

The Victim Myth Revisited: The Politics of History in Austria up until the Waldheim Affair

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Introduction

Over the last thirty years, no other concept has defined the politics of history concerning Austria's Nazi past to a greater extent than the concept of the Austrian "victim myth." The term emerged in the mid-1980s as part of an effort to expose the victim hypothesis formulated in the Declaration of Independence of April, 27, 1945—namely that Austria was occupied by Nazi Germany in March 1938 and became, along with its population, a helpless and defenseless victim of German repression, exploitation, and warmongering—as an "existential lie," a "fiction," and a "state mythology."¹ The exposure of the "victim myth" profoundly changed Austria's "national mythscape" (Duncan Bell). Today, one could well claim that it has become a widely shared component of the national memory regime, which has moreover taken on a legitimizing function on the level of governance. This became especially clear in the 2018 memorial year after the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP), under the leadership of Sebastian Kurz, had entered into a coalition government with the right-wing Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) despite the fact that the latter has made a name for itself with rather different attitudes regarding the politics of history, especially in relation to the service of Austrians in the *Wehrmacht*, as well as with repeated revisionist, antisemitic, and racist statements made by its functionaries. Now, the "new" politics of memory went hand in hand with a decisively right-wing politics directed against refugees and immigrants, with Austria and the Austrians being stylized as victims that needed protection from an unbridled—and, in the anti-Semitic discourse of the FPÖ, even targeted—invasion by foreigners. In contrast to the original intention of the critics of the victim myth, namely to liberalize a problematic and antiquated national politics of memory in pursuit of a new political culture of self-reflection, the demarcation of the victim myth now served to instrumentalize the politics of history as the flank guard of a right-wing conservative political turn.

In the introduction to this volume, Christian Karner called in reference to Duncan Bell for a "processual understanding of ongoing memory-work

and myth-making.” This naturally also applies to the discovery of the victim myth and its function as a “master narrative” of Austria’s politics of history. In what follows, I will therefore examine some of the elements of this explanatory model as an impetus to rethink the “victim myth” as the central lens through which to approach the Austrian politics of memory up until the Waldheim years. I will begin with the central problem of the theory of the victim myth—namely the deficiencies in differentiating conceptually between various meanings of the German term *Opfer*, which can, in fact, be translated into English either as “victim” or “sacrifice.” This distinction, I argue, can serve to analyze the politics of history in Austria more precisely while overcoming the aporias inherent to the concept of the “victim myth.” To this end, I will develop the hypothesis that the most significant engagements with the past that occurred during the first two decades after the war on the state and civil society levels revolved around the question of “sacrifices made” (*erbrachte Opfer*) rather than “victimization” (*Opferwerdung*). On the civil society level, the competing positions in this debate reflected the views of the organizations of former resistance fighters and political opponents of National Socialism on the one side and of *Wehrmacht* veterans on the other. The central question here was who could claim to have made the greatest sacrifice for Austria during the Nazi era. This approach challenges the hypothesis that the victim myth was not just a “foundational myth supportive of the state” but moreover led to a “public consensus” and laid the groundwork for a “process of victimization” through which the “true victims of National Socialism” were marginalized.² Even though, as Heidemarie Uhl and Günter Bischof have emphasized, the relationship between different narratives of victimization were not necessarily consensual—and there were, in fact, various “competing Austrian victim myths”³—the vanishing point and broad reception of the narrative pattern of victimization were ultimately grounded in its postulation of “generalization,” “universalization,” “leveling,” and “homogenization” of the category of victimhood in relation to various societal groups, some of whom had been deeply involved in the Nazi system.⁴ Walter Manoschek and Thomas Geldmacher characterized the politics of history in the first ten years after 1945 altogether as the political implementation of “Austrian identity as a collective of victims.”⁵ In the final section of this paper, I will describe, by contrast, the crystallization of a state-implemented sacrificial memory regime, which ultimately allowed for Kurt Waldheim to be elected federal president in 1986. In summary, this paper presents the hypothesis that Austria’s national formation through the politics of history should be understood as a process in which the recognition of *sacrifice* was the crucial

issue, while the turn toward a victimological memory only occurred following Waldheim's election and his international isolation.

Conceptualizations of Victimhood in the Waldheim Context

The meaningful distinction between the two dimensions of the German concept of *Opfer*, which is linguistically clearer in English through the correspondence of this term to either "victim" or "sacrifice,"⁶ was recognized in the discussions surrounding the victim myth but not systematically differentiated in the corresponding analyses.⁷ Aleida Assmann's distinction between sacrificial and victimological forms of remembrance is pertinent in this context. The conceptual consequences are clear: A perspective focusing on sacrificial efforts places the subject's motivations to act at center stage in the politics of history, posing questions such as "to what end" and "in opposition to what" they acted. Meanwhile, a focus on sacrifice opened up a broad space for the search for meaning, the process of victimization being far more difficult to make sense of. As Svenja Goltermann addressed, "victimhood was hardly ever an attractive subject position" until the latter third of the twentieth century.⁸ Neither in Europe nor in the US was it of particular moral benefit to describe oneself as a victim after enduring an act of violence. The victim position was "loaded with reservations" as it was perceived as a result of weakness and therefore implied a certain co-responsibility in the act of aggression, particularly in cases concerning Jews and women.⁹ This also entailed the mechanism of guilt reversal, which typified both the secondary antisemitism of the post-1945 era, whereby the Jews' ostensible political and economic power was identified as the reason for their persecution,¹⁰ along with sexist perceptions of victimhood, which identified sexual impulses as the cause of violence against women.¹¹

As scholars of nationalism have shown, collective identities throughout much of the twentieth century were formed through the construction of collective sacrificial efforts and their recognition by the state—in other words, through sacrificial memory regimes. As early as the nineteenth century, during the era of civil emancipation, the notion arose that the "highest duty [of the citizen] consisted in sacrifice and death for the fatherland."¹² Ernest Renan described the honorific recognition of "sacrifices that have been made" as the most significant moment in the process of national integration. This was the symbolic remuneration from state and society for the fulfillment of duty, greater still than the material remuneration in cases of invalidity or death. National remembrance, to paraphrase Benedict

Anderson, was grounded in the selective memory not so much of having killed but of having willingly died.¹³ As I will demonstrate shortly, this thinking is precisely what underlies the antagonistic self-representations of veterans of the resistance and veterans of the *Wehrmacht* between the late 1940s and the mid-1960s. What these opponents had in common, though, was that they did not seek recognition as victims but as martyrs for Austria.

