

For all those who wouldn't or couldn't leave and were
murdered in cold blood.

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Foreword

A History of a Bygone Era

Manfried Rauchensteiner

Consulting the 1914 volume of one of the most helpful reference books of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy—the *Schematismus für die k.u.k. Armee und Flotte* (Schematics for the Imperial and Royal Army and Navy)—one finds not only a list of the regiments, garrisons, and the names of the officers on active duty and in the reserves, but also names of clergymen and their religions: Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Protestant (Augsburg Confession), Evangelical Reformed (Calvinists), “Israelitic” (Jewish), and “Mohammedanic” (Muslim).

The total of seven officially approved confessions mirrors the diversity of the army, which, for its part, was a replica of the construction of the polyglot Habsburg Empire, and therefore difficult to understand. In 1867, Austria-Hungary was divided into two halves, each of which had its own government and parliament, with only three common ministers. Over all of this stood the emperor and king, until 1916 Franz Joseph I (Ferenc József in Hungary), and after him Emperor Karl I (Charles I)—in Hungary, King Károly IV. The Monarchy consisted of eleven nationalities, which had identical rights and obligations, but beyond that, they had very few similarities.

The mention of eleven nationalities is misleading insofar as there existed an additional group of people, which had the qualities of a nationality but did not see itself as such: the Jews.

The total number of Jews in the Habsburg Monarchy was approximately four percent of its total population of fifty-two million; therefore, the number of Jews was more than the percentage of Italians, Romanians, and Austrian Serbs put together. Compared to other nationalities, who settled in wide but definable regions, the Jews were scattered over the entire Monarchy; thus, one could not count them exclusively as part of one or the other kingdom, principality, or county. And there was yet another problem: Most Austrian Jews

counted themselves as being of German nationality, notwithstanding the fact that approximately half of them lived in Galicia—today part of Poland and the Ukraine—and in Bukowina—which today is divided between Ukraine and Romania. Their spiritual capital was not L'viv (Lemberg) or Černivci (Czernowitz), but Vienna, where the percentage of Jews was about eight percent of the population. In Budapest, the percentage was slightly higher.

Jews played an important role in the politics, administration, economy, science, and especially in the culture of the Habsburg Empire—but they also played a significant role in the army. Most people, even in Austria and Poland, may be surprised to know that Austrian emperors proudly held the title of Duke of Auschwitz and Sator. This fact should be emphasized, since it was ignored and suppressed during the Nazi period in Austria.

Long before the implementation of compulsory military service in the Habsburg Monarchy in 1868, the Jews of Galicia, like German-Austrians, were liable for the draft and military service. This was one of the consequences of the annexation of the southern parts of Poland by Austria in 1772. Jews regarded compulsory military service with mixed feelings: some looked on it as an unpleasant obligation, but others as a great opportunity. Austria was a much more modern and liberal state than Poland or Russia; it opened up all sorts of possibilities for a career and, in the case of the Jews, for emancipation. Religious tolerance, beginning with the *Toleranzpatent* of Emperor Joseph II (1780–1790), also enlarged the scope of religious freedom. The military also opened up opportunities for social advancement. Jewish officers could attain the ranks of staff officers and generals. Of course, the journey was painstaking, for the mass of professional officers were Roman Catholics, as was the emperor and king. Still, opportunities for promotion were available. By contrast, in Prussia Jews were not allowed to become reserve officers and not permitted into the Prussian officers' corps; thus, Germany entered World War I without a single Jewish officer.

Since Austria-Hungary was not involved in great military conflicts in the years between 1866 and 1914, service in the army as well as in the navy was comparatively comfortable. Every male Austrian able to serve in the military was obliged to serve for twelve years, three years on active duty and nine in the reserves. In 1912, the period for active duty was reduced to two years. Then, World War I broke out, changing everything.

Like most other European countries, a euphoric atmosphere reigned in most parts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and reserve soldiers were keen to join up for active service. Tumultuous scenes occurred in many parts of the

country; nobody wanted to be absent when the most important event of the twentieth century thus far took place. At the end of July and in early August 1914, two million Austro-Hungarian soldiers were sent to war against Serbia and Russia, a war whose reality proved to be completely different from the one expected. Nevertheless, the soldiers did not hesitate and went off to fight for God, emperor, and fatherland.

Jewish soldiers were no exception. They fought in the lines of the Habsburg armies in Serbia, Poland, Russia, Montenegro, Albania, and Italy. They were part of the Austro-Hungarian Expeditionary Corps, which was sent to the Ottoman Empire in the Near and Middle East, and some of the most haunting and touching photos of the war show Austro-Hungarian Jewish soldiers praying at the Western Wall in Jerusalem in the midst of the Great War.

