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Continuity and Change in the Vienna Police Force, 1914–1945

Part I

Abstract

In 1914, before the First World War, the Austrian state police and military intelligence created a new type of imperial surveillance system in the Habsburg Monarchy to track spies. In 1938, after the Nazi take-over of Austria, the Gestapo took control of the state police and also reshaped the *Kriminalpolizei* and *Sicherheitswache* to suit Nazi policy. Were there elements in preventative policing under the Habsburg Empire and later political systems that made it easier for the Nazis to reshape the police? Or were the crimes committed by the Viennese police under Nazism only possible because of Nazi restructuring and ideology? Instead of a straight-line progression or a sudden Nazi radicalisation, this paper argues that four different political systems required new policies, while the force itself struggled with internal problems at certain points. However, since the police is a social and cultural institution, there were also prejudices and investigative practices that persisted across eras. Part I of this study traces transformations in the police from 1914 to 1934, while Part II, which will be published in the next issue of S.I.M.O.N., will cover Austrofascism and Nazism.

During four different political systems – the Habsburg imperial system during the First World War, the First Austrian Republic, the interwar Austro-fascist state, and National Socialism – the Viennese police held a variety of attitudes toward the state, acting variously as a defender, an ambiguous rival, or, in the context of the Nazi police state, as a partly autonomous power centre. Despite these changing political contexts and positions toward the state, certain mentalities and practices within the Viennese police remained. The police adapted the concepts of “quiet, order, and security” to suit each era. They expanded the hierarchy of “politically suspicious” people and “state enemies” with new categories. Their methods of determining a political subject’s reliability through background checks and interviews were consistently applied. The transformation of the police force in the Nazi era was not simply a matter of “radicalisation” and the increased use of violent force. Pre-existing Austrian prejudices concerning communists, Slavs, and Jews coloured the worldviews of Viennese police who engaged in political persecution and mass deportation in Nazi-occupied Europe. This was not merely imposed by the German Nazi system, but partly stemmed from Austrian culture and from Austrian police praxis.

This paper takes a novel approach to the question of continuities and ruptures by covering four historical eras, rather than just one or two, as other studies have done. It critically evaluates grave abuses of power, which are often overlooked in the broad

works written by police officials.¹ Methodologically, I have analysed criminal cases, police reports, and protocols of meetings,² reconstructed chronologies, and applied “source criticism”. I also present certain insights from two broader prosopographical/collective biographical studies of the Viennese *Sicherheitswache* (the regular police) and Viennese *Kriminalbeamte* (officials and detectives), which I hope to publish at a future point.³

My analysis draws on the insights of scholars who have covered specific periods relevant to this topic. For example, Donald Emerson⁴ showed how the political police in the Habsburg Empire between 1815 and 1830 clamped down on German, Italian, and Polish nationalism through surveillance and censorship; the political police’s distrust of liberal nationalism became a feature of its surveillance in later stages of the empire. Ulrike Wetz explained how frequently the political authorities between 1848 and the 1870s changed who controlled the police, displaying a pendulum-like movement between absolutism and civilian control – though certainly not with equal time on each side.⁵ Gerhard Jagschitz analysed the history of the *Politische Zentralevidenzstelle der Bundespolizeidirektion Wien*, an office within the Vienna Police Directorate that kept extensive records and reports on “suspicious persons”. He noted that this project began as a cooperative effort between military intelligence and the political police in 1914, in the wake of the discovery that Colonel Alfred Redl, the head of military intelligence, was a Russian spy. Jagschitz concentrated on the later history of this central repository of politically “suspicious people” during the First Republic, when Police President Johannes Schober wanted to create a “non-political” political police that could serve the republic, protecting it against internal and external enemies.⁶ (In a separate article, I covered some of the main aspects of the surveillance system during the First World War, showing that it was created to prevent sabotage but actually became a broader instrument to expel and intern members of non-dominant nationalities.)⁷ Christiane Rothländer, in her detailed study of the early history of the Viennese SS, thoroughly illustrated cases where the Viennese police in the early 1930s did not strongly intervene to stop SS violence on

1 See: Anton Walitschek, *Die Entwicklung der Polizei-Organisation und des Polizeirechtes in Österreich von 1850 bis 1930*, in: Hermann Oberhummer (ed.), *Die Wiener Polizei. Neue Beiträge zur Geschichte des Sicherheitswesens in den Ländern der ehemaligen österreichisch-ungarischen Monarchie*, Vienna 1938, 259-323, and Engelbert Steinwender, *Von der Stadtguardia zur Sicherheitswache. Wiener Polizeiwache und ihre Zeit. Ständestaat, Großdeutsches Reich, Besatzungszeit*, 2 vols., Graz 1992. Walitschek was a police official who served during the republican, Austrofascist, Nazi, and post-war periods. His contribution, written after the police suppression of the Social Democratic movement and the Justizpalast fire in 1927, shows authoritarian tendencies; it is not neutral. Steinwender’s work contains useful information, though he has little archival material on the First World War, is too sympathetic toward the July putschists of 1934, and does not deal with the roles that Viennese policemen played in the ‘Third Reich’. He sticks to the narrative of a police force ‘taken over’ by Nazi Germany, rather than one whose members adapted to the regime.

2 These come from the state police files of the Archiv der Landespolizeidirektion Wien (LPDW), records in the Österreichisches Staatsarchiv (OeStA) and the Croatian National Archives, documents in the Documentation Centre of Austrian Resistance (DÖW), and records of the Landesgericht für Strafsachen and of the Volksgerichte in the Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv (WStLA). Specific collections are cited in the footnotes below.

3 In this paper, I have used some of this material drawn from the LPDW and the files of the Kriminalbeamtenreferat in WStLA, 2.5.1.8 A1, Personalakten Kriminalbeamte.

4 Donald E. Emerson, *Metternich and the Political Police. Security and Subversion in the Habsburg Monarchy (1815–1830)*, The Hague 1968.

5 Ulrike Wetz, *Geschichte der Wiener Polizei-Direktion vom Jahre 1945 bis zum Jahre 1955 mit Berücksichtigung der Zeit vor 1945*, (Dissertation), Vienna 1971, 30-56.

6 Gerhard Jagschitz, *Die politische Zentralevidenzstelle der Bundespolizeidirektion Wien. Ein Beitrag zur Rolle der politischen Polizei in der ersten Republik*, in: *Jahrbuch für Zeitgeschichte* (1978), 49-95.

7 Mark Lewis, *The Failed Quest for Total Surveillance. The Internal Security Service in Austria-Hungary during World War I*, in: Judith Devlin/Maria Falina/John Paul Newman (ed.), *World War I in Central and Eastern Europe. Politics, Conflict and Military Experience*, London 2018, 19-41.

the street, nor did detectives thoroughly investigate Nazi acts of terrorism.⁸ Her evidence indicates that certain high-level police officials and detectives at the lower level were sympathetic to Nazism or were Nazis themselves. Emmerich Tálos' survey of the Austrofascist system of rule between 1933 and 1938 argued that several important aspects of police centralisation and expansion occurred in 1929 in the wake of the *Justizpalast* fire of 1927 and the Christian Socials' fear of the *Republikanische Schutzbund*, the paramilitary organisation of the Social Democrats. The 1934 constitution confirmed these changes, while new Security Directors gained new powers to send persons to detention facilities if they believe they threatened public order – without needing to prove this to a court first.⁹

Scholarship on the Viennese Gestapo has treated the organisation as an entity fully under the control of the Nazi state, examining its suppression of enemies of the state, its reliance on confidential informants, its use of torture, and its power to send political opponents, “racially inferior” people, and “workshy” individuals to concentration and death camps. For these reasons, historians have regarded the institution as a fundamental part of National Socialism, not as a transformation of the Austrian state police (which was formally dismantled by the Nazis). Thus, Wolfgang Neugebauer regarded the Gestapo as an integral part of the Nazi terror system, which successfully eliminated organised resistance groups, though there were exceptions in 1944/1945.¹⁰ Thomas Mang argued that Gestapo Chief Franz Josef Huber and Baldur von Schirach (the Gauleiter of Vienna) were the chief decision makers in the deportation of Viennese Jewry starting in 1941, not Adolf Eichmann and his *Zentralstelle für jüdische Auswanderung* (Central Agency for Jewish Emigration). Mang contended that Schirach wanted to increase his standing with his party base by providing them with more housing in overcrowded Vienna, while the planning of the deportations must have emanated from the Gestapo, since Huber, as Inspector of the Security Police and Security Service, was several levels higher than Eichmann. Although Mang's argument is based more on a bureaucratic analysis of power flows and chains of command rather than on “smoking gun” documentary evidence, he tries to show that the idea that the Viennese deportations all stemmed from Eichmann, receiving orders from Berlin, was a convenient post-war ploy used by Huber and his deputy, Karl Ebner, to evade responsibility.¹¹

Still, the question of what remained of the Austrian state police in the Viennese Gestapo falls outside the parameters of Neugebauer and Mang's studies. Franz Weisz investigated this question, showing that Austrian Nazis in the police actually falsified records in their political background checks of Austrian policemen in 1938 in

8 During the Gauparteitag in October 1932, the police stated that they would protect Viennese Jews, but they failed to do so at the Café Sperlhof in the Leopoldstadt, where Nazis stormed the building where Jews were praying during Rosh Hashanah. After an SS teargas attack in the Gerngross department store in December 1932, one of the police officers involved in the investigation was a Nazi (Karl Prieler), as was the officer in charge of the house searches and interrogations (Franz Kamba). Christiane Rothländer, *Die Anfänge der Wiener SS*, Vienna 2012, 203-211, 281-287.

9 Emmerich Tálos, *Das austrofascistische Herrschaftssystem. Österreich 1933–1938*, Vienna 2013, 228-240.

10 These included Wehrmacht officers who successfully executed plans in Vienna to topple the Hitler government as part of the Stauffenberg conspiracy of 20 July 1944, and the activities of the cross-party O5 resistance organisation, although members of its Provisional Austrian National Committee were arrested in 1945. Wolfgang Neugebauer, *The Austrian Resistance, 1938–1945*, translated by John Nicholson and Eric Canepa, Vienna 2014, 34-38, 212-215, 217-219.

