, Lang, Janhuber and Prüger, vol. 1, 105-108; Richard von Schaukal, "Kaiser Franz Joseph I," in *Helden der Ostmark*, 198-204; Heinrich Kretschmayr, "Kaiser Franz Josef,"

the nationalities with promises of independence in order to dismantle the Monarchy, despite the efforts of the “*Friedenskaiser*” (peace-emperor) Karl to save the old state. Schier noted that when all was said and done, Austria in 1918 had been territorially smaller than even the lands of the medieval Habsburg Emperor Rudolph IV. Still, Schier did allow that the heroic deeds of Austrian soldiers during World War I could inspire Austrians in the present.⁵⁴⁴

Schleicher, Lang, Janhuber and Prüger’s description of the war contained no animosity toward the Monarchy’s non-German nationalities, but it too sympathized with Karl, and lamented his failure to save the old multinational state. Their textbook tried to personalize the war for Austrian children. Their account of the conflict contained an illustration of an Austrian soldier embracing his tearful wife and young child even as his unit rode off for the front on horseback, and it presented several anecdotes concerning life both in the trenches and on the home front, emphasizing, in order to inspire Austrian patriotism in students, the noble sacrifices which Austria had made during the conflict.⁵⁴⁵

Schier made no mention of any Austrian desire for *Anschluß* in 1918 after the collapse of the old Monarchy. He did note however, that an Austrian union with Germany was a prominent goal of the Nazis, whom he in turn cast as the enemies of Austria.⁵⁴⁶

Schleicher, Lang, Janhuber and Prüger, on the other hand, highlighted the prohibition of *Anschluß* by the Entente powers, and in fact vehemently denounced the “enslavement” of the German *Volk* and the “theft” of German territories, a deed which the authors blamed upon a vengeful France. Indeed, as if the point had not been made with sufficient

Österreich, Volk und Staat (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1936), 89-93.

⁵⁴³ Alfred von Baldass, “Kaiserin Elisabeth,” in *Helden der Ostmark*, 205-210.

⁵⁴⁴ Schier, vol. 1, 87-91.

⁵⁴⁵ Schleicher, Lang, Janhuber and Prüger, vol. 1, 108-112, 113, vol. 4, 147.

obviousness, the authors underscored their complaints by including an illustration of a copy of the Treaty of St. Germain resting underneath a fearsome armored fist. They argued that the First Republic had failed to establish order or build Austrian prosperity, leaving the conservative chancellor during the 1920s, Ignaz Seipel, and ultimately Dollfuß, to replace this failed liberal government with one better able to help Austrians be free, independent, and happy once more.⁵⁴⁷

Some of the regime's new textbooks and readers also made direct references to an "Austrian mission" of the sort so often discussed by corporatist leaders and educational theorists. Schier's textbook in particular contained an explicit description of "Austria's political and cultural mission," which he argued remained the same for the *Ständestaat* as it had been for the Habsburg Monarchy. Schier described this mission as one of spreading German culture to the *Völker* of Central Europe in order to foster peace, cooperation, and development. Schier ultimately noted that both Austria and especially Vienna had been outposts of German culture for centuries, serving the cause of both Germany and Europe.⁵⁴⁸ In the reader *Helden der Ostmark*, Hermann Zerzawy likewise discussed the often described Austrian mission to transmit German culture from West to East and to defend Europe against Eastern threats.⁵⁴⁹ Even those educational materials which did not make direct references to such a mission still often reminded students that Austria's great history was a living legacy for the Austrian *Ständestaat* which obliged students to serve their Fatherland

⁵⁴⁶Schier, vol. 4, 164, 167-169.

⁵⁴⁷Schleicher, Lang, Janhuber and Prüger, vol. 1, 115-116, vol. 4, 148-155.

⁵⁴⁸Schier, vol. 4, 172-173, 203. See also Josef Nadler, "Österreichs kulturelle Sendung," *Österreich, Volk und Staat* (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1936), 49-54.

⁵⁴⁹Zerzawy, 65.

dutifully.⁵⁵⁰

The government's new educational texts contained material which supported the regime's ideals on a symbolic level as well. For example, Schier's history textbook contained a notable discussion of Austria's red-white-red flag's purported origins in Babenberg participation in the Christian crusades against Islam. Indeed, Schier went into gory detail in recounting the legend of how the flag supposedly represented the blood of slain Muslims splattered upon the stark white tunic of Duke Leopold of Babenberg, and he also used the episode to present that Austrian prince as a dedicated defender of Christendom who had put the military success of the West ahead of his own pride.⁵⁵¹ Hermann von Riling argued in *Helden der Ostmark* that this story of the banner's origins was apocryphal, but then avowed that such a fact did not diminish the red-white-red flag's power as a symbol which had been used by the Babenbergs, the Habsburgs, and the First Republic.⁵⁵² Both of these works also provided a similar treatment of the Austrian national anthem, dramatically portraying the composition of the old *Kaiserhymne* by the great Austrian composer Joseph Haydn in response to Napoleon's first real military defeat at the hands of Austria at Aspern in 1809.⁵⁵³ The reader for younger Austrian children, *Mein Vaterland, Mein Österreich*, also contained material on the symbols which the corporatist state had inherited from the Habsburg Monarchy.⁵⁵⁴

Finally, it worth briefly describing the contents of various anthologies of German language readers which presented students with numerous and varied references to the

⁵⁵⁰Schleicher, Lang, Janhuber and Prüger, vol. 1, 118.

⁵⁵¹Schier, vol. 1, 34-37.

⁵⁵²Hermann von Riling, "Österreichs Farben Rot-Weiss-Rot" in *Helden der Ostmark*, 21-24.

⁵⁵³ Schier, vol. 1, 77; Felix Günther, "Das Kaiserleid," in *Helden der Ostmark*, 120-122.

Habsburg past, even if they did not contain continuous historical narratives in the same manner as history textbooks. For example, Robert Lohan, Walther Maria Neuwirth, and Viktor Trautzi's *Das Herz Europas* included patriotic songs and poems, and accounts of notable Austrian figures from the past such as Eugene of Savoy, Radetzky, Archduke Karl, Hofer, and, of course, Dollfuß. It also contained selections about Austria's national symbols, its contributions to European music, and its German and European missions. The authors of the selections indeed were frequently Austrians of note themselves, such as Grillparzer, Nikolaus Lenau, Anastasius Grün, Hermann Bahr, Hugo von Hofsmannsthal, Wilhelm Miklas, Seipel and, again, Dollfuß. As an introduction, the reader also contained a lengthy selection by the conservative pedagogical theorist, Oskar Benda, which provided a characteristically detailed and theoretical discussion of Austrian culture and identity within the context of the German nation, presumably for the benefit of teachers.⁵⁵⁵

Franz Berger's series of readers for students in *Mittelschulen*, *Sonniges Jugendland*, featured a similar selection of texts, including patriotic works, descriptions of Austria's natural beauty, and passages on dynastic figures such as Leopold VI of Babenberg, Friedrich Barbarossa (a non-Austrian German monarch who fought in the crusades), Rudolph I, Eugene of Savoy, Maria Theresa, Radetzky, Hofer, and Franz Joseph. The fourth volume of this reader even contained a number of selections which discussed the broad variety of characteristics and features of the German nation, in which Austria claimed a proud place as the historic defender of the German *Volk*.⁵⁵⁶

⁵⁵⁴*Mein Vaterland, Mein Österreich* (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1935), 4-15.

⁵⁵⁵Robert Lohan, Walther Maria Neuwirth and Viktor Trautzi, eds., *Das Herz Europas. Ein österreichisches Vortragsbuch* (Vienna: Saturn-Verlag, 1935).

⁵⁵⁶Franz Berger, ed., *Sonniges Jugendland, Lesebuch für österreichische Mittelschulen*, vols. 1-4 (Vienna:

One particularly interesting work, which was designed to inspire patriotic fervor in the very youngest of students attending Austrian *Volksschulen* was the reader *Mein Vaterland, Mein Österreich*. Like the other readers, this work contained a number of passages which presented brief anecdotes about various notable figures from Austria's past such as Maria Theresa, Mozart, Dollfuß, and soldiers on the front during World War I. This reader was unique, however, in its presentation of a sort of "patriotic alphabet" for Austrian school children, with different inspirational selections and illustrations for each letter in the German language. This section of the work propounded upon such patriotic topics as "Adler" (eagle), "Christentum" (Christianity), "Deutschtum" (Germanness), "Eugene of Savoy," "Farben und Fahnen" (colors and flags), "Helden der Heimat" (heroes of the homeland), "Kruckenkreuz," "Musik aus Österreich" (music from Austria), "Österreich" (Austria), "Soldaten" (soldiers), "Stephansturm" (the spire of St. Stephan's Cathedral), "Treue" (loyalty), "Volk und Vaterland" (people and Fatherland), "Wien" (Vienna), and "Zukunft" (the future). Clearly then, the regime wanted to instill even Austria's very youngest students with the precepts of corporatism and Austrian patriotism.

Thus, even though the *Ständestaat* did not have very much time in order to produce educational materials which reflected its ideology, it was able to oversee the creation of at least some textbooks and readers. These texts presented Austrian students with descriptions of Austria and its history which accorded with the vision of the regime. History textbooks presented the Habsburgs in an overwhelmingly positive light, and portrayed the old Monarchy as the embodiment of the Christian, German, and Western ideals which the

Österreichischer Bundesverlag für Unterricht, Wissenschaft und Kunst, 1936), *passim*, and especially vol. 4, 110-117, 281-283.

corporatist government claimed to represent. Readers contained selections which emphasized great political and cultural figures from Austria's past, enjoined students to be patriotic, reminded them of their homeland's natural beauties and German character, and above all urged them to be loyal to the new regime. Some of these materials did from time to time display an affinity for German nationalism which clearly went a bit beyond the stated positions of the government, but for the most part they buttressed the *Ständestaat's* basic ideology and called on students to be proud of Austria's Habsburg past and its contemporary independent statehood.

Ultimately, however, the *Ständestaat* failed in its efforts to preserve Austria's independence. The attempts of the leaders of corporatist Austria to base a new authoritarian political and social order upon the legacy of the old Habsburg state ultimately proved to be no match for the increasingly overwhelming diplomatic predominance in Central Europe achieved by Nazi Germany in the late 1930s. By the time of Schuschnigg's last, desperate attempts to bolster Austrian independence through a proposed referendum on the issue of the *Anschluss* in the spring of 1938, it is doubtful whether Austria, isolated from any allies in Italy or the West it might have at one time depended upon for help, could have preserved its statehood even if it wanted to. All subsequent indications, however, indicate that the Austrian people did not generally oppose the *Anschluss* which so many of them had desired since 1918. The Nazi invasion of Austria in March of 1938 was greeted with celebration rather than resistance, a fact for which even the oppressive tactics of the new Nazi authorities cannot completely account.

It seems, then, that the *Ständestaat's* attempts to promote a vigorous upsurge of

Austrian patriotism through the use public propaganda, ideological education, and the suppression of dissenting opinions must be counted as a failure. It is certainly questionable whether a mere five years could have possibly been enough time to achieve a transformation of public opinion of the sort hoped for by the *Ständestaat*'s leaders. It is also worth pondering, however, whether the regime's own ideology may have played a role in the state's failure to preserve itself. Certainly, many contemporary observers on the left (and, indeed a few on the right) were highly critical of the corporatist government's suppression of the workers' movement at a time when the regime may well have needed every available ally it could find in order to stand against the advances of National Socialism. Likewise, some commentators at the time argued that the new government was unwise to dismantle democracy in Austria, using dictatorial measures to oppose another dictatorship and giving Austrian democrats no obvious reason to prefer corporatist tyranny over the Nazi variety. Other observers made the argument that the *Ständestaat*'s stance on Austrian national identity was simply too ambiguous to be effective in combating German nationalism. For all of its leaders' talk concerning Austrian patriotism and distinctiveness, the *Ständestaat* always proclaimed that Austrians were part of the German nation, and that Austria was a German state. Such statements certainly had the potential to feed precisely the German nationalist sentiment that the regime feared, especially in an era such as the interwar period in Europe when the idea of the nation state was so prevalent and widely accepted.

The *Ständestaat*'s vision of an Austrian state that was simultaneously religiously Catholic, culturally German, traditionally Western, and yet still uniquely Austrian, was undoubtedly a realistic reflection of how many Austrians had thought of themselves

throughout their state's history. Such ideas were thoroughly rooted in precisely the Habsburg past which the Austrian corporatist state claimed to embody. In an era of waxing German nationalism and expanding National Socialist power, however, the Habsburg past was apparently not a firm enough foundation upon which to build and maintain an independent Austrian state. We can never know for certain precisely what the state of public opinion concerning Austrian national identity was between 1933 and 1938, given the repressive nature of the corporatist regime. Nor can we really discern exactly how effective the government's attempts to influence such ideas were. All we can say for certain is that the efforts of the *Ständestaat* to preserve Austria's statehood failed, and were not visibly mourned by the Austrian people until a new Austrian Republic mounted a similar effort to inspire Austrian patriotism in 1945, after the seven years of war, genocide, and racist dictatorship which were the ultimate fruits of the 1938 *Anschluss* with Nazi Germany.

Part III. Repudiating the Past: The “Alpine and Danubian *Reichsgaue*,” 1938-1945

Chapter 5. Politics, Education, and the Habsburg Past in Nazi Austria

On March 12, 1938, the *Anschluß* with Germany which had been so long awaited by so many Austrians since 1918 finally occurred. The Schuschnigg government had been under increased pressure from Nazi Germany for almost two years to curb its restrictions upon the Austrian Nazi party and to align its foreign policy with that of Germany. In a last, desperate effort to maintain Austrian independence, Schuschnigg had planned a plebiscite for March 13 on the question of whether or not Austria should join the German *Reich*. The announcement of the plebiscite backfired, however, and served as the impetus for a new, more aggressive stance on the part of Nazi Germany. In the face of the threat of a German invasion, the Austrian President, Wilhelm Miklas, called for Schuschnigg’s resignation on March 11.⁵⁵⁷ The new government, led by the prominent Austrian Nazi Arthur Seyss-Inquart, requested the assistance of the German military in order to “keep order” in Austria, and the next day, as the Nazi *Wehrmacht* flooded into Austria, it issued a declaration which announced that Austria was a part of the greater German *Reich*.⁵⁵⁸

⁵⁵⁷Christine Klusacek, Herbert Steiner and Kurt Stimmer, eds. *Dokumentation zur Österreichischen Zeitgeschichte 1938-1945* (Vienna and Munich: Verlag Jugend und Volk, 1971), 20-21.

⁵⁵⁸“Eine Klarstellung,” *Wiener-Zeitung* (Vienna), 13 March 1938, 1. Despite the press reports at the time, Seyss-Inquart himself did not draft the invitation to the German government, but rather reluctantly

authorized the statement, written by Wilhelm Keppler, the liaison between the Third Reich and the Austrian Nazi Party. The Austrian Party was confident in its ability to complete its seizure of power in Austria without any military assistance from Germany, and was taken by surprise by the swiftness of both the German decision to intervene and the subsequent *Anschluß*. See below, and Bruce F. Pauley, *Hitler and the Forgotten Nazis: A History of Austrian National Socialism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1981), 210-215.

The Nazis held their own plebiscite on the *Anschluss* on April 10, which saw the Austrian voters approve the abnegation of their independence by the suspiciously overwhelming margin of 99.73 percent.⁵⁵⁹

Indeed, historians have good reason to doubt that an anti-democratic group such as the Nazis held a free plebiscite which accurately recorded the real level of support for the *Anschluss* on the part of the Austrian population. Yet even if the Nazi authorities manipulated the vote, there is little doubt that there was widespread support in Austria for a union with Nazi Germany.⁵⁶⁰ As we have seen, Austria's major political parties had all endorsed *Anschluss* until 1933, and the efforts of the corporatist regime to instil an intense sense of Austrian patriotism within the population seemed to have met with little success. The Austrian population received Hitler and the German military with enthusiasm and the *Wehrmacht* met no significant resistance on its march from the Austro-German border to Vienna. The crowds of admirers which greeted the German *Führer* in the land of his birth were quite large, and it is doubtful that such a reception could have been completely manufactured through Nazi coercion.⁵⁶¹ One historian of the Nazi seizure of power in Austria, John Bernbaum, even notes that marriage rates tripled in Austria between 1937 and 1939, while the number of births in December of 1938 (that is, of children conceived during the immediate aftermath of the Nazi takeover), increased sixty-six percent from the previous

⁵⁵⁹*Neue Freie Presse* (Vienna), April 11, 1938, 1-2; Barbara Jelavich, *Modern Austria, Empire and Republic 1815-1986* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 223-224.

⁵⁶⁰*Ibid.*, 224.

⁵⁶¹Hans Haas, "Der 'Anschluss'" in *NS-Herrschaft in Österreich: Ein Handbuch*, ed. Emmerich Tálos, Ernst Hanisch, Wolfgang Neugebauer, and Reinhard Sieder (Vienna: österreichische Bundesverlag, 2001), 44-48. Evan Burr Bukey argues that Austrians supported the Nazi regime from the initial *Anschluss* in March of 1938 up until the end of World War II. Evan Burr Bukey, *Hitler's Austria: Popular Sentiment in the Nazi Era, 1938-1945* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 288-93.

December.⁵⁶² Such statistics reveal the optimism of Austrians about their future after the successful completion of a union between Austria and Germany.

Yet at the same time, such initial ebullience should not obscure the fact that support for the *Anschluss* in a general sense did not mean total support for all aspects of Nazi ideology. The Nazi takeover in 1938 seems to have enjoyed the support that it did because most Austrians considered themselves Germans and had long thought that their state should be a part of a greater Germany. The economic hardships and political instability which Austria had experienced since 1918 had done little to convince the general population that a small Austrian state was viable on its own, and they looked to a union with the resurgent, economically vigorous Nazi German state to put an end to those problems. Certainly many Austrians did not object to the Nazis' virulent racial anti-Semitism, anti-Bolshevism, German chauvinism, and aggressive ambitions to dismantle the post-World War I international order. Given the repressive, authoritarian nature of the Nazi regime in Austria, however, there are very few sources which indicate exactly how most of the Austrian population felt about specific aspects of Nazi ideology, or how those opinions changed in the face of the Third Reich's efforts to indoctrinate the Austrian population. The most we can say with confidence is that most Austrians supported the *Anschluss* with enthusiasm and did not offer any active opposition to Nazi rule.⁵⁶³ Acquiescence is something different than ideological conviction, and even if most Austrians remained fairly satisfied with Austria's membership in the Third Reich between 1938 and 1945, that fact does not mean that the

⁵⁶²John Bernbaum, "Nazi Control in Austria: The Creation of the Ostmark, 1938-1940" (Ph.D. diss., University of Maryland, 1972), 149.

⁵⁶³Bernbaum, 151-154; Bukey, 288-293; Haas, 44-48. There was a small but significant Austrian resistance movement, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

Nazi state was the *Großdeutschland* that most Austrians had longed to join since 1918.

The *Anschluß* of 1938 represented the triumph of a specific kind of Germanist identity in Austria. The diversity of Germanist sentiment in Austria after 1918 was subordinated in 1938 to the Nazi *Weltanschauung*, which comprised a specific cluster of ideas and beliefs, not all of which were necessarily widely supported in Austria. One need only compare the support for democratic rule, racial equality, and internationalist pacifism of the “Germanist” Austrian Social Democrats, or the staunch Catholicism of the Christian Social Party during the 1920s with the Nazis’ racism, militarism, anti-Catholicism and anti-republicanism in order to illustrate the conflict between Nazi “Germanism” and other German nationalist presentations of Austrian identity. Nevertheless, after 1938, Germanist conceptions of Austrian national identity in general came to be closely associated with the Nazi regime, and such national ideals ultimately were de-legitimized by their perceived linkage with the crimes of the Nazis once the second World War ended with the defeat of Nazi Germany.

During Nazi rule in Austria, the government mounted an attempt to erase all traces of Austrian independence by gradually dissolving all of the old Austrian state’s administrative divisions and functions, and by completely integrating the Austrian territory into the structure of the greater German *Reich*. As with previous regimes in Austria, the Third Reich used educational policy as a tool, indoctrinating Austrian students with Nazi ideology and a strong sense of German identity. Similarly, the Habsburg past represented as much of a focal point for the Nazis as it had for previous Austrian governments, as the Nazi government tried to replace any sense of Austrian particularism which might have lingered

among its new subjects with an absolute devotion to the Nazi German state. National Socialist ideologues, from Adolf Hitler down to individual educators in the Third Reich's Austrian territory, presented the Habsburgs as a foreign, decadent, anti-German dynasty which had done all it could to hinder German unity, and which had been a pestilential presence in Germany's history. Such anti-Habsburg rhetoric, almost universal in the curricula, pedagogical writings, and textbooks disseminated and used in the former Austria during the Nazi period, constituted a concerted effort on the part of the Hitler regime to impose its own unique vision of German identity upon its newest citizens.

Conversely, the small but still significant resistance movement in the Austrian territory, formed in opposition to the new regime, frequently presented its own arguments in a way that emphasized notions of Austrian patriotism. Such efforts by the various factions within the Austrian resistance to portray the Nazis as foreign or "Prussian" invaders in Austria sometimes used the Habsburg dynasty and its historical relationship to Austria as a rallying point for resistance against the Nazis. Furthermore, some of the plans for reestablishing Austrian independence proposed by the resistance groups and discussed by the Allies during the final stages of World War II often aimed not just to recreate the small Austrian state of the interwar period, but rather to recast Austria as the center of a larger Danubian or German Catholic federation which bore more than a passing resemblance to the old Habsburg state. Thus, the debate on Austrian national identity and the meaning of the Habsburg past continued even under the authoritarian rule of a Nazi state which had officially eradicated Austria's very existence. On the other hand, the new context of this debate—the genocidal war between Nazi Germany and the rest of Europe—permanently

transformed the discussion, as the crimes of the regime de-legitimized Austrian Germanism by association, even as they gave a new urgency and potency to the Austrianist conceptions of national identity which had been mobilized against the Nazi government by its opponents.

i. National Socialist Ideology and the Nazi Seizure of Power in Austria

The ideals and doctrines of National Socialism which came to dominate Germany in 1933 and Austria in 1938 were in an indirect manner themselves partially of Austrian origin. The leader and guiding ideological figure of Nazism was Adolf Hitler, who was born in Braunau in Habsburg Austria on April 20, 1889. Hitler grew up and was educated in the Habsburg state, and was particularly influenced by the anti-Semitic political ideals of two of the most prominent Austrian politicians of that era, Georg von Schönerer and Karl Lueger. It was in old Austria that he came to believe in the distinctively odious mixture of chauvinistic German nationalism and virulent racism which would ultimately provide the basis of the Nazi ideology that later engulfed his homeland. Hitler refined his political ideas further after he fought in the German army during World War I, and witnessed the defeat and political collapse of the German *Reich* which he had so admired. After the war he joined and in short order became the leader of a small group of right-wing radicals in Munich called the National Socialist German Workers Party (*Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*- NSDAP). After a number of fairly feeble attempts to seize political power in Germany during the 1920s, the economic depression which convulsed all of Europe provided the circumstances which allowed Hitler's Nazi movement to win increasing successes at the ballot box, culminating with his appointment as chancellor of

Germany on January 30, 1933. From that position of power, Hitler quickly moved to dismantle the democratic apparatus of the Weimar Republic, and to replace it with a one-party, nationalistic, anti-Semitic dictatorship which five years later absorbed the land of his birth.⁵⁶⁴

The National Socialist ideology which Hitler decisively helped shape was most clearly defined by what it opposed: it was anti-Semitic, anti-liberal, anti-democratic, anti-Marxist, anti-egalitarian and anti-conservative. In the place of all of the ideas or groups which Hitler opposed, he supported a staunchly chauvinistic German nationalism which valued racial purity, an idealized conception of dictatorial leadership, military strength, youthful energy, struggle as the crucible which produced true character, and the willingness of the individual German to sacrifice himself for the interests of the community of the *Volk* (*Volksgemeinschaft*). Such ideas were hardly new. Hitler derived them from the German Romantic movement of the early nineteenth century, the modern racial anti-Semitism of William Houston Chamberlain and Karl Eugen Dühring, and the aesthetic and philosophic works of Richard Wagner and Friedrich Nietzsche.⁵⁶⁵ Hitler's National Socialism was unique, however, in the manner in which it synthesized these various influences into a successful political platform which ultimately shaped not only the destiny of Germany, but

⁵⁶⁴For Hitler's own autobiographical account of his youth and early career, see Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1962), 1-372. The most comprehensive scholarly biography of Hitler is Ian Kershaw, *Hitler, 1889_1936: Hubris* (London: Penguin, 1999); *Hitler, 1936_45: Nemesis* (London: Penguin, 2000). See also Alan Bullock, *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964); Brigitte Hamann, *Hitler's Vienna: A Dictator's Apprenticeship* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

⁵⁶⁵On the intellectual background of Nazi ideology see George Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology: The Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1964); Fritz Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair: A Study in the Rise of Germanic Ideology* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1963); Steven Ascheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany, 1890-1990* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 164-309; Karl Dietrich Bracher, *The German Dictatorship: The Origins, Structure and Effects of National Socialism* (New York: Praeger, 1970).

that of all of Europe.

Once in power, Hitler's regime moved quickly in the direction of the goals which Hitler had set forth with remarkable frankness in his 1924 autobiography, *Mein Kampf*. Germany withdrew from the League of Nations, began a program of military rearmament in violation of the Treaty of Versailles, outlawed Marxist and liberal political parties, and, perhaps most significantly, used a series of laws to deprive German Jews of their citizenship and participation in German public life.⁵⁶⁶ Historians have long discussed the manner in which the Nazi dictatorship in Germany functioned. One view, proposed by such scholars as Alan Bullock and William Sheridan Allen, presented Nazi Germany as a firm dictatorship, which insinuated itself into every facet of German life.⁵⁶⁷ Other historians such as Hans Mommsen and Martin Broszat argued that Nazi Germany represented a fairly disorganized authoritarian regime which was characterized by numerous competing administrative structures, and which achieved its high degree of social control through local improvisation as much as through premeditated policies created by the Nazi leadership.⁵⁶⁸

If the Nazi regime in Germany was less well-planned and tightly controlled than historians of National Socialism first supposed, then the development of the Austrian Nazi Party was even more disorganized. Despite Hitler's own Austrian origins and the presence

⁵⁶⁶V. R. Berghahn, *Modern Germany: Society, Economy and Politics in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 129-149. For a detailed discussion on Nazi policy toward German Jews during the 1930s see Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, vol.1, *The Years of Persecution, 1933-1939* (New York: HarperCollins, 1998), 9-175.

⁵⁶⁷Alan Bullock, *Hitler and Stalin. Parallel Lives* (London: HarperCollins, 1991) 974-9; William Sheridan Allen, *The Nazi Seizure of Power: The Experience of a Single German Town, 1922-1945* 2d Ed. (New York: Franklin Watts, 1984), 293-306; Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* 2d. Ed. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973), 389-459.

⁵⁶⁸Hans Mommsen, *From Weimar to Auschwitz*, trans. Philip O'Connor (Princeton, N.J : Princeton University Press, 1991); Martin Broszat, *The Hitler State: the Foundation and Development of the Internal Structure of the Third Reich* (London: Longman, 1981).

in Austria of a relatively more potent tradition of political anti-Semitism than in Germany, the Nazi movement in Austria was always politically weaker than its German counterpart.⁵⁶⁹ The Austrian Nazi organization had actually been founded well before the German party, yet it lacked the sort of dynamic leadership that Hitler gave to the German Party after 1919. In 1926, Austrian Nazis acknowledged as much by voting unanimously to subordinate themselves to Hitler's leadership as a wing of the German Nazi organization.⁵⁷⁰ Despite their affiliation with Hitler's party, however, the Austrian branch never commanded much electoral support within Austria, even during the late 1920s, when the German party was increasingly successful. Only after the Nazis seized power in Germany in 1933 did their Austrian wing become a major force in Austrian politics. The Austrian Nazis subsequently made impressive gains at the ballot box, especially in the countryside, where they began to win control of many local governments.⁵⁷¹

Just as the Austrian party began to win real support in Austria, however, the conservative authoritarian regime of Engelbert Dollfuß outlawed it on June 19, 1933. Hitler, who had guided the Austrian party from afar for almost a decade, decided to maintain amicable relations with the Austrian state for the time being, and so ordered the Austrian Nazis to obey Dollfuß' edict and to cease terrorist activities against the Austrian government immediately. This decision provoked a power struggle within the Austrian Nazi leadership,

⁵⁶⁹On the strong tradition of political anti-Semitism in Austria, see Bruce Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution: A History of Austrian Anti-Semitism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 1-11; Peter Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988).

⁵⁷⁰The Austrian Party was founded in 1904 as the German Workers Party, and became the German National Socialist Party in 1918. Andrew G. Whiteside, *Austrian National Socialism Before 1918* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1962), 37-40, 101-122; Pauley, *Hitler and the Forgotten Nazis*, 16-35.

⁵⁷¹Bernbaum, 22-25; Timothy Kirk, "Fascism and Austrofascism," in *The Dollfuss/Schuschnigg Era in Austria: A Reassessment*, eds. Günter Bischof, Anton Pelinka and Alexander Lassner (New Brunswick and

as the old fighters of the Austrian movement refused to go along with Hitler's decision and end their activism against the Dollfuß regime. Hitler's appointee as leader of the Austrian party, Theo Habicht, wanted to stage a Nazi coup in Austria as a means of regaining the support of the lower level Austrian party leaders, and Hitler, with some reluctance, agreed. The attempted coup took place on July 25, 1934 and ultimately failed, although the Austrian Nazis did succeed in fatally wounding Dollfuß.⁵⁷²

In order to mollify Schuschnigg, the new Austrian leader, Hitler subsequently denied any responsibility for the uprising, and officially separated the Austrian Nazi Party from the German Party. Extreme factionalism resulted from this decision, as a movement of Austrian "old fighters" under the leadership of Josef Leopold sought to take a more activist stance *vis-à-vis* the Austrian government, while other figures who still maintained close but covert ties to Berlin such as Arthur Seyss-Inquart, Friedrich Rainer, Hubert Klausner and Odilo Globocnik held to the more passive approach favored by Hitler and the German party. Ultimately the latter faction became the dominant one after Hitler succeeded in pressuring Schuschnigg into an agreement with Germany in 1936.⁵⁷³

Yet even the Austrian Nazi leaders who had been most loyal to the German Party leadership were somewhat surprised by events leading up to the *Anschluss*. The Austrian Nazis initially imagined that they themselves would seize power in an independent Austrian state, and afterward move gradually toward a union with Germany which would at least partially preserve both Austrian autonomy and their own political prominence in the region. Instead, the German military invaded on March 12, 1938, without any prompting from the

London: Transaction Publishers, 2003), 10-31.

⁵⁷²*Ibid.*, 28-43; Jelavich, 196-200, 207-208.

Austrian Party and pursued *Anschluss* with surprising swiftness.⁵⁷⁴ Indeed, the rapid union between the two states yielded a hastily constructed power structure in Austria, featuring a number of overlapping and competing nodes of authority. The Third Reich certainly did not neglect the Austrian Nazis, who subsequently held many positions of leadership at the *Gau* level.⁵⁷⁵ At the same time, however, Germans from outside Austria filled the most decisive positions of leadership within the Austrian territories of the Third Reich between 1938 and 1945, and the old Austrian state apparatus was gradually dismantled in favor of an administrative chain of command which linked important policy decisions to Berlin.⁵⁷⁶

The integration of Austria into the Third Reich was largely an improvised process, however, and there seems to have been little in the way of advance planning either by the German government or the Austrian Nazi leadership.⁵⁷⁷ Josef Bürckel, the German former administrator of the Saarland, oversaw the overall administration of the Austrian territories within the Third Reich for more than a year. At the same time, however, the old Austrian governmental structure, presided over by Seyss-Inquart, remained intact, and competed with Bürckel for influence in the former Austria. The old Austrian ministries of Interior and Cultural Affairs (which included responsibility for education), Economics and Labor, Finance and Agriculture all continued to exist within the Third Reich until June 1, 1940.

⁵⁷³Bernbaum, 46-55.

⁵⁷⁴Pauley, *Hitler and the Forgotten Nazis*, 210-215; Maurice Williams, "Captain Josef Leopold: Austro-Nazi and Austro-Nationalist?" in *Conquering the Past: Austrian Nazism Yesterday and Today*, ed. F. Parkinson (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989), 57-71.

⁵⁷⁵Pauley, *Hitler and the Forgotten Nazis*, 220.

⁵⁷⁶Bernbaum, 51-52, 106-108, 246; Jelavich, 224-228; Klusacek, Steiner and Stimmer, 54.

⁵⁷⁷Bernbaum, 66-67; Pauley, *Hitler and the Forgotten Nazis*, 220-222. This preference undoubtedly reflected Hitler's own frustration with and even contempt for the Austrian branch of the Party, which he never really trusted to follow his orders before 1938. The German dictator was of course willing to allow Austrian Nazis such as Odilo Globocnik, Alfred Frauenfeld, and Franz Schattenfroh to serve in positions of relative importance outside of Austria, but for the upper echelons of power within the *Ostmark*, he relied most heavily upon *Reichsdeutsche*.

The territories of Austria themselves were transformed into seven “*Reichsgaue*” which basically corresponded to the old Austrian provinces, with the exception of Burgenland and Tyrol, which were both incorporated into other *Gaue*.⁵⁷⁸

In an especially important symbolic move, the Nazi authorities completely abandoned the name “*Österreich*” (Austria). Immediately after the *Anschluß*, the Austrian territories were re-christened the “*Ostmark*,” (Eastern March), a label which harked back to Austria’s supposed past as one of the border territories of the medieval German Empire, and which lacked the connotations of independence and distinctiveness inherent in the region’s more common name. Similarly, the new authorities transformed the former provinces of Upper and Lower Austria into the Upper and Lower Danube *Reichsgaue*.⁵⁷⁹

⁵⁷⁸Bernbaum, 129-130; Emmerich Tálos, “Von der Liquidierung der Eigenstaatlichkeit zur Etablierung der Reichsgaue der ‘Ostmark:’ Zum Umbau der politisch-administrativen Struktur,” in *NS-Herrschaft in Österreich: Ein Handbuch*, ed. Emmerich Tálos, Ernst Hanisch, Wolfgang Neugebauer and Reinhard Sieder (Vienna: österreichische Bundesverlag, 2001), 55-72.

⁵⁷⁹*Völkischer Beobachter* (Vienna), August 3, 1938, 1.

In 1942, the Third Reich even discarded the term *Ostmark* in favor of the unwieldy label “the Alpine and Danubian *Reichsgaue*.”⁵⁸⁰ On a symbolic level it was clear that the Nazi government wanted not only to assimilate Austria in the Third Reich, but also to erase any terms which might perpetuate feelings of Austrian particularism. Hitler and his movement had regarded the independence of the Austrian lands as a historical aberration, and they saw Austria’s very name as a symbol of the division of the German *Volk* by its enemies. In their attempts to erase that name from the map of Europe, the Nazis sought to ensure that the *Volksgemeinschaft* would never again be divided.

The Nazi regime also moved to curtail the power and influence of the Catholic Church in Austria, just as it had earlier in the rest of the Third Reich. The new authorities did not generally attack the Church or its leaders, but they did eliminate the privileged position in Austrian public life which the Church had enjoyed during the *Ständestaat*, cutting off state financial support to the Church and removing it from its previous role in education and marriage law. For their part, upper level Church leaders accepted their diminution of power and did not call for Catholics to resist the new government. Some clergymen lower down in the Church hierarchy did openly oppose National Socialism, however, and were persecuted by the Nazi government. Indeed, in 1938 Austrian Catholics even conducted the largest public demonstration ever held in the Third Reich to protest the Nazi regime’s treatment of the Church. For the most part, however, Nazi and Church leaders in Austria reached an uneasy truce in which the Nazis allowed the Church to continue its religious leadership of Austrian society in exchange for its acceptance and

⁵⁸⁰Tálos, “Von der Liquidierung,” 64-69; Bernbaum, 212.

support of Nazi rule.⁵⁸¹

The Nazi government of the Austrian territories was basically a German creation, and the dictatorial nature of the Nazi system left little room for most Austrians to voice their opinions or to influence policy decisions. Now it was the Nazi German leadership that made policy for Austria, including the determination of what was an acceptable view of Austria's Habsburg past, and what version of that past should be taught in Austrian schools.⁵⁸²

ii. National Socialism and the Habsburg Past

On March 15, 1938, just after German troops had seized control of Austria, Hitler gave a speech to a massive Austrian crowd from the balcony of the former Habsburg palace on the *Heldenplatz* in Vienna. In this speech, Hitler described the differences between the recently toppled Schuschnigg regime's vision of Austria and his own conception of his native land's place within the Nazi *Reich*. He proclaimed:

During recent years the heads of the regime which has now been overthrown have often spoken of the special "mission" which in their eyes this country had to fulfil. A leader of the legitimists sketched this mission in detail in a memorandum. According to this memorandum the task of this so-called independence of the country of Austria— an independence based upon the Peace Treaties and dependent upon the favor of foreign countries— was to hinder the formation of a really great German *Reich* and thus to bar the way leading to the future of the German people. Now I proclaim for this land its new mission, which corresponds with the command which in times past summoned hither the German settlers from all the *Gaue* of the Old *Reich*. The oldest East Mark of the German people shall henceforth be the youngest bulwark of the German nation and thus of the German *Reich*.⁵⁸³

⁵⁸¹Bukey, *Hitler's Austria*, 130-134; Ernst Hanisch, "Austrian Catholicism: Between Accommodation and Resistance," in *Conquering the Past*, 165-176.

⁵⁸²Herbert Dachs, "Schule und Jugenderziehung in der 'Ostmark,'" in *NS-Herrschaft in Österreich 1938-1945*, ed. Emmerich Tálos, Ernst Hanisch, and Wolfgang Neugebauer (Vienna: Verlag für Gesellschaftskritik, 1998), 224; *Völkischer Beobachter* (Vienna), May 1, 1940, 1-2.

⁵⁸³Adolf Hitler, *The Speeches of Adolf Hitler, April 1922-August 1939*, vol. 2, trans. Norman H. Bayne (London: Oxford University Press, 1942), 1430, 1425-1426.

Hitler's statements, which received with thunderous applause from the assembled Viennese crowd, neatly encapsulated his views about his Austrian homeland. According to Hitler, Austria had long been used as an implement by anti-German forces; now it was returning home to Germany and to its "true mission" as the eastern outpost of the German Empire.

Hitler had long yearned for *Anschluß* between Austria and Germany. He had mentioned his desire to join his Austrian homeland with Germany on the very first page of *Mein Kampf*, a work in which he also sketched out the views about Austria's Habsburg past which would become dogma in Nazi Germany.⁵⁸⁴ In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler portrayed the House of Habsburg as a decadent, anti-German force which had sought to maintain its power at the expense of the German *Volk* who were its most important and creative subjects. He argued that the Habsburgs had historically worked against the interests of German unity, and that Germans in Austria owed their loyalty to their *Volk*, rather than to the corrupt dynasty:

Here it suffices to state that even in my earliest youth I came to the basic insight which never left me, but only became more profound: *that Germanism could be safeguarded only by the destruction of Austria, and furthermore, that national sentiment is in no way identical with dynastic patriotism.* . . . Even then I had drawn the consequences from this realization: ardent love for my German-Austrian homeland, deep hatred for the Austrian state.⁵⁸⁵

For Hitler, there was no such thing as an Austrian history separate from the history of Germany as a whole. German history in Austria had been the story of how a dynastic house kept one segment of the *Volk* subservient and separate from the rest of the German nation.⁵⁸⁶

Early in his life, Hitler repudiated the Habsburg state which he saw as infected by

⁵⁸⁴Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 1.

⁵⁸⁵*Ibid.*, 16.

⁵⁸⁶*Ibid.*, 13.

Slavs, Magyars, and Jews, pledging his loyalty instead to Wilhelmine Germany. In *Mein Kampf* he described how as a young boy he had raptly read an account of the Franco-German War of 1870-71 in one of the volumes in his father's library. When he asked his father why Austria had not participated in the conflict, he reportedly received the response that, "not every German was fortunate enough to belong to Bismarck's *Reich*."⁵⁸⁷ This emphasis upon Prussia rather than Habsburg Austria as the true representative of the German *Volk* characterized Hitler's view of German history. Indeed, most of the heroes which Hitler singled out for praise in history such as Martin Luther, Frederick the Great, Bismarck, and Richard Wagner, were northern Germans rather than Austrians.⁵⁸⁸ The only Habsburg figure whom he portrayed positively was Joseph II, and even then, Hitler qualified his praise with a comment that it had been fortunate that the Austrian monarch's "Germanization" policies had not worked because they would have diluted the racial purity

⁵⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 6-7; It is worth noting that at least one Nazi textbook recounted this episode from *Mein Kampf*. Christoph Herfurth, *Die Ewige Strasse: Geschichtsbuch für die Hauptschule* (Dortmund: Druck un Verlag von W. Cruwell, 1943), 9.

of Austrian Germans.⁵⁸⁹

⁵⁸⁸Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 213, 238, 655-6.

⁵⁸⁹*Ibid.*, 73, 389-390; Joseph II was a popular figure for many other German nationalists in Central Europe as well. See Cynthia Paces and Nancy M. Wingfield, "The Sacred and the Profane: Religion and Nationalism in the Bohemian Lands, 1880-1920," in *Constructing Nationalities in East Central Europe*, eds. Pieter M. Judson and Marsha L. Rozenblit (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2005), 107-125; Wingfield, "Statues of Emperor Joseph II as Sites of German Identity," in *Staging the Past: The Politics of Commemoration in Habsburg Central Europe, 1848 to the Present*, eds. Maria Bucur and Nancy M. Wingfield (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2001), 178_201.

Other Habsburgs such as Franz Josef and the Archduke Franz Ferdinand appear in the pages of Hitler's autobiography as figures who sought to "exterminate" the German *Volk* in Austria with pro-Slavic, pro-Catholic policies designed to maintain their "mummy" of a state's increasingly feeble grip on political power.⁵⁹⁰ For Hitler, only the Monarchy's German subjects had accomplished anything of economic, political, or cultural value. By 1866 at the latest, the dynasty itself had ceased to fulfill its appropriate role as the protector of German interests in eastern Europe.⁵⁹¹

⁵⁹⁰Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 92-93, 141, 159.

⁵⁹¹*Ibid.*, 70, 94-95.

Hitler did single out two other figures from Austria's recent past for praise in *Mein Kampf*: the Pan-German Party leader Georg von Schönerer and the Christian Socialist Party's guiding figure, Karl Lueger. Hitler lauded Schönerer as a great ideological revolutionary who had clearly seen the anti-German character of the Habsburg dynasty. Schönerer's only real fault according to Hitler was his regrettable inability to move past his theoretical preoccupations and create a successful mass political movement. Lueger on the other hand, appeared in an opposite light in Hitler's description. Hitler praised the patriarchal Viennese politician as a man who truly knew how to create a broad political movement by playing on the anxieties and desires of the Austrian-German population. Lueger had erred, however, by remaining staunchly loyal to the Habsburgs, and Hitler charged that the Viennese mayor's professed anti-Semitism was a "sham" because it was not based upon racial principles. Thus, both men were flawed models. Schönerer had an appropriate ideological understanding of Austria's real place in the world, yet lacked political skills, while Lueger was a canny populist politician who ultimately failed to recognize the national flaws of the dynasty which he fervently supported.⁵⁹²

Thus, Hitler's view of the Habsburg past was one in which the Habsburg dynasty opposed the interests of the German *Volk*, both within and outside of Austria. He portrayed the dynasty as predatory and anti-German, interested in its own political power rather than in its proper national duties as a German princely house. Above, all Hitler identified the Habsburg Monarchy as a supranational, indeed internationalist, entity which stood

⁵⁹²*Ibid.*, 100-120; Pauley, *Hitler and the Forgotten Nazis*, 22-23; John W. Boyer, *Culture and Political Crisis in Vienna: Christian Socialism in Power, 1897-1918* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 26; Andrew G. Whiteside, *The Socialism of Fools: Georg Ritter von Schönerer and Austrian Pan-Germanism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 305-319.

diametrically opposed to the sort of nationalistic and racial theories which National Socialism valued above all else. Interestingly, Hitler's characterization of the Habsburg state closely mirrors the apologetic descriptions of the old Monarchy given by proponents of "Austrianist" national identity during the 1920s. If First Republic Austrian commentators such as Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi and Oscar Schmitz had loved old Austria for its supranational, peace-loving character, then Hitler hated the Habsburg Monarchy for precisely the same reasons.⁵⁹³ It is also worth noting that while neither Hitler nor any other Nazis overtly described the Habsburg Monarchy as being in any way Jewish, they did associate it with ideas or movements which they inevitably characterized as being linked with the Jews, such as internationalism or cooperation between *Völker*.⁵⁹⁴

Hitler expressed his animosity toward the Habsburg Monarchy in various ways once he came to power. For example, during the 1930s, Nazi officials in Germany saw the restoration of the Monarchy in corporatist Austria as a potential, if somewhat unlikely, danger to their interests in the region. German diplomatic correspondence during the mid-1930s contains numerous references to such a possibility and reveals the efforts by the Nazi regime to inform the Schuschnigg government that the Third Reich would not tolerate any attempt to return to a monarchical system in Austria.⁵⁹⁵ Likewise, after the *Anschluss*, the

⁵⁹³Richard N. Coudenhove-Kalergi, *Österreichs Europäische Sendung* (Vienna: Paneuropa-Verlag, 1934), 1-24; Oscar A. H. Schmitz, *Der österreichische Mensch, zum Anschauungsunterricht für Europäer, insbesondere für Reichsdeutsche* (Vienna: Wiener Literarische Anstalt, 1924) 1-68. See Chapters 1 and 3 for a complete discussion of "Austrianist" views of the Habsburg past during the First Republic and the *Ständestaat*.

⁵⁹⁴For a brief description of how the Nazis associated internationalism with the Jews, see Gilmer W. Blackburn, *Education in the Third Reich. Race and History in Nazi Textbooks* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1985), 143.

⁵⁹⁵See especially documents 157, 161, 190 and 196 in *Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945*, Series D, 1937-1945, vol. 1, *From Neurath to Ribbentrop (September 1937-September 1938)*, ed. US State Department (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1949).

new Nazi authorities in Austria undertook a symbolic assault upon any lingering affinities for the old Monarchy. In the town of Mödling, they re-christened Franz Josef-Platz as Adolf Hitler-Platz,⁵⁹⁶ while various townships in Burgenland revoked the honorary citizenship they had previously conferred upon Otto Habsburg, the son of the last Habsburg monarch.⁵⁹⁷ History education in Nazi Germany and Austria expressed Hitler's view of history especially forcefully and it sought to indoctrinate students with National Socialism's preferred interpretation of the Habsburg past.

iii. Educational Policy and the School System in Nazi Germany

Any examination of educational policy in Nazi Germany must necessarily begin with the pedagogical ideas of Hitler himself. On the one hand, Hitler was convinced that education was a vital tool in the National Socialist quest to regenerate the German *Volk* and to prepare the German nation for the inevitable conflict for domination of the European continent. On the other hand, he was deeply critical, and even contemptuous, of educational policy in Habsburg Austria, Wilhelmine Germany, and the democratic republics which arose in Central Europe following the First World War.

Hitler set down his educational ideals in his 1924 autobiography, *Mein Kampf*. According to Hitler, the old style of education had been far too concerned with intellectual training and the simple accumulation of knowledge. The sort of nationalistic and radically transformative education which he envisioned focused on teaching good character to German students, especially loyalty, a spirit of self sacrifice, discretion and, above all, a firm

⁵⁹⁶*Neues Wiener Abendblatt* (Vienna), March, 15, 1938, 2.

⁵⁹⁷Klusacek, Steiner and Stimmer, 62.

dedication to the German *Volk* and race. Hitler personally disdained intellectualism of any sort, and he argued that military service rather than university study should be the necessary culmination of the education of any good German man. For German women, Hitler substituted motherhood and a dedication to preserving the racial purity of the German family as the ultimate end of education.⁵⁹⁸

Hitler particularly emphasized the tremendous importance of history to the education of the next generation of German soldiers and mothers. He avowed that history had been his favorite subject as a young student, and indeed the only academic topic which had truly captured his imagination. His high school history teacher in Linz, Leopold Pötsch, provided a template for the sort of history education Hitler thought was best. What had impressed Hitler about Pötsch was not merely the instructor's command of the subject matter, but rather the emotionally inspiring manner with which he had delivered his lectures. Hitler wrote in *Mein Kampf* that,

Even today I think back with gentle emotion on this grey-haired man, who, by the fire of his narratives, sometimes made us forget the present; who, as if by enchantment, carried us into past times and, out of the millennial veils of mist, molded dry historical memories into living reality. On such occasions we sat there, often aflame with enthusiasm, and sometimes even moved to tears.⁵⁹⁹

As we shall see, Nazi pedagogical theorists emphasized such inspirational talent as a necessary part of a teacher's vocation.⁶⁰⁰

In addition to seeing history as a source of inspiration, Hitler thought that history education should inform students' views of the present. The past was not to be studied for its own sake, but rather for the lessons it could teach to a strong and unified German *Volk*.

⁵⁹⁸Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 14-15; 408-427.

⁵⁹⁹*Ibid.*, 14.

Again, Hitler felt that Pötsch had excelled at such a use of history.⁶⁰¹ Thus a clear, concise presentation of the past that was useful for the German nation was far more important than completeness or attention to detail. He argued:

Especially in historical instruction, an abridgement of the material must be undertaken. The main value lies in recognizing the great lines of development. The more the instruction is limited to this, the more it is to be hoped that an advantage will later accrue to the individual from his knowledge, which summed up will also benefit the community. For we do not learn history just in order to know the past, we learn history in order to find an instructor for the future and for the continued existence of our nationality. That is the *end*, and historical instruction is only a *means* to it.⁶⁰²

Thus, the teaching of history was important insofar as it could be used to support the National Socialist ideology and to strengthen the resurgent national state which Hitler envisioned.

Hitler also emphasized the necessity of indoctrinating German students with the precepts of racism, precepts which he felt were the key to understanding human history. He wrote,

The crown of the *volkisch* state's entire work of education and training must be to burn the racial sense and racial feeling into the instinct and the intellect, the heart and brain of the youth intrusted to it. No boy or girl must leave school without having been led to an ultimate realization of the necessity and essence of blood purity.⁶⁰³

Hitler's racial anti-Semitism formed one of the foundational concepts of National Socialist ideology. It was an idea which would ultimately inform not just education in the Nazi

⁶⁰⁰Blackburn, 34.

⁶⁰¹Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 14-15.

⁶⁰²*Ibid.*, 421.

⁶⁰³*Ibid.*, 427.

state,⁶⁰⁴ but also its legal structure, military policies, and the eventual extermination of most of Europe's Jews.

However disorganized Hitler's Nazi dictatorship might have been in practice, it seems clear that education was one area in which his ideological statements in *Mein Kampf* and other sources became normative in the Third Reich. Moreover, unlike other areas, such as his drive to exterminate the Jews, where it is difficult for historians to draw a clear and unambiguous line between Hitler's vague public statements and the actual practices of the Nazi regime, there was a clear link between Hitler's words and the style and content of Nazi education. The historian of anti-Semitism and Nazi educational policy Gregory Paul Wegner argues that even though teachers and pedagogical theorists under the Nazi regime elaborated considerably on Hitler's ideas, *Mein Kampf* remained the ideological guide for their work and they studiously followed it.⁶⁰⁵ Education was an important issue for Hitler, and the structure and content of educational policy was a matter of extreme significance for the Third Reich.

After the Nazi seizure of power in 1933, the new Nationalist Socialist government moved quickly to remodel the educational system of Germany along lines which would enforce the ideological dominance of Nazism. The key features of this transformation included the Third Reich's efforts to thoroughly politicize education, to seize control of the education of teachers, to redraw curricula and to revise the content of education in Germany, to reapportion the division of classroom hours devoted to various subjects, and to inculcate

⁶⁰⁴Gregory Paul Wegner, *Anti-Semitism and Schooling Under the Third Reich* (New York and London: Routledge Falmer, 2002), 1-5.

⁶⁰⁵*Ibid.*, 182; See also Blackburn, 25; Kurt-Ingo Flessau, *Schule der Diktatur: Lehrpläne und Schulbücher des Nationalsozialismus* (Munich: Ehrenwirth, 1977), 22-26.

racism and anti-Semitism in German students.⁶⁰⁶ As a means to this end, the Nazis dismissed overtly anti-Nazi instructors as well as teachers of Jewish background. Efforts to revise the curricula and to publish new textbooks began soon after the Nazi seizure of power.⁶⁰⁷

Such efforts, however, were initially quite disorganized, and the Nazi state did not immediately attempt a systematic reshaping of Germany's curricula and textbooks. Instead, the Germany Ministry of the Interior and the administrations of various *Länder* issued isolated decrees which called for educators to devote their efforts to producing mature Germans devoted to the Nazi *Weltanschauung*. Even these early measures awarded history pride of place. These decrees increased the number of hours of historical instruction in classrooms in order to indoctrinate students in Nazi ideology, and urged history teachers to emphasize enthusiasm and inspiration rather than the tedious memorization of dates and names.⁶⁰⁸

Comprehensive revised curricula did eventually follow these piecemeal measures. A decree issued by the Third Reich's Ministry of Education in 1937 and a set of "General Guidelines" set forth by the Education Minister, Bernard Rust, in 1939 gave German primary schools a new set of curricular principles. German secondary schools received their own set of "General Guidelines" in 1938. These decrees, which set forth detailed curricula, delineated in a systematic manner the same ideals found in the regime's previous statements on education. German education was to be thoroughly politicized and grounded in the racist and nationalistic principles of National Socialism. History, German language instruction,

⁶⁰⁶Flessau, 14; See also Blackburn, 177.

⁶⁰⁷Wegner, 185; Blackburn, 9.

and geography emerged as the primary subjects in this ideological vision of education.⁶⁰⁹

Nazi textbook policy followed a similar pattern. At first there was no central authority within the Nazi regime charged with issuing new educational texts. The responsibility for such work rested with individual publishers. At the same time, however, such publishers collaborated with both the National Socialist Teachers Union (NSLB) and the Ministry of Education, so that textbooks published during the first six years of the Third Reich consistently followed the guidelines preferred by the Nazi government. The government finally assumed exclusive control over this process in 1939, when a special commission under the leadership of Phillip Bouhler began to oversee and certify the publication of all textbooks for use in German schools.⁶¹⁰

Even as the new government moved to transform German education, it still built upon the educational and ideological foundations which it had inherited from the Weimar Republic. Already in the 1920s German language textbooks contained the sort of glorification of the military conflict and the animosity toward the postwar international order which later became the hallmarks of Nazi ideology. The main difference after 1933 was the new regime's conscious attempt to ground education in the Nazi *Weltanschauung* and obedience to Hitler's government.⁶¹¹ In a similar manner, the racial anti-Semitism which Nazi education so emphasized built upon the less explicit but still very real currents of anti-Semitism that had pervaded the Weimar era as well. Hitler and the Nazis may have wanted to create a new educational system in order to forge a new sort of German citizen, but

⁶⁰⁸Wegner, 117-118; Blackburn, 41, 87; Flessau, 19-20.

⁶⁰⁹Flessau, 55-83.

⁶¹⁰Wegner 25, 183; Blackburn, 37; Flessau, 95-100.

⁶¹¹Joachim S. Hohmann, "Erziehung in 'Stahlgewittern,' Zur Konzeption und Wirkungsgeschichte des

German educators had already laid a partial foundation for this enterprise even before 1933.

The Third Reich did not have to start its work from scratch.⁶¹²

In the same manner as Nazi education between 1933 and 1938 drew on existing traditions within Weimar Germany, so too did Nazi education after the *Anschluß* find a fertile ground in Austria. The previous regime had already dismantled democratic, non-ideological education in Austria in favor of system which had emphasized community over the individual and which urged students to be obedient and loyal to the regime. Of course the corporatist educational system had emphasized Austrian patriotism and Roman Catholicism, while the Nazi regime repudiated both in favor of racist German nationalism.⁶¹³

deutschen Lesebuchs im NS-Staat," *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 43, no. 1 (1995): 1-8.

⁶¹²Wegner, 181-186; See also Flessau, 97-100.

⁶¹³Dachs, 339.