During the war, 5,091 Jewish Austro-Hungarian officers were killed in action or died from wounds or illness. This made up 6.78 percent of all officer losses and lay far beyond expectation, given that Jews comprised 4 percent of the population. Officer losses of the Honvéd (Royal Hungarian), one of the three parts of the Austro-Hungarian Army, were even higher: One third of the Honvéd officers killed in the numerous battles were Jews. The fact that the overall number of Jewish soldiers killed remained below the estimated number gave rise to derogatory comments, but did not reflect the true situation.

Altogether, more than 300,000 Jewish soldiers served in the infantry and other branches. They fought, were decorated, suffered, and died like their comrades from other nationalities.

One additional fact should also be mentioned: Tens of thousands of Jewish soldiers were taken as prisoners of war and became part of the 1.5 million prisoners that the Austro-Hungarian Army lost to the Russians. Because they viewed themselves as German-Austrians or Hungarians, most were brought to the prisoner of war camps beyond the Ural Mountains and to the Asiatic provinces of the Russian Empire. There, they had to remain until the Russian Revolutions and the peace treaty with Bolshevik Russia in 1918.

One of the chapters in this book stands out as especially significant to the history of the Austro-Hungarian War. It is the history of the Jewish chaplains (*Feldrabbiner*) who accompanied Jewish soldiers during both the good and the bad days of the war. The importance of the role and history of the *Feldrabbiner* cannot be overestimated. It was the *Feldrabbiner* who supported the faith of the soldiers in their prosecution of a “just” war. It was the *Feldrabbiner* who supported the religious conviction of the Jewish soldiers, explained the Holy Scriptures, and gave the soldiers the feeling of some normality, which was put

to its sternest test during the war. It was also the *Feldrabbiner* who gave them comfort and consolation in their darkest hours. Their story is part of the larger history of the end of Austria-Hungary in World War I, and is an essential part of the subject of this book.

Peter Appelbaum deserves our thanks for having so thoroughly researched the role of Jewish soldiers as part of the Austro-Hungarian Army. He has made a large amount of previously unpublished texts, articles and correspondence available for the first time in the English language, most especially the history of the *Feldrabbiner*, which he describes in an excellent manner. This is a practically unknown part of the history of World War I, detailing aspects far beyond the usual operational, tactical or logistical levels of the original catastrophe of the twentieth century: This vast war can only be understood by accompanying these suffering men individually through their history of pain and suffering. A history of Austro-Hungarian Jewish soldiers during the war is much more than simply closing a gap in our knowledge. It also offers insights that can enable us to better understand the many good points of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

One of the most beautiful and poignant epitaphs for the old monarchy was written by the author Joseph Roth, who was born in Brody. When Roth explained his motives for writing his great novel *Radetzky March*, he noted:

A cruel will of history has shattered my old fatherland, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. I loved this fatherland that enabled me to be both a patriot and a citizen of the world at the same time, an Austrian and a German among all Austrian peoples. I loved the virtues and advantages of this fatherland, and now that it is lost and gone, I still love its faults and weaknesses. It had many. It atoned for them with its death.

There is really nothing to add to Roth's epitaph.

Jewish Soldiers in Habsburg Austria

Gerald Lamprecht

In autumn 1933 the famous Austrian author Joseph Roth, who had already fled from Berlin into exile to Paris in January of that year, wrote the powerful text *Das Autodafé des Geistes*. In this text, he accusingly wrote:

They all [the burned authors] have fallen on the field of honor of the spirit. They all have a common flaw in the eyes of German murderers and arsonists: *Jewish blood and European spirit*.

The threatened and terrorized world must account for the fact that penetration of Private Hitler into European civilization does not only mean the beginning of a new chapter in the field of antisemitism: far from it! What the arsonists say is true, but in a different sense; this Third Reich is the beginning of its downfall! By destroying the Jews, one persecutes Christ. For the first time Jews are beaten to death not because they crucified Jesus, but because they produced him. When one burns the books of Jewish or suspicious authors, one actually sets fire to the Book of Books: to the Bible. If one expels or imprisons Jewish judges and lawyers, one turns in spirit at the same time against right and justice. . . .

We German writers of Jewish descent were the first to fall for Europe. We were spared folly and remorse. All we have left is honor . . . !

Many of us served in the field during the war, and many fell. We wrote for Germany, we died for Germany. We shed our blood for Germany in two ways: the blood that nourishes our physical life and the blood with which we write. We have sung of Germany, the true Germany! That is why we are being burned by Germany today!¹

Joseph Roth, who had repeatedly mourned the downfall of the multi-ethnic Habsburg monarchy with his texts, wrote the *Autodafé des Geistes* as a response to book burnings by the National Socialists from May 1933 onwards and the beginning persecution and expulsion of Jews. For him, Jewish authors and expatriates were soldiers who fought for the spirit of Europe.