The quest for meaning in the commemoration of victims of antisemitic and racist persecution is a more recent phenomenon, a consequence of the turn toward recognition of the victims that began in the 1960s when new social movements started to campaign for victims' rights and to give them a voice. A greater recognition of the victims' perspective in criminal and trial law also only emerged in the 1960s as the attribution of co-responsibility to the victims and/or disregard for the victims began to be criticized, for example, by the feminist movement.¹⁴ In Holocaust research, too, the victims only began to emerge from the shadows as a result of the Auschwitz trials in Germany during the 1960s. It was not before the early 1970s that survivors of the Shoah in Europe began to receive medical treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder.¹⁵ The global transmission of the American TV series *Holocaust* in the late 1970s finally broke the embargo on remembering Jewish victims of the Holocaust in mass media.¹⁶ Investigations conducted into the psychological aftereffects of soldiers' wartime experiences, for example during the Vietnam War, meanwhile led to a reevaluation of the victimization of soldiers in wartime contexts and consequently to a de-heroization of death and suffering among soldiers.¹⁷ Another aspect of shifting perspectives on victimization was the struggle for human rights from the 1970s onwards and the worldwide lobbying on behalf of victims of human rights infractions. This empowerment of victims finally also affected the perspective on perpetrators, focusing attention on their identities and motives.

A terminological differentiation of the concept *Opfer* can help open the way for a clearer analysis of the Austrian politics of history that occurred from the 1950s to the 1980s, the period during which an Austrian national consciousness began to be consolidated. However, the most influential monographs and edited volumes published after Waldheim's election focused on the immediate postwar years or on the Waldheim debate itself.¹⁸ The victim hypothesis emerging from the Allied Declaration on Austria of 1943 and the Austrian Declaration of Independence of 1945 did, indeed, play a major role in both temporal contexts. It was first deployed as a means to distance Austria from Nazi Germany. Then, following decades of meaninglessness, it was resurrected in 1986 to deflect criticisms of Austria's engagement with

the Nazi past. The timestamps of the criticisms then and now were the years 1945 and 1986—a time frame that became foundational for the theorization of the entire politics of history of the Second Republic. Criticisms of Austria's self-representation as a victim and the exposure of this narrative as a myth were important, yet they were only partially able to account for the transmission and continued propagation of values and attitudes in the new democratic order that had been shaped by Fascism and National Socialism. A differentiation between "victim" and "sacrifice" is therefore also a suitable frame within which to understand the constellation underlying the politics of history that led to the exposure of the "victim myth" in the mid-1980s.

In Austria, the turn toward a memory of victimhood began on the political level with some delay following the Waldheim affair. Kurt Waldheim did not present himself in his election campaign as a victim of National Socialism but as someone who, like hundreds of thousands of Austrian *Wehrmacht* soldiers, had "done his duty." He deployed a rhetoric that had already been promoted by the Austrian Union of Comrades (*Österreichischer Kameradschaftsbund*, ÖKB) in the 1950s and was adopted into the official historical narrative of the republic in the 1960s. It had moreover already been utilized as a justification first by the former *SS-Obersturmführer* and FPÖ politician, Friedrich Peter, in 1975¹⁹ and then again by the emerging right-wing politician Jörg Haider in 1985 to defend the former SS officer Walter Reder when he returned to Austria in 1985 following a prison sentence served for war crimes in Italy.²⁰ In his election speeches, Waldheim added the phrase "we were decent" to this rhetoric.²¹ According to Robert Knight, the first historian to astutely analyze the "Waldheim context,"²² Waldheim's success thus contravened the "myth about the foundation of the Austrian republic," for "decency" and the "fulfillment of duty" did not number among the topoi of the anti-Nazi victim narratives of the period from 1943 to 1946, whether in the Declaration on Austria, the Declaration of Independence, or the *Rot-Weiss-Rot-Buch*, a 1946 government-issued work intended to document Austria's status as a country occupied by Nazi Germany. However, it would also be missing the mark to characterize the "fulfillment of duty" narrative as a kind of subcutaneous popular tradition and as a populist countermyth that stood for a long time in covert contradistinction to the state victim myth.²³ Waldheim was speaking in the context of a sacrificial regime of honor that had been promoted by government politicians since 1955 and had become entrenched as the *leitmotiv* of patriotic memory. The ÖVP only cast Waldheim as a victim during the presidential campaign in response to the criticisms of this narrative of sacrifice in the line of duty, which in the context of the new historical paradigm of the

Holocaust predominating outside of Austria (as well as among a minority within Austria) had come to be regarded as a structural contribution to the murder of European Jewry, as well as to the stability of the Nazi regime. The victimological turn only became evident after the election when Waldheim ceased employing the terminology of a “proper fulfillment of duty” that had won him the election. Meanwhile, the unavoidable recognition of the persecution of Austria’s Jewish population was accompanied by representations of the non-Jewish population in various victim roles, particularly of the civilian population as those who had severely suffered through the bombing war.²⁴ Soldiers were also included among the ranks of the victims, although the positive recognition of the soldiers’ fulfillment of duty remained highly resilient right into the 2000s.

In light of the new attention paid to the “true” victims, both these forms of victimization of *Wehrmacht* soldiers and civilians rightly began to be viewed by a younger generation of intellectuals as an illegitimate appropriation that, in relation to present discourses as well as to historical foundational documents, needed to be deconstructed as myths. In fact, the reactivation of the victim hypothesis also demanded an adaptation by state representatives to suit the new context of victimological remembrance. If, in 1945, the Germans alone could be identified as the perpetrators (along with a highly treasonous minority of Austrian Nazis), the new victimization of the Austrians now also raised the question of Austrian perpetrators. Under these circumstances, Waldheim became the first leading politician to admit that many Austrians had enthusiastically embraced National Socialism and become Nazi perpetrators.²⁵ However, this acknowledgement of co-responsibility only received a degree of credibility after the Waldheim years in the 1990s when Austria was preparing itself for accession to the European Union.

The Fading of the Victim Hypothesis in the International Context

The resurrection and rejuvenation of the victim hypothesis was not only an issue for the ÖVP in the grand coalition, which was established once more in 1986 after a more than twenty-year hiatus. This position was also adopted with particular zeal by Foreign Minister Peter Jankowitsch of the Social Democratic Party (SPÖ), who after Waldheim’s election reminded critics of Austria abroad “that this country did not just become the victim of verbal aggression, but that hundreds of thousands of Austrians had to give their lives during World War II in Adolf Hitler’s concentration camps and

on his generals' battlefields."²⁶ He thus harked directly back to the rhetoric of the 1945 Declaration of Independence. However, the reanimation of Austria's victim status found little appeal amongst the Western Allies. The UK government had already implemented diplomatic sanctions against the Austrian federal government a year earlier and indefinitely postponed a planned visit of Defense Minister Friedhelm Frischenschlager as he had personally welcomed the above-mentioned convicted war criminal, Walter Reder, back to Austria with a handshake.²⁷ Despite vocal international criticism, Frischenschlager did not resign. Moreover, at the grand ceremonies organized in Vienna in May 1985 to mark the thirtieth anniversary of the signing of the State Treaty, the foreign ministers of the UK and the US, Geoffrey Howe and George Shultz, did not address Austria as the "first victim of National Socialism." Only French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas and his Soviet counterpart, Andrei Gromyko, described Austria as the "first victim of Hitlerite aggression" and as the "first victim of National Socialism," respectively.²⁸ Dumas jumped to Austria's defense because France had itself been battling challenges to its own longstanding resistance myth for a number of years already, which after 1945 had sidelined French collaboration with the German occupation in the persecution of the resistance and the deportation of Jews.²⁹ For the Soviet Union, meanwhile, the State Treaty and the neutrality of the Austria it enshrined had constituted a significant success for post-Stalinist foreign policy and for the political architecture of Europe. Due to the rumblings then occurring in various states of the "East Bloc," Gromyko had no interest in damaging these cornerstones of Soviet diplomacy.