Furthermore, National Socialist ideals had been popular among Austrian teachers and students during the period between 1934 and 1938, despite the *Ständestaat*'s best efforts to indoctrinate the schools with its official ideology. Thus, the Third Reich found fertile soil for its *Weltanschauung* in the Austrian school system.⁶¹⁴

In the aftermath of the *Anschluß*, the new authorities in Austria moved swiftly to dismiss teachers who espoused anti-Nazi political ideologies, as well as teachers of Jewish origin, and all remaining teachers had to swear an oath of loyalty to Hitler. Because the curricula and textbooks could not be changed immediately, these teachers had to “correct” interpretations in the texts which were “false” (that is to say, at odds with the Nazi view of education and history).⁶¹⁵ The new Nazi authorities set out to complete the distribution or production of replacement textbooks in the *Ostmark* as soon as possible.⁶¹⁶

As we have seen, the old Ministry of Education continued to exist in Austria until 1940. This administrative body became Division IV of the Austrian Ministry of the Interior and Culture. After the dissolution of this organization, responsibility for education in the *Reichsgaue* of the *Ostmark* devolved to the administrative apparatus of the individual *Gaue*, under the supervision the Ministry of the Interior of the Third Reich as a whole. The Nazi government also compelled schools within the Austrian territories to conform with the practices in the rest of Germany. The Nazi government reduced from 52 to 16 the number of humanistic *Gymnasien*, which had been the foundational schools for academically gifted students in Austria. The Nazis also almost totally liquidated the network of religious

⁶¹⁴*Ibid.*, 218-221.

⁶¹⁵*Ibid.*, 221-224; *Deutsche Volkszeitung* (Vienna), March 30, 1938, 1.

⁶¹⁶Klusacek, Steiner and Stimmer, 593.

schools in Austria, which had been an important part of the old school system.⁶¹⁷ All of these efforts were designed to eliminate schools which the Nazi leaders regarded as either unnecessary or even hostile to the military, national, and racial ideals of National Socialism. For a time, Austrian Nazi authorities discussed maintaining some of the old system's *Hauptschulen* (middle schools), and even of exporting that system to the rest of Germany, but nothing ever came of such discussions.⁶¹⁸ Finally, as in the rest of the Third Reich, Nazi authorities made membership in various Nazi youth organizations, such as the Hitler Youth and the Association of German Girls, mandatory for all Austrian children between the ages of ten and eighteen.⁶¹⁹

For their part, many Austrian teachers appeared enthusiastic about the change in government. While the new government purged some segments of the teaching population and discontinued most of the old state's previous pedagogical journals, the remaining Austrian educators did work to further the ideological aims of the new leadership. The Austrian territories' only remaining pedagogical journal, *Die Neue Weg*, continued to publish, because, according to its new editors, it had been the only such publication which had never supported educational theories which harmed the unity and character of the German *Volk*.⁶²⁰ In the first edition after the *Anschluß* in April, 1938, the editors issued a call to Austrian teachers to dedicate themselves to the goals of the Nazi regime and to work

⁶¹⁷Dachs, 224-226; Such measures followed the near elimination of religious and classical education in the rest of Nazi Germany as well. See Flessau, 20-21.

⁶¹⁸Dachs, 224-226.

⁶¹⁹*Ibid.*, 230; The scholar Daniel Horn argues that the Nazi youth organizations were actually harmful to the cause of Nazi education in their emphasis on the priority of youthful leadership at the expense of the authority of and respect for the expertise of the older generation of teachers. Daniel Horn, "The Hitler Youth and Educational Decline in the Third Reich," *History of Education Quarterly* 16, No. 4 (Winter, 1976): 425-447.

⁶²⁰"An die Lehrerschaft!" *Der Neue Weg* 1 (1940): 1. This journal was discontinued later in 1940 due to

diligently to bring the Austrian school system in line with that of the rest of the Third Reich.⁶²¹ This call seems to have been heeded.⁶²²

Thus, the Nazi educational system, both in Austria and in the Third Reich as a whole, followed Hitler's vision of a new pedagogical structure which would serve to indoctrinate the German *Volk* with the ideological precepts of Nazism. After 1933, the Nazi government moved swiftly, albeit in a characteristically disorganized manner, to realize this vision, and moved no less swiftly to bring these changes to Austria after 1938. The Nazi government built on widely prevalent ideas and administrative structures which it inherited from the governments which had preceded it, and often had the active collaboration of teachers and students in its efforts. This new educational system attempted to promulgate a specific view of Austrian national identity and the Habsburg past.

iv. National Socialist History Education

The Third Reich's leaders conceived of National Socialist education as an unabashedly ideological enterprise, designed to indoctrinate German students with the basics of the Nazi *Weltanschauung*. Following Hitler's lead, most Nazi pedagogical theorists and educators emphasized history as a particularly important topic for German children to study. As early as 1933, the Third Reich's Interior Minister, Wilhelm Frick, increased the number of classroom hours devoted to historical studies in German schools, and declared that history should have a commanding position within the Nazi educational system.⁶²³ Indeed, many

wartime shortages which prohibited its further publication.

⁶²¹"Ruf zu Mitarbeit," and "Geschichtswende und Schule" in *Der Neue Weg*, 4 (1938), 280.

⁶²²Dachs, 224-227.

⁶²³Blackburn, 36-3.

Nazi educators acknowledged that history was especially important to National Socialist educational efforts, and ranked it alongside biology, German language, and geography as a critical topic for German children to study properly.⁶²⁴ Austrian educators after the *Anschluss* also believed that history education was critically important to the cause of reshaping their homeland as part of the Third Reich. One sample curriculum from Vienna in 1938 described the importance of history education in a manner reminiscent of Hitler's own pedagogical views:

History education is the foundation of national-political education. Its goal is education of Germans who are always joyfully willing to act for the freedom and honor of our *Volk*, and who also understand how to draw out the usefulness of the history of the development of the German *Volk* and to use it to successfully participate in the shaping of the present and future of the *Volk*.⁶²⁵

Of course, the point of history education was not merely to study the past, but, more to the point, to study it correctly from the Nazi point of view. According to most Nazi educators there was clearly a right way and a wrong way to teach historical topics. In 1939, Dietrich Klagges, a *Reichsdeutsch* historian and one of the Third Reich's most prominent and prolific textbook authors, wrote an instructional text for history teachers. In this book, *Geschichte als Nationalpolitische Erziehung (History as National-Political Education)*, Klagges discussed the appropriate methods and perspective which teachers were to use in order to successfully educate children.

From the first, Klagges avowed that Nazi history education must represent a break from the liberal historical methodology which recently had been so dominant in Germany

⁶²⁴For a *Reichsdeutsch* presentation of these views, see Dietrich Klagges, *Geschichte als Nationalpolitische Erziehung* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Moritz Diensterweg, 1939), 106. For an example from Nazi Austria see Hugo Winklerhöfer, "Die Änderung der Stoffepläne für Volks- und Hauptschulen im neuen Geiste" *Der Neue Weg* 7 (1938): 481.

and the rest of the Western world. He opposed such methodology not merely because liberalism, from the Nazis' perspective, was a decadent, atomizing, Jewish ideology, but also because liberal history education eschewed the sort of teleological and ideological interpretations of history which Klagges and other Nazi theorists thought crucial to real education.⁶²⁶ Klagges objected to the liberal focus upon learning foreign languages and appreciating foreign cultures, and he argued that such educational emphases resulted in an "international education," rather than a German one. According to Klagges, the history, languages, and cultures of foreign *Völker* were to be viewed as valuable to the Nazi state only insofar as they bolstered the German sense of worth or served as a useful contrast to German qualities.⁶²⁷

Even more galling than internationalism for Klagges, however, was liberal education's emphasis on upon "objectivity." Liberal pretensions to objectivity in history education were a sham which allowed liberal historians and teachers to pretend to be neutral. In reality, according to Klagges, the liberal historian was as much bound to his ideology as any other human being. Even the pretense of objectivity when examining the past ultimately robbed teachers and historians of the ability to make moral judgements about the past and to draw historical lessons for the German *Volk*. He claimed that such a view of history debased these necessary ethical and national judgements into sterile issues of mere "significance."

As Klagges wrote:

In all cases, objectivity is not an ideal for National Socialism, but rather a grave negative trait ("*schwere Mangel*"). . . For us there is only one standpoint which we

⁶²⁵“Übergangslehrplan für den Geschichtsunterricht an Wiener Hauptschulen und Abschlußklassen,” *Der Neue Weg* 9 (1938): 636.

⁶²⁶*Ibid.*, 105-106.

⁶²⁷*Ibid.*, 106-107.

unshakably cling to, and from which we seize and experience all progress. . . We are objective if we are German. The will and right of life of the German *Volk* builds the position from which we understand the course of history in the past and the present. It is from here we come to our view of history which is clear, unambiguous and unshakable.⁶²⁸

Thus, according to Klagges, all history had to be viewed from the perspective of whether or not a given event was good or bad for the German *Volk*. For him that fixed perspective was the essence of the Nazi historical view.⁶²⁹

Klagges gave several examples of how to apply this Nazi vision of history education in German classrooms. One such example is particularly relevant to the case of Nazi Austria. Klagges argued that if teachers required their students to write essays about the 1938 *Anschluss*, they should privilege the Nazi view of history. Thus a theme like “Advantages and Disadvantages of the *Anschluss* of German-Austria and the *Reich* .” was not good Nazi methodology, but rather displayed a “Jewish-liberal” tendency toward overly critical analysis. It would be far better if students wrote essays on themes such as, “The *Anschluss* of the *Ostmark*– the Fulfillment of a Dream of Centuries,” or “Great-Germany– The Yearning of the Best Germans.”⁶³⁰

Klagges also noted that National Socialist education had resolved the liberal debate over the relative merits of cultural, economic, political, and military history. The real focus of history education should be the development of the German *Volk* and the personalities and events which were good or bad for the *Volk*. Thus Nazi education did not emphasize the politics of ruling dynasties or individual monarchs, but rather focused on the heroes and

⁶²⁸ *Ibid.*, 116-117.

⁶²⁹ *Ibid.*, 119-121.

⁶³⁰ *Ibid.*, 447.

groups who had served the interests of the German *Volk*.⁶³¹

If Klagges drew a distinction between “heroic” history education and traditional political or military history, not all Nazi educators shared his views. The Austrian Nazi pedagogical theorist, Hugo Winkerlhöfer, for example, simply stated that education in Nazi Austria should focus upon political and military history, which he equated with the Nazism’s heroic ideals.⁶³² Indeed, Nazi pedagogical theorists unanimously wanted history teachers to stress the ideals of heroism, particularly in terms of war and physical struggle.⁶³³ As we shall see, such “heroic” history generally corresponded to an emphasis upon political and especially military history at the expense of cultural, social, and economic history.

Racism was one other concept which Klagges and other Nazi educational theorists repeatedly stressed. In fact several Nazi commentators on history education explicitly identified race as the real key to understanding the history of the world correctly.⁶³⁴ According to the Nazi view of history, there were enduring racial groups which gave various nations and national groups a set of indelible physical, moral, and spiritual characteristics. For the Nazis, the Nordic or Aryan race, from which modern Germans descended, was the strongest, most creative and most worthy race in human history, and, according to at least some Nazi theorists, the race responsible for almost all progress in human history. Indeed, one Nazi educator, Paul Abl, went so far as to argue that the great cultural achievements of medieval Spain and Italy were to be attributed to the nordic blood of the nobility in those

⁶³¹*Ibid*, 122.

⁶³²Winkerlhöfer, 282.

⁶³³Blackburn, 67-69; Hohmann, 1-115; “Übergangslehrplan für den Geschichtsunterricht an Wiener Hauptschulen und Abschlußklassen,” 687.

⁶³⁴Winkerlhöfer, 282-283; “Übergangslehrplan für den Geschichtsunterricht an Wiener Hauptschulen und Abschlußklassen,” 637; “Der nordische gedanke in der deutschen Erziehung,” *Der Neue Weg* 1/2 (1939): 51; Ulrich Haacke and Ernst Ziemann, *Handbuch für den Geschichtsunterricht an Volksschulen* (Leipzig:

regions, and even argued that Leonardo DaVinci's artistic work resulted from his purported partial Germanic descent.⁶³⁵

One pedagogical theorist, Ludwig Woltmann, presented the foundations for the Nazis' racially determined view of history in a 1941 article in *Der Neue Weg*. In this piece, he distinguished between the old "spiritual" (*geistig*) history, the environmentally deterministic material history of liberal and Marxist historians, and the newer "anthropological" history, which focused upon race as the key element in human development over the centuries. Woltmann argued that despite the claims of critics, an examination of the past revealed that certain races had undeniably maintained the purity of their blood throughout their history, and that racial characteristics were an enduring and unchangeable factor in human historical development.⁶³⁶

The Nazi view of history inevitably presented the Jews as the insidious racial counterpart to the Aryan Germans, and insisted that racial anti-Semitism was a crucial component of history education as well. Nazi educators portrayed the Jews as a pestilential presence no matter where or when they appeared in human history, and one author blamed them for the ultimate downfall of the Babylonian, Persian, Greek, and Roman empires.⁶³⁷ Another Austrian Nazi teacher sought to combat any lingering sentiments among German students that there were any "decent Jews" in Germany or Austria, and continually railed against the danger represented to Germany by the mixing of German and Jewish blood.⁶³⁸

Verlag von Quelle and Meyer, 1941), 7.

⁶³⁵Paul Abl, "Nationsozialistische Weltanschauung und Geschichtsbetrachtung," *Der Neue Weg* 1/2 (1939): 12-16. See also Klagges, 449.

⁶³⁶Ludwig Woltmann, "Grundfragen einer rassenkundlichen Geschichtsbetrachtung," *Der Neue Weg* 1 (January, 1941): 2-7.

⁶³⁷Ulrike Dietrich, "Judentum und Schule," *Der Neue Weg* 5 (May 1940): 97-9.

⁶³⁸"Aus Zeitschriften. Die Judenfrage in Unterricht," *Der Neue Weg* 5 (1939): 231.

Indeed, Klagges asserted that the ultimate defeat of the German *Volk* and race was only possible through the “racial suicide” of blood mixing, or through the adoption of dangerous “Jewish” ideologies such as pacifism, liberalism, or Marxism.⁶³⁹ Abl likewise argued against the notion, perpetuated by the Jews through the egalitarian dogmas of liberalism, that human beings were all equal. He proclaimed that the inequality of racial groups was the foundation of the Nazi view of history.⁶⁴⁰

Austrian educators after 1938 realized that despite the tradition of political anti-Semitism in their homeland, such a racial, biological, deterministic vision of history was relatively foreign to Austrian educational thought. Thus, a provisional curricula for history education in Viennese schools urged Austrian teachers to lose no time in familiarizing themselves with Nazi racial ideals and in implementing those ideas in their classrooms. The curricula suggested that teachers in the *Ostmark* present examples of the domineering tendencies and insidious, racially determined morality of the Jews throughout history and explain how the Viennese population had acted against the exploitative activities of that city’s Jewish population.⁶⁴¹

Nazi pedagogues did their best to link the ideologies and institutions which they despised to the Jews. Various educators argued that the Jews had a hand in the origins of internationalism, pacifism, liberalism, socialism, the League of Nations, freemasonry, political conservatism, Roman Catholicism, and indeed Christianity as a whole.⁶⁴² Of all these ideas associated with the Jews, however, Nazi educational theorists focused most

⁶³⁹Klagges, 449.

⁶⁴⁰Abl, 12-16. See also Klagges, 403.

⁶⁴¹“Übergangslehrplan für den Geschichtsunterricht an Wiener Hauptschulen und Abschlußklassen,” 638-640; “Geschichtswende und Schule,” 280.

closely upon intellectualism. Hitler himself had expressed his contempt for intellectuals and academic professionalism in the pages of *Mein Kampf*.⁶⁴³ Nazi educators followed his lead, and proclaimed that intellectual learning was merely a secondary consideration for teachers in the Nazi system. Intellectualism was a sterile, decadent movement bred in the urban, Jewish culture in which the modern German had allowed himself to become ensnared. The real strength of the German people came from the strong character that came from the link between the *Volk* and German soil. German teachers had to realize that a real education was not just a matter of knowledge, but rather consisted of building *völkisch* character and will.⁶⁴⁴ For Nazi theorists, there was no distinction between higher education and *Volksbildung* (education in basic skills necessary for everyday life); Nazi education was to be an organic, value-laden enterprise which eschewed narrow academic specializations and effete intellectualism.

As a result, Nazi pedagogical theorists considered the character and qualities of teachers in German schools to be especially important. As we have seen, Hitler himself had definite ideas concerning the sort of qualities and talents a German history teacher should have. Nazi educators in Germany and Austria reiterated his argument that instructors should strive to transport students into the past and to inspire them to ideological zeal. Nazi teachers had to make history clear, exciting, and “alive.”⁶⁴⁵ One sample curricula even specifically cited Hitler’s account concerning Professor Pötsch in *Mein Kampf* in order to

⁶⁴²Blackburn, 143; Abl, 14; Klagges, 397-402.

⁶⁴³Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 431-433.

⁶⁴⁴Blackburn, 120-121, 143; Klagges 107-110.

⁶⁴⁵Klagges, 111-114; Haacke and Ziemann, 3.

present teachers with a model of an ideal history instructor.⁶⁴⁶ Such a history teacher had to have a forceful, magnetic personality, ready with a clear answer to any question which students might ask. In other words, a good history teacher in Nazi Germany had to be a true *Erzieher* (educator of character), who transmitted not mere knowledge, but the vital values of honesty, obedience, self sacrifice, love of *Volk* and *Vaterland*, and a firm dedication to the principles of National Socialism to his students.⁶⁴⁷ In fact, a 1939 article in the Viennese edition of the Nazi newspaper *Die Völkischer Beobachter*, which listed the most desirable qualities for teachers, placed expertise in the relevant subject matter behind strength of character and loyalty to National Socialist principles in terms of importance.⁶⁴⁸

Nazi educational theorists also urged a reconsideration of the sources which German educators used to teach history. According to many such theorists, students had learned a distorted picture of the German past in recent decades. Liberal, Marxist, and Catholic historiography had all consistently misrepresented the German past, discarding the vital strengths of the *Volk* in favor of representations of history which stressed universalistic and humanistic ideals over national interests. In particular, many Nazi educators took umbrage at the portrayal of ancient Germanic peoples as “barbarians.” Nazi pedagogues such as Klagges and Abl argued for the rehabilitation of modern Germany’s Germanic ancestors, and argued that these early Germans should be portrayed as noble warrior-farmers who had cultivated an intimate link to the soil of their homeland, rather than as the savage antagonists

⁶⁴⁶“Übergangslehrplan für den Geschichtsunterricht an Wiener Hauptschulen und Abschlußklassen,” 636-637.

⁶⁴⁷ Klagges, 448-449, 451; “Übergangslehrplan für den Geschichtsunterricht an Wiener Hauptschulen und Abschlußklassen,” 638; “An die deutschen Lehrer der Ostmark,” *Der Neue Weg* 1/2 (1939): 49.

⁶⁴⁸*Völkischer Beobachter* (Vienna), January 3, 1939.

of the Roman Empire described by Tacitus.⁶⁴⁹ In order to counteract the negative portrayal of the Germanic peoples, Nazi educators argued that teachers should emphasize folktales and sagas from German antiquity and the Middle Ages rather than hostile Roman or Church accounts of history in order to provide a clearer picture of the virtues of the German race throughout history.⁶⁵⁰

Thus the vision of history presented by Nazi educators was one which valued ideology over objectivity and emotional urgency over dispassionate detail in order to present a racially determined version of the past to German students. This view of history may be neatly summarized with Klagges' list of suggested themes that German history teachers should emphasize:

- (1) Nordic man as the creator and bearer of world culture
- (2) Creative and uncreative races of men
- (3) German territory over time
- (4) Two millennia of the German state
- (5) Nordic-German culture from the stone age to the present
- (6) The *Weltanschauung* of struggle
- (7) Arms, the military and struggle in the era of our forefathers and in the present
- (8) Jewishness and Bolshevism as a danger to the world
- (9) The danger of spiritual (*geistigen*) alienation
- (10) Leaders and discipleship in German history
- (11) Men make history
- (12) Nation-states and world empires
- (13) *Volk* as a community of destiny

⁶⁴⁹Klagges, 124-127; Abl, 15-16; Herfurth, 102-103. Of course Tacitus did praise the ancient Germans for their strength and nobility, but apparently not enthusiastically enough for the Nazis.

⁶⁵⁰Klagges, 400; Winkerlhöfer, 481.

(14) (Work and the community of the *Volk*.⁶⁵¹

Klagges intended this vision of racial and national struggle in the German past to prepare students for the conflict between Nazi Germany and the Jewish, Bolshevik, and decadent liberal antagonists who supposedly sought to wipe out the German *Volk*.

v. Nazi Education and the Habsburg Past

The textbooks, curricula and pedagogical journals produced in Nazi Germany and Austria faithfully represented the vision of the Habsburg past which Hitler articulated in *Mein Kampf*. These educational texts presented Austria as part of the wider sweep of the history of Germany, and portrayed the Habsburgs as a pestilential, anti-national presence within that historical narrative. Nazi school materials generally agreed with Hitler's definition of the "Austrian mission," and they shared his emphasis on Prussia and historical figures from northern Germany as the true defenders of the interests of the German *Volk*. This view of Austria's past had a great deal in common with the formulations of a Germanist Austrian national identity presented in earlier Austrian educational material, yet at the same time it represented a distinctively National Socialist perspective on history which was foreign to these previous Germanist texts.

All Nazi educational materials presented Austria as part of German history. Nazi representations of Austria's part in German history focused upon the German people of Austria as whole, and often argued that all Germans, whether Prussian or Austrian, had played a role in advancing the interests of the *Volk*.⁶⁵² Indeed, one Austrian educator during

⁶⁵¹Klagges, 447.

⁶⁵²*Völkischer Beobachter* (Vienna), August 3, 1938; Haacke and Ziemann, 115.

the Nazi period explicitly argued against placing too much of an emphasis upon students' *Heimat*, instead arguing for a focus upon the German nation as a whole in classrooms.⁶⁵³ Such descriptions of Austria obviously fit well with the official attempt by Nazi Germany to erase all remnants of Austria's independence, from its name to its old administrative apparatus. Just as there was no longer a separate or distinct "Austria" within the borders of the Third Reich after 1938, so too was there no separate Austrian history in the historical narratives presented in Nazi classrooms.

Nazi educational materials also reiterated Hitler's emphasis upon a "German Mission" for Austria while it existed. Various textbooks, educational manuals, and curricula reinforced the notion that an important part of Austria's historical role had been to serve as a "bulwark" to protect Germany from the predatory advances of the Turks or other eastern antagonists. Indeed, such descriptions of the "Austrian mission" were not at all foreign to Austrianist views of history. For the Nazis, however, Austria's protective role was specifically to protect Germany and areas of German settlement, and not to help defend Western civilization or Christendom as a whole as in Austrianist accounts.⁶⁵⁴

Several atypical accounts of Austria's historical mission did appear during the Nazi period, however. Hugo Hassinger's 1942 book, *Wiens deutsche Sendung im Donauraum* (*Vienna's German Mission in the Danubian Region*), represented a peculiar blending of National Socialist ideology and earlier Austrianist presentations of Austria's historical mission. Hassinger, a professor of geology at the University of Vienna, had been active in

⁶⁵³*Heimat* is German word which means "home" or "homeland" in a regional or parochial sense. Ferdinand Kopp, "Volkhafte Neugestaltung des Heimatkundunterrichtes," *Der Neue Weg* (April, 1941): 97.

⁶⁵⁴Abl, 16; "Übergangslehrplan für den Geschichtsunterricht an Wiener Hauptschulen und

publishing educational materials during the *Ständestaat*, and his later discussion of Austria's role in German history still bore some of the characteristics of the historical views endorsed by the corporatist regime. Hassinger's book did undeniably endorse Nazism, and it argued that the *Anschluß* had freed the city of Vienna to play its proper role in German history once again. Like other educational theorists during the Nazi period, Hassinger affirmed that part of the mission which Vienna, and through it, Austria, was destined to play in history was to advance German interests in East Central Europe. Like other Nazi theorists, he argued that Vienna had lost contact with its historical mission after 1866, and especially after 1918, as Austria was no longer powerful enough to ensure the political and cultural predominance of the German *Volk* in the region.⁶⁵⁵

Yet Hassinger differed with other Nazi educational texts in his discussion of how best to secure Germany's interests in Eastern Europe. He argued that Vienna not only was the leading tower of Germandom in the East, but also that the city needed to serve as a mediator between Germans and non-Germans in the Danubian territories. Hassinger asserted that the Habsburg Monarchy had led many non-Germans to adopt German culture, and that such *Kulturdeutscher* (cultural Germans) had been just as much apart of Vienna's German mission as ethnic Germans. Furthermore, he argued that Vienna had been a decisive and positive force in helping the other *Völker* within the Habsburg Monarchy to develop their own national cultures, even if such cultural development often came at the expense of German-Austrians.⁶⁵⁶ Such notions may have been fairly typical of previous Austrianist conceptions of the Habsburg past during the First Republic and the *Ständestaat*,

Abschlußklassen," 643; Haacke and Ziemann, 152.

⁶⁵⁵Hugo Hassinger, *Wiens deutsche Sendung im Donaauraum* (Vienna: Ostmarken Verlag, 1942), 3-7.

but they were profoundly at odds with the chauvinistic nationalism and the racially determined view of culture which orthodox Nazism espoused. Yet Hassinger himself seemed to have seen no conflict between National Socialism and the Viennese mission he described, and at one point even argued that the Third Reich and the Habsburg Monarchy both stood for the same goal of order and cultural progress for the peoples of central and southern Europe!⁶⁵⁷

A 1941 article in *Der Neue Weg* by Wilhelm Deutsch also contradicted Nazi orthodoxy. Deutsch, like Hassinger, argued that German settlement in the southeastern Europe had exerted benevolent influence upon the literary, cultural, and national development of the southern Slavs and Romanians. He argued that this process had been begun during the “German Reformation,” and was initially opposed by the “Jesuit-Habsburg Counter-Reformation.” Eventually, however, Austria’s government had encouraged such development, especially with the extensive school and administrative reforms under Maria-Theresa and Joseph II. Deutsch’s article, while not as dramatically peculiar as Hassinger’s work, is nevertheless curiously unideological for a pedagogical work published during the Nazi era. Deutsch’s emphasis upon Slavic and Romanian culture was at odds with the typical Nazi focus upon German culture and development, and he did not mention racial ideals in his work at all.⁶⁵⁸

Yet works such as those of Hassinger and Deutsch are remarkable precisely because they were so rare during the Nazi period. The vast majority of Nazi educational materials,

⁶⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 3, 11, 21-22.

⁶⁵⁷*Ibid.*, 16.

⁶⁵⁸Wilhelm Deutsch, “Österreichs frühe deutsche Mittlerrolle im Südosten,” *Der Neue Weg* (April, 1941): 90-7.

whether produced by Austrians or *Reichsdeutsche*, repudiated any notions of an Austrian mission beyond its role as an eastern outpost of German settlement, and they condemned the supranational cultural efforts of the Habsburg Dynasty. Indeed such educational sources most frequently argued that the Habsburgs, in serving their own interests or the interests of other regional *Völker*, had betrayed the cause of Germandom in their territory. Various Nazi educators presented a diverse array of pejorative descriptions of the Habsburgs as a whole. Klagges argued that guilt for long delay in unifying the German *Volk* should be charged to the Habsburgs and asserted that “Nothing had so hindered the creation of a strong German national state as the continued existence of the Habsburg Imperial house, which was German in appearance only.”⁶⁵⁹ A provisional curriculum for history education in Vienna charged that Habsburgs had been a force of decay that had caused the German Empire to decline from its highpoint during the Middle Ages.⁶⁶⁰ The authors of a handbook for Nazi teachers of history, Ulrich Haacke and Ernst Ziemman, described various Austrian Habsburgs as “foreign to the *Volk*,” “foreign to the Viennese *Geist*,” and “Spanish,” and proclaimed that “it is the tragedy of the Germans in Austria that this royal house ruled them.”⁶⁶¹ While Nazi educators certainly identified other enemies of the German people in their work, the Habsburgs consistently appeared alongside the Jews, the individualistic German princes of the early modern period, and political Catholicism as a corruptive force in German history, rife with such anti-Nazi qualities as decadence, humanism and cosmopolitanism.

Nazi historical educators identified several periods in which the House of Habsburg had had a particularly pernicious effect upon the German *Volk*. The Counter-Reformation

⁶⁵⁹Klagges, 383, 486.

⁶⁶⁰“Übergangslehrplan für den Geschichtsunterricht an Wiener Hauptschulen und Abschlußklassen,” 640.

and the subsequent Thirty Years War represented one particularly destructive episode for Germany. Nazi pedagogues were especially critical of the Habsburgs' actions during this era, and charged that such Habsburg emperors as Karl V and Franz I had allied themselves with the anti German Jesuit order in order to impose Catholicism forcibly upon a German population that had largely opted for the Protestant faith. These Austrian rulers were guilty of choosing the interests of a universalistic, Jewish-influenced religion over the unity and prosperity of the German *Volk*, and of setting the stage for hostile foreign powers such as Sweden and especially France to rape and pillage the German homeland. This conflict in many ways represented the nadir of German history for Nazi educators. Not only the Habsburgs but also most of the other Germany princely houses had allowed their selfish political interests and fascination with anti-German cultures to justify keeping German Central Europe divided and nationally demoralized.⁶⁶²

The *Vormärz* era and the subsequent Revolution in 1848 also provided Nazi educators with the opportunity to denounce the Habsburgs. Nazi educators presented Prince Klemens von Metternich, the Austrian architect of the *Vormärz* conservative order, as an oppressive figure who actively opposed the German nationalist movements which the Nazis regarded as the real force of progress in German history.⁶⁶³ The revolution which ended Metternich's grip upon Austria in 1848 led to positive change according to Nazi educators, however, as the Habsburgs did all that they could to frustrate any effort to create a unified German national state in the name of maintaining their own exploitative multinational

⁶⁶¹Haacke and Ziemann, 75, 95.

⁶⁶²Haacke and Ziemann, 79-85; "Übergangslehrplan für den Geschichtsunterricht an Wiener Hauptschulen und Abschlußklassen," 640; Blackburn, 161; Dietrich Klagges and Fritz Stoll, *So Ward Das Reich* (Frankfur-am-Main: Verlag Moriz Diesterweg, 1943), 66.

empire. Indeed, the Frankfurt parliamentarians who sought national unity in 1848 fared little better with Nazi pedagogues. According to Nazi educators, the revolutionaries of 1848 had mistakenly sought to realize a German state on the impractical basis of liberal ideals derived from the French Revolution, which were in fact antithetical to real German nationalism.⁶⁶⁴ Still, for Nazi historians, any step toward German unity, no matter how confused ideologically, was good, and the Habsburgs in 1848 had opposed this unity as they invariably had throughout German history.

One final era in which the House of Habsburg supposedly betrayed the German cause was during the First World War. While Nazi educators largely blamed the Jews and the French for Germany's defeat and for its subsequent humiliation by the treaties which ended the war,⁶⁶⁵ at least one Nazi educational text apportioned out a share of the guilt to the Habsburgs as well. Haackes and Ziemann charged that the last Habsburg ruler, Karl I, had betrayed the German war effort and his own homeland by pursuing a separate peace near the end of the war.⁶⁶⁶ Thus up to its final demise, the Habsburg dynasty represented an anti-German ruling house which continually placed its own political hegemony ahead of its concern for the German subjects whom it should have protected.

While Nazi educators almost universally abhorred and derided the Habsburg dynasty, they did have a vision of the forces that had truly served the cause of German progress in history. This vision, when taken as whole, provided German students with a

⁶⁶³“Übergangslehrplan für den Geschichtsunterricht an Wiener Hauptschulen und Abschlußklassen,” 643.; Haacke and Ziemann, 137-139; Klagges, 339.

⁶⁶⁴Ernst Krieck, “Französische Revolution und deutsche Zeitwende,” *Der Neue Weg* 6 (1939): 244-245; “Zur Geschichte des Zusammenschlusses aller Deutschen” *Der Neue Weg* 9 (1938): 671; Klagges, 395; Haacke and Ziemann, 143-4.

⁶⁶⁵See Klagges, 396, Blackburn, 145.

⁶⁶⁶Haacke and Ziemann, 185-186.

heroic narrative of German history which moved from the victory of Armin's Germanic warrior-farmers over the Romans at Teutoberger Forest to the final salvation of the *Volk* under the leadership of Hitler himself.⁶⁶⁷ The heroic narrative presented in Nazi textbooks and pedagogical materials generally privileged the contributions of Prussians and north Germans, and frequently contrasted Prussia's vigorous leadership with the Habsburg's decadence and lack of *völkisch* sentiment. Haackes and Ziemann's handbook presented a particularly clear description of the National Socialist German heroic narrative, and of how that narrative was to be contrasted with the anti-national policies of the Habsburgs. They argued that there had been three great leaders in historical march toward German unity: Frederick the Great, Bismarck, and Hitler.⁶⁶⁸

Indeed, the conflict between the Hohenzollerns and the Habsburgs during the eighteenth century appeared to many Nazi pedagogues as the point when true leadership of the German *Volk* decisively passed from Austria to Prussia. In comparing those two princely houses, Klagges wrote, "from henceforth there would be two treetops of the German *Reich*, an old one, increasingly desicated and dying, and a second one, a young and powerful force of regeneration."⁶⁶⁹ Haackes and Ziemann likewise argued that the eighteenth century represented the time when the Habsburgs lost the future, even as the Hohenzollerns won it.⁶⁷⁰ Frederick the Great invariably appeared as the standard bearer of the German *Volk* in such accounts, and Nazi educational theorists praised his vigorous and nationalistic military leadership even as they minimized his regrettable lifelong patronage of

⁶⁶⁷Blackburn, 130-134; Winkerlhöfer, 482.

⁶⁶⁸Haackes and Ziemann, 146.

⁶⁶⁹Klagges., 380.

⁶⁷⁰Haacke and Ziemann, 107.

French culture and Enlightenment ideas.⁶⁷¹ One Austrian Nazi author, specifically addressing an Austrian audience accustomed to the corporatist regime's previous denunciations of Frederick's wars against Habsburg Austria, took a milder tone, avowing that it had been a tragedy that Prussia and Austria had fought, but that the conflict had been brief and understandable in light of Frederick's encirclement by hostile powers.⁶⁷²

Nazi educators likewise praised Bismarck as the next truly great national leader in Germany's history, and endorsed his conflict with Austria just as they had Frederick the Great's Silesian War. Haacke and Ziemann argued that Bismarck had correctly identified the Habsburgs as the greatest obstacle to any sort of unified German state, and had shrewdly maneuvered the House of Austria into a decisive conflict which paved the way for a new German *Reich*.⁶⁷³ Various Nazi authors emphasized the manner in which Bismarck swiftly offered Habsburg Austria a conciliatory peace and a subsequent alliance, however, pointing out that Bismarck was not anti-Austrian, but was merely attempting to serve the interests of the *Volk* as a whole. Indeed, these Nazi educators lamented the fact that Bismarck was only able to create a small German state, even as they acknowledged that it was probably the best the Prussian chancellor could have achieved given the circumstances.⁶⁷⁴

Adolf Hitler himself of course represented the climax of the Nazis' heroic historical narrative. He was key figure who finally realized a government in Germany on a truly national and *völkisch* basis, and who finally absorbed Austria and the other German-

⁶⁷¹Blackburn, 96-97, Klagges 381, Haacke and Ziemann, 122; "Deutschland's Geschichte," *Der Neue Weg* 7 (1938): 597; Klagges and Stoll, 97.

⁶⁷²Abl, 17. For similar point, see "Übergangslehrplan für den Geschichtsunterricht an Wiener Hauptschulen und Abschlußklassen," 640.

⁶⁷³Haacke and Ziemann, 146.

⁶⁷⁴Klagges, 405-406; Haacke and Ziemann, 151-160; B. Kumsteller, U. Haacke, and B. Schneider, *Geschichtsbuch für die Deutsche Jugend, Klasse-1* (Leipzig: Verlag von Quelle and Mayer, 1941), 61.

speaking regions of the old Habsburg Monarchy into the German *Reich*. He was also obviously the dictator around whom the Nazi regime had created a potent cult of personality, so naturally Nazi educational accounts praised him tirelessly. Some Nazi pedagogical journals and German language readers even made him the subject of starry eyed poems and breathless paeans.⁶⁷⁵ Still it is worth noting that educational authors consistently lauded Hitler for his role in “bringing Austria home” to the Third Reich, in essence finally ending the Austrian independence that had been the legacy of Habsburg rule.⁶⁷⁶

Frederick the Great, Bismarck and Hitler were the pinnacles of German national leadership in the National Socialist view of history. Among the lesser heroic figures in such accounts, however, Nazi accounts featured a number of historical personalities most commonly associated with Austrian history, and indeed a few Habsburg rulers as well.

Maria Theresa and her son Joseph II were the only Habsburg monarchs ever portrayed positively in Nazi educational materials. Maria Theresa’s case is particularly interesting, given the fact that she was a woman, a pious Catholic, and the Austrian monarch who had fought against Frederick the Great’s Prussia. As we have seen, Nazi educational policy typically focused upon motherhood and other family matters as the primary duty for German women. Maria Theresa, as the Empress of Austria, had assumed a political role which the Nazis reserved for men. Nevertheless, Maria Theresa emerged in educational materials as a worthy antagonist for Frederick the Great, and Nazi teachers praised her toughness and shrewd diplomatic and military leadership, as well as her more motherly

⁶⁷⁵Will Vesper, “Dem Führer,” Baldur von Schirach, “Dem Führer,” Schirach, “Der Größte,” in *Der Neue Weg* 4 (1938), 258-259; Kumsteller, Haacke, and Schneider, 12-13.

⁶⁷⁶Klagges, 442; “Übergang Lehrplan für den Geschichtsunterricht an Wiener Hauptschulen und Abschlußklassen,” 643-4; Flessau, 80.

attributes.⁶⁷⁷

These Nazi accounts portrayed Maria Theresa as a great and truly German leader, despite her pious Catholicism and her perennial opposition to the Frederick the Great's diplomatic and military endeavors in Central Europe. While Nazi educators may have charged her Habsburg predecessors and successors for prioritizing their own political power or the demands of other, non-German *Völker* above the interests of the German nation, they portrayed the Austrian Empress as a leader just as concerned with German affairs and German welfare as Frederick. Indeed, Haacke and Ziemann explicitly placed Maria Theresa alongside Frederick as a great leader of the *Volk* in their handbook for history teachers, and used both monarchs as symbols for reconciliation and brotherly ties between Austrian and Germany. They wrote:

The two great opponents, the King and the Empress, grew together. And today, after the year 1938, all the animosity and bitterness lies behind us. Today Frederick the Great, as one of the greatest German men, belongs to the Austrian, just as Maria Theresa, one of the greatest German women, belongs to the Prussian. Today, that which separated us has dwindled, and only the feeling that Prussians and Austrians are in the same manner Germans remains.⁶⁷⁸

Austrian Nazi educator, Paul Abl, similarly praised both Frederick and Maria Theresa, and repudiated the notion that there was any valid historical distinction to be drawn between nationally minded leaders from Prussia and Austria.⁶⁷⁹ Thus, even though the Habsburg dynasty as a whole was often compared unfavorably to the House of Hohenzollern, Nazi

⁶⁷⁷Klagges, 282; Haacke and Ziemann, 115; "Übergangslehrplan für den Geschichtsunterricht an Wiener Hauptschulen und Abschlußklassen," 642; "Über den Geschichtsunterricht im 5. Schuljahr," *Der Neue Weg* 10 (1938) 734; Kümstler, Haacke, and Schneider, 92; Gilmer Blackburn makes note of Maria Theresa's uniqueness as a female political leader singled out for praise by the Nazis in their history textbooks. According to his findings, the only other female leader praised in such terms by the Nazis was the Louise, the Queen of Prussia during the Napoleonic wars. Blackburn, 109-110.

⁶⁷⁸Haacke and Ziemann, 106.

⁶⁷⁹Abl, 17.

accounts often claimed Maria Theresa as part of Germany's great historical heritage.

Joseph II, always a popular figure for German nationalists, also emerged in Nazi historical accounts as a praiseworthy figure. As we have seen, Hitler himself thought highly of Joseph, and Nazi educational texts replicated the dictator's positive view of the Austrian Emperor. If other Habsburgs had been hostile toward the German *Volk* in Austria, Joseph II emerged in Nazi accounts as one of the rare Habsburg rulers who had truly thought of himself as a German, and who had sought to spread German language and culture through his administrative and educational reforms. Indeed, Haackes and Ziemann lamented Joseph's early death as a tragedy which resulted in the reversal of many of his reforms by his successors, who were more typically anti-German Habsburgs.⁶⁸⁰

Nazi historical educators also portrayed several other figures associated with the Habsburg dynasty as part of Germany's heroic heritage. Eugene of Savoy was one such historical personality, and Nazi textbook authors and pedagogues praised him for his role in defending Germany from the Turkish onslaught in the seventeenth century. Such praise is perhaps unsurprising, given the fact that the Nazis christened one of the SS divisions operating on the Eastern Front during World War II the "Prince Eugen Division," but it is interesting, especially since Eugene was not actually German. Still, the Nazis lionized Eugene as a statesman and military leader during of the siege of Vienna of 1683, and gave him credit, alongside Starhemberg and the German people of Vienna, for the victory over the Turks. Nazi educators were quite careful, however, not to allow any of this credit to accrue to the Habsburgs themselves, and emphasized the House of Austria's flight from the capital in the face of the Turkish siege, which left the common German *Volk* of the city to

secure their own liberation.⁶⁸¹

Nazi accounts treated Andreas Hofer's resistance against Napoleon in a similar manner. Hofer, the Tirolean leader who had struggled against and ultimately been executed by French and Bavarian forces serving under the French Emperor, had frequently been claimed by Austrianist views of history as an example of Austrian national sentiment. Now Hofer emerged in Nazi narratives as a true German patriot, betrayed by the cowardly Habsburg rulers to die a martyr's death for the cause of the German *Volk*. Thus, Nazi teachers and pedagogues counted Hofer alongside such other opponents of Napoleon such as Arndt, Clauswitz, and Stein as a German national hero.⁶⁸² They cast the Habsburgs, on the other hand, as the weak link in the struggle against Napoleon, and as the arch-betrayers of the burgeoning German national movement.⁶⁸³

Various other Austrians also appeared in the Nazis' heroic narrative. Nazi historians singled out Georg von Schönerer, for example, as one of the few German Austrians of his age who had seen national issues with clarity, and who had rightly opposed Habsburg rule in Austria rather than dividing his loyalties between the anti-German Habsburg dynasty and the German *Volk*. Schönerer's ardent anti-Semitism and firm stance against political Catholicism likewise fit well with Nazi views of Austrian history. Even the Austrian dramatist Franz Grillparzer emerged in at least one Austrian Nazi educational article as a possible source of inspiration for Austrian National Socialists through the use of anti-Semitic quotations carefully selected from his writing. This account of course made no

⁶⁸⁰“Über den Geschichtsunterricht im 5. Schuljahr,” 734; Abl, 17; Haacke and Ziemann, 115-116.

⁶⁸¹“Über den Geschichtsunterricht im 5. Schuljahr,” 734; Abl, 17; Haacke and Ziemann, 94-97.

⁶⁸²Klagges, 388; Haacke and Ziemann, 131; “Übergangslehrplan für den Geschichtsunterricht an Wiener Hauptschulen und Abschlußklassen,” 642.

mention of Grillparzer's firm sense of Austrian distinctiveness and occasional hostility to Prussian German culture.⁶⁸⁴ Nazi educators also sometimes mentioned figures from Austria's strong musical tradition such as Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert as a source of pride for not just Austrians, but all Germans.⁶⁸⁵

Thus the National Socialist vision of the Habsburg past was one in which the dynasty had represented a decadent, internationalist, Catholic force hostile to the national aspirations which the Nazis held to be the true essence of German history. It had been Prussia, not Habsburg Austria, which had led Germany toward its national destiny, and the Habsburg Monarchy for the most part merely served as an adversary to true *völkisch* leadership in the Nazi heroic narrative of German history. Habsburg monarchs who had actually done their duty to protect and advance the interests of the German *Volk* were extraordinarily rare, and in general any German heroes from Austria had carried on their fight for the German nation despite the pernicious efforts of the House of Austria, rather than in conjunction with it. Austria had lost its appropriate sense of a German mission under the rule of the Habsburgs, and had only regained that calling with the final attainment of a great German state under the leadership of Austria's most glorious son, Adolf Hitler.

This was the vision of Austria's history which the government of the Third Reich derived from Hitler's writing, and which it assiduously sought to inculcate in students in classrooms in Germany after 1933. After 1938, the Nazi teachers, textbook authors, and educational theorists from the old Reich were enthusiastically joined by their counterparts in

⁶⁸³Klagges, 389-391; "Übergangslehrplan für den Geschichtsunterricht an Wiener Hauptschulen und Abschlußklassen," 643.

⁶⁸⁴ "Franz Grillparzer" *Der Neue Weg* 1 (1941): 18-19.

⁶⁸⁵*Ibid.*, 19; Klagges, 400.

the *Ostmark*, and the pedagogical materials produced in Nazi Austria did not differ appreciably from those produced anywhere else in Hitler's state. Of course, not all Austrians had shared this Nazi vision of Austria's Habsburg past before the *Anschluss*, just as not all Austrians supported Hitler's regime after Austria's inclusion in Nazi Germany. The harsh realities of Nazi rule left some Austrians disenchanted with new government after the flush of enthusiasm immediately after the *Anschluss* faded. This disillusionment only deepened as the Second World War began to go badly for Germany after 1943, and the Nazis' promises of a return to greatness and economic prosperity for Austria began to ring increasingly hollow for more and more Austrians. As the small Austrian resistance movement grew and the Allies came ever closer to defeating the Third Reich, "Austrianist" articulations of Austrian national identity typified the opponents of Nazi rule in the *Ostmark*.

vi. The Austrian Resistance Movement and the Resurgence of Austrian National Identity

The extent to which the Austrian population truly supported the Hitler regime after 1938 has been a controversial issue in the historiography of Nazi Austria. The generation of Austrian historians working after the Second World War tended to minimize Austrian support for the regime, and generally portrayed the Nazi government in Austria as a foreign imposition upon the Austrian population.⁶⁸⁶ In the years after the 1986 controversy

⁶⁸⁶For a discussion of postwar interpretations of the Nazi period, see Chapter 5 and Peter Thaler, *The Ambivalence of Identity: The Austrian Experience of Nation-building in a Modern Society* (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2001); Heidemarie Uhl, "The Politics of Memory: Austria's Perception of the Second World War and the National Socialist Period," in *Austrian Historical Memory and National Identity*, Contemporary Austrian Studies, ed. Günter Bischof and Anton Pelinka, vol. 5 (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 1997), 64-5; Anton Pelinka, "Taboos and Self-Deception: The Second Republic's Reconstruction of History," in *Austrian Historical Memory and National Identity*,

surrounding the Austrian President Kurt Waldheim's past service in the *Wehrmacht* on the Balkan front, however, a new generation of Austrian historians began to question these accounts of Austria's Nazi past. Such Austrian scholars as Anton Pelinka, Erika Weinzierl, and Gerhard Botz spearheaded this drive to promote a more critical examination of Austria's support for the Third Reich, highlighting Austrian participation in the Nazi regime, the Second World War, and the Holocaust.⁶⁸⁷

Work by foreign scholars has also helped redefine the state of the historical debate on the extent of Austrian support for the *Anschluss* and the Third Reich. Recent research by Evan Bukey and Peter Thaler has revealed the extent to which Austrians supported the Nazi regime and the war which Hitler initiated in 1939. Bukey, in particular, conclusively demonstrates that most inhabitants of the Austrian lands of the Third Reich, in a broad spectrum ranging from conservative Catholics to radical workers, generally supported Hitler's rule, even if their level of enthusiasm varied from region to region, and according to ideology. Bukey argues that only after the German defeat at Stalingrad in 1943 did many Austrians begin to express grievances against the Nazi regime openly, and that even then their complaints were unaccompanied by any large scale resistance.⁶⁸⁸ Thaler's work on Austrian soldiers serving in the *Wehrmacht* reveals that the Nazi leadership had a great deal of confidence in the reliability of their troops from Austria, and that Austrian rates of desertion were comparable to those of other Reich Germans, and considerably less than

99-100.

⁶⁸⁷ Anton Pelinka, *Austria: Out of the Shadow of the Past* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1998); Gerhard Botz, "Eine Deutsche Geschichte 1938 bis 1945? Österreichische Geschichte Zwischen Exil, Widerstand und Verstrickung," *Zeitgeschichte* 14, no. 1 (1986): 19-38; *Wien vom 'Anschluss' zum Krieg* (Vienna: Jugend und Volk Verlag, 1978); Erika Weinzierl, *Zu wenig Gerech. Österreicher und Judenverfolgung, 1938-1945*, 3rd ed. (Graz: Verlag Styria, 1986).

⁶⁸⁸ Bukey, 288-93.

those of German-speaking troops from Alsace and Luxembourg.⁶⁸⁹ Thus most Austrians supported, or at the very least did not actively oppose, Nazi rule until the very end of the war.

Yet the picture is more complex than such accounts of Austrian support for the Third Reich imply. Timothy Kirk's study of Austrian workers under National Socialist rule reveals a wide *lack* of support for the Nazi regime on the part of many Austrian workers, who had been for the most part quite successfully indoctrinated by the Austrian Social Democrats before 1933. Kirk found that such sentiments rarely translated into overt opposition to the Nazis, but rather took the form of the quiet maintenance of networks within the labor community and in some instances covert industrial sabotage.⁶⁹⁰ Likewise, Radomir Luza's work has focused on the role of the Austrian resistance in maintaining notions of Austrian distinctiveness during the war years. According to Luza, Nazi policies which attempted to assimilate Austrians in the greater German Reich in fact helped inspire notions of Austrian patriotism, which the resistance did its best to build upon and magnify. He notes that, "Part of the Resistance's achievement was that by piercing the Nazi fiction of unanimous support for the regime, it constantly reminded Austrians of their inheritance."⁶⁹¹

Bukey and Thaler convincingly demonstrate a high level of Austrian support for the *Anschluß*, the Nazi regime, and the war effort. Yet at the same time, these indications of

⁶⁸⁹Peter Thaler, "'Germans' and 'Austrians' in World War II: Military History and National Identity," Center for Austrian Studies, Working Paper 99-1, September, 1999; see also Walter Manoshek and Hans Safrian, "Österreicher in der Wehrmacht" in *NS-Herrschaft in Österreich: Ein Handbuch*, 123-158.

⁶⁹⁰Timothy Kirk, "Nazi Austria: the Limits of Dissent," in *Opposing Fascism: Community, Authority and Resistance in Europe*, ed. Timothy Kirk and Anthony Mc Elligot, 133- 149. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 148-9; *idem*, *Nazism and the Working Class in Austria: Industrial Unrest and Political Unrest in the 'National Community'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

⁶⁹¹Radomir Luza, *The Resistance in Austria, 1938-1945* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 277; *idem*, *Austro-German Relations in the Anschluß Era* (Princeton: Princeton University Press,

broad popular support do not invalidate the findings of Luza, which estimate the membership in various illegal political groups in Austria during the war at about 100,000 people out of a total population of more than 6 million.⁶⁹² Such numbers are certainly significant even if they do not represent armed opposition to the Nazis on the level maintained elsewhere. Thus, even as we acknowledge the extent to which many Austrians seemed to be quite comfortable with Nazi rule, and hence presumably with Nazi statements concerning Austria's history and national identity, the existence of the Austrian resistance movement does provide significant evidence of opposition to Nazi Germany's effort to co-opt and redefine Austria's Habsburg past. Indeed, the Austrian resistance presented strong, if clandestine, articulations of an Austrian identity separate from the German nation in its struggle against the Nazi regime.

The resistance movement did not come into existence during the Nazi years as an entirely new creation. It developed from the ideological roots of the political parties which had dominated Austrian public life before 1938. Thus various factions within the resistance movement continued to articulate the positions on Austrian identity and the Habsburg past already established by Christian Socials, Social Democrats and, to a lesser extent, Communists before the *Anschluss*. The Socialist resistance movement, deriving its ideals from the Austrian Social Democratic tradition, was reluctant to give up the support for *Anschluss* and a German Austrian identity which the old party had firmly adhered to since before World War I. The Communists, on the other hand, maintained the sense of Austrian national distinctiveness that the Austrian Communist Party had established during the 1930s,

1975), 259-256.

⁶⁹²Luza, *The Resistance in Austria*, 285.

and supported that position with proclamations of Austrian nationalism which were almost as hostile toward the old Habsburg Monarchy as they were toward the Nazis. Of all of the factions of the Austrian resistance, only those with roots in Austria's conservative movement demonstrated both a sense of Austria's national distinctiveness and a commitment to an Austrian historical tradition grounded in the old Habsburg dynastic state. Evidence concerning the Austrian resistance's views on Austrian identity and the Habsburg past is of course quite rare because of the Nazi regime's stringent censorship and brutal suppression of all overt political dissent. Still, there are some documents which give us at least a partial picture of the manner in which the resistance movement made its arguments against Nazi rule.

The Austrian Social Democrats in many ways represented the least active political faction in terms of overt resistance to the Hitler regime. The Social Democratic Party, a prohibited organization in Austria since it was outlawed in 1934, had mounted little in the way of active struggle against Austria's corporatist government after a brief initial revolt, and it remained passive during the Nazi era. By 1938, most of the Party's leaders had already left Austria to escape the corporatist regime, and the Social Democrats' traditional reluctance to engage in revolutionary activity left those Party members who had remained ill prepared to engage in the sort of clandestine resistance at which the more activist Communist Party excelled.⁶⁹³ The Social Democrats' long commitment to *Anschluß* likewise weakened their ability to mobilize the workers against a regime which had finally

⁶⁹³For a criticism of the Social Democratic leaders' reluctance to use force against the corporatist regime, see Anson Rabinbach, "Red Vienna: Symbol and Strategy," in *The Austrian Socialist Experiment: Social Democracy and Austromarxism, 1918-1934*, ed. Anson Rabinbach (Boulder and London: Westview, 1985):187-194; *idem*, *The Crisis of Austrian Socialism: From Red Vienna to Civil War, 1927-1934*,

realized that ambition, albeit in a dramatically different form than the democratic and socialist great-German state which the Party had always envisioned. Still, Socialist ideology did play an important role in “inoculating” the working class against Nazi ideals, and the Socialists were at least successful in maintaining underground networks which would serve as the basis for their post-1945 party organization.⁶⁹⁴

The Socialists had been among the strongest supporters of union with Germany during the interwar period. Despite their vehement opposition to National Socialism, the Socialists continued to support the *Anschluss* even during the Nazi era. On April 3, 1938, Karl Renner, the most prominent Socialist leader and the first president of the Austrian First Republic, made a public statement in the *Neues Wiener Tagblatt* entitled “*Ich stimme mit Ja*” (I vote yes), supporting union with Nazi Germany. In this statement and a subsequent clarification in the British periodical *World Review*, Renner explained that he supported the *Anschluss* in 1938 for the same reason that he had supported it as president of the Austrian delegation to the conference drafting the Treaty of Saint-Germain in 1919: most Austrians considered themselves part of the German nation, and deserved the same right to self determination as any other national group. Renner thought that an independent Austrian state would be economically unviable, and he rejected the notion of some sort of political or economic Danubian federation with the other former Habsburg lands as similarly unrealistic and lacking in popular support. While he abhorred the Hitler regime, Renner argued that it represented little real change from Schuschnigg’s corporatist dictatorship. He also characterized the National Socialist government as a temporary condition, and he hoped that

(Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983).

⁶⁹⁴Kirk, 133-149.

the *Anschluss* would prove a permanent boon for the Austrian people once the Hitler regime ended. Indeed, Renner demonstrated his faith in the eventual demise of National Socialism by refusing to flee Nazi Austria as so many other Social Democratic leaders did.⁶⁹⁵

Not all Socialists supported the *Anschluss* as vigorously as Renner, however. One leader of the Socialist exile community, Joseph Buttinger, defended his movement against charges that it supported Hitler's *Anschluss* by remarking that the Socialists cared little for notions of Austrian independence, but rather focused on the goal of overthrowing Hitler. In 1939 he wrote, "The Socialist worker's movement is neither altogether for nor against the *Anschluss*. It is for the achievement of its political goals, for the realization of proletarian class power, for the victory of German and international socialism."⁶⁹⁶ A year later, a group of Austrian Socialist exiles in Paris reiterated these themes, arguing that any decisions by the movement concerning what would come after the Third Reich should be put off until Hitler was successfully overthrown. At the same time, the group warned that the efforts by Austrian legitimists to work for the restoration of the Habsburg Monarchy played directly into the hands of the Nazis by alienating the former subject peoples of the Monarchy who had a "profound aversion" to such an idea.⁶⁹⁷ In a practical sense, the *Anschluss* made little difference to the Socialists so long as the struggle against Hitler continued. Still, during the first years of Nazi rule in Austria, they generally remained far more receptive to the idea of a

⁶⁹⁵Renner retired totally from public life in 1938 and spent the Nazi years quietly in his villa in Gloggnitz, Upper Austria. Only after the Soviet "liberation" of eastern Austria in 1945 did he resume political activity. Karl Renner, *Karl Renner in Dokumenten und Erinnerungen*, ed. Seigfried Nasko (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1982), 132-137; Jelavich, 247.