Only a few years later, in the summer of 1940, Jakob Kellmann opened his memoirs—addressed to his daughter—with the words:

... and many generations will tell of their great-great-grandfathers, who fought and bled as Austrians in the Great War of 1914–1918, but had to leave their Fatherland when a former war comrade came to power in this country, and decided that for people who belong to the Jewish *Volksstamm* [tribe] there is no longer any place in their own Fatherland, regardless of their merits for the same.²

Kellmann was born in Galicia, moved to Vienna shortly before the beginning of the Great War, fought in the Habsburg army from 1915 to 1918, and became an Austrian citizen after 1918, having overcome numerous bureaucratic obstacles. He led a successful life in Vienna before persecution began in March 1938 for him and all those defined as Jews by the National Socialists through the 1935 Nuremberg Laws. The consequences were first loss of their middle-class existence and then loss of homeland and potentially of life. Kellmann and his family first managed to flee to Panama and then on to the United States, where he lived until his death.

A third example. The story is told that Major General Emil Sommer, the first Federal Leader of the Austrian Federation of Jewish Front Soldiers and later head of the Legitimist Jewish Front Fighters, was torn out of his apartment by young SA-men in the course of the *Anschlusspogrom* (annexation-pogrom) in Vienna in March 1938, to be publicly humiliated in a so-called *Reibpartie*, where Jews were forced to clean the city streets and pavements with hand brushes. But before he was taken out, the story goes, he asked the SA-men to be allowed to go back to his apartment to dress differently. After a short while, he returned dressed in his uniform with all his war decorations, whereupon the SA-men “shamefacedly” let him go. As Thomas Chaimowicz put it in his memoirs: “A k.u.k. general, kneeling on the ground washing the streets, could lead to a disturbance of people passing by, many of whom had noticed a few days after the invasion where the wind was blowing.”³

All three abovementioned examples bear witness to the National Socialist policy of expulsion and extermination of the Jewish population, after loyal and patriotic military service to their respective homelands during World War I. They loudly denounce the betrayal by Private Adolf Hitler of his former war comrades, and cast the logic of modern military service into the balance against Nazi barbarism. The modern state assures the individual “citizen soldier,” ready to fight in times of war, civil rights and security as well as equal position in society and state. In this way, the “hero’s death” or willingness to suffer in war has been the ultimate proof of each individual citizen’s unbreakable loyalty to the state and society in which he lived.⁴ Joseph Roth, Jakob Kellmann, Emil Sommer, and many thousands of other former soldiers of World War I referred to this fundamental relationship between military service and civil rights in the face of the Nazi threat. They drew attention to achievements of Jewish emancipation, and deplored the National Socialists’ betrayal of the promise of emancipation.

Military service and Emancipation

In 1783, before emancipation and Jewish military service were first considered in Prussia, Government Councilor Christian Wilhelm Dohm published an enlightened paper *Über die Bürgerliche Verbesserung der Juden*.⁵ Dohm, who had been inspired by Moses Mendelssohn to write this paper, dedicated an entire chapter to the question of Jewish military service, first listing all the traditional arguments of opponents of Jewish military service, alleging that Jews were generally incapable of military service. The religious commandments of “Sabbath rest” and Jewish dietary laws would complicate Jewish military service. Alleged Jewish social segregation, as well as their “unfamiliarity with physical labor” or “lack of physical stature” would also be problems. But, above all, there was the religious principle that the only just war is a “defensive war,” and that wars of aggression are forbidden. The prevailing opinion was that Jews would not, when compelled to do so, fight against Jewish soldiers of opposing armies, thus behaving disloyally towards their homeland. For all these reasons, emancipation opponents concluded that “citizens who do not defend the society to which they belong are not citizens like others, cannot demand equal rights, and must tolerate a measure of oppression.”⁶

Dohm responded:

One has the right to demand unqualified military service from Jews as well. Now, of course, they cannot do this because oppression, in

which they have lived for so long, has stifled their warlike spirit and personal courage, and their religious speculations have led them to antisocial paradoxes. They had no Fatherland for a millennium and a half, so how could they fight and die for something that didn't exist? I am convinced that once they have been given a Fatherland, they will fight with the same ability and loyalty as everyone else.⁷

Dohm's writings represent the central discourses of debates on Jewish war service throughout the nineteenth century up to World War I. In essence, they touch on the question of the extent to which Jews could become full citizens of emerging liberal national-civic societies. Accordingly, development of European Jewish emancipation can also be seen through the prism of admission of Jews to military service and the question of their opportunities for military promotion.