11 Thomas Mang, “Gestapo-Leitstelle Wien, mein Name ist Huber”. *Wer trug die lokale Verantwortung für den Mord an den Juden Wiens?*, Münster 2004, 70-106, 257-262.

order to keep a quantity of Austrians on the force.¹² What is not fully discussed is whether the intense anti-socialist and anti-communist stance of the police in the late First Republic and Austrofascist state provided a solid base for Nazi recruitment of higher police officials. That seems to have been the case with Karl Ebner, for example, who had already worked in surveillance of leftist movements in the General Directorate for Public Security and was then hired after March 1938 by the Gestapo to work in a department devoted to the repression of the churches, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Jews. Ebner had an additional credential: He was involved in Nazi activity during the "illegal period" – meaning the period from 1934 to 1938 when the Nazi Party was banned in Austria.¹³

Carston Dams and Michael Stolle observed that three groups comprised the Gestapo leadership: officials from the criminal police, who welcomed the restriction of constitutional limitations on police power, were motivated by anti-communism, but were "latecomers" to Nazism; legal administrators, who excelled in policy development and became the "fighting administration" in the Gestapo offices deployed to the occupied territories; and *Sicherheitsdienst* personnel who had no prior policing experience but were instrumental in setting the policies of racial persecution.¹⁴ These three groups appear in the Austrian context, though more research is needed about the lower levels of the Gestapo (such as the Criminal Assistants and the Criminal Secretaries) as well as the roles of the *Kriminalpolizei* and the former Viennese *Sicherheitswache* (renamed the *Schutzpolizei* under National Socialism.)¹⁵

The Defensive Intelligence Service during the First World War

The First World War has often been overlooked in the history of political policing in the Habsburg Empire, as well as in the general history of the police.¹⁶ In May 1914, shortly before the outbreak of the war, Major Maximilian Ronge (a General Staff officer in the Habsburg army in charge of the military intelligence office, called the *Evidenzbüro*), Edmund von Gayer (chief of the state police), Johannes Schober (at this time a police official in charge of the espionage department in the state police), and Gustav von Ilosvay (chief of the Hungarian border police) formed a new network of domestic intelligence offices across the Dual Monarchy, linking regular police, state

12 Franz Weisz, Umstellung der personalen Organisation der ehemaligen Österreichischen Polizei auf jene des Deutschen Reiches, in: Wiener Geschichtsblätter 50 (1995), 70-95; Franz Weisz, Die Geheime Staatspolizei, Staatspolizeileitstelle Wien 1938–1945, Organisation, Arbeitsweise und personale Belange, (Dissertation), Vol. 4, Vienna 1991, 1366-1380.

13 WStLA, A1- Vr-Strafakten, Landesgericht für Strafsachen Wien (Volksgerecht), Vg 12 Vr 1223/47, Strafsache gegen Ebner, Karl, Band II, OrNr. 86, Hauptverhandlung, 3 (BlZ. 61). See also: Mang, Gestapo-Leitstelle Wien, 191, who noted that Ebner joined an illegal Bezirksgruppe in July 1936 and joined SS-Standarte 89 in March 1937.

14 Carston Dams/Michael Stolle, The Gestapo. Power and Terror in the Third Reich, translated by Charlotte Ryland, Oxford 2014, 41-45.

15 Neugebauer, The Austrian Resistance, 41, affirmed that the *Kriminalpolizei* was part of the Nazi repressive system (a position with which I agree). Hans Safrian, Eichmann's Men, translated by Ute Stargardt, New York 2010, 118-121, 165, noted that Viennese *Schutzpolizisten* were the armed escorts for the deportation trains departing from Vienna and Salonika, Greece. On the role of Viennese *Schutzpolizisten* who participated in massacres of Jews in Galicia, see: Thomas Geldmacher, Wir als Wiener waren ja bei der Bevölkerung beliebt. Österreichische Schutzpolizisten und die Judenvernichtung in Ostgalizien 1941–1944, Vienna 2002.

16 Jens Jäger, Verfolgung durch Verwaltung. Internationales Verbrechen und internationale Polizeikooperation 1880–1933, Constance 2006, 16.

police, and military intelligence.¹⁷ Called the *Defensive Kundschaftsdienst*, it was designed to help police quickly track spies who had already been prosecuted, or persons suspected of being spies.¹⁸ In practice, it was also used to question and track national separatists, anarchists, communists, and persons who expressed anti-monarchical sentiments or criticised the Austro-Hungarian war effort. New elements to the system included the creation of four Central Bureaus that filed information about suspicious persons and issued search-and-arrest notifications to Main Bureaus. Domestic police and military intelligence also cooperated more closely than before.

However, the police were able to adapt several pre-existing systems to the new effort: They already had central filing systems for people with criminal records (*Zentralevidenz*) and lists of wanted suspects (*Fahndungsblätter*). Processes and forms were drawn up to record information about spies and all types of suspicious people, and each Central Office (located in Vienna, Budapest, Zagreb, and Sarajevo) stored these files. Police investigations relied on the pre-existing process of *Erhebung*, in which a person's background and political bearing (*Gesinnung*) were examined, not only whether the person had in fact committed a crime. Police were able to operate with great latitude because civil liberties were suspended during the war; the normal period of 48 hours of arrest was extended to eight days, and security authorities could conduct a house search without a judge's order.¹⁹ Subjects of the monarchy were jailed and sometimes sent to internment camps; this was mainly handled through police administrative processes, since civilian and military courts became backlogged with treason cases.²⁰

State police officials involved in the *Defensive Kundschaftsdienst* were part of the higher police bureaucracy, comprised of officials with backgrounds in law or administration. They were conservative monarchists, opposed to separatist movements led by Polish, Ruthenian, Czech, Italian, or other nationalists.²¹ In their view, the police's

17 Hrvatski Državni Arhiv [Croatian National Archives, Zagreb], Fond 79 [HR-HDA-79], Odjel za Unutarnje Poslove- Središnja defenzivna dojavna služba [UOZV-SDDS], Kut. 5687 (1), 9/1914, K.u.K. Chef des Generalstabes. K.Nr. 4444 von 1914, Protokoll über die Konferenz: "Schaffung der Zentral- und Hauptstellen für den defensiven Kundschaftsdienst" im Mai 1914.

18 For a more detailed study of the *Defensive Kundschaftsdienst*, see: Lewis, *The Failed Quest*. See also: Albert Pethö, *Agenten für den Doppeladler. Österreich-Ungarns Geheimer Dienst im Weltkrieg*, Graz 1998, 258-302, 307-322. Pethö concentrated on the military's role in anti-espionage activities outside the empire rather than police investigations within it. He contended that the main domestic surveillance organisations were the *Kriegsüberwachungsamt* for the Austrian half of the empire and the *Kriegsüberwachungskommission* for the Hungarian half. He dated the foundation of the *Kundschaftsdienst* to April 1915, though the above-cited minutes show it was in May 1914. He was also unsure whether the organisation as a whole was effective, stating that detailed studies were needed to determine whether publishing broadsheets with suspected spies, disseminating information about enemy governments' espionage services, using fingerprinting in front areas, and attempting to draw the population into participating in surveillance were really effective. *Ibid.*, 261.

19 Alexander Koller (ed.), *Ausnahme-Gesetze und Verordnungen für den Kriegsfall*, Vienna 1914, 1-6.

20 In February 1917, the *Evidenzbüro* (military intelligence) of the k.k. General Staff made new recommendations to restrict types of treason and political cases that should be handled by military courts versus civilian courts. See: OeStA, *Kriegsarchiv*, AOK-Evidenzbüro, K. 3575, 1917, Evb 2063 1917, Referat über die am 5. Februar 1917 bei der 4. Abteilung des KM stattgefundenen Besprechung über die Konzentrierung der politischen und Spionageprozesse.

21 The extent to which these officials, collectively, were nationalists who supported their own linguistic group is subject to debate. After the First World War, Schober became Vienna's police president, headed the Greater German People's Party, a "middle-class coalition of seventeen nationalist splinter parties and organizations left over from the monarchy", and became chancellor in 1929. Bruce Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution. A History of Austrian Anti-Semitism*, Chapel Hill 1992, 182-183. The number two man in the Croatian branch of the defensive intelligence service in Zagreb, Artur Femen, became a Croatian provincial councilor after the war. Like other former Croatian civil servants, he took an oath of allegiance to the new Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes in November 1918, and apparently the government did not know that he had worked in the main secret service bureau designed to counter Greater Serbian and South Slav ambitions. See: HR HDA 89, Zbirka Personalija- BH: Femen, Artur.

main tasks were to protect the dynasty, the institutions of the state, and the three crucial values of quiet, order, and security (*Ruhe, Ordnung und Sicherheit*). These concepts were defined in the 1850 decrees establishing the competency of the police in the Cisleithanian or Austrian half of the monarchy (*Vorschriften über den Wirkungskreis der k.k. Polizeibehörden*).²²

The state police investigated and tracked persons who belonged to non-German, non-Hungarian nationalities who allegedly wanted to break away from the empire or sympathised with enemy states fighting the empire. The targeting of particular nationalities generally occurred in stages as the war progressed, with particular events triggering the police and military to view these groups as suspicious or traitorous. Serbs with a “Greater Serbian” orientation had already been under suspicion since 1908, when Austria-Hungary formally annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina, but this suspicion became acute after the Young Bosnians killed Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir apparent to the Habsburg throne, and the Austro-Hungarian military believed that Serbia’s volunteer defence organisation, *Narodna Odbrana*, formed an underground network of Serbs inside the empire.²³ Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia were also targeted if they had left the country to join the Serbian army.²⁴ Czechs were targeted for distributing the Russian Czar’s proclamation “To the Slavs” and other anti-Habsburg texts; scrutiny increased after Czech regiments fighting for Austria-Hungary were taken prisoner by the Russian army and some of them switched sides in December 1914.²⁵ Poles in Eastern Galicia who exhibited a pro-Russian orientation or favoured Polish independence were targeted following the dissolution of a Polish Legion in Eastern Galicia in 1914. The persecution of Polish nationalists in the Polish National Democratic Party continued in 1917/1918, because Minister President Ignaz von Seidler wanted to eliminate parliamentary opposition to the military budget.²⁶ Ruthenians had already been targeted in espionage trials in Galicia and Hungary prior to the war; this continued with the outbreak of the war on the grounds that they were pro-Russian, and even when treason and other charges were dropped in 1916, Ruthenians involved in cultural activities and politics were interned at a camp in Thalerhof.²⁷ In Vienna, the police targeted radical socialists at the end of worker strikes in

22 Wetz, *Geschichte der Wiener Polizei-Direktion vom Jahre 1945*, 18-19.

23 Andrej Mitrović, *Serbia’s Great War 1914–1918*, West Lafayette 2007, 5-6, 24; Mark Cornwall, *Traitors and the Meaning of Treason in Austria-Hungary’s Great War*, in: *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 25 (2015), 127-128.