⁶⁹⁶"Flugschrift mit Stellungnahme des Sozialisten Emigrationführers Joseph Buttinger zum 'Anschluß,'" in *Widerstand und Verfolgung in Wien 1934-1945. Eine Dokumentation*, vol. 2 (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1975), 31-33.

⁶⁹⁷"Flugschrift der Auslandsvertretung österreichischer Sozialisten mit grundsätzlicher politischer Stellungnahme, Neujahr 1940," in *Widerstand und Verfolgung in Wien*, vol. 2, 37-40.

continuing union with Germany than to any of the options supported by the other opposition factions such as monarchical restoration or a Danubian confederation.

Only as it became clear that Nazi Germany would lose the war and that the Allies were unlikely to permit Austria to remain with Germany, did many Socialists begin to repudiate the *Anschluss* explicitly. An excerpt from the memoirs of the future Socialist president, Adolf Schärf, concerning a conversation with the trade unionist resister Wilhelm Leuschner in 1943 illustrates how difficult it was for many members of the movement to abandon the idea even at that stage:

I interrupted my visitor unheralded and said: “The *Anschluss* is dead. The Austrians have been cured of their love of Germany. . . .” Leuschner was surprised and shaken. He told me that he had talked to other men in Vienna, and no one had presented him with such an impression of the mood in Austria. I regained control of myself, so to speak, and initially could not understand how I had arrived at such an answer. I continued, however, and declared that my political friends could only participate in the overthrow of the Hitler government, not in the preservation of the *Anschluss*. Leuschner was disappointed.⁶⁹⁸

Not all Socialists had entirely abandoned the *Anschluss* even relatively late in the war. It seems likely that even those who had rejected it did so out of practical considerations in light of Allied intentions, rather than out of genuine ideological or national conviction. Still, the Socialist exile Rudolph Holowatyj anticipated the position that his Party would take on the *Aschluß* after the end of the Nazi regime when he wrote in 1944 that,

The victorious powers will have no need to issue ‘prohibitions’ against a new *Anschluß*. *The Concept of the Anschluss has ceased to exist.* Hitler and his disciples have finished it off. After the liberation of the country, the Austrians will reject by an overwhelming majority the idea of *Anschluss* even with a democratic Germany.⁶⁹⁹

⁶⁹⁸ Adolf Schärf, *Österreichs Erneuerung, 1945-1955* (Vienna, 1955), 20; Thaler, *The Ambivalence of Identity*, 84-5.

⁶⁹⁹ United States State Department excerpt of Rudolph Holowatyj’s article in *L’Avenir*, National Archives,

Holowatyj recognized that the ideal of an Austro-German union had simply become too inextricably intertwined with National Socialist ideology to survive as a viable political goal for the Party after the Third Reich's defeat, no matter how ardently Socialists had supported *Anschluß* before 1938.

The position and activities of the Austrian Communist Party (KPÖ) differed significantly from those of the Socialists. During the 1930s, the Communists had proclaimed a theory of Austria's nationhood based upon its distinctive history and culture. The Party's main spokesman on national issues, Alfred Klahr, had vigorously supported Austrian independence as a bulwark for democratic ideals against Hitler. In contrast to Renner and the Socialists, Klahr and the KPÖ saw a very significant difference between Schuschnigg's dictatorship and Hitler's racial state, and thus supported the corporatist regime's efforts to maintain Austrian independence between 1936 and 1938, even though the party had been banned by that same government in 1933.⁷⁰⁰

Because the KPÖ had taken the Nazis very seriously as adversaries and were used to functioning underground, the Communists were poised from the beginning for resistance against the Hitler regime. Indeed during the course of the war, the Communists constituted the single largest and best organized faction within the Austrian Resistance. They were unable to mount any sort of serious armed insurrection until the last year of the war, however, and the early years of Nazi rule saw them struggle just to survive. Yet the Communists did manage to produce propaganda during these years which portrayed the

Washington DC, RG 59, 863.000/6-642.

⁷⁰⁰ Alfred Klahr, "Zur nationalen Frage in Österreich," *Weg und Ziel: Monatschrift für Theorie und Praxis des Marxismus-Leninismus* 2, no. 3 (1937):126-133; Luza, *Resistance in Austria*, 21-22.

Nazis as foreign invaders and appealed to the Austrian people's proud sense of distinctiveness. Just two months after the *Anschluß*, Nazi Security Service records indicate that KPÖ distributed flyers in Vienna which read:

From a cosmopolitan city to a Prussian province?
Viennese! Do you approve of the degradation of your city?
Fight with us for an independent Austrian Republic! ⁷⁰¹

An illicitly published issue of *Die Rote Fahne* from November of the same year contained a similar message: "The Austrian working class, and with it the entire Austrian *Volk*, will with steely determination lead the struggle against Prussian foreign domination, which has brought the Austrian *Volk* only a lack of freedom, misery and war, to the end!"⁷⁰² Nazi records indicate that such Communist propaganda continued to circulate throughout the war years with messages urging Austrians to fight for their independence against a Nazi regime invariably characterized as foreign or "Prussian."⁷⁰³ The Communists thus explicitly disputed the Nazi government's claims to represent a united German *Volk* by portraying National Socialism as a provincial ideology which was foreign to the traditions and values of the Austrian nation.

The KPÖ's goal seems to have always been an independent "small" Austria, however. The Communists did not advocate a south German state or a Danubian federation, as did some other resistance groups. The fact that Communists exclusively supported "small" Austrian independence makes sense in light of the ties between the Party and the Soviet government, which had no desire to countenance the creation of a powerful

⁷⁰¹“Vom SD in Wien XVI und XVII beschlagnahmter Steuzettel der KPÖ, Mai 1939,” in *Widerstand und Verfolgung in Wien*, vol. 2, 234.

⁷⁰²“Illegale Zeitschrift der KPÖ ‘Die Rote Fahne. Nachrichten Blatt’, November, 1939,” in *Widerstand und Verfolgung in Wien*, vol. 2, 237-8.

state with the power to oppose the Soviet Union's own ambitions in Central Europe. As might well be expected, the Communists also opposed any notion of a restored monarchy, and at least one Communist newspaper countered Western accusations of Soviet aggression in 1939 by accusing Chamberlain and Deladier of conspiring to return Otto von Habsburg to the Austrian throne.⁷⁰⁴ Thus, the KPÖ juxtaposed the cultural and historical traditions of Austria and its inevitable socialistic future with the militarism and foreignness of "Prussian" Germany, which had brought about Nazism. At the same time, however, the Communists also repudiated the legitimacy of the old dynasty in no uncertain terms.

The "small" Austrian ideology of the Communists can be contrasted with opinions of the other large faction of opposition to the Nazi regime in Austria: the right wing legitimists and traditionalists. This group represented the conservative core of the other prominent political faction in the First Republic, the Christian Social Party. The CSP itself had supported *Anschluss* in 1919 just as the other parties had done, and it continued to do so, albeit in an increasingly muted manner, until 1933. A portion of the right wing of the Austrian political spectrum maintained support for the Austrian *ancien regime*, however, and hoped for a resumption of Habsburg rule in Austria at some point in the future. Such *kaisertreu* aspirations blended with firm devotion to Roman Catholicism, and were obviously at odds with any sort of greater German ideology. The Schuschnigg regime used these ideals in an attempt to cultivate a distinctive Austrian identity and maintain a tenuous independence from Nazi Germany during the mid-1930s.⁷⁰⁵ Schuschnigg failed to prevent

⁷⁰³ *Widerstand und Verfolgung in Wien*, vol. 2, 214-264.

⁷⁰⁴ "Illegale Zeitschrift 'KPÖ-Nachrichten,'" *Widerstand und Verfolgung in Wien*, vol. 2, 236-7.

⁷⁰⁵ See Chapter 3 of this dissertation, and Anton Pelinka, "Austrian Identity and the *Ständestaat*," in *The Habsburg Legacy: National Identity in Historical Perspective*, eds. Ritchie Robertson and Edward Timms

the Nazi invasion and subsequent *Anschluß*, but these attempts by Austrian conservatives to describe the basis for a distinctive Austrian identity laid the foundation for the Austrian right's resistance to Nazi rule.

After the *Anschluß*, Nazi authorities were quick to move against Austrian conservatives and legitimists. They detained Schuschnigg and arrested thousands of others. From 1938 on, records from the Gestapo and various courts reveal that the Nazis proceeded against Austrian legitimism with vigor and succeeding in capturing many conservative Austrian resisters. These documents show that legitimist opposition to the Nazi regime was splintered and far less organized than the KPÖ's resistance networks. Right wing resistance groups with an array of names such as *Österreichische Bewegung*, *Österreichische Freiheitsbewegung*, *Großösterreichische Freiheitsbewegung*, *Österreichisches Jungvolk*, *Karl-Vogelsang-Bund*, *Österreichische Volksfront*, *Antifaschistische Freiheitsbewegung Österreichs* and *Illegale Österreichische Kaisertreu Front* give an idea of the proliferation of right-wing resistance movements and groups. There was no widespread agreement by these groups as to the exact nature of their goals for their homeland, but all of them rejected the notion of continued union with greater-Germany and staunchly opposed Nazi rule.⁷⁰⁶

Some conservative resisters appealed to Austrian patriotism and separatism, but referred only vaguely to the precise form a postwar Austrian state ought to take, if indeed they addressed that issue at all. For example, Friedrich Theiss of the *Österreichische Bewegung* maintained that his movement supported the "Austrian idea" against Bolshevism, National Socialism, and Judaism, but provided no details on what a new Austria might look

(Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994), 167-176.

⁷⁰⁶*Widerstand und Verfolgung in Wien*, vol. 3, 81-149.

like. Likewise, Franz Zellner noted in a *Volksgerichtshof* proceeding in 1940 that, “We Austrians are, through history and culture, in spirit and conviction, in character and lifestyle, different from other Germans, and opposite from Prussians,” but mentioned no specific goals other than Austrian independence.⁷⁰⁷

In arguing for Austrian independence, at least some conservative movements used the figures associated with the Habsburg past in order to inspire Austrian opposition to the regime. For example, a resistance group’s pamphlet from 1938 harked back to Andreas Hofer’s struggle against Napoleon’s Bavarian allies in 1809, and used the Tirolean leader as a symbol of Austrian patriotism.⁷⁰⁸ Similarly, an Austrian resistance group made up of young people closed its illegally printed call to action with the old Habsburg motto, “Austria above all, if it so wills.”⁷⁰⁹

Other conservative resisters explicitly identified the restoration of the House of Habsburg as their ultimate ideal. Nazi judicial proceedings charged Emilie Gehrich, Walther Dürr, and Maria Theresia Kettenberg, as well as the members of the “Burian Group,” with working toward precisely this goal in 1941. Nazi prosecutors accused the members of Karl Polly’s *Österreichische Arbeiterpartei* not only of working for the return of Otto von Habsburg, but for the establishment of a “democratic monarchy in Bavaria, the Rhineland, the Alpine and Danubian *Reichsgauen*, in the former Czechoslovakia and in part of Poland,” which amounted to not merely a restoration but an expansion of the Habsburg

⁷⁰⁷“Urteil des SG beim LG gegen Friedrich Theiss und andere wegen Vergehens nach dem Gesetz gegen die Neubildung von Parteien, 17. 12. 1941” and “Anklageschrift des Oberreichsanwaltes beim VGH gegen Franz Zellner, 5. 4. 1940” in *Widerstand und Verfolgung in Wien*, vol. 3, 91, 132-3.

⁷⁰⁸Klusacek, Steiner and Stimmer, 126.

⁷⁰⁹*Ibid.*, 124.

Monarchy as it existed prior to 1918!⁷¹⁰ A number of other groups had similar notions of establishing either some form of revitalized Habsburg Monarchy, or a Habsburg-ruled Catholic state which would include Bavaria and Austria.

Even in exile, legitimist opposition to the Nazis attempted to work toward the goal of an independent, and possibly expanded, conservative Austrian state. Otto von Habsburg himself spent much of the war in the United States working to muster support from the Austrian exile community. He met a number of times with Franklin Roosevelt and served as a powerful voice for a particular vision of post-war Austria. In a brief article in the January, 1942 issue of *Foreign Affairs*, Habsburg criticized the dismemberment of the Habsburg Monarchy in the peace settlement after World War I and the subsequent creation of numerous, economically unviable states which became easy prey for Nazi Germany. He then proceeded to offer a vision for a Central European peace settlement for the Second World War :

I repeat that war policy is always a lasting mortgage on peace policy. Therefore everything will depend on whether the Allies choose to encourage the right forces this time in Germany and German-occupied countries. . . .The right forces are those which aim at decentralizing Germany in order to break Prussian leadership and which aim at reintegrating the old supra-national community on the Danube.⁷¹¹

Habsburg thus envisioned a renewal of the union between the Habsburg lands, but this time on federal terms with a central government which would truly serve the interests of all the

⁷¹⁰“Anklageschrift des Staatsanwalts beim LG Wien als SG gegen Emilie Gehrich, Walther Dürr and Maria Theresia Kettenberg, 5. 3. 1940,” “Urteil des VGH gegen Karl Burian, Josef Wotypa, Ludwig Krausz-Wiener, Rochus Kosak, Julius Kretschmer, Dr. Josef Krininger und Martha Krinninger, 9. 12. 1943,” “Urteil gegen Karl Polly, Wilhelm Zach, Agnes Polly, Margarete Matzner und Gabriel Mesner wegen Vorbereitung zum Hochverrat, 20. 11. 1943,” in *Widerstand und Verfolgung in Wien*, vol. 3, 129, 141. See also, *Widerstand und Verfolgung in Tirol 1934-1945. Eine Dokumentation.*, vol. 2 (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1984), 312, 319, 333, 339, for similar cases.

⁷¹¹Otto Habsburg, “Danubian Reconstruction,” *Foreign Affairs* 20 (January, 1942): 251.

member nationalities. He never unequivocally stated that he wanted such a Danubian federation to be a monarchy, but an OSS report indicates that some US officials were clearly suspicious of his motives and thought that he wished to claim the throne for himself.⁷¹² Habsburg nevertheless obtained approval from the US government at several points to gather an Austrian or “Austro-Hungarian” battalion of exiles to fight in Europe as a unit of the US army, although the State Department’s skepticism concerning the actual support for such a venture within the emigre community proved to be well founded.⁷¹³

The legitimist and conservative opposition to the Nazi regime thus did not all agree on the form that a postwar Austrian state should take. They unanimously argued for separation from Germany based upon Austria’s distinctive history and culture, but many were loath to return to the 1938 boundaries of the supposedly unworkable small Austrian state. Many such proposals argued for a return to the format of a supra-national Danubian state, essentially a recasting of the old Habsburg Monarchy, while others supported a union with other German Catholics which would eliminate the strife between Germans and Slavs which had plagued the old Monarchy.

Reports on Austria from British and American sources seem to confirm the assertions of Austrian identity that these resistance documents contain. Correspondence from the British consul in Vienna to the British Foreign Office in the months following the *Anschluss* describes the persistence of Austrian separatism and resistance to Nazi efforts to assimilate the population. Consul-General Ganier reported that the Austrian upper and working classes were generally hostile toward Nazism even if they often welcomed the

⁷¹²“The Austrian Emigration and its Activity,” National Archives, RG 226, Entry 16, Record 16588.

⁷¹³“General Joseph McNarney to Sumner Welles,” “John C. Wiley to Ray Atherton,” National Archives,

Nazis' anti-Semitic and anti-Czech policies. Ganier described the Austrian youth, however, as more receptive to Nazi propaganda due to their lack of memory of "the last war or of Austrian traditions." He also reported that the threat of war during the September 1938 Munich crisis and the Nazi-sponsored anti-Catholic violence in Vienna during October had caused many Austrians to be dissatisfied with the regime. Ganier even asserted that some sections of the population had not supported the November pogrom, although most historians agree that "*Kristalnacht*" was actually more vicious in Austria than in most of the Third Reich.⁷¹⁴

During the war years, various reports by the US Office of Strategic Services likewise documented the survival of Austrian patriotism and separatism in the *Ostmark* which gathered in strength as the war turned against Germany. The OSS argued that many Austrians resented German economic exploitation of the *Ostmark*, and were disappointed that they had not experienced the economic gains from the *Anschluß* which the Nazis had promised. Reports also noted the especially strong Austrian resentment toward the so-called "*Bombenfrischer*," Germans who had sought refuge in Austria from the Allied bombing in the *Altreich*. By the final years of the war, OSS reports described brawls between Austrians and Germans, and economic discrimination toward Germans by Austrian merchants. The OSS invariably characterized such animosity as "anti-Prussian."⁷¹⁵ One report from December of 1943 commented at length on the overall weakness of regional separatism in

RG 59, 811.2221/307, 863.000/6-642.

⁷¹⁴Christopher Seton-Watson, ed. *British Documents on Foreign Affairs: Reports and Papers from the Foreign Office Confidential Print, Part II, From the First to the Second World War, Series F, Europe, 1919-1939*, Vol. 14, *Southern Europe: Italy, Balkan States and Danubian States, 1938* (University Publications of America, 1990), 346, 359. On *Kristalnacht* in Austria, see Bukey, *Hitler's Austria*, 144.

⁷¹⁵National Archives, RG 226 Entry 14 Boxes 10-12; Entry 16, Reel 126, Document 22129; Box 1647 Record 142130.

the Nazi Reich, but distinguished Austrian resentments toward “Prussia” from those of other German regions:

The difference is striking if one compares the mass of reports of local opinion in the supposedly "separatist" regions of the Old Reich with reports from Austria. In Austria the question is clearly continually debated in all classes whether or not secession would be preferable to continuation in the Reich, whether a return of the Habsburgs would be desirable, and so on. In Bavaria, Württemberg, etc., such discussions are mentioned, if at all, only occasionally and in small circles. Most observers report greater or less adherence to National Socialism in Bavaria as compared with Prussia, greater or less desire for immediate peace, and such things, but never think to mention separatist tendencies.⁷¹⁶

In the early war years, the OSS frequently described Austrian support for independence, but also noted that these sentiments were sometimes tinted with profound skepticism about the political and economic viability of a resurrected small Austrian state. The OSS reports documented a spectrum of postwar proposals ranging from a Socialist or democratic small Austrian state to a Danubian economic federation to a Catholic Austro-Bavarian monarchy. These reports noted that many Austrians had lingering affinities for the Habsburg Monarchy and that some of them even believed that the comparatively lighter bombing in Austria than in the rest of Germany resulted from the personal intercession of Otto von Habsburg with the Allied leaders to spare his homeland so it could be reconstituted under his leadership.⁷¹⁷ Only by 1945, with the unification of numerous resistance groups of all political stripes in the form of the Austrian Provisional National Committee (POEN), did support for a small, republican Austria predominate, and even then reports still occasionally

⁷¹⁶National Archives, RG 226, Entry 16, Box 622, Record 53144S.

⁷¹⁷National Archives, RG 226, Entry 16, Box 838, Record 69480. It is worth noting, however, that a report from February 24, 1944 indicates that, "The movement favoring monarchy has some force, but it is doubtful if it has the support of most of the people." RG 226, Entry 16, Box 735, Document 60655.

mention support for alternate proposals.⁷¹⁸

The OSS did notice, however, the decided absence of any significant armed uprisings against the Nazis. The Austrian response to the Allies' Moscow Declaration of 1943, which declared the Allied intention to reconstitute Austria after the defeat of the Hitler regime, but also warned that Austria needed to atone for its share of the responsibility for the war by contributing to its own liberation, was lukewarm at best. There was never any significant Austrian effort to overthrow the Nazi regime in the *Ostmark*. One OSS source attributed this lack of armed rebellion to Austrian uncertainty about which of the various options for a post-war Austrian state the Allies supported. It certainly seems likely, however, that Austrian inaction had more to do with the weakness of the actual resistance and the continuing support by most Austrians for the Nazi regime.⁷¹⁹

Indeed these findings concerning the durability of some sense of a historically grounded Austrian distinctiveness during the Nazi years ultimately do not modify the findings of Bukey or Thaler that most Austrians generally supported Hitler's regime up until the actual end of the war. The resistance in Austria was significant, but there was no widespread revolt against Nazism. Likewise, no faction of the Austrian resistance voiced any appreciable opposition to the Nazis' anti-Semitic policies or to the deportation of the Austrian Jews. In fact, many of the right-wing resistance organizations displayed anti-Semitic attitudes of their own. Austria was obviously not the "first victim" of National Socialism, and most Austrians did not oppose the measures which led to the murder of the European Jews.

⁷¹⁸National Archives, RG 226, Entry 14, Boxes 10-12; Entry 16, Box 1406, Record 122908.

⁷¹⁹National Archives, RG 226, Box 648, Record 54103, Box 735, Record 60655.

At the same time, it is clear that Austrian attitudes toward the *Anschluß* and the desirability of Austrian independence were far from monolithic. The majority of the population supported the *Anschluß*, but that support did not mean that Austrians completely abandoned a separate Austrian identity or a sense of the distinctiveness of Austria's Habsburg past. Certainly there was a determined core of opponents of the Nazi regime who maintained firm support for Austrian independence in one form or another, and who explicitly counterposed their ideals of Austrian nationhood and history with the Germanist views of National Socialism. These ideals had been present in the Austrian debate on national identity before 1938, and it is possible that the clearly articulated Austrian patriotism of the resisters and the Allied intelligence reports concerning lingering Austrian separatism reflected the sentiments of a sizable portion of the Austrian population who were unwilling to voice or act upon their feelings while under the threat of Nazi terror. The continuously reiterated skepticism concerning the viability of the pre-1938 small Austria raises the possibility that the strong support for the *Anschluß* in 1938 was as much a statement against the shortcomings of a particular form of an Austrian state as it was a declaration in favor of greater Germany. Likewise, it is even possible that many Austrians simultaneously supported the Nazi regime and many of its policies and resented the perceived lack of Nazi sensitivity toward Austrian distinctiveness.

Ultimately it is impossible to gauge how extensive these notions of Austrian identity were. All we can say for sure concerning Austrian identity during the Nazi period is that it was profoundly contested. Some Austrians obviously supported the continuation of the union with Germany. Others wanted a return to the Austrian state within its pre-1938

borders. Still other groups argued that Austria should be expanded to include the Catholic parts of Germany, or the former territory of the Habsburg Monarchy, or both. Such a range of opinions makes it impossible to speak of one unique, fully-formed notion of identity. Rather, there was a multiplicity of options and views, most of which were based upon the idea that Austria's history and culture distinguished it from other German-speaking areas. There was, however, no wide agreement as to what that distinctiveness might mean in practical terms.

Ultimately it was the military defeat of the Nazi regime in the spring of 1945 that truly produced a halting consensus in the Austrian debate on national identity. The horrific level of devastation wrought by the war which Hitler unleashed upon the world, the hideousness of the Nazi attempt to murder the Jews of Europe, and the decisiveness of the allied defeat of Nazi Germany all created a set of circumstances which profoundly delegitimized not only National Socialism, but also the Germanist conceptions of Austrian identity and history which the Nazis had promoted. As we have seen, the Nazi government in Austria conceived of Austrians as Germans, and had viewed the *Anschluß* of 1938 as a crowning achievement in German history. Hitler's regime had sought to inculcate this view of Austrian national identity, as well as a view of the Habsburg Monarchy as a national tragedy for the German *Volk* into the minds of Nazi Germany's youngest Austrian citizens through the Third Reich's educational system.

As the victors in World War II, however, the liberal democratic powers of the West, on the one hand, and the Communist Soviet Union on the other, all repudiated National Socialism as a destructive, evil ideology, and the allies did their best to undo the work of the

Nazi regime in the regions of Europe which had been conquered by Germany. They arrested remaining leaders of the Nazi regime in both Germany and Austria and swiftly dismantled the legal and administrative apparatus of the National Socialist dictatorship. An important part of this work of rolling back Nazism was the restoration of Austrian independence. The Allies had encouraged the independence-minded Austrian resistance movement with the Moscow Declaration of 1943, and in 1945 those same powers occupied Austria and moved quickly to once again separate Austria from Germany. The Allies had come to see the *Anschluss* itself as a Nazi ideal, and its reversal too was part of the process of eliminating Nazism root and branch.

Thus, the Austrian people themselves again faced circumstances which determined the course of their debate on their own past and nationhood. Whether they wanted to remain a part of Germany or not, they were once again citizens of a state separate from Germany. This state was now occupied by foreign powers which looked with a hostile eye upon anything associated with the Nazi regime, including Austro-German nationalism. The Austrian people had also been placed in a position where continued support for Austria as a part of the German nation would implicitly require Austrians to share the blame for Nazi Germany's crimes, while an assertion of Austrian independence and national distinctiveness would facilitate claims that Austria had merely been a victim of the Nazi regime rather than a willing collaborator.⁷²⁰

Austria had powerful incentives to repudiate the German national identity which had previously been so popular in the Austrian public sphere. The era in which a view of

⁷²⁰Günter Bischof, *Austria in the First Cold War: The Leverage of the Weak* (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1999), 1-13; Günter Bischof and Josef Leidenfrost, eds. *Die Bevormundete Nation, Österreich*

Austria as part of Germany was the dominant point of view in the Austrian debate on national identity ended with the disintegration of Hitler's regime. From 1945 onward, Austrian independence from Germany was simply a given. It would be up to the political factions and the government of the newly liberated Austrian Second Republic, however, to decide exactly how Austria's Habsburg past related to Austria's national identity in the new circumstances of the postwar world.

Part IV. The Past as an Alibi: Austria Reborn, 1945-1955

Chapter 6. Politics and the Habsburg Past in the Second Republic

In 1945, just as in 1918, Austria was separated from a large Central European Empire which had been defeated in a devastating world war. The circumstances surrounding the birth of the Austrian Second Republic, however, differed from those which greeted the emergence of the First Republic in several crucial ways. First of all, in late 1945, most Austrians who had not been Nazi Party members denounced the Hitler regime, which had conducted a nakedly expansionistic war of conquest in Europe and murdered millions of Jews, Slavs, and various other ethnic and social groups, as not merely authoritarian, but evil. While many Austrians in 1918 had repudiated the Habsburg Monarchy, none of them had done so with the same level of vehemence or outrage which all of Austria's non-Nazi political factions unanimously directed toward the Third Reich. Secondly, while Austria had not been the site of any appreciable combat during the First World War, during the course of World War II, the Allied powers had subjected Austria's urban and industrial centers to a massive aerial bombardment, and ultimately mounted a military invasion to seize control of the Austrian lands. In 1945, after the astounding destruction wrought by the war, Austria found itself occupied by those Allies, forcibly separated from the great-German *Reich* to which it had been joined since the 1938 *Anschluss*,

and divided into four zones of occupation, administered by the United States, Britain, France and the Soviet Union respectively.⁷²¹

⁷²¹On the Allied occupation of Austria, see William B. Bader, *Austria Between East and West, 1945-1955* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1966); Donald R. Whitnah and Edgar L. Erickson, *The American Occupation of Austria: Planning and the Early Years* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1985); Günter Bischor and Josef Leidenfrost, eds., *Die Bevormundete Nation, Österreich und die Alliierten 1945-1949* (Vienna: Haymo Verlag, 1988); Günter Bischof, *Austria in the First Cold War, 1945-1955: The Leverage of the Weak* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999); James Jay Carafano, *Waltzing Into The Cold War: The Struggle For Occupied Austria* (College Station: Texas A&M Press, 2002).

In April of 1945, Karl Renner, the prominent Social Democrat and former president of the First Republic, formed an Austrian Provisional Government with the approval of the Soviet Union. The other Allied powers were suspicious of Renner's government, which they saw as a unilateral Soviet creation and a possible first step toward the creation of an Austrian Communist state dominated by Moscow. The Soviet government had often criticized Renner's moderate Marxism in the past, but now it sanctioned his efforts simply because he was the only Austrian political figure of prominence ready to seize the initiative and form a new Austrian government. Indeed, Renner was no Stalinist stooge and he vigorously courted the Western Allies, seeking to assuage their fears by including members of the Austrian right in his government. His efforts were successful; in October, 1945, the remaining Allied powers recognized his government. None of the Allies, however, were yet willing to end their occupation or to grant full sovereignty to the Austria. Before those things could happen, the occupiers wanted to ensure the elimination of any remaining vestiges of National Socialist power in Austria. The rapidly increasing hostility between the Western powers and the Soviet Union over the postwar balance of power in Europe only served to complicate the Allies' discussions about when and under what circumstances the occupation of Austria would end.⁷²²

⁷²²Bischof, 45-61; Bader, 60-63; Carafano, 54-55; Barbara Jelavich, *Modern Austria: Empire and Republic 1815-1986* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 247.

Therefore, by the end of 1945, Austria had a government, but was not fully independent. The new political regime in Austria, which held its first elections in December of 1945, was able to set policies for Austria, but only with the approval of the Allied occupiers. The Second Allied Control Agreement of June 1946 dramatically expanded the Austrian government's autonomy, but the Allies could still veto any of its policies by issuing a unanimous objection within thirty-one days of the passage of any piece of legislation. The increasingly tense relations between the two Cold War blocks made such unanimity on the part of the occupiers rare, however, and by the late 1940s, Austria itself had assumed a great deal of responsibility for even such critical matters as denazification and Austrian foreign policy.⁷²³ Moreover, Austria had much more autonomy than the other occupied portions of the former Third Reich, which remained divided throughout the Cold War, and where even the zone occupied by the Western powers did not hold elections or establish an independent government until 1949.⁷²⁴ Still, the Austrian Second Republic remained occupied by the Allies until 1955.

The new government which Renner formed divided power roughly equally among the three political factions which had opposed the National Socialist government—the conservatives of the old Christian Social Party, the Social Democrats, and the Communists—and adopted as its ultimate goal the reestablishment of full Austrian sovereignty in the form

⁷²³Bader, 60-63; Bischof, 52-77; Kurt K. Tweraser, "Military Justice as an Instrument of American Occupation Policy in Austria 1945-1950: From Total Control to Limited Tutelage," *Austria History Yearbook* 24 (1993): 161-162; Robert Knight, "Britische Entnazifizierungspolitik, 1945-1948," *Zeitgeschichte* 11, nos. 9-10 (1984): 287-295.

⁷²⁴See Hans-Peter Schwartz, *Vom Reich zum Bundesrepublik: Deutschland im Widerstreit der außenpolitischen Konzeptionen in den Jahren der Besatzungsherrschaft, 1945-1949*, 2d ed. (Berlin: Luchterhand, 1980).

of a democratic republic.⁷²⁵ Issues of Austrian national identity were just as crucial for the Provisional Government and Austria's postwar political parties as they had been for previous Austrian regimes since 1918. As in all of those previous eras, the Austrian leadership was not completely free to decide upon such issues on its own, but rather operated under constraints imposed by the wider European political situation.

The occupying Allies in 1945 insisted that Austria be established as a democratic state totally separate from Germany. These goals were grounded in the Allies' Moscow Declaration of 1943, which had presented the *Anschluss* as a imposition upon Austria by a foreign invader, even as it had cautioned that Austria had to accept responsibility for its participation in Hitler's war of aggression.⁷²⁶ The response of all of Austria's major political factions to most of these Allied constraints was far from unenthusiastic, however. Whereas the provisions of the Treaty of St. Germain of 1919 forbidding Austrian *Anschluss* with Germany had been greeted with only the most reluctant acceptance on the part of Austria's political leadership at the time, Austria's leaders in 1945 did not require much allied coercion to repudiate the goal of Austrian union with Germany. The 1938 *Anschluss* with Nazi Germany had represented an unambiguous disaster for Austria, and had resulted in

⁷²⁵These goals were clearly spelled out in the Provisional Government's first statement to the Austrian people in April of 1945. "Die Regierungserklärung der Provisorischen Regierung," in *Für Recht und Frieden: Eine Auswahl der Reden des Bundespräsidenten Dr. Karl Renner*, ed. Austrian Federal Government (Vienna: Österreichischen Staatsdruckerei, 1951), 13-17.

⁷²⁶The Allies differed significantly concerning the form which an independent Austria should take. Before the end of the war, Britain and the United States had contemplated constituting Austria as part of a South German Catholic Monarchy, while the USSR wanted no part of such a plan. The Soviet Union and the Western powers also clearly had drastically different conceptions of the meaning of "democracy" as well. As the Cold War era began, disagreements between the two ideological blocks were every bit as intense and extensive as elsewhere in Europe. The Allies at least had reached a very basic consensus, though, that postwar Austria should be separated from Germany, and should have a government which was neither National Socialist nor fascist. For a discussion of the Moscow Declaration and Austria's part in the early Cold War, see Bischof, *Austria in the First Cold War*, 57, 78-129; "Die Instrumentalisierung der Moskauer Erklärung nach dem 2. Weltkrieg," *Zeitgeschichte* 20(1993): 345-366; Bader, 31-33.

unparalleled devastation and severe political oppression. The only groups which would have retained any lingering affinity for *Anschluss*, the remnants of the old Pan-German parties and the Austrian National Socialist themselves, were utterly tainted by their support for and participation in the Nazi regime. The Allies prohibited the remaining Austrian Nazis from participating in postwar Austrian politics and the remaining three Austrian political factions regarded them as traitors to Austrian freedom.⁷²⁷ The idea of *Anschluss* itself had simply become inextricably entwined with the experience of Nazism in the minds of the Allies and most of the Austrian people, and even apart from any demands by the Allied occupiers, “Germanist” conceptions of Austrian national identity had been thoroughly delegitimized by the severely negative consequences of Austria’s union with the Third Reich.

The Provisional Government and the Austrian conservative, Socialist, and Communist factions which participated in it thus cooperated enthusiastically with Allied demands to rebuild an independent, democratic state, and worked tirelessly to proclaim the existence of a separate and distinctive Austrian national identity, a notion which they regarded as the key element of Austria’s reconstruction. These presentations of a unique Austrian nationhood also had the felicitous side effect of minimizing any Austrian connection to or responsibility for the crimes of Nazi Germany. Austria’s new leaders eagerly embraced this project in order to rehabilitate Austria’s reputation and to end the occupation as soon as possible. The three parties all portrayed the Nazi period as one in which a foreign dictatorship had imposed itself upon an unwilling Austrian *Volk*, the “first

⁷²⁷Strictures against many former Nazis would be lifted as early as 1948, however, allowing them to return to political activity, as will be discussed later in this chapter. See essays in Sebastian Meissl, Klaus_Dieter Mulley, and Oliver Rathkolb, eds., *Verdrängte Schuld, Verfehlte Sühne, Entnazifizierung in Österreich 1945-1955* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1986).

victim” of Nazi aggression. As we have seen, such a portrayal of Austria’s Nazi past considerably distorted reality. Austrians had broadly supported the 1938 *Anschluss*, the National Socialist regime, and even the war itself.

These efforts to distance Austria from the Nazi past were far from unique to Austria, however. Political leaders in postwar West and East Germany and France sought to minimize their respective states’ complicity in World War II and the Holocaust.⁷²⁸ What was unique about the Austrian effort to downplay Austria’s responsibility for the Nazi past was its use of the notion of a distinctive Austrian national identity in order to accomplish its aims.⁷²⁹ The postwar German and French states may have denied that their contemporary states bore any responsibility for what had occurred during the war, but they never denied their German or French identities in doing so. The postwar Austrian leadership based its attempts to separate Austria from the legacy of the Nazis by presenting just such a denial, arguing that Austrians were not Germans, and never had been. The Allies themselves, despite their initial demands that Austria shoulder its share of responsibility for the war, ultimately allowed Austria to present such claims because, by the late 1940s, the heightened Cold War tensions made the issue of war responsibility seem less pressing than the new

⁷²⁸Jeffrey Herf, *Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the Two Germanys* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997); Norbert Frei, *Vergangenheitspolitik: Die Anfänge der Bundesrepublik und die NS-Vergangenheit* (Munich: Verlag C. H. Beck, 1996); Henry Rousso, *The Vichy Syndrome: History and Memory in France since 1944*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991).

⁷²⁹The best such account is Peter Thaler, *The Ambivalence of Identity: the Austrian Experience of Nation-building in a Modern Society* (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2001). See also Anton Pelinka, *Austria: Out of the Shadow of the Past*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1998); and essays in Bischof and Pelinka, eds., *Austrian Historical Memory and National Identity*, Contemporary Austrian Studies, vol. 5 (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 1997); Peter Utgaard, *Remembering and Forgetting Nazism: Education, National Identity and the Victim Myth in Postwar Austria* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003). None of these accounts place enough weight on the importance of references to the Habsburg past to the Second Republic’s efforts to build a new Austrian identity.

ideological conflict in Europe.⁷³⁰

The project of presenting and nurturing the sense of a distinctive Austrian national identity both in order to create a firm foundation for the Austrian independence and democracy and to minimize Austria's responsibility for World War II and the Holocaust continued throughout the early Second Republic. Indeed, as the Provisional Government gave way to an actual elected government which assumed increasing responsibility for Austria's own affairs, culminating in the end of the occupation with the State Treaty of 1955, this project was a central feature of Austrian politics and public discourse, although the intensity of the discussions of Austrian identity decreased significantly during the early 1950s. As with the public debate about Austrian national identity which had raged between 1918 and 1945, the postwar Austrian discussion of national identity invariably made reference to Austria's past as part of the Habsburg Monarchy in order to make arguments concerning the contemporary state's national status. This time, however, there really was no "debate" concerning Austrian national identity as such, but rather widespread consensus among the major political parties and within the government that Austria really was its own nation. Arguments for Austrian Germanness virtually disappeared from public discourse in Austria after 1945. The main element of contention in the postwar public discussion of such nationhood involved exactly *how* Austria's Habsburg past supported the notion of a distinctive Austrian national identity.

The Austrian right after 1945 asserted that the Habsburgs themselves had been responsible for Austria's unique nationhood. These Austrian conservatives argued that the dynasty had created a benevolent supranational empire which had seen the development of a

⁷³⁰Bischof, *Austria in the First Cold War*, 142-150.

cosmopolitan Austrian *Volk* whose historical talent for understanding and toleration of other *Völker* was utterly opposed to the chauvinistic and domineering tendencies of the German nation. The Social Democrats also supported the notion of Austrian nationhood, but their statements concerning such a national identity were generally more ambiguous than those of the Austrian right. They argued that the Habsburgs had largely been an oppressive force in Austrian history, and that it was the working class which had represented the true subject of Austria's history, and which had been led by the Socialist Party toward the realization of the democratic spirit which was ultimately the defining feature of Austrian national identity in the form of the Austrian First Republic. Finally, the Communists presented a view which combined aspects of both of the major parties' positions. Like the Social Democrats, they argued that the Habsburgs had been an oppressive force in the old Monarchy which the working class had opposed. Yet the Communists' vehement declarations of Austrian national identity, and their continuous contrasts between the national character of Austrians and that of Germans throughout history were quite similar to statements by the Austrian right. Ultimately, all three of Austria's postwar political parties presented differing visions of the Habsburg past. Yet however different their views of that past may have been, each party's vision still worked to fulfill the common goal of bolstering the Second Republic's independence and democratic character, while distancing Austria from responsibility for the crimes of Nazi Germany.

ii. The New Austrian Conservatism and the Habsburg Past

The Austrian political right participated eagerly in the efforts to promote an

independent Austrian national identity through the articulation of an “Austrianist” view of the state’s history. Such efforts were also part of a wider effort by the right to redefine itself. The former major right wing party in Austria, the Christian Social Party (CSP), had been subsumed within Dollfuß’ Fatherland Front in 1933. Now the right reconstituted their movement under the new name of the *Österreichische Volkspartei* (ÖVP- Austrian People’s Party). This new label represented at least a symbolic break with the more problematic aspects of the Austrian conservative movement’s history. The CSP had been tainted through its close association with *Ständestaat* dictatorship, and the new name signified not just a commitment to Austrian nationhood, but also the new republican principles which Austrian conservatism wholeheartedly embraced as it never had before 1945. Indeed, the new party explicitly and emphatically supported democracy as the best form for Austria’s government, even though the Austrian right before the war had been willing to abandon democratic rule in Austria in the name of order and security.⁷³¹ The ÖVP thrust those few CSP figures who had remained committed to democratic rule during the 1930s, such as Leopold Kunschak, to the forefront of its electoral campaigns in an effort to bolster the party’s democratic credentials. The new party also represented a significant shift on the part of the right away from its previously close affiliation with Roman Catholicism and the Austrian Catholic Church. The ÖVP downplayed that aspect of Austrian conservatism in favor of a newfound commitment to democracy, to the point of forbidding priests from running for political office. In a similar manner, the ÖVP also placed less emphasis on anti-Socialism, and was

⁷³¹See “Die Programmatische Leitsätze der Österreichischen Volkspartei, 1945,” and “‘Alles für Österreich,’ Programmatische Grundsätze der Österreichischen Volkspartei, 1952,” in *Österreichisch Parteiprogramme, 1868-1966*, ed. Klaus Berchtold (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1967), 376-379, 379-385.

markedly more willing to approach their old adversaries, the Social Democrats, with a spirit of cooperation rather than hostility. Likewise, the Austrian right's previous staunch political anti-Semitism disappeared from the rhetoric of the People's Party after 1945.⁷³² These modifications transformed the Austrian right into a much more liberal faction than it had ever been before the war, as it sought to define a position which harmonized with the principles of the Western Allies whom it looked to for guidance and support.

Yet despite all of these changes, whether superficial or substantial, there was still a great deal of continuity between the CSP and ÖVP. The new generation of conservative leaders, including Leopold Figl and Felix Hurdes, had all been active in the CSP during the 1930s, as had many of the ÖVP's lower ranking members. The ÖVP's basic political platform continued the CSP's mixture of traditionalism and moderate social and economic reform, and the Party continued to target its appeals to Austrian farmers and *petit-bourgeoisie*, much as it always had. Despite its move away from clericism, the ÖVP remained committed to Catholicism as an important part of Austrian life and of its own ideology. Thus, while it was technically a new party, the ÖVP was very much the successor of the CSP, and Austrian conservatism after the war had a great deal in common with the ideology of the Austrian right before 1938.⁷³³

This continuity of ideology allowed the new Austrian right to build upon its earlier presentations of Austrian history in order to provide the historical foundation for a renewed Austrian national identity. Certainly the conservatives of the First Republic and the

⁷³²Jelavich, 248; Adam Wandruszka, "Österreichs politische Struktur," in *Geschichte der Republik Österreich*, ed. Heinrich Benedikt (Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1954), 355-359; Erika Weinzierl and Kurt Skalnik, eds., *Österreich. Zweite Republik*, vol. 2 (Graz: Verlag Styria, 1972), 208-215. On the previous political stance of Austrian conservatism, see Chapters 1 and 3.

Ständestaat had been far from unambiguous and unanimous in their support of a view of Austrian history and national identity separate from that of Germany. Immediately after the First World War, many in the Austrian right had favored union with Germany, and even those who advocated continued Austrian independence still viewed Austrians as Germans in at least an ethnic and cultural sense. The right-wing *Ständestaat* government had been outspoken in its support of Austrian independence and patriotism, yet had also presented Austria as a “second German state” rather than a national entity in its own right. Yet there had been those Austrian conservatives such as Oscar Smitz, Ernst Karl Winter and even Kurt von Schuschnigg who had presented arguments for Austria as an independent nation with its own special history.⁷³⁴ Furthermore, as the political faction which maintained a firm reverence for Austrian traditions as part of its outlook, Austrian conservatism had a certain “built-in” tendency to take pride in Austria’s unique history. Therefore for post-war Austrian conservatives the project of bolstering an Austrian identity through the forceful articulation of an “Austrianist” view of history was a matter of emphasizing ideas and sentiments that were already present within Austrian conservatism, while at the same time eliminating any of those elements of the conservative tradition which had portrayed Austria as part of the German nation.

One aspect of the Austrian right’s presentation of Austria’s history in the post-war era was especially distinctive. The conservatives, unlike the other political factions of the time, were able to embrace the Habsburg dynasty and the old Austrian Monarchy as part of their presentation of Austrian history. While the Socialists and Communists necessarily

⁷³³Jelavich, 247-250; Wandruszka, 355-359, Frederick C. Engelmann, *Government by Diplomacy: The Austrian Coalition 1945-1966* (Vienna: Braumüller, 2001), 44 -45.

rejected the legitimacy of the Habsburg monarchs for reasons of ideology, the Austrian right was proud to claim the Monarchy and all of its representatives as part of the distinctive history which supported Austria's nationhood. Such an affinity for the Monarchy was certainly an advantage for arguments in favor of Austrian nationhood, which were necessarily based upon history and culture rather than language and ethnicity, which could only link Austria with Germany. It was this embrace of the Monarchy as an important and beneficial part of Austria's national history which helped make the conservative representation of the Habsburg past the most positive of all Austria's political factions.

Postwar Conservatives and Austrian Nationhood

The necessary first element of all attempts to present Austria as its own nation separate from Germany was to provide a firmly negative answer to the question of whether or not Austrians could also in some sense be called Germans. As we have seen, Austrians grappling with this issue between 1918 and 1945 were often reluctant to completely renounce Austrian membership in the German nation, even if they supported Austrian independence. Even staunch conservative Austrian patriots such as Seipel, Dollfuß, and Schuschnigg maintained that Austria was at least German in a cultural sense, while maintaining that Austrian *Deutschum* was different from and even superior to the Prussian or north German version. After 1945, however, the conservative answer to this question was far less ambiguous. The vast majority of conservative intellectuals and politicians now firmly and unequivocally asserted that Austrians were not and had never been Germans, and many of them argued that Austrians constituted a unique *Volk*, separate from the German

⁷³⁴See Chapters 1 and 3.

nation.

The most outspoken conservative to articulate this point was Alfred Missong, the editor of the ÖVP-sponsored journal the *Österreichische Monatsheft*. Missong maintained that it was absolutely necessary for Austrians to completely abandon any lingering notions of kinship with Germany if they wanted their nation to be successful at maintaining its independence. He argued that it was precisely this mistaken Austrian sense of belonging to the German nation which had allowed Hitler to seize power and absorb Austria into Nazi Germany. Hitler had struck not just at Austrian democracy, but at Austrian independence itself. Thus freedom and independence could only be preserved in Austria through a firm commitment to both democracy and Austrian nationhood. Missong was optimistic about the invigorated sense of Austrian nationhood that he thought had surged forth after Hitler's defeat, but he warned that if Austrians did not dispense with *großdeutsch* notions entirely, then sooner or later Austria would again be absorbed by Germany with results just as devastating for European peace as in 1938. A mere revival of a sentimental or romantic *Österreichertum* which paid lip service to Austrian distinctiveness while claiming that Austria was a "second German state," as the old corporatist regime had, would not suffice. Missong argued that the nation-state ideal had become an integral part of the European order, and that there was no room for two German states. He argued that Austria must firmly and unequivocally dispense with such ideas once and for all. In 1945, he proclaimed, "May Austria never again appear as 'the second' or 'the other German state,' and thus be included in a German combination. May Austrian history and tradition never again be

prostituted as an appendage of German history and “German destiny.”⁷³⁵

Missong systematically set out his ideas concerning the necessity for the total repudiation of Austrian national kinship with Germany in his article “25 Theses Concerning the Austrian Nation,” published in the August 1948 edition of the *Österreichische Monatshefte*. In this essay he addressed the various varieties of *großdeutsch* ideology which had to be ripped out of Austria root and branch in order to maintain the state’s independence. He of course mentioned the desire for actual *Anschluß* with Germany in his list of dangerous ideas, but he also argued against notions which posited a community of culture or destiny shared by Austria and Germany, or which claimed that the peoples of the two states possessed a common racial substance. Thus, for Missong, even the most tentative assertion of a common community between Austrians and Germans would end up being an ideological Trojan horse which would undermine Austria’s very existence.⁷³⁶

Other conservatives joined the chorus denying that Austrians were Germans, even if they did not address the matter with quite Missong’s systematic stridency. In response to one of Missong’s articles, Raimond Poukar provided a particularly eloquent statement concerning the necessity for Austrians to abandon their previous sense of kinship with Germany. He noted in 1946, “The picture of Mother Germania must vanish from the heart and brain of our *Volk*, not only because Germania has been a bad mother, indeed a true step mother to us. No, because we therefore forgot our own mother to our shame, and that— to

⁷³⁵ Alfred Missong, “Oesterreichertum— einmal zu Ende gedacht,” *Österreichische Monatshefte, Blätter für Politik* 3 (December 1945): 104. See also Missong, “25 Thesen über die österreichische Nation,” *Österreichische Monatshefte* 11 (August, 1948): 485-6.

⁷³⁶ Missong, “25 Thesen über die österreichische Nation.,” 485.

forget and disparage one's own origin— is the most evil thing one can do.”⁷³⁷ No less a figure than Leopold Figl, the ÖVP leader and longtime chancellor of the Second Republic, also addressed this issue quite directly, arguing that the German language was all that Austria had in common with Germany.⁷³⁸ Perhaps the clearest statement on the question came from Leo Kirtste, however, who firmly declaimed in 1946, “we are not Germans, we are Austrians!”⁷³⁹

Yet for all this vehemence on the part of Missong and others, some conservative intellectuals did occasionally display the sense of kinship with Germany against which Missong had warned. For example, an anonymous author in the inaugural edition of the *Österreichische Monatshefte* in November 1945 affirmed that Austrians indeed represented a portion of German culture, albeit one which was markedly differently from the Prussian variety of *Deutschtum*.⁷⁴⁰ The historian Wilhelm Böhm, an otherwise staunch defender of Austrian distinctiveness, acknowledged that Austria had a close historical relationship to the German states which would eventually make up Germany, although he asserted that this relationship was not the only or the most important factor in Austrian history.⁷⁴¹ Such comments stand as testimony that the notions of Austrian kinship with Germany which had characterized Austrian conservatism before 1938 had not entirely disappeared. Still, after 1945, the Austrian right rejected the notion of Austrian Germanness more firmly than it ever

⁷³⁷Raimond Poukar, “Österreichs Weg zur Volkwerdung,” *Österreichische Monatshefte* 6 (March, 1946): 225.

⁷³⁸Leopold Figl, “Was ist Österreich?” *Österreichische Monatshefte* 3 (December 1945): 90.

⁷³⁹Leo Kirtste, “Bekanntnis zur österreichischen Nation,” *Österreichische Monatshefte* 5 (February, 1946): 183.

⁷⁴⁰XXX, “Das größere Österreich, Gedanken zur österreichischen Aussenpolitik,” *Österreichische Monatshefte* 2 (November 1945): 6.

⁷⁴¹Wilhelm Böhm, “Prolegomena einer österreichischen Geschichtsauffassung,” *Österreichische Monatshefte* 6 (March, 1946): 230. See also *idem*, “Die österreichischen Nation,” *Forum* 2, no. 24

had before.

In order to assert that Austrians were not Germans, conservatives had to refute earlier claims that Austrians were indeed Germans. Many conservative commentators argued that previous thinkers who had proclaimed Austrian membership in the German nation had based those claims on a fallacious theory of national identity which equated the nation too narrowly with language. Such a theory had been particularly common in German-speaking lands, and had led to a facile association between Austrians and Germans in a national sense. These conservative commentators, including Missong, Poukar, Böhm, and Kirste, as well as Michael Kröll, Walter Ost, and Ernst Joseph Görlich, argued that such theories of nationhood fell apart upon even a cursory examination of various national populations around the world. These writers cited the examples of Switzerland, Brazil, Belgium, the United States, and the Spanish-speaking Latin American states as distinct and unique nations which also shared languages with other nations. They argued that Austria belonged on this list because its history and culture indeed clearly set it apart from German-speakers in Germany.⁷⁴²

Conservative Austrians also took issue with previous national theorists who had argued that Austrians were Germans in a racial or biological sense because they were the descendants of the Germans of the Bavarian *Stamm* (tribe) who had settled the territory nearly a millennium ago. Several postwar conservatives argued that even if modern Austrians were in some sense the descendants of the Bavarian *Stamm*, such Austrians

(December, 1955): 429.

⁷⁴²Missong, "Oesterreichertum— einmal zu Ende gedacht," 105; Poukar, 224; Kirste, 181-2; Michael Kröll, "Prüfstein der Nation," *Österreichische Monatshefte* 10 (July, 1947): 338; Walter Ost, "Ein Wort über die 'Volksösterreicher,'" *Österreichische Monatshefte* 8 (May, 1946): 337; Ernst Joseph Görlich, "Zur

certainly could not be considered Germans in a racial sense because of the frequent racial interbreeding which had occurred over the centuries in Austria. According to the historian Ernst Joseph Görlich, the Austrian *Volk* descended not just from a branch of the Germanic groups of late antiquity, but also from the Romans, Celts, and Illyrians who had also at various times inhabited the Danubian region during that period, to say nothing of the more recent mixing with Slavic peoples and even small groups of Scottish, Irish, and French settlers.⁷⁴³ Missong also argued that the Austrian *Volk* represented the culmination of a long period of racial mixing, making it utterly nonsensical to view Austrians as Germans in a racial sense.⁷⁴⁴ These arguments reflected the traditional conservative discomfort with racial definitions of nationhood, and they clung to the cultural formulations of Austrian national identity which the Austrian right had professed since the First Republic. After 1945, however, conservatives argued that Austria's culture and history served to define a unique Austrian nation rather than to describe the distinctive qualities of the Austrian branch of the wider German nation.

If conservative Austrians were to fully assert a distinctive Austrian nationhood, they had to do more than assert that Austrians were not Germans; they also had to define Austria's national character. Such arguments often began with the rhetorical construction of a sort of idealized Austrian type: the "Austrian man." Conservatives often contrasted this Austrian man with the "German" or "Prussian man," and used him to represent all that was distinctive and worthwhile about the Austrian *Volk*. Such arguments generally depended

Problem der österreichischen Nation," *Österreichische Monatshefte* 9 (June, 1946): 443; Wilhelm Böhm, "Deutschnationalismus einst und jetzt," *Österreichische Monatshefte* 2 (November, 1949): 128.

⁷⁴³Görlich, "Wann kommt das österreichische Geschichtswerk?" *Österreichische Monatshefte* 12 (September, 1947): 494.

heavily upon common stereotypes about Austrians, which conservatives in turn contrasted with stereotypes about Prussians or other north Germans. The Austrian man first and foremost was a good European, free from narrow nationalist sentiments, and committed to peace and prosperity for the continent as whole in a way that Germans were not. This ideal Austrian viewed the other national groups in a spirit of European brotherhood and cooperation, while Germans viewed them as enemies to be conquered and subjugated. The Austrian was a lover of culture, art, and individual liberty, and worked to secure a good life, in contrast to the German, who was inherently militaristic and saw obedience and work as ends in and of themselves. The Austrian man emerged in postwar Austrian accounts as a sensitive and cosmopolitan European citizen interested in understanding the other European *Völker*, completely unlike the warlike and pedantic German man, who sought to impose his views upon the rest of the continent.⁷⁴⁵

These descriptions of Austria's national characteristics also sometimes contained statements which not only emphasized the positive qualities of the Austrian people, but which also had the added benefit of absolving Austrians of any responsibility for the crimes of Nazism. For example, a number of conservative commentators explicitly stated that the Austrian national character was thoroughly opposed to the ideology of National Socialism. They therefore minimized Austrian participation in Hitler's regime and Austrian support for Nazism in such accounts, and portrayed those Austrians who did support Hitler as dupes of Nazi propaganda who had lost faith in their own nation as a result of the hardships of the

⁷⁴⁴Missong, *Die österreichische Nation*, (Vienna: Österreichischer Verlag, 1946), 5. Böhm, *Österreich, Erbe und Aufgabe* (Vienna: Österreich-Institute, 1947): 9-10.

⁷⁴⁵Missong, *Die Österreichische Nation*, 8; Böhm, *Österreich, Erbe und Aufgabe*, 9-14; Kröll, 339.

1930s.⁷⁴⁶ In 1945 Figl affirmed such a view, and asserted that the Austrian national character had stood opposed to all sorts of “barbarism” for a millennium, from the invasion of the Huns up to the recent “foreign Prussian-Tartar Nazism.”⁷⁴⁷

These conservative theorists, however, often did not specify whether or not their archetypal Austrian inhabited only the territory of the post-1918 Austrian state, which of course was a great deal smaller than Habsburg Austria. The intellectuals who discussed the idea of the Austrian man generally agreed that old Austria’s Slavic, Italian, and Magyar populations were not to be included in the concept of the Austrian man. Such a judgement was undoubtedly based in large part upon the fact that all of these non-German-speaking groups within old Austria had defined themselves as distinct nationalities in the last years of the Monarchy, and had generally elected to form new states in the aftermath of the state’s collapse in 1918. Yet interestingly, conservative exclusions of these other groups from the body of the Austrian *Volk* seemed to rest as much on notions of linguistic and ethnic nationality as did the very *großdeutsch* theories of nationalism that they so vehemently denounced, especially given the strong historical and cultural bond which the Monarchy’s German-speakers, Slavs and Magyars had shared for so long.⁷⁴⁸ Furthermore, conservatives only rarely discussed whether the concept of the Austrian man ought to include the other German-speaking residents of the Monarchy who had found themselves living in the Monarchy’s other successor states. Many conservative commentators laid much of the blame for the corrosive anti-Habsburg German nationalism before 1918 on German-

⁷⁴⁶“Das größere Österreich, Gedanken zur österreichischen Aussenpolitik,” 4-5; “Wir und Nationalsozialismus,” *Österreichische Monatshefte* 2 (November 1945): 10.