In France, emancipation took place in 1791, when Jews were able to serve without restrictions in the military. Consequently, Jewish soldiers fought in all Napoleonic wars. Despite some setbacks and restrictions at the beginning of the 19th century by the *Décret Infâme* (1808), Jews were able to rise to the highest military ranks within the army, especially in the Third French Republic.⁸ French Jewish military chaplains (*aumôniers*) had existed since the beginning of the nineteenth century. But complete integration into the French army did not mean that there was no antisemitic discrimination. Rather, the Dreyfus affair is to be seen as the birth of political antisemitism in France.⁹ It must be borne in mind that, despite the catastrophic social and political consequences of *l'Affaire*, Dreyfus was permitted to join the French general staff—something that was impossible in Prussia and unthinkable in Imperial Russia.

The United States, Great Britain, and Italy emancipated their Jewish population very early and, despite some individual antisemitism, there were no structural restrictions in the military careers of Jewish soldiers. In all these armies, Jews were able to rise to general rank, and in the case of Great Britain, during World War I, there was also a separate Jewish volunteer unit, the Jewish Legion.¹⁰

In the Russian Empire, emancipation was only a consequence of World War I and the Revolution of 1917. Until 1827, no Jews were drafted into the army, instead they had to pay a substitute tax. As in other European countries, enlistment of Jews into the army, which began in 1827, was primarily aimed at greater integration into society, which in Russia meant that Jewish soldiers were to be forced to convert through numerous discriminations. As a

result of these politics, opportunities for career advancement in the army were limited, and many Jews tried to escape military service for religious reasons, fear of discrimination, and baptism.¹¹ With enactment of general compulsory military service in 1874, numerous decrees were issued to force Jews into military service. In the last third of the nineteenth and at the beginning of the twentieth century, the army also introduced numerous restrictions for Jews. In 1908, for example, right-wing parties in the Duma demanded that Jews be completely exempted from military service and that substitute taxes should be paid instead. The aim of this initiative was to undermine demands for emancipation. Liberal, enlightened Jewish authorities repeatedly argued for military service as an argument for emancipation, to no avail.¹²

In an expert opinion of the *Oberkriegskollegium*, Prussian Jews were considered unsuitable for military service in 1790,¹³ and not admitted into the army until the emancipation edict of 1812. Subsequently, Jews fought as Prussian soldiers in the wars of liberation and again, with numerous restrictions, in the reactionary wars against Denmark (1864) and Austria (1866). These restrictions were gradually lifted (at least on paper) with foundation of the German Empire and the emancipation of 1871. In the Franco-Prussian war of 1870/71, many Jews again fought for the German Empire, in an attempt to gain national integration within the framework of the German army.¹⁴ But despite legal emancipation and active patriotic participation in the war, it was impossible for Jews in the Prussian army to become officers until World War I. Jews were also not allowed to become reserve officers.¹⁵ Although there was no legal foundation for this rejection, the aristocratic status of the Protestant Prussian nobility and the idea of a Christian Germany in which Jews were under no circumstances allowed to give orders to Christians, made it impossible in the Prussian army even for Jews who were largely bourgeois. By contrast, Catholic Bavaria was more liberal, allowing a small number of Jews to become officers. This military rejection, also found in other societal areas, was perceived as a deep insult. The industrialist and future foreign minister of the Weimar Republic, Walter Rathenau, wrote, after repeated attempts at an officer's career had failed:

In the adolescence of every German Jew there is a painful moment which he remembers throughout his life: when he becomes fully aware for the first time that he has entered the world as a second-class citizen and that no capability or merit can free him from this situation.¹⁶

The impossibility of an officer's career for Jews in the German Empire was finally abolished after massive losses in the officer's corps during the early months of the war. During the war's course, despite the antisemitism already described, about 3,000 Jews were promoted to officer rank (but none higher than captain).¹⁷

In the Habsburg Monarchy, the beginnings of Jewish military service were linked to Joseph II's *Toleranzpatent* (edict of tolerance). Starting in 1782, he gradually implemented the ideas set forth by Christian Wilhelm Dohm, against considerable resistance from the Court War Council. Austria was the first European country to introduce military duty for Jews in 1788, even before France.¹⁸ At first, Jews were only used in transportation, but from 1789 onwards they could also serve in other units. As in other countries, there were initially supporters and resolute opponents of military service within the Jewish population. Supporters associated military service with the chance of emancipation and societal integration, while the mostly Orthodox opponents, who were critical of the Age of Enlightenment (*haskalah*), expressed fears with regard to observance of religious laws.¹⁹