24 See the cases of Petar Dobrić and Milutin Basrak in HR-HDA-79, UOZV-SDDS, Kut. 5714 (28), 4282/1916. Dobrić was from Croatian Karlovac and was allegedly a military deserter who then joined the Serbian army. Basrak, a teacher’s assistant in Bosnian Gradiška, fought as a Serbian komitadji (guerrilla) against the Austro-Hungarian army. He was captured in 1917 and sentenced by a district court in Zagreb for crimes against the military power and treason.

25 OeStA, Allgemeines Verwaltungsarchiv, Ministerium des Innern, Präsidiale [AVA/MdI], Präsidium 22, K. 2049, Protokoll Nr. 3294, Z. 3832, Erzherzog Friedrich (Feldmarschall) K.u.k. Armeeeoberkommando to Standort des AOK, 23 December 1914, Op.Nr. 5581, Tschechische Legion; *ibid*, Memo to Minister President, 3.832/15, 16 February 1915, 28. The author was probably an official in the Ministry of Justice.

26 See the case of Jan Zamorski, OeStA/AVA/MdI, Präs., K. 2076, Präs. No. 8567 ex 1918/M.I. and Präs. No. 8905 ex 1918/M.I. For a more detailed explanation of this case, see: Mark Lewis, *From Spies to International Criminals. The Influence of the Austro-Hungarian Counter Espionage Service on the International Criminal Police Commission*, in: Mats Deland/Mark Klamberg/Pål Wrangé (ed.), *International Humanitarian Law and Justice. Historical and Sociological Perspectives*, London 2018, 44-59.

27 Thirteen Ruthenes from Galicia were arrested in 1914 for supposedly spreading nationalist propaganda and working with the Russians. After the Habsburg military prosecutor dropped the treason case against them in 1916, he still ordered that they remain in detention. LPDW, 1915, Scha. St-13, 9593/914/15/K, Z. A 295/14, 13 April 1916.

January 1918, considering them to be “Bolsheviks” who wanted to imitate the Leninists in Russia and start a revolution.²⁸

Jewish organisations were also put under surveillance, though the police were more careful in assessing the actual aims of these organisations than the military, which sometimes assumed they were revolutionary Bolshevik organisations. For example, in February 1918, a “high [military] officer” with “connections to scholarly circles” in Vienna told the Ministerial Commission of the War Ministry that the Jewish organisation B’nai B’rith was allegedly connected to the Bolsheviks and wanted to overthrow the monarchy and create a Central European republic.²⁹ Referring to the major food shortages in Vienna, the officer said that B’nai B’rith was supposedly behind them, intending to aggravate the masses and drive them to revolution. A more level-headed police report noted that B’nai B’rith was a humanitarian organisation, founded in 1894, which enjoyed “the highest reputation” among the broad public, and whose leaders were not engaged in “unpatriotic activity”.³⁰ Still, at the urging of the Ministerial Commission, the police ordered the mail and telegraph authorities to send all the group’s correspondence to Schober.³¹ At the same time as these events, the authorities were on the alert for a Hungarian socialist who was allegedly going to receive two million roubles from the Bolsheviks in Stockholm and bring them to Austria-Hungary using an Entente currency.³² Supposedly, the Social Democrats were going to use the money for revolutionary propaganda. The Ministerial Commission inside the War Ministry wanted border control agents to strictly inspect all Jews crossing the border, since “the whole machination is being done in an international, Jewish way.”³³ The Hungarian Interior Ministry, concerned that the Austrian government had recently relaxed border controls in Austria, instructed its border agents that under “all possible pretexts, Jews heading to neutral foreign countries should be carefully watched and their departures should be hindered when possible.”³⁴ In response, the Austrian Interior Ministry told its provincial chiefs that they should be extremely careful when issuing passports for persons wishing to go to neutral countries and that they should only issue them to Jews “if they are completely unobjectionable from a state police point of view”. The Austrian Ministry repeated the claim that Bolshevik propaganda was being spread “in international Jewish ways” – propagating the myth that Jews were international Bolshevik conspirators.³⁵

The *Defensive Kundschaftsdienst* was a new partnership between civilian police and military intelligence, which developed an information bureaucracy across both

28 For example, police arrested a 17-year-old electrician named Friedrich Hermann for making a “provocative speech” in front of a workers’ house in Favoriten. OeStA/AVA/MdI, Präs. 22, K. 2074, Protokoll Nr. 2414 ex 1918/M.I., Pr.Z.52356/22 K., 21 January 1918. They also arrested a jurist named Rudolf Beer who spoke against ending the strike at a meeting of 3,000 workers at the Lembacher Gasthaus in the third district. Ibid, Pr.Z.52356/23 K., 21 January 1918. The next day, police again arrested persons there who spoke out against ending the strike, viewing them as radicals who were spreading treasonous ideas. Ibid, Pr.Z.52356/27 K., 22 January 1918.

29 LPDW, 1918, Scha. St.-17, 52537K, Memo from Ministerialkommission in k.u.k. Kriegministerium, filed by the K.K. Polizei-Direktion Präsidial-Bureau on 23 January 1918.

30 Ibid, Josef Auer (Polizeiaгент), Meldung, 19 February 1918.

31 Ibid, Pr.Z. 52537/2K, Verband der israelitischen Humanitätsvereine “B’nai B’rith” [sic!]; Korrespondenz-überwachung, 24 March 1918.

32 This information came from the Habsburg ambassador in Copenhagen, who obtained it from a “relatively reliable, well informed” source. See: OeStA/AVA/MdI, Präs., K. 2074, Protokoll 2568 ex 1918/M.I., Meldung der kuk. Gesandtschaft in Kopenhagen, 26 January 1918 (Abschrift). The Hungarian socialist was allegedly Jakob Weltner, a trade unionist and delegate to the International Socialist Congresses of 1907 and 1910. G.D.H. Cole, *The Second International, 1889–1914*, Vol. 3, Part 3, *A History of Socialist Thought*, London 1963, 585.

33 OeStA/AVA/MdI, Präs., K. 2074, Protokoll 3619/M.I., 2 February 1918.

34 Ibid.

35 Ibid, “I. Alle Landeschefs.”

halves of the empire. In the eyes of its chiefs, it was a successful venture that prevented major acts of sabotage during the entire war, and, if the Dual Monarchy survived, the chiefs planned to retain the system for peacetime surveillance.³⁶ However, surveillance and arrests were not able to suppress nationalist activists working abroad, nor could they prevent the widespread exhaustion and hunger that took hold of Vienna in 1917/1918, which led to a loss of confidence in the legitimacy of the civilian bureaucracy and the Habsburg monarchy. Police surveillance and repression, therefore, could serve as a control mechanism, but it did not shape underlying economic relations. Furthermore, in late 1918 and 1919, the Vienna police's central task shifted to focus on security on the streets in revolutionary conditions, specifically by dealing with disillusioned soldiers returning home with their weapons.

On the issue of Jewish refugees, one must point out some fundamental differences between the Viennese police's policy during the First World War and the deportation plans developed by the Nazi Security Service (specifically Adolf Eichmann's Central Agency for Jewish Emigration) and the Viennese Gestapo.³⁷ During the opening months of the First World War, Jewish and Ruthenian refugees from the war zone in Galicia began pouring into the western Austrian crownlands (including the capital Vienna). The government was concerned because they appeared to be penniless and the Viennese public spread fearful rumours that they carried cholera and smallpox.³⁸ In a September 1914 meeting, representatives of the Interior Ministry, the Vienna Police Directorate, the Vienna City Council, and Vienna's mayor decided that Austria would establish "concentration barracks" (*Konzentrationsbaracken*) for refugees; the state would provide food and shelter while private charities would contribute aid. Since the refugees were swarming the train lines, special escorts would take these trains to collection points (*Sammelstellen*), where refugees would be "sorted" (different national groups were assigned different locations in Austria) in order to prevent them from flooding Vienna, whose homeless shelters were full, according to the Police President. The representatives also agreed to prepare lists (*Kataster*) of refugees and lists of open spots in the "concentration barracks".³⁹ During the war, welfare stations in Vienna's second and third districts housed refugees from Galicia and Bukovina, while "politically suspicious" persons were sent to Olmütz, Pottenbrunn, and Thalerhof.⁴⁰

Despite similar-sounding terms (concentration barracks, collection points, and quarantine), there were major differences with Nazi policy. In the agreement of September 1914, a key provision stated that refugees in Vienna would not be forced to go

36 HR-HDA-79, UOZV-SDDS, Kut. 5717 (31), 596/1917, Nachrichtenabteilung des k. und k. Armeeeoberkommandos. Evb.Nro. 2306 res., Protokoll zu der am 20. und 21. März 1917 stattgefundenen Besprechung mit den Leitern der vier Zentralstellen für den defensiven Nachrichtendienst in Evidenzbüro des K.u.K. Generalstabes, I.

37 Although some readers may be sceptical of this comparison, the issue of Jewish refugees was highly politicised during the First World War and the interwar period, with many publicists and politicians calling for their expulsion. A comparison between the two World Wars is legitimate to show differences in police policies.