⁷⁴⁷Figl, “Was ist Österreich?,” 90.

⁷⁴⁸Missong, *Die Österreichische Nation*, 5-10; Böhm *Österreich, Erbe und Aufgabe*, 9 14; Kröll, 338-339.

speakers living in Bohemia, outside of the territory which would later become the Austrian Republic. Conservatives most frequently portrayed such German nationalists as kindred spirits to Prussians or other north Germans, and hence implicitly as people who were not “real” Austrians.⁷⁴⁹ Yet the precise national status of German-speakers living in other formerly Austrian lands went remarkably unmentioned in a body of conservative writings so otherwise concerned with describing an Austrian nationality which was by and large grounded in Austria’s Habsburg past. These other German-speakers, who did not obviously belong to either the German or the Austrian state after 1945, were generally too problematic a group to be included in the urgent conservative project to neatly define and unequivocally proclaim Austrian nationhood during the Second Republic’s first decade.

A 1946 article by Walter Ost represented one notable exception to this blind spot in conservative national discussion. In this essay, Ost discussed the concept of *Volksösterreicher* (members of the Austrian *Volk*), and argued that German-speakers living in the former Habsburg territories of South Tyrol, South Bohemia, South Moravia, Slovenia, and western Hungary all shared the sense of a cultural mission, the humanistic *Europäertums* (Europeanness) and the Christian *Weltanschauung* which stood as the hallmarks of the Austrian *Volk*, and should be welcomed back to Austria now that so many of them had been expelled from their historic homes. Ost did argue that the Sudeten German-speakers and German-speakers living in the rest of Hungary were too nationalistically pro-German or too oriented toward Budapest, respectively, to be considered

⁷⁴⁹Missong, “25 Thesen über die österreichische Nation,” 485-488; Böhm, *Österreich, Erbe und Aufgabe*, 30-31; Görlich, “Wann kommt das österreichische Geschichtswerk?” 495; Figl, 5.

true *Volksösterreicher*.⁷⁵⁰ A respondent to Ost's article, Leopold Müksch, warned Austrians against being too eager to welcome German-speaking immigrants from the Habsburg successor states, however. Müksch agreed with Ost's definition of *Volksösterreicher* in general terms, but argued that while farmers and other more average German-speakers in these lands had been and still remained true to Austria, the German-speaking intelligentsia of these regions was prone to an aggressive German nationalism which was precisely what the post-1945 Austrian state had dedicated itself to combating. Thus, Austria needed to be cautious lest these anti-Austrian elements undermine its hard won second chance at independence.⁷⁵¹

Ultimately, these descriptions of the Austrian man all shared an idealized portrayal of what it meant to be Austrian which minimized or ignored the words and actions of those Austrians who had fervently espoused German nationalism, and who had decried both democracy and peaceful coexistence with the neighboring *Völker* of Europe. They also failed to acknowledge National Socialism's Austrian roots, and the real and extensive support which the Nazis had commanded in Austria both before and after the *Anschluß*. Instead, these portrayals presented a vision of a freedom loving, benevolent Austrian national character. Such presentations relied on arguments which were frequently rather vague and superficial, but which offered Austrians a positive view of themselves which could be contrasted with a correspondingly negative portrayal of "foreign" Germans. In the end, this conservative representation amounted to, in the words of Görlich, the, "vague,

⁷⁵⁰Ost, 337-340.

⁷⁵¹Leopold Müksch, "Zum Begriff 'Volksösterreicher,'" *Österreichische Monatshefte* 10 (July, 1946): 488-489.

intuitive sense that the Austrian is something different.”⁷⁵²

Postwar Conservatives and the Austrian Mission

In addition to this idealized “Austrian man,” the postwar conservative intellectuals also returned to the notion of the “Austrian mission” or the “Austrian idea,” so frequently discussed by the advocates of Austrian distinctiveness before 1938, as something which served to define the Austrian national character and which set Austria apart from Germany. The conservative arguments concerning the Austrian idea were in many ways no less vague than the idea of the Austrian man, but they were far more grounded in Austria’s historical experiences, and especially its experience as an integral component of the Habsburg state. Such arguments consequently also depended less upon a setting up a stark contrast with Germany, although many of the advocates of the notion of the Austrian mission did not fail to note when the opportunity arose how that mission differed from the historical motives and actions of Germany or Prussia.

The specific versions of the Austrian mission varied from intellectual to intellectual, but they generally corresponded to two basic and familiar ideas: that Austria had a mission to serve as a cultural mediator or “bridge” between the peoples of Eastern and Western Europe, and that it was called to be the defender of Western civilization and culture. Both of these versions of the Austrian mission also correspond quite closely to the role that the Habsburg state had historically played in European affairs, and the Austrian right offered them not only as evidence of Austria’s distinctive nationhood, but also as a possible model for Austria in the postwar European order.

⁷⁵²Görlich, “Zur Problem der österreichischen Nation,” 445.

The first aspect or version of the Austrian mission presented Austria as a meeting place of cultures which had historically facilitated communication and understanding between Western and Eastern European civilizations. This idea was an extension of Austria's geographic location along the European fault lines between Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy, between Christendom and Islam, and between Germanic and Slavic and Magyar settlement. As a regional and cultural crossroads, the Austrian state had by necessity been forced over the centuries to manage the relationships of numerous different ethnic, cultural, and religious groups. The conservatives who advocated an Austrian mission did not present Austria as culturally neutral in this exchange. They argued that Austria had functioned as an outpost of Western civilization, giving Western culture a paternal upper hand in the exchange between East and West. Whereas many pre-1945 conservative descriptions of Austria as a cultural mediator often tended to describe Austria as a German land responsible for bringing a civilizing German influence to the East, these postwar accounts presented a slightly more balanced exchange, and portrayed Austria as an outpost of Europe as a whole rather than of Germany specifically.⁷⁵³

The metaphor which appeared most frequently in the Austrian right's portrayal of such an Austrian mission was that of a bridge. Such a metaphor was hardly new: one anonymous conservative in 1945 explicitly referred to Ignaz Seipel's assertion during the 1920s that Austria had functioned as a "bridge with ideas" to the East.⁷⁵⁴ The image of Austria as a bridge between West and East assumed a new vividness in the postwar era,

⁷⁵³Böhm, "Deutschnationalismus einst und jetzt," 127; "Resurrectio Austriae," *Österreichische Monatshefte* 7 (April, 1946): 267-269; Alfred Kasamas, "Wir wollen Oesterreich!" *Österreichische Monatshefte* 9 (May, 1947): 297; Kirtste, 183; Figl, 89-90; Görlich, "Zur Problem der österreichischen Nation," 444-5.

however. The “bridge” was now more genuinely bidirectional as well. Austria not only had the obligation to transmit Western civilization eastward, but also to make Eastern culture accessible to the rest of Western Europe. Conservatives thus now portrayed Austria not as an imperialistic or colonial power, imposing the West upon the East, but rather as a servant in the cause of cultural understanding between the *Völker* of Europe.⁷⁵⁵ Some conservatives presented the Austrian bridge as something which involved just an exchange of culture and ideas; others argued that Austria even worked to combine cultural elements from East and West to arrive at something that contained the strengths of both European regions. Wilhelm Böhm for his part found the bridge metaphor unsatisfactory, and he argued that it suggested a misleading passivity. In 1947 he asserted Austria was more of a cultural transformer, synthesizing and spreading a mixture of German philosophy and legal thought, Italian art, French courtly culture, Magyar military abilities, Slavic peasant culture, and Byzantine-Greek church culture.⁷⁵⁶ Fritz Hartlmayer abandoned the notion of a bridge entirely, opting instead to compare Austria with the Danube River: “Austria still has a function in common with the Danube: the connection between West and East.”⁷⁵⁷ These discussions of an Austrian mission to the peoples of the East decreased dramatically in frequency, however, as the Soviet Union tightened its control upon the Slavic lands of Europe after 1948, effectively separating them from the rest of Europe and eliminating any real possibility of a close Austrian relationship with them.

A related aspect of this Austrian mission as a cultural mediator and agent of

⁷⁵⁴“Das größere Österreich, Gedanken zur österreichischen Aussenpolitik,” 5-6

⁷⁵⁵Julia Plohovich, “Kulturelle Völkerverständigung– eine österreichische Aufgabe,” *Österreichische Monatshefte* 5 (February, 1946): 188; Nadine Paunovic, “Der grossdeutsche Irrtum,” *Österreichische Monatshefte* 12 (September, 1946): 516.

understanding was the notion that Austria must use its unique, historically-acquired sympathy for other cultures and *Völker* for the cause of peace. This argument had also appeared sporadically before 1938, but it achieved a new sense of urgency after the devastation wrought by the Second World War. If the German national character represented war and conquest in the writing of postwar Austrians, then the Austrian mission amounted to an obligation to use Austria's aptitude for cultural understanding in the cause of peace in a war-ravaged Europe. In 1946 Leopold Figl argued that the Austrian *Volk* had a calling to use Austria's long tradition to test new ideas and to put them to political use in the cause of peace and to advance the ideals of freedom, equality, and humaneness. He portrayed Austria's history as one of peace and understanding which could serve as an example for all of Europe. He asserted, "A world that has not understood the problem of Austria will also never be able to understand itself."⁷⁵⁸ Thus, this first version of the Austrian mission depicted an Austria which had a timely role to help ease the still raw tensions between the *Völker* of Europe, and stood as a marked contrast to Europe's recent experience with an aggressive, militaristic German state.

The second variation on the notion of an Austrian mission at first glance stood at odds with the first. This second Austrian mission involved the defense of European civilization against threats to its existence from the East. As with the mission of cultural mediation, this mission to act as a bulwark of the West was thoroughly grounded in Austria's historical experiences. Conservative writers cited Austria's role in turning back

⁷⁵⁶ Böhm, *Österreich, Erbe und Aufgabe*, 17.

⁷⁵⁷ Fritz Hartlmayr, "Die Donaufrage," *Österreichische Monatshefte* 9 (June, 1946): 425.

⁷⁵⁸ Leopold Figl, "Und Österreich lebt doch..." in *Offizielle Festschrift zur 950-Jahr-Feier Österreichs*, ed. Österreich-Institut (Vienna: Brücken Verlag, 1946): 5.

Eastern invasions throughout its history, sacrificing its men and treasure to combat threats from the Huns, Avars, Magyars, and Turks. Figl and Böhm both associated Austria's very founding as a state with this defensive mission, as it was established as the eastern-most territory of the Carolingian Empire in the tenth century. Since then it had stood against "barbarism" and "heathenism" throughout its history, no matter what specific state form it took or which territories it encompassed. Interestingly, although the Austrian mission mostly faced Eastern threats, Figl included Austria's eighteenth-century conflicts with Prussia and Böhm cited its struggle with revolutionary and Napoleonic France as important aspects of this defensive mission.⁷⁵⁹ None of these discussions of Austria's defensive European mission, however, contained any of the references to the more modern Soviet threat from the East which had been fairly common in conservative rhetoric before 1945. This omission is certainly understandable, however, given the Soviet occupation of part of Austria's territory up until 1955. The ÖVP and its representatives in the Austrian government realized that they needed to convince the Soviet Union that Austria posed no threat to Soviet security, and despite their firm opposition to Communism they could ill afford belligerent rhetoric with the Red Army still stationed on Austrian soil.⁷⁶⁰

These apparently contradictory variations on the concept of the Austrian mission were reconcilable to a certain extent, and indeed conservative intellectuals sometimes presented them as complimentary ideals. This reconciliation came through the notion of an "Austrian idea." Most conservatives presented the essential nature of Austria's historical experiences and actions as representing a humanistic and supranational European spirit.

⁷⁵⁹Figl, "Was ist Österreich?" 89-91; Böhm *Österreich, Erbe und Aufgabe*, 17-23.

⁷⁶⁰On the Austrian People's Party's cautious dealings with the Soviet Union, see Bischof, *Austria in the*

Indeed, the conservative historian Ernst Joseph Görlich argued that Austrian national identity and European consciousness were intimately connected: “Not only does European consciousness not conflict with Austrian consciousness, but it is the basic prerequisite of consciousness of the Austrian.”⁷⁶¹ Some members of the Austrian right also added a commitment to the advancement and protection of Roman Catholicism to this Austrian idea. Whatever the precise mixture of values, these ideals to which Austria was committed allowed it to serve the cause of uniting Western and Eastern cultures in a felicitous and peaceful combination while protecting Europe from the more dangerous Eastern (or even Western) ideas and cultures which threatened to overwhelm it. Thus Austria emerged as a nation which had historically been willing to extend its hand in peace and understanding to the *Völker* of the region, while remaining ready to grasp a sword to protect the continent against barbarism.⁷⁶²

All of these conservative formulations of the “Austrian mission” or the “Austrian idea” stood in explicit contrast to the sort of chauvinistic German nationalism which the Austrian right associated with Germany. Germany had no mission to facilitate understanding between *Völker*, but rather sought to place the interests of the German *Volk* in a preeminent position through war in conquest. Likewise, Germany assumed no obligation to defend Europe from outside threats, and indeed was at times itself a major threat to European civilization.⁷⁶³

First Cold War, 133-145; Bader, 184-209.

⁷⁶¹Görlich, “Zur Problem der österreichischen Nation,” 444-445.

⁷⁶²Figl, “Was ist Österreich?” 89-90; Böhm, “Staatsmythen und österreichische Idee,” *Österreichische Monatshefte* 4 (January, 1948): 151-154.

The Postwar Conservative Vision of the Habsburg Past

The most important aspect of the conservatives' efforts to define Austria as a distinctive nation was their reference to Austria's history. Austria's Habsburg past was the actual foundation upon which the Austrian character, culture, and mission rested. Given the fact that Austrians did have a great deal in common with Germans in terms of language, culture, and even religion, it was only natural that the conservative arguments referred to Austria's history, which differed markedly from the history of the northern German states. Of course, previous advocates of Austria's German character had also used Austria's history in their arguments, asserting that Austria's past was defined by its leadership of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation. The postwar Austrian conservative movement strongly attacked such a position. Spokesmen argued that the Holy Roman crown had always been an supranational, European title rather than one which stood for anything distinctively German in the national sense. The Empire had encompassed not just ethnic Germans, but also numerous other nationalities as well. The crown's wearers, who had been exclusively Habsburg for more than half a millennium, had used their authority to advance the interests of all of Europe, defending the continent and its culture as a whole. Wilhelm Böhm argued, "Certainly we need to not belittle the imperial aspect of our historical past. On the contrary, we must be proud of it. We must always, however, keep before our eyes the fact that the Holy crown did not constitute a national myth which became linked to Austria; rather, it was a part of our own Austrian power and our Austrian supranational mission."⁷⁶⁴ In fact, some conservative intellectuals argued that if anything, Germany had

⁷⁶³Poukar, 225.

⁷⁶⁴Böhm, "Resurrection Austriae," 268; "Österreich," *Wiener Zeitung*, October 30, 1946, 3.

been a part of Austria thanks to its membership in the Habsburg-led Holy Roman Empire, and had benefitted from Austria's benevolent, supranational stewardship.⁷⁶⁵

The Austrian right accused those who had claimed Austria as historically German of distorting the real past of the Austrian nation. Austrian conservatives argued that such views were the work of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century "Prussian" historical propagandists acting to advance the hegemonic national ambitions of Germany at the expense of Austria. Conservatives sharply disputed portrayals of the Habsburg state as religiously intolerant, socially reactionary, and nationally oppressive, and denounced such views as empty, anti-Austrian rhetoric which lacked any true historical basis. Such otherwise well-regarded German historians such as Treitschke, Sybel, Droysen, and Ranke came under attack by the Austrian right with considerable frequency due to their presentation of a broadly conceived German history which included Austria. According to Austrian conservatives, the fact that so many Austrian citizens had been taken in by such "misrepresentations," which, as we have seen, were quite typical in Austria before 1945, was due to a lack of familiarity with the real substance of Austria's history. Thus the Austrian right considered the forceful presentation of a genuine, pro-Austrian vision of the Habsburg past to be critically important.⁷⁶⁶

A number of professional historians and historically-minded intellectuals including Fritz Stöckl, Gustav Blenk, Emmerich Fehrnepach, Oscar Folkert, Wilhelm Böhm, Ernst Joseph Görlich and Alfred Missong spearheaded conservative efforts to articulate such a

⁷⁶⁵Kirste, 183-4; Poukar, 225; Felix Hurdes, *Österreich als Realität und Idee* (Vienna: Österreichische Verlag, 1946), 2.

⁷⁶⁶Hurdes, 3; Böhm, "Österreich heißt das Land," 8; Görlich, "Wann kommt das österreichische Geschichtswerk?" 491-495.

view of Austrian history. Böhm and Görlich contributed most actively and prolifically to the endeavor, penning numerous articles and short books that sketched out Austria's past and contrasted it with that of Germany, and discussing specific events and individuals from Austria's history in terms that portrayed the old Habsburg state and its leaders in a positive light. The common thread that united their work was the idea that an examination of the truth of Austria's history led inevitably to the notion that Austrians were not German in any nationally significant sense, and never really had been.

The starting point for most of the Austrian right's presentation of Austrian history was the tenth century, when Austria first received its name. In 996, the territories which would later become the Austrian Republic were for the first time in recorded history referred to as *Ostarrichi*, an old German word which would later become *Österreich* (Austria). The name, which roughly translates as "eastern land," corresponded to the Danubian territories' position on the easternmost edge of the Carolingian Empire. Even though the name itself first appeared in the year 996, Böhm argued that historians might reasonably assume that the notion of Austria as a unified and distinctive territory within the Reich predated the first recorded use of the word. As with so much of Austria's history, the state's name during the early Middle Ages was a politicized topic. Many German and Austrian historians during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had referred to early Medieval Austria as the "*Ostmark*," a label which described Austria's position as the eastern most portion of what would become the medieval German Reich, but without the connotations of distinctiveness and independence suggested by "*Ostarrichi*." Indeed, as we have seen, Nazi Germany re-labeled Austria as the *Ostmark* for a time after the 1938 *Anschluß*. Austrian conservatives

now took umbrage at the label, which they described as an anachronistic name projected back upon Austria's past by German nationalists eager to portray Austria as nothing more than a part of a greater Germany. *Ostarrichi* does seem to be the usage which appeared earliest, and did ultimately provide the root of the name by which the German-speaking territories on the Danube would be known throughout their subsequent history. In asserting the importance of Austria's name, conservatives sought to emphasize their land's ancient status as an independent and distinctive territory separate from other German-speaking lands. In this, the Austrian right was not alone, as the Second Republic as a whole celebrated the 950th anniversary of the Austria's name in 1946.⁷⁶⁷

If Austria's name dated back nearly one thousand years, some commentators argued that the roots of the Austrian *Volk* were older still. As we have seen, after 1945, the Austrian right repudiated the notion that Austrians were Germans in a racial or ethnic sense in favor of the idea that modern Austrians were the products of long centuries of interbreeding between Romans, Illyrians, Celts, and Germanic *Völker*. Görlich argued that any examination of Austria's history ought to begin even before the migration of Germanic peoples into the Danubian territories. Such in-migration had been the customary starting point of many Germanist histories of Austria, but Görlich asserted that Austria should be as proud of its Roman, Illyrian, and Celtic, roots as France was of its Gallic and England its Brittanic past.⁷⁶⁸

Most conservative historians, however, argued that the most significant era of Austria's early history was the period of Babenberg rule during the twelfth and thirteenth

⁷⁶⁷Böhm, *Oesterreich, Erbe und Aufgabe*, 15-16; "Oesterreich heißt das Land," 7; Kirtste, 182; *Offizielle Festschrift zur 950-Jahr-Feier Österreichs*, 1-45.

centuries. The House of Babenberg separated Austria from the duchy of Bavaria, and established it as an autonomous land within the loose coalition of the Holy Roman Empire. The Babenberg state quickly became an economic and political power of note in Central Europe, and its capital, Vienna, developed into a center for trade and cultural and artistic achievement throughout the region.⁷⁶⁹ The postwar Austrian right argued that, despite the Babenbergs' status as a German noble house, the state which they created, with its growing ties to Bohemia and Hungary and its affiliation with other non-Germanic cultural regions, was easily distinguishable from the other German states. Babenberg Austria was the first truly independent state which comprised the Austrian territories and its position of influence in Central Europe was easily recognizable as the one which Austria would occupy for most of the rest of its history. Austrian conservatives had always lauded the Babenbergs, but after 1945 they presented Babenberg Austria as the earliest version of the autonomous and supranational Danubian center of culture, trade and power which was the essence of Austria's national character and mission as they saw it.⁷⁷⁰

If the Austrian conservatives saw the Babenbergs as the founders of the Austrian state, they argued that it had been the Habsburgs who had truly made the Austrian mission a reality by transforming Austria into great power in Europe. If the Babenbergs had provided the foundations for the Austrian idea by creating bonds between their territories and those of the Slavs and Magyars who were their neighbors, it was the Habsburgs who brought the promise of an supranational political, cultural and economic community in Central Europe

⁷⁶⁸Görlich, "Wann kommt das österreichische Geschichtswerk?" 494.

⁷⁶⁹For a brief treatment of Babenberg Austria, see Robert A. Kann, *A History of the Habsburg Empire, 1526-1918* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 4-8.

⁷⁷⁰Böhm, *Oesterreich, Erbe und Aufgabe*, 20-21; "Heldenepos Oesterreich," *Österreichische Monatshefte*

to real fruition in the eyes of most conservatives. This conservative emphasis upon the House of Habsburg was hardly a new phenomenon, but after 1945 it assumed national implications. For the postwar Austrian right, it was the Habsburg dynasty and the great, multinational Austrian state it had founded which represented the essence of Austria's character, history, and nationhood. Thus, the Austrian right focused most of their attentions upon the Habsburgs, emphasizing the most admirable aspects of their Monarchy, and often providing strident apologetics for specific events or figures which had been negatively portrayed by German nationalists. Just as so many earlier proponents of a German identity for Austria had assailed the Habsburgs and their representatives as being an anti-German, negative force in Austria's history, the postwar Austrian conservatives rallied around the dynasty and defended them as the very embodiment of Austria's national uniqueness.

Wilhelm Böhm, as one of the most vigorous conservatives who used Austria's history to bolster its postwar national identity, discussed Austria's Habsburg past at length during the late 1940s. Like other Austrian conservatives, he located Austria's origins in Charlemagne's empire and the subsequent Babenberg period. In terms of Austria's more modern history however, he argued that the real strength of the Habsburgs' multinational state lay in the Catholic uniformity established during the wars of religion in the seventeenth century. At that time, many of the state's inhabitants had become Protestants, and only a protracted and bloody conflict in Bohemia and northern Austria enabled the Monarchy to reestablish religious conformity. Many commentators on Austrian history had been critical of the Habsburgs' actions, charging them with religious, and indeed national oppression of both Czech and German-speaking Protestants. During the subsequent period, however,

Louis XIV's France and the ascendent Ottoman Empire to the southeast had attacked the Habsburg state. According to Böhm, only the religious unity created by the suppression of Protestantism allowed Austria to survive this difficult period. Indeed, the experience of these wars had in fact created the modern Austria nation by unifying Austrian culture and cementing Austria's Catholic character. Furthermore, contemporary critics who assaulted the Habsburgs' actions during this period were guilty of misunderstanding the practices and necessities of the time and of judging them by modern standards. The Habsburgs' imposition of religious uniformity was not only necessary, but not at all unusual for Europe at the time.⁷⁷¹

The eighteenth-century Austrian empress Maria Theresa was also a particularly attractive historical figure for the Austrian right, especially given her Catholic piety and her struggles against the Prussian monarch Frederick II. Conservatives portrayed Frederick as the quintessential militaristic German ruler and they contrasted his character with Maria Theresa's more maternal qualities. Postwar conservatives emphasized Frederick's attacks on Theresian Austria and his seizure of the Silesian territory, to which he had no legal right, as evidence of the differences in character between imperialistic Germans and freedom-loving Austrians. In 1945, Leopold Figl forcefully contrasted Maria Theresa and Frederick, arguing that while the Austrian Empress was filled with the spirit of toleration, understanding, and humanism, Frederick represented all that was barbaric and violent about the German character. Figl asserted that Frederick, traditionally called "the Great," had benefitted from the inflation of his reputation by Prussian "historical lies." Böhm also

⁷⁷¹Böhm, "Oesterreichs innere Geschichte und ihre Behandlung," *Österreichische Monatshefte* 10 (July, 1948): 244.

criticized Frederick, arguing that he had sought to destroy Austria's beneficial role in Central Europe without assuming any responsibility himself for securing peace and stability in the region.⁷⁷² Such presentations were quite typical of the manner in which the Austrian right used the eighteenth-century conflicts between Austria and Prussia to symbolize national differences between contemporary Germans and Austrians.

Of course, the eighteenth century was not without its problems for Austrians wishing to portray it as a time when a sense of Austria nationhood blossomed. In particular, Joseph II had long been a popular figure with Central European German nationalists due to his efforts to impose German as the language of administration throughout the Monarchy.⁷⁷³ Böhm and Görlich argued, however, that Joseph had based these regulations upon reasons of state, rather than upon any sort of German nationalism. They asserted that this reform made sense when considered within the context of the rest of Joseph's efforts to extend centralized state power and to make the Monarchy's administration more uniform. His choice of German as a language of administration was reasonable given its status as the only widely spoken, fully developed literary language within his territories, but he might as easily have chosen any language. According to the Austrian right, Joseph's primary emphasis was upon reforming the administration of his territories, rather than on advancing German national interests.⁷⁷⁴

Thus conservatives portrayed the eighteenth century as an era were the Habsburg House made notable progress in advancing the power of its state and the prosperity and

⁷⁷²Figl, 89-90; Böhm, *Österreich, Erbe und Aufgabe*, 26. See also Görlich, "Fürst Wenzel Kaunitz-Rietberg." *Österreichische Monatshefte* 11 (August, 1948): 510-513.

⁷⁷³See Chapter 5 and Nancy M. Wingfield, "Statues of Emperor Joseph II as Sites of German Identity," in *Staging the Past: The Politics of Commemoration in Habsburg Central Europe, 1848 to the Present*, eds.

cultural development of its subjects. They argued that this period of waxing Austrian national potency prepared Austria to resist the serious threats posed by the wars of the French Revolution and Napoleon which convulsed Europe between 1791 and 1815. The revolution itself, with its democratic radicalism, provided a sharp ideological challenge to the Austrian Monarchy, and the postwar Austrian right viewed it with distaste. Napoleon's military might provided an even greater threat, and ultimately not only forced Austria to give up significant portions of its territory, but also obligated the Habsburgs to abdicate the Holy Roman throne which they had possessed for so many centuries.

Austrian German nationalists before 1945 had often portrayed these wars as a period of invigorated German national consciousness, in which German *Volk* united under the pressure of French domination to drive back Napoleon.⁷⁷⁵ Post-World War II defenders of Austrian nationhood also celebrated Napoleon's defeat, but obviously could not agree with such a German nationalist interpretation of events. Andreas Hofer, the Tyrolean peasant leader who struggled against Napoleon and was executed by French forces in 1809, had often appeared in "Germanist" historical views as a German national martyr.⁷⁷⁶ They Austrian right had always viewed him as more of an Austrian patriot than a German national hero, but now its spokesmen denied any that there had been any German nationalist component to his struggles whatsoever. For example, in 1946 Leo Kirste charged that the depiction of Hofer as a defender of *Deutschtum* was nonsensical given the fact that the Tyrolean had actually fought most of his battles against Napoleon's Bavarian German allies.

Maria Bucur and Nancy M. Wingfield (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2001), 178-201.

⁷⁷⁴Böhm, *Österreich, Erbe und Aufgabe*, 24-5; Görlich, "Fürst Wenzel Kaunitz-Rietberg," 510-513.

⁷⁷⁵See Chapters 1, 2, and 5.

⁷⁷⁶See Chapters 2 and 5. For a discussion of conservative efforts to portray Hofer as an Austrian patriot

The appropriate view of Hofer, according to Kirste, was that of a dedicated fighter for his particular *Heimat* of Tyrol, which was of course a constituent part of the greater Austrian state.⁷⁷⁷

Wilhelm Böhm took a still broader view of Austrian participation in the wars against Napoleon, arguing that Austria's role in the conflict proved its firm commitment to defend the freedom of the peoples of Europe against dictatorship. Böhm portrayed Napoleon's style of rule as a sort of proto-fascism which had sought to subjugate Europe and its *Völker*. Böhm painted Austria's stand against him as part of a long Austrian historical tradition of opposition to authoritarian, predatory regimes.⁷⁷⁸ Naturally this alleged history of Austrian support for freedom in Europe also lent itself to contemporary efforts to portray Austrians as victims and opponents of Hitler's Germany, rather than willing participants in the Nazi state.

The subsequent period in Austrian history was more difficult for the Austrian right to portray positively. As we have seen, both Austrian German nationalists and Marxists habitually focused on the nineteenth century as a time when the Habsburg government had been particularly oppressive, charging that the Monarchy had stifled the legitimate national aspirations of its subjects in order to maintain its own political power. These critics of the Monarchy often presented Klemens von Metternich, the chief architect of Austrian policy from the time of Napoleon's defeat until the Revolution of 1848, as the very personification of the Monarchy's reactionary or oppressive tendencies.⁷⁷⁹ The postwar Austrian right

during the *Ständestaat*, see Chapter 4.

⁷⁷⁷Kirste, 181.

⁷⁷⁸Böhm, *Österreich, Erbe und Aufgabe*, 24-5.

⁷⁷⁹See Chapters 1, 2 and 5.

naturally disputed such characterizations of the Metternich and his era. They attempted, just as they often had before 1945, to accentuate the positive aspects of the period, highlighting Austria's diplomatic predominance in Europe, and the generation of peace and stability that the continent experienced under Metternich's guidance.

In a 1948 article in the *Österreichische Monatsheft*, Görlich argued that Metternich had to be understood as a product of the aristocratic culture of the ancien regime, who stood against what he saw as the greatest dangers to Europe: Prussian-German nationalism and the laissez-faire capitalism of the liberal *Bürgertum*. Görlich argued that Metternich's policies should not be judged by contemporary and anachronistic democratic criteria, but rather had to be evaluated under the standards of his own era, according to how ably he served his state. In such a light, he then emerged as a devoted Austrian and European.⁷⁸⁰ Böhm echoed these sentiments in an article of his own, asserting that Metternich should be judged by whether or not he was true to Austria, rather than how he measured up to modern democratic ideals.⁷⁸¹

The Revolution of 1848 provided a similar interpretive challenge for the Austrian right. If critics saw the Austrian state during the *Vormärz* as a reactionary and oppressive force, they portrayed the Revolution of 1848 as an attempt by Austria's peoples to attain and secure national, social, and political liberties. Austrian conservatives, however, more frequently presented the Revolution as a dangerous surge of anti-Austrian nationalism, despite the laudable democratic ideals of many of the revolutionaries. Böhm was a particularly vehement critic of the Revolution of 1848, and of the nationalism-tainted

⁷⁸⁰Görlich, "Fürst Klemens Lothar Wenzel Metternich," *Österreichische Monatshefte* 5 (February, 1948): 219-223.

Austrian political liberalism which drove it. He argued that the revolution represented an attempt to destroy the Monarchy and replace it with twin anti-Slavic German national and Magyar hegemonies. He acknowledged that the revolution certainly brought with it important constitutional and anti-feudal reforms, and the Monarchy overreacted to the uprising with a counter-productive policy of neo-absolutism, yet Böhm argued that in its heart, the Revolution in Austria was an anti-Austrian movement led by Sudetenlanders and Viennese liberal intellectuals. In response to the commemoration of the revolution's centenary by the Austrian left, Böhm wondered if it was really appropriate to celebrate such an event which he clearly saw as a step on the road of German domination which led to 1866, 1918, and ultimately to 1938 and Hitler. He argued that 1848's democratic ideals were a thin disguise for the ugly German nationalism at its heart. After a century of history, he wrote, "The covering had fallen from 1848— all of the world saw what it had concealed: naked violence, degradation, and crime."⁷⁸²

Böhm's sharp critique of Austrian liberalism and the revolution of 1848 corresponded to his defense of Austria's government during the second half of the nineteenth century. Instead, the Austrian state had not been the oppressive "Völkerkerker" (prison of the nations) that so many of its critics, both at the time and more recently, had charged. He argued that the Austrian state had traditionally worked for the freedom and prosperity of its *Völker*. As early as the time of Maria Theresa, Austria had provided for the education of the Monarchy's nationalities in their own languages. In the nineteenth century, the Monarchy had attempted to protect and nurture the particularities of its various nation

⁷⁸¹Böhm, "Oesterreich heißt das Land," 9; *Österreich, Erbe und Aufgabe*, 25-27.

⁷⁸²Böhm, "Die Revolution von 1848 und Oesterreich," *Österreichische Monatshefte* 6 (March, 1948): 247;

groups within a multinational framework, expanding educational rights and regional autonomy. The real problem during the nineteenth century had been the fact that federal reforms necessary to guarantee the privileges of Austria's national minorities could not be put in place so long as Austria retained the old boundaries of its historical *Länder* (provinces). Yet those boundaries remained, turning the individual *Länder* into hotly contested national battlegrounds. Also, the nationalities could not hope for a realization of the national equality implicit in the Austrian *Staatsidee* (state idea) so long as German-speaking Austrian liberals attempted to upset the state's delicate national balance, and to establish a predominant position for themselves. The Hungarian half of the Monarchy was also a problem after 1867, as the dominant Hungarian lower nobility there systematically refused to grant national rights to any of Hungary's non-Magyar minorities. Indeed, if Austria had not been a *Völkerkerker*, then in Böhm estimation, Hungary certainly had been.⁷⁸³

Another conservative who provided a ready defense of Austria's nineteenth-century government was Alfred Missong, who asserted that not only was Austria at that time not nationally oppressive, but that it was in fact more democratic than some critics were willing to admit. In a 1947 essay, he traced Austria's constitutional development during the nineteenth century to make the argument that Austria, like almost all other European states, had experienced a gradual development toward democracy. He maintained that Austria's modern constitutional history began with the democratic enthusiasm of 1848, despite the regrettable national prejudice of many of the revolutionaries. The Monarchy's suppression

"Oesterreichs innere Geschichte und ihre Behandlung," 441.

⁷⁸³Böhm, "Die 'Völkerkerker,'" *Österreichische Monatshefte* 10 (June, 1947): 398.

of the revolution did provide a series of setbacks for constitutionalism, yet Missong asserted that even the most flawed of the post-1848 constitutions and patents represented barriers to absolutist rule by the crown and provided a role for representative government. He particularly emphasized the progressive character of the December Constitution of 1867, which created a full blown constitutional Monarchy with an array of legally protected freedoms which he compared favorably to the constitution of the French Third Republic. Missong concluded Austria was well on the road to democratization, and if it had not fallen apart in 1918 it would undoubtedly have arrived at a form comparable to Britain's constitutional monarchy.⁷⁸⁴

If the postwar right defended the policies of Austria's government in general during the nineteenth century, so too did they rally to bolster the reputation of Franz Joseph, the Habsburg monarch who reigned between 1848 and 1916. While Franz Joseph's critics charged that his personal rigidity and aloofness personified the resistance to change typical of the Habsburg state at the time, conservatives such as Böhm and Missong portrayed him as a dedicated and conscientious ruler who always worked for the best interests of his state and his subjects, and who did what he could within the constraints of the times to ameliorate the problems that challenged the Monarchy.⁷⁸⁵ In a 1949 essay on the Emperor, Emmerlich Fehrpach portrayed Franz Joseph as a proponent of peace, prosperity, and cooperation both within the Reich and indeed throughout Europe. Fehrpach shifted the blame for the Monarchy's problems in its last decades to other figures such as the Austrian officials

⁷⁸⁴Missong, "Oesterreichs Entwicklung zur Demokratie," *Österreichische Monatshefte* 4 (January, 1947): 152-154.

⁷⁸⁵Böhm, "Kaiser Franz Josef I und die 'A.-Z.,"" *Österreichische Monatshefte* 4 (January, 1949): 179; Missong, "Oesterreichs Entwicklung zur Demokratie," 153.

Ferdinand Beust and General Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf, the German *Kaiser* Wilhelm II, and all Magyars. These groups placed the interests of German-speakers or Hungarians above those of the multinational state as a whole, in marked contrast to the Austrian monarch. Fehrpach praised Franz Josef for fostering Austria's economic and cultural prosperity, and for preserving the peace, both internally and externally, for so long in the face of all the problems which beset Austria during his reign. Fehrpach presented Franz Joseph as a ruler who fulfilled the Monarchy's mission in Central Europe so as to help its *Völker* to progress economically and culturally, and who always did his best to serve the interests of the Monarchy as a whole.⁷⁸⁶

The Austrian right also used other figures within Franz Joseph's government as symbols of the Monarchy's benevolence and judiciousness. For example, conservative writer Gustav Blenk praised Count Leo Thun, the Monarchy's Minister for Public Instruction during the early part of Franz Josef's reign, for his dedication to the rights of all of the state's nationalities. Blenk presented Thun, a native German speaker, as a defender of the Monarchy's unity, a proponent of federalism, an educational reformer, and a supporter of balance in matters of religion. Blenk particularly emphasized Thun's continual support of for Czech and Slovak political equality with German-speakers and Magyars, and lauded his advocacy for a special position for the Czechs within the Monarchy. Blenk argued that if Austrian liberals and Hungarians had not obstructed Thun's views, then the Monarchy might not have succumbed to the national pressures which ultimately destroyed it.⁷⁸⁷

A 1949 article by Fehrpach similarly presented Franz Joseph's heir and nephew,

⁷⁸⁶Emmerlich Fehrpach, "Kaiser Franz Josef I," *Österreichische Monatshefte* 4 (January, 1949): 78-82.

⁷⁸⁷Gustav Blenk, "Graf Leo Thun," *Österreichische Monatshefte* 7 (April, 1949): 319-321.

Archduke Franz Ferdinand, as a proponent of national equality and federalism. Fehrpach argued that the Slavophile Franz Ferdinand was perhaps the only man in the Monarchy's waning years who might have had the position and strength of character to reshape the Monarchy. Franz Ferdinand emerged in Fehrpach's writing as a plain spoken and ardent Austrian patriot who thought federalism was the only solution to the centrifugal forces which plagued the Monarchy's last years and as a staunch opponent of the Magyars' attempts to maintain and enhance their post-1867 privileged status within the Monarchy. Ultimately of course, the Archduke never had the opportunity to realize his plan for the federalization of the Habsburg state because of his 1914 assassination by a Serbian nationalist in Sarejevo. Fehrpach identified Franz Ferdinand's death as the root cause not just of the First World War but also of the Second, and he argued that the Archduke's assassination marked the real end of the Habsburg dynasty as a force for stability and national equality in Central Europe. Without the ballast of the Habsburg's multinational state, the *Völker* of the region were doomed to decades of misery and bloody national conflict.⁷⁸⁸

Even Karl I, Franz Josef's successor and the last Habsburg monarch, merited a defense by the postwar Austrian right. Despite the fact that he reigned a mere two years, and presided over the Habsburg state's military defeat in World War I and subsequent dissolution, Alfred Missong presented Karl as a fair, federally-oriented ruler who was unable to overcome the narrowminded nationalisms of his time. Missong pointed to Karl's attempts to conclude a peace with the allies separate from Germany as evidence of his lack of interest in German nationalism, and emphasized his success at finally bringing federal

⁷⁸⁸Fehrpach, "Erzherzog Franz Ferdinand," *Österreichische Monatshefte* 9 (June, 1949): 417-419.

reform to the Monarchy, even if such reforms unfortunately came too late to save the state from dismemberment.⁷⁸⁹

Missong also asserted that Karl's reputation had been besmirched by nationalist propaganda after 1918, and he criticized the Austrian left for not defending Karl against such slander. He argued that instead of seizing this opportunity to rally to the defense of a true servant of the Austrian nation, the left merely regurgitated its traditional anti-monarchical party line: "Even the best monarch is an enemy of the people!"⁷⁹⁰ Missong's argument on this matter actually provides a concise summary of the Austrian right's position on Austria's Habsburg past after World War II. He declared that the Second Republic should restore Karl's reputation as a man, regent, and good European to its appropriate dignity, and remarked that anyone who thought that such a rehabilitation was anti-democratic actually had very little confidence in Austrian democracy. According to Missong, Austria would be far better served through reverence for its Habsburg past than by the nullification of that past. For Missong and other conservatives, Austrian patriotism was not restricted to the Austria Republic, but encompassed all of Austria's history.⁷⁹¹

Of course, if the leaders of Habsburg Austria had been as benevolent and judicious as postwar conservatives asserted, then the Austrian right was obligated to explain why their state had ultimately disintegrated. Naturally they blamed German nationalism for old Austria's demise. According to conservatives, it was ultimately the growth of such German nationalism which had led directly to the Hitler regime and its monstrosities as well as to the

⁷⁸⁹ Alfred Missong, "Der letzte habsburgische Regent," *Österreichische Monatshefte* 7 (April, 1947): 248-251.

⁷⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 248.

⁷⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 248-251.

destruction of the Habsburg state, despite the best efforts of Austria's rulers. Although German nationalism had been relatively common among the German-speakers in the Monarchy, postwar conservatives portrayed it as treason against the Austrian nation. Ultimately, they presented German nationalism as a poisonous and anti-Austrian ideology which acted to unbalance the delicate relationships between all the national groups and to dilute Austrian loyalty to the Monarchy and its Central European mission.⁷⁹²

The Austrian right generally agreed that the origins of modern German nationalism lay in the eighteenth century. Some figures like Böhm and Paunovic thought that its ultimate roots lay in the Enlightenment's attack upon Catholicism and the old regime. Most commentators, however, agreed that a sense of German unity inspired by the wars with revolutionary and Napoleonic France combined with the *völkisch* emphasis of German Romanticism provided the real inspiration for the emergence of German nationalist sentiment. Such a depiction of German nationalism's origins were of course at odds with its conception of its own origins, which German nationalists dated back to antiquity.⁷⁹³

According to postwar conservatives, such nationalism was ultimately foreign to Austria and most of its inhabitants, and indeed became prevalent during the nineteenth century only within a narrow portion of the population. Böhm, Görlich, and Edward Josef Stur identified the liberal movement, the Viennese intelligentsia, and the Bohemian German-speakers as the real proponents of German national sentiment in Austria. According to their arguments, most of the other German-speakers within the Monarchy, and most especially

⁷⁹²Böhm, "Deutscher und slawischer Nationalismus." *Österreichische Monatshefte* 11 (August, 1948): 488-491; *Österreich, Erbe und Aufgabe*, 31; Paunovic, 515-516; Missong, "25 Thesen über die österreichische Nation," 487-8.

⁷⁹³Böhm, "Deutschnationalismus einst und jetzt," *Österreichische Monatshefte* 2 (November, 1949): 126-

the peasant class, had been untouched by such sentiment and had maintained their loyalty to the multinational state. According to Böhm, even nationalistic liberals and intellectuals had not really wanted to abandon the Monarchy for a unified German state, but rather had wished to secure a predominant position within the Habsburg state for German-speakers while maintaining Austria's dominance in the affairs of the German states. It was only as nationalists felt the hegemony of German-speakers within the Monarchy threatened toward the end of the nineteenth century that they really began to look toward *Anschluß* with Germany as an attractive option. Even so, such nationalism had had a detrimental effect on public discourse in the Monarchy, and indeed according to Böhm and Missong, the anti-Slavic sentiment of German nationalists, especially in the Sudetenland, had inspired a Czech national movement which in turn further sharpened national differences within the Monarchy.⁷⁹⁴

Postwar Austrian conservatives also criticized Germany itself for exacerbating German nationalism. From the wars of religion in the seventeenth century to the predatory design of Frederick II of Prussia, to the arrogant militarism of Bismarck and Wilhelm II, conservatives portrayed Germany as a power which worked against Austria's interests. As we have seen, the Austrian right accused nineteenth-century German historians of encouraging German nationalism within Austria with pro-German historical propaganda. Conservatives likewise charged that Austria's alliance with Wilhelmine Germany essentially had bound Austria to Germany's nationalistic dreams of conquest, while preventing any

7; Paunovic, 515-6; Görlich, "Wann kommt das österreichische Geschichtswerk?" 492.

⁷⁹⁴Böhm, "Deutschnationalismus einst und jetzt," 127; Missong, "25 Thesen über die österreichische Nation," 488; Görlich, "Fürst Klemens Lothar Wenzel Metternich," 223; Eduard Josef Stur, "Wiedergeburt des Patriotismus," *Österreichische Monatshefte* 12 (September, 1947): 482.

possibility of easing tensions between Austria and Russia over the Balkans.⁷⁹⁵

This single-minded conservative effort to blame Germany and its Austrian German nationalist supporters for the catastrophes which Austria had experienced during the past century represented a significant change for the Austrian right. Whereas conservatives during the First Republic and, to a lesser extent in the *Ständestaat*, had frequently blamed the Czechs for the end of the Monarchy, during the early Second Republic they shifted that culpability entirely onto “treasonous” Austrian German nationalists and German imperial ambitions in Europe. Similarly, where earlier Austrian conservatives had vigorously denounced liberalism and Enlightenment ideas without providing a corresponding denunciation of the nationalist sentiment which frequently accompanied those ideals, the Austrian right after 1945 attacked German nationalism far more vehemently than it did liberalism.⁷⁹⁶ While individual conservatives such as Böhm did sometimes attack liberal ideas in terms reminiscent of the Christian Social Party’s rhetoric before 1938, the People’s Party as a whole now embraced republicanism and hence could not afford to strongly assail the liberal notions which provided the foundation of the Second Republic’s democratic ideology. These new positions stemmed from Austria’s circumstances after 1945. The experience of the Second World War had de-legitimized both authoritarianism and German nationalism for Austrian conservatives, and the ÖVP now positioned itself as a Party which was committed to republican rule and to Austrian nationalism.⁷⁹⁷

⁷⁹⁵Böhm, *Österreich, Erbe und Aufgabe*, 30.

⁷⁹⁶For previous conservative views, see Chapters 1 and 3. The postwar Austrian right’s unwillingness to blame the Czechs for the collapse of the Monarchy, as they once had, might also stem from their reluctance to offend the predominantly Slavic Soviet Union which continued to occupy Austria.

⁷⁹⁷On the de-legitimization of right-wing authoritarianism in Europe after World War II, see Jerry Z. Muller, *The Other God That Failed: Hans Freyer and the Deradicalization of German Conservatism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987); Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe’s Twentieth*

Ultimately the Habsburg past emerged in the accounts of the postwar Austrian right as the source of the uniqueness of the Austrian nation. The conservatives portrayed the dynasty as a generally benevolent force which had worked not just to protect the interests of Austrians, but of all the peoples within their multinational state, and which exemplified the best of Austria's national qualities. Such qualities could easily be contrasted with the far more negative Prussian or German character displayed so clearly in Germany's own past, and revealed the fact that Austrians and Germans represented different nations despite the language which both groups shared. They also minimized the authoritarian tendencies of the old Monarchy, while highlighting the reforms during the nineteenth century which had provided a constitutional basis for Habsburg rule. These efforts to define Austrian nationhood through references to the Habsburg Monarchy and its legacy were most intense during the immediate postwar era, and decreased markedly in frequency once the Second Republic stabilized during the early 1950s. Still, the Austrian right after 1945 used the Habsburg past as the starting point for their arguments about Austrian national identity, just as they always had since 1918. The manner in which the Second Republic's conservatives now used Habsburg past to proclaim the existence of an Austrian nation separate from the German *Volk* was new, however, and marked a profound change in the stance of the Austrian right.

ii. Postwar Socialists and the Habsburg Past

Unlike the Austrian right, the Social Democrats, the major faction within the Austrian left, saw no need to reconstitute themselves as an entirely new party after the

restoration of Austrian statehood in 1945. The Socialists saw themselves as the only political group in Austria which had unambiguously supported democracy in Austria during the decades since the collapse of the Monarchy. They had resisted both the authoritarian corporatist regime of the 1930s and Nazi rule in Austria, and saw little in their political stance between 1918 and 1945 from which they had to distance themselves. They had always supported *Anschluß* with Germany before World War II, however, and after 1945 they needed to adjust their position to include support for Austrian independence in order to minimize Austrian responsibility for Nazi crimes and to secure an end to the Allied occupation.. Thus, the Social Democrats rechristened themselves with a more patriotic name– the *Sozialistische Partei Österreichs* (Socialist Party of Austria- SPÖ)– even as they still explicitly identified themselves as the direct inheritors of the old Social Democratic Workers Party’s heritage.⁷⁹⁸

In a certain sense, the Social Democrats’ ideological position in 1945 was the exact opposite of that of the ÖVP. The SPÖ indeed possessed a rich democratic legacy, but, as we have seen, almost no tradition of Austrian patriotism or nationalism upon which to build in the postwar era. So while the Austrian right could emphasize and amplify its own reasonably strong if somewhat ambiguous history of support for Austrian nationhood, but had to manufacture conservative enthusiasm for democratic republicanism where little has

⁷⁹⁸Weinzierl and Skalnik, 215-222. The position of the Austrian Social Democrats was in many ways similar to that of the German Social Democratic Party, which likewise based its postwar political rhetoric in part upon references to its traditional support of democratic rule, and which denounced the Nazis’ dismantling of German democracy. The leader of the German Social Democrats, Kurt Schumacher, did explicitly and publicly denounce the Third Reich’s murder of Europe’s Jews. The Austrian Party, on the other hand, did not make the Holocaust a part of its public rhetoric during the early Second Republic. See Herf, 245-251; Lewis J. Edinger, *Kurt Schumacher: A Study in Personality and Political Behavior* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1965); Douglas A. Chalmers, *The Social Democratic Party of Germany: From Working Class Movement to Modern Political Party* (New Haven: Yale University Press,

existed before, the Socialists already had a firmly democratic past, but had to revise their ideology to accommodate an affirmation of Austria as a nation. It should come as no surprise then, that the Social Democrats saw the task of rebuilding an independent Austria after 1945 in a somewhat different light than did the conservatives. For the Socialists, Austria's foremost goal in the postwar era had to be the reconstruction of a strong political culture which was unambiguously democratic and republican. According to the Socialists, the primary crime of the Nazis, and indeed the *Ständestaat* before them, had been the dismantling of Austrian democracy, not an assault upon Austrian nationhood. The SPÖ certainly did take part in the same postwar project to define Austria as a historically unique nation which all of the Second Republic's other major political factions participated in, but Socialist denials of Austrian Germanness were more tentative and ambiguous than those of the ÖVP or the Communist Party. The task of rebuilding of Austrian democracy and furthering the state's progress toward social and economic justice were simply more important concerns for the Socialists than Austria's national issues.⁷⁹⁹

Nevertheless, the Socialist Party did indeed make a place in their political ideology for at least a qualified affirmation of Austrian nationhood, and used that affirmation to distance the Austrian state from the crimes of the "foreign" Nazi German occupiers in a manner similar to that of Austria's other political factions. After all, *Anschluss* had never been an end in itself for Austrian Socialists, but rather a step on the road to a united, socialist German democracy. If Social Democrats during the First Republic had been able to present

1964).

⁷⁹⁹For examples of the SPÖ's emphasis of democratic and social issues rather than national ones, see their political platforms in the 1940s and 1950s: "Aktionsprogramm der Sozialistischen Partei Österreichs, 1947," and "Das Kommunalprogramm der Sozialistischen Partei Österreichs, 1953," in *Österreichisch*

union with Germany as a progressive, socialist goal, however, after 1945 the ideal of *Anschluß* simply had been too tainted by its association with the Third Reich to stand as viable part of the Party's postwar program. Socialists in the Second Republic had to be content with pursuing their goals in an independent Austrian state, just as they had in the old Monarchy.

The Socialists' new arguments in favor of Austrian independence were based on a particular vision of Austria's Habsburg past, just as were those of the Austrian right. The Socialist narrative of that past, however, continued to build upon previous Socialist views of Austria's history, which had defined the dynasty and its governmental representatives in largely negative terms, while at the same time emphasizing the progress of the Monarchy's subjects toward democracy and socialism under the leadership of the workers' movement. The SPÖ essentially returned to the position it had held before 1918, which presented the Monarchy as a supranational territory compatible with Socialist ideals of internationalism and national rights. The Socialists after 1945 argued, just as they had before 1918, that it had ultimately been the resistance of the reactionary forces of the dynasty, the Austrian *Bürger* class, the aristocracy, the Church, and nationalists of all stripes which had kept the old state from achieving the federal, democratic, and social reforms necessary to its survival.⁸⁰⁰ Ultimately for the Social Democrats, however, it was not the history of the Monarchy itself which represented the best historical foundation for a democratic and

Parteiprogramme, 1868-1966, 269-278, 279-287. See also Franz Pop, "Das Wesen der Demokratie," *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), August 7, 1945, 1.

⁸⁰⁰On the Social Democrats views before 1918, see Tom Bottomore, "Introduction," in *Austro-Marxism*, ed. and trans. Tom Bottomore and Patrick Goode, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 1-43; Otto Bauer, *Die Nationalitätenfrage und die Sozialdemokratie*, 2d ed. (Vienna: Wiener Volksbuchhandlung, 1924); Karl Renner, *Der Kampf der österreichischen Nationen um der Staat* (Leipzig and Vienna: Franz Deuticke, 1902).

independent Austria to rise from the devastation wrought by Hitler's war, but rather the Austrian First Republic, which the Socialists claimed as their own legacy.

The SPÖ and the National Question

The Social Democrats in 1945 were ultimately somewhat more tentative in presenting Austria's Habsburg past as something which demonstrated an absolute national and ethnic separation between Austria and Germany than either the postwar Austrian conservatives or the Communists. Part of the reason for this hesitancy was the simple fact that the Socialists had maintained for so long and with such consistency that German-speaking Austrians and Germans in Germany proper were indeed part of the same *Volk*. Therefore when it came to the question of whether or not Austrians were Germans or not, the leaders and theorists of the SPÖ found it difficult to break with their past positions. This question was a crucial one when it came to denying Austrian complicity for the crimes of Nazi Germany, however, and even those Austrian Socialists who had greeted the 1938 *Anschluß* with at least halting approval as an event which furthered the eventual cause of German unity in a democratic and socialist state now admitted that the experience of Nazism had put an end to that prospect for good.

In a 1946 statement in the Socialist monthly *Die Zukunft* regarding Austria's position after the end of Second World War, Oscar Pollak argued that the experience of Nazism had instilled Austrians with a profound aversion to *großdeutsch* ideology, and now precluded any Austrian return to broad support for *Anschluß*.⁸⁰¹ In a similar manner, the Socialist

⁸⁰¹Oscar Pollak, "Österreich Heute," *Die Zukunft, Sozialistische Monatsschrift für Politik und Kultur* (March, 1946): 4.

leader and eventual president of the Second Republic Adolf Schärf described in his memoirs how during the Nazi years he had come to realize that: “The *Anschluss* is dead. The Austrians have been cured of their love of Germany.”⁸⁰² Even President Karl Renner, who in 1938 had proclaimed his qualified support for the *Anschluss* with Nazi Germany, argued in 1946 that the entire notion of *Anschluss* with Germany was contradicted by Austria’s unique spirit and cultural relationship to the other *Völker* of Europe. For Renner, 1938 now represented a total catastrophe for Austria after the Nazi assault on its name, political traditions, and unique character.⁸⁰³

Like Austria’s other postwar parties, the Socialists refused to admit any Austrian responsibility for Nazi Germany’s crimes, and vehemently denied that Austrians had been willing participants in Hitler’s war. Yet at the same time, postwar Socialists did not blame ethnic Germans as a whole for the Nazi regime as the Austria conservatives and the Communists frequently did. Rather they portrayed the Nazi regime also as a vicious dictatorship ruled by a relatively small National Socialist cabal which had oppressed not just Austrians but also most Germans within the Third Reich. Germany’s real problem according to one Austrian Socialist had not begun with Hitler himself, but rather with the failure of the Weimar Republic to remove from positions of influence military officers from the Wilhemine *Kaiserreich* who were willing to oppose democracy with murder and violence.⁸⁰⁴

⁸⁰² Adolf Schärf, *Österreichs Erneuerung, 1945-1955* (Vienna: Wiener Volksbuchhandlung, 1955), 20.

⁸⁰³ Karl Renner, “Am Ausgangspunkt der Zukunft. Rede zur Neunhundertfünfzigjahrfeier Österreichs am 22. Oktober 1946,” in *Für Recht und Frieden: Eine Auswahl der Reden des Bundespräsidenten Dr. Karl Renner* (Vienna: Österreichischen Staatsdruckerei, 1951), 54.