The fact that the UK and the US did not support the victim hypothesis in 1985 did not actually represent a policy turnaround. The victim hypothesis had already ceased being of relevance to the leading Western states after 1955. No supporting statements by their diplomats can be found in the stream of news reports by the *Austria Press Agency (APA)* during this period. Statements characterizing Austria as the "first victim" were uttered exclusively by representatives of the Communist regimes in Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and the Soviet Union. Of the Western democracies, only neutral Sweden and France can be found to have made statements to this effect—and then only very rarely. The US and the UK had—since the beginning of their open, systemic competition with the Soviet Union from 1947 onwards—been cultivating a different image of Austria, which was not that of a victim. The US in particular continued to characterize Austria as a model for the Central and Eastern European states of the East Bloc. The victim role was not suitable to this end. Quite on the contrary, the point

was to demonstrate how a small country could overcome the victim role: through accepting the aid offered by the Marshall Plan, resisting the Soviet Union's claims to power, and adopting a democratic solution to societal conflicts, market-based modernization, and religious tolerance. Inversely, only a few *APA* reports demonstrate an emphasis on the victim status in statements by Austrian foreign affairs politicians after 1955. This finding suggests that Austria's external nation-building process, meaning the positioning of the country in the international context, was already detached from the anti-German victim doctrine. The politics of neutrality that set in after 1955 guided this external nation-building process out of the shadow of the Nazi past and into the context of the Cold War, the decolonization and non-alignment movements, as well as the North/South divide.³⁰

The two most significant Allied powers therefore did not participate in the Austrian resuscitation of the victim doctrine. On the contrary, their leading media became the first in 1985 to attack the "victim myth."³¹ This dissonant constellation, with the US and UK distancing themselves from the victim doctrine at precisely the time that Austria was attempting to resuscitate it, had a great impact on the views of the critics. This led to an exceptionalist interpretation of the victim hypothesis as a specific national product of the Austrian politics of memory—as something specifically Austrian.³²

A Reevaluation of the Declaration on Austria and Its Problems

A major scholarly foundation for this development was the influential reevaluation of the Allied Declaration on Austria of November 1943, as presented by the historian Robert Keyserlingk in 1988.³³ In his greatly abbreviated reconstruction of the origins of this document, Keyserlingk arrived at the conclusion that it by no means constituted a declaration of intent on behalf of the Allies to reestablish Austria. According to Keyserlingk, this document was nothing more than a short-term propaganda instrument of psychological warfare designed to promote resistance in Nazi Austria. Keyserlingk's line of argumentation was adopted by most historians working on the "victim myth," although Gerald Stourzh proffered a convincing critique of his analysis.³⁴ For critics of Austria's politics of history, Keyserlingk's "demystification" of the Declaration on Austria came at just the right time. If the Allies had not actually described Austria in earnest as a victim of Nazi Germany, then the responsibility for this portrayal lay exclusively with the first generation of the political elite of

the Second Republic, who therefore became the subject of criticism. The adoption of the victim hypothesis in the Declaration of Independence now appeared as an immoral instrumentalization designed to externalize all guilt and responsibility for the crimes of National Socialism onto Germany. Undoubtedly, Keyserlingk's work stimulated a meritorious body of literature on the early Austrian politics of history and its protagonists. However, these reevaluations significantly distorted the underlying historical power relations. The Allies were now cast as weak agents from whom the victim hypothesis had essentially been wangled by cunning and/or opportunistic Austrian postwar politicians.

The deconstruction of the Declaration on Austria additionally entailed the deconstruction of the Declaration of Independence, the *Rot-Weiss-Rot-Buch*, and the preamble to the State Treaty. Like dominoes, one document after the other succumbed to this process of demystification. In the Declaration of Independence, the state founders had obfuscated the reference to Austria's co-responsibility for the German war effort, excluded the Jews as the largest group of victims, and instead transformed the *Wehrmacht* soldiers into victims of the Germans. In the *Rot-Weiss-Rot-Buch*, the government then grossly exaggerated the scope of the resistance. Previously celebrated in national historiography as a masterwork of diplomacy, the complete expungement of Austria's "responsibility" from the preamble of the State Treaty was reevaluated as the final affront to the "true" victims of National Socialism.

These deconstructions reproduced a negative of the Austro-centric perspective, meaning that the problems of writing a national historiography were perpetuated. For example, the fact that the Declaration on Austria was just one of four declarations made by the Allies during the Moscow Conference in October 1943 was completely overlooked. As late as 1996, Keyserlingk opened his essay on the "Moscow Declaration" in the foundational edited volume *Österreich im 20. Jahrhundert (Austria in the Twentieth Century)* with the two counterfactual research questions of why the Allied foreign ministers had chosen Austria of all countries "as the first and only country for which a decisive postwar policy was formulated" and how this political declaration fitted in with the "otherwise exclusively strategic military character of this conference."³⁵ Aside from the central strategic military declaration on the continuation of hostilities until the "unconditional surrender" of the German armies had been achieved and the political declaration on the reestablishment of Austria, two further, decisively political declarations were made. The "Statement on Atrocities" formulated the principles of the judicial action that was to be taken against the German

perpetrators for the atrocities, massacres, and mass murders committed in the context of the war and the occupation of foreign countries. Naturally, this declaration also applied to civilians and soldiers from Austria who, as the Declaration on Austria stated, had fought on the side of Germany. In the “Declaration Regarding Italy,” the foreign ministers formulated seven principles of action with which Fascism was to be overcome, a guide that was absent in the Declaration on Austria. In contrast to Italy, Austria had a longer democratic history upon which it could build. In Austria’s case, the key challenge was its territorial separation and national dissociation from Germany. Thus, the authors of the drafts of the Declaration on Austria from the British Foreign Office came up with the strategy of pointedly describing Austria as the “first free country *to fall a victim* [my emphasis] to Hitlerite aggression.” However, victimization alone is not enough for the construction of a national identity. The authors therefore also included a formulation that aimed, first of all, to relativize the main hypothesis by ascribing to Austria “a responsibility for the participation in the war on the side of Hitlerite Germany.” Thus, a second form of *Opfer* was introduced—namely Austria’s responsibility to make its own *sacrifices* in the struggle for liberation. The path from being victimized to making a sacrifice, from a negative identity to a positive identity, was idealistically preordained in the Declaration on Austria. The Declaration of Independence can be read as the first official response on behalf of the provisional government. It began by quoting in full the victim hypothesis and the clause for the reestablishment of the republic. However, not surprisingly, Austrian politicians here broadened the victim hypothesis by portraying the “participation in the war” on the side of Germany as coerced and the Austrian *Wehrmacht* soldiers as some sort of war slaves of the Germans. Yet the transition to a positive identity formation turned out to be weak indeed. The document evinces no heroization of the resistance, rather excusing its meager contribution in this regard by pointing to the debilitation of the people and the despoliation of the country.