38 Stimmungsberichte aus der Kriegszeit, 1 October 1914, 7 January 1915, and 14 January 1915, <http://www.digital.wienbibliothek.at/wbrobv/periodical/titleinfo/607252> (22 September 2019). See also: Marsha Rozenblit, *Reconstructing a National Identity. The Jews of Habsburg Austria during World War I*, New York 2001, 79.

39 See the minutes of the meeting in LPDW, 1914 Sch. V/7, Besprechung bei dem Minister des Inneren, 12 September 1914. Rudolf Schwarz-Hiller, a Jewish liberal who belonged to the Viennese city council, attended the meeting; he became head of the government's central office to help refugees. See also: LPDW, 1914 Nov. Kriegtagesereignisse, Pr.Z.924K, 17 September 1914, for one of the first reports of thousands of refugees arriving in Vienna. The folder is marked November, but it also contains reports from September and October.

40 LPDW, 1914 Nov. Kriegtagesereignisse, Pr.Z.2087K, 7 November 1914.

to the concentration facilities.⁴¹ Moreover, refugees were not exploited for slave labour, never mind being murdered. Instead, the Austrian government recognised refugees as Austrian citizens, supporting them with more than two billion crowns during the war and working with private Jewish organisations, which collected substantial donations from Jewish communities and provided food, clothing, vocational training, and schools for refugee families.⁴²

Vienna's First World War refugee problem evoked different reactions among the police. High officials contended in 1915 that they were eating up food supplies needed for the troops while also running the black market and gambling in local taverns.⁴³ Lower-level policemen claimed that Galician Jewish refugees pretended to be beggars but were really carrying huge amounts of cash.⁴⁴ After the end of the war, the Austrian government did not want to give these people citizenship in the new Austrian Republic, although the Treaty of Saint Germain allowed them to opt for it.⁴⁵ Instead, the government wanted to expel them to the new Polish Republic, prompting the Polish government to protest to the League of Nations. In 1919, Austria expelled 600 Jews (140 through the police force); 8,000 left voluntarily while 6,684 obtained Austrian residency permits.⁴⁶ The Council of the League of Nations applied pressure, and Austria finally agreed in 1921 not to expel persons who wanted to exercise the right of option for citizenship, giving special consideration to the sick, the elderly, and persons whose houses had been destroyed during the war.⁴⁷ However, Austrian antisemites tried to scapegoat Jewish refugees for Austria's food shortages and economic problems in the early 1920s, demanding their internment or expulsion.⁴⁸

Politicisation of the Police in the First Republic

There were several continuities between political policing in the late imperial era and the First Republic, though the State Police Bureau became weaker than it had been during the war.⁴⁹ Johannes Schober was named Police President by Emperor Karl I in June 1918, remaining in this position after the Austrian Republic was proclaimed in November 1918. While the military intelligence side of the former *Defensive Kundtschaftsdienst* was briefly reorganised and then dissolved in 1920, Schober was able to rebuild part of the state police into a *Zentralevidenzstelle*, though he had to move carefully, as the new state authorities did not want a domestic spy agency that would become repressive. Initially, the Social Democratic Party leaders approved the creation of the *Zentralevidenzstelle* because they did not want Austria's

41 "In Wien wird getrachtet, die mittellosen Flüchtlinge nach den Konzentrationsorten zu schaffen, ohne Zwangsmassregeln." Besprechung bei dem Minister des Inneren, 12 September 1914, 3.

42 Rozenblit, *Reconstructing a National Identity*, 65-74.

43 OeStA/AVA/MdI, Allgem., K. 2089, 20, Protokoll Nr. 22276/18, Sicherheitsbericht für das Jahr 1915, 31 July 1916, 2-3, 49.

44 LPDW, 1914, Scha. V/7, K.k. Sicherheitswache-Abteilung 26, Wahrnehmungen während der Dienstleistung in Prerau, 18 November 1914.

45 League of Nations Archive [LNA] (Geneva), 586/10734/9557.

46 LNA, 586/10986/9557. In 1919, there were 22,552 applications for permis de séjour, 16,172 made by Polish Jews.

47 LNA, 586/11412/9557.

48 See the views of Christian Social leader Leopold Kunschak, discussed in Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution*, 82-86.

49 Since 1871, the State Police was "Section I" in the Vienna Police. According to Wetz, *Geschichte der Wiener Polizei-Direktion vom Jahre 1945*, 56-57, Schober preserved the pre-war police institutional structure and did not make major changes.

intelligence services to fragment after the war, but the party did not make a serious effort to reorient the state police, filled with monarchists and authoritarians, to function in a democratic state. Schober wanted to create an intelligence bureau, attached to the Vienna police, that would collect information about internal and external threats to the state, though according to Gerhard Jagschitz, he also wanted to consolidate his own power over information and its use in the new republic.⁵⁰ Although he had difficulty getting sufficient funding, and some government officials in other agencies did not want to turn over their information to his bureau, fearing it would amass too much power, the *Zentralevidenzstelle* developed a file system with an astounding 250,000 cards containing essential information about political parties, cultural movements, businesses, locales, and civil society organisations.⁵¹ The information bureaucracy consisted of an anti-espionage group, a group that collected foreign intelligence (partly from reading newspapers), and a cataloguing/filing group (*Evidenzbüro*), staffed by former military intelligence officers. The system interfaced with the police, because it relied on police agents who attended meetings of political and cultural organisations, and state police bureaucrats who provided reports on request.⁵² These methods of gathering information were essentially the same as in the late monarchy, though the areas of interest definitely changed.

Domestically, the police began reporting on the activities of the Nazi movement and its conflicts with the Social Democrats, the activities of legitimist organisations, and the communist movement, which supplanted the anarchist movement as a revolutionary force in the eyes of the police. Examining the international situation, the state police filed reports on nationalist movements in the countries bordering Austria (the nascent Czechoslovak and Serb-Croat-Slovene states), informing the government about foreign troop strength and cultural organisations with “irredentist” goals.⁵³ The state police were relatively tolerant of Croatian ultra-nationalists, who often received asylum (even high-level members of the fascist Croatian *Ustaša* were protected until 1934),⁵⁴ while Polish Jewish communists were routinely expelled. When foreigners were involved in cultural or nationalist political activities that could destabilise the countries in the “Little Entente”, they received lighter treatment, but when they were allegedly involved in communist activity in Austria, they were interrogated and expelled.

For example, in 1926 Romanian internal security warned the Vienna Police Directorate that there were “communist terrorists” in Vienna, sending a list of names and an address where they allegedly resided.⁵⁵ The Vienna police investigated the address, finding a Polish Jewish couple; the husband possessed communist literature, while his wife worked in a Jewish workers’ kitchen. The police pursued this as a lead, deciding that the kitchen was a place where Jews involved in Zionism, socialism, and communism frequented. Several Jewish workers were questioned. They were born in Galicia and Bukovina when these had been part of Austria, but these were now parts of Poland and Romania; police said that the workers were domiciled

50 Jagschitz, *Die politische Zentralevidenzstelle*, 56-60.

51 *Ibid.*, 72-74.

52 *Ibid.*, 73.

53 LPDW, Schober Archiv, Sch. 50/Gruppe III 1924, Geplante Errichtung einer Jugoslawischen Agitationszentrale in Graz, Pr.Z.IV-2226, 28 June 1923; Militärische Nachrichten aus SHS, *ibid.*, Pr.Z.IV-17/56 Zest, 11 October 1923.

54 Mark Lewis, *The Failure of the Austrian and Yugoslav Police to Repress the Croatian Ustaša in Austria, 1929–1934*, in: *Austrian History Yearbook* 45 (2014), 186-212.

55 All details from this case come from LPDW, Schober Archiv, Sch. 28 II. 1926, “Rumanische unabhängige Terroristengruppe”, Pr.ZI.IV-37/26/3.

there and had allegedly violated passport regulations. This opened another line of inquiry. Some were involved in a possible business deal to work for a photo-enlarging enterprise in Bulgaria, which the police saw as suspicious because the man who owned the business (named Horowitz) had submitted one set of their photos to the Polish embassy in Vienna (so they could obtain passports) but kept another set – allegedly because he wanted documents that could be used in “false confidential reports”.⁵⁶ It was not clear who the recipient of these reports was supposed to be or why Horowitz was doing this, but the Police Directorate planned to continue the investigation. The police also pursued other names on the original Romanian list not connected with the workers’ kitchen. One was a Romanian national (religion not specified) who elicited suspicion because his wife was already under surveillance for working for the Soviet embassy in Vienna. Another, a Jewish student, worked for the *Israelitische Kultusgemeinde* library and had the same name as another person on the Romanian list. It turned out he was not the same man in the picture provided by Romanian security, but instead of dropping the matter, the police wanted to determine if he was using a false name.⁵⁷ According to a report that Police President Schober sent to the Chancellor’s Foreign Affairs Office, the Police Directorate began expulsion proceedings against all these people – possibly six or seven – except for the employee of the *Kultusgemeinde*, who was still being investigated.⁵⁸ None possessed weapons or explosives, and none were linked to terrorism.

Legally, the civil liberties that had been cancelled during the war were restored with the establishment of the First Republic. Still, the police leadership did not consistently prevent antisemitic violence, sometimes taking precautionary measures when Austria’s international reputation was at risk, only taking delayed action, or refusing to intervene because another established institution (such as the university) exerted its authority. According to historian Bruce Pauley, police acted correctly by sending 6,000 officers to confront and break up a gathering of 10,000 antisemites who illegally demonstrated during the Zionist Congress in Vienna in 1925. There were 220 arrests over two days, although Jews and people who appeared to be Jewish were attacked on streetcars and in shops.⁵⁹ On the other hand, when the *Landesleitung* of Vienna’s Nazi party convened a meeting in a restaurant in January 1927 to discuss “the *völkisch* common front as an instrument to cleanse public life”, the Vienna police allowed the meeting, which drew 1,000 attendees, including 400 Nazis. (The police had the power to prohibit a public meeting if it threatened order and security.) Only when various German nationalist groups started brawling did the police clear the room and make two arrests.⁶⁰ In the Viennese universities, there were eight incidents of antisemitic violence against Jewish students starting in November 1927, but the universities had sovereign control over their buildings and grounds, which the police respected by not entering. In the fall of 1929, students associated with the *Heimwehr* attacked Jewish students at the Anatomy Institute, while mounted police remained outside.⁶¹

The police leadership’s attitude toward the Social Democratic Party and workers became much harsher in the 1920s, when the social democrats controlled the city government of Vienna but the Christian Socials controlled the federal government, often in

56 Ibid, 4.

57 Ibid, 4-5.

58 Ibid.

59 Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution*, 108-114.