⁸⁰⁴ “Der Mord an Karl Liebknecht und an Rosa Luxemburg,” *Die Zukunft* (January, 1947): 5-10. See also Franz Winterer, “Österreichs Kriegsteil,” *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), September 18, 1945, 1; “Sind wir Schuldig?” *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), March 15, 1947, 1-2; Franz Pop, “Das Wesen der

This more charitable view of Germans illustrates the SPÖ's lingering ambiguity on the issue of national kinship between Austrians and Germans. Gustav Bieneck may have forthrightly stated that, "Austria never grew as the part of another entity, but rather always as a unified whole; it was the deliberate, natural creation of unfathomable historical laws . . ." but few other postwar Socialist commentators were so willing to state in a clear and firm manner that Austrians were not Germans and never had been.⁸⁰⁵ For example, Renner, who had written extensively on national issues from a Socialist perspective since before the collapse of the old Monarchy, argued that Austria's history had really begun with the influx of German settlers into the Danubian region in the tenth century. Whereas conservative commentators often emphasized the fact that Austrians were not really a purely Germanic people, but rather represented the culmination of centuries of intermixing between Germans, Slavs, Celts, Illyrians and others, Renner focused solely upon the ethnic Germanic roots of the Austrian *Volk*. He did allow that Austrians were a particularly adaptable Germanic group due to their descent from a mixture of the Frankish, Schwabian, Hessen, and Saxon tribes, rather than just one Germanic tribe, but ultimately for him the Austrians were essentially Germans in an ethnic sense.⁸⁰⁶

Yet Renner also concluded by 1945 that Austrians certainly constituted a separate national group from the German nation. For him, part of the problem that had plagued Austria for so long involved theories of nationalism. Western Europeans simply equated the concept of the nation with the state, while the inhabitants of Central Europe understood the

Demokratie," *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), August 7, 1945, 1.

⁸⁰⁵Gustav K. Bieneck, "Gedanken über Österreich," *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), August 8, 1945, 2.

⁸⁰⁶Karl Renner, "Am Ausgangspunkt der Zukunft. Rede zur Neunhundertfünfzigjahrfeier Österreichs am 22. Oktober 1946," in *Für Recht und Frieden*, 47; "Wohin wir kommen und wohin wir wollen . . ."

concept as signifying a linguistic, cultural, and ethnic community. Renner argued that nations were in a constant state of flux, and continually developed. He noted that the Czechoslovakian nation had formed through the fusion of the Czech and Slovak nations, just as the Yugoslavian nation had emerged the union of the Slovene, Serb and Croat nations⁸⁰⁷ Indeed, Renner asserted, the Habsburg state had contained many nations without being a nation itself. According to Renner, the Austrian example was somewhat similar to that of Switzerland. Both had been part of the German nation in the Middle Ages, but had gradually developed into separate national groups thanks to their historical, geographic, and cultural relationship with neighboring nations. Austria's relationship with Germany had been closer and longer lasting than Switzerland's, but Renner argued that in principle their development was analogous.⁸⁰⁸ Renner of course never actually specified precisely when Austria had developed into a unique nation; given the fact that he had proclaimed Austrian Germanness as recently as 1938, one might be tempted to conclude that he believed the Austrian nation was less than a decade old.⁸⁰⁹

Other Socialist thinkers echoed Renner's position that Austrians had in the past been part of the German nation, but now constituted a separate nation. In a response to conservative criticisms of the Socialists' lack of Austrian nationalism, Erich Körner countered that the ÖVP's national position represented just the sort of nationalism that had

Offizielle Festschrift zur 950-Jahr-Feier Österreichs, 4.

⁸⁰⁷ Obviously Renner's remark has proven to be ironic given the enduring mutual resentment among these respective groups and the immediate disintegration of both Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia after the end of communist rule in East Central Europe in 1989.

⁸⁰⁸ Karl Renner, "Die Ideologische Ausrichtung der Politik Österreichs," *Wiener Zeitung* January 19, 1946, 1-5.

⁸⁰⁹ For Renner's 1938 statements supporting *Anschluss* and Austrian Germanness, see Renner, *Karl Renner in Dokumenten und Erinnerungen*, ed. Seigfried Nasko, (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1982), 132-137.

led to the recent world wars. Körner asserted that Austrians of earlier eras considered themselves to be both German and, thanks to their political and cultural history, distinctively Austrian. He admitted that the Social Democrats now agreed with conservatives that Austria was indeed a separate nation, but he argued that this Austrian nationhood had to serve the needs of internationalism and European unity and eschew chauvinism. According to Körner, the Austrian right was falling prey to just such a chauvinism by attempting to replace German nationalism with Austrian nationalism. For Körner, any ideology which placed national prestige ahead of the interests of all humanity inevitably represented a threat to peace. He differentiated between the simple “feeling of national belonging” which the Socialists acknowledged, and the sort of Austrian chauvinism which he claimed the ÖVP advocated. For Körner all nationalism, even Austrian nationalism, represented a grave danger.⁸¹⁰ This fear of the dangers of nationalism of course had been a long standing feature of Socialist rhetoric.⁸¹¹

Indeed, Körner was not alone in asserting that nationalism of any sort was a problem for both Austria and the world as a whole. Otto Koenig forcefully repudiated the racial nationalism espoused by the Nazis in a 1945 article in *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung*, arguing that the Nazi attempt to ground German history in a mythological link between the Indo-Germanic peoples and the ancient Aryans amounted not just to historical nonsense, but threatened the cause of international peace as well.⁸¹² Josef Hindels noted in a 1950 issue of *Die Zukunft* that the ideological split created by the Cold War in Europe had allowed German nationalism to flourish once more in West Germany. He warned against allowing the threat

⁸¹⁰Erich Körner, “Gibt es eine österreichische Nation?” *Die Zukunft* (March, 1949): 74-76.

⁸¹¹For discussions of previous Socialist views on the dangers of nationalism, see Chapters 1 and 3.

posed by the Soviet Union to blind the West to the dangers of a renewed nationalism in a rearmed Germany. Renner agreed that any sort of nationalism or particularism, whether of the *großdeutsch* or pro-Habsburg Austrian variety, was harmful and tended toward fascism. The sort of internationalism that the Social Democrats had long espoused represented the only real chance for peace in Europe. In the postwar era, Renner foresaw the end of nationalistic mass movements and the rise of internationalism.⁸¹³

While most Social Democrats in the Second Republic denied Austrian Germanness, some of them did note that there were benefits to maintaining a close relationship between Austria and Germany. While a 1947 article in the Socialist newspaper *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* avowed that Austrians were neither more nor less interested in affairs in Germany than those of any other European state, Renner argued that the language and continuing cultural community which Austria shared with Germany was an advantage for, rather than an obstacle to, Austria's continuing independence. Austria had to work with all European peoples, including the Germans in West and East Germany as well as Austria's Slavic, Magyar, and Italian neighbors, especially now that the old political bonds which had caused so many problems under the Habsburg state were gone. Such economic cooperation in Central Europe was in Austria's best interests and could not be ignored due to nationalist prejudices of whatever variety.⁸¹⁴

The problem of the "*Volksdeutsche*," the more than ten million German-speaking

⁸¹²Otto Koenig, "Arier? Was ist das?" *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), October 19, 1945, 2.

⁸¹³Josef Hindels, "Der deutsche Nationalismus," *Die Zukunft* (September, 1950): 242-245; Karl Renner, "Die Ideologische Ausrichtung der Politik Österreichs," *Wiener Zeitung*, January 19, 1946, 1-5.; Karl Renner, "Gedanken zur Friedenskonferenz," *Die Zukunft* (September, 1946): 1-3.

⁸¹⁴The Socialists never distinguished between Germans living in East and West Germany, although they were clearly uncomfortable with both Soviet oppression in the East and NATO's rearmament of the West. "Deutschland," *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung*. (Vienna), March 23, 1947, 1-2; Karl Renner, "Am Ausgangspunkt

refugees brutally expelled from their historical settlements in the Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Yugoslavia after 1945, also illuminated the Socialist position on Austria's relationship to the German *Volk*.⁸¹⁵ Writing in 1950, Socialist commentator Gustav Korkisch displayed no real sense of ethnic kinship with the refugees beyond his remark that some felt a closer bond to Austria than to Germany thanks to the Habsburg past of their former homelands. He did, however, portray the plight of these refugees as a European humanitarian crisis which required both a concerted international aid effort and a sympathetic stance from Austria.⁸¹⁶

Thus the Socialist position on the issue of national kinship between Austria and Germany was essentially that Austria indeed constituted a separate nation, although in the past it had been part of the German nation. The Socialist view of the nation did not purely depend on the existence of an independent Austrian political state; they clearly believed that the Austrian nation was based upon the ethnic, cultural, and, above all, historical bonds shared by the Austrian people rather than upon mere political citizenship. They argued, however, that in the new postwar world nationalism in general was both outmoded and dangerous. The appropriate response to the Nazi assault upon Austrian nationhood was not to embrace Austrian nationalism, but rather to focus upon international peace and European cooperation. Such a stance fit in well with the SPÖ's traditional internationalism and hostility toward overt nationalism, and it further minimized the significance of the lingering ambiguity in the Social Democrats' newly minted "Austrianism."

der Zukunft. Rede zur Neunhundertfünfzigjahrfeier Österreichs am 22. Oktober 1946," 55-6.

⁸¹⁵Most of these German-speakers were deported to the East and West German states, but some were also deported from Czechoslovakia to Austria. On the expulsion of the *Volksdeutschen*, see Mazower, 214-225; Gerhard Ziemer, *Deutscher Exodus: Vertreibung und Entgliederung von 15 Millionen Ostdeutschen*

The SPÖ and the Austrian “Mission” and National Character

Just as the SPÖ’s statements concerning the national differentiation between Austrians and Germans were more ambiguous than those of the Austrian right, so too were their comments about Austria’s historical mission and distinctive national characteristics more tentative than similar formulations by the ÖVP. Again, this ambiguity can be explained by the history of Austrian Social Democratic thought. Simply put, Austrian Socialism already possessed a historical mission to which it was committed: the progress of democracy and social justice. Thus the Social Democrats always made their statements about an Austrian mission in the context of their primary commitment to advance the cause of international socialism. Likewise, they always evaluated the Austrian national character in terms of how closely Austria’s national characteristics either aided or hindered the cause of the workers’ movement. Still, in the period after 1945 the Austrian Socialist Party did display a markedly stronger sense of Austrian national and historical distinctiveness than it had at any point in the past, and it articulated these views through references to Austria’s historical past.

Even though they were primarily dedicated to the Socialist cause, some Social Democratic intellectuals did recognize that Austria had a special and continuing role to play in European affairs. Their views often resembled Austrian conservatives’ definitions of Austria’s “mission” to serve as a cultural bridge and a defensive bulwark. For example in 1946, Wilhelm Stemmer argued that thanks to its geographic position between East and West, Austria was destined to play a role as mediator between the two regions. He avowed

(Stuttgart: Seewald Verlag, 1973).

⁸¹⁶Gustav Korkisch, “Das Volksdeutsche Problem in Österreich,” *Die Zukunft* (June, 1950): 161-162.

that even if the Austrian *Volk* was small in numerical terms, it had been and continued to be very important to Europe in intellectual and cultural matters.⁸¹⁷ The Socialist historian Jacques Hannak combined the defensive and cultural aspects of the Austrian mission with a distinctively democratic Socialist slant in a 1948 article, in which he asserted that Austria's geographically determined fate enabled it to defend Europe against detrimental changes pursued by hostile powers. The Habsburg dynasty's reactionary conservatism made it well suited to fulfill this historical role, and it successfully opposed the threats posed to Europe by the Turks in the east and the French in the west. In 1848, however, the Austrian *Volk* itself had become the agent of a sort of change which was creative and necessary rather than destructive, while the dynasty found itself working against the tide of historical progress. The Revolution of 1848 began the process which would ultimately depose the ruling house in 1918. Austria's mission thus changed from one of conservative defense to one of social and political progress. Austria's task in the postwar era was to spread the republican legacy of 1848 eastward to nations that were as oppressed by Communist Russian dictatorship in 1948 as they had been by czarist Russia's reactionary intervention in East Central Europe in 1848.⁸¹⁸

Other Socialist thinkers approached the more traditional notions of the Austrian mission with more circumspection, however. One commentator writing in 1949 warned that while Austria had once been the very heart of Europe and Vienna the continent's real capital, that position of status and influence had vanished, and to maintain such a view of Austria in the postwar era was a dangerous illusion. Austria was now a small state located

⁸¹⁷Wilhelm Stemmer, "Otto Glöckel und das Schulprogramm der Sozialistischen Partei: Zur Wiederkehr des Todestages Otto Glöckels (23. Juli 1935)," *Die Zukunft* (July, 1946): 3-4.

on the fault line between the two mutually antagonistic ideological blocks in the Cold War. Austria's very existence was threatened by both of the Cold War blocks, which both continued to have troops stationed on Austrian soil. Austria still had a part to play in the European order, now as a neutral means of contact between the capitalist West and the Communist East. Such a function had to serve the cause of international peace, and was to be carried out only in close cooperation with the United Nations. Delusions of Austrian historical grandeur could only threaten this more modest and cautious Austrian role.⁸¹⁹ The Socialist educator Anton Tesarek viewed the notion of an Austrian defensive mission *vis-à-vis* the East not just with suspicion, but rather with outright hostility. He saw such an idea as a thinly veiled version of the Austrian "German mission" which had served the cause of Nazi imperialism in Europe, and declared, "Austria is no longer an *Ostmark*, and no longer wants to be the 'core land' of an empire or a 'bulwark' with the function of 'protection against the East.'" ⁸²⁰

One Socialist thinker even went so far as to replace the "Austrian mission" with an "Austromarxist mission." In a 1947 article discussing the significance of the 1917 revolution in Russia, Karl Czernetz described the role of Austromarxism as a "bridge" between the authoritarian but revolutionary Marxism of the Russian Bolsheviks and the exaggerated emphasis upon reform within the capitalist system by the British Labour movement. Czernetz saw Austrian Social Democracy as a necessary mediator between the extremes of the Western and Eastern varieties of socialism, parallel to the widespread

⁸¹⁸ Jacques Hannak, "Österreich in der Geschichte," *Die Zukunft* (April, 1948): 97-100.

⁸¹⁹ Cato, "Was für ein Österreich wollen wir?" *Die Zukunft* (May, 1949): 129-133.

⁸²⁰ Anton Tesarek, *Erziehung zur Demokratie, zum Republikanismus, zum Pacifismus. Gedanken zu einem politischen Problem,* *Die Zukunft* (May, 1946):18

notions of an Austrian mission as a cultural bridge between East and West proposed by the Austrian right and even by some Austrian Socialists.⁸²¹

Thus, the SPÖ's discussions of Austria's mission invariably either translated the nation's historical task into forms which were compatible with the "Socialist mission" of the workers' movement to advance democracy and social justice, or rejected such notions entirely as threats to the ideals of socialism. In a similar manner, Socialists discussed the national character or aptitudes of the Austrian *Volk* with an eye to qualities which were valued by the international workers movement. As we have seen, Karl Renner argued that Austria's diverse Germanic background gave the Austrian *Volk* a particularly adaptable national character. Renner also asserted that internationalism was a historical gift of the Austrian *Volk* thanks to the strength of the internationalist Austrian workers' movement and of Roman Catholic universalism in Austrian history. Indeed for Renner the potency of internationalist sentiment in Austrian history represented Austria's true character, rather than the trappings of the dynastic Monarchy which the ÖVP emphasized as Austria's heritage.⁸²² Gustav Bieneck presented the Austrian national character in a similar manner, arguing that thanks to its position between the Occident and Orient, Austrians had developed a special gift for absorbing numerous different foreign influences in a positive manner, and crystalizing them into a uniquely Austrian form. This "chemical-cultural" process allowed Austria to benefit from positive cultural influences from other nationalities both within and

⁸²¹Karl Czernetz, "Zum 30. Jahrestag der russischen Revolution," *Die Zukunft* (November, 1947): 320.

⁸²²Renner, "Die Ideologische Ausrichtung der Politik Österreichs," 1-5.

outside of the Habsburg state.⁸²³

⁸²³Gustav K. Bienek, "Gedanken über Österreich," *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), August 8, 1945.

Unsurprisingly, Austrian Socialists were also far less eager than the conservatives or even the Communists to present a positive contrast between Austria's benevolent national characteristics and the stereotypical negative national characteristics of north Germans or Prussians. In a discussion concerning how best to educate Austria's youth about the benefits of socialism and democracy, Fritz Kurz noted in passing that the major national flaw that Prussians had historically displayed was the inability to view situations from the perspective of others. Kurz asserted that Austrians, on the other hand, had an aptitude for understanding that made them much better suited to democracy.⁸²⁴ Such statements by Socialist commentators were quite rare, however, and were presented with far less urgency than they were by the representatives of Austria's other political factions.

The Austrian Socialists' representation of the Austrian national character and mission thus was indeed more forceful than it had been in the past, but it was still relatively anemic compared to the positions of the other political camps. In the end, these issues were simply less important for the Austrian Social Democracy than they were for the right or the Communist left. The Socialists already had a historical mission in their political ideology, and any statements concerning Austria's nationhood were always made in that ideological context. Despite the relative newness and weakness of the SPÖ's Austrian national consciousness, however, the Austrian past was every bit as important for them in terms of defining Austria's place in the postwar world as it was for the other parties.

The SPÖ's View of Austrian History

The Social Democrats used Austria's history extensively in order to define the

⁸²⁴Fritz Kurz, "Erziehung zur idealen oder realen Demokratie?" *Die Zukunft* (November, 1947): 332-333.

position of the Austrian Second Republic in the world after 1945. Unlike the Austrian conservatives, however, the Socialists were not interested in glorifying the dynastic aspect of Austria's history. Just as they had before 1945, the postwar Social Democrats presented a view of Austrian history which described the Habsburg dynasty itself largely as a reactionary, negative force. Now that they had abandoned *Anschluß* in favor of Austrian nationhood, however, they were far more willing to portray the supranational state which the Habsburgs had governed as a positive, proto-internationalist entity. This heightened appreciation for the Monarchy's more felicitous qualities did not fundamentally alter the Socialist view of history, though. Postwar Socialists continued to believe that the workers movement and the nascent Austrian democracy which rose out of the Monarchy's ashes in 1918 were far more important parts of Austria's heritage than the old dynastic empire. Thus, Social Democrats' view of Austrian history was one in which the Austrian working class struggled to achieve democracy and social justice in the face of the resistance of a reactionary dynasty, and ultimately fulfilled its aspirations through the creation of the First Republic. In presenting this vision of history, the Social Democrats were able to distance postwar Austria from complicity in the crimes of Nazi Germany not just by asserting the distinctiveness of Austria's historical past, but also by portraying the essence of Austria's past in terms of democratic progress which was inimical to the authoritarian character Nazi ideology.

Given the Socialist emphasis upon democracy and social progress as the most important ideas in the post-1945 world, the Party had to grapple with the question of exactly how much historical continuity the Second Republic shared with the Habsburg past. Could

the Second Republic reasonably be viewed as the successor to the history of the old Monarchy, which had indeed also included so many other territories and so many other national groups? Or was modern Austria simply the inheritor of a democratic and territorial legacy which truly began with the First Republic in 1918? During the First Republic, most Socialists had denied any real continuity between the Monarchy and the modern Austrian state.⁸²⁵ In 1946, one Socialist thinker, the educational theorist Anton Tesarek, continued to argue that Austria's past as part of the Habsburg Monarchy should be minimized in favor of a view of history which emphasized 1918 as the real beginning of the modern Austrian state. In a 1946 article on education and democracy he wrote:

Our Second Republic cannot be a successor state to the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy There are no longer any Czechs, Poles, Croats, or Hungarians who desire their state life to be linked to the Habsburg Monarchy— despite the architectural monuments from this epoch in their cities, despite all cultural relationships, despite many social institutions which recall the form of the old Monarchy. They all write the history of the state as something new— and they essentially date it from the days of their liberation [from the Monarchy] . . .⁸²⁶

Most other Socialist commentators now argued, however, that Austria's past could not reasonably be restricted to the First Republic, particularly in light of workers' movement's historical roots in the last half century of the Monarchy's existence. More importantly, the Party's new stance in support of Austrian nationhood required that they take a longer view of Austria's past in order to ground these national views more firmly. Therefore, Social Democrats generally presented a vision of Austria's history which included the old Monarchy. At the same time, however, postwar Socialists did not see the dynasty itself as the real subject of Austria's history. The postwar Socialist historical

⁸²⁵See Chapter 1.

⁸²⁶Anton Tesarek, "Erziehung zur Demokratie, zum Republikanismus, zum Pacifismus. Gedanken zu

narrative cast the Austrian *Volk* and the workers' movement as the real protagonists of Austria's past, and Socialists in 1945 still regarded the end of the Monarchy in 1918 as the culmination of that narrative, just as they had during the First Republic and the *Ständestaat*. Thus, the stance of the SPÖ during the Second Republic did not represent a wholesale revision of the Party's earlier views on Austrian history, but rather constituted a subtle revision in which the old Monarchy assumed more importance than it previously had.

In a 1949 article, for example, Erich Körner expressed the view of a majority of Socialist thinkers that Austrian Republic's past included the history of the Habsburg Monarchy, with all of its good and bad aspects:

Austrian history is neither worse nor better than that of other nations. We need neither to be especially proud of it nor to repudiate it, just as both light and shadow divide our land. So next to an absolutist emperor stands the people's emperor Joseph II, next to the "butcher"- General Heynau stands the peasants' liberator Frundberg, and next to the Austro-fascist Stahrhemberg stands the workers' leader Wallisch. . . . Thus it must be understood that the Austrian Socialists do not base their Austrian-confession upon the "good, old days" of the Monarchy, in which the workers were merely the object of feudal and capitalistic exploitation, but rather they unconditionally profess their faith in the Austrian Republic which they helped create.⁸²⁷

Adolf Schärf also agreed that the territory of the current Austrian Republic had a past before 1918. He argued that the individual federal provinces of contemporary Austria had developed a common feudal and urban culture by the late Middle Ages. Even though the Republic itself was relatively young, its territories had represented a unified region within the much larger Habsburg supranational state for many centuries, and it made sense to

einem politischen Problem," *Die Zukunft* (May, 1946): 18

⁸²⁷Erich Körner, "Gibt es eine österreichische Nation?" *Die Zukunft* (March, 1949): 75.

include the Habsburg period as part of Austria's history.⁸²⁸

Socialists were definitely less interested in Austria's medieval past than either the ÖVP or earlier proponents of a "Germanist" vision of Austrian history. While the conservatives placed a great deal of emphasis upon the formal founding of "*Ostarrichi*" in the tenth century and upon the Babenberg creation of culturally vibrant Danubian duchy centered upon Vienna with strong ties to Bohemia and Hungary, Socialists discussed Austria's history during the Middle Ages relatively rarely, and then only in passing.⁸²⁹ Such a lack of interest is unsurprising given the Socialist focus upon the common Austrian *Volk* and its democratic development. The historical records from the medieval period have little to say about the masses, and largely describe a feudal order which Socialists rejected as inimical to democracy and social progress.

The postwar Social Democrats' examination of Austria's past generally began in earnest with the Habsburg dynasty's creation of a multinational empire in the sixteenth century. The early modern Habsburg Monarchy provided the Austromarxists with an supranational state that simultaneously prefigured Socialist internationalism, and served as a tool of reaction and oppression against its subjects of numerous different nationalities. It was within the framework of this Monarchy that the democratic workers' movement developed during the nineteenth century, and it was against the Habsburgs that the movement would struggle.

Socialist commentators gave the Habsburgs themselves a certain amount of credit for

⁸²⁸ Adolf Shärf, "Oesterreichs Mission," *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), January 1, 1946, 1.

⁸²⁹ See for example Renner, "Die Ideologische Ausrichtung der Politik Österreichs," 1-5, which only briefly discusses the Middle Ages in Austria before moving on to a more substantial discussion of the Habsburg period.

at least creating a state based on supranational principles, which the Socialists preferred to the nationalist ideals that had served as the inspiration for Nazism and its horrific war of conquest. Indeed, Karl Renner recognized that as the “House of Austria,” the Habsburg dynasty, was historically synonymous with the sort of supranational ideas which were the antithesis of the nationalism which had poisoned Europe’s recent history. He praised the Habsburg state’s openness to the cultures of other European lands such as Spain, Italy, and the Netherlands, and admitted that after the union of the Austrian, Bohemian, and Hungarian crownlands in the sixteenth century, the Monarchy experienced a highpoint of prosperity and power. Apart from the achievement of building a vibrant multinational empire, however, the dynasty itself received little further credit from postwar Socialist thinkers. Renner charged that the arch-conservative dynasty had too often lagged behind the rest of the continent in recognizing important social and cultural changes sweeping Europe and indeed had frequently opposed such change, to the point where Austria’s very name had become synonymous with reaction.⁸³⁰

Likewise, Adolf Schärf lauded the Habsburgs for their ability to construct a strong supranational state which saw slow but continuous improvement in the condition of its Slavic and Magyar populations over the centuries, and which was able to turn back the threat posed by the Ottoman Empire. Yet he also noted that the Monarchy was the central point of the Counter Reformation which had stopped the progress of Protestantism and its more progressive economic ideals from spreading to the east and south from its point of origin in northern Europe. Schärf also argued that the Habsburgs based their continent-wide

⁸³⁰*Ibid.*, 1-5; Renner, “Am Ausgangspunkt der Zukunft. Rede zur Neunhundertfünfzigjahrfeier Österreichs am 22. Oktober 1946,” 49-51.

cultural and political prominence on the backs of Austria's oppressed peasant class.⁸³¹

Other Socialist commentators refused to give even that much credit to the figures of the dynasty. Tesarek argued that it was a historical distortion to laud the dynasty for the social and political progress that the Monarchy had made over the centuries. He argued that the empress Maria Theresa, a particularly beloved figure of the Austrian right, could be not be praised for the centralization and progress which Austria had experienced during her reign. These changes had depended upon Europe's inevitable economic development toward capitalism rather than her policy choices. In the place of the praise heaped upon dynastic rulers, Tesarek asserted that a truly Republican vision of Austria's should emphasize the common people and their struggles toward democracy:

And the "heroes" of our history? They come in part from the masses (the "unknown" workers, peasants, researchers, and soldiers of the many branches of the underground struggle against fascism), and in part from the history of the great democracies which must be a reminder and an inspiring model for us.⁸³²

Despite his qualified praise for the dynasty elsewhere, Renner made similar arguments concerning Maria Theresa's son, Joseph II. Other Socialists sometimes applauded Joseph II as a progressive "*Volkskaiser*" who had initiated numerous centralizing and anti-feudal reforms, but Renner asserted that the emperor's supposedly "enlightened" reforms merely amounted to a recognition of social changes which were already sweeping

⁸³¹Adolf Shärf, "Oesterreichs Mission," 1.

⁸³²Anton Tesarek, "Erziehung zur Demokratie, zum Republikanismus, zum Pacifismus. Gedanken zu

the continent, and came far later to the Monarchy than elsewhere in Europe.⁸³³ Ultimately, whatever small credit Socialist thinkers gave the dynasty, they most frequently defined it as a reactionary force and as a barrier to democratic development for all of the Monarchy's peoples.

If the eighteenth century represented the key era in the history of Austria for the postwar right, then the nineteenth century was certainly the critical era in the Habsburg past for the Social Democrats. Just as they had before 1945, postwar Socialists identified the nineteenth century as the epoch when the forces of progress truly awoke and began their struggles in earnest. It was the century when the individual nationalities of the Monarchy began to strive for a recognition of their rights by the dynasty. It was the time of the Revolution of 1848, a pivotal event in the Socialist view of history. And of course, it was during the nineteenth century that the Austrian Social Democrats themselves first organized and began their self-styled historical mission to drag Austria out the feudal Middle Ages and into the modern era of democracy and social justice.

For Austromarxist commentators, the dynasty and its agents were at their most reactionary in the first half of the century. After successfully turning back the progressive tide of the French Revolution, the Monarchy, guided by its arch-conservative foreign minister Metternich, allied itself with the reactionary forces of Russian tsarism and the Prussian Junkers to prevent any further revolutionary change in Europe. Internally, it used censorship and its secret police force to prevent any sort of social progress from within as well. Hannak, using a well established epithet, characterized the Monarchy during this time

einem politischen Problem," 18.

⁸³³Renner, "Am Ausgangpunkt der Zukunft," 51. For a more positive Socialist view of Joseph II, see

as a “*Völkerkerker*,” (prison house of nations) which had kept all of the its constituent nationalities from pursuing their aspirations for liberty. The goal of Metternichian absolutism was to create one unified *Volk* throughout the Monarchy without any national qualities, a “*kaiserlich-königlicher*”⁸³⁴ people who would not stand in the way of the dynasty’s efforts to impose its reactionary will in Europe. Yet Renner argued that ultimately the dynasty’s very rigidity and unwillingness to accept necessary social and cultural changes during this period made it brittle and unable to withstand new challenges.⁸³⁵

The Revolution of 1848 represented the first real challenge to Metternich’s stultifying policies, as Austria’s *Bürger* and working classes, and its various nationalities all rose up against the Monarchy. Just as they always had, Socialists after 1945 celebrated the Revolution as the true beginning of Austria’s movement toward democracy. These commentators unanimously portrayed the dynasty and the Monarchy’s old social order as the main villains of the narratives they crafted concerning the revolution. A 1947 article in *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* characterized the forces of reaction in Austrian in 1848 as, “the absolutist Monarchy, the feudal-patrimonial constitution of society, the privileged social strata, the unrestrained bureaucratic administration, and the paternalist clergy.”⁸³⁶ In an account by Anton Tesarek, the dynasty and its noble representatives in the military appeared as a ruthless, bloodthirsty group that attempted to force obedience to its reactionary policies. He described an episode from the Revolution in Vienna in which Archduke Maximilian had

Körner, “Gibt es eine österreichische Nation?” 75.

⁸³⁴“Imperial-royal.” This term refers to the division of the Monarchy into the two equal and autonomous regions– the kingdom of Hungary and the rest of the Habsburgs’ imperial holdings–after the *Ausgleich* of 1867. Hannak’s use of this term to describe Metternich’s era is therefore anachronistic. Hannak, “Österreich in der Geschichte,” 97-100.

⁸³⁵Renner, “Am Ausgangspunkt der Zukunft. Rede zur Neunhundertfünfzigjahrfeier Österreichs am 22. Oktober 1946,” 53.

ordered his troops to fire on the assembled crowds until dissuaded from his error by a cooler-headed junior officer. Similarly, Tesarek portrayed Windischgrätz and his troops as marauders and murderers who viciously looted Vienna after the dynasty retook the city from the revolutionaries.⁸³⁷

Hannak lauded the Revolution of 1848 for bringing dramatic change to Austria, which for the first time became an agent of social change rather than a mere expression of the House of Habsburg's dynastic power. From that point on, Austria's oppressed social classes and nationalities were never again passive objects in the face of the dynasty's efforts, but rather became the subjects of their own stories. Hannak concluded that the Habsburg tradition ultimately had been incompatible with the aspirations to freedom of all social classes and nationalities. Thus, the end of the Monarchy in 1918 represented the completion of the republican task begun in 1848.⁸³⁸ For Oscar Pollak too, 1848 marked the first time Austria truly felt the effects of the inevitable progress of history toward freedom, as its working class awoke and began to develop true class consciousness. The Revolution of 1848 was a part of the same historical process that drove the earlier English and French Revolutions, a process which Marx himself revealed for the first time in the *The Communist Manifesto* of that year. Pollack argued that it had been the ideologically mature liberal bourgeoisie, rather than the nascent proletariat, which had truly driven events in 1848, and which had subsequently brought constitutional rule to Austria. Pollak warned that the workers' movement could never take the political freedoms secured by the *Bürger* for

⁸³⁶“Unvergängliche Ideen,” *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), March 14, 1947, 1.

⁸³⁷Tesarek, “Des 13. März des Jahres 1848 (Eine Gedenkfeier für Arbeiterkinder),” *Sozialistische Erziehungsarbeit* (1947): 5-6.

⁸³⁸Hannak, “Österreich in der Geschichte,” 97-100.

granted, however, and he noted that recent Austrian history had shown that the *Bürger* could destroy the same system of rights and freedoms they themselves had achieved in the first place. Thus for Pollak, when the SPÖ commemorated the centenary of the revolution in 1948, they were not just celebrating the heroism of past fighters for freedom, whether proletarian or bourgeois, but internalizing lessons that were just as vitally important for the workers in the twentieth century as they had been in 1848:

We do not merely celebrate a historical memory, we adopt, in a correct understanding of the unfolding of history, our role in the great evolution of human culture, in the revolution of social relationships, which recurs so long as class separation, exploitation, injustice and lack of freedom exist. We adopt the pathos of the struggle for liberation not as the faded tradition of 1848, but rather as a living mission for today.⁸³⁹

Although the revolution ultimately failed to achieve its goals of liberal-democratic reform and national equality in the short term, most postwar Socialists saw its legacy with a longer view which presented 1848 as the first step on the path to the replacement of the Monarchy with the First Republic. Whereas earlier Socialist portrayals of the revolution had generally lauded the movement toward German national unity as part of 1848's progressive legacy, Socialists after 1945 were much more reticent to discuss, let alone praise, the ardent German nationalism of the revolutionaries, and when they did mention the topic, they frequently minimized the importance of such nationalism to the revolution's overall goals. This stance of course reflected the new post-war environment in which the experience of Nazi rule in Austria had tainted the very notion of German nationalism. While the conservatives like Böhm were simply able to dismiss the revolutionaries of 1848 as dangerous, anti-Austrian zealots, the revolution was simply too important to the Socialists'

⁸³⁹Oscar Pollak, "Das Erbe von 1848," *Die Zukunft* (March, 1848): 67-68.

conception of their own history to reject. Therefore the SPÖ had to downplay the national aspect of the Revolution of 1848 in order to maintain its place as a key part of the Party's ideological heritage.

Renner led the way in these efforts to remove the stain of German nationalism from the revolution, explicitly arguing that those who saw the 1938 *Anschluß* as the culmination of the ideas of 1848 were deeply mistaken.⁸⁴⁰ An article in the *Arbeiter-Zeitung* made a similar point in 1947, proclaiming that the fruits of 1848 were democracy and freedom, and, far from being nationalistic, the real dream of the revolution was unity for the peoples of the Habsburg state in an international community. These goals were not realized then, but were now on the horizon due to the foundation of the United Nations and the progress of democracy and human rights after the Second World War.⁸⁴¹ Tesarek summarized the SPÖ's basic position on the revolution more succinctly, avowing that though they failed to achieve their goals, the revolutionaries should be remembered as heroes who gave their lives for the cause of Socialism⁸⁴²

With the temporary defeat of the forces of progress in 1848, however, the Monarchy entered a reactionary, neo-absolutist phase. Gustav Bieneck portrayed the post-revolutionary decades of the 1850s and 1860s as an era in which the tensions and unresolved issues from 1848 had merely been postponed, and indeed had been deepened by the development of capitalism and working class consciousness. The upper classes diverted themselves from these problems with a passionate interest in the waltzes of Strauß, opera,

⁸⁴⁰Renner, "Die Ideologische Ausrichtung der Politik Österreichs," 1-5.

⁸⁴¹"Unvergängliche Ideen," *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), March 14, 1947, 1.

⁸⁴²Tesarek, "Des 13. März des Jahres 1848 (Eine Gedenkfeier für Arbeiterkinder)," 5-6.

and other displays of artistic opulence.⁸⁴³ Likewise, national tensions festered throughout the Monarchy. Socialist thinkers argued that the Monarchy's agreement with the Hungarian lower nobility in 1867 only exacerbated these national problems by awarding the Magyars a privileged position which they used to oppress Slovak and Croat minorities in their territory.⁸⁴⁴

Postwar Socialists also contrasted their own Party's origins in the nineteenth-century awakening of the working class with the reactionary roots of the ÖVP. Josef Hindels argued that despite the claims of the present day ÖVP to be a completely new political party, it was still the inheritor of the old Christian Social Party's reactionary legacy. According to Hindel, the party which grew into Austria's primary bourgeois party actually began as a coalition of farmers and *kleinbürger* formed under the auspices of Taaffe's aristocratic government to oppose liberal efforts to sweep away the remaining refuse of feudalism. The Christian Social Party was anti-capitalistic, yet unlike the Socialist Party, it offered no positive program for the future. Instead, it was a fundamentally backward looking group which idealized the past. This anti-bourgeois coalition repudiated the ideals of the French Revolution in favor of the Middle Ages, using anti-Semitic rhetoric to advance its cause. In its efforts to expand beyond its initial Viennese roots to become a genuine *Reichspartei*, the Party became a strong supporter of the Monarchy, and consequently backed the government's efforts to block national reform, and to allow nationalistic German-speakers to continue their domination of the Monarchy's Slavic peoples. Indeed, Socialists after 1945

⁸⁴³Gustav K. Bienek, "Das Zeitalter Johann Strauß," *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), October 25, 1945, 2.

⁸⁴⁴Renner, "Die Ideologische Ausrichtung der Politik Österreichs," 1-5; Cato, "Was für ein Österreich wollen wir?" *Die Zukunft* (May, 1949): 129-133; Jacques Hannak, "Drei Marksteine," *Die Zukunft* (November, 1951): 293-296.

likewise had not forgotten the role of the conservative movement in creating the authoritarian *Ständestaat*, which had persecuted and restricted Austrian Social Democracy, and they suspected that ÖVP still concealed fascist tendencies beneath its veneer of republicanism.⁸⁴⁵

As always, the Socialists naturally saw their own party as the historical force which did the most to oppose such reactionary elements in Austrian history, and portrayed the workers' movement as the real bearer of the ideals of democracy and social change in Austria's past. As an article in *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* declaimed,

Social Democracy stood as the only international power able to oppose the supranational might of the House of Habsburg, which supported itself upon the disappearing feudal elements of the old Monarchy and which was threatened by the young, surging nationalism of the Czechs, Poles, Ruthenes, Slovenes and so forth. Thus Social Democracy became the great adversary of the Habsburgs. It represented the ideal of the transformation of the feudal, coercive state into a democratic-federal state.⁸⁴⁶

The Socialists particularly praised their party's first leader, Viktor Adler, who had crusaded against the "half-feudal" Monarchy which he had famously characterized as "*Absolutismus gemildet durch Schlamperei*" (absolutism made more bearable through slovenliness). They lauded Adler's decision to guide the party along a Bernstein-inspired reformist path which took advantage of the long period of peace and economic expansion in Europe to improve

⁸⁴⁵Josef Hindels, "Die Vergangenheit der Österreichische Volkspartei," *Die Zukunft* (April, 1949): 109-112; "Sie sind nicht vergessen," *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), February 12, 1954, 1.

⁸⁴⁶"Der Staatsbaumeister. Zu Karl Renners 75. Geburtstag," *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), December 14, 1945, 1-2.

the condition of the working class, and they argued that Adler's Vienna Program of 1901 in particular had maintained Marxist principles while seeking immediate, practical gains for workers. The Social Democrats cited the attainment of universal manhood suffrage in the Monarchy in 1907 as proof of the success of the workers' movement under Adler.⁸⁴⁷

As for the national question, the Social Democrats noted that their party after 1899 had demanded equality and freedom for all of the Monarchy's nationalities. Hannak asserted that Adler, Renner, and Otto Bauer all had proposed various reform plans to improve the position of the various nationalities while still keeping them within the Habsburg *Völkerstaat*. The rationale behind these programs was that the situation of these nationalities would be better in a federal Austria than it would be if they broke away to form independent, isolated states vulnerable to the domination of an Eastern, reactionary power such as Russia. And indeed, Hannak argued that the contemporary condition of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Poland had proven them right. In fact, one Socialist commentator argued that in advocating a federalized state in which numerous nations cooperated with one another in the spirit of democracy, the Austromarxists had

⁸⁴⁷“Zum 12. November, Viktor Adler und die Republik,” *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), November 11, 1945, 1-2; Jacques Hannak, “Drei Marksteine,” 293-296; “Der Vertrauensman,” *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), September 26, 1945, 1-2. These points seem to have been directed as much in response to the KPÖ's postwar criticisms that SPÖ was no longer truly Marxist as they were toward presenting a Socialist view of history. On Adler and the foundation of the Social Democratic Party, see Kann, 427; Robin Okey,

provided the prototype for the sort of postwar internationalism which had been expressed in the United Nations.⁸⁴⁸

The Social Democrats' nineteenth-century proposals concerning the nationalities issue actually provide some insight into their stance concerning the Habsburg state as a whole. While Adler and the other early party leaders had been vehemently opposed to the Habsburg dynasty in principle, and railed against it as an oppressive force, in practice they were willing to work with the government of the Monarchy, and their national proposals always envisioned reforming the Habsburg *Völkerstaat* along federal and democratic lines rather than dissolving it completely. Hence, the thinkers of the SPÖ in the era after 1945 too were reluctant to completely repudiate the achievements of the Habsburg Monarchy in the era after Social Democracy had become part of its political mainstream and indeed had worked to preserve its multinational form.

The Habsburg Monarchy (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2001), 266-267.

⁸⁴⁸Jacques Hannak, "Drei Marksteine," 293-296; Cato, "Was für ein Österreich wollen wir?" 129-133; "Victor Adler und die Begründung der ersten Republik Österreich," *Die Zukunft* (November, 1948): 317-320; "Die große Gestalt von Österreichs Vergangenheit in die Zukunft," *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), January 3, 1951, 1-2. On the Austromarxism and the national question in Austria, see Kann, 346; Bottomore, 30-36, 102-125; Bauer, 509-521; Renner, *Der Kampf der österreichischen Nationen um der Staat*.

In fact, some Socialist analysts even praised the Monarchy's last decades as evidence of an increasing tendency in Austria toward democracy. Hans Strenitz identified 1867 as the point at which Austria finally rid itself of the last vestiges of its semi-feudal character. 1848 had been an attempt to accomplish this task, but with the exception of the lifting of the feudal obligations of the peasantry, the work was not completed until nearly two decades later, when Franz Joseph was forced by Austria's military defeat at the hands of Prussia to break with the anti-reform nobility and clergy and forge a new coalition with Austrian liberals. An era of liberal rights, constitutional rule and economic development ensued which marked the real beginning of modernity in Austria, and these changes largely carried over into the constitution of the First Republic in 1918. Strenitz of course argued that the early workers' movement, and in particular Hermann Hartung's *Allgemeiner Arbeiterbildungsverein*, had played an important role in achieving these changes.⁸⁴⁹ On the other hand, however, such praise was far from unanimous from the Socialist camp, and a number of commentators dismissed parliamentary rule in imperial Austria as a democracy in name only that merely served to perpetuate the Habsburg oppression in a milder form.⁸⁵⁰

If the postwar Socialists were generally hostile toward the Habsburgs as a dynasty, some of them did manage to muster a certain degree of sympathy for Franz Joseph, the monarch who sat on the Austrian throne for the nearly seven decades between 1848 and World War I. The Socialist historian Wilhelm Ellenbogen, in an article written in 1941 but reprinted by *Die Zukunft* in 1951 to commemorate his recent death, portrayed the monarch

⁸⁴⁹Hans Strenitz, "80 Jahre österreichischer Verfassungsstaat," *Die Zukunft* (December, 1949): 272-3; Renner, "Österreichische Demokratie," *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), August 14, 1945, 1; Kurz, 332.

⁸⁵⁰"Victor Adler und die Begründung der ersten Republik Österreich," *Die Zukunft* (November, 1948): 317-320; Tesarek, "Erziehung zur Demokratie, zum Republikanismus, zum Pacifismus. Gedanken zu

as a tireless and well-informed administrator who was dedicated to fairness and law, and who put aside his own personal piety and conservatism in order to do what was best for the state. He oversaw many reforms which were favorable to the workers' movement despite the Church's opposition because he saw the movement as not detrimental to the unity of the state. Ellenbogen contrasted Franz Joseph quite favorably with Wilhelm II of Germany, and argued that the Habsburg was far less reactionary than he was sometimes portrayed.⁸⁵¹

Such generous views, however, were not widespread in the Socialist camp. In an article that commented on reports that members of the Habsburg family had been seen in Austria in 1947, *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* lamented the older generation's view of the era of Franz Joseph as the "good, old times" when things were "*so viel schön* (so very beautiful)," and that some Austrians consequently thought that they might reclaim that splendor by returning a Habsburg to power in Austria. The author of the piece advised his readers not to forget that Franz Joseph's reign began with the subjugation of the Revolution of 1848 and the especially brutal suppression of the revolution in Hungary. Thus Franz Joseph's first decades on the throne were "truly and bloodily reactionary." Only in his later years did he become the arch-conservative elder statesman who accepted change with weary resignation. Under him, Austria saw some of the industrial development which swept through Western and Central Europe, but never to the same degree, so that even in the twentieth century Austria still retained aspects of feudalism. The article's author asserted that the workers movement advanced despite Franz Josef's efforts, not because of them, and that the emperor

einem politischen Problem," 17-19; "Schluß mit den Habsburgern!" *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung*, (Vienna), January 20, 1946, 1-2.

⁸⁵¹ Wilhelm Ellenbogen, "Wilhelm Ellenbogen über Kaiser Franz Josef," *Die Zukunft* (March, 1951): 64-67.

himself, however reluctantly, had signed the declaration which led Austria into the war, a death sentence not just for his antiquated Monarchy but for millions of Europeans.⁸⁵²

Thus the end of the Monarchy in 1918 represented for the postwar Socialists the culmination of decades of progress toward democracy in Austria, just as they had for Socialists before 1945. Regardless of whether or not Franz Josef had been an oppressive reactionary or merely an old-fashioned conservative who had reluctantly endorsed change, Social Democrats all agreed that the Monarchy which he had presided over in its last decades had been too loath to allow the democratic, social, and federal reforms which might have allowed the *Völkerstaat* to survive. Karl I's efforts to institute these reforms in 1918 represented an acknowledgment of the dynasty's mistakes, but came far too late to be of help. Even as relatively generous an observer of the Monarchy's twilight years as Ellenbogen allowed that although the Monarchy was not as backward as it was often portrayed, ultimately capitalism had been a centrifugal force there rather than the constructive one which it had been in the West due to shortsighted policies of the Austrian governments of the nineteenth century. In the end, the Monarchy simply was not strong enough to withstand nationalism.⁸⁵³ In considering the history of the twentieth century, one socialist commentator summed up his party's basic position concerning the Habsburgs by simply including them in a list of other oppressive imperial dynasties—the Manchus, Ottomans, Romanovs, and Hohenzollerns—which had been deposed and replaced with republics.⁸⁵⁴

⁸⁵²“Schluß mit den Habsburgern!,” 1.

⁸⁵³Ellenbogen, 64-67

⁸⁵⁴Karl Czernetz, “Bilanz eines halben Jahrhunderts,” *Die Zukunft* (January, 1950): 1-5. See also “Schluß mit den Habsburgern!,” 1

In contrast to the postwar Austrian right, which had provided a vigorous apologetic for the Monarchy, lauding its emperors and their representatives as the exponents and defenders of a rich Austrian national tradition, the Socialists proffered a historical counter-narrative which presented the democratic opponents of the dynasty, and especially the workers' movement, as the true essence of Austrian history. In the place of monarchs, nobles, and generals, the Social Democrats presented the leaders and theorists from their movement as the "heroes" of Austrian history. Postwar Socialist newspapers and periodicals celebrated well known Socialist Democrats like Viktor Adler, Otto Bauer, Karl Renner, and Otto Glöckel alongside other, less familiar figures like Herbert Kohlich, Ferdinand Tschürtz, Anton Afritsch, Max Winter, Rudolf Brunngraber and Hans Kelson.⁸⁵⁵ The SPÖ even claimed democratic or revolutionary figures from outside Austria such as Goethe, Marx, Thomas Masaryk, Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, and, in a qualified manner at least, Lenin, as predecessors or comrades-in-arms in the wider struggle for freedom and social justice.⁸⁵⁶

The ultimate culmination of this Socialist narrative was the Austrian First Republic,

⁸⁵⁵“Otto Bauer,” *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), September 23, 1945, 1-2; “Zum 12. November, Viktor Adler und die Republik,” *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), November 11, 1945, 1-2; “Victor Adler und die Begründung der ersten Republik Österreich,” *Die Zukunft* (November, 1948): 317-320; Heinrich Schneidmadl, “Herbert Kohlich zum Gedank,” *Die Zukunft* (November, 1949): 342-343; “Ferdinand Tschürtz: Gedenkworte zu seinem Todestag,” *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), January 19, 1946, 3; Marriane Pollack, “Max Winter: der Sozialist des Herzens,” *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), January 9, 1946, 2; Wilhelm Stemmer, “Otto Glöckel und das Schulprogramm der Sozialistischen Partei: Zur Widerkehr des Todestages Otto Glöckels (23. Juli 1935),” *Die Zukunft* (July, 1946): 3-4; Tesarek, “Sozialistische Erziehung– eine Funktion der Sozialistischen Partei,” *Die Zukunft* (February, 1948): 56-59. Karl Ziak, “Rudolf Brunngraber, der Dichter-Soziologe,” *Die Zukunft* (October, 1951): 287-288; Otto Tschadek, “Hans Kelson zum 70. Geburtstag,” *Die Zukunft* (October, 1951): 279-280.

⁸⁵⁶“Revolutionär Goethe/ 1749-1949,” *Die Zukunft* (April, 1949): 247-250; Anton Tesarek, “Thomas G. Masaryk (Zu seinem zehnten Todestag),” *Die Zukunft* (September, 1947): 257-260; “Der Mord an Karl Liebknecht und an Rosa Luxenburg,” *Die Zukunft* (January, 1947): 5-10; Jacques Hannak, “Lenin,” *Die Zukunft* (April, 1951): 108-114; Karl Czernetz, “Zum 30. Jahrestag der russischen Revolution,” *Die Zukunft* (November, 1947): 317-320.

which the Social Democrats claimed as the legacy of their decades of struggle against the Habsburgs. Whatever that Republic's flaws might have been, the SPÖ argued that it had been superior to both the Monarchy which had preceded it and the corporatist and National Socialist regimes which followed it. The Social Democrats regarded themselves not just as the creators of the First Republic, but as the only faction which had truly believed in and supported Austrian democracy. They charged the Christian Social Party and the Austrian bourgeoisie with sole responsibility for destroying the Republic and replacing it with a fascist dictatorship. Furthermore the Austrian right's destruction of republican rule in Austria had, according to the Socialists, suppressed the democratic forces in the country which might have represented the sole hope for Austria to defend itself against the Nazi threat of the 1930s. For the Socialists, the Second Republic represented a second chance for Austrian democracy, and they considered the new republic to be built directly upon the historical foundations of the previous one.⁸⁵⁷

Thus the Social Democrats after 1945 presented a version of Austrian history which distanced Austria from the crimes of Nazi Germany by emphasizing the democratic content of Austria's past. For the Socialists, it was not enough to use Austrian history to argue that Austrians were not Germans, although as we have seen, the SPÖ did make such arguments, albeit with less frequency and less urgency than either the Austrian right or the Communists. Ultimately for the Socialists, the aspect of the Austrian past most crucial to reestablishing the state's independence in the postwar era was not the fact of its distinctive Austrianness, but rather that it contained a narrative of democratic development which provided the

⁸⁵⁷Anton Tesarek, "Umriss einer republikanischen Schule," *Die Zukunft* (December, 1946): 20; "Victor Adler und die Begründung der ersten Republik Österreich," *Die Zukunft* (November, 1948): 317-320;

antidote and the antithesis to the sort of fascist thinking which the Nazi dictatorship had embodied. In such a light, the Habsburg Monarchy emerged as a largely reactionary entity against which the forces of Austrian democracy, embodied by the workers' movement, had to struggle. The end point of that struggle for the Socialists was the First Republic, which may not have been able to preserve the beneficial supranational structure of the Habsburg *Völkerstaat*, but which was able to provide a firmer foundation for Austrian independence and a peaceful international order than the old Monarchy ever could. The postwar Social Democrats made no mention of their own support for *Anschluss* during the First Republic, however. That was simply a part of their own past which they could not use to help build an independent Austrian state after 1945.

iii. The Postwar Communist Party and the Habsburg Past

The third of the major postwar parties, the Austrian Communist Party (KPÖ), also participated in the Second Republic's efforts to present a vision of the Habsburg past which denied Austrian Germanness. Like the Social Democrats, the Communists drew a clear distinction between the forces of progress and freedom and those of reaction and oppression in Austrian history. Yet the Communist Party's strong and unequivocal proclamation of the existence of a distinctive Austrian nationhood resembled that of the Austrian right much more closely than it did the ambiguous national stance of the Socialists. On a surface level at least, the Communists had much more of a claim to a history of simultaneous support for both social progress and Austrian nationhood during the 1930s and than did either of the other parties. The Communists, however, were beholden to the influence of the Soviet

Union on all ideological matters, and their advocacy for freedom and independence rang hollow given the actions of their patrons in East Central Europe and the Soviet zone of occupation in eastern Austria after the war.

In the Second Republic's first national election after the war in late 1945, the Communists managed to win only five percent of the vote, far less than the other two anti-Nazi parties. This lack of electoral success indicates the anti-Soviet leanings of Austria's voters and the mistrust with which they regarded the KPÖ's association with the U.S.S.R., which was clearly more interested in appropriating Austria's few remaining economic resources and exploiting it for leverage in the Cold War than it was in restoring genuine Austrian independence. Indeed, in 1948, the leaders of the KPÖ secretly approached their patrons in Moscow to discuss the possibility of transforming the Soviet occupation zone into a Austrian "people's republic," separate from the western zones, along the lines of Soviet-dominated East Germany. In the end, however, the Soviet government was simply too occupied with consolidating its hold on the rest of East Central Europe to seriously contemplate the creation of a territorially small and economically unviable "East Austria," and decided to simply continue the economic exploitation of its occupation zone.⁸⁵⁸ Such a division of Austria would certainly have flown in the face of the KPÖ's strident professions of Austrian nationhood during the Nazi years, and after the Soviet refusal, the Party supplemented its continuing public support for Austrian independence with demands for the guaranteed Cold War neutrality of a unified Austria after the end of the occupation.⁸⁵⁹

⁸⁵⁸Wolfgang Mueller, "Die Teilung Österreichs als politische Option für KPÖ und UdSSR 1948," *Zeitgeschichte* 32 (January/February, 2005), 47-54.

⁸⁵⁹Ernst Fischer, "Deutsche division oder österreichische Unabhängigkeit? (1. Dezember, 1954)" Friedl Fürnberg, "Für die Freiheit und Unabhängigkeit Österreichs (17. Februar, 1955);" "Resolution des

Despite its willingness to secretly compromise Austrian unity and autonomy, however, the KPÖ's public statements after World War II concerning Austria's Habsburg past presented a vision of Austria's nationhood which combined an emphasis on freedom and social progress with an unambiguous differentiation between the Austrian and German nations.

The Communists and the Austrian Nation

The Communists' postwar comments concerning the existence of a distinctive Austrian nation represented a continuation of their pre-war position. As they had during the 1930s, the KPÖ's representatives after 1945 stridently proclaimed that Austrians were not Germans, and could easily be distinguished from the German *Volk* through an examination of their distinctive national characteristics which they had developed over the centuries of Austria's unique history. Communist commentators invariably characterized the Nazis as foreign occupiers who had imposed their dictatorship upon a largely unwilling Austrian population. Ernst Fischer, the Communist historian and the Second Republic's first Minister of Education, described the Nazis as "Prussian-German" tyrants who had oppressed the freedom-loving Austrian *Volk*.⁸⁶⁰ The Communist Party's position on national issues during the 1930s had of course been guided both by Stalin's own writings on nationalism and by the Soviet Union's determination to cast European Communists as the defenders of national

Volkeskongresses für Einheit und Unabhängigkeit Österreichs vom 13. März 1955," in *Die Kommunisten im Kampf für die Unabhängigkeit Österreichs* (Vienna: Stern Verlag, 1955), 247-255.

⁸⁶⁰Ernst Fischer, *Die Entstehung des österreichischen Volkscharakters* (Vienna: "Neues Österreich" Zeitungs- und Verlagsgesellschaft, 1945): 3. Fischer's references to Germans and Nazis as "Prussians" seem designed to play upon the fact that Prussia had been Austria's major rival for power in Germany during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In essence, Fischer cast Prussia as the antithesis of everything Austrian, and used the contrast between "Prussian" Germans and Austrians in order to play upon the patriotic sentiments of his Austrian audience. Needless to say, the Nazi dictatorship was not a predominantly Prussian institution, and National Socialism had far deeper roots in Bavaria and Austria

rights in the face of reactionary fascism. In a similar manner, Moscow now molded the KPÖ's postwar stance to align with the Soviet Union's new guise as the liberator of the nations of Eastern Europe from the yoke of Nazism.⁸⁶¹

The postwar Communists were highly critical of the lack of Austrian consciousness which Austria's other political parties had displayed throughout the nation's history and argued that such weakness of national sentiment had allowed the Nazis an easy opening in their conquest of Austria. According to Communist intellectuals, most Austrians had not supported the Nazis, but they had unfortunately lacked the sort of clear and unambiguous sense of Austrian national identity which might have allowed them to prevent the *Anschluss*. The actual experience of the oppressiveness of Nazi rule, however, had produced a more potent feeling of nationhood in the Austrian *Volk*. The Communists were encouraged by this upsurge of Austrianist sentiment, but they were still concerned that it was neither sufficiently strong, nor supported with appropriately progressive reasoning on the part of many Austrians. They also thought that they could detect the lingering remnants of *großdeutsch* sentiment beneath the veneer of the Austrian patriotism proclaimed by the conservatives and the SPÖ.⁸⁶² Therefore, the Communist Party embarked upon a program to describe how Austrians should view their nation and its history in order to forestall any future German nationalist catastrophes.

than in Prussia.