Austria’s top diplomats ultimately encouraged the government to adopt this line as general foreign policy since they expected this to result in preferential treatment by the Allies.³⁶ In December 1945, the parliament cemented the victim hypothesis as foreign policy doctrine. The Allies accepted this legislation because—entirely in contrast to the situation in 1918—this narrative elevated Austria’s dissociation from Germany to a basic consensus of the political elites. Whether the formulations of these documents correlated to historical facts is somewhat irrelevant. Rather, both documents should be viewed entirely as political declarations drafted

and based on partly counterfactual knowledge: they aimed at a transformation of an unpleasant past and present into an outline for a better future. In other words, they were products of the politics of history.

In preparation for negotiations over full sovereignty, the Austrian government tried to overcome the shortcomings of a pure victimization narrative through the *Rot-Weiss-Rot-Buch* of 1946, which documented civilian and military resistance, as well as the martyrdom of opponents of National Socialism. Concerning war service, the fallen Austrian soldiers were counted among the victims of the German occupation. The government thereby tried to entirely recreate the two dimensions of *Opfer*—victimhood and sacrifice—proffered by the Declaration on Austria.³⁷ At this point, the Allies were still invested in interrogating the shift from victimization and collaboration to resistance, this issue therefore playing a prominent role in the negotiations concerning reparations, as well as the transfer of “German property” from Austria to the Soviet Union.³⁸ As has been demonstrated by Ulrich Nachbauer, the government was thoroughly aware that the *Rot-Weiss-Rot-Buch* was not particularly impressive.³⁹ The relatively low scale of resistance corresponded to the expectations of British diplomats in 1943. The price for freedom was thus ultimately not fixed according to a historical judgment but according to the present interests of the Allies. At first, the Soviet Union massively escalated its demands in the general context of systemic confrontation between the powers, resulting in the initial conclusion of negotiations in 1949 stipulating the loss of the petroleum industry. Ultimately, however, Austria profited from the formalization of antagonistic military alliances in Europe, the NATO and the Warsaw Pact, in 1955. As part of its attempts to improve the relations with “strategically important ‘floating’ European countries,”⁴⁰ the Soviet Union agreed both to strike the responsibility clause from the preamble of the 1947 draft of the State Treaty and to completely relinquish its property claims against Austria.

The Failure of the Victim Hypothesis in Austrian Society

In an article from 1988, Robert Knight distinguished between two functions performed by the Declaration on Austria—namely a tactical function designed to legitimize the separatist foundation of the state as a victim of Nazi Germany through which the Austrian population was detached from their entanglements with the “Third Reich,” as well as a legitimizing function for the “creation of a national myth.”⁴¹ However, he

was unsure whether the “legitimizing” function had like the “tactical” function, in fact, been realized, for one of his theories was that Waldheim’s electoral victory must be regarded not as a paradox of the Austrian success story but as an integral component thereof. Knight had already argued that the “official myth about Austria as a victim, including [its] resistance” had not provided “a sufficient basis for a national consensus in postwar Austria.”⁴² Waldheim’s electoral victory was thus precisely not a “confirmation of the victim hypothesis by the majority of the electorate.”⁴³

Knight was here referring to the difference between exterior and interior processes of national formation. He thereby questioned whether the victim myth developed in the international political context had been fertile in the domestic societal context. In other words, while on a diplomatic level the readiness to lie in unison was sufficient for politicians to reach a consensus amongst themselves, such negotiations do not translate onto the inner relations of a representative democracy. The state-founding parties could propagate certain historical narratives in society but not dictate them. Knight noted the sensitivity of the governing politicians to the resonance of historical pronouncements among the general population in his analysis of the minutes of cabinet meetings relating to discussions on the restitution of Jewish property and/or compensation for “Aryanized” property. The governing politicians of the ÖVP and SPÖ in 1946 already entertained significant doubts about the usefulness of the vocabulary of the victim doctrine as a legitimization for the new state.

Knight therefore interpreted the curtailment and deferment of reparations as a “balancing act between maintaining the victim hypothesis in foreign policy and finding consensus in domestic policy.”⁴⁴ This suggests that the very first elected postwar government already considered the logical consequences of the victim doctrine to be difficult to implement among the broader population. With specific regard to the small group of Jewish survivors in Austria and their meager societal influence, the government moreover did not consider them worth realizing. A strategy in this context consisted of placing the victimization of the non-Jewish population on a par with the persecution of the Jews by presenting Austria’s “occupation” as a process of unlawful expropriations of Austrian state property, implying that the systematic despoliation of the Jewish population was not a unique phenomenon. This genuinely did constitute an “instrumentalization” of the Declaration on Austria and of the Declaration of Independence,⁴⁵ for neither of these documents evinced such a political relativization of victimhood. In fact, these discussions made visible the continuity of antisemitic attitudes both on the government level and among the general population

since the belonging of Jews to the “Austrian” collective of victims addressed in the Declaration of Independence was implicitly challenged.

Aside from the relativization of the persecution of the Jews, victimization was ultimately a short-lived phenomenon of postwar politics with a low societal impact, as Bertrand Perz also noted.⁴⁶ Initially, the attempt to document the scale of resistance was complemented by an emphasis on the sacrifices made by resistance fighters, as evinced by the temporary anti-fascist exhibition “*Niemals vergessen!*” (“Never Forget!”) and by the first *Opferfürsorgegesetz* (Victim Welfare Act), which exclusively benefited resistance fighters. Not until 1949 were victims of racist persecution integrated and then only on a subordinate level.⁴⁷ However, the various portrayals of resistance soon led to conflicts between the SPÖ and ÖVP when it came to dealing with the Austrian dictatorship between 1933 and 1938. Another line of conflict was the anti-communism being enforced in the context of the Cold War, which divided the SPÖ from the Communist Party of Austria (KPÖ). An analysis of the first wave of anti-fascist memorials in Vienna reveals that anti-fascist and/or anti-Nazi commemorations of sacrifice did not achieve a national, patriotic dimension but rather remained stuck in reconstructed partisan identities.⁴⁸ In addition, there is absolutely no empirical knowledge concerning the dissemination and influence of the *Rot-Weiss-Rot-Buch* among the Austrian population.⁴⁹ Its function as a “manifesto”⁵⁰ of the victim myth is thus far from self-evident.