60 LPDW, Schober Archiv, Sch. 29, 1927, Pr.ZI.IV-36 Exp.

61 Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution*, 121-125.

coalition with the Greater German People's Party. Yet the issue did not only concern party affiliation or ideology on the part of the police leadership, who had been educated during the imperial era and had served in higher police offices before and during the First World War. Although the police leadership was uncompromising when it came to alleged spies and "security threats" (often loosely defined) during the war, they recognised in the end stages of the war that the suffering civilian population could not simply be ruled by force and that compromises with Social Democracy were necessary. This was far less the case by the late 1920s, when Viennese society was starkly divided by class, ideology, and interest groups. This can be demonstrated by comparing the police's response to worker demonstrations in January 1918 and 1927. During the massive worker strikes in Vienna in January 1918, when workers from almost all industrial branches walked off the job and demanded food and "peace without annexations", the State Police monitored the demonstrations every day.⁶² Police gathered intelligence about the workers' intentions and their feelings about the ongoing negotiations between the Central Powers and the Bolshevik government at Brest-Litovsk.⁶³ In the streets, the police leadership deployed rank-and-file police and mounted police to "maintain order", primarily arresting women workers who seized bread trucks, dispersing workers who blockaded street cars, and breaking up groups of workers who marched to other factories to encourage more workers to join them. The police also called in the military, which sent approximately 15,000 men on the first day of the strike, with more following; troops protected the gas and electricity plants, a water reservoir, the mint office, and the state printing press.⁶⁴ Although there were scenes of antagonism with the police – workers threw stones and snowballs at police, and police brandished their sabres – the number of arrests was generally low. For example, on 16 January 1918, the first day of the strike, the police only arrested 21 persons in a strike involving over 84,000 people.⁶⁵ Much of the strike proceeded without major outbreaks of violence, and when the Social Democratic leadership called for it to end, the police did not want to immediately send in massive force to enforce this decision. Instead, they selectively arrested "agitators", more radical workers who wanted to continue the strike and emulate the Bolshevik Revolution.⁶⁶ The police leadership was cautious in 1918 because they did not want to incite the population, knowing that resuming factory work was necessary to continue fighting the war – which, at the point of the Brest-Litovsk negotiations, the Austro-Hungarian monarchy still thought it could win.

The police response to large-scale worker demonstrations was less restrained and less rational on 15 July 1927, when 200,000 workers put down their tools and protested a jury's decision that members of the *Frontkämpferversammlung* (a radical right-wing Austrian paramilitary) were not guilty of killing a member of the *Schutzbund* and a child in the town of Schattendorf in Burgenland in January. The protests involved several confrontations with the police that turned violent. Workers who marched by the ramp of the University of Vienna (which was protected by a police cordon) were taunted by conservative university students. Outside the *Burgtheater*, worker demonstrators skirmished with police. Other worker demonstrators, marching toward the Ringstraße to join protests in front of the parliament building, were trampled by

62 OeStA/AVA/MdI, Präs., K. 2074, Protokoll Nr. 2414 ex 1918/M.I.

63 Ibid, Pr.Z.52350/4/K. Arbeitseinstellung in Wien, 16 January 1918.

64 Ibid, Pr.Z.52350/2/K; Pr.Z.52350/3/K; Pr.Z.52350/5/K.

65 Ibid, Pr.Z.52350/4/K.

66 Ibid, Pr.Z.52536/19 K., 20 January 1918; Pr.Z.52356/22 K., 21 January 1918; Pr.Z.52356/23 K., 21 January 1918; Pr.Z.52356/27 K., 22 January 1918. I do not want to underemphasise the fact that the police used the threat of force: When a group of 400 workers broke into a sugar factory in the eleventh district on 21 January and stole bonbons valued at 7,000 crowns, police dispersed them with sabres.

mounted police as they entered the area. Workers, angry about police arrests of demonstrators, protested in front of a police station on the corner of Lichtenfelsgasse and Bartensteingasse; after they were charged by incoming police, they stormed the police station and set it on fire.⁶⁷ In the main confrontation, 250 police, armed with military rifles, shot into crowds of workers demonstrating on Bartensteingasse and the area around the city hall. These police had been ordered to the area by Schober, who had been authorised by Vice Chancellor Karl Hartleb (from the *Landbund*) to repress what he believed was a violent revolution.⁶⁸ The social democratic leadership disputed this, as their original plan was for a mere one-hour strike and demonstrations asking for a reversal of the jury's not guilty verdict.⁶⁹ As this occurred, mounted police, attempting to clear the Ringstraße, pushed demonstrators toward the Schmerlingplatz in the vicinity of the *Justizpalast*, where workers barricaded the building. The situation escalated further when police, trapped inside the building, tried to shoot their way out. Workers broke ground-floor windows, entered the building, and threw furniture and paper into the street. After lighting them on fire, some threw burning bundles into the building, spreading the fire. The demonstrators and their barricades prevented the fire department from getting close enough to the building to extinguish the fire (plus their hoses had been cut by demonstrators). The *Schutzbund*, which had arrived on the scene to try to prevent the storming of the building, tried to clear the barricades so that the fire department could lay hoses and extinguish the fire, which was finally possible. The *Schutzbund* also helped policemen trapped inside the building to leave. However, police armed with rifles continued shooting into the crowds, who were hemmed inside the area.⁷⁰

Schober had told Karl Seitz, the social democratic mayor, that he would only order shooting to clear the area so the fire department could get in. Julius Deutsch, head of the *Schutzbund*, claimed that he had told Schober by phone that he was with the *Schutzbund* on the scene and that they would clear the area, a promise to which Schober had agreed. Schober then had a motorcycle courier deliver orders to stop shooting, but it did not reach the police units, nor did an emissary sent by Deutsch. The historians Winfried Garscha and Barry McLoughlin have argued that this was not a communication breakdown: Since Schober allowed the shooting to continue after the area was cleared and the fire department set up its hoses, it was an attempt by Schober to deal a political blow to the Social Democrats.⁷¹ They maintain that the mounted police had lacked restraint during their engagement with protestors and that the police leadership had no overall strategy for dealing with the protests other than clearing the Ringstraße, then shooting into the areas near the parliament building, when they should have cleared the areas and blocked them off, thus preventing demonstrators from returning (obviating the need for more shooting).⁷² In my view, the dynamic of escalation got out of control much more quickly than during the strike movements of January 1918 (which developed and grew over a series of days). In the dynamic in July 1927, the protest marches led to confrontations with police, who had received orders that morning to report regularly about worker strikes and demonstrations and to protect all public buildings.⁷³ Furthermore, the police had known since

67 Winfried Garscha/Barry McLoughlin, *Wien 1927. Menetekel für die Republik*, East Berlin 1987, 117-123.

68 *Ibid.*, 125-127.

69 *Ibid.*, 114-115.

70 *Ibid.*, 128-131.

71 *Ibid.*, 132.

72 *Ibid.*, 134.

73 LPDW, *Justizpalast Sch. I, Juliereignisse 1927*, Zkl 823, *Alle Stadthptl.*, 15 July 1927.

January that there was a potential for demonstrations.⁷⁴ Once the police started responding with force (especially mounted units that attacked and charged the demonstrators), the workers armed themselves with sticks and pieces of iron. Sometimes a triggering event – such as shots fired or false rumours – led the police to respond with harsher measures, while the workers dug in, erecting barricades. Despite discussions between leaders on the two sides at different points, the situation was never brought under control. The police leadership did not demonstrate a willingness to stand down and compromise, as they had done in 1918, when the imperial government had negotiated an end to the strike with the social democratic leadership. Even in the late evening on 15 July 1927, there was further violence, when youth stormed a police station in the seventeenth district (Hernals) and workers besieged a police station in the tenth district (Favoriten). In the latter case, when police dispatched ninety more officers to the scene, someone fired at them from above the *Südbahnviadukt*, killing two policemen. Police returned fire, killing innocent bystanders.⁷⁵

All told, 84 demonstrators were killed and 548 injured, while four police officers and one military officer were killed, and 586 police were injured. The aftermath led to diametrically opposed interpretations of the events. At a commemoration for the victims in October, Mayor Seitz depicted the police's role in the *Justizpalast* events as an echo of 1848: government repression of a democratic demonstration and police violence against innocent people.⁷⁶ The police bureaucracy released a long report countering accusations that it had used excessive force, stating instead that it had saved the state from a communist putsch. It honoured its dead as heroes and obtained commendations from Christian Social Party politicians, who praised the police's role in restoring order.⁷⁷

The “July 1927 unrest”, as it was called in police records, led to a greater centralisation of the police in Austria, confirmed by changes in the 1929 constitution, implemented when Schober became Austria's chancellor. Anton Walitschek, an anti-liberal, anti-socialist police official who wrote a history of the police organisation from 1850 to 1930, praised the changes Schober introduced in response to the *Justizpalast* events. The power of the *Länder* (particularly Vienna, which was controlled by the Social Democratic Party) was reduced, while police power was increased. For example, after 1927, many new *Polizei-Direktionen* (police directorates) were created. The municipalities had to dissolve their community police (*Gemeindewache*) and lost power to the police directorates, controlled directly by the Chancellor Ignaz Seipel of the Christian Social Party. The *Länder*, which formerly controlled the registration of weapons and explosives, lost that control to the police authorities. Also, at this point, a new high-level body, the *Generaldirektion für die öffentliche Sicherheit* was established to supervise all the police authorities, the police forces, and the gendarmerie.⁷⁸

74 LPDW, Schober Archiv, Sch. 29, 1927, Pr.Z.IV-3 Exp, 31 January 1927.

75 Garscha/McLoughlin, Wien 1927, 146.

76 See: Schober's report on Seitz's speech, LPDW, Justizpalast Sch. I, Juliereignisse 1927, Pr.Z.IV-1-766/493/27, 31 October 1927.