⁸⁶¹On the KPÖ during the 1930s see Chapter 3 and Heinz Gärtner, ed. *Zwischen Moskau und Österreich: die KPÖ, Analyse einer sowjetabhängigen Partei* (Vienna : Braumüller, 1979). On the Soviet Union's positions on these issues during the 1930s and 1940s see Mazower, 104-137, 250-284; François Furet, *The Passing of an Illusion: The Idea of Communism in the Twentieth Century*, trans. Deborah Furet (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1999): 209-266; 361-395.

⁸⁶²Fischer, "Der großdeutsche Gedanke und die Arbeiter Bewegung.," *Weg und Ziel, Monatsschrift für Fragen der Demokratie und des Wissenschaftlichen Sozialismus* (March, 1946): 140; Otto Langbein, "Was ist überhaupt Österreich?" *Weg und Ziel* (August, 1946): 489-490; "Der Nationalismus in Österreich," *Weg*

The first element in this program involved correcting the fallacious theories of national development which had allowed *großdeutsch* sentiment to fester for so long in Austria's public sphere. Like the conservatives, the Communists argued that part of the problem was that such theories had equated the concept of the nation with language and race. In 1946, Franz Marek presented the postwar Communists' view of what constituted a nation, which, like their statements during the 1930s, depended heavily upon Stalin's theories of national development. Marek echoed Stalin's definition of the nation as a "historically developed stable community of language, territory and economic life which reveals its psychological uniqueness in a cultural community."⁸⁶³ Language was a necessary component in this definition, but it was certainly not the most decisive element. Marek argued that a people's actual consciousness of their own nationhood and of their own historical development was the most important signifier of nationhood. Marek was equally clear concerning what nations were not. He regarded notions of an immutable racial or biological basis for nationhood as a dangerous falsehood. Nations were always the product of continuous historical development. One could not "follow" the history of nation; rather the nation *was* its history, and changed over time. A nation also did not correspond to the political state, as so many Western theorists had argued. Thus Marek proclaimed that the correct understanding of the concept of nationhood defined the nation as a complex cluster of historically contingent elements which found expression in the national consciousness of a *Volk*. The Austrian *Volk* had all of the necessary components of nationhood except for a strong national awareness, and it was this lack of awareness that had left it vulnerable to the

und Ziel (January, 1949): 14-23.

⁸⁶³Franz Marek, "Was ist eine Nation?" *Weg und Ziel* (February, 1946): 118; Josef Stalin, *Marxismus und*

sort of simplistic *großdeutsch* racial and linguistic nationalism espoused by the Nazis.⁸⁶⁴

Ernst Fischer also carefully denied the existence of nationality as a racial category in the Nazi sense. Instead, he based his assertion of Austrian nationhood upon the only feature which he considered real and meaningful in defining national character: the possession of a unique history. Fischer repudiated any definitions of national identity couched in terms of ideal types, or the “soul” of a people (*Volkseele*) or race (*Rassenseele*). According to Fischer, national character did not represent one distinct set of features, but rather encompassed a broad body of characteristics which were in a continual state of evolution as they were influenced by historical events. So ultimately, historical factors were the most important markers of national identity.⁸⁶⁵

The Communists also sought to define the characteristics of the Austrian national character. Like the Austrian right, postwar Communists frequently presented these characteristics as a positive contrast with national characteristics which they associated with the German or “Prussian” nation. First of all, many postwar Communists presented the Austrian nation as the result of a felicitous mixture of numerous cultural and ethnic groups in the Danubian region dating back to antiquity. They emphasized the contributions of the Illyrians, Celts, Slavs, Franks, and Bavarians in the early centuries of Austria’s history, who combined to help shape the national characteristics of contemporary Austrians. The presentation of modern Austrians as the product of millennia of ethnic and cultural intermixing also simultaneously repudiated the familiar *großdeutsch* argument that Austrians were descended solely from tenth-century Germanic settlers and thus represented

nationale Frage (Vienna: Stern-Verlag, 1949), 10-11.

⁸⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 115-118.

a tribe of the German *Volk*.⁸⁶⁶

The national character which had resulted from this cultural admixture and from Austria's centuries of history contained positive and negative features. Fischer described the Austrian character as one tending toward tolerance, understanding, open-mindedness, informality, love of personal freedom, and the enjoyment all of life's pleasures, a set of qualities which he termed "*Natürlichkeit*" (naturalness). These characteristics were accompanied by an abhorrence of rigidity and constraint, drill and military precision, and authoritarianism. On the opposite side of these positive characteristics, however, lay some less fortunate tendencies: a certain passivity and lack of decisiveness, an inclination toward improvisation and opportunism rather than careful planning, and a willingness to postpone difficult solutions to complicated problems. Also, hand in hand with the basic Austrian distaste for nationalist chauvinism went a certain lack of clearly defined national consciousness which Fischer described as "national nihilism." Thus for Fischer, the content of the Austria's national character explained both the Austrian *Volk*'s conspicuous lack of Austrianist nationalism as well as its ultimate incompatibility with the subservience and militarism inherent in the Prussian national character.⁸⁶⁷

If the German-speaking inhabitants of the modern Austrian republic had forged a real national character thanks to centuries of cultural and social development under the auspices of the Habsburg Monarchy, the German-speakers throughout the rest of the Monarchy had not shared in that development, at least according to the Communist theoretician Otto Langbein. Langbein argued that Monarchy's other German-speakers in

⁸⁶⁵Fischer, *Die Entstehung des österreichischen Volkscharakters*, 4-5.

⁸⁶⁶*Ibid.*, 4 5; "Sind die Österreicher ein 'deutscher Stamm?'" *Weg und Ziel* (July/August, 1948): 551-552.

Bohemia, Moravia, the Banat, and Transylvania historically had distanced themselves from the Austrian national community centered around Vienna, and had instead oriented themselves toward Berlin. These groups had ultimately been the dupes of *großdeutsch* German nationalism in the nineteenth century which Prussia used in order to transform German-speakers living in various states throughout Europe into a fifth column for German imperialism. As such, they had not shared in Austria's national heritage of toleration and understanding for other *Völker*, but rather displayed the chauvinism and hostility toward other peoples so characteristic of Prussian Germany. These German-speakers had lacked not just loyalty to the Habsburg state, but also to the various states which had succeeded the Monarchy, and had ultimately become notorious supporters of the Nazi Germany. While these groups had called themselves "*Volksdeutsch*" before World War II, after the war they had styled themselves "*Volksösterreicher*" and had come to Austria for assistance after their expulsion from the states in which they had lived. Langbein, however, had no sympathy for such "scum," and stated in no uncertain terms that they were not part of the Austrian *Volk*, and, as an examination of the history of the Monarchy clearly showed, never had been.⁸⁶⁸

While the postwar Communists fervently asserted that Austrian *Volk* had developed a distinctive national identity and character over the centuries of its history as a part of the Habsburg Monarchy, they also felt proclamations of Austria's nationhood had to be made

⁸⁶⁷Fischer, *Die Entstehung des österreichischen Volkscharakters*, 5-9.

⁸⁶⁸Otto Langbein, "Die 'Volksösterreicher,'" *Weg und Ziel* (March, 1947): 181-190; "Was ist überhaupt Österreich?" 489. Langbein's notable lack of sympathy for these German refugees also may have had something to do with the fact that they had all been expelled from the states in East Central Europe that the Soviet Union had "liberated." Indeed, the Soviets themselves had been heavily involved in these expulsions. See Mazower, 214-225. Langbein also did not mention the Austrians in Upper Austria, Styria and Carinthia who had also been enthusiastic supporters of both German nationalism and Nazism. See Timothy Kirk, "Fascism and Austrofascism," in *The Dollfuss/Schuschnigg Era in Austria: A Reassessment* (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 2003), 15.

very precisely. For example, while Langbein welcomed the ÖVP's publication of articles by Missong and others which totally repudiated any lingering *großdeutsch* sentiments in Austria as a threat to the very existence of the nation's independence, he noted that even in 1946 the Austrian consciousness of the ÖVP was deficient. He argued that thinkers from both of Austria's major parties too often relied on vague notions of an Austrian historical mission in Europe which were insufficient as a foundation for a firm Austrian national identity, and which reminded Austria's neighbors of their past oppression under the Habsburgs and the Nazis, who had both espoused a similar sort of hegemonic mission. In the end, ill-defined notions of an Austrian mission or "*Österreichertum*" could never be enough to support the Second Republic's existence. The mere fact that so many Austrian conservatives and Socialists had to pose the question "what is Austria?" was evidence for Langbein that they lacked an appropriately clear and strong sense of Austrian consciousness. Austria's nationhood was a plain, unquestionable fact which required no lengthy justifications. He noted:

Why Austria? What is Austria? Who is the Austrian? We have seen: only a clear, unqualified realization of existence can give an answer to these questions. The correct answers will make the questions themselves superfluous, because they will give our *Volk* what it has so often lacked: a clear and peaceful national consciousness. ⁸⁶⁹

Langbein certainly felt that Austria's history and national development were vital topics for discussion, but he denied that there was anything mysterious or elusive about those matters. They were simply concrete realities.

Indeed, by 1949 Langbein denounced the notion of an Austrian mission not just as an insufficient foundation for a postwar Austrian national identity, but also as an inherently dangerous idea. In the context of the heightened Cold War tensions of that year, Langbein asserted that the idea of an Austrian mission represented an anti-Slavic form of Austrian nationalism which served the interests of “American imperialism” in Europe. Langbein thus repudiated not just German nationalism, but also Austrian nationalism as grave dangers for the postwar era. Indeed according to Langbein the notion of an Austrian mission was the other side of the German nationalist coin, and implicitly called for a renewal of the Austrian hegemony over the Slavic peoples of the East which had characterized the oppressive policies of the Habsburg Monarchy. Such hegemony had been the goal of *großdeutsch* Nazi ideology as well, and the fact that the Austrian right had called for the rebirth of the Austrian mission under the auspices of America rather than in the context of Habsburg or German imperialism did not change the reactionary nature of the idea. For Langbein, true support of Austrian independence meant fighting the “bourgeois poison” of Austrian nationalism which was being used by the Americans against the champion of freedom and progress in the world, the Soviet Union.⁸⁷⁰

The Communist historian and journalist Eva Priester also criticized the manner in which the other parties supported the notion of Austrian identity, and took particular exception to the content of the various celebrations of the 950th anniversary of Austria in 1946. She acknowledged that any event which portrayed Austria as an independent historical entity separate from Germany amounted to a positive step, but she argued that the

⁸⁶⁹Otto Langbein, “Was ist überhaupt Österreich?” 490.

⁸⁷⁰Langbein, “Der Nationalismus in Österreich,” 14-23.

commemorations focused too narrowly on Austrian culture and contributions to the arts.

Without providing a critical view of Austria's history and especially of the *großdeutsch* sentiments which had almost destroyed it, and without a firm and clearly stated declaration of Austria's nationhood, such commemorations amounted to no more than pleasant pastoral landscapes and celebrations of historical monuments which accomplished little. Priester sarcastically characterized the attitudes displayed by the other parties toward Austria as:

An idyll with painterly national traditions and stilted buttons of horn with the inscription, "greetings from Styria," with baroque art, baroque culture, and "baroque men" (however one might understand that), a little of the beautiful mountain landscape, a little of the Salzburg Cathedral and a few Salzburg dumplings, a little advertising for foreign trade, a little classical music—and the whole thing topped with a light sauce of self satisfaction: "See? This is how we are. Are we not a *Volk* with a great culture? Are we not by the mere fact of our existence a valuable commodity for Western culture, worthy to be preserved and maintained by the entire world?"⁸⁷¹

After all, such a celebration of Austria's traditional culture could easily have occurred in 1936 rather than 1946. What such a portrayal truly lacked was an emphasis upon, or indeed, any mention of, the struggles which Austria had undergone in order to reclaim its very existence from the foreign Nazi dictatorship:

Of course, this is to say nothing against the baroque, Salzburg, Bruckner's music or landscape paintings. All of these things are part of our cultural heritage, and it is necessary to speak of them. They are not enough, however. The new, patriotic Austria did not originate in a museum or a traditional festival. It originated—excuse the hard expression which is so rarely heard by the cultivated "Austrian men" of Vienna with their gentle sensibilities—in struggle. It originated in the struggle of a few small and, for a long time, nearly isolated groups of Austrian patriots, was born in their struggle against German domination, grew into the struggle for the rebuilding of a free, happy, and peaceful land, and will be an unconquerable reality when a free and strong people's democracy is also a reality.⁸⁷²

⁸⁷¹Eva Priester, "Nationale Kundgebung oder Trachtenfest?" *Weg und Ziel* (September, 1946): 558.

⁸⁷²*Ibid.*, 558.

For Priester, the 1946 celebrations represented the sort of compromise so typical of Austria after the war. The political leaders of the two dominant parties wanted a statement that Austria really was a nation independent from Germany, but neither faction was willing to risk alienating the other. The resulting bloodless neutrality was insufficient to provide the sort of fiery confession of Austrian statehood which was necessary in the postwar era. Priester avowed that it was ultimately up to the Austrian *Volk* to fill the 950th anniversary celebrations with the sort of passionate national and progressive consciousness that the ÖVP and SPÖ were unwilling to provide.

The Communist Representation of Austrian History

As we have seen, the Communists based their notions of a distinctive Austrian nation largely upon Austrian history, and argued that a correct presentation of Austria's past was crucial to bolster a postwar sense of Austrian identity which distinguished it from Germany. As Langbein wrote, "acknowledgment of Austria's unique history is a weapon in the struggle for an Austria ruled by the working *Volk* which is not to be underestimated."⁸⁷³ In many respects, the Communist vision of Austria's Habsburg past was quite similar to that of the Social Democrats. As a revolutionary working class movement, the KPÖ saw both the dynasty and the Austrian bourgeoisie largely as oppressive forces in Austria's history which had done their best to stifle the efforts of the Monarchy's working classes and nationalities to move toward freedom and justice. The Communists, in competition with the Socialist

⁸⁷³Langbein, "Ein großer Fortschritt der österreichischen Geschichtsschreibung," *Weg und Ziel* (June, 1949): 467.

Party for the votes of the workers and progressive minded individuals in postwar Austria, portrayed the Social Democrats as a group which had ultimately betrayed the forces of freedom and equality during the nineteenth century in favor of an opportunistic accommodation with the dynasty and the bourgeoisie. The Communists disagreed with the Austromarxists concerning German nationalism as well, which the KPÖ identified as the most poisonous reactionary force in Austria's history. Thus the Communists' portrayal of the Habsburg past presented their predecessors in the radical left of the workers' movement as the true heroes of Austrian history who struggled against the reactionary dynasty, the oppressive *Bürger* class, and a Social Democratic Party which had been corrupted by German nationalism. According to the Communists, the end of the Monarchy in 1918 had not represented the successful liberation of the working class, but merely the exchange of one form of subjugation for another in the form of the "bourgeois" First Republic. The true goal of Austrian history was not bourgeois democracy, but rather a "people's democracy" of the sort which existed in the Soviet Union and, after 1948, in Eastern Europe.

Like the Austrian right, the Communists argued that the reality of Austrian history could not be understood until the lies which had been perpetuated by *großdeutsch* historians concerning Austria had been thoroughly rebutted. Fischer accused the "*großdeutschen* falsifiers of history" of systematically distorting Austria's past in order to pretend that Austria had historically been part of the German nation.⁸⁷⁴ Langbein echoed Fischer's criticisms, charging that the Austrian right had participated in similar distortions. According to Langbein, the right's duplicitous professions of patriotism amounted to a "fossilized, anti-Austrian, anti-democratic concealment of *großdeutsch* myths with a black and yellow

covering which was foreign to the *Volk*.”⁸⁷⁵ Selma Steinmetz argued that for too long the forces of reaction had presented the dynasty and its representatives as the protagonists of Austrian history while ignoring the important contributions of the leaders of the workers’ movement to progress and freedom in Austria. Thus it was left to the Communist Party to correct the myriad fabrications and distortions concerning Austrian history, whatever their source, and to present the “real” view of Austria’s Habsburg past.⁸⁷⁶

Above all, it was Ernst Fischer who took it upon himself to present this Communist version of Austrian history. While other Communist thinkers wrote about Austria’s Habsburg past, Fischer was the one who provided the most systematic discussion of how to view that past correctly. In his books *Die Entstehung des österreichischen Volkscharakters* and *Nationale Probleme des Jahres 1848 in Oesterreich*, as well as in numerous articles in the Communist monthly *Weg und Ziel*, Fischer provided the most extensive statements of the Communist vision of the Habsburg past.⁸⁷⁷

Fischer maintained an essentially negative view of the Habsburg dynasty, as did other Communist commentators on Austrian history. He portrayed them as originally a foreign group which had, along with the Magyars whose crown they later inherited, established control over a territory that was predominantly Slavic. Fischer characterized such early modern Habsburg emperors as Leopold I and Karl VI as reactionaries who

⁸⁷⁴Fischer, *Die Entstehung des österreichischen Volkscharakters*, 3.

⁸⁷⁵Langbein, “Ein großer Fortschritt der österreichischen Geschichtsschreibung,” 468

⁸⁷⁶Selma Steinmetz, “1848-1948. Hans Kudlich, ein Freiheitskämpfer von 1848,” *Weg und Ziel* (April, 1948): 310-312.

⁸⁷⁷Fischer had been a Social Democrat during the First Republic before being attracted by the Communists’ more activist stance against fascism during the 1930s. After the “Prague Spring” of 1968 he became disenchanted with the totalitarian character of Communism, and left the KPÖ as well. See Ernst Fischer, *Das Ende einer Illusion*, (Vienna: Molden, 1973).

presided over a state which was “ponderous, backward, and medieval.”⁸⁷⁸ The Habsburg Monarchy initially fulfilled a double role, acting as the focal point of the unstable Holy Roman Empire of the German nation, while at the same time striving to unite a disparate group of nationalities in Central Europe into a unified body for use as a defense against the encroaching Ottoman Turks. According to Fischer, the Monarchy’s German function ended during the Thirty Years War because of the Habsburgs’ inability to force the zealously independent German principalities to become part of the stable, centralized Central European empire which they sought to build.⁸⁷⁹

The Habsburgs’ other unifying efforts were more successful, however, and they helped forge a state which contained numerous nations which were distinct from one another, yet which still maintained a sense of common community. Fischer was careful not to give the Habsburgs themselves too much credit for the actual creation of the bonds which ultimately bound the various nations of the Monarchy to each other. While the Habsburgs consciously encouraged unity among the nations until well into the eighteenth century, it was really the Turkish threat which forged the enduring feeling of mutual ties between the nationalities. Indeed, Fischer argued that there were times when the dynasty was passive in the face of the Turkish predation, while the *Völker* themselves spontaneously banded together for mutual defense. The sense of unity among the Monarchy’s nationalities also

⁸⁷⁸Fischer, *Die Entstehung des österreichischen Volkscharakters*, 17.

⁸⁷⁹It is worth noting while Fischer denied that Austrians were Germans, he posited a point where Austrian history “separated” from German history. This apparent contradiction is also present in works by Priester and Alfred Klahr, who identified the point of separation as 1866 and 1848, respectively, despite both also denying that Austrians had ever been Germans in the first place. Fischer, *Die Entstehung des österreichischen Volkscharakters*, 15-16; “Der großdeutsche Gedanke und die Arbeiter Bewegung,” *Weg und Ziel* (March, 1946): 130; Priester, “1866 und die Folgen. 80 Jahre Königgrätz,” *Weg und Ziel* (June, 1848): 337-339; Alfred Klahr, “Der März 1848 und die nationale Freiheit,” *Weg und Ziel* (March, 1946): 158-160 (Reprint of a 1938 article).

inspired a number of peasant uprisings *against* the Habsburgs during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and nineteenth centuries, and ultimately persisted until the Monarchy's demise in 1918.⁸⁸⁰

However reactionary and feudal the Habsburg dynasty may have been in Fischer's eyes, it was not without its redeeming qualities. Whatever their individual and collective failings, the Habsburg monarchs were still Austrians, and frequently displayed the tolerant and cosmopolitan national character which the Austrian people possessed. Fischer contrasted the relatively mild dynastic rule of the Habsburg House with the thoroughly thuggish brutality of the Prussian Hohenzollerns. In *Die Entstehung des österreichischen Volkscharakters* he used Maria Theresa and Frederick the Great to personify the differences between tolerant Austria and militaristic Prussia. Fischer presented Maria Theresa as motherly, understanding, prudent, and "folkloric" in contrast to Frederick's cynicism, amorality, and contemptuousness. Despite the comments of certain *großdeutsch* historians to contrary, Fischer asserted that the Austria of Maria Theresa and Joseph II was actually far more progressive than Frederick's Prussia, and that their Austrian state did far more for such traditionally oppressed groups as peasants or weavers than did Prussia. This progress may have been replaced by reaction under Metternich, but the progressive stamp which Maria Theresa and Joseph II's reforms left upon the state never entirely disappeared.⁸⁸¹

Other Communist commentators, however, portrayed the dynasty as a thoroughly oppressive force which was generally no less of an impediment to freedom for social classes and nationalities than the Hohenzollerns. In a 1949 article concerning the possibility of an

⁸⁸⁰Fischer, *Die Entstehung des österreichischen Volkscharakters*, 10-12; "Der großdeutsche Gedanke und die Arbeiter Bewegung," *Weg und Ziel* (March, 1946): 130.

American-sponsored Habsburg restoration somewhere in Central Europe, for example, Franz West argued that Otto von Habsburg, the son of the last emperor, was no less reactionary than his forebears who had pursued the same sort of anti-Slavic imperialism and anti-progressive agenda as the Nazis. He wrote, “Hitler and Habsburg in reality represented the same program: animosity toward the Soviet Union, animosity toward the *Völker*, animosity toward anything progressive”⁸⁸²

The Communists agreed with the Social Democrats that the Revolution of 1848 represented an especially important turning point in Austrian history. It was the pivot point in time when the working class first began to realize its power to transform Austrian society, even as the Austrian bourgeoisie waged its own struggle to wrest political control from the dynasty and the nobility in order to protect its economic interests. The Communists portrayed the dynasty and its representatives as the chief antagonists of the forces of progress in the revolution, and they painted the era of ascendent conservatism and stringent social control under Metternich which proceeded the Revolution as especially oppressive. Indeed, if Fischer had characterized the reigns of some previous Habsburg monarchs as reactionary and feudalistic, then he portrayed the era of Metternich, Franz I, and Ferdinand as one of absolute ossification. The Metternich regime had done its best to prevent all the social tensions that were simmering below the surface of Europe’s conservative order from changing Austria in any way, postponing decisions concerning important issues indefinitely in favor of stasis. Metternich succeeded in preserving the status quo for a generation, but when the Revolution finally came, it expressed the repressed social outrage which Austria’s

⁸⁸¹Fischer, *Die Entstehung des österreichischen Volkscharakters*, 24-27.

⁸⁸²Franz West, “Habsburg– Eine Karte im Spiel der amerikanischen Imperialisten,” *Weg und Ziel*

mannered *Biedermeier* culture had concealed.⁸⁸³

Communist commentators agreed it was the Austrian *Bürger* class which at first drove the Revolution. Yet as the uprising continued, the workers came to the aid of the bourgeoisie's struggle to attain a broad program of constitutional and liberal rights.

According to Eva Preister, however, the further the Revolution progressed, both in Vienna and elsewhere, the more hesitant the *Bürgertum* grew and the more dedicated the working class became. Finally the workers began to push the revolution further than the *Bürger* had intended, adding their own demands for social reform to the bourgeoisie's insistence on political change. At this point the *Bürgertum* felt threatened by the burgeoning workers' movement, and subsequently sought an accommodation with the crown, allowing it to suppress the Revolution with brutal force.⁸⁸⁴

The Communists argued that the *Bürgertum*'s flight into the camp of reaction in 1848 also related to the national issues at stake during the Revolution. Indeed the postwar Communists emphasized the national aspect of the revolutionary events to a much greater degree than the Socialists. Priester noted that the Monarchy's German-speaking bourgeoisie had been more frightened by the activities of workers in Bohemia than they had been even by the Viennese working class. The Czech workers in the Monarchy's most industrially advanced centers in Bohemia and Moravia had developed a platform of socially oriented demands far earlier than the Viennese proletariat, and had also coupled claims to national equality with those demands. Thus the bourgeoisie feared losing its hegemony over the

(February, 1949): 143.

⁸⁸³Fischer, *Die Entstehung des österreichischen Volkscharakters*, 20-21; Priester, "1848-1948. 1848 und die Arbeiter," *Weg und Ziel* (February, 1948): 127-131.

⁸⁸⁴Priester, "1848-1948. 1848 und die Arbeiter," 127-131.

Czechs in Bohemia and Moravia as much as it dreaded losing its economic dominance throughout the Monarchy.⁸⁸⁵

Fischer agreed with this argument, asserting that Austria's German-speaking *Bürgertum* feared that the Slavs would assert their sheer strength of numbers and destroy the status of German-speakers as the dominant faction in Austria. These fears led the German-speaking *Bürger* to oppose Czech demands for democracy and national equality in Bohemia. Instead of banding with the Czechs and presenting a united, democratic front against the reactionary Habsburg government, German-speaking Austrians in both Bohemia and Vienna aligned themselves with the Bohemian nobility (who, no matter what their linguistic proclivities, opposed reform) against Czech progressives who they feared represented a "new Hussitism." Fischer noted that while the Austrian *Bürgertum* talked about securing the rights of other nationalities, they never really followed through on such ideals, and indeed ended up actively opposing such rights.⁸⁸⁶

Fischer and Priester both argued that it was anti-Slavic German nationalism which caused the revolution to fail. Fischer asserted that for a brief time during Metternich's era *großdeutsch* thinking had actually been a progressive force which had inspired German-speakers throughout Europe to dream of a German union in a democratic state. Yet ultimately German-speakers both in Austria and in Prussia demonstrated in 1848 that they cared more about maintaining their own privileged positions in their respective societies than they did about the dream of democracy. The March 1946 edition of *Weg und Ziel* reprinted a 1938 article by Alfred Klahr which had made the same point, arguing that 1848

⁸⁸⁵Priester, "1848-1948. 1848 und die nationale Frage," *Weg und Ziel* (March, 1948): 182-186.

⁸⁸⁶Fischer, *Nationale Probleme des Jahres 1848 in Oesterreich* (London: Free Austrian Books, 1947), 3-6.

had represented the last point at which a union of Austrians with other German-speakers had been possible. The selfishness and chauvinism of the Habsburgs, the Hohenzollerns, and the *Bürger* classes of both their states had ultimately scuttled that dream in favor of a reactionary nationalism which maintained their dominance. Thus 1848 for the Austrian Communists not only marked the moment when the working class awoke, but also the time when *großdeutsch* ideology was transformed into a reactionary force which the dynasty used to play the individual nationalities off one another.⁸⁸⁷

In the aftermath of the unsuccessful conclusion of the revolution, the dynasty attempted to reimpose absolutist rule. Neither the bourgeoisie nor the nationalities had achieved their aims in 1848, however, and the tensions from that year had merely been postponed. According to the postwar Communists, *großdeutsch* ideology had now emerged as the most serious reactionary poison in the Monarchy's political culture, and it would fester in Austria even after 1918. Now instead of representing any genuine desire for union with Germany, *großdeutsch* sentiment actually represented the anti-Slavic prejudices and desire to maintain national predominance of the Monarchy's German-speaking *Bürger* class.⁸⁸⁸

For the Communists, 1866 represented a further turning point in the relationship between class power and national ideology in Austria. Priester asserted that it was in the aftermath the Habsburg military defeat by Prussia in that year that many Austrians, whether

⁸⁸⁷*Ibid.*, 18; Fischer, "Der großdeutsche Gedanke und die Arbeiter Bewegung," 132; Klahr, "Der März 1848 und die nationale Freiheit," 158-160.

⁸⁸⁸Fischer, "Der großdeutsche Gedanke und die Arbeiter Bewegung," 132; Fischer did not mention the nascent Czech middle class in his discussion of the Revolution of 1848. For an overview of the relationship of German nationalism to the Revolution, see Pieter M. Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries: Liberal Politics, Social Experience, and National Identity in the Austrian Empire, 1848-1914* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1997).

Bürger or workers, began to think of themselves as “not German.” Despite having all of the characteristics which defined a nation, most Austrians at this point still lacked a true Austrian consciousness, but as a result of Prussia’s aggression they at least had developed a firm sense that they did not belong with Germany. For the dynasty, 1866 marked the end of any pretense of Austrian domination of a group of south German “satellite states,” For more than three hundred years, Austria had struggled first with France, and then with Prussia for influence in the southern Germany. By 1866, Austria had lost not only the struggle for German influence with Prussia, but also its contest with France over influence in Italy. According to Priester, Austria had not “been expelled” from a nation to which it had previously belonged in 1866, as German nationalist historians had argued, but rather had lost a great deal of its international influence. This blow to Austrian prestige, coupled with unfulfilled national demands of the Magyars and the class aspirations of the Austrian bourgeoisie, prompted a half hearted attempt by the Monarchy to shore up its weakness by compromising with those groups. The *Ausgleich* of 1866 gave the Hungarian nobles the freedom to oppress the nationalities in their half of the Monarchy. Likewise, the sharing of political power between the crown and the bourgeoisie in the Austrian half of the Monarchy resulted in some reform, but, thanks to the *Bürgertum*’s fears of losing its privileged position within the state, not enough to help the stagnating, semi-feudal economy to industrialize fully. Without real solutions to any of the lingering problems after 1848, Austria was weak and doomed to be Germany’s junior partner, against its own better interests.⁸⁸⁹

It was in this era of weakness and compromise that the Austrian workers’ movement first organized. While the Communists fiercely criticized the Social Democrats, they

⁸⁸⁹ Priester, “1866 und die Folgen. 80 Jahre Königgrätz,” 337-339.

allowed that in the beginning at least, the Social Democratic Party had truly represented the interests of the Austrian working class. In 1948, the KPÖ commemorated the sixtieth anniversary of the Socialist Party Congress held in Hainfeld in Lower Austria, in which the previously fractious movement united under the leadership of Viktor Adler. Franz Strobl described the Hainfeld Platform as a document which committed the movement for the first time to the revolutionary, scientific socialism which Marx had prescribed. Strobl praised Adler for his leadership, but lamented the vagueness of some of the program's provisions, which had allowed the movement to drift into reformism and to split along national lines. Strobl argued that it was the Communist Party, not the ideologically compromised SPÖ, which represented the real successor to the pure Marxist principles set forth at Hainfeld.⁸⁹⁰

According to the Communist view, after the promising start at Hainfeld, Austromarxism, like all varieties of social democracy, had found its ideological potency diluted by its opportunistic compromises with *bürgerlich* democracy and capitalism. Franz Marek argued that the Socialist Party's downward spiral began in earnest with the Brünn Program of 1899 and the Vienna Program of 1901. While the Vienna Program represented the basic abandonment of revolutionary Marxism by the Social Democrats in favor of reformism, the Brünn Program saw the Austromarxists mirroring the nationalistic hypocrisies of the Austrian *Bürgertum*. That class habitually presented itself as Austrian when in economic competition with German industry, but styled itself as German when it came to preserving its national privileges within the Monarchy. By 1899 Austrian Social Democrats had come to reflect the stance of their class enemies. The Socialist Party had claimed to represent the entire working class of Austria, but in reality the German-speaking

⁸⁹⁰Franz Strobl, "60 Jahre Hainfeld," *Weg und Ziel* (December, 1948): 867-872.

workers enjoyed higher status and more prosperity than the Monarchy's other national proletariats. The Brünn program sought to maintain this privileged position by committing the party to equal rights, but only within the structure of the Monarchy. The workers of other nationalities were not allowed to advocate leaving the Habsburg state. Thus, Marek argued that in the name of internationalism, Austrian Social Democrats had covertly replicated the anti-Slavic, pro-Habsburg patriotism of the Monarchy at its worst. "The Austromarxists based themselves on the soil of the Habsburg *Völkerkerker*," he declared.⁸⁹¹

For the Communists, the strikes which convulsed Vienna in January of 1918 represented the Social Democrats' worst abnegation of their responsibilities to the working class. The strikes had come in on the heels of the successful Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 in Russia, partly in response to the Soviets' call for peace. The postwar Austrian Communists naturally saw the Soviet seizure of power as an example of exactly the sort of socialist revolution that Marx had called for and portrayed the Viennese strikes as the beginning of the a spontaneous effort by the Austrian working class to follow the Soviet example and seize power from the Habsburg regime. According to the Communists it was ultimately the Austromarxist leadership that prevented a Communist revolution in Austria. L. Hornik argued that when Karl Renner and Viktor Adler coopted the leadership of the newly formed workers' councils that had driven the events of January and brought the strikes to an end, they had betrayed the Austrian working class. Instead of general peace, the Social Democrats, like the Habsburg government, supported only a peace with Russia while calling for continued fighting elsewhere. Thus the forces of Austromarxism sold out

⁸⁹¹Franz Marek, "Zur Ideologie des Austromarxismus," *Weg und Ziel* (December, 1946): 680. On the SDAP's Brünn Program of 1899, see Kann, 436; Okey, 308.

their cause to act as mouthpieces for the dynasty. In the aftermath of this betrayal, the radical left wing of the party split off from the rest of the Socialist Party, founding the Austrian Communist Party later that year. Thus for the postwar KPÖ, 1918 represented the year when the leadership role of the truly progressive forces in Austrian history passed from the Social Democrats to the Communists. As the Monarchy crumbled and the era of Bolshevism dawned in Europe, the Socialists had decisively lost their claim to represent freedom and social progress in Austria.⁸⁹²

While the First Republic which had replaced the Habsburg Monarchy represented the triumphant culmination of decades of work in the service of democracy for the SPÖ, for the Communists it merely represented the exchange of one form of oppression for another. Again, the Social Democrats had failed to fulfill their duty to act in the interests of the working class. In a bitter polemic on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the First Republic, the Communist journalist Leopold Spira argued that the Socialist Party had failed in every way possible to live up to its obligations as a Marxist organization, casting its lot with the *Bürger* class, and letting the bourgeoisie and the imperialist Entente powers dictate the form of the new state. Spira even charged that the Austrian Socialists pursued a *großdeutsch*, imperialist campaign to undermine the progress of freedom in Czechoslovakia and Soviet Hungary, aiding reactionary forces with arms and

⁸⁹²L. Hornik, "Der Jännerstreik 1918," *Weg und Ziel* (January, 1947): 49-51. On the strikes and their effects, see Okey, 388-389; Richard Georg Plaschka, Horst Haselsteiner, and Arnold Suppan, eds., *Innere Front. Militärassistenz, Widerstand und Umsturz in der Donaumonarchie 1918*, vol. 2, *Umsturz* (Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1974), 316-328; Hans Leo Mikoletzky, *Österreichische Zeitgeschichte vom Ende Donaumonarchie bis zur Gegenwart* (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1966), 30-44; Hans Hautmann, *Die verlorene Räterepublik: Am Beispiel der Kommunistischen Partei Deutschösterreichs* (Vienna, Frankfurt, Zurich: Europa Verlag, 1985); Adam Wandruszka and Peter Urbanitsch, eds., *Die Habsburgermonarchie, 1848-1918*, vol.6 (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1973), 359-360.

support while leaving the bourgeois domination of finance, administration, and security in their own state absolutely untouched. He even asserted that the Social Democrats would have preserved the Habsburg Monarchy in 1918 if it had at all been within their power. For Spira, the shameful actions of the Socialists during the founding of the First Republic served as ample justification for the necessity of the Austrian Communist Party.⁸⁹³

Marek echoed these sentiments, asserting that after the end of the Monarchy, the Austromarxists replaced their habitual support of the Habsburg state with a pro-*Anschluß* stance, and spurned the friendship of the Soviet Union, abandoning any last vestiges of true Marxism,. Austromarxism's impotence was amply demonstrated by the Social Democrats' dismal failure to defend the interests of the working class in 1918, 1934, and 1938. Fischer summed up the Communists' position on the First Republic by arguing that it had not represented any sort of real democracy, but had rather been an instrument of bourgeois domination which had gone virtually unchallenged by the Social Democrats. In 1946, he declared that the Second Republic should not be built upon the flawed foundation of the First. He avowed that the Communists wanted to move toward a new, real democracy, and urged the rest of the country not to be content with a false, bourgeois democracy.⁸⁹⁴

The KPÖ proclaimed a much different version of the last several decades of the Austria's history than did the SPÖ. While both parties of the left agreed on the reactionary character of the dynasty, the exploitive nature of the *Bürger* class, and the primacy of the working class struggle for democracy and social justice, the two factions differed

⁸⁹³Leopold Spira, "Vor 30 Jahren: der 12. November 1918," *Weg und Ziel* (October, 1948): 691-703; Friedl Fürnburg, "Kommunisten und Demokratie," *Weg und Ziel* (January, 1946): 12-17.

⁸⁹⁴Marek, "Zur Ideologie des Austromarxismus," 678-685; Fischer, "Der Weg der Provisorischen Regierung," *Weg und Ziel* (January, 1946): 1-12.

dramatically about who truly defended the freedom and the interests of the workers. They even disagreed about the history of the workers movement. While the Socialists had held up such diverse figures as Goethe, Masaryk, and Otto Bauer as the heroes of Europe's fight for freedom, the Communists looked primarily to the forces of the radical left such as the Paris *Communards* and, most importantly, to the Bolshevik founders of the Soviet Union as their ideological forebears.⁸⁹⁵ For the Austrian Communists, the Social Democrats represented bitter antagonists who had been corrupted by German nationalism and reformism, and who had hurt Austria almost as much as the Habsburg dynasty and the bourgeoisie.

Thus, the Communist view of the Habsburg past was distinctive. It possessed both the fervent sense of Austrian national identity and the animosity toward *großdeutsch* ideology displayed by the Austrian right, as well as the negative view of the dynasty and the Austrian *Bürgertum* as oppressors of the truly progressive forces of history proclaimed by the Socialists. Yet the Communists presented these elements in a radical, pro-Soviet context. The Austrian Communists used their view of Austria's past as part of the Habsburg Monarchy in order to distinguish between the forces of Austrian progress and democracy, which they themselves claimed to represent, and the Nazi German dictatorship against which they had struggled for the better part of a decade. Ultimately they saw the Habsburgs and the Hitler regime, the bourgeois conservatives and the reformist Social Democrats, the German nationalists and the American "imperialists" all as obstacles in Austria's historical

⁸⁹⁵See for example the following articles in the Communist monthly *Weg und Ziel*: Leopold Grünwald, "30 Jahre Sozialistische Revolution: 30 Jahre Sowjetmensch," *Weg und Ziel* (June, 1947): 433-437; F. M., "75 Jahre Pariser Kommune 18. März 1871- 18. März 1946," *Weg und Ziel* (March, 1946): 160-163; "Das Jahrhundert Lenins und Stalins," *Weg und Ziel* (December, 1949): 765-721; Grünwald, "30 Jahre Sozialistische Revolution: 30 Jahre Sowjetmensch," *Weg und Ziel* (June, 1947): 433-437; Fritz Lang, "Wladimir Iljitsch Lenin— Der Mann des Volkes. Zu seinem 22. Todestag," *Weg und Ziel* (January, 1946): 19-23; Franz Marek "30 Jahre Sozialistische Revolution: 1917 und der Weg zum Sozialismus," *Weg und*

march toward “true” democracy and social freedom under Communist leadership and Soviet patronage.

iv. Enduring German Nationalist Sentiment in Postwar Austria

Despite the fervent proclamations of Austrian national identity based upon various visions of Austria’s distinctive history by the postwar conservatives, Socialists, and Communists, there were still indications of lingering German nationalist sentiments in Austria after 1945. The most significant expression of such Germanist ideals was the emergence of the *Verband des Unabhängigen* (Union of Independents- VdU) in 1949. This new organization represented a loose coalition of various elements of the Austrian polity which did not feel that the other political parties expressed their interests and ideals. Former supporters of the Nazi regime comprised an important portion of this political block, although it also operated as an umbrella group for diehard proponents of *großdeutsch* ideology of other orientations.⁸⁹⁶

For obvious reasons, however, the VdU was extremely circumspect about its partial dependence upon groups which had supported National Socialism. As we have seen, in the postwar era most of Austria’s political leadership portrayed Nazism as a treasonous, anti Austrian ideology. The four Allied occupying powers all clearly proscribed Nazism as well and mandated the prosecution of Austrian Nazi party members after the war. Still, by the late 1940s, the Allies had largely lost their zeal for denazification in Austria due to the fact that each of the Cold War ideological blocks regarded the other as a more pressing enemy

Ziel (April, 1947): 267-272.

⁸⁹⁶Engelmann, 31-32; Jelavich, 272; Weinzierl and Skalnik, 222-224.

than the defeated Nazis. In a similar manner, the leaders of Austria's other political parties were eager to move beyond the topic of Austria's responsibility for the war and the Holocaust, even if the suppression of those matters allowed lower level former Nazis and Nazi supporters to resume political activity in the Second Republic.⁸⁹⁷ This complicity between the postwar Austrian political order and the Cold War factions to scale back denazification in Austria allowed former supporters of National Socialism to return to Austrian political life so long as they did not overtly advocate policies or ideological themes which had been associated with the Hitler regime.

As a result, the Independents did not openly use Nazi tropes in their public statements, but rather fell back upon the sort of political goals which had been advocated by *großdeutsch* Austrian liberals during the First Republic and the last decades of the Habsburg Monarchy. In fact at least some of the supporters of the independent voting block, including one of its most important leaders, Viktor Reimann, had themselves languished in Nazi jails.⁸⁹⁸ Consequently the earliest platforms of the VdU formulated the coalition's political stance along the classically liberal lines of support for democratic government, private property, lower rates of taxation, anti-clericism and opposition to Marxism.⁸⁹⁹ Still, many of

⁸⁹⁷Günter Bischof has persuasively argued that it was the ability of the leaders of the ÖVP and SPÖ to skillfully play the competing Cold War blocks off of one another in order to end the occupation of Austria which resulted in the shallow level of denazification in Austria, and which allowed postwar Austria to avoid any real discussion its Nazi past. See Bischof, *Austria in the First Cold War*, 52-77. See also Brigitte Balier, "They Were All Victims: The Selective Treatment of the Consequences of National Socialism," in *Austrian Historical Memory and National Identity* (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 1997), 103-115 and various essays in Meissl, Mulley, und Rathkolb, eds., *Verdrängte Schuld, Verfehlt Sühne*.

⁸⁹⁸Although Reimann had been affiliated with the Austrian Nazi Party before 1938, he fell out with the Nazi regime soon after the *Anschluß* and was imprisoned for four and a half years for participation in an anti-Nazi resistance group. See Albert Massiczek, "Zweimal Illegal," in *Verdrängte Schuld, Verfehlt Sühne*, 308-311.

⁸⁹⁹"Das Programm der Verbandes der Unabhängigen, 1949," in *Österreichisch Parteiprogramme, 1868-1966*, 484-488.

the leaders of the independent movement had been associated in some way with National Socialism, and certainly the numbers of such individuals within the VdU were far greater than in any of Austria's other postwar political parties.⁹⁰⁰ Indeed, while the People's Party and the Socialists accepted the VdU as a valid political organization, the Communists continually denounced it as a neo-Nazi organization.

The Independents' postwar statements concerning a Germanist conception of Austrian national identity were tentative at first, but grew bolder over time. The organization's first political program in 1949 supported Austria's independence, yet still proclaimed a sense of cultural community with Germany, stating, "alongside full protection of our state independence we profess our Germanness."⁹⁰¹ By the time of the publication of their Aussee Program of 1954, however, the Independents more boldly announced their *großdeutsch* position, avowing that "Austria is a German state. Its politics must serve the entire German *Volk* and may never be aligned against any other German state."⁹⁰² Indeed that program even presented a vision of a "German mission" for Austria which was designed to serve the cause of unity and common defense in the German-speaking regions of Europe. The VdU presented this mission in the context of its support for a potential European union in which the German *Volk* would inevitably participate, but such a vision of Austria's role in the world remained quite similar to previous *großdeutsch* presentations of a German mission for Austria.⁹⁰³

The VdU rarely justified these confessions of Austrian Germanness with the sort of

⁹⁰⁰Oliver Rathkolb, "NS-Problem und politische Restauration: Vorgeschichte und Etablierung des VdU," in *Verdrängte Schuld, Verfehlte Sühne*, 73-99.

⁹⁰¹"Das Programm der Verbandes der Unabhängigen, 1949," 489.

⁹⁰²"Das 'Ausseeer Program' des Verbandes der Unabhängigen, 1949," 489.

lengthy historical arguments which had characterized the German nationalist camp before 1945, however. The Independents were ultimately far more concerned with providing vehement denunciations of the current political parties and government in Austria than they were with presenting treatises on Austria's history as a German state. Certain small examples of a historically grounded notion of a Germanist national identity did appear from the VdU from time to time, however. For example, the party's main newspaper, *Die Neue Front*, published an article in 1950 urging Austria's compassionate treatment of Central European German-speaking refugees on the grounds that they had for centuries shared "a common history, culture and language"⁹⁰⁴ with Austrians. Similarly, the party's leaders also called for the renewed use of the First Republic's Austrian national anthem (the Haydn-composed melody which had been the basis for the anthems of both the Habsburg Monarchy and Germany) on the grounds of its important place in Austria's history.⁹⁰⁵ Yet such historical arguments were by and large tangential and vague, and certainly not the main focus of a political party which was in essence trying to appeal to former Nazis and *großdeutsch* idealists in Austria while also not associating itself too overtly with ideas which had been tainted by their association with the Hitler regime.

Some historians of the Austrian Second Republic have argued that the postwar confessions of Austrian national identity on the part of the three main political parties after 1945 represented an opportunistic effort by Austria's postwar order to regain independence and to avoid the issue of Austria's responsibility for its Nazi past. Peter Thaler, Anton

⁹⁰³*Ibid.*, 489-490.

⁹⁰⁴"Die Volksdeutschen als Europäer," *Die Neue Front* (Vienna), January 19, 1950, 2.

Pelinka, and others have argued that such positions represented too rapid and profound a rupture with the strong currents of German nationalist sentiment in Austria before 1945 to have really represented the views of all, or even most, Austrian citizens. Indeed, with the VdU garnering more than ten percent of the vote (twice the percentage gained by the KPÖ) in the national election of 1953, there is certainly ample reason to argue that notions of a German national identity had not been extinguished in Austria.⁹⁰⁶ Still, the vigorous and repeated presentations of a unique Austrian national identity grounded in various visions of Austria's Habsburg past by the ÖVP, SPÖ and KPÖ were far too systematic and enthusiastic to have been merely opportunistic. Rather they represented a concerted effort on the part of Austria's postwar leaders to eliminate from Austria's psyche the German nationalist notions which they felt had nearly destroyed Austrian independence. No doubt there was a pragmatic element to such efforts, but the sentiment behind them was sincere.

Sincerity and vehemence are not in themselves enough to transform the opinions of millions of people, however. The leaders of the three major parties themselves may have nearly universally repudiated *großdeutsch* conceptions of national identity in favor of a historically grounded "Austrianism," but they could hardly have expected to establish a similar uniformity of opinion in Austria's population simply through the publication of articles, books, and speeches alone. Therefore, Austria's postwar political leaders mounted a concerted effort to instill in the Austrian people an appropriately Austrianist view of national identity based upon a vision of the state's past as part of the Habsburg Monarchy.

⁹⁰⁵Reported in "Wieder die neonazistische Lüge," *Die Neue Front* (Vienna), June 29, 1950, 1.

⁹⁰⁶Thaler, *The Ambivalence of Identity*, 180-188; Anton Pelinka, "Taboos and Self-Deception: The Second Republic's Reconstruction of History," in *Austrian Historical Memory and National Identity*, 95-102; Emil Brix, "Zur Frage der österreichischen Identität am Beginn der Zweiten Republik," in *Die Bevormundete*

Educational policy represented the primary means for those leaders to attempt to fulfill such goals.

Chapter 7. Education and the Habsburg Past in the Second Republic

The Austrian Second Republic witnessed not just efforts by the state's individual political parties to bolster Austrian national identity by presenting various views of the Habsburg past, but also saw those parties work together in order to present Austrian citizens with a historically grounded sense of Austria's unique nationhood. The conservatives, Social Democrats, and to, a lesser extent, the Communists, were not content merely to make statements concerning Austria's national character and history directed at their own constituents. Rather, they also used the state education as a means through which they could both express their national and historical convictions and help convince Austrian citizens of the necessity and reality of Austria's historical nationhood.

The Second Republic's government used a number of different methods in order to express and advance notions of Austrian national identity.⁹⁰⁷

⁹⁰⁷The historian Peter Thaler has also discussed the Second Republic's efforts to shape Austrian ideas concerning Austrian national identity. In addition to education, he also identifies judicial restrictions on

German nationalist discourse and public rhetoric delegitimizing such discourse as important parts of this effort. Thaler does briefly discuss how public figures in the Second Republic used Austrian history to argue for the existence of an Austrian nation, but he does not deal in depth with the centrality of Habsburg past to the efforts of all of Austria's postwar political factions and pedagogical leaders to present their distinctive visions of Austrian nationhood. Peter Thaler, *The Ambivalence of Identity: The Austrian Experience of Nation-building in a Modern Society* (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2001), 119-124; 132-142.

Educational policy, however, was by far the most significant tool used by Austria's postwar leaders to pursue such goals. As we have seen, previous governments in Austria had all considered state educational policy, and especially policies about teaching history, as crucial to indoctrinating the state's population on the most appropriate view of Austria's place in the world. Austria's political leaders after 1945 were no different, and leading figures from all of the parties self consciously and forthrightly stated that the state's educational system represented a vital tool in their efforts to convince the people of Austria to embrace an Austrian's conception of the state.

To that end, the Second Republic set out to reform the Austrian educational system after 1945. Obviously one of the Ministry of Education's first tasks was to remove any and all vestiges of Nazism from Austrian education. The government went beyond merely denazifying state education, however. It committed itself to helping Austria's youth develop a firm dedication to Austrian independence and democracy in order to avoid the weak national and republican consciousness which Austria's leaders thought had contributed to the Nazi conquest of Austria. Thus, Austria's postwar leaders attempted to recast state curricula in *Staatsbürgerkunde* (civics), literature, language and, especially history, in order to portray Austria as democratic, Danubian, and European, rather than as a mere historical appendage of Germany as had so often been the case earlier. Austrian educators conducted a vigorous debate concerning educational policy on those topics in the pages of pedagogical journals with an eye toward influencing the government's policy decisions. Finally, the Second Republic's government oversaw the publication of new educational materials and textbooks which would instill a strong Austrian national and republican consciousness in the youth. All of these efforts of course involved frequent references to Austria's Habsburg

past in order to achieve their aims.⁹⁰⁸

Ultimately, these efforts at transforming the content of Austrian education were only partially successful. As an examination of the postwar curricula and civics and history textbooks shows, Austrian education may have been denazified by 1955, but, just as before the war, Austrian students after 1945 still often read books which emphasized Austria's relationship to Germany. Some changes certainly did occur, but the stated goals of Austria's leaders and educators during this period to effect a sweeping Austrianist transformation of educational materials went at least partially unrealized. Efforts to portray Austria as a historical entity separate from Germany in textbooks and readers were half-hearted, although such texts did invariably cast Austria's more recent Nazi past as one in which foreign German invaders had subjugated the Austrian nation, and forced it to participate in war and mass murder for which the Austrian people themselves bore no responsibility.

The new government's lack of success in transforming the content of history education to reflect the new consensus on Austrian nationhood stemmed from a number of factors. First, the decade after 1945 saw Austria struggle to recover from the devastation wrought by World War II. Its economic infrastructure had been reduced to rubble by Allied bombing, and the Soviet Union made matters worse by parasitically expropriating the remaining Austrian economic resources in its zone of occupation in eastern Austria. The Second Republic received some aid from the Western powers and participated in the

⁹⁰⁸Peter Utgaard has also extensively studied the relationship between the Second Republic's education system and its efforts to construct a new Austrian identity. He concludes that the Austrian education in the decades after 1945 sought to portray Austria as a nation separate from Germany in order to minimize Austria's responsibility for the crimes of the Third Reich. He does not, however, pay significant attention to the role which portrayals of Austria's Habsburg past played in those educational efforts to cast a distinctive Austrian nation as the "first victim" of "foreign" Nazi aggression. Peter Utgaard, *Remembering and Forgetting Nazism: Education, National Identity and the Victim Myth in Postwar Austria* (New York:

Marshall Plan after 1948, but it still had to strain throughout the immediate postwar period merely to provide for the most basic needs of its citizens. A comprehensive educational reform would have been a difficult and complicated endeavor under the best of circumstances, and Austria's straitened circumstances and limited resources after 1945 made such a project even more problematic.⁹⁰⁹

Additionally, while the major political postwar parties all agreed on the importance of cultivating a sense of Austrian nationhood in the population, they were still unable to reach a consensus about the meaning and legacy of the Habsburg past. The parties cooperated on matters of policy far more effectively during the early Second Republic than they ever had before 1945, but their continuing disagreements about Austrian history made it difficult for them to achieve a comprehensive transformation of history education. The extensive provincial autonomy inherent in the Second Republic's federal organization likewise continued to complicate the government's efforts to disseminate its Austrianist ideals in education at the local level.

Finally, systematic and comprehensive educational reform simply is process which takes time. As we have seen, none of the Austrian governments between 1918 and 1945 were entirely successful in transforming state education either, and even the authoritarian corporatist and Nazi regimes could not entirely achieve the educational changes they desired despite their extensive ability to quash dissent. In the end, the constraints upon the early Second Republic's educational reforms—limited resources, a lack of central authority, and widespread ideological disagreement among the major parties—resembled the barriers to

Berghahn Books, 2003).

⁹⁰⁹On Austria's difficult circumstances after World War II, see Günter Bischof, *Austria in the First Cold*

similar efforts in the First Republic. Austria after 1945 had certainly learned valuable lessons from the First Republic's failure to craft a stable democratic order, and its leaders were far more willing to set aside their ideological disagreements and cooperate with one another than they had been between 1918 and 1933. Still, the Second Republic was not able to free itself entirely from the constraints which had stymied educational reform in the earlier Republic, some of which were inherent in federal, parliamentary government. In the end, however, the Second Republic benefitted from one advantage which all of the other post-Habsburg Austrian governments lacked: time. None of those other regimes lasted more than fifteen years, while the Second Republic had generations to accomplish its educational labors. The new Republic's reforms may not have been entirely successful in the immediate aftermath of World War II, but the educational changes which Austria's postwar leaders sought gradually bore more fruit after 1955.⁹¹⁰ Thus, the early Second Republic laid the foundations for a durable Austrian national identity, even if it only partially succeeded in transforming the content of state history education during the first decade after the war.

i. The Second Republic's Cooperative System of Government

In the Republic's first months, Austria's Provisional Government divided its positions roughly equally between the Austria's three most prominent political factions: the People's Party, the Social Democrats, and the Communists. The Communists, whose prominence was due more to Soviet patronage and to the prestige derived from their

War, 1945-1955: The Leverage of the Weak (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 30-129.

⁹¹⁰On the educational reform efforts of previous Austrian governments, see Chapters 2,4, and 5. On the success of the Second Republic's educational reforms after 1955 see Utgaard, *Remembering and Forgetting Nazism*, 71-160.

underground, anti-Nazi activism during the war than to any history of electoral success in Austria, suffered a resounding defeat in the Second Republic's first round of parliamentary elections in late 1945. Afterwards, their influence upon the government's policies waned dramatically, but the ÖVP and the SPÖ continued to share power, cooperating closely in order to avoid the sort of fractious ideological conflicts between left and right which had led to the end of Austrian democracy during the 1930s. The conservatives and Socialists continued to disagree sharply on matters of ideology, but they nonetheless were able to put aside their differences and cooperate with one another to forge a government based upon compromise. The coalition system that these two parties created, the so-called *Proporz* system based upon power sharing between the two parties proportional to their electoral support, endured as the Second Republic's guiding political strategy until 1966. Using this strategy of governance based upon cooperation rather than confrontation, Austria's postwar political leaders were able to use the power of the Austrian government, and especially the state's educational system, as a tool in their attempts to instill a sense of Austrian national identity in the population.⁹¹¹

Cooperation between the political parties meant that the Second Republic was able to present a unified front which strongly advocated Austrian independence and a commitment to democracy, and sought to implant these values in the Austrian population. While the parties still disagreed about the specifics of various policies, they agreed about the state's basic direction and the government proceeded with broad support. In fact, the political

⁹¹¹Frederick C. Engelmann, *Government by Diplomacy: The Austrian Coalition 1945-1966* (Vienna: Braumüller, 2001), 29-60; Manfred Rauchensteiner, "The 'Big Two': The Grand Coalition, 1945-1966 and 1987-2000," in *Austria in the Twentieth Century*, eds. Rolf Steininger, Günter Bischof and Michael Gehler (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2002): 235-262.

parties all avowed that it was more important for them to put aside their differences in order to secure the broader goals which they held in common than it was for them to squabble concerning matters of ideology. To this end, the parties jointly published a newspaper, *Neues Österreich*, dedicated to fostering political cooperation between all of the state's ideological factions in order to lay the groundwork for a truly independent, democratic Austria.⁹¹²

The Second's Republic's education policy demonstrated this unity of purpose between the parties. The parties all agreed that Austria was a unique nation which had been victimized by the Nazis, and they argued the easy "conquest" of Austria by Germany in 1938 had occurred because of the weak national and democratic consciousness in Austria during the First Republic and the *Ständestaat*. Thus they agreed that the new Republic needed to inculcate Austrian children with the principles of Austrian nationhood, democratic government, and international cooperation in order to avoid the recurrence of the sort of devastating conflicts which had convulsed Europe twice within the space of generation. All the parties identified the teaching of Austrian history as the most important tool for achieving such educational goals. This new spirit of cooperation did not, however, necessarily translate into a consensus on the actual details of educational policy, and the ideological differences between the parties did continue to limit the speed and thoroughness of educational reform, despite the more conciliatory tone in Austrian politics after 1945.