At the same time, the victim myth offered no suitable resources to integrate on a national level the 1.3 million Austrian veterans of the *Wehrmacht*. The first edition of the veteran newspaper *Der Kamerad* announced programmatically on the front page in April 1950 that the political establishment had to date failed to show the frontline soldiers the “illustrious gratitude of the fatherland.”⁵¹ In 1951, the ÖKB, an umbrella organization for *Wehrmacht* veterans founded with the help of the ÖVP, demanded a positive recognition of the fulfillment of duty performed in the *Wehrmacht* and the *Waffen-SS*. The dominant position evinced by former *Wehrmacht* soldiers was identification with the *Wehrmacht* and its supreme commandment of fulfillment of duty.⁵² An important development was the welfare provided to some 505,000 disabled veterans and the next of kin of fallen soldiers by the *Kriegsopferversorgungsgesetz* (Law Concerning Welfare for the Victims of War) of 1949. However, the soldiers were here by no means generally transformed into victims.⁵³ The attribution of victimhood related only to specific injuries that diminished the veterans’ capacity to work. Of all the parties, the SPÖ clung to a soldierly victim myth the longest. The Socialists thereby built on their post-1918 victim narrative,⁵⁴ cultivating an image

of soldiers that conformed to the binary model of oppression postulated by Marxist theories of Fascism. A radio speech held by the SPÖ deputy and former resistance fighter, Rosa Jochmann, in March 1949, which has frequently been cited as evidence for the successful assertion of the victim myth, also needs to be placed in this Socialist—not national—context. Her mantra that “we were all victims of fascism” was intended to include *Wehrmacht* soldiers, the civilian population, those driven into exile, concentration camp inmates, and Jews.⁵⁵ However, she did point explicitly to the uniqueness and ruthlessness of the antisemitic persecution—a fact that is often omitted when it comes to supporting the hypothesis of the victim myth.⁵⁶ Her intention was, in fact, to justify to the general population the inclusion at long last of Jews in the victim welfare system. Nevertheless, Jochmann elevated the anti-fascist martyrs above all other victim groups. This Socialist hierarchy of martyrdom over victimization was dismantled by the ÖVP in the 1950s. Following the removal of SPÖ-friendly Leopold Figl in 1953, the ÖVP pursued a different path in their struggle with the *Verband der Unabhängigen* (Federation of Independents, VdU, the predecessor party of the FPÖ)⁵⁷ for hegemony in the right-wing political camp and in preparation for the establishment of a federal army. As in the 1930s, the conservatives thus moved away from the victimization of the military toward a sacrificial portrayal of wartime service. This paradigm shift was expressed pointedly in a speech by future Federal Chancellor Alfons Gorbach of the ÖVP, a former concentration camp inmate, held before parliament in December 1954. In an argument concerning the question over “who was in fact a hero and who was a traitor: the Austrian resistance fighters or such Austrians who were loyal to their oaths and fulfilled their bitter duty up until the final hour in the German *Wehrmacht*,”⁵⁸ Gorbach defended the fulfillment of duty as a meaningful patriotic and anti-Bolshevist service, praised the loyalty shown to the oaths that had been made, and advocated the necessity of unconditional obedience. Gorbach thereby transferred the sacrificial memory cultivated by the ÖKB in the civil society sphere to the representative sphere of the state. His position was consolidated on an official state level in November 1955 by Ferdinand Graf of the ÖVP, a former inmate of the Dachau Concentration Camp and the state secretary responsible for the Austrian Armed Forces, during the first official military memorial service at the Austrian Heroes’ Memorial on the Heldenplatz in Vienna since 1945. The Heroes’ Memorial had been created in 1934 by the Austrofascist regime to honor the fallen soldiers of World War I, a function it continued to serve under the Nazi regime, which until March 1945 used the site for the commemoration of fallen *Wehrmacht* soldiers as

well. Now, after the end of the Allied occupation, Graf demanded that the site become a “national memorial” dedicated to Austrian soldiers of both World Wars. In front of veterans of World War II and the first troops of the Austrian Armed Forces under the command of Erwin Fussenegger—a former *Wehrmacht* colonel, bearer of the Knight’s Cross, and member of the Nazi *Soldatenring* organization—Graf declared that it was necessary “in the now free and sovereign Austria to give a new voice to the commemoration of heroism.”⁵⁹ Under the political partnership emerging between the ÖKB, the Ministry of Defense, and the armed forces, a new mythology was cultivated around fallen *Wehrmacht* soldiers as martyrs in the struggle for Austria’s freedom.

This constituted a parallel development on the state level in Austria of what Norbert Frei called the “secondary affirmation” of the Nazi *Volksgemeinschaft* with regard to the rehabilitation of the *Wehrmacht* on the societal level in West Germany in the 1950s.⁶⁰ However, while the West German state then also began a new judicial reckoning with the crimes committed in the context of the war, the Austrian state more or less terminated postwar prosecutions in 1957. If we cease adopting the “victim myth” as an a priori paradigm for our analyses of the politics of history in postwar Austria, the concept of a “secondary affirmation” also becomes evident in the “denazification” process. As Siegfried Göllner has demonstrated, the amnesty granted to former Nazis from 1948 onwards was shot through with positive evaluations of their “idealism”—in other words, a recognition of their subjective sacrifices for the idea of National Socialism.⁶¹ Ina Markova demonstrated recently that the images of soldiers returning home conveyed not just wartime suffering but also heroic endurance, anti-communist self-justifications, and admonitions against the Soviet internment of POWs. They moreover served a reconstruction of masculinity that ran contrary to the assumption of a powerless victim role in the war.⁶²

The Sacrificial Memory Regime

The politics of history spearheaded by the ÖVP promoted a new hierarchy of sacrifices over victims, which, in turn, intensified the conflicts between the veterans’ associations and the associations of resistance fighters. The violent riots that erupted during the so-called Borodajkewicz affair in 1965 marked the nadir of a deep polarization after Austria obtained full sovereignty. During this first grand memorial year of the Second Republic—marking twenty years since the foundation of the state and ten