After a brief period of regression following the death of Joseph II, Jews were readmitted to military service in 1806, and allowed to rise to officer's and finally to general's rank within the Habsburg Army by the time of the *Ausgleich* (compromise) and emancipation in 1867.²⁰ It is noteworthy that, after enactment of general conscription in 1869, a very high proportion of reserve officers in the Habsburg Army towards the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century were Jews. István Deák shows that, in 1911, seventeen percent of the reserve officers were Jews and that during World War I around 25,000 Jewish officers served.²¹ Besides the fundamental denominational tolerance of the Habsburg Monarchy and importance of the army as one of the three columns of the supranational state (bureaucracy, dynasty, army), this was certainly also due to the high proportion of Jewish high school graduates.²²

If one understands the history of Jewish military service as part of the history of emancipation, then at the beginning of World War I both parallels and differences emerge in the different countries. Jews served as soldiers for their homeland in all belligerent states, to gain or confirm their legal and social acceptance. The total number of Jewish soldiers who served during the war is difficult to quantify, as only limited reliable statistics are available. According to a contemporary list from the 1930s, a total of c. 1.25 to 1.5 million Jews served in all warring countries. For the Habsburg Army, about 300,000–350,000 soldiers are assumed to have served, of whom between 30,000 and 35,000 were

killed. In the Tsarist army, the figure is estimated at 600,000, of whom between 60,000 and 70,000 were probably killed. In the German Empire about 100,000 served and 12,000 were killed, while, in the British Army corresponding numbers were 60,000 and 2,324, respectively.²³ In the French army, 35,000 soldiers served and 7,000 fallen are reported to have been killed.²⁴ Most Jewish soldiers during the World War came from Central and Eastern Europe, and Jewish soldiers fought on the Eastern Front in all armies.

It should also be emphasized that Eastern European Jewish civilians were particularly affected by the war, because their settlement areas in the Russian Pale of Settlement, Galicia, and Bukovina were central theaters of operations. Furthermore, the World War did not end *sensu stricto* in November 1918, but immediately passed into the Baltic wars of independence as well as Polish-Ukrainian, Polish-Soviet and Russian Civil Wars. Many Jews died between 1914 and 1920 in pogroms, and as a result of diseases and famines. With the continuation of the war, antisemitism also became radicalized; about 60,000 Jews were murdered in pogroms in affected areas during these years, and by mid-1921 about 200,000 Jews were homeless in those “bloodlands.”²⁵

Expectations, Experiences, Memories

Against the backdrop of promises of emancipation, thousands of Jews with very specific expectations of their military service followed their beloved Emperor Franz Joseph I's call to arms, and volunteered at the beginning of the war in 1914. For them, equality of rights achieved in 1867 was to be followed by social equality through military service, and, finally, all forms of antisemitism would be overcome. Another war goal was liberation of Jews from the Tsarist yoke, and the slogan “revenge for Kishinev” was on everyone's lips. These expectations comprised specific Jewish experiences and subsequent war memories from 1914 onwards.²⁶ Jewish war experience did not result from events that only Jewish soldiers would have experienced, but also from the specific Jewish interpretation and endowment with meaning of military violence. This means that, with the exception of decidedly antisemitic violence, the experience of warlike violence, suffering and deprivation shared by millions of other people, was not specifically Jewish. The specific Jewish endowment of meaning, in addition to general war discourses of the time, was founded above all in the history of emancipation and struggle for citizenship as well as in Jewish religion and tradition. The focus of these experiences was always on the questions of social equality and recognition of the Jewish population and,

closely linked to this, defense against antisemitism. They centered on the area of tension between Jewish particularism and national egalitarianism, equal and recognized possibilities of existence of a Jewish “minority,” and Jewish identity in a liberal, national-civic society. This tension is reflected in all debates about Jewish war expectation, war experience and war memories, suffered by all soldiers as well as the mourning and overcoming of trauma and the assurance of collective identity.²⁷ These Jewish endowments of meaning become visible as narratives in the reports of soldiers’ experiences, memoirs, sermons of rabbis and chaplains, narratives in Jewish newspapers and magazines, and Jewish war memorials and other memory signs.²⁸

Based on expectations and experiences, foundations for future Jewish war memory were already laid during the war period. Particularly in newspapers and magazines, names of the fallen heroes were memorialized and special sections for the Jewish heroes were built in the Jewish cemeteries. From 1918, cemeteries and synagogues were to become the central locations of Jewish war memory. After the Great War, almost every Jewish community in Austria erected war memorials, normally in the center of the war grave sections, or memorial plaques in synagogues or in Jewish cemeteries. The list of the fallen was placed at the center of all these memorials and plaques, just as in non-Jewish memorials, usually without making any reference to their military or social status. Inscribed names were framed by religious or patriotic symbols and followed by some religious references.²⁹ All of these memorials carried the typical abbreviations that appear on Jewish tombstones such as *נפ”ה* and *תנצב”ה*.