In the first few months of the Provisional Government, the Communist leader and intellectual Ernst Fischer served as the Second Republic's first Minister of Education. After

⁹¹²For a statement of this new newspaper's purpose to serve as a multiparty forum for the advocacy of Austrian independence and democracy, see Ernst Fischer's lead article in *Neues Österreich* 1 (April 23,

the KPÖ's electoral defeat at the end of 1945, however, the conservative Felix Hurdes replaced him as Minister, ushering in more than a decade of ÖVP leadership of the Ministry of Education.⁹¹³ As we have seen, however, there was a surprising amount of agreement between the Communists and the conservatives concerning the role of the Habsburg past (if not the dynasty itself) in defining the Austrian nation, and even the SPÖ shared a certain sense that the Monarchy, reactionary as it may have been, had helped forge Austria's nationhood. Thus, the Second Republic's educational policies expressed the broad agreement between the parties about the importance of the Habsburg past in their efforts to define and strengthen Austria's national identity.

Of course while the parties shared a dedication to the concept of a distinctive Austrian nation which was defined by its historical past, there was enough substantive disagreement between their visions of that past to make the presentation of a coherent view of Austria's history in the state's educational system difficult. The conservatives saw the past in terms of a benevolent dynasty which had helped forge a unique Austrian *Völkerstaat* beneficial to all of the old Monarchy's nationalities, while the parties of the left largely saw the dynasty as an obstacle to the historical forces of freedom and progress, even if it had helped create a multinational state which had some positive aspects. These competing views were difficult to harmonize, and attempts to find neutral ground between the three parties' visions often diluted the forcefulness of assertions that Austria's history had defined its

1945): 1-2.

⁹¹³The exact title of both the Ministry and the officials responsible for education in Austria changed several times after 1945, but no matter what exact terms were used, this division of the Second Republic's government was always responsible for educational policy in Austria, and hence is simply rendered here as the "Ministry/Minister of Education." Under the *Proporz* system, the ÖVP's leadership of the Education Ministry was generally offset by the appointment of a Socialist undersecretary; the converse was true in ministries that were headed by Socialists. See William T. Bluhm, *Building an Austrian Nation: The*

unique nationhood apart from Germany. The one area where the parties did completely agree, and which consequently was translated into the state's postwar educational system with great success, was the notion that Austria had represented a victim of German aggression in 1938, which bore no guilt for Nazi Germany's crimes.

ii. The Second Republic's Educational Reforms

The first task of the new republic's government was obviously to remove all the trappings of the National Socialist educational system which had been in place in Austria between 1938 and 1945.⁹¹⁴ Such efforts went hand in hand with uprooting the entire apparatus of the Nazi governance in Austria. Just as the Provisional Government in 1945 nullified the Nuremberg laws and laws establishing the NSDAP and its affiliate organizations as the only legal political bodies in Austria, it also repealed all National Socialist laws concerning higher education and all Nazi academic titles.⁹¹⁵ The government's plan for the first postwar school year in 1945/1946 explicitly annulled all National Socialist curricula, and returned the state's primary and secondary educational systems to the reformed curricula instituted by the First Republic in 1930 and 1928,

⁹¹⁴This task was also mandated by the Allied powers occupying Austria, which had an especially significant role in influencing the state's educational policy between 1945 and 1948. Utgaard, *Remembering and Forgetting Nazism*, 25-70.

⁹¹⁵“Kundmachung der provisorischen Staatsregierung vom 13. Mai 1945 über die Aufhebung der ‘Nürnberger Rassengesetze,’” “Kundmachung der provisorischen Staatsregierung vom 12. Juni 1945 betreffend die Aufhebung der deutschen Rechtsvorschriften über die NSDAP, ihre Gliederungen und angeschlossenen Verbände,” “Kundmachung der provisorischen Staatsregierung vom 20. Juni 1945 über die Aufhebung der Reichskulturkammergesetz,” “Kundmachung der provisorischen Staatsregierung vom 20. Juni 1945 über die Aufhebung der deutschen Rechtsvorschriften auf dem Gebiet des Hochschulwesens,” *Verordnungsblatt für den Dienstbereich des Bundesministeriums für Unterricht* (February 1, 1946): 3-5; “Amtsbezeichnungen,” *Verordnungsblatt* (February 1, 1946): 58.

respectively.⁹¹⁶

⁹¹⁶It is worth noting that the laws mandated a return to the curricula from the First Republic, rather than to subsequent curricula from the *Ständestaat* which the Second Republic deemed insufficiently democratic, even if they had been products of an Austrian government rather than a German one. “Maßnahmen für den Beginn des Unterrichtes an Volks- und Haupts- und Mittelschulen im Schuljahr 1945/6,” *Verordnungsblatt* (February 1, 1946): 59-61.

The same law also returned the state to the use of the traditionally Austrian school nomenclature of *Gymnasien*, *Realgymnasien*, *Realschulen*, and *Frauenoberschulen*, removing Nazi designations which had followed the standard usages from the German educational system. Further laws banned political insignias from Austrian schools and the Ministry of Education even decreed that crucifixes, which had been removed from Austrian classrooms by the Nazi government, be once again displayed as an “Austrian popular religious custom anchored in a more than 1000 years of history.”⁹¹⁷

The Ministry of Education also set about removing from Austria’s schools educators associated with the NSDAP or Nazi ideology. The Second Republic removed members of the Nazi Party and its subsidiary organizations, and prohibited non-Party members who were “politically contaminated” from even assisting other teachers in an auxiliary capacity unless there were no other candidates available. Furthermore, the government excluded high ranking members of the NSDAP, the SD, *Gestapo*, SS, Death’s-Head Corps, *Waffen-SS*, high level SA functionaries, and the bearers of any number of Nazi honors or awards from Austrian higher education. Finally, the Ministry restored teachers who had been removed from their jobs due to Nazi racial or political restrictions, or due to recruitment for military service, to their old positions.⁹¹⁸

The Second Republic did not restrict its efforts to the removal of teachers affiliated

⁹¹⁷*Ibid.*, 59-61; “Verbot aller Propaganda für Schulfremde Zwecke an Schulen,” *Verordnungsblatt* (February 1, 1946): 59; “Aufhebung der ‘Deutschen Normalschrift’: Richtalphabet 1945,” *Verordnungsblatt* (October 1, 1945): 69; “Wiederanbringung der Kreuze in den Schulen,” *Verordnungsblatt* (May 1, 1946): 97.

⁹¹⁸“Übersicht über die Behandlung der Mitglieder und Anwärter der ehemaligen NSDAP an Volks- Haupt-, Mittelschulen und anderen mittleren Lehranstalten,” *Verordnungsblatt* (February 1, 1946): 76-7; “Verwendung politisch belasteter Lehrkräfte,” *Verordnungsblatt* (November 1, 1946): 156-7; “Politische Überprüfung der Hochschüler,” *Verordnungsblatt* (December 15, 1947): 19-21; “Zulassung von Kriegsteilnehmern und Geschädigten zu Lehrbefähigungsprüfungen für Volksschulen,” *Verordnungsblatt*

with National Socialism. The new government also mounted a campaign which resulted in the removal of university professors who had promoted a view of the Austrian past as part of the history of Germany. For example, the government relieved the prominent interwar Austrian historian Heinrich von Srbik of his university teaching duties due to his German nationalist views, and even investigated the staunchly anti-Nazi conservative historian Hugo Hantsch for his commitment to teaching Austrian history in a German context before deciding to allow him to keep his position.⁹¹⁹

The Ministry of Education acknowledged that such measures also represented a symbolic repudiation of Nazism in the educational system in favor of educational policies which were native to Austria. Such measures by themselves however, could not achieve the sort of systematic change that the government desired.⁹²⁰ Thus, while the Ministry of Education did not produce a new set of complete curricula for the Second Republic between 1945 and 1955, it did publish a series of provisional curricula for Austria's schools which sought to augment the democratic content of the First Republican curricula in use and to supplement the insufficient Austrian national consciousness of those curricula. For example, the provisional curriculum for secondary schools published in 1948 essentially reproduced the basic approach of the 1928 curriculum, but supplemented it with material emphasizing Austrian nationhood and the importance of democratic rule. This curriculum, however, admittedly lacked detail, and it merely advised Austrian teachers to produce their own more extensive personal lesson plans to augment the official ones.⁹²¹ Indeed the absence of

(October 1, 1945): 69.

⁹¹⁹Thaler, 130-131.

⁹²⁰“Stundtafel der Mittelschulen,” *Verordnungsblatt* (February 1, 1946): 62-7.

⁹²¹“Maßnahmen für die Erteilung des Unterrichtes an Haupt- und Mittelschulen im Schuljahre 1948/49,” *Verordnungsblatt* (August 1, 1948): 122-8.

completely new and revised curricula during this period seems to have been a source of frustration for many Austrian teachers. In an introduction to a republished edition of the provisional curriculum for Austrian *Mittelschulen* in 1955, the conservative Minister of Education at that time, Heinrich Drimmel, acknowledged these criticisms, but argued that it would have been both impractical and confusing for the Ministry to publish a completely new curriculum before Austria had finished its lengthy task of totally reforming its school system. This Ministry intended this new edition of the provisional curriculum to provide more guidance for instructors than the earlier version, and it incorporated more material on such nationally sensitive topics as German language and history education.⁹²²

From its inception the Second Republic operated with a set of curricula which attempted to redefine the goals of the school system without totally abandoning the content of lesson plans which were twenty years old. The stated goals of such curricula were generally quite lofty, and used bold terms to describe the changes that were to be made in Austrian education. For example, Viktor Fadrus, in the introduction to a published edition of the 1947 *Curriculum for Hauptschulen*, discussed efforts to incorporate the latest pedagogical ideas from the United States and Switzerland, and to make Austrian education more democratic in spirit, emphasizing critical thinking and understanding of opposing viewpoints rather than simple obedience.⁹²³ Similarly, a decree from the ministry of Education from late 1945 spoke of transforming students into mature democrats imbued with a sense of the interconnectedness of all the world's nations.⁹²⁴

⁹²²“Neuverlautbarung der Provisorischen Lehrpläne für die Mittelschulen,” *Verordnungsblatt* (October 15, 1955): 3-5.

⁹²³ Victor Fadrus, *Lehrpläne für die Hauptschulen* (Vienna: Verlag für Jugend und Volk, 1947), viii-ix.

⁹²⁴“Erlaß des Staatsamtes für Volksaufklärung, für Unterricht und Erziehung und für Kulturangelegenheiten vom. 3. September 1945, Zl. 4690/IV/45, betreffend allgemeine Richtlinien für

The new curricula were particularly ambitious when it came to defining the role of history education in the new state. An edition of the provisional curriculum from 1946 for *Hauptschulen*, for example, advocated the utility of historical study in awakening in students a love of the Austrian *Volk* and Fatherland, and an appreciation of Austria's democratic development as well as its cultural achievements.⁹²⁵ Similarly a 1946 ministry decree recommended that, in order to lay the groundwork for students' loyalty to the state, teachers should emphasize Austrian *Bürgerkunde* (civics), geography, flora and fauna, and especially a sense of "Austria as a multinational state, its development, its disintegration and its reconstruction as a democratic *Volksstaat*."⁹²⁶ This new history education was to be more balanced than previous efforts by the Austrian educational system, correcting the prior overemphasis upon political matters in favor of a more organic representation of the intimate linkages between politics and culture in Austria's past. Likewise, Austrian history was to be presented in the context of wider world history, with a focus upon freedom, humanity, reason, and the peaceful resolution of conflict.⁹²⁷ Certainly the Ministry of Education made it amply clear that history education in the Second Republic was to present Austrian history as separate and different from German history. For example, a decree from the ministry in 1945 declared that the goal of Austrian history education "is to awaken the will of the youth to joyfully collaborate in the cultural mission of the Austrian *Volk* and of humanity." This history "should be an Austrian history, that is, a history which does not present Austria as a

Erziehung und Unterricht in den österreichischen Schulen," in *Lehrpläne für die Hauptschulen* (Vienna: Verlag für Jugend und Volk, 1947), xiv.

⁹²⁵ *Provisorische Lehrpläne für die Hauptschulen, Veröffentlicht auf Grund der Verordnung des Bundesministeriums für Unterricht vom 18. Oktober, 1946* (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag für Unterricht, Wissenschaft und Kunst, 1946), 39.

⁹²⁶ "Übergangsmaßnahmen für die fünfte und sechste Hauptschulklasse in Schuljahre 1945/6," *Verordnungsblatt* (February 1, 1946): 58.

mere annex of the German *Reich*, but which rather points out the uniqueness of Austrian life which served to separate Austria from that *Reich* even in the Middle Ages.”⁹²⁸

In practice, however, these curricula were less new than such statements of purpose might suggest. Certainly some revisions significantly changed the interpretative framework and substantive materials used in various subjects. For instance, sections in the geography curricula completely replaced the old presentations of Austria as part of “the area of German settlement” in Europe in favor of a view which emphasized Austria in the context of Europe as a whole and which did not even mention Germany. Similarly, instruction in literature deemphasized selections from German literature in favor of a variety of readings from elsewhere in Europe, Russia, and the United States, and the curricula encouraged the study of living foreign languages in order to foster “cooperation between peoples.”⁹²⁹ On the other hand, however, at least one change in the curriculum represented an almost ridiculously symbolic gesture. In 1946, the Ministry saw fit to rename German language education in schools as education in “the language of instruction.” The subject matter was obviously still

⁹²⁷“Neuverlautbarung der Provisorischen Lehrpläne für die Mittelschulen,” 84.

⁹²⁸“Erlaß des Staatsamtes für Volksaufklärung, für Unterricht und Erziehung und für Kulturangelegenheiten vom. 3. September 1945, Zl. 4690/IV/45, betreffend allgemeine Richtlinien für Erziehung und Unterricht in den österreichischen Schulen,” xx-xxviii.

⁹²⁹*Ibid.*, xv-xvii; “Neuverlautbarung der Provisorischen Lehrpläne für die Mittelschulen,” 89.

German grammar and writing; the Ministry simply refused to call the language which students learned German. This change was emblematic of the thoroughness with which the Ministry of Education declared that Austrians were not Germans.⁹³⁰

⁹³⁰Indeed, some Austrian mocked the Education Ministry's new nomenclature for German language education, calling German "Hurdestani" after the conservative Minister of Education. The government returned to calling the German language by its name in 1955. *Provisorische Lehrpläne für die Hauptschulen, Veröffentlicht auf Grund der Verordnung des Bundesministeriums für Unterricht vom 18. Oktober, 1946* (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag für Unterricht, Wissenschaft und Kunst, 1946), 3; "Änderung der Bezeichnung 'Deutsche Unterrichtssprache' in 'Deutsch,'" *Verordnungsblatt* (October 1, 1955): 218; Bluhm, 133; For a critical view of efforts to cast "Austrian" as a unique language separate from German, see "Oesterreichisches Deutsch. 1," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (September, 1948): 196-7.

The success of the new curricula in achieving a truly new approach to history education was mixed. There were indeed significant alterations to the descriptions of the historical subject matter to be covered. The Ministry wanted to include more material on social and cultural history and to de-emphasize political and military matters in the curricula.⁹³¹ It added, for example, sections to history curricula which discussed the status and progress of the peasant class, and the rise of industrial capitalism. There were also sections which emphasized Austria's democratic development and which portrayed fascism and Nazism as ideologies destructive to world peace. Ultimately, however, these additions did not generally replace any of the old content of the curricula from the First Republic. Rather, the Ministry inserted the new elements into the previous text without changing any of the original substance of the historical narrative. Thus the First Republic's curricula for history education, which had traced Austrian history from Charlemagne's Reich through the Babenberg and Habsburg eras, accompanied by extensive discussion of significant events in the German states, remained largely intact in the Second Republic's curricula. The Second Republic did make some minor alterations, but these changes were usually shifts in the language of the original text to eliminate overt references to the German character of Austrian history. For example, the new curricula now prescribed the study of "urban culture in the Middle Ages," rather than "the German city in the Middle Ages" and no longer

⁹³¹Social Democratic educators during the First Republic had also wanted to include more social and political history, but they were often opposed by conservative pedagogues. After 1945, the conservatives joined the left in this reform effort. See Chapter 2.

contained any references to the Holy Roman Empire as a “German Empire.”⁹³²

⁹³²*Provisorische Lehrpläne für die Hauptschulen*, 47-9. As compared to the text of the 1928 curricula in “Lehrpläne für die Hauptschulen,” *Volkserziehung* (June 1, 1928), 13-14.

The re-publication of the curricula in 1955 made some further additions, such as the inclusion of a new section on the “rivalry between Austria and Prussia” in the early modern period, but even these newer versions also largely replicated the content of the First Republic’s curricula.⁹³³

Thus the various curricula implemented by the Austrian Second Republic represented only a partial break with the past in order to transform the state’s educational policy. The Ministry of Education’s stated goals of emphasizing Austrian independence and democracy and of presenting a distinctive view of the state’s history were indeed reflected in the Republic’s provisional curricula, but only as additions inserted into a curricular framework which was essentially a generation old. The Second Republic would ultimately have to wait until 1962 to see the completion of postwar reforms to its educational system and the publication of completely rewritten curricula.⁹³⁴

iii. The Second Republic’s Pedagogical Community and the Habsburg Past

Given the fact that the actual curricula published during the first decade of the Second Republic set such ambitious goals for Austrian education yet did not provide teachers with much detail concerning how exactly to effect such changes, there was considerable discussion among educators and politicians within the pages of Austria’s various postwar pedagogical journals concerning how best to improve Austrian education within the relatively skeletal curricular framework. Indeed, as we have seen, some versions of the provisional curricula actually encouraged instructors to flesh out the curricular

⁹³³“Neuverlautbarung der Provisorischen Lehrpläne für die Mittelschulen,” 82-86.

⁹³⁴On Austrian education and national identity after 1955, see Utgaard, *Remembering and Forgetting*

material themselves, and to use their own judgement as to how best to inculcate young Austrians with a sense of Austrian national identity and a commitment to democratic government. This postwar discussion concerning the Austrian educational system was extensive, involving all of the major political factions and educators from all over the country, and involved a wide range of topics. Invariably, however, educators and commentators focused on Austria's history and how best to teach it to students so that they might internalize the stronger national and democratic consciousness which Austria's leaders believed was so critical for the state in the postwar era.

One topic which many educators commented on with considerable frequency in the years immediately following World War II were the perceived deficiencies of the educational efforts of Austria's previous governments. Naturally enough, the Nazi educational system which had been in place between 1938 and 1945 provided the initial target for such criticisms. No matter what their political orientation, educators agreed that Nazi education had done considerable damage in Austria. As with every other aspect of life under the National Socialist regime, Nazi education had been fundamentally unfree, inhibiting ideals absolutely crucial to real education such as critical thought, dedication to truth, and objectivity. The Nazis' racial ideals and sense of the Germans as history's "chosen *Volk*" had permeated every facet of education in the Third Reich. Postwar Austrian educators argued that the teleological historical view imposed upon the Austrian educational system by the Nazis had "provincialized" Austria, portraying it as a mere eastern march of the German *Reich*, rather than as the distinctive and cosmopolitan historical nation it had

actually been.⁹³⁵

Many postwar Austrian teachers and educational theorists argued that the educational efforts of earlier governments in Austria had displayed systematic deficiencies as well. Critics on the left usually charged that earlier Austrian education had not been sufficiently democratic. Norbert Janitschek, for example, argued that the problems in Austrian education had not begun under the Nazi regime. Education under the Monarchy in its absolutist, pre-constitutional period had been similarly undemocratic and had attempted to inculcate students with blind patriotism and bonds to the ruling house.⁹³⁶ The Socialist educator Anton Tesarek went further, arguing that even education in the First Republic had lacked any real commitment to democracy.⁹³⁷

Conservatives, on the other hand, frequently critiqued pre-1945 education for failing to distinguish between Austria and Germany. The right-wing historian Ernst Josef Görlich argued that the main problem in Austrian education, the presentation of Austrian history as

⁹³⁵Leopold Zechner, "Geschichtsunterricht im neuen Österreich," *Erziehung und Unterricht* (1946): 23-28; Hans Brachtmann, "Unsere Erziehungs Aufgabe," *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Vienna), August 8, 1945; Ottokar Wanacek, "Demokratische und National sozialistische Erziehung," *Erziehung und Unterricht* (1946): 29-39; Ernst Mayer, "Nationalsozialistische und objektive Geschichtsauffassung," *Erziehung und Unterricht* (1946): 392-402; Oscar Pollak, "Der Kampf gegen den inneren Nazi," *Sozialistische Erziehungsarbeit* 4 (1946): 3-15.

⁹³⁶Norbert Janitschek, "Grundsätzliches zur 'staatsbürgerlichen Bildungsarbeit,'" *Erziehung und Unterricht* (1948): 251.

⁹³⁷Anton Tesarek, "Umriss einer republikanische Schule," *Die Zukunft, Sozialistische Monatschrift für Politik und Kultur* (December, 1946): 20-23.

part of German history, dated back further than 1938 or 1934, to the last decades of the old Monarchy.⁹³⁸

⁹³⁸Ernst Josef Görlich, "Einige Grundaufsetzungen einer österreichischen Geschichtsdarstellung," *Erziehung und Unterricht* (1946): 309-312.

Ernst Mayer concurred, asserting that the previous fifty years of Austrian education had been plagued by the *großdeutsch* “lie” that Austria was a mere part of Germany’s history without any distinctive past of its own, a notion which had led to the diminution of interest in *Österreichertum* as something unique and worthwhile.⁹³⁹

Indeed many educators singled out the previous prevalence of the *großdeutsch* view of Austrian history as a particularly dangerous and persistent misrepresentation which needed to be uprooted from the Second Republic’s educational system. Yet not all commentators felt that previous Austrian governments had been really responsible for this problem. The conservative educator Ludwig Reiter criticized “pro-Prussian, pro-Hohenzollern” historical writing which had consistently inflated the reputations and significance of Frederick “the Great” and other Prussians at the expense of Austria’s own history and achievements. While he acknowledged that some Austrian historians had been complicit in this enterprise, Reiter reserved most of his vitriol for nineteenth-century German nationalist historians who, he argued, had ultimately succeeded in defeating Austria with their ideas when the military might of Austria’s historical antagonists such as Francis I, Suleiman II, Gustavus Adolfus, Louis XIV, and Napoleon had failed.⁹⁴⁰

Friedrich Korger and Heinrich Gassner agreed that Germanist interpretations of Austrian history had largely been imported to Austria during the nineteenth century from Prussia and other German states. Gassner identified such ideals as the product of the Romanticism which had flourished in Germany after the defeat of Napoleon. Ultimately,

⁹³⁹Ernst Mayer, “Nationalsozialistische und objektive Geschichtsauffassung,” *Erziehung und Unterricht* (1946): 396-7; See also Ferdinand Tremel, “Die Aufgaben des Geschichtsunterrichtes im neuen Österreich,” *Unser Weg* 4/5 (April/May 1946): 61-69.

⁹⁴⁰Ludwig Reiter, “Zu neuen Wegen der Geschichtsschreibung,” *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (March, 1946): 26-7.

however, he argued that this *großdeutsch* vision of history amounted to mere mythology which had placed an undue emphasis upon the medieval history of German-speaking Europe while ignoring the early modern developments which had had such a profound impact upon the development of a distinctive Austrian nation.⁹⁴¹

Thus Austrian educators essentially agreed about the importance of correcting the flaws in previous presentations of Austrian history. The conservative postwar Minister of Education Felix Hurdes argued that Austrians must not lose sight of their real history, and that they had already seen the bitter fruits of what happened when they renounced their past and historical inheritance.⁹⁴² Görlich likewise asserted that teachers had to have a clear view of the facts of Austria's distinctive and ancient history in order to educate Austria's youth to appreciate a free, independent and democratic Austria in the present.⁹⁴³ Ernst Mayer put the matter most succinctly, warning that, "The bad history education of today is the disastrous politics of tomorrow!"⁹⁴⁴

Thus no matter who was to blame for the previous absence of democratic and national consciousness in Austrian education, postwar Austrian educators agreed that these problems could only truly be solved through educational reforms emphasizing the necessity of democracy and the uniqueness of Austria's history. The democratic aspect of these prescriptions was relatively straight forward, and involved the use of instruction in civics

⁹⁴¹Friedrich Korger, "Erziehung zu Österreich," *Verordnungsblatt* (November, 1950): 1-7; Heinrich Gassner, "Die Schule im neuen Österreich. Aufgabe, Weg, Ziel," *Verordnungsblatt* (June 1, 1946): 3-4; "Prolegomena zu einer österreichischen Geschichte," *Erziehung und Unterricht* (1948): 1-19.

⁹⁴²Felix Hurdes, "Und Österreich lebt doch . . .," in *Offizielle Festschrift zur 950-Jahr-Feier Österreichs* ed. Österreich-Institut (Vienna: Brücken Verlag, 1946), 6.

⁹⁴³Ernst Josef Görlich, "Einige Grundaufsetzungen einer österreichischen Geschichtsdarstellung," *Erziehung und Unterricht* (1946): 312.

⁹⁴⁴Ernst Mayer, "Nationalsozialistische und objektive Geschichtsauffassung," *Erziehung und Unterricht* (1946): 398.

and history to inculcate students with a commitment to democracy. Such instruction was to focus not just upon the basic mechanics of democratic rule in the Second Republic, but also to teach the inner values of democracy, such as love of the Austrian Fatherland, understanding, toleration, cooperation, and respect for the opinions of others.⁹⁴⁵ Friedrich Korger argued that students had to be taught that even the worst democracy was better than the best dictatorship, and that individual responsibility for state politics, the willingness to stand up for one's beliefs, and the spirit of compromise were ideals valued by the Second Republic in a way they had not been under previous authoritarian regimes. He also argued that under previous Austrian governments, teachers had been afraid to voice any political opinions. In the new Republic teachers could feel free to express their views, so long as they placed a commitment to the spirit of democracy above their party politics, and did not attempt to force students to accept a particular political ideology.⁹⁴⁶ Heinrich Gassner and Viktor Fadrus further avowed that such democratic efforts could not be restricted merely to the study of civics and constitutional rule in the contemporary Republic, but also had to trace the development of democracy from the struggles of humanity under the oppressive state forms in antiquity and the Middle Ages up to the rise of modern democratic politics, society, and economy. Such democratic historical narratives likewise needed to draw a sharp contrast between the evils of Nazism and the virtues of democratic rule.⁹⁴⁷

In order to further such democratic ends, the educators of the Second Republic

⁹⁴⁵Werner Tschulik, "Staatsbürgerkunde und demokratische Erziehung," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (February-March, 1951): 47; Mayer, "Nationalsozialistische und objektive Geschichtsauffassung," 400-402; Franz Kramer, "Erziehung im demokratischen Staat," *Unser Weg* (November 1945): 29-40.

⁹⁴⁶Korger, "Staatsbürgerliche Erziehung," *Erziehung und Unterricht* (1948): 460-467; "Erziehung zu Österreich," 5-7.

⁹⁴⁷Heinrich Gassner and Viktor Fadrus, "Grundlinien eines Erziehungsplan für die österreichischen Schulen," *Verordnungsblatt* 11 (1947): 5.

founded a new pedagogical journal, *Erziehung und Unterricht*, which began publication in late 1946. This periodical was a continuation of the earlier journals *Der Neue Weg* and *Die Quelle*, which had been published during the First Republic but which had subsequently been coopted by the Austrian corporatist and Nazi regimes in turn. The editors of *Erziehung und Unterricht* argued that journals in the First Republic had been so devoted to the non-ideological discussion of pedagogy that they had left Austrian teachers insufficiently prepared to deal with anti-democratic philosophies. The editors thus conceived of their journal as an unabashedly ideological enterprise to correct such deficiencies. Its editors argued that pedagogy depended heavily upon *Weltanschauung* and was necessarily a political topic. *Erziehung und Unterricht* would not shy away from political matters and would welcome a variety of opinions from representatives of all of Austria's political parties so long as their contributions displayed a dedication to democracy, truth, fairness, toleration, and international cooperation.⁹⁴⁸

In addition to education promoting democratic government, many postwar educators also recommended teaching young Austrians about the vital interconnectedness of the nations of the world as an antidote to the sort of nationalist chauvinism which had featured so prominently in Nazi education. Karl Wiesinger argued that efforts to instill in students a love of the Austrian *Volk* should also include instruction directed toward an appreciation of the cultures and achievements of other *Völker* and their bonds with Austria as well. Such an education would constitute a rejection of racial hatred and chauvinism, values which had

⁹⁴⁸ Albert Krassnigg and Anton Simonic, "Ziel und Weg," *Erziehung und Unterricht* (1946): 1-5. It is worth noting that despite the new periodical's professed commitment to democratic values, one of its first postwar editors, Anton Simonic, had been involved in the efforts of the *Ständestaat* to transform the Austrian educational system along authoritarian lines between 1933 and 1938. See Chapter 4 for more details.

always been inimical to the character of the Austrian *Volk*.⁹⁴⁹ Other educators recommended that education about world citizenship be accomplished by focusing not just upon Austrian history, literature, and geography, but also upon the cultures of all of the world's peoples. The Second Republic's educators identified the role of the newly created United Nations and its charter in fostering peace and cooperation in the postwar world as an important aspect of global education, and some educational theorists even recommended that the training of Austria's teachers be conducted under the auspices of the UN.⁹⁵⁰

Even teachers closely affiliated with political parties agreed with one another concerning the desirability of educational efforts which highlighted Austria's vital connections with the other nations of the world, although they often disagreed about the specific justifications for such efforts. For example, the conservative educator Heinrich Peter argued that education about world citizenship should focus on the inevitable economic and cultural bonds between *Völker*, but avowed that internationalism which denied love of the Fatherland and Austrian patriotism was as bad as exaggerated nationalism. He identified the universalism of the Roman Catholic Church, the Red Cross, and the UN as healthy varieties of internationalism which had to be balanced with the positive ideals of patriotism and Austrian nationalism.⁹⁵¹ The Socialist leader Oscar Pollak likewise agreed that one of the highest callings of Austrian education was to emphasize Austria's bonds with the rest of the world. He argued, however, that internationalist education should be presented along

⁹⁴⁹Karl Wiesinger, "Nicht Völkerverhetzung, sondern Völkerversöhnung," *Erziehung und Unterricht* (1947): 143-145.

⁹⁵⁰"Staatsbürgerliche Erziehung," *Verordnungsblatt* (August 1, 1949): 149-153; Gassner and Fadrus, "Grundlinien eines Erziehungsplan für die österreichischen Schulen," 6; Renatus Fürstenberg, "Die Schule im Dienste der Völkerverständigung," *Unser Weg* (March/April, 1947): 5-6; Heinrich Peter, "Unterricht und Erziehung als Bekenntnis zum Vaterlande." *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (October, 1949), 233.

Socialist lines to the secure support for a just international distribution of economic goods and capital.⁹⁵²

Education about democratic values and the concomitant interconnection between *Völker* was undeniably important to most postwar Austrian educational theorists, but they discussed the necessity of instilling a sense of Austrian national consciousness in students with just as much urgency. Again, Austrian educators all agreed that such national consciousness had been absent from the pedagogical efforts of previous governments, but they strongly disagreed about how to inculcate students with a sense of Austrian distinctiveness. Educators and theorists from the conservative camp frequently argued that the antidote to the German nationalism which had done so much damage in Austria's recent past was simply Austrian nationalism. Görlich and Peter proclaimed that a sense of the Austrian Fatherland and loyalty to the Austrian *Volk* were necessary values in Austrian education. Students should be firmly grounded in the ideals of *Österreichertum* and Austrian patriotism, although they were careful to distinguish between the cosmopolitan Austrian nationalism which they advocated and the aggressive, chauvinistic *großdeutsch* nationalism that had nearly destroyed Austria.⁹⁵³ Other Austrian educators, particularly those on the left, were more circumspect about advocating any variety of nationalism, however, even as they highlighted the existence the Austrian nation. The textbook author Friedrich Korger asserted that the idea that there was a necessary linkage between notions of *Volk*, nation, and state was an outmoded concept which had shown its destructive character

⁹⁵¹Peter, "Unterricht und Erziehung als Bekenntnis zum Vaterlande," 233.

⁹⁵²Oscar Pollack, "Der Kampf gegen den inneren Nazi," 5-6.

⁹⁵³Peter, "Unterricht und Erziehung als Bekenntnis zum Vaterlande," 233; Görlich, "Österreichischen Staatsbewußtsein," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (1955): 296-7; "Erziehung zu Österreich," 2-3.

during the Second World War.⁹⁵⁴ Likewise, Socialist commentators such as Erich Körner argued that even the sort of Austrian nationalism advocated by the right was a danger to Austrian independence.⁹⁵⁵

There were even rare instances in which Austrian educational theorists seemed to allow that Austria, as nationally distinctive as it supposedly was, was still in some sense part of the wider German community of Europe. In a 1955 article in the conservative journal *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte*, Karl Schalberger supported the cultivation of a non-chauvinistic form of Austrian nationalism, but at the same time he argued that the Austrian nation had descended from the medieval German *Volk*, and even in the postwar period there remained a wider German cultural community to which Austria belonged. Schalberger noted that Austria's own cultural output was indistinguishable from the larger culture of Germandom, and that respect for the German cultural community was a necessary part of Austrian patriotism.⁹⁵⁶ Such statements were extraordinarily rare in mainstream pedagogical discussion, but as we have seen, were not so different from the postwar Austrian president Karl Renner's comments concerning the enduring nature of Austria's linguistic and cultural bonds with Germany.⁹⁵⁷

Indeed, there seems to have been some confusion concerning the meaning of concepts such as "*Volk*" and "nation" in postwar Austria. In a 1951 article, Klemens Zens recounted a dialogue from an Austrian secondary school classroom on the topic of "the state." The students and the instructor discussed what notions such as "state," "race,"

⁹⁵⁴Korger, "Staatsbürgerliche Erziehung," 460-467.

⁹⁵⁵Erich Körner, "Gibt es eine österreichische Nation?" *Die Zukunft* (March, 1949): 74-76.

⁹⁵⁶Karl Schalberger, "Wo ist das Vaterland?" *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (1955): 228-31.

⁹⁵⁷Karl Renner, "Am Ausgangspunkt der Zukunft. Rede zur Neuhundertfünfzigjahrfeier Österreichs am 22. Oktober 1946," 55-6.

“*Volk*,” and “nation” might mean, and puzzled over the extent to which they corresponded to one another. The instructor did not resolve any of these questions for the students, but rather left them as matters for further reflection. Zens himself seemed to think that such discussions were important for postwar Austrian students, but he offered no firmer answers to the questions raised in the dialogue than the unnamed instructor.⁹⁵⁸

Thus, although there was nearly unanimous support among Austrian educators for the inclusion of instruction concerning an Austrian national consciousness in Austria’s postwar educational efforts, they often disagreed with one another considerably concerning what Austrian national identity meant. No matter what their specific definition of Austrian national identity, however, they all generally agreed that a new view of Austria’s history was vitally necessary in order to bolster a postwar sense of Austrian distinctiveness.

Since postwar educators felt that one of the most serious problems with previous visions of Austria’s past had involved presenting that past as too narrowly entwined with the threads of German history, they usually argued that such deficiencies could best be corrected by portraying Austrian history in a more appropriately multinational context. Ernst Mayer and Heinrich Gassner argued that the true context for Austria’s history was a Danubian one, given the longtime association between the territory of the contemporary Austrian republic with the other territories on the Danube. They admitted that Austria’s ties to German Europe certainly could not be ignored, but argued that Austria and Vienna had traditionally been much more oriented toward the *Donauraum* than they had toward the northern German

⁹⁵⁸Klemens Zens, “‘Der Staat.’ Möglichkeiten des freien Unterrichtsgespräches auf der Oberstufe.” *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (February-March, 1951): 47-50.

states.⁹⁵⁹

Other commentators argued that Austria had historically been far more of a European entity than a German one, and hence the nation's past was best to be understood in the context of the history of the continent as a whole. Franz Joachim asserted that Austria's culture had derived its distinctiveness from such broad European roots as Greek philosophy and art, Jewish religion, and Roman law and political organization, all of which had been brought to Austria by the Roman Catholic Church. The strength of the Church and Catholic piety in Austria ultimately served to distinguish its culture from that of the predominantly Protestant German nation.⁹⁶⁰ Other educational theorists such as Gassner and Leopold Zechner did not emphasize the role of Catholicism in Austria to the degree that the conservative Joachim did, but largely agreed with his assessment that Austria had traditionally been a supranational European entity which had little in common with notions of a historical German "nation."⁹⁶¹

Indeed, some educators argued that the vital European context of Austrian history was necessary to understand Austria's continuing mission to work as a force for international peace and understanding, and to serve as a cultural bridge between East and West. This notion of Austria's European "mission," which had been so frequently discussed throughout Austria's recent history, thus also appeared in a pedagogical context as well. Postwar Austrian educators did not endorse this Austrian mission unequivocally,

⁹⁵⁹Ernst Mayer, "Nationalsozialistische und objektive Geschichtsauffassung," *Erziehung und Unterricht* (1946): 392-402; Heinrich Gassner, "Prolegomena zu einer österreichischen Geschichte," *Erziehung und Unterricht* (1948): 11.

⁹⁶⁰Franz Joachim, "Der Geschichtsunterricht im neuen Österreich," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (March, 1949): 39-41.

⁹⁶¹Gassner, "Prolegomena zu einer österreichischen Geschichte," 7-9; Leopold Zechner, "Geschichtsunterricht im neuen Österreich," *Erziehung und Unterricht* (1946): 23-28; "Staatsbürgerliche

however. Fischer warned against the return to any notions of a “German mission” for Austria which had been used to such evil ends by the Nazis, and Korger avowed that a sense of quasi-religious nationalistic mission for any people inevitably resulted in bloodshed. For many other pedagogical theorists, however, the notion of an Austrian calling to work for peace in Europe seemed innocuous enough and fit with the European character of Austrian history that many theorists proposed⁹⁶²

Postwar Austrian educators obviously had to grapple with the question of the degree to which Austrian education should emphasize continuity between the contemporary Austrian Republic and the Habsburg Monarchy which had preceded it. A view of Austrian history which emphasized the distinctive multinational character of the old Monarchy was certainly useful to the efforts of Austrian teachers to trace the development of a distinctive Austrian national character which differentiated Austria from Germany. At the same time, however, the monarchical and even absolutist nature of Habsburg Austria seemed to be at odds with the sort of democratic values which the Second Republic’s educational system so fervently sought to emphasize.

Ultimately Austrian educators could not agree about the extent to which the Monarchy’s history should be emphasized. The Socialist educational theorist Anton Tesarek advocated completely disavowing Austria’s Habsburg past in history education in favor of a historical narrative which emphasized the founding of the first Republic in 1918

Erziehung,” *Verordnungsblatt* (August 1, 1949): 149-150.

⁹⁶²Gassner, “Prolegomena zu einer österreichischen Geschichte, “18-19; Viktor Fadrus, “Das einheitlich Schulbuchwerk für alle Schulen in Österreich,” *Verordnungsblatt* (June 1, 1946): 8; Anton Simonic, “Die Aufgaben des Lehrbilders,” *Erziehung und Unterricht* (1946): 73-78; Korger, “Erziehung zu Österreich,” 4; Fischer, “Österreich, wie es war,” *Unser Weg* 9/10 (November/December 1946): 16-17.

as the true beginning of Austria's history.⁹⁶³ Gassner and Fadrus also downplayed continuity between the old Monarchy and modern Austria, noting that while memories of Austria's past continued to have importance, 1918 and even the final demise of pro-*Anschluß* sentiment after 1945 represented more logical starting points for the study of such a truly new entity as the Austrian Republic.⁹⁶⁴

Most Austrian educational theorists recognized that such views were not particularly practical when it came to instilling students with a sense of Austrian national consciousness, however. Ultimately a longer view of Austria's past was indispensable in terms of grounding Austria's nationhood. Some educators compromised by emphasizing the historical unity of the Alpine territories within the Monarchy as the legacy for the modern Austrian Republic, rather than focusing on the Monarchy as a whole. For example, in a discussion of the pedagogical use of illustrations, Rudolf Kroyer presented a map of Austria which listed when the provinces which now comprised the Second Republic joined the Habsburg state, implying a continuity between the Monarchy and modern Austria, but emphasizing only Alpine Austria.⁹⁶⁵

Other Austrian educational thinkers, however, did not shy away from presenting the entire multinational Habsburg state as the historical foundation for modern Austria. Conservative educators were of course particularly willing to discuss contemporary Austria's roots in the Monarchy. Ernst Josef Görlich presented the Austria of his era as the result of the gradual union of the Alpine provinces dating back to the pre-Roman kingdom

⁹⁶³Anton Tesarek, "Erziehung zur Demokratie, zum Republikanismus, zum Pacifismus. Gedanken zu einem politischen Problem," *Die Zukunft* (May, 1946): 18.

⁹⁶⁴Heinrich Gassner and Viktor Fadrus, "Grundlinien eines Erziehungsplan für die österreichischen Schulen," *Verordnungsblatt* 11 (1947): 1-8.

⁹⁶⁵Rudolf Kroyer, "Behandlung des Merkstoffs im Geschichtsunterricht," *Österreichische Pädagogische*

of Norica, but he argued that it had been the Babenbergs and especially the Habsburgs who had really advanced such unity, and he emphasized the importance of Alpine Austria's historical ties to other regions of the Monarchy. Indeed, as we have seen, even Ernst Fischer, the Communist intellectual and first Minister of Education of the Second Republic, had been quite willing to ground his unabashedly Marxist understanding of Austrian national identity in a national character which had been the fruit of the larger Habsburg state, and had recommended that Austrian history education disseminate this view to students.⁹⁶⁶

The government of the Second Republic itself explicitly endorsed such a vision of Austria's past with its official celebration of the 950th anniversary of Austria's name in autumn of 1946. The celebration focused upon the first recorded usage of the name "*Ostarrichi*" in 996, and aimed to "strengthen the Austrian state idea after years of foreign domination," and to "proclaim the political and cultural independence of the Austrian *Volk*."⁹⁶⁷ Many Austrian educators rallied around the celebration, presenting the "*Ostarrichi*" name as the counterpoint to the anachronistic usage of the label "*Ostmark*" for Austria which had been foisted upon the state by Prussian and Nazi historical propagandists who had aimed to subsume Austrian history into that of Germany. They portrayed modern Austria as the culmination of nearly a millennium of continuous historical development, a development which obviously included the Habsburg Monarchy's centuries of rule of

Warte (April, 1951): 95-8.

⁹⁶⁶Ernst Josef Görlich, "Ewiges Österreich. 3. Der Staat," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (December, 1948): 271-4; Ernst Fischer, "Österreich, wie es war," *Unser Weg* 9/10 (November/December 1946): 3-17.

⁹⁶⁷*Offizielle Festschrift zur 950-Jahr-Feier Österreichs*, 3.

Alpine Austria.⁹⁶⁸

Of course, given the extensive disagreement among Austria's major political parties concerning the exact role of the Habsburg dynasty itself in Austria's history, there naturally was little widespread agreement among Austrian pedagogical thinkers concerning how best to depict the Habsburgs' contribution to modern Austria's history. Representatives of Austria's major political ideologies such as Görlich, Fischer, and Tesarek were also active in the Second Republic's pedagogical discussions, and generally expressed what could be regarded as the "party line" of their respective political camps regarding the Habsburgs. The conservatives portrayed the dynasty as the creators of a benevolent multinational Monarchy, while the two parties of the left presented a more negative view of the imperial house as an obstacle to democracy and freedom in the admittedly felicitous supranational state which it had founded.⁹⁶⁹

Less ideologically committed pedagogical thinkers presented a more balanced view of the dynasty. They praised the Habsburgs for helping create the Austrian nation and for forging the ties between German-speakers and Slavs and Magyars in the Danubian region

⁹⁶⁸Erhard Dzimirsky, "950 Jahre Österreich: Österreich als Staat," *Unser Weg* 7/9 (September/October 1946): 24-39; J. Dobretsberger, "Hinter dem Hass steht das Grauen und der Tod—die Güte allein schafft neues Leben. Worte zur 950-Jahr-Feier Österreichs," *Unser Weg* (February 1, 1947): 2-8; Ludwig Reiter, "'Ostmark' oder Ostarichi? (Zu Feier '950 Jahre Österreich')," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (September, 1946): 116-7; Görlich, "Einige Grundaufsetzungen einer österreichischen Geschichtsdarstellung," *Erziehung und Unterricht* (1946): 309-312; Josef Kallus, "Kulturbild aus der Zeit der Entstehung des Names 'Ostarrichi,'" *Erziehung und Unterricht* (September-October 1949): 473-5.

⁹⁶⁹For the basic conservative view of the Habsburgs as expressed in educational journals, see Görlich, "Einige Grundaufsetzungen einer österreichischen Geschichtsdarstellung," 309-312; Franz Joachim, "Der Geschichtsunterricht im neuen Österreich," 39-41; Richard Meister, "Die grosstaten des alten Österreich auf dem Gebiet des Bildungswesens," *Erziehung und Unterricht* (1946): 200-211; for the Communists, see Fischer, "Österreich, wie es war," 3-17; for the Socialists, see Tesarek, "Erziehung zur Demokratie, zum Republikanismus, zum Pacifismus. Gedanken zu einem politischen Problem," 18; *idem*, "Des 13. März des Jahres 1848 (Eine Gedenkfeier für Arbeiterkinder)," *Sozialistische Erziehungsarbeit* (1947): 1-18. See Chapter 6 for a more complete discussion of the representation of the Habsburg past by the Second Republic's political parties.

which had largely been responsible for the prosperity and cultural progress for all of their Monarchy's national groups, including the Austrian *Volk*.⁹⁷⁰ Yet at the same time, such educators did not shrink from criticizing the sometimes oppressive actions of the dynasty over the course of Austrian history. These criticisms generally focused upon the widespread censorship and legal restrictions in Austria under Metternich, or upon the opposition of the dynasty to legitimate demands by the Austrian people during the revolution of 1848. Likewise, educators frequently criticized the Monarchy's government for its unwillingness to modify the state's administrative arrangements during the last years of its history in order to create a more equitable situation for the oppressed nationalities.⁹⁷¹ The postwar pedagogical community's emphasis on the Monarchy's multinational character, and its frequent criticisms of the dynasty's failure to recognize the national rights of their subjects were new features in Austrian pedagogical discourse. Earlier critiques of the Monarchy's oppression of the German *Volk* or discussions of the civilizing role of German culture in the East had disappeared in favor of a new appreciation for the Habsburg Monarchy as a flawed but admirable supranational community of nations.

Despite their acknowledgment of the importance of the dynasty to Austria's history, several educators also argued that previous presentations of the nation's past had vastly overrated the importance of military and dynastic history. While the Habsburg monarchs and the leaders of their armies had certainly had a significant influence upon the life of Austria's inhabitants, to focus upon those subjects to exclusion of other vital matters such as

⁹⁷⁰Gassner, "Die Schule im neuen Österreichisch. Aufgabe, Weg, Ziel," 3-4; "Prolegomena zu einer österreichischen Geschichte," 14-15; Ludwig Battista, "Hundert Jahre Unterrichtsministerium," *Erziehung und Unterricht* (1948): 237; Max Kössler, "Geschichtliches Wissen als wertvolle Hilfe beim Bau des neuen Österreich," *Unser Weg* (April, 1948): 36-40.

⁹⁷¹Franz Hillebrandt, "1848," *Unser Weg* (March, 1948): 2-13; Ferdinand Tremel, "1848," *Unser Weg*

cultural, economic, and social development was to do the Austrian *Volk* a disservice. Such an overemphasis upon dynastic and military matters was, in the eyes of these pedagogues, also at least partially responsible for the recent nationalistic conflicts between the Great Powers of Europe as well.⁹⁷² Conservative educators of course did not share this criticism of dynastic history, despite their newfound emphasis upon peace, democracy and internationalism.

Thus, the postwar Austrian pedagogical community had considerable enthusiasm for the Second Republic's avowed goals of reforming the state's educational system in order to instill a commitment to democracy and a sense of Austrian identity in Austria's youth. Austrian educators likewise generally agreed that a portrayal of Austria's past which eschewed previous Germanist and anti-democratic misconceptions was a profoundly important tool to generate consciousness of Austrian distinctiveness in students. The consensus concerning such matters broke down, however, when it came to the actual details of such an enterprise. Postwar pedagogical theorists disagreed frequently concerning the sort of Austrian identity which was most desirable for the educational system, and were at odds with one another concerning how to portray the dynastic element of Austria's past. So, as with the debate concerning the relationship between the Second Republic and the Habsburg past among Austria's political parties, Austrian educators agreed upon the broad goals of reform within the educational system, but they could not arrive at any actual consensus about how exactly to accomplish those aims.

(March, 1948): 13-23; Gassner, "Prolegomena zu einer österreichischen Geschichte," 16.

⁹⁷²J. C. Maderner, "Ein neues Geschichtslehrbuch," *Erziehung und Unterricht* (1948): 189-191; Renatus Fürstenberg, "Die Schule im Dienste der Völkerverständigung," *Erziehung und Unterricht* (1948): 156-7; Isolde Emich, "Kulturgeschichte statt kriegsgeschichte," *Erziehung und Unterricht* (January-February 1949): 27-8; Walther Winternitz, "Kriegsspielzeug auf dem Gabentisch?" *Unser Weg* (November-

iv. The Second Republic's History Textbooks and the Habsburg Past

Ultimately the success of the Second Republic at reforming its educational system in order to inculcate students with democratic and national consciousness must be judged not by the content of postwar pedagogical debates or of relatively vague official curricula, but rather according to what happened in the classroom. The history and civics textbooks used by the Second Republic thus reveal how postwar educational system produced a new program of instruction. Given the lack of a total overhaul of the state's postwar curricula, and the failure of Austria's educators to come to complete consensus concerning how best to effect changes in the character of Austrian history education, it is perhaps unsurprising that the textbooks and readers produced by the Second Republic failed to achieve all of the ambitious goals set by Austria's postwar leaders. The new textbooks changed rather slowly in the aftermath of the Second World War, and ultimately remained remarkably similar to the instructional materials which had been used by the First Republic and the *Ständestaat*. The postwar texts did ultimately show a significant shift toward an emphasis upon the importance of democracy in the postwar era, and presented a view of Austria's recent Nazi past as the subjugation of Austria by a foreign invaders. In the end, however, such textbooks frequently did not present the sort of vision of Austria's deeper Habsburg past which decoupled Austrian history from that of Germany that was advocated by the Second Republic's leaders.

From the very beginning of the postwar era, Austria's new government recognized the absolute necessity of producing new educational texts. The books used in Austria's

schools under the Nazis had of course glorified National Socialism and presented Austrian history as a mere appendage of the history of the wider German *Volk*.⁹⁷³ As the one of the Second Republic's Ministers of Education, Felix Hurdes, noted, denazifying the textbooks used in Austrian classrooms was just as important for the Second Republic as cleansing the educational laws of the Nazi spirit.⁹⁷⁴ There was a consensus among Austrian educators, however, that merely denazifying textbooks would not be sufficient to truly establish an independent, democratic Austria. Viktor Fadrus argued that the state's new textbooks had to be oriented toward inculcating students with Austrian state and cultural consciousness, democratic thought, and social equality. Anton Tesarek similarly argued that the textbooks of previous governments had not been sufficiently democratic, and had perhaps contributed to Austria's descent into fascism.⁹⁷⁵

Educational theorists and policy makers thus wanted the production of new history textbooks to be a special priority for the Second Republic. As J. C. Maderner noted, other subjects might be able to use the old, pre-1934 textbooks, but Austrian history education certainly could not continue to utilize such materials. The old history texts were too *großdeutsch* in orientation, and paid homage to dynastic monarchs, even those who were undeserving of the obedience of their subjects. The recent failings of the Austrian *Volk* were in part due to a failure of historical judgement, so history texts had to be totally rewritten.⁹⁷⁶ Karl Heinz Dworzak similarly argued that Austrian history textbooks had to break sharply with previous representations of the past, emphasizing a critical view of Austria's anti-

⁹⁷³See Chapter 5.

⁹⁷⁴Hurdes, "Zur Aufgabe der katholischen Lehrerschaft beim Neuaufbau des österreichischen Schulwesens," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (March, 1946): 3-6.

⁹⁷⁵Fadrus, "Das einheitlich Schulbuchwerk für alle Schulen in Österreich," 9-13; Tesarek, "Umrisse einer republikanische Schule," 21.

democratic and German nationalist failings. Only through a frank discussion of the faults and failures of Austrians in the past could the postwar republic help Austrian students embrace a new democratic and patriotic Austrian state.⁹⁷⁷ In 1950 the conservative educator Karl Johannes Grauer even proposed international textbooks be produced cooperatively by multiple states.⁹⁷⁸

In order to enact this sweeping textbook reform, the Second Republic founded the *Kommission für Lehrbücher und Schulgestalt* in late 1945 to oversee the editing, publication and advertising of all texts, picture books, maps, films, and other educational materials used in Austrian schools.⁹⁷⁹ The government charged the commission with ensuring that such materials' content conformed to postwar Austria's democratic and national ideals, and gave it the power to approve all such materials. The Ministry of Education did make allowances, however, for the use of "classic" readings or books in conjunction with the state curricula, and these materials required no special approval. In a similar manner, texts on relatively noncontroversial subjects such as mathematics, the natural sciences, and vocational training also did not require the committee's close attention.⁹⁸⁰

Early in the Second Republic's history, however, Viktor Fadrus noted that the production of new educational texts was proceeding slowly. In response to requests by educators from Austria's various provinces that they be allowed to produce individualized

⁹⁷⁶J. C. Maderner, "Ein neues Geschichtslehrbuch," 189-191.

⁹⁷⁷Karl Heinz Dworcak, "Entgiftung der Geschichtsbücher," *Erziehung und Unterricht* (1948): 608-610.

⁹⁷⁸Nothing ever came of such ideas, however. Karl Johannes Grauer, "Probleme der Geschichtsdarstellung," *Österreichische Pädagogische Warte* (May-June, 1951): 129.

⁹⁷⁹The Allied occupiers of Austria also exercised significant oversight of Austrian textbooks, especially between 1945 and 1948. Utgaard, "From *Blümchenkaffee* to *Wiener Melange*: Schools, Identity, and the Birth of the 'Austria-as-Victim' Myth, 1945-55," *Austrian History Yearbook* 30 (1999): 134-135.

⁹⁸⁰"Herausgabe, Begutachtung und Zulassung von Schulbüchern, Jugendschriften und Lehrbehelfen," *Verordnungsblatt* (October, 1945): 69-71.

textbooks to suit the needs of the particular regions, Fadrus argued that Austria's educational system still had a long way to go in order to return its textbooks to the high quality which they had displayed before the Nazi period. Paper was in short supply, and the government needed Allied financial and material assistance to produce any new texts. As matters stood in 1946, Fadrus asserted that to simply even produce workable textbooks on the national level required all of Austria's best pedagogical minds to work together.⁹⁸¹ Indeed, getting all of the state's teachers to use the new texts was apparently a problem throughout the early years of the Second Republic, as in 1950 the Ministry of Education, in response to reports of the use of non-approved textbooks, had to reiterate that only texts approved after 1945 could be used in Austrian schools.⁹⁸²

The Second Republic did ultimately produce a number of new history textbooks, which more or less presented new views of Austria's past. These textbooks did incorporate more cultural and social history, and consequently less military and dynastic history, than before. *Aus alter und neuer Zeit*, a history textbook for primary schools produced in late 1945, for example, contained a section on "Heroes of Humanity" which discussed figures from the sciences, scholarship, and the arts as well as everyday citizens, and made absolutely no mention of military or political icons. War, when it was discussed, appeared as an evil which afflicted humanity.⁹⁸³ Similarly, a pedagogical manual for teachers in Austrian primary schools presented material for instructors to use which drew in equal

⁹⁸¹Viktor Fadrus, "Das einheitlich Schulbuchwerk für alle Schulen in Österreich," *Verordnungsblatt* (June 1, 1946): 9-13.