years since the State Treaty—the governing coalition of ÖVP and SPÖ was faced with the central challenge of overcoming the memory conflict over the question of who had made the true sacrifice. On April 27, 1965, the federal government extended the Austrian Heroes' Memorial with a memorial room for the "*Opfer im Kampf für Österreichs Freiheit*" in order to honor the sacrifices made by the resistance fighters alongside the sacrifices made by the *Wehrmacht* soldiers. A few months later, the parliament established October 26, the anniversary of the implementation of the Declaration of Neutrality in 1955, as Austria's national holiday. The Austrian Heroes' Memorial was chosen as the site for the state ritual to be enacted on this new national holiday. Although the ÖVP and SPÖ had agreed during the two previous years to settle their differences concerning the politics of the past, this day became the locus of renewed conflicts regarding the evaluation of the behavior of Austrian citizens during the era of Nazi rule. The coalition was only able to agree on laying a wreath in the memorial room for the resistance at the first state ritual but not on a ceremony to take place in the crypt dedicated to the *Wehrmacht* soldiers.⁶³ A coequal commemoration of freedom fighters and *Wehrmacht* soldiers evidently did not meet with the approval of the SPÖ ministers. Yet the ÖVP continued to emphatically demand a commemoration on equal terms of sacrifices made. Alfred Maleta of the ÖVP, the president of the National Council, used his ceremonial address in the parliament to rally for a general recognition of *all* the sacrifices made and called for everything that divided the nation to be forgotten in the interests of national formation. He regarded the context of sacrifice as offering a "common understanding"—"if we do not understand and affirm Austria as a mere community of material benefit, but as an *Opfergemeinschaft*."⁶⁴ With this term, Maleta was precisely not speaking of a community of *victims* but a community of people who had made various *sacrifices*. These included, he continued, the "*Opfergang* [in the sense of martyrdom] of the patriots" in the concentration camps on the basis of which "the idea of Austria" had been reborn, before adding the "courage to make sacrifices to the point of self-renunciation" in the period of Allied occupation, and finally integrating the former *Wehrmacht* soldiers and Nazis into his summation: "we do not aim to limit the sacrifices made by Austrians to the patriots, but rather to also integrate those sacrifices into our state consciousness that Austrians made during World War II, whether from force or from inner conviction, in the service of an idea they thought to be right." Distinctions between different forms of sacrifice and questions regarding their meaning he dismissed as "sophistry." The assertion of the sacrificial community in the state ritual at the Heroes' Memorial was

finally enabled by the end of the Grand Coalition in April 1966 when the ÖVP for the first time achieved an absolute majority in the general election. From then on, the heads of state laid wreaths in both the memorial room for the resistance and the crypt for the *Wehrmacht* soldiers.⁶⁵ The ÖVP's majority government under Federal Chancellor Josef Klaus thus institutionalized Austria's "sacrifices" as a new "imaginative horizon" in the memory of National Socialism and of World War II.⁶⁶ On a theoretical level, the government's policy can be understood as "a hegemonic process whereby the official narrative promoted by state agencies operates so as to 'frame' war memories articulated from below, in forms which serve the interest of that nation-state."⁶⁷ The subsequent majority government led by Bruno Kreisky of the SPÖ maintained this principle. One characteristic of the sacrificial memory regime was the authoritarian circumscription and appeasement of the various contradictory forms of recognition of sacrifices to the state that existed among *Wehrmacht* veterans and resistance associations. In return for recognition, all mutual contestation was to cease. Only then did an authoritarian element of "identity consolidation 'from above'" become effective, which it can hardly be said to have done previously through assertion of the victim hypothesis.⁶⁸

In contrast to the victim myth, the myth of sacrifice had the potential to connect to the social memory of a "dominant milieu" (Anton Pelinka) of which the mindset was characterized not by demarcation from but, rather, continuity with National Socialism. The tactical function of the victim myth (namely, dissociation from Germany) was the sign under which the sacrificial memory regime, including the recognition of supportive and conformist behavior under National Socialism, could be established. It externalized guilt to Germany, as Rainer Lepsius argued, while simultaneously also creating the conditions for what could, in reference to a contemporary finding of Theodor W. Adorno, be termed the afterlife of National Socialism in Austrian democracy.⁶⁹ The flipside of the authoritarian pacification of memory conflicts was the continued marginalization of those victims who had been "harmful to the community," who had been not "Germanizable," meaning Jews, Sinti and Roma, *Wehrmacht* deserters, so-called "asocials," homosexuals, and Carinthian Slovenes. Their marginalization was less an expression of a repression of guilt as of manifest continuities of social rejection and state discrimination. They could only be recognized as "true" victims once the sacrificial memory regime had eroded, and the struggles for recognition of the social movements in the 1970s and 1980s had extended discussions of their legal discrimination and social denigration into the politics of history too.

Endnotes

- 1 See Anton Pelinka: "...so leben wir mit zwei Geschichtsbildern," *ORF Nachlese Extra*, 1985, 15–17 (here 17); Heidemarie Uhl, *Zwischen Versöhnung und Verstörung: Eine Kontroverse um Österreichs historische Identität fünfzig Jahre nach dem "Anschluss,"* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1992), 15–16; Oliver Rathkolb, *Fiktion "Opfer": Österreich und die langen Schatten des Nationalsozialismus und der Dollfuß-Diktatur* (Innsbruck: Studien Verlag, 2017) 11; Günter Bischof, "'Opfer' Österreich? Zur moralischen Ökonomie des österreichischen historischen Gedächtnisses," in *Die politische Ökonomie des Holocaust: Zur wirtschaftlichen Logik von Verfolgung und "Wiedergutmachung,"* ed. Dieter Stiefel (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2001), 305–335 (here 307); Robert Knight, "Besiegt oder Befreit?" in *Die bevormundete Nation: Österreich und die Alliierten 1945–1949*, ed. Günter Bischof, Josef Leidenfrost (Innsbruck: Haymon, 1988), 75–92 (here 77). There is a vast literature on the "victim myth." Due to lack of space, I can only refer to some of the key literature here. I wish to thank Tim Corbett for the translation of this article and his critical comments.
- 2 See e.g. Brigitte Bailer, "Alle waren Opfer: Der selektive Umgang mit den Folgen des Nationalsozialismus," in *Inventur 45/55: Österreich im ersten Jahrzehnt der Zweiten Republik*, ed. Wolfgang Kos (Vienna: Sonderzahl, 1996), 181–200 (here: 185).
- 3 Bischof, "'Opfer' Österreich," 319; Heidemarie Uhl, "Of Heroes and Victims: World War II in Austrian Memory," *Austrian History Yearbook* 42 (2011): 185–200 (here 185).
- 4 Gerhard Botz, "Geschichte und kollektives Gedächtnis in der Zweiten Republik: 'Opferthese,' 'Lebenslüge' und 'Geschichtstabus' in der Zeitgeschichtsschreibung," in *Inventur 45/55: Österreich im ersten Jahrzehnt der Zweiten Republik* (Vienna: Sonderzahl, 1996), 51–86.
- 5 Walter Manoschek, Thomas Geldmacher, "Vergangenheitspolitik," in *Politik in Österreich: Das Handbuch*, ed. Herbert Dachs et al. (Vienna: Manz, 2006) 448–464 (here 453); Helga Embacher and Maria Ecker, "A Nation of Victims: How Austria Dealt With the Victims of Authoritarian Ständestaat and National Socialism," in *The Politics of War Trauma: The Aftermath of World War II in Eleven European Countries*, ed. Nannet Mooij, and Jolande Withuis (Amsterdam: aksant, 2010) 15–47 (here 15); Barbara Serloth, *Von Opfern, Tätern und jenen dazwischen: Wie Antisemitismus die Zweite Republik mitbegründete* (Vienna: Mandelbaum, 2016), 128–129; Ernst Hanisch, *Männlichkeiten: Eine andere Geschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts*, (Vienna: Böhlau, 2005), 316; Evan Burr Bukey, *Hitler's Austria: Popular Sentiment in the Nazi Era, 1938–1945* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 228–230. I do not exclude myself from this critique: Peter Pirker, *Subversion deutscher Herrschaft: Der britische Kriegsgeheimdienst SOE und Österreich*, (Göttingen: Vienna University Press, 2012), 219–220.
- 6 See Aleida Assmann, *Der lange Schatten der Vergangenheit: Erinnerungskultur und Geschichtspolitik* (Munich: Beck, 2006), 73, 76; Cathleen M. Guistino, "Behind the Opfermythos: Fascism, Agency, and Accountability in Twentieth-Century Austria," in *Austrian Environmental History*, ed. Marc Landry, Patrick Kupper, and Verena Winiwarter (New Orleans: UNO Press, 2018), 293–297 (here 294–295).
- 7 See e.g. Uhl, "Of Heroes and Victims," 185–186; Cornelius Lehnguth, *Waldheim und die Folgen: Der parteipolitische Umgang mit dem Nationalsozialismus in Österreich* (Frankfurt/Main: Campus, 2013), 64–68; Kathrin Hammerstein, *Gemeinsame Vergangenheit – getrennte Erinnerung? Der Nationalsozialismus in Gedächtnisdiskursen und Identitätskonstruktionen von Bundesrepublik Deutschland, DDR und Österreich* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2017), 60–62; Siegfried Göllner, *Die politischen Diskurse zu "Entnazifizierung," "Causa Waldheim" und "EU-Sanktionen": Opfernarrative und Geschichtsbilder in Nationalratsdebatten* (Hamburg: Kovač, 2009).
- 8 Svenja Goltermann, *Opfer: Die Wahrnehmung von Krieg und Gewalt in der Moderne* (Frankfurt/Main: S. Fischer, 2017), 182.