Responsibility for the erection of Jewish war memorials and memorial plaques all over Austria from 1919 onwards lay with Jewish communities, burial associations (*chevra kadishas*) and the *Bund jüdischer Frontsoldaten* (BJF, Federation of Jewish War Veterans) of Austria, founded in Vienna in 1932. The BJF was founded by former Austrian Jewish Soldiers after a drastic increase in the number of antisemitic agitations and assaults by National Socialists.³⁰ Its main aims were to protest the “permanent defamation and daily defilement of the Jewish name and Jewish honor,”³¹ actively resist antisemitism, and preserve and maintain Jewish civil rights in Austria. Members of the BJF legitimized their activities by citing their loyal military service to the Habsburg Army and referring to the narrative of emancipation and military service. The head of the BJF, off-duty Captain Sigmund Edler von Friedmann (the future Eitan Avisar of the Israeli Defense Forces) argued in his speech at the general muster on May 5, 1935:

Was Jewish blood that was shed worth less than the blood of non-Jews? No! It was the same lifeblood that was shed, the same lifeblood wept over by Jewish and non-Jewish mothers alike. We do not beg for equality, we do not beg for equal rights, we demand them!³²

Conclusion

In the end, all efforts by men like Joseph Roth, Jakob Kellmann, and Emil Sommer, former Jewish soldiers, and members of the BJF to fight for their rights as citizens and remember their military service, ultimately afforded no protection whatsoever. The Holocaust marked the end of traditions of Jewish war memory in Austria. All those who returned to Austria after 1945 could not continue the war memorial discourses of the prewar period because history of their heroic struggle for the Fatherland was robbed of legitimacy due to betrayal by the very Fatherland they had so much loved and for which they had sacrificed so much.³³ The National Socialists not only expelled and destroyed the milieu of remembrance necessary for every form of memory, they also destroyed many material memorial signs like monuments and plaques in synagogues and cemeteries. Furthermore, memory of the Jewish soldiers of World War I was overshadowed by the catastrophe of the Holocaust, and in Austria, like the history of the Jews in general, was largely erased from public consciousness for many years.

If one looks at the academic literature on Austrian Jewish soldiers, it can be seen that Jews in general and Jewish soldiers in the Habsburg Army in particular, were hardly noticed for a long time and thus were not researched.³⁴ The first scientific work on the situation in Austria was done by Wolfgang von Weisl in 1971,³⁵ followed by Erwin A. Schmidl (1989),³⁶ István Déak (1990),³⁷ Martin Senekowitsch (1994 and 1995),³⁸ Beatrix Hoffmann-Holter (1995),³⁹ Marsha Rozenblit⁴⁰ and David Rechter,⁴¹ both in 2001. What they all have in common is that in the end they did not lead to any greater public or historical knowledge with regard to Jewish participation in the war, either as soldiers or as supporters, victims or opponents. A noticeable change resulted from the centennial of 2014-2018,⁴² which witnessed publication of a new edition of Erwin Schmidl's standard work (1989)⁴³ and realization of a number of exhibitions⁴⁴ and book projects.⁴⁵ These include publication of the war diaries of the physician Bernhard Bardach⁴⁶ as well as this important book by Peter Appelbaum.

Finally, looking at the specific practice of memory in Austria after 1945, it can be observed that in contrast to Germany, where the first signs and activities of memory of the Jewish soldiers of World War I are noticeable from the 1960s onwards,⁴⁷ Austrian public debate about Jewish war memories and Jewish soldiers, Jewish culture and history, began late. One of the first memorial activities dates from 1982 and is closely linked to the move of the Austrian Jewish Museum into the Wertheimer house in Eisenstadt. On the museum's initiative, a memorial plaque for fallen Jewish soldiers, first erected in June 1934 and probably destroyed by the National Socialists, was redesigned and installed in the museum's inner courtyard.⁴⁸ Although representatives of the Austrian armed forces attended the inauguration by Chief Rabbi Eisenberg in 1982, it was not until the 1990s that the army became aware of individual Jewish war memorials from the interwar period that had not been destroyed. Since 1995 a wreath has been laid in front of the Jewish war memorials at the Jewish cemetery in Graz and for some years now also at the Jewish memorial and cemetery at the Vienna *Zentralfriedhof* on All Saints' Day during Austrian Armed Forces' commemoration of the fallen.⁴⁹ Thus, more than a hundred years after the end of the World War I, Austrian Jewish soldiers are now part of official Austrian hero's memory and, at least in the field of the military preservation of tradition, they finally receive the recognition that they so deeply desired in the years from 1914 to 1938.