⁹⁸²"Mißbräuchliche Verwendung von nicht approbierten Lehrbüchern," *Verordnungsblatt* (October 15, 1950): 203.

⁹⁸³*Aus alter und neuer Zeit*, vol. 1 (Vienna: Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky, Ed Hölzel, Österreichischer Bundesverlag, Verlag für Jugend und Volk, 1945), 16-17.

measures from social, cultural, economic, and political history.⁹⁸⁴ Ludwig Stöger's 1951 history textbook for secondary schools also presented a mixture of military, political, and cultural matters, discussing martial heroes such as Leopold V von Babenberg and Andreas Hofer alongside more peaceful heroes such as researchers, discoverers, inventors, and artists.⁹⁸⁵ Ultimately, however, most history texts either inserted small vignettes concerning Austria's social and cultural development into their texts, or simply retained the political and military focus which the states history textbooks had presented since the Habsburg era. Even Stöger's account ultimately had far more political and military content than it had concerning cultural and social matters.⁹⁸⁶

Postwar textbooks also largely retained the view of Austria as an area of Germanic settlement characteristic of earlier texts. As we have seen, not all postwar Austrians themselves agreed on whether the Austrian *Volk* was first and foremost a Germanic people or not, but a sizable group of postwar commentators from both the conservative and Communist camps had argued vigorously that Austrians represented an ethnic admixture rather than a purely Germanic lineage. The postwar textbooks rarely reflected such notions. Heinrich Kotz's history text for *Hauptschulen* portrayed Austrians as the descendants of tenth-century Germanic Bavarian settlers who had overwhelmed the region's previous Slavic inhabitants. Stöger presented an even more blatantly Germanist orientation explicitly

⁹⁸⁴Ferdinand Prillinger, *Methodik für Volksschulen*, vol. 2, *Heimatkunde, Geographie und Geschichte* (Salzburg: Verlag Salzburger Kultur Vereinigung, 1949), 77-89.

⁹⁸⁵Ludwig Stöger, *Geschichte in Tafelbildern und Zusammenfassungen* (Wels: Verlagsbuchhandlung Leitner, 1951), 22-23.

⁹⁸⁶*Ibid.*, 22-23; see also Franz Heilsberg and Friedrich Korger, *Allgemeine Geschichte der Neuzeit, von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zur Gegenwart*, vol. 4, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte für die Oberstufe der Mittelschulen*. (Vienna: Verlag Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky, Verlag Ed. Hölzel, Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1955); Heinrich Kotz, *Geschichte für Hauptschulen*, vols. 1-2 (Innsbruck: Verlagsanstalt Tyrolia, 1945).

avowing that Austrians were part of the German *Volk*, even though they had traditionally had their own separate state and “other missions” than the rest of their national brethren.⁹⁸⁷ Textbooks which demonstrated a willingness to explicitly break with such Germanist interpretations of Austrian descent, such as Robert Endres’ 1950 civics manual, which proclaimed that Austrians represented a racial mixture of Illyrians, Celts, Bavarians, Franks, Slavs, Avars, and Magyars, were quite uncommon during the early Second Republic.⁹⁸⁸

Moreover, some postwar textbooks did not even reflect the postwar consensus on the importance of using “*Ostarrichi*” or “*Österreich*” instead of “*Ostmark*” to describe Austria. Both Endres and Prillinger made a note of the preferred usage and denounced “*Ostmark*” as an anachronistically *großdeutsch* label, but Kotz and Stöger used both labels interchangeably without noting any sort preference one way or the other.⁹⁸⁹

At least some texts did attempt to emphasize Austrian distinctiveness, however. For example, *Aus alter und neuer Zeit* described an Austrian *Volk* which spoke “*österreichisch*,” presenting the Austrian dialect of German as a distinctive language.⁹⁹⁰ Even Stöger allowed that the Germans of Austria had their own special mission to protect the West from Eastern invasions while spreading Western culture eastward in times of peace. Franz Heilsberg and Friedrich Korger’s textbook for upper level students in Austrian *Mittelschulen* presented a similar sense of Austrian mission which saw Austrians spreading Viennese and Alpine German culture to areas of Slavic and Magyar settlement.⁹⁹¹ Likewise, Endres described the

⁹⁸⁷Kotz, 64-71; Stöger, 20-21.

⁹⁸⁸Robert Endres, *Österreichische Staatsbürgerkunde*, 6th ed. (Vienna: Verlag für Jugend und Volk, 1950), 34-37.

⁹⁸⁹Prillinger, 77; Endres, “Österreich geht nicht unter,” in *Der Österreicher hat ein Vaterland*, ed. Florian Gröll (Vienna: Verlag für Jugend und Volk, 1955), 15; Kotz, 5-7; Stöger, 30.

⁹⁹⁰*Aus alter und neuer Zeit*, 11-13.

⁹⁹¹Stöger, 30, Heilsberg and Korger, 96.

distinctive Austrian national penchant for humaneness, toleration, and freedom, and he advised young Austrian citizens to preserve and build upon Austria's millenia-old culture and political essence (*Dasein*).⁹⁹²

Ultimately, however, the most serious failing which all of the Second Republic's textbooks displayed was a tendency to repeat the same sort of Germanocentric historical narrative characteristic of previous texts. Their focus was clearly on Austria's Habsburg past, and upon the various monarchs and leaders who had guided that state, but they made little effort to portray the old Monarchy as anything other than a particularly large German dynastic state which had just happened to contain numerous other non-German national groups. When the empire's non-German-speaking nationalities appeared in a significant way in these narratives, it was usually only in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and then generally only because they contributed to the demise of the Habsburg state.⁹⁹³

While postwar textbooks did not denounce the dynasty as anti-German oppressors, as Nazi texts had done, neither did they differentiate much between the history of the Habsburg state and the history of the German states. Indeed most of the Second Republic's history texts contained the same interweaving of the history of the Habsburg imperial house with the history of the wider domain of Germany which had featured prominently in historical narratives in textbooks during the First Republic, the *Ständestaat*, and even the last decades of the Monarchy itself. Thus, alongside the discussions of the expansion's of Vienna's regional influence, the Turkish wars, and *Biedermeier* culture, postwar Austrian history textbooks frequently discussed German culture during the Middle Ages, Germany

⁹⁹²Endres, 115.

⁹⁹³See Heilsberg and Korger, 89-98, 105-107; Stöger, 207; Hermann Gsteu, *Geschichte Österreichs*

after the Thirty Years War, and the wars of German unification.⁹⁹⁴ Only the history textbooks produced just before the signing the Austrian State Treaty in 1955, such as that of Heilsberg and Korger, showed even the beginnings of an attempt truly to differentiate between Austrian history and German history.⁹⁹⁵

These textbooks, however, frequently portrayed the main figures from the Habsburg dynasty itself in a positive light. They praised such medieval and early modern monarchs as Rudolf von Habsburg, Rudolf IV, “the Founder,” and Maximilian I as dynastic figures who exemplified the best aspects of knightly culture, and who had encouraged the growth of a powerful Central European state through their judicious combination of military might, cunning diplomacy, and cultural patronage.⁹⁹⁶ Postwar textbooks similarly lauded seventeenth and eighteenth-century leaders such as Eugene of Savoy, Maria Theresa and Joseph II as individuals who helped lay the foundations for a strong, modern Austrian state through their wise military, administrative, and cultural policies. Ultimately only the architects of the restrictive *Vormärz*-era policies such as Metternich and Franz I emerged as targets of significant criticism from postwar authors, and even then the textbooks frequently balanced those criticisms with an appreciative view of the era’s *Biedermeier* culture.⁹⁹⁷ Postwar textbook authors often did not analyze the Monarchy’s end in much detail, but even those who did, did not generally blame the dynasty itself for the state’s demise. Stöger, Heilsberg, and Korger all attributed the collapse of the Habsburg state to a combination of national unrest on the part of the Monarchy’s Slavic subjects and the devastation wrought by

(Innsbruck and Vienna: Tyrolia Verlag, 1947), 395.

⁹⁹⁴See for example Kotz, 7, 26-27, 89, 92-94; Stöger, 36, 44-45.

⁹⁹⁵For example, Heilberg and Korger contrast the Habsburgs’ multinational empire not only with czarist Russia and Ottoman Turkey, but also with the nationalistic German states. Heilsberg and Korger, 26.

⁹⁹⁶Kotz, 29-31, 37, 69; Stöger, 126-127, 131, 136-137.

the First World War. Stöger at least did ultimately blame the outbreak and duration of that conflict upon “Prussian Germany,” one of the rare anti-German statements in his narrative.⁹⁹⁸

Thus postwar textbooks did portray the Habsburg dynasty and its representatives positively. Ultimately, however, such depictions did not mark any sort of dramatic departure from the descriptions of Austria’s dynastic past in older textbooks. Educational materials from the last years of the old Monarchy, the First Republic, and the *Ständestaat* had always focused upon the dynastic aspects of Austrian history.⁹⁹⁹ Only Nazi textbooks had really mounted a concerted effort to portray the Habsburgs in a negative manner and to diminish the value of their historical achievements.¹⁰⁰⁰ What was really missing from most of the Second Republic’s textbooks was a new interpretive framework which portrayed the Habsburg past as unique, and fundamentally different from the German past.

One area where almost all of the Second Republic’s history and civics texts did directly reflect the postwar debate on Austrian national identity was in their portrayal of Austria’s more recent past. Almost all of these textbooks did thoroughly differentiate between Austria and Nazi Germany. The Nazi regime in Austria invariably appeared in postwar textbooks as a foreign imposition upon Austria established through invasion and conquest. In the pages of these texts the Nazis emerge as the guilty parties in the Second World War and the Holocaust, events for which Austrians themselves bore no responsibility.

⁹⁹⁷Stöger, 45-46.

⁹⁹⁸Stöger, 203-207; Heilsberg and Korger, 107.

⁹⁹⁹See for example Gustav, Rusch, Alois Herdegen and Franz Tiechl, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte* (Vienna: Verlag von Pichlers Witwe & Sohn, 1911); Karl Czerwenka Alfred Bohmann, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte für die Unterstufe der Mittelschulen* (Vienna and Leipzig: Österreichischer Bundesverlag für Unterricht, Wissenschaft und Kunst, 1930); Andreas Zeehe and Adam Schuh, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte für die oberen Klassen der Mittelschulen*. (Vienna: Verlag Ed. Hölzel, 1930); Wilhelm Schier, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte für österreichische Hauptschulen* (Vienna and Leipzig: Österreichischer Bundesverlag für Unterricht, Wissenschaft und Kunst, 1937).

Thus even if history textbooks ultimately did little to bolster a historical sense of national identity in postwar Austria, they did at least reflect the convenient mythology of the Second Republic that Austria had been an innocent victim of Hitler's regime between 1938 and 1945.¹⁰⁰¹

History textbooks in the Second Republic may not have presented a clear vision of Austria's historical distinctiveness, but postwar readers and anthologies did a somewhat better job. Such collections were obviously easier to produce than completely new historical narratives, and the editors of such works were able to select readings which emphasized the importance of certain people, cultural products, or trends in Austria's past. For example, one reader for Austrian primary schools from 1950 contained a selection by Friedrich Schiller about Rudolf von Habsburg emphasizing the knightly values which he brought to the throne, a brief text concerning role of St. Stephan's cathedral as a focal point for the thoroughly Austrian city of Vienna, and an essay about the importance of music in Austria's distinctive culture.¹⁰⁰² A 1949 reader for secondary schools edited by Friedrich Korger and Josef Lehl contained even more material which emphasized Austria's unique history and distinguished culture. It included works by such notable Austrians as Franz Grillparzer, Hugo von Hofsmantal, Anton Wildgans, Leopold Kunschak, and Karl Renner, and its contents ranged from patriotic poems such as the Second Republic's state anthem to

¹⁰⁰⁰See for example Dietrich Klaages, *Geschichte als Nationalpolitische Erziehung* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Moritz Diensterweg, 1939).

¹⁰⁰¹*Aus alter und neuer Zeit*, 15; Endres, 41; Heilsberg and Korger, 149-169. Note that Heilsberg and Korger produced the only narrative history text between 1945 and 1955 which directly dealt with the Nazi era in Austrian history. The other texts are citizenship textbooks or collections of brief historical descriptions for younger students. For a detailed discussion of the Nazi past in the Second Republic's textbooks, see Utgaard, *Remembering and Forgetting Nazism*, 25-70.

¹⁰⁰²It is worth noting that the essay on music claimed such figures as Gluck, Beethoven, and Brahms for Austria's cultural heritage, despite their German origins. *Heimat und weite Welt: Lesestoffe für die 7. und*

depictions of important historical figures like Maria Theresa, Eugene of Savoy, and Andreas Hofer to democratic documents such as the text of the proclamation of the Second Republic in 1945.¹⁰⁰³ Similarly, two books published in 1946 presented brief biographical sketches of a number of notable Austrians, including Wildgans, Freud, Otto Wagner, Gustav Mahler, Nestroy, and Mozart, in order to bolster the national pride of students. The selections in these two works were fairly predictable, although they did also include biographies of less well known figures such as the nineteenth-century pacifist leader Berta von Suttner, the twentieth-century playwright Max Reinhardt, and the turn-of-the-century painter Franz von Defregger, as well as a description of the contributions of Austrian researchers of Indian culture.¹⁰⁰⁴

Indeed, the Ministry of Education itself became involved in the selection of notable figures for students to look to with pride through its organization of periodic official celebrations. In 1955 for example the state celebrated the lives and achievements of the baroque architect Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach, the nineteenth-century author Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach, and the classical composer Mozart, all of whom it presented as examples of characteristic and genuine *Österreichertum*.¹⁰⁰⁵ Interestingly however, the early Second Republic also celebrated the cultural importance of figures from outside of Austria

8. *Schulstufe der österreichischen Volksschulen* (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1950), 27-30; 215-219.

¹⁰⁰³Friedrich Korger, and Josef Lehl, eds. *Lesebuch für Mittelschulen*, vol. 1 (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag für Unterricht, Wissenschaft und Kunst, 1949), 3, 153-157, 198-203, 230-233, 303-309, 335.

¹⁰⁰⁴Alfons Übelhör and Richard Wolf, *Grosse Österreicher* (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1946); Alfons Übelhör and Richard Wolf, *Grosse Österreicher II* (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1946).

¹⁰⁰⁵“Gedenktage; Fischer von Erlach, Mozart, Stifter, Edner Eschenbach.” *Verordnungsblatt* (December 1, 1955): 249-50.

such as Hans Christian Anderson, Tolstoy, Bach, Schilling, and Goethe.¹⁰⁰⁶ The Ministry of Education did not describe any of the latter three figures as in any sense nationally German, and indeed in the case of Goethe, it explicitly portrayed him as a figure of global importance rather than the cultural hero of just one nation. Still the selection of such clearly German figures does seem unusual given the dedication to differentiating between Austria and Germany professed by Austria's postwar leaders.

Ultimately, however, such efforts to highlight key figures or aspects of Austria's past in isolation from an overarching historical narrative represented only superficial attempts at instilling Austrian students with a stronger Austrian national identity.¹⁰⁰⁷ Similar efforts, after all, had also been made by the *Ständestaat*, which had proclaimed Austrian distinctiveness and patriotism within the context of a German conception of Austrian national identity. Laudatory descriptions of the character of Maria Theresa and paeans to Austria's natural beauty amounted to weak substitutes for a thoroughly revised vision of Austria's past in the Second Republic's efforts to lay the groundwork for a durable sense of Austrian nationhood. Austria's postwar leaders and educators clearly desired to provide the Republic's students with such a systematic revision of Austria's history, but by 1955 they had only barely begun to realize this goal.

¹⁰⁰⁶ "Goethe-Jahr 1949, Veranstaltung in den Schulen Österreichs," *Verordnungsblatt* (February 1, 1949): 13-5; "Gedenkfeier für J. S. Bach," *Verordnungsblatt* (March 15, 1950): 67; "125. Geburtstag Leo Tolstojs," *Verordnungsblatt* (August 1, 1953): 124; "150. Geburtstag von Hans Christian Andersen, 150. Todestag Friedrich Schiller, Schulfeiern," *Verordnungsblatt* (April 1, 1955): 53-4.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Peter Utgaard, in examining the Second Republic's educational policy and the "Austria-as-victim myth," places undue weight upon such presentations of Austrian patriotism, culture and *Heimat* in transforming Austrian education. A closer examination of the historical narratives presented to postwar Austrian students indicates that the actual changes in educational policy were less sweeping than he allows. Utgaard, "From *Blümchenkaffee* to *Wiener Melange*: Schools, Identity, and the Birth of the

iv. The Changing Face of Austrian National Identity

The Second Republic's efforts at transforming its educational system met with only partial success. The Ministry of Education, under various leaders, explicitly dedicated itself to the goals of instilling students with a commitment to democracy and a sense of Austrian national identity, and such aims were reflected in the state's official curricula. Both the state's leaders and its pedagogical community agreed that a thorough reform of the study of Austrian history, which stressed the distinctiveness of the state's long past and which clearly differentiated and even drew a contrast between Austria and Germany was vitally necessary to such an enterprise. In the end, however, such a real transformation of the state's educational presentation of the Habsburg past did not occur. In both the state's curricula and its textbooks there were some substantive changes, but for the most part any alterations came in the form of additions to existing educational materials. The curricula and the textbooks by and large maintained the narrative of the state's past that had been presented by previous Austrian educational systems, and postwar history textbooks in particular frequently preserved a *großdeutsch* aesthetic which was utterly out of step with the rhetoric coming from Austria's political leaders. The Austrian educator Friedrich Korger had warned in a 1950 article that vague platitudes concerning the special qualities of the Austrian homeland and its culture would be insufficient to ground a true sense of loyalty to the Austrian state in students.¹⁰⁰⁸ Yet at times it seemed that such relatively empty gestures were all that the Second Republic offered students in terms of a new vision of Austria's past. Austrian leaders and educators certainly advocated the sort of intensively political education

'Austria-as-Victim' Myth, 1945-55," 127-58.

¹⁰⁰⁸Korger, "Erziehung zu Österreich," 2.

which Korger had recommended, but while they agreed on very basic goals for Austrian education, they could reach no consensus concerning the details, and they often lacked the resources to fully implement them. Indeed perhaps the only total success of the postwar Austrian educational system was in its presentation of the Nazi past as a foreign conquest for which Austria itself bore no responsibility.

Indeed, there are certainly clear indications that the leaders of the Second Republic did not achieve the total transformation of the national outlook of its students which they desired. In a 1956 public opinion survey reprinted in Georg Wagner's *Österreich Zweite Republik*, forty-six percent of Austrians surveyed still maintained that Austrians were part of the German *Volk*, compared to forty-nine percent who claimed that Austrians were a people of their own.¹⁰⁰⁹ The persistence of such *großdeutsch* notions as well as the small but continuing support for the German nationalist VdU are evidence that the efforts of the postwar leaders and educators to radically transform Austrian national identity were far from universally successful.

Ultimately, however, we should not be too quick to devalue the accomplishments of the postwar Austrians in changing the tone of the dialogue concerning Austrian national identity. It is important to remember how prevalent statements which identified Austrians as part of the German *Volk* were between 1918 and 1945. During that period German conceptions of Austrian national identity were much more prominent than Austrian ones. By the end of 1955, the Second Republic had witnessed a substantial reversal in the public discussion concerning Austrian national identity. Now it was the Austrianist point of view which predominated and the Germanist one which represented a minority opinion. A

universal transformation of Austrian public opinion concerning national identity was certainly not a realistic expectation, but the actual extent to which such opinion did shift after 1945 was impressive. And the efforts of postwar Austrians to transform national opinions in fact continued beyond the end of Austria's occupation. The signing of the Austrian State Treaty in 1955 officially enshrined Austria's separation from Germany in a binding legal document and brought the period of intense postwar discussion concerning Austrian national identity and the Habsburg past to a close, but the Second Republic's efforts to promote an Austrianist identity continued in succeeding decades with incrementally increasing success.¹⁰¹⁰

Ultimately, the Second Republic's leaders, intellectuals and educators did not contribute any new ideas to the Austrian debate on national identity. Rather, they recapitulated arguments which had in fact been presented continuously by various individuals and groups since 1918. The Second Republic's attempt to recast Austrian national identity thus represented an amplification of previous Austrianist ideas from Austria's public sphere accompanied by efforts to delegitimize the Germanist discourse which had been so dominant prior to 1945. The arguments presented by Austria's postwar leaders, thinkers and pedagogues invariably focused most upon the Habsburg past, and portrayed that past in a variety of different ways, but always with the aim of creating a sharp contrast between Austria's national character and that of Germany. The need of Austria's leaders to deny their nation's responsibility for the crimes of the Nazi state and to suppress a painful and potentially socially disruptive public discussion in Austria about such matters

¹⁰⁰⁹Wagner, 1432.

¹⁰¹⁰For a discussion of these efforts beyond 1955, see Utgaard, *Remembering and Forgetting Nazism*, 71-

undoubtedly played an important role in their efforts to support Austrian nationhood. We cannot discount, however, the simple fact that *großdeutsch* sentiments had born catastrophic fruit for Austria during the Nazi era. The undeniably horrific results of the Nazi *Anschluß* certainly provided ample justification for Austrians to abandon their German nationalism. Ultimately, then, it was the tremendous physical devastation and the terrifying moral lapses which accompanied the Second World War which added a new urgency and momentum to Austrianist visions of the Habsburg past, while simultaneously delegitimizing the Germanist views which had been so fervently advocated by the Nazis. Thus the decisive influence of the experience of the Second World War upon the Austrian debate concerning the Austrian nation and its Habsburg past stands as powerful evidence of the essential variability and fluidity of notions of national identity.

Conclusion: The Long Shadow of the Habsburg Past in Austria

The conclusion of the Austrian State Treaty and the withdrawal of Allied troops from Austria in 1955 marked the beginning of a new era of stability in Austrian public rhetoric concerning Austrian national identity. Scholars who have written on the emergence of this new consensus regarding Austrian identity have focused on the fact that Austrian political leaders minimized Austrian complicity for the crimes of the Third Reich and thereby articulated a vision of Austrian nationhood which denied Austrian Germanness.¹⁰¹¹ There is certainly good reason for this scholarly emphasis. As we have seen, the Second Republic's politicians, intellectuals and educators all declared their newfound belief in Austria's distinctive nationhood as part of a conscious project to portray the 1938 *Anschluss* as a "foreign invasion" which had joined Austria with the Third Reich against its will. While the new national rhetoric of Second Republic's elites cannot be regarded as a totally cynical enterprise solely designed to evade Austria's just share of the responsibility for the crimes of Third Reich, it is undeniable that Austria stood to gain a great deal of practical benefit by portraying itself as an entity separate from the German nation which had led Europe into a catastrophic war and genocide. It is indeed true that no other factor was as important to the de-legitimization of Germanist conceptions of Austrian national identity and the emergence of a broadly based and forcefully articulated vision of a unique Austrian nationhood after

¹⁰¹¹See for example Utgaard, Peter Thaler, *The Ambivalence of Identity: the Austrian Experience of Nation_building in a Modern Society* (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2001). See also Anton Pelinka, *Austria: Out of the Shadow of the Past*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1998), and essays in Bischof and Pelinka, eds., *Austrian Historical Memory and National Identity* (New Brunswick

1945 than the Austrian experience of Nazi rule and the Second World War.

In acknowledging the decisive importance of the Second Republic's efforts to minimize Austrian complicity in the crimes of the Hitler regime in the debate over Austrian national identity, however, we must not lose sight of the fact that this Austrian debate did not begin in 1945, and that it encompassed other issues besides Austria's Nazi past. As this study has demonstrated, the debate over Austrian national identity had deeper roots. This national discussion in the Austrian public sphere had begun during the nineteenth century, but it gained a new urgency after 1918 as Austria's leaders were forced to define Austria's place in the world apart from the multinational, dynastic Monarchy with which the destiny of their land had been inextricably linked for so many centuries. The Austrian debate on national identity between 1918 and 1955 encompassed deeply important, existential questions for Austrians: Who were the Austrian people? Where in Europe did they belong? What did the future hold for them? It was simply impossible for any Austrian leader, intellectual, or educator to offer any answers to these queries without reference to the Habsburg Monarchy which had only so recently collapsed, and which had helped provide the necessary answers to these questions before 1918. Indeed, as we have seen, any effort by Austria's post-Habsburg elites to discuss whether or not Austrians were part of the German *Volk* or whether or not the existence of an independent Austrian state was desirable always entailed a concomitant effort to grapple with the meaning, historical function, and legacy of the old Habsburg Monarchy. Simply put, Austrians could not make sense of their

and London: Transaction Publishers, 1997).

present circumstances or possible future path without first coming to grips with their past.

While the Nazi past may have been an overwhelmingly important issue for Austrians after 1945, the Habsburg past was the most important component of the Austrian debate concerning national identity during the tumultuous period between 1918 and 1955.

Any scholarly discussion of Austrian national identity during this era cannot help but note that Austrian national identity was a “constructed” phenomenon. The intellectual, political, and educational leaders of the Austrian state between 1918 and 1955 all recognized the importance of national identity, and they all consciously and openly worked to influence opinions on Austrian nationhood. These Austrian elites were not content just to make public statements regarding Austrian identity, but they also attempted to use state educational policy as a tool to mold the national opinions of the next generation of Austrian citizens.

The constructed character of Austrian national identity is revealed even more clearly by the fact that during this period multiple views regarding the national status of Austrians were advanced and disseminated by different political parties and governments. During the era of the First Republic between 1918 and 1933, most of Austria’s political parties argued that Austrians were a part of the German *Volk* whose destiny lay in *Anschluß* with a great-German state, an aspiration which was frustrated by the victors of the First World War. This point of view was articulated even more vigorously by the Nazi regime which forcibly absorbed Austria into the Third Reich between 1938 and 1945, a fact underscored by the Nazi government’s active efforts to eradicate any sense of Austrian distinctiveness in the Austrian *Gaue*. Of course, after the restoration of Austrian independence in 1945, the leaders of the Second Republic presented a vision of Austrian national identity which denied

any national kinship between Austrians and Germans, in part to minimize Austrian guilt for the war and to secure the withdrawal of Allied forces as quickly as possible. Between these two extremes lay the authoritarian *Ständestaat* of the mid-1930s, which proclaimed Austrian membership in the German nation, but which also sought to inspire a sense of pride in Austria's distinctive culture and history, and a loyalty to an independent Austrian state in its citizens, in no small part to try and keep the National Socialists both inside and outside of Austria from seizing power. Each of these visions of Austrian national identity— whether Germanist, Austrianist, or of Austria as the “second German state”— had roots in Austria's history and culture and represented a potentially viable resolution of Austria's crisis of national identity of 1918. The course and ultimate resolution of the Austrian debate on national identity in 1955 depended far more on the shifting political circumstances which faced the Austrian state during this era than it did on the inherent correctness of any one of the proposed views on Austrian national identity.

Thus, the formulation of the modern notion of Austrian national identity generally serves to confirm the theories of nationalism proposed by scholars such as Eric Hobsbawm and Benedict Anderson, who argue that nationhood is a property which is constructed by the work of social and political elites rather than some inherent property of a people.¹⁰¹² At the same time, however, we ought not lose sight of the fact that to say that a thing is “constructed” is to imply that it was constructed out of certain materials. Such was certainly the case with Austrian national identity. Austria's leaders between 1918 and 1955 used the same “raw materials” in their national projects which scholars and historians have identified

¹⁰¹²Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism: Programme, Myth, Reality*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread*

as the basic components of nationhood since the dawn of the era of modern nationalism in the nineteenth century: language, culture, religion, ethnicity and history.

The main difference between the various visions of Austrian national identity proposed by the territory's ideological factions and governments involved the manner in which these components of nationhood were put together. Proponents of an Austrianist view of Austrian national identity were unable to make use of language or ethnicity to define the Austrian nation because those characteristics served to tie Austrians to other German-speakers. In a similar manner, the religion of the majority of Austrians, Roman Catholicism, was a faith which Austrians shared with other Germans, as well as other European national groups. Thus, most Austrianists were forced to look to Austria's history as part of the Habsburg Monarchy, separate from Europe's other German states, and to the distinctive culture which Habsburg Austria produced, as the most important aspects of Austrian nationhood. Austrian proponents of a Germanist national identity, on the other hand, were also forced to explain the meaning of the Habsburg past in Austria, even if only to characterize that past as a national aberration which had served to keep Austrian Germans apart from the ethnically, culturally, and linguistically defined German nation. The *Ständestaat's* more moderate view of Austria as nationally German but also as a land which was culturally and historically distinctive enough to merit its own state likewise drew heavily upon the memory of the Habsburg past.

Opinions regarding Austrian national identity varied along a spectrum which stretched from a view of Austrians as Germans to a vision of Austrians as a unique national group, and which encompassed intermediate formulations of Austrian nationhood between

these two extremes. In order to make arguments for any one of these opinions, Austrian political, intellectual, and educational leaders had to assemble the building blocks of Austrian identity in different ways, alternately emphasizing or de-emphasizing various elements in order to make their case. Without exception, all of these Austrian leaders were forced to confront and define the meaning of Austria's Habsburg past. So, we should not be too quick to assume that the constructed nature of Austrian identity meant that such an identity was simply invented by the territory's leaders. As the historian of nationalism Anthony Smith notes, national identity always has some concrete anchor in a perceived community of kinship.¹⁰¹³ Austrian national identity after 1918 could and did vary, but only within limits. Those limits left enough room for Austrians to embrace either a Germanist or an Austrianist conception of national identity, or indeed even some intermediate formulation. The circumstances with which Austria was confronted between 1918 and 1955, as *Anschluss* with Germany was in turn prohibited, threatened, forcibly achieved, and just as forcibly undone by the great powers of Europe, dictated the shifting terms of this debate regarding national identity, and were in large part responsible for the form of the debate's ultimate resolution.

Another critical element which helped to define the course of the Austrian debate over national identity was political ideology. All of Austria's major political camps after 1918 possessed an ideological framework which served to define how each viewed Austria's past. These political ideologies changed somewhat as did Austria's circumstances, and so too did their views of the past. For example, the Austrian conservative camp in 1918 was guided by an ideology which was religious, traditionalist, and suspicious of democratic rule.

¹⁰¹³Anthony Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, (New York: B. Blackwell, 1987).

Their initial vision of Austria's Habsburg past held that the old Monarchy had been a benevolent institution which had fostered the material, cultural, and spiritual progress of the German *Volk*. After the regrettable collapse of the Habsburgs' admirable dynastic state, however, most conservatives in the early First Republic believed that Austria's future lay in a union with a great-German state. Once it became clear that the Entente powers would not relax their stance against *Anschluß*, the conservative faction made its peace with Austrian independence and by the late 1920s increasingly emphasized their positive narrative of the Habsburg past as the basis of a resurgent Austrian patriotism. By the 1930s, the waxing threat of a National Socialist takeover of the Austrian state, whether from within Austria or under the auspices the Nazi government in Germany after 1933, helped inspire the conservative Austrian right to dismantle the democratic apparatus of the First Republic and to replace it with an authoritarian government. The leaders of the *Ständestaat* proclaimed both Austrian Germanness, and Austrian uniqueness and independence, which they supported through their portrayal of the old Monarchy as the defender of both Austrian tradition and the German *Volk* as a whole. After the feared Nazi takeover indeed occurred, the ideals of Austrian conservatism were driven underground, only to emerge considerably altered after the restoration of Austrian independence in 1945. Postwar conservatives replaced their previous hostility toward democracy and liberalism with a newly minted devotion to democracy. In a similar manner, they amplified their previous commitment to Austrian patriotism with a full blown sense of Austrian nationalism. Their positive narrative of Austria's Habsburg past remained, but conservatives after 1945 emphasized the multinational character of both the dynastic state and indeed the Austrian people themselves

to a far greater degree than they had before.

The major party of the Austrian left experienced a similar transformation of its ideology, and hence its views regarding Austrian history. Unlike the conservatives, commitment to democracy was never a problem for the major faction of the political left, the Social Democrats. They always fervently supported republican rule, and their vision of the Habsburg past reflected that fact. They celebrated the foundation of the First Republic as the victory of the forces of progress in Austrian history over the reaction and oppression which the Habsburgs' dynastic state had always represented. They also believed that Austrians were part of the German *Volk*, and unlike the conservatives, they did not back away from that view before 1945. The Social Democrats held that the Habsburgs had oppressed all of the constituent nations of their Empire, including the German *Volk*. At the same time, however, the Social Democrats denounced chauvinistic nationalism, and argued that German unity could only be achieved as part of the movement of the working classes of all nations toward peace, democracy, social justice and international cooperation. They viewed both the corporatist dictatorship of the mid-1930s and the Nazi regime which ruled Austria between 1938 and 1945 as variations on the same reactionary and predatory themes which they associated with the Habsburgs. The reversal of the National Socialist *Anschluss* in 1945 and the new realities of the Cold War forced the Social Democrats to abandon their previous dedication to German national unity. Their newfound and comparatively weak sense of Austrian nationhood required the Socialists to modify their narrative regarding the Habsburg past. While they still denounced the dynastic government itself as noxious and oppressive, they now celebrated the multinational community which the Habsburgs had

helped to create in a manner that they never had before 1945.

The other faction of the Austrian left, the Communist Party, which really only achieved genuine political significance during the 1930s and 1940s, presented a narrative of the Habsburg past which in many ways resembled that of the Social Democrats. The Communists decried the oppressive character of the Habsburg government, and portrayed the Austrian working class as the true heroes of Austrian history. Yet the Communists used this view of Austria's past to make an argument concerning Austrian national identity which was the exact opposite of that of the Socialists before 1945. The Communists argued that Austria was a nation separate from Germany, and they vehemently opposed any arguments in favor a union with the German state. The political and national ideals of the Austrian Communists did not change to a large degree after 1945, a fact that is unsurprising given their ideological dependence upon their patrons in the Soviet Union. While the Communists were committed to democracy in at least a rhetorical sense and had a firmer dedication to Austrian nationhood than their Social Democratic rivals did, the first decade of the Second Republic saw the precipitous decline of Communist electoral strength in Austria. The Austrian voters experienced first hand the emptiness of the Soviet Union's professed commitment to democracy and social justice during the Soviet occupation of eastern Austria between 1945 and 1955, and they consequently rejected the Austrian Communist Party at the ballot box despite its Austrian nationalist bona fides.

One further ideological group which found itself thoroughly de-legitimized in the early Second Republic was the Austrian German nationalist faction. Since 1918, this group had argued most loudly in favor of *Anschluss* and Austrian Germanness. While the early

years of the German nationalist faction were marked by a lack of unifying political principles, the members of this faction tended to portray the Habsburg Monarchy in a negative light. The most generous German nationalists simply remarked that while Austria's Habsburg past might have had some positive aspects, after its collapse in 1918, its example was simply no longer relevant to the Germans of Austria, whose destiny lay with the rest of the *Volk*. The more hostile German nationalist commentators were far more critical of the old Monarchy, and decried it as an institution that had historically worked against German interests in order to bolster the dynasty's political power. Ultimately, it was this latter point of view which won out as the German nationalists of Austria became increasingly radicalized as a result of the depression of the late 1920s and the First Republic's inability to achieve *Anschluss*. By the 1930s the Austrian National Socialist Party had managed to attract the largest part of these Austrian German nationalists, and after the Nazi seizure of power in Austria in 1938, the Party's virulently nationalistic and anti-Habsburg interpretation of history became the dominant historical narrative in the Austrian lands. After the end of the Hitler regime in 1945, however, German nationalism in Austria became taboo as the leaders of the Second Republic attempted to secure the withdrawal of the Allied forces by portraying Austria as the "first victim" of Nazi aggression. The Union of Independents represented the political rebirth of the old German nationalist camp under liberal auspices, but it failed to win much support from Austrian voters due to its all too recent Nazi tendencies, and its statements regarding Austria's Habsburg past were rare and quite timid when they occurred at all.

While almost all of Austria's political factions were forced to transform their

national and political ideals in order to respond to Austria's changing circumstances between 1918 and 1955, what is remarkable is how much continuity their respective narratives of Austrian history displayed throughout this period. These narratives certainly changed between 1918 and 1955, but those changes were a matter of nuance rather than wholesale revision. For example, the conservative view of the Habsburg Monarchy as the benevolent guardian of Austrian tradition after 1945 was certainly recognizable as the same basic narrative proffered by conservatives in 1918, despite the ÖVP's newfound abandonment of German nationalism and its embrace of republican rule. The Austrian conservative camp simply emphasized historical interpretations that had always been present within their ranks, albeit as minority views, while pushing other ideals which had once been dominant in its historical rhetoric into the background. Thus, individuals within the conservative camp such as Oscar Schmitz or Ernst Karl Winter, who had seemed like voices in the wilderness before 1938 due to their unusually strong sense of Austrian nationhood, saw their views adopted by the mainstream of Austrian conservatism after 1945.

In the same way, the Social Democrats' characterization of the old Monarchy as a reactionary and oppressive institution, which had deservedly been vanquished by the Austrian working class, remained fundamentally unchanged between 1918 and 1955. What did change was the degree to which the Party after 1945 emphasized the socialist principles of internationalism, cosmopolitanism, and cooperation between *Völker*, which had always been present in its historical and national rhetoric, while at the same time de-emphasizing its previous focus upon German national unity. The broad thrust of their historical narrative remained unchanged, while the manner in which they used that narrative to support Austrian

independence and nationhood shifted significantly.

Those factions which were unable or unwilling to adapt their historical and national ideals to fit the Second Republic's new circumstances, the Communists and the Austrian German nationalists, quickly found themselves without influence in Austrian politics after 1945. Again, it bears repeating that, no matter what position a given ideological faction took regarding Austrian national identity, all of these groups were forced to present some interpretation of Austria's Habsburg past in order to make their arguments. As the arguments concerning Austrian identity changed, so too did the manner in which the ideological camps used their narratives regarding the Habsburg past. The necessity of confronting the Habsburg past in order to make statements regarding Austrian nationhood never changed, however, nor did the basic outline of the historical narratives that each of Austria's major political groups presented throughout this era.

Educational policy provided the practical context in which various governments and parties tried to disseminate their views regarding Austrian nationhood and Austrian history to the public. All governments and parties regarded education, especially history education, as a vitally important aspect of their efforts to influence public opinion on such matters. The success of attempts to mold the content of Austrian education in order to reflect dominant views regarding Austrian national identity and the Habsburg past varied according to the extent to which the Austrian government in power was able to establish a consensus regarding those topics, as well as according to the amount of time available to undertake the educational transformation. As dictatorships, both the *Ständestaat* and the Nazi regime were able to establish ideological conformity in education more effectively than either of the

Austrian Republics simply because they were able to quash dissent. The governments of the First and Second Republics had a much more difficult time building an educational consensus through democratic means. Even the *Ständestaat* and the government of the Third Reich, however, found themselves unable to completely transform education in Austria, given the short amount of time, five and seven years, respectively, which they had in order to accomplish the task. The Second Republic, which was ultimately the most successful post-Habsburg Austrian government in terms of translating its national ideals into educational policy, had only just begun to reform the content of Austrian state education in order to reflect its Austrianist view of national identity by the time of Allied troops withdrew in 1955. The Second Republic's major political parties had accomplished the task of transforming their own national and historical ideals by that time, but it would not be until after 1955 that those views truly dominated in Austrian classrooms.¹⁰¹⁴ Other Austrian governments simply never had the luxury of time to effect similar ideological overhauls of the state educational system.

We may conclude then that while public political rhetoric regarding national identity and the interpretation of the past changed rapidly in order to reflect new circumstances in Austria between 1918 and 1955, it took far longer to transform state educational institutions in order to reflect those ideological changes. It was one thing to transform the national and historical opinions of political, intellectual, and pedagogical elites; it was another, far more laborious task entirely, to change the direction of the state's educational bureaucracy from the Ministry level down to individual textbooks, teachers, and classrooms. That was a

¹⁰¹⁴For information of Austrian state education and national identity after 1955, see Peter Utgaard, *Remembering And Forgetting Nazism: Education, National Identity and the Victim Myth in Postwar*

process which required decades to succeed.

Still, the Austrian case does provide evidence of the constructed nature of national identity. Thanks to the committed work of the leaders of the Second Republic, and, to a lesser extent, to Austrianist patriots working before 1945, the state of national public opinion changed from majority support for a German Austrian identity in 1919 to a near majority in favor of a unique Austrian national identity in 1956.¹⁰¹⁵ By 1992 one public opinion survey in Austria revealed that more than 70 percent of those surveyed believed that Austrians constituted a distinct national group.¹⁰¹⁶ Given the absence of actual public opinion surveys between 1918 and 1955, and the actual suppression of free debate under the *Ständestaat* and Nazi governments between 1933 and 1945, we can never know the precise nature of public opinion on Austrian national identity for the entire period covered by this study. We do, however, have data points for the Austrian public's views concerning their identity for the beginning and end of this era, and this evidence strongly suggests a dramatic shift in these views. It may have taken longer for this transformation of Austrian national sentiment to be completed, but the initial change in direction certainly had been decisively accomplished by 1955. The role of Austria's political leaders, intellectuals, and educators in shaping the debate on Austrian national identity seems to have been a decisive one, and discussions and

Austria (New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2003), 71-160.

¹⁰¹⁵According to plebiscites in Vorarlberg and Tyrol in 1919 and 1921 cited in Alfred D. Low, *The Anschluss Movement 1918-1919 and the Paris Peace Conference* (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, (1974), 326-328; Barbara Jelavich, *Modern Austria, Empire and Republic, 1815-1986* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 159-162; John Swanson, *The Remnants of the Habsburg Monarchy: The Shaping of Modern Austria and Hungary, 1918-1922* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 2001), 35-37; and a 1956 public opinion survey cited in Georg Wagner, *Österreich Zweite Republik: Zeitgeschichte und Bundesstaatstradition*, vol. 2 (Thaur/Tirol, Austria: Österreichischer Kulturverlag, 1987), 1432.

¹⁰¹⁶Peter Thaler, *The Ambivalence of Identity: the Austrian Experience of Nation-building in a Modern Society* (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2001), 127.

interpretations of Austria's Habsburg past were the most important element of their efforts in that regard. Likewise, the dramatic change in Austria's circumstances between 1918 and 1955 had a profound influence on the shift in Austrian national opinions, and it is impossible to explain the final outcome of the debate without reference to delegitimization of Austrian German nationalism by the experience of Nazi rule. Thus, political ideology, diplomatic circumstance, and historical memory all interacted in complex manner between 1918 and 1955 to shape the course and ultimate conclusion of the Austrian debate on national identity.

The Habsburg Past and Questions of Identity in Austria and Europe After 1955.

But what of Austrian national identity and interpretations of the Habsburg past after 1955? The ultimate success of the Austrianist view of national identity in the Second Republic after the signing of the State Treaty was due to one luxury which the new government enjoyed and which all of Austria's other post-Habsburg governments had lacked: stability. Paradoxically, the Cold War, which was such a profoundly destabilizing phenomenon throughout much of the rest of the world, created a stable political and diplomatic environment for Austria which it had not experienced since at least the reign of the Emperor Franz Joseph. No longer did Austria have to agonize about its appropriate place in the European order or concerning whether or not its destiny lay in a great-German nation state. The State Treaty had neatly resolved all of those issues for the Austrian people. After 1955, Austria became a neutral state on the border between the two mutually antagonistic Cold War blocks in Europe, enjoying the benefits of the liberal-democratic West's economic prosperity without actual participation in the Western military alliance. In

many ways, Austria became the “*Ostmark*” of the West that so many public figures had portrayed it as throughout its history, sitting on the ramparts of the border between the Western community of nations, face to face with a frightening and potentially hostile Eastern empire. The issue of *Anschluss* was a dead one, as the defeat of Nazi Germany and the division of Germany and the rest of Central Europe by the NATO and Iron Curtain ideological camps had made amply clear. Neither of the two Cold War blocks was willing to allow even a reunification of Germany as it had existed before 1938, let alone the recreation of the sort of great-German union which had wrought so much havoc on the continent after the *Anschluss*. Austria’s own eagerness to distance itself from the crimes of the Hitler regime likewise put an end to the hopes for a pan-German unity of all but the most fanatical of Austrian German nationalists.

Simply put, the debate over Austrian national identity had come to an end by 1955. The public argument, which had been so critical a part of Austrian life between 1918 and 1955, had ceased to be an issue of any particular importance for Austrians in the new era. The views of all of the Second Republic’s major political factions regarding Austria’s national identity had solidified, and the ensuing three decades did not provide Austria’s leaders with any compelling reason to revisit the national debate which previously had been so divisive. After the signing of the State Treaty, Austria concerned itself with an entirely different set of issues than it had between 1918 and 1955. The new order of the day was the preservation of Austrian neutrality, the extension of its participation in the United Nations Organization and other international entities, and the expansion of its economic prosperity, as the state rebounded impressively from its destitution in the aftermath of the Second

World War and the Allied occupation. The two main Austrian political factions, the People's Party and the Social Democrats, had for the most part learned the lessons of their experiences during the First Republic and the *Ständestaat* well. The later Second Republic was characterized far more by the grudging cooperation of the *Proporz* system than by the destabilizing ideological squabbling of earlier eras. Between the 1950s and the early 1980s the Second Republic experienced a period of growth and stability, and it seemed that Austria had finally put its past behind it.¹⁰¹⁷

Of course such stability could not last forever, and indeed it did not. The 1980s and 1990s brought at least a partial reopening of some of the issues which had been so integral a part of Austrian life before 1955. The first event which prompted a reconsideration of much that had been settled with the State Treaty was the controversy over the election of the former Nazi *Wehrmacht* officer Kurt Waldheim to the Austrian presidency in 1986. Waldheim's election reopened old wounds which centered on Austria's Nazi past far more than its Habsburg past, and it inspired a new generation of Austrian intellectuals and historians to reexamine Austria's participation in World War II and the Holocaust. Ultimately, the Waldheim controversy prompted Austria begin to dismantle its "victim myth," so long the Austrian government's official view of its Nazi past, and to admit that Austrian participation in Nazi crimes had been far less coerced than the leaders of the Second Republic had been willing to admit.

With this new focus on Austrian complicity in the crimes of the Third Reich came a

¹⁰¹⁷On the later years of the Second Republic, see Jelavich, 269-324; Hella Pick, *Guilty Victim: Austria From the Holocaust to Haider* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2000), 49-148; Oliver Rathkolb, "The Kreisky Era: 1970-1983," in *Austria in the Twentieth Century*, eds. Rolf Steininger, Günter Bischof, and Michael Gehler (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2002), 262-293.

concomitant reconsideration of Austria's postwar national identity. Whereas throughout the early decades of the Second Republic, a sense of Austria's unique nationhood apart from Germany had been presented by Austria's leaders as an article of faith which Austrians simply needed to accept without much discussion, in the late 1980s and the 1990s, a new wave of scholars such as Anton Pelinka, Erika Weinzierl, and Ernst Hanisch began to examine the widespread Austrian support for *Anschluss* with Germany in 1938, and the role of the Second Republic's early leaders' efforts to distance Austria from Nazi crimes in the formulation of a new Austrianist sense of national identity.¹⁰¹⁸ As of this writing, the scholarly reconsideration of Austria's Nazi past and the topic of its national identity continues unabated, even as the Austrian population as a whole continues to support Austrian independence and nationhood.

The matter of Austria's Habsburg past has also once again become relevant thanks to a far more epochal event in European history: the end of the Cold War in 1989 and the subsequent expansion of the European Union. The collapse of the Soviet Union and its enforced community of Communist satellite states in Eastern and Central Europe did not really prompt the sort of reexamination of Austrian identity in the way which one might have expected, however. Despite the reunification of Communist East Germany with the German Federal Republic in 1990, there was no movement on the part of Austria to revisit the notion of *Anschluss* to any significant degree. Neither was there any real movement on the part of Austria or any of the Habsburg successor states which emerged from behind the

¹⁰¹⁸Erika Weinzierl, *Zu wenig Gerechte. Österreich und Judenverfolgung 1938-1945* (Graz: Verlag Styria, 1985); Anton Pelinka, *Austria: Out of the Shadow of the Past* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998); Ernst Hanisch, *Der Lange Schatten des Staates. Österreichische Gesellschaftsgeschichte im 20. Jahrhundert* (Vienna: Ueberreuter, 1994); and various essays in Pelinka and Weinzierl, eds., *Das große Tabu*.

Iron Curtain to move toward a Danubian or Central European community of nations and interests of the sort that Austrianist intellectuals had so often discussed before 1955. For several years during the 1970s and 1980s, dissident intellectuals in Communist Central Europe such as Václav Havel, Adam Michnik and György Konrád had indeed rallied around the notion of Central Europe as a concept which might help deliver their states from the Soviets' oppressive ideological domination. Once the Iron Curtain fell, however, the Soviet Union's former satellite states moved fairly quickly to adopt the Western model of liberal-democratic government and free market economics rather than cultivate ties with the other states and nations of Central Europe.¹⁰¹⁹ The Habsburg successor states that freed themselves from Soviet domination vigorously pursued membership in Western Europe's major political, economic and military organizations with varying levels of success. Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Poland joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1999 and the European Union in 2004. Slovakia and Slovenia joined both bodies in 2004, and Romania joined NATO in 2004 and is slated to become a member of the EU in 2007. Austria for its part abandoned its longstanding abstention from European alliances by joining the European Union in 1992, but has not sought NATO membership, in keeping with its official neutral stance in military matters. Thus, the first decade of the twenty-first century has seen the integration of the vast majority of the territory of the old Habsburg Monarchy into the institutions and organizations of Europe.

Yet the union between the Habsburg successor states and the Western European

Österreichs Umgang mit seiner Vergangenheit (Vienna: Edition S., 1987).

¹⁰¹⁹Charles Maier, "Whose Mitteleuropa? Central Europe Between Memory and Obscure," in *Austria in the New Europe*, eds. Günter Bischof and Anton Pelinka (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 1993), 8-18.

powers did not mark an end to the relevance of the Habsburg past for Austria and the rest of Central Europe. In fact, the European Union's expansion into the regions over which the House of Austria reigned for so many centuries instead has made the Habsburg past a relevant issue for all of Europe. The new EU's composition in the twenty-first century resembles the multinational character of the Habsburg Monarchy of one hundred years ago in a striking manner. The European continent, a region in which the idea of the nation state was so dominant for much of the twentieth century, has now sweepingly embraced multinational federalism with all the promises and difficulties which that ideal entails.

Indeed, the difficulties which the European Union faces as it consolidates its expansion into Central and Eastern Europe powerfully recall the experiences of the Habsburg Monarchy. The EU's open borders and common currency have opened up the original western core states of the Union to immigration from and economic competition with the inhabitants of the Central and Eastern European expansion states. Now the western EU states have been brought into direct contact with the different cultures, languages, and historical experiences of the newer members. The contrast between the recent economic stagnation and high unemployment of the West and the comparatively more dynamic economic performance of the expansion states has only made this experience more unsettling for the older members.

Many of the western EU members, once so eager to expand the Union eastward in order to cement peace and prosperity on the continent, are now apparently reconsidering the wisdom of the organization's enlargement. Radical right-wing politicians such as Jean-Marie Le Pen in France and Austria's own Jörg Haider have recently seen their electoral

popularity expand dramatically, in part in response to the fears of their constituencies that the Union was diluting their national distinctiveness and harming their economic position. In a similar manner, the rejection of the proposed EU constitution by the Netherlands and France in 2005, which would have further regularized and streamlined the relationship between the EU members, and the frequent references to the threats posed by low-wage immigrant “Polish plumbers” to the French economy in the period before that vote in France all point to misgivings on the part of voters in the established member states to EU expansion.¹⁰²⁰ It is impossible to observe the European Union’s recent difficulties and not see the similarities with the national tensions which wracked the Habsburg Monarchy a century ago, as the Monarchy’s privileged German-speakers reacted with anxiety and hostility toward the increasingly militant demands of its Slavic and Magyar populations. The relationship among the EU member states and national groups is a looser one than that between the *Völker* of the old Habsburg state, but new Europe certainly bears more of a resemblance to the Monarchy on the Danube before 1918 than it does to the system of nation states found on the continent after the empire’s demise. So, far from being irrelevant in the modern era, it seems that the lessons of Austria’s Habsburg past could be more significant to more of Europe than at any time since the end of the First World War.

Another, perhaps even more vexing issue to which Austria’s Habsburg past may be vitally relevant involves Europe’s Muslim immigrant populations. Much of Western Europe’s impressive economic growth during the later half of the twentieth century was fueled by low wage immigrant labor from predominantly Muslim lands, as millions of

¹⁰²⁰For a review of the European Union’s recent growing pains, see Laurent Cohen-Tanugi, “The End of Europe?” *Foreign Affairs* 86, no. 6 (November/December, 2005): 55-67.

workers flooded into France and Spain from north Africa, into Britain from Pakistan, and into Germany and Austria from Turkey. The Western states always had confidence that the virtues of their liberal-democratic traditions, which were comparatively more open and tolerant than those of much of the Islamic world, would lead to the cultural assimilation of these immigrant groups into the Western society. While many Muslim immigrants have indeed become enthusiastic participants in the West's liberal culture, other sectors of Europe's new Muslim community have rejected that culture in a violent manner. The sensationalistic murder of the Dutch film maker Theo van Gogh by a Dutch-Moroccan Islamic militant in 2004, and the devastating bombings in Madrid in 2003 and London in 2005 by Islamist terrorists illustrate the extent to which Europe's faith in the assimilating powers of its liberal traditions may have been misplaced. The weeks of rioting by the offspring of north African immigrants in the suburbs of Paris in 2005 over their straitened economic circumstances indicate that the disenchantment of Europe's Muslim populations with Western society is not solely the purview of religiously motivated radicals either. The controversial prospect of Turkish membership in the EU at some point in the future would in all probability only exacerbate these issues by opening up the member states to still greater numbers of Muslim immigrants.¹⁰²¹

All of these recent tensions between Muslims and non-Muslims in Europe once again call to mind Austria's Habsburg past, and in particular the dual "Austrian mission" which so many Austrian patriots used in their arguments for a unique Austrian national identity. On the one hand, this Austrian mission was often cast as one of defense of the

¹⁰²¹For a discussion of problems posed by Europe's Islamic population, see Robert S. Leiken, "Europe's Angry Muslims," *Foreign Affairs* 86, no. 4 (July/August, 2005): 120-135.

Christian West by the Habsburg state against the threats posed by Islamic invasions throughout centuries of European history. Indeed, it should not be forgotten that the colors of the flag of modern Austria are at least apocryphally based upon the tunic soaked with Muslim blood of Austrian Archduke Leopold during the crusades. On the other hand, however, the Austrian mission also frequently entailed an Austrian function as a mediator or “bridge,” which brought the benefits of Western civilization to the supposedly less advanced East. Traditionally, the East to which proponents of the Austrian mission referred was that of the Slavic and Magyar lands of Europe, but the concept might just as easily apply to the Islamic East as well.

Both of these aspects of Austrian public rhetoric concerning Austria’s historical mission correspond to possible reactions on the part of Europe’s leaders to the recent round of Muslim violence throughout the continent. They might either crack down upon the continent’s Islamic populations, restricting their movements and activities while proscribing further immigration, or they could pursue Muslim assimilation to the Western liberal model even more aggressively. Both approaches certainly have their advocates in Europe today.¹⁰²² Thanks to the ease of transportation and the porous nature of state borders in the twenty-first century, Austria itself may not stand on the “bulwark” between Western civilization and the Islamic East. Clearly, however, the concepts involved in Austria’s dual mission are quite relevant for all of Europe in this new era. If anything, the old Austrian mission of the Habsburg Monarchy has become the “European mission” of the twenty-first century, as the continent decides how best to deal with the tensions between its traditions, and the culture

¹⁰²²Indeed, radical right-wing politicians such as Le Pen and Haider are if anything even more concerned with the effect of Muslim immigration upon European society than they are about that of immigrants from

and aspirations of its growing Muslim populations.

Thus, while there is no longer really a crisis of Austrian national identity which requires constant references to and interpretations of the Habsburg past, what we might term a European crisis of identity in the twenty-first century has made the Habsburg past as significant to life on the continent as it has ever been. While there has been no concerted European effort to draw upon the lessons and legacies of the Habsburg era in Austria, the parallels between the problems which faced the old Monarchy and the challenges that confront a new multinational European federation which encompasses numerous different national and religious cultures are clear and striking. The Habsburg past was the most critical component of Austria's effort to define its own national identity and its place in the world between 1918 and 1955. It is difficult to imagine that the example of the House of Austria's history might not be a fruitful topic in any discussion of Europe's own identity and position at the beginning of a new millennium. Emperor Karl may have stepped off of the throne in 1918, but both Austria and the Europe as a whole continue to live in the long shadow of the Habsburgs.

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