9 Goltermann, *Opfer*, 177.

10 See John Bunzl, and Bernd Marin, *Antisemitismus in Österreich: Sozialhistorische und soziologische Studien* (Innsbruck: Inn-Verlag, 1983), 206–208.

11 Karin Stögner, *Antisemitismus und Sexismus: Historisch-gesellschaftliche Konstellationen* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2014), 50.

12 Ernest Renan, *Was ist eine Nation?* (Vienna: Folio, 1995), 57.

13 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections of the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006), 7.

14 Goltermann, *Opfer*, 192.

15 Annet Mooij, and Jolande Withuis, “Conclusion,” in *The Politics of War Trauma: The Aftermath of World War II in Eleven European Countries*, ed. Annet Mooij and Jolande Withuis (Amsterdam: aksant, 2010), 323–332 (here 325).

16 See e.g. Frank Bösch, *Zeitenwende 1979: Als die Welt von heute begann* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2019), 363–395.

17 Jolande Withuis, “Introduction: The Politics of War Trauma,” in *The Politics of War Trauma: The Aftermath of World War II in Eleven European Countries*, ed. Annet Mooij and Jolande Withuis (Amsterdam: aksant, 2010), 1–11, 2.

18 See Robert Knight, “*Ich bin dafür, die Sache in die Länge zu ziehen*”: Die Wortprotokolle der österreichischen Bundesregierung von 1945 bis 1952 über die Entschädigung der Juden, 2nd ed. (Vienna: Böhlau, 2000); *Das große Tabu: Österreichs Umgang mit seiner Vergangenheit*, ed. Anton Pelinka, and Erika Weinzierl (Vienna: Böhlau, 1987); *Die bevormundete Nation: Österreich und die Alliierten 1945–1949*, ed. Günter Bischof, and Josef Leidenfrost (Innsbruck: Haymon, 1988); *Kontroversen um Österreichs Zeitgeschichte: Verdrängte Vergangenheit, Österreich-Identität, Waldheim und die Historiker*, ed. Gerhard Botz and Gerald Sprengnagel (Frankfurt/Main: Campus 1994).

19 Ingrid Böhler, “‘Wenn die Juden ein Volk sind, so ist es ein mieses Volk’: Die Kreisky-Peter-Wiesenthal-Affäre 1975,” in *Politische Affären und Skandale in Österreich: Von Mayerling bis Waldheim* ed. Michael Gehler, and Hubert Sickinger (Thaur: Kulturverlag, 1995), 502–531 (here 519).

20 Austrian Press Agency, 11 February, 1985.

21 *Waldheims Walzer: Ein Film von Ruth Beckermann* (Vienna: edition Filmladen, 2018).

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23 Gerhard Botz, “Die ‘Waldheim-Affäre’ als Widerstreit kollektiver Erinnerungen, in 1986: *Das Jahr, das Österreich veränderte*, ed. Barbara Toth and Hubertus Czernin (Vienna: Czernin, 2006), 74–95 (here 86); Uhl, “Of Heroes,” 186.

24 See Nicole-Melanie Goll, “‘Terror Pilots’ and ‘Bombing Holocaust’: Discourses on Victimization and Remembrance in Austria in the Context of the Allied Aerial Bombing,” in *Austrian Environmental History*, ed. Marc Landry, Patrick Kupper, and Verena Winiwarter (New Orleans: UNO Press, 2018), 277–292, 286.