77 LPDW, Justizpalast Sch. I, Juliereignisse 1927, Pr.Z.IV-1-766, “Ausschreitungen in Wien am 15. und 16. Juli 1927.”

78 Walitschek, Die Entwicklung der Polizei-Organisation und des Polizeirechtes in Österreich, 304-309. Walitschek, who welcomed these authoritarian steps, remained a police official during the Nazi period (though he was not a party member). He continued working during the Second Republic, too, and defended the decision in certain police stations to burn all their records in the final days of the Nazi system, which made it more difficult, though not impossible, to unearth how the Viennese Kriminalpolizei collaborated with the Nazi system. See: Brigitte Rigele, Aktenverbrennung in Akten. Strafverfahren zum Amtsmissbrauch 1945, in: Claudia Kuretsidis-Haider/Christine Schindler (ed.) Zeithistoriker, Archivar, Aufklärer. Festschrift für Winfried R. Garscha, Vienna 2017, 347-360.

In the late 1920s and early 1930s (before the Christian Socials proclaimed the authoritarian constitution of 1934), the police faced an urban situation in which they were not the only armed unit in the streets, but faced violent competitors, such as paramilitaries on the left and right who engaged in violent conflict with each other. The latter asserted the right to use armed force to protect their own groups and political parties, and in some cases prepared for armed revolution. In Max Weber's theory, the state monopolises the use of force and thereby prevents others from using it, yet the Viennese police did not have this monopoly. Various paramilitaries, each with its own agenda – the *Heimwehr* (a right-wing, anti-communist paramilitary affiliated with the Christian Social Party and its own “*Heimwehr*” block), the Republican *Schutzbund*, the Nazi SS, and the far-right *Vaterländische Schutzbund* – violently clashed during party rallies, demonstrations, parades, and encounters in restaurants.⁷⁹ Concentrating on changes to the police, it is important to note the government's overall policies toward these groups, how these changed in the course of 1932/1933, and what the police's actual strategy was. The Austrian government under Chancellor Schober had close relations with the *Heimwehr* (without letting them completely take power) and relations become much closer under the Christian Social chancellors Ignaz Seipel and Engelbert Dollfuß. However, while Dollfuß gave *Heimwehr* leaders cabinet positions and gave *Heimwehr* men the authority to conduct searches and make arrests, *Heimwehr* leaders in 1933/1934 plotted behind the scenes to undertake a coup to topple Dollfuß and also join with the Nazis, though these negotiations did not pan out.⁸⁰

Over an eight-month period from May 1933 to February 1934, the Dollfuß government banned rival parties (the Communists, the Nazis, and the Social Democrats), with the police constituting one of the forces aligned with the state that enforced these bans. Persons who engaged in party political activities, printed or distributed party literature, or planned rallies and events were prosecuted and punished. In the Austrian legal system, the police also had the power to punish persons with arrest (for example, up to six weeks for illegal party activity) without referring the case to a criminal court (which would rule on guilt or innocence). The police also had wide latitude to conduct house searches, using this power to search for weapons kept by the Republican *Schutzbund* and the Nazis. At the pinnacle of the police leadership, there was a conflict between Police President Franz Brandl⁸¹ and the State Minister for Security Emil Fey (the founder of the Vienna *Heimwehr*) because Fey wanted to supplement the police with *Heimwehr* units, which Brandl resisted, not because he believed in “neutral” police (as he claimed when he took the job), but because he sympathised with the Nazi goal of ‘Anschluß’. When he was forced out of

79 For a social analysis of the progression of these confrontations, see: Gerhard Botz, *Nationalsozialismus in Wien. Machtübernahme, Herrschaftssicherung, Radikalisierung, 1938/39*, Vienna 2008. On the *Heimwehr* (which was unable to develop its own Austrian nationalism because there were tensions between a pro-‘Anschluß’ faction and a clericalist faction), see: Edmonson. On the development of the SS (including confrontations and tensions with the SA), see: Rothländer, *Die Anfänge der Wiener SS*.

80 Gerhard Jagschitz, *Der Putsch. Die Nationalsozialisten 1934 in Österreich*, Graz 1976, 62-65.

81 After obtaining a doctorate in law, he started his career in the police in 1898, worked for the State Police during the First World War, and continued in the police under the First Republic, eventually becoming police president on 30 September 1932.

office in March 1933, he joined the Nazi Party.⁸² The next two Police Presidents, Eugen Seydel and Michael Skubl, were supposed to be more reliable supporters of the Christian Social Party and the Dollfuß dictatorship, which the chancellor took a step toward establishing in March 1933 by dissolving the parliament. However, both these police chiefs failed to fulfil their duty to protect the state: Seydel failed to prevent the Nazi putsch against Dollfuß, while Skubl, in February and March 1933, did not want to resist a Nazi invasion, believing that Arthur Seyß-Inquart, the Nazi Interior and Security Minister in Austria, was a ‘moderate’ Nazi, a Catholic who would prevent the implementation of ‘totalism’. In his post-war testimony in the treason trial of Guido Schmidt, Austria’s last foreign minister before the takeover, Skubl stated that there was no point in ordering the police and army to resist a Nazi German invasion, as the loss of life would be too great. He was willing to serve as Security Minister in the Austrian Nazi government, too, but Heinrich Himmler, the Chief of the German Police, demanded he resign.⁸³

After the government banned demonstrations along with the Christian Socials’ rivals in 1932/1933, the police obtained a broader legal framework for repression, but the Nazis’ strategy of trying to weaken the Austrian government by beginning a wave of terrorist bombings in the summer of 1933 – hitting train lines, electrical systems, telephone booths, parks, and businesses – added a new destabilising element to the rocky interwar period.⁸⁴ The Austrian Nazis were strengthened by support from Nazi Germany, which provided weapons, explosives, and places of refuge for SA and SS men who committed acts of violence in Austria. After the Austrian government banned the Nazi Party on 19 June 1933, the Viennese police confiscated individual editions of Nazi newspapers (if they attacked the government or Austrian politicians), dispersed Nazi supporters when they rallied in public, and tracked down and charged Nazis who set off fire alarms in buildings, committed arson, or planted bombs.⁸⁵ However, it gave a certain latitude to Nazi leaders, such as Gauleiter Eduard Frauenfeld, who was allowed to travel during the summer⁸⁶ and was not arrested until December. Some *Kriminalbeamte*, who were either Nazis or Nazi sympathisers, were lackadaisical in their investigations of Nazi crimes.⁸⁷

Overall, the state’s response to Nazi bombings included arresting 1100 leaders, shutting down Nazi Party offices, stripping Austrian Nazis of their Austrian citizen-

82 Chancellor Dollfuß appointed Fey Minister for State Security after a chaotic shootout between the SS and the Schutzbund in the working-class district of Simmering on 16 October 1932 during the Nazis’ Gauparteitag. Police intervened with their weapons, killing two Nazis and a passer-by, as well as beating up Schutzbund members inside the local party building and ransacking the premises. Once Fey was appointed, he banned all socialist, communist, and Nazi demonstrations. See: Rothländer, *Die Anfänge der Wiener SS*, 218-227, 319-320.

83 *Der Hochverratsprozess gegen Dr. Guido Schmidt vor dem Wiener Volksgericht*, Vienna 1947, 325-327.

84 Jagschitz, *Der Putsch*, 42-43. Winfried Garscha, *Nationalsozialisten in Österreich 1933-1938*, in: Emmerich Tálos/Wolfgang Neugebauer (ed.), *Austrofascismus. Politik – Ökonomie – Kultur. 1933-1938*, Vienna 2005, 104-105.

85 OeStA/AdR BKA BKA-I BPDion Wien, *Polizeidirektion Wien Berichte*, July 1933, K. 33, Seydel to Fey, *Nationalsozialistische Parteigänger*, Pr.Zl.IV-4066/33/37, 18 July 1933.

86 *Polizeidirektion Wien Berichte*, August 1933.

87 Rothländer, *Die Anfänge der Wiener SS*, 284-294, showed that this was true the year before (1932) in connection with the SS teargas attack on the Gerngross department store. The police held many of the suspects in custody, then let them go because they claimed they could not come up with sufficient evidence; one of the police detectives on the case was a Nazi (Karl Prieler), while the *Kriminalbeamte* responsible for interrogating the SS members (Franz Kamba) was also a Nazi. Both *Kriminalbeamte* were later also involved in the Nazi putsch in July 1934. The case only eventually went to trial in March 1933 because someone, probably a disgruntled SS man, sent an anonymous letter telling police who had left the Nazi Party headquarters (the Adolf-Hitler-Haus) right before the attack and then come back. With this information, the higher-level Security Bureau reopened the case and began checking the building’s logs, which turned out to have been altered.

ship, using special legislation to seize property, and reintroducing the death penalty (on 18 July 1934) for persons who possessed explosives with the goal of using them to endanger public security.⁸⁸ The *Heimwehr* meanwhile continued pushing for influence in state security on the ground. Fey ordered the creation of the *Schutzkorps* in July 1933 to “assist” police and gendarmes to maintain public order if they were short on manpower. The men in the *Schutzkorps* came from various regional right-wing authoritarian paramilitaries, including the *Heimwehr* and *Sturmscharen*.⁸⁹ Fey’s bans on associations did not apply to them; in fact, they operated with their own authority or cooperated with police in searching and seizing Nazi and Republican *Schutzbund* weapons.