Endnotes

- 1 Joseph Roth, "Das Autodafé des Geistes," in *Joseph Roth Werk*, vol. 3: *Das journalistische Werk 1929–1939*, ed. Klaus Westermann (Frankfurt am Main and Vienna: Büchergilde Gutenberg, 1989), 494–503.
- 2 Memoirs of Jacob Kellmann, Leo Baeck Institute (LBI), ME 1639; Martin Moll and Herbert-Ernst Neusiedler (eds.), *Woher du kommst. Die wahre Geschichte ihres Lebens, die Jacob und Paula Kellmann für ihre Tochter aufgeschrieben haben* (Vienna: edition a, 2014).
- 3 See Thomas Chaimowicz, "'Lacht nicht, ich wasche Gottes Erde'. Als Jude und Legitimist im Wien von 1938," in 1938—*Anatomie eines Jahres*, ed. Thomas Chorherr (Vienna: Ueberreuter, 1987), 292–299, here 293; see also: "Austrian General Disclaims Role in Jewish Street-Sweeping 'Epic,'" *New York Times*, October 15, 1946.
- 4 See Ute Frevert, *Die kasernierte Nation. Militärdienst und Zivilgesellschaft in Deutschland* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2001), 15f.; Nikolaus Buschmann, "Vom 'Untertanensoldaten' zum 'Bürgersoldaten'? Zur Transformation militärischer Loyalitätsvorstellungen um 1800," *Jahrbuch des Simon-Dubnow-Instituts* 12 (2013): 105–126, here 105.
- 5 Christian Wilhelm Dohm, *Ueber die buergerliche Verbesserung der Juden* (Berlin and Stettin: Friedrich Nikolai, 1783).
- 6 *Ibid.*, 223.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 236f.

- 8 See Anne Külow, "Jüdische Soldaten in der Französischen Armee—Ein Erfolgsmodell für Integration?," in *Jüdische Soldaten: Jüdischer Widerstand in Deutschland und Frankreich*, ed. Michael Berger and Gideon Römer-Hillebrecht (Paderborn, Munich, Vienna, and Zürich: Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh, 2012), 145–148.
- 9 Detlev Zimmermann, "Eine Bewährungsprobe für die Republik. Frankreich und die Dreyfus-Affäre," in *J'Accuse . . . ! . . . ich klage an! Zur Affäre Dreyfus. Eine Dokumentation*, ed. Elke-Vera Kotowski and Julius H. Schoeps (Berlin: Verlag für Berlin-Brandenburg, 2005), 33–46.
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- 11 Military service in the Russian Empire also triggered migration. See, for example, the biography of the Hebrew author Gershon Shoffmann: Gerald Lamprecht, "Gerschon Schoffmann—eine biographische Annäherung," in Gerschon Schoffmann, *Nicht für immer. Erzählungen* (Graz and Vienna: Literaturverlag Droschl, 2016), 337–350, here 339.
- 12 "Militärdienst der Juden," in *Jüdisches Lexikon. Ein enzyklopädisches Handbuch des jüdischen Wissens in vier Bänden*, vol. 4, part 1: Me–R (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1930), 182–191, here 188–191; Yohanan Petrovsky-Shtern, "Military Service in Russia," in *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*, vol. 2, ed. Gershon David Hundert (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), 1170–1174.
- 13 See "Militärdienst der Juden," 183.
- 14 See Christine G. Krüger, "Sind wir denn nicht Brüder?" *Deutsche Juden im nationalen Krieg 1870/1871*, vol. 31 of *Krieg in der Geschichte* (Paderborn, Munich, Vienna, and Zürich: Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh, 2006), 191–297.
- 15 See Michael Berger, *Eisernes Kreuz—Doppeladler—Davidstern. Juden in deutschen und österreichisch-ungarischen Armeen. Der Militärdienst jüdischer Soldaten durch zwei Jahrhunderte* (Berlin: Trafo Wissenschaftsverlag, 2010), 27–47; idem., *Für Kaiser, Reich und Vaterland. Jüdische Soldaten. Eine Geschichte vom 19. Jahrhundert bis heute* (Zürich: Orell Füssli, 2015).
- 16 Walter Rathenau, quoted in Shulamit Volkov, *Walther Rathenau. Ein jüdisches Leben in Deutschland 1867–1922* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2012), 33.
- 17 See Berger, *Eisernes Kreuz*, 50.
- 18 See Erwin A. Schmidl, *Habsburgs jüdische Soldaten 1788–1918* (Vienna, Cologne, and Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 2014), 29–32.
- 19 See Michael K. Silber, "From Tolerated Aliens to Citizen-Soldiers. Jewish Military Service in the Era of Joseph II," *Austrian Studies* 6 (2005): *Constructing Nationalities in East Central Europe*, ed. Pieter M. Judson and Marsha L. Rozenblit (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2004) 19–36, here 27–29.
- 20 "Militärdienst der Juden," 186.
- 21 See István Deák, *Der k.(u.)k. Offizier 1848–1918* (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 1995), 206, 208.
- 22 Ibid., 211.
- 23 Felix Aron Teilhaber, "Der Weltkrieg und die Juden," in *Jüdisches Lexikon. Ein enzyklopädisches Handbuch des jüdischen Wissens in vier Bänden*, vol. 4, part 2: S–Z (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1930), 1379–1381, here 1380. Current data put the number of Russian Jewish soldiers at c. 180,000. No accurate fatality statistics are available (Yohanan Petrovsky Shtern, personal communication). Thus, the total of Jews serving in all armies was nearer to one million.
- 24 See Jay Winter, "Jüdische Erinnerung und Erster Weltkrieg: Zwischen Geschichte und Gedächtnis," in *Jahrbuch des Simon-Dubnow-Instituts* 13 (2014): 111–129, here 117f.