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- 28 “Grußadressen der Außenminister der vier Signatarstaaten bei den Feierlichkeiten zum 30. Jahrestag der Unterzeichnung des österreichischen Staatsvertrages am 15. Mai 1985 im Wiener Belvedere,” in *Österreichisches Jahrbuch für Internationale Politik* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1985), 293–296.
- 29 Katharina Wegan, *Monument – Macht – Mythos: Frankreich und Österreich im Vergleich nach 1945* (Innsbruck: Studien Verlag, 2005), 324–325.
- 30 See also Thomas U. Berger, *War, Guilt, and World Politics after World War II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 101–107.
- 31 Michael Gehler, *Österreichs Außenpolitik der Zweiten Republik: Von der alliierten Besetzung bis zum Europa des 21. Jahrhunderts* (Innsbruck: Studien Verlag, 2005), 539.
- 32 Christian Gerbel et al., “Einleitung: Transformationen gesellschaftlicher Erinnerung. Zur ‘Gedächtnisgeschichte’ der Zweiten Republik,” in *Transformationen gesellschaftlicher Erinnerung: Studien zur ‘Gedächtnisgeschichte’ der Zweiten Republik*, ed. Christian Gerbel et al. (Vienna: Turia + Kant, 2005), 7–20 (here 11).
- 33 Robert Keyserlingk, *Austria in World War II: An Anglo–American Dilemma* (Quebec: McGill–Queen’s University Press, 1988).
- 34 See e.g. Günter Bischof, “Die Instrumentalisierung der Moskauer Erklärung nach dem 2. Weltkrieg,” in *Zeitgeschichte* 20 (1993): 345–366; Thomas Albrich, “‘Es gibt keine jüdische Frage’: Zur Aufrechterhaltung des österreichischen Opfermythos,” in *Der Umgang mit dem Holocaust. Europa – USA – Israel*, ed. Rolf Steininger (Vienna: Böhlau, 1994), 147–166; Heidemarie Uhl, “Das ‘erste’ Opfer: Der österreichische Opfermythos und seine Transformationen in der Zweiten Republik,” in *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft* 30, no. 1 (2001): 19–34, 21; Barbara Serloth, *Von Opfern, Tätern und jenen dazwischen: Wie Antisemitismus die Zweite Republik mitbegründete* (Vienna: Mandelbaum), 81; Bukey, *Hitler’s Austria*, 207; Peter Utgaard, *Remembering and Forgetting Nazism. Education, National Identity, and the Victim Myth in Postwar Austria* (New York: Berghahn, 2003), 123–124. For a critique, see Stourzh, *Um Einheit und Freiheit*, 25–28; Richard Mitten, “Jews and other Victims: The ‘Jewish Question’ and Discourses of Victimhood in Postwar Austria,” in *Austria in the European Union*, ed. Günter Bischof, Anton Pelinka, and Michael Gehler (New Brunswick: Transaction Publ., 2001), 223–270 (here 230); Peter Pirker, “British Subversive Politics towards Austria and Partisan Resistance in the Austrian–Slovene Borderland, 1938–1945,” in *Journal of Contemporary History* 52, no. 2 (2017): 319–351.
- 35 Robert H. Keyserlingk, “1. November 1943: Die Moskauer Deklaration – Die Alliierten, Österreich und der Zweite Weltkrieg,” in *Österreich im 20. Jahrhundert: Vom Zweiten Weltkrieg bis zur Gegenwart*, vol. 2, ed. Rolf Steininger and Michael Gehler (Vienna: Böhlau, 1997), 9–38.
- 36 Rathkolb, “Fiktion Opfer,” 48–49.
- 37 *Rot–Weiss–Rot–Buch: Darstellungen, Dokumente und Nachweise zur Vorgeschichte und Geschichte der Okkupation Österreichs nach amtlichen Quellen* (Vienna: Österr. Staatsdruckerei, 1946), 3.
- 38 Stourzh, *Um Einheit*, 73–74.
- 39 Ulrich Nachbauer, *Österreich als Opfer Hitlerdeutschlands: Das Rot–Weiß–Rot–Buch 1946 und die unveröffentlichten Vorarlberger Beiträge* (Regensburg: Roderer 2009), 70.
- 40 Ian Kershaw, *Roller–Coaster: Europe, 1950–2017* (London: Penguin, 2019), 9–10.
- 41 Knight, “Besiegt oder Befreit?,” 77.
- 42 Knight, “Der Waldheim-Kontext,” 81.
- 43 Rathkolb, *Fiktion “Opfer,”* 31.
- 44 Knight, *Ich bin dafür*, 46.

- 45 See Albrich, "Es gibt keine jüdische Frage," 160.
- 46 Bertrand Perz, "Österreich," in *Verbrechen erinnern: Die Auseinandersetzung mit Holocaust und Völkermord*, ed. Volkhard Knigge and Norbert Frei (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2005) 170–182 (here 177).
- 47 Brigitte Bailer, *Wiedergutmachung kein Thema: Österreich und die Opfer des Nationalsozialismus* (Vienna: Löcker, 1993), 26–27.
- 48 See Peter Pirker, Philipp Rode, and Mathias Lichtenwagner, "From Palimpsest to Memoiré: Exploring Urban Memorial Landscapes of Political Violence," in *Political Geography* 74 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2019.102057>; and the digital map www.porem.wien.
- 49 Nachbaur, *Österreich als Opfer*, 108.
- 50 Hammerstein, *Gemeinsame Vergangenheit*, 59.
- 51 "Was will 'Der Kamerad,'" in *Der Kamerad* 1 (1950): 1.
- 52 Felix Römer, *Kameraden: Die Wehrmacht von innen* (Munich: Piper, 2014), 117, 136; Richard Germann, "'Österreichische' Soldaten im deutschen Gleichschritt,'" in *Der Führer war wieder viel zu human, viel zu gefühlvoll: Der Zweite Weltkrieg aus der Sicht deutscher und italienischer Soldaten*, ed. Harald Welzer and Sönke Neitzel (Frankfurt/Main: Fischer, 2011), 217–233 (here 218).
- 53 Walter Manoschek and Günther Sandner, "Die Krieger als Opfer: Das Kriegspferversorgungsgesetz (KOVG) in den Debatten des österreichischen Minister- und Nationalrats und in österreichischen Printmedien," in *Wie Geschichte gemacht wird: Zur Konstruktion von Erinnerungen an Wehrmacht und Zweiten Weltkrieg*, ed. Hannes Heer et al. (Vienna: Czernin, 2003), 109–144 (here 115).
- 54 See Ke-chin Hsia, "War Victims': Concepts of Victimhood and the Austrian Identity after the Habsburgs," in *Austrian Environmental History*, ed. Marc Landry, Patrick Kupper and Verena Winiwarter (New Orleans: UNO Press, 2018), 245–252 (here 249).
- 55 Rosa Jochmann, "Für die Opfer des Faschismus," *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, March 1, 1949, 1–2.
- 56 See Serloth, *Von Opfern*, 129–130; Bailer, "Alle waren Opfer," 185; Sandner and Manoschek, "Krieger," 131–132; Hammerstein, *Gemeinsame Vergangenheit*, 62.
- 57 The VdU was founded in 1949 and consisted largely of 'former' National Socialists, see Margit Reiter, *Die Ehemaligen: Der Nationalsozialismus und die FPÖ* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2019), 96–101.
- 58 "Rede des Abg. Gorbach, 54. Sitzung des Nationalrates, VII. GP.," Dec. 3, 1954, www.parlament.gv.at. For the provinces, see Heidemarie Uhl, "Erinnerung als Versöhnung: Zur Geschichtspolitik der Zweiten Republik," in *Zeitgeschichte* 23, no. 5/6 (1996): 146–160.
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- 60 Norbert Frei, *Vergangenheitspolitik: Die Anfänge der Bundesrepublik und die NS-Vergangenheit* (Munich: Beck, 2012), 304.
- 61 Göllner, *Die politischen Diskurse*, 212.
- 62 Ina Markova, *Die NS-Zeit im Bildgedächtnis der Zweiten Republik* (Innsbruck: Studien Verlag, 2018) 46–47.
- 63 Amtsvermerk, Schmückung des Weiheraumes, Zl. 2279/65, Burghauptmannschaft Österreich (BHÖ).
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67 T. G. Ashplant, Graham Dawson, and Michael Roper, "The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration: Contexts, Structures and Dynamics," in *The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration*, ed. idem (London: Routledge, 2000), 3–85 (here 53).

68 Hammerschmitt, "Gemeinsame Vergangenheit," 65.

69 Theodor W. Adorno, "Was bedeutet: Aufarbeitung der Vergangenheit," in *Eingriffe: Neun kritische Modelle* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1963), 125–146 (here 126).