While the police seemed reactive in the case of the Nazis, they were pro-active in the case of the Viennese communists, whom they viewed as the greater threat. This can be traced back to their opposition to the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, the attempt to create an Austrian council republic in 1918, and the Hungarian communist take-over in 1919.⁹⁰ On a deeper level, however, high police officials came from upper-middle-class (or upper-class) families and were educated with law doctorates; a communist revolution could have meant a loss of their property, positions, and perhaps their lives. Street-level policemen came from both Vienna and neighbouring Lower Austria, usually from families of tradesmen (not industrial wage-workers) or small farmers, and the traditionally Catholic ones saw communism as a threat to religion, social order, and private property. Although the police banned communist publications, broke up demonstrations, and searched for weapons, they ambitiously arrested and jailed communists before the latter planned demonstrations, on the grounds that this was necessary to protect public order. For example, house searches, arrests, and jail sentences prevented communist leaders from staging a major demonstration on 1 August 1933, which was supposed to be an “International Anti-War Day”.⁹¹

Finally, during the late republic, a small number of policemen (*Sicherheitswache* and *Kriminalbeamte*) joined the Nazi Party while it was still legal. Using personnel records, I studied the careers of 82 *Sicherheitswache* officers who were hired before the Nazi takeover of Austria in March 1938 and were still on the force during the Nazi period.⁹² The names were chosen from rosters and financial records of men who guarded deportation transports of Austrian Jews and Roma from 1941 to 1943; others had guarded other equipment transports or were mentioned in other police re-

88 Jagschitz, *Der Putsch*, 53. Garscha, *Nationalsozialisten in Österreich*, 104-105. OeStA/AdR BKA BKA-I BPDion Wien Berichte, July–October 1934 (K. 44), ZI 205.277/34, Bundesgesetz zur Abwehr politischer Gewalttaten.

89 Tálós, *Das austrofaschistische Herrschaftssystem*, 224.

90 Hans Hautmann, *Geschichte der Rätebewegung in Österreich 1918–1924*, Vienna 1987, 490.

91 OeStA/AdR BKA BKA-I BPDion Wien, Polizeidirektion Wien Berichte, August 1933, K. 34, Skubl to Fey, “Geplante kommunistische Demonstration anlässlich des ‘Internationalen Anti-Kriegstages’ am 1. August 1933 in Oesterreich”, Pr.Z.IV-5116/5/33, 2 August 1933.

92 The data is on file with the author, who hopes to publish the study at a later point. The actual percentage who joined the Nazi Party before March 1938 is probably smaller than 15.85 percent, since the group of 82 represents policemen who were still on the force after the Austrofascist government removed alleged socialist policemen from the force between 1927 and 1934. Therefore, the percentage of *Sicherheitswache* who joined the Nazi Party in the late 1920s and early 1930s would likely be smaller, since there would have been more left-leaning policemen on the force at the time. As for the total number of police, it is unclear how many were on the force in the early 1930s. In 1911, there were 4,514 *Sicherheitswache* and 389 inspectors, excluding the “Polizei-Agenten”, later known as *Kriminalbeamte*. See: OeStA/AVA/MdI, Allgem., K. 2087, Nr. 23503-911, 13 July 1911. In the autumn of 1940, there were 3,300 *Schutzpolizisten* (former *Sicherheitswache*, then part of the German police in Vienna). See: LPDW, BPD-Wien 1938-47, Personalstände beim Polizeipräsidenten von Wien.

cords. Only thirteen (15.85 percent) joined the Nazi Party prior to March 1938.⁹³ It is difficult to assess from personnel records why these men joined the party. Nazi Party records (*Gau* records) usually only discuss their party loyalty and service, not their motivations. Most of the autobiographies in the policemen's personnel files were written after the Second World War, when they wanted to minimise their involvement or conceal it, not explain it. Nevertheless, the data suggests that certain traditional explanations of why men joined the Nazi Party may not apply here. For example, a traumatic experience on the front during the First World War was not an automatic predictor of radical right-wing activity; many policemen in the overall group of 82 were veterans but did not join the party. Rural origins did not necessarily predicate party membership either. Many of these policemen came from Lower Austria, a bastion of traditional Catholicism and support for the Christian Social Party, but few joined the Nazi Party. And while many worked in agriculture or in small trades before they joined the police and may have been part of the "declining *Mittelstand*", others came from the same backgrounds and did not join the Nazi Party during the late republic.

Results were similar among the *Kriminalbeamte* who were on the force during the First Republic: Only a small number of these mid-level officials, inspectors, and detectives joined the party before 1938. Here, I studied 94 Austrian *Kriminalbeamte* who worked for the police during the Nazi period, using the records of the post-Second World War *Kriminalbeamtenreferat*, a department that determined whether former police officials should be allowed back on the force and whether new hires were politically acceptable.⁹⁴ I supplemented this sample with additional *Kriminalbeamte* that I found through reading records of Austrian war crimes trials. This was a different type of data-set than the *Sicherheitswache* personnel records, because these *Kriminalbeamte* served in different police agencies (the Viennese police, the border police, or the Gestapo). Although this group (like the *Sicherheitswache*) were all Austrian, some had first joined the German police because they were Nazis who escaped to Germany after the Austrian Nazi Party was banned on 19 June 1933 and were then transferred to Austria when it was incorporated into the 'Third Reich'. Therefore, in this data-set, only 24 actually joined the police before 1938 (specifically between 1912 and 1937). Seventeen of them were members of the Nazi Party, but I was only able to determine that fourteen joined before the 'Anschluß'. Of this group, seven started in the Austrian police and six started in the German police. The seven are the ones that we can examine as having been in the Austrian police prior to the Nazi takeover and who had joined the Nazi Party prior to March 1938: five between 1931 and 1934 and two in 1937.⁹⁵ Because the overall number in the set of 94 is not a statistical sample, but constitutes cases that the *Kriminalbeamtenreferat* selected for

93 One of these policeman's entry date to the Nazi Party was 1 June 1937, and this date may have been invented to make it appear there were more 'Old Fighters' on the force than there really were. After the Nazis came to power, Austrian Nazis in charge of the police wanted to preserve the number of Austrians, so part of their personnel review process included giving policemen false dates stating that they had joined the Nazi Party during the 'illegal period'. See: Weisz, *Umstellung*.

94 I went through approximately 636 files (WStLA, 2.5.1.8 A1) and selected those who were in the police during the Nazi era (94 cases). This group includes men who were in the *Kriminalpolizei*, the Gestapo, and the *Grenzpolizei*. Some men moved from one division to another during the Nazi period, others were in different areas of the police before 1938. I also studied the *Volksgesicht* records for any policeman who was examined by the *Kriminalbeamtenreferat* (if he was also investigated by the state prosecutor) and, in cases where it was unclear when the man joined the Nazi Party, I examined his *Gau* records, too. (In other cases, the *Gau* records were contained in the *Kriminalbeamtenreferat* files, because the State Police examined these after 1945 and sent copies to the *Kriminalbeamtenreferat*.)

95 See footnote 98.

investigation after the Second World War, the percentage of policemen who joined the Nazi Party before the Nazi takeover (7.4 percent) is not a statistical sample of the whole force at that point in time. However, this suggests that the number who had joined was small. Although Konrad Rotter, a *Kriminal-Bezirksinspektor* who founded a Nazi Party group just for policemen in 1930 (“Gersthof 2”), claimed that the group had 1,000 members by 1933,⁹⁶ this number may be inflated. Weisz found that when the Nazis wanted to rebuild the police after March 1938, *Kriminalrevierinspektor* Johann Hoi, who had set up a secret organisation to provide welfare support for illegal Nazi policemen after the failed Nazi putsch in July 1934, could only produce sixty names of Austrian policemen who had been ‘illegal’ Nazis.⁹⁷ This is not to minimise the significance of the spread of National Socialism in the police. It is not only the number that mattered, but why they joined and their impact, as they represented the emergence of a ‘third camp’ in the police, neither Social Democratic nor Christian Social, which had as its goal the overthrow of the state.

It is difficult to pinpoint one overarching reason why the men in the *Kriminalpolizei* sample joined.⁹⁸ All were generally anti-communist, but there were other groups in Austria (the *Heimwehr* and the *Sturmscharen*, for example) which were also anti-communist. Only three had served in the military during the First World War, so the theory that a traumatic frontline experience radicalised them politically may have played a role, but not necessarily for the whole group. (Plus, there were other *Kriminalbeamte* who had also been on the front and did not join the Nazi Party). These seven men were born in different areas of Austria (Vienna, Lower Austria, Burgenland, and Carinthia), so it is hard to generalise that a conservative rural culture influenced them all. The overall context of the late republic must be kept in mind, starting with the depth of the depression and the inability of the government to provide sufficient financial aid to the unemployed. This led to the disintegration of the two main political camps in the republic, creating room for a third camp, the Nazis, to draw certain economic groups toward them, including public employees, many of whom supported a pan-German nationalism.⁹⁹ The acceleration of class conflict caused

96 “Rotter Bericht I (Institut für Zeitgeschichte Wien, ER-19, DO-647, Mappe 63, Putschbericht von Konrad Rotter)”, 30 August 1934, 2, using the pagination from Kurt Bauer’s transcription at <http://www.kurt-bauer-geschichte.at/Juliputsch.htm> (22 September 2019). Jagschitz, *Der Putsch*, 71, cited 1,000 members too, relying on this report.