- 25 David Rechter, "Die große Katastrophe: die österreichischen Juden und der Krieg," in *Weltuntergang. Leben und Sterben im Ersten Weltkrieg*, ed. Marcus G. Patka (Vienna, Graz, and Klagenfurt: Styria Premium, 2014), 14; Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands. Europe between Hitler and Stalin* (New York: Basic Books, 2010).
- 26 See Jörg Rogge, "Kriegserfahrungen erzählen—Einleitung," in *Kriegserfahrungen erzählen. Geschichts- und literaturwissenschaftliche Perspektiven*, ed. Jörg Rogge (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2016), 9–30, here 13f.
- 27 See Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning. The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Reinhart Koselleck, "Einleitung," in *Der politische Totenkult. Kriegerdenkmäler in der Moderne*, ed. Reinhart Koselleck and Michael Jeismann (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1994), 9–20.
- 28 See Gerald Lamprecht, "Erinnern an den Ersten Weltkrieg aus jüdischer Perspektive 1914–1938," *Zeitgeschichte* 41 (2014): 242–266; idem, "Jewish Soldiers in the Austrian Collective Memory 1914 to 1938," in *Jewish Soldiers in the Collective Memory of Central Europe. The Remembrance of World War I from a Jewish Perspective*, ed. Gerald Lamprecht, Eleonore Lappin-Eppel, and Ulrich Wyrwa, vol. 28 of *Schriften des Centrums für Jüdische Studien* (Vienna, Cologne, and Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 2019), 311–330.
- 29 See "Protocol of the meeting of the committee for the erection of the war memorial on the central cemetery," April 4, 1926 and the "Program of the call for bids," August 1926, Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People; Archiv der IKG Wien, A/W 1176 a–d.
- 30 See Gerald Lamprecht, "The Remembrance of World War One and the Austrian Federation of Jewish War Veterans," *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of Fondazione CDEC* 9 (October 2016): *The Great War. Reflections, Experiences and Memories of German and Habsburg Jews (1914–1918)*, ed. Petra Ernst, Jeffrey Grossman, and Ulrich Wyrwa, accessed October 13, 2018, www.quest-cdecjournal.it/focus.php?id=381, accessed April 4, 2021.
- 31 "Aufruf zur Gründungsversammlung des Bundes Jüdischer Frontsoldaten im Juli 1932," in *Drei Jahre Bund jüdischer Frontsoldaten Österreichs* (Vienna, n.d.), 18.
- 32 *Drei Jahre Bund jüdischer Frontsoldaten Österreichs*, 54.
- 33 This can also be seen, for example, in the failure of the reactivation attempts of the Austrian Federation of Jewish Front Soldiers after 1945. See, for example, Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv (WStLA), 1.3.2.119.A32.1932.6959/1932.
- 34 See Derek J. Penslar, *Jews and the Military. A History* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2013); Sarah Panter, *Jüdische Erfahrungen und Loyalitätskonflikte im Ersten Weltkrieg*, vol. 235 of *Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Europäische Geschichte Mainz* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014); Ulrich Sieg, *Jüdische Intellektuelle im Ersten Weltkrieg. Kriegserfahrungen, weltanschauliche Debatten und kulturelle Neuentwürfe* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2001).
- 35 Wolfgang von Weisl, *Die Juden in der Armee Österreich-Ungarns* (Tel Aviv: Olamenu, 1971).
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- 37 István Déak, *Beyond Nationalism. A Social and Political History of the Habsburg Officer Corps* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).
- 38 Martin Senekowitsch, *Ein ungewöhnliches Kriegerdenkmal. Das jüdische Heldendenkmal am Wiener Zentralfriedhof* (Vienna: Militärkommando Wien, 1994); idem, *Verbunden mit diesem Lande. Das jüdische Kriegerdenkmal in Graz* (Graz: Militärkommando Steiermark, 1995).
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