97 Weisz, *Die Geheime Staatspolizei*, 1303.

98 Otto Schleifer (born 14 February 1907 in Vienna) joined the Nazi Party in 1931. He transferred from the Gendarmerie to the Vienna Kriminalpolizei in 1937, then joined the Vienna Gestapo in 1941, where he beat and tortured prisoners. WStLA, 2.5.1. 8 A1-18, Schleifer, Otto; see also: Vg 1a Vr 1272/45. Franz Rückert (born 2 April 1882 in Tratten near Klagenfurt) joined the Nazi Party in 1932. He joined the Vienna Sicherheitswache in the 1920s (the specific date is unknown) and was a Revier-Inspektor until he retired in 1941. Vg 2c Vr 1876/46. Johann Danzmayr (born 15 November 1902 in Hadersdorf-Weidlingau, Lower Austria) started in the Vienna Sicherheitswache in 1923, transferring to the Vienna Gestapo in 1939. It is possible that a feeling of resentment played a role in his decision to join the Nazi Party in 1932. In 1931, his application to get into a commander training course (Chargenschulkurs) was rejected. WStLA, 2.5.1. 8 A1-4, Danzmayr, Johann, Bitte um Aufnahme in den Offiziers-anwärterkurs der Ordnungspolizei, 24 April 1938. Florian Preisegger (born 5 July 1899 in Pötsching, Burgenland) joined the Vienna Sicherheitswache in 1927 and the Nazi Party in May 1933. He was dismissed from the police in 1934 because he was involved in the Dollfuß putsch, then went to Berlin, where he worked for the Berlin Gestapo from 1935 to 1938 before transferring to the Vienna Kriminalpolizei. WStLA, 2.5.1. 8 A1-16, Preisegger, Florian; Vg 12a Vr 8720/46. Karl Künzel (born 8 September 1907 in Vienna) spent four years in the Austrian army (1926–1930), then joined the Vienna Sicherheitswache in 1930, serving as a driver for the State Police. Although his SS-Führerpersonalakte states that he joined the Nazi Party in May 1937 (Bundesarchiv [Berlin-Lichterfelde], R 9361-III/538507), he was active in the movement before this point, because he was investigated and punished for Nazi activity during 1933–1936. He joined the Vienna Gestapo in 1938 and was later second-in-command of the “worker education” camp at Ober-Lanzendorf, where he gravely mistreated prisoners and ordered the transport of prisoners to Mauthausen. WStLA, 2.5.1. 8 A1-11, Künzel, Karl; Vg 3b Vr 4750/46.

99 Ernst Bruckmüller, *Sozialgeschichte Österreichs*, Vienna 1985, 500–504.

middle-class parties to criticise democratic institutions and call for a governing body, based on a system of corporate orders, to either take over and replace the parliament or to serve as another chamber therein.¹⁰⁰ Deeply rooted antisemitism of the religious, economic, and racial types was ever-present in post-war society, where there were frequent discussions about a *numerus clausus*, separate schools for Christian and Jews, the expulsion of Jewish immigrants, and the supposedly “corrupt Jewish influence” in modernist culture.¹⁰¹ Vienna also had a persistent shortage of housing, despite the municipal administration’s construction of large-scale communal apartment blocks.¹⁰² It is no accident that once the Nazis came to power, Viennese Nazis not only received jobs in the police, they also received apartments confiscated from Jewish Austrians.¹⁰³

Therefore, a mixture of factors may have attracted policemen to National Socialism during the late republic: economic hardship, the attraction of pan-German nationalism, the message of ‘German’ renewal, the promise that antisemitic policies would benefit Austria, and the persona of Hitler. *Polizei-Revierinspektor* Franz Rückert, who had joined the Vienna *Sicherheitswache* in the 1920s and became the watch commander in the Bräunerstraße station in Vienna’s first district, perhaps joined due to his belief in Hitler, stating in his 1939 application for “Old Fighter” status: “I have and will always aim to realise the idea of the Führer.”¹⁰⁴ However, this may have been an exaggeration that he thought the *Gau* leadership would like to hear, because after the war, when he was prosecuted for being an ‘illegal’ Nazi (he was found innocent¹⁰⁵), he stated that he had filled his 1939 application with “lies” in order to secure a job for his son, who was an unemployed mechanic and had also joined the party.¹⁰⁶ Rückert may, therefore, have had economic and familial motivations. Nevertheless, he seems to have believed in the mission of the party, despite his post-war claims that he only supported Austria’s “economic annexation to Germany”.¹⁰⁷ He held the position of *Blockleiter* from August 1938 onwards and his application for “Old Fighter” status was approved, indicating that the party saw him as reliable, despite his post-war claims that he was not really involved in the party.¹⁰⁸

Another policeman, Franz Wiedermann, born in 1896 in Hirtenberg, Lower Austria, represents a complex case in which social and psychological factors may have influenced his belief in Nazi ideology. A veteran of the First World War on the Italian front (who was captured), he joined the *Sicherheitswache* in 1922, then entered the police commander school (*Chargenschule*) in 1926 to become a *Kriminalbeamte*. By 1932, he attained the rank of *Rayonsinspektor*. This career path shows that he had been promoted during the First Republic and did not become a Nazi because he had been passed over. He joined the Nazi Party in 1932, though his support for the ideology may have started much earlier. According to an autobiographical statement he wrote in 1938 (to seek readmission to the party after the Nazi takeover), he said he had joined a “National Socialist workers’ association” in 1920 while he was an office

100 Tálos, *Das austrofaschistische Herrschaftssystem*, 10–12.

101 Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution*, 80–95, 121–127, 157–173, 183–189, 198–203.

102 Botz, *Nationalsozialismus in Wien*, 414–415.

103 LPDW, *Normalien 1939*, *Polizeipräsident in Wien*, P 5000/39, *Betr: Wohnungsfürsorge für Angehörige der staatlichen Polizei*, 30 September 1939.

104 Vg 2c Vr 1876/46, *BLZ. 6*, Rückert an die Gauleitung Wien der NSDAP (Abschrift), *Betrifft: Aktion “Alter Kämpfer”*.

105 *Ibid.*, *Urteil* (Abschrift), 13 September 1947.

106 *Ibid.*, “*Verantwortung*”, 15 March 1946.

107 *Ibid.*, 3.

108 *Ibid.*, 3–4.

worker in a woodworking firm in Pfaffstätten, Lower Austria. He boasted that his firm was the only “National Socialist” firm in “red Triestingtal”, where industrial firms and “red” socialist workers were located.¹⁰⁹ This indicates that he was attracted to an anti-communist, pan-German nationalist ideology from a very early point. Unlike most of the policemen in the sample, his mother died when he was four, and his father, a butcher in Salzburg, died in 1921, a few years after Franz returned from the war. While working as a waiter before the First World War, he was introduced at age fifteen to homosexual sex by older waiters.¹¹⁰ After he became a policeman, he got married and had a child, as virtually all the policemen did in my sample. From 1939 to 1941, while stationed in occupied Poland, he had sex with two young men (who were under 21 years old) and was convicted of sodomy by an SS court.¹¹¹ He was sentenced to twelve years in prison and was sent to Dachau concentration camp,¹¹² but was later released to help suppress the Warsaw Uprising in 1944. Badly burned,¹¹³ he did not return from the war, according to information provided by his wife.¹¹⁴ Among the 94 cases of *Kriminalbeamte* I studied, his case is atypical in some ways (his homosexual activities and trial by the SS), but typical in others: He joined the police after having had a short career in another profession, advanced through the ranks before 1938, and worked in an urban police station where there were conflicts between Nazi policemen and those who, during the Austrofascist period, belonged to the single permissible political party, the Fatherland Front. Wiedermann stated that he had protected Nazi Party members in his precinct (Schmelz in the sixteenth district) and destroyed evidence that he found when searching the houses of Nazis. He claimed he was repeatedly denounced by Fatherland Front members, which contributed to his sense of grievance against the “system regime” (as Nazis called the Austrofascist government).¹¹⁵ This too was typical of the mind-set of Nazi Viennese policemen. The end of the republic saw an increasing politicisation in the actions of

109 WStLA, 2.5.1.8 A1-23, Kriminalbeamtenreferat, Wiedermann, Franz, BlZ. 58, Lebenslauf, 21 August 1938.

110 Ibid, BlZ. 98, Feld-Urteil, SS- und Polizeigericht XV Breslau (Abschrift), St.L. 103/42, 15 July 1942, 11.

111 Ibid, BlZ. 101, 14. Because these cases were investigated in a Nazi framework, and witness statements were made to police and prosecutors (rather than to a private confidant), the men’s reasons for engaging in sexual activity with Wiedermann are subject to interpretation. One of his sexual relationships was with an 18-year-old (Kurt Z.) whom he met while stationed at a border checkpoint at Geiersdorf in 1939. Kurt was the son of a family who rented Wiedermann a little settlement house, where Kurt also lived. Wiedermann made sexual advances which Kurt tried to resist, but then the youth gave in and there was a mutual masturbation episode. In 1940, Kurt visited Wiedermann in Glogau/Glogow, Poland, and after a night of heavy drinking, Wiedermann pressed himself against Kurt and carried out “coitus-like actions”, according to the court judgment. Wiedermann also attempted sexual contact with Kurt again when he visited the family. The court refused to believe Kurt’s protests that he had resisted Wiedermann, instead believing the latter, who said Kurt had already engaged in homosexual activity before he met him, having been “corrupted” by a priest. The other case involved a 17-year-old butcher’s apprentice, Arthur K., whom Wiedermann met in a restaurant in Glogau, when Wiedermann was stationed at a border post there, north of Liegnitz/Legnica. After extremely heavy drinking at a restaurant, Wiedermann invited Arthur to his apartment and paid him to have anal sex. They were heard by the landlady, who confronted them. The matter was reported to the police, probably by the landlady. The SS court’s judgment argued that Wiedermann was not “a typical homosexual” – with the underlying subtext that a true Nazi and family man could not be a homosexual – contending that he was a man who sought sexual relations with young men because he was “uprooted” and separated from his family when he was sent to Poland. The judge also blamed the supposedly “lax” moral and legal environment in Vienna before 1938. After he was punished, the court said, he could be “won back over for his family and also for the Volksgemeinschaft”. Ibid, BlZ. 100, 13.

112 Ibid, BlZ. 103, Staatliche Kriminalpolizei, Kriminalpolizeileitstelle Wien, KPL-A-40/4/3/1942, 21 July 1943, 3. An die Leitung des Strafvollzugslager der SS und Polizei-Abteilung Z in Dachau.

113 Ibid, Kriminalpolizeileitstelle Wien, Büro A, Bericht, 28 November 1944.

114 Ibid, Polizeidirektion Wien, Kriminalbeamtenreferat, Betrifft: Wiedermann Franz, Aufenthaltsermittlung, 29 June 1946.

115 Ibid, Lebenslauf, 21 August 1938; Meldung der Beamten welche als Alte Kämpfer angesehen werden können (Abschrift), 4 April 1939.

the police vis-à-vis the public and intensified political conflicts among policemen within the ranks, representing a change in police culture involving power struggles inside station houses. The history of the next era shows that efforts to force the police officers to conform to the state's ideology were not wholly successful, challenging the view that the police was simply a political tool of the state.

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