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Creating Patriotism

Imperial Celebrations and the Cult of Franz Joseph

Despite the role of the dynasty in the creation of the Habsburg state and the continued power and influence of the emperor in domestic and foreign affairs (even after 1867), little scholarly attention has been paid to Habsburg celebrations under Emperor Franz Joseph I. My work-in-progress, a study of the creation, dissemination, and reception of the image of Franz Joseph as a potential symbol of common identity within the Austrian half of the Habsburg Monarchy (Cisleithania)¹, addresses this gap in the historiography. I concentrate on the official presentation of the imperial cult, as well as on the use or rejection of the image of the emperor by regional social and ethnic factions. By looking at both the production of the cult of the emperor and its reception, this project analyzes the tension between national and supra-national identity in an age of mass political participation.

The Habsburgs and their supporters were not alone in redefining and expanding the role of royalty for the creation of state-oriented political identities in the second half of the 19th century. As Eric Hobsbawm and others have noted,

the four or five decades preceding World War I witnessed the 'invention of tradition' on a massive scale.²

Many European states introduced public holidays and built monuments venerating the ruling house and cultivating state and dynastic loyalty. Promoters of dynastic celebrations often competed with national movements, which commemorated events of allegedly crucial significance in the development of the nation and extolled national rather than dynastic heroes. During dynastic celebrations, government figures, aristocrats, and members of the ruling houses themselves publicly equated national and state interests in order to counter and to harness popular nationalism.

The Habsburgs, however, could not claim to embody the spirit of the German nation without alienating the non-German majority in the monarchy. In any case, such an association of the dynasty with the interests of a 'nation' would have been an admission that sovereignty arises from the people, independent of the historic rights of the dynasty – an unlikely concession from this most traditional of ruling families. The Habsburgs and their

supporters instead promoted the emperor as a living symbol of state unity.

Habsburg invention and alteration of tradition is at the center of my study. I examine the principal apparatus of monarchical representation – the court – as well as the display of imperial ritual, ceremony, and celebration to the population of Cisleithania. The project is divided into three main sections. I begin by looking at changes in the presentation of the emperor in the early decades of Franz Joseph's rule. In the wake of the revolutions of 1848/1849, the Habsburg court sought to renew old traditions that could help legitimize the neoabsolutist system. The second section analyzes the major imperial inspection tours of Galicia. The emperor's tours of the provinces brought the theater of court ritual to the masses outside of Vienna. This case study illustrates how the appropriation of the dynastic cult could affect local politics. The third section looks at celebrations marking the emperor's fiftieth and sixtieth Jubilees in 1898 and 1908 respectively. Although the focus here is largely on the court and Karl Lueger's Christian Social city government in Vienna, I also consider how the Jubilees were celebrated in the provinces and how information about the great festivities in Vienna was conveyed to the population outside the imperial capital. The project also briefly considers the presentation of the Empress Elisabeth, imperial celebrations in World War I, and the burial of Franz Joseph.

While there is an extensive literature on European medieval and absolutist courts and court society, neither the persistence of court ritual and ceremony, nor the presentation of the ruling house as a

symbol of state unity in the 19th and 20th centuries have received as much scholarly attention.³ This gap is all the more glaring in the case of the Habsburg monarchy, a heterogeneous patchwork of territories acquired largely through the ambitious marriage politics of the ruling house. Few scholars treat supporters of the dynasty as actors in the public sphere or look at the use of dynastic symbols to justify various political programs.⁴ Habsburg historiography has traditionally focused on nationality and nationalism rather than on imperial loyalty. The concern with nationality is understandable to all familiar with the history of the monarchy, yet historians often too readily assume that imperial and national identities were by definition mutually exclusive. Certainly, the post-1848 period witnessed economic transformations leading to the rise of peasants' and workers' movements and the radicalisation of ethnic politics, but the diversity of the monarchy's regional political structures allowed for alternative routes to the definition of national identity, some of which were compatible with imperial loyalty. In fact, socialist agitation and nationalist confrontation coexisted with an unprecedented increase in official and popular manifestations of imperial loyalty in the last decades of Habsburg rule.

My study of the court, the presentation of the emperor, and the use, manipulation, and rejection of the mythic narratives of Habsburg power, which were created and bolstered during imperial celebrations, reveals much about the workings of the state. The study examines government attempts to build support for its programs, the place of the court in politics and society, and the ways local

political elites strove to defend and expand their power positions through the manipulation of the imperial cult. I utilize records from the imperial court, documents from the Interior Ministry and the Ministry of Education and Culture, police reports from Vienna, Lemberg (the provincial capital of Galicia, now Lviv, Ukraine), and Krakow, the papers of the Lower Austrian and the Galician provincial administrations, memoirs, newspapers, and pamphlets.

Court, Church, Dynasty

From the moment Franz Joseph ascended the throne on December 2, 1848, the neoabsolutist regime placed great emphasis on the representation of monarchical grandeur through ceremony and ritual. This Habsburg appeal to 'tradition' became necessary in part because of dynastic discontinuity and the rejection of tradition: Ferdinand abdicated and the rightful heir was passed over in favor of Franz Joseph. The dynasty had broken with its own (relatively new) tradition of primogeniture, something Franz and Metternich had refused to do when securing the succession for the debilitated Ferdinand.

Franz Joseph's court moved swiftly to revitalize the Catholic ceremonial role of the Habsburg monarch. Once symbolizing the baroque alliance of Church and Dynasty, public expressions of the Catholic piety of the Habsburg ruler, like the annual Foot Washing and Corpus Christi processions, had diminished in importance under Joseph II. and his successors.⁵ In 1849 Franz Joseph participated in his first Corpus Christi procession as emperor. Its origins in the leg-

endary Habsburg reverence for the Host, this ceremony offered an opportunity to display the majesty of the court and the semi-sacred character of the emperor.⁶ The bishops of Austria joined in the procession. Franz Joseph, head uncovered in a gesture of humility, walked behind the priest bearing the Host from Stephansdom to four stations in Vienna's inner city. At each stop, excerpts from the New Testament were read. Yet the Corpus Christi Procession was never merely a display of Habsburg humility. Imperial guards in colorful uniforms and the highest aristocrats of the realm clothed in the robes of the various Habsburg House Orders surrounded the emperor. An imposing military parade followed the 1849 procession, in sharp contrast to that of 1848, when Vienna's citizens had organized their own procession in the absence of the imperial family and without army participation. On Holy Thursday 1850, in another display of Habsburg piety, for the first time the new emperor knelt in the Ceremonial Hall of the Imperial Palace to wash the feet of twelve old men in imitation of Christ. These Catholic ceremonies demonstrated the return to order and the renewal of stability after the chaos of revolution.

The annual Foot Washing ceremony and Corpus Christi procession, presented to the broader public through newspapers, commemorative publications, and sermons, portrayed the emperor as a devout son of the Church whose rule and new order were sanctioned by Heaven. Even after the cancellation of the Concordat with Rome in the early 1870s, Franz Joseph rarely missed either celebration and regularly kissed relics, at-

tended church services, and was blessed by Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, and Islamic clergy. The exhibition of Habsburg religious devotion had regained its earlier prominence, but Habsburg public piety now projected a very different meaning. The Catholic bigotry of the Habsburg past had been transformed into a general respect for organized religion as a source of stability against the threat of revolution. The Habsburgs now used Catholic ritual to create internal unity rather than to define non-Catholics as enemies. Public demonstration of the ruler's special Catholic ceremonial role bolstered the sacred aura of the emperor and the dynasty's claim to rule in Central Europe by historic right.

Franz Joseph performed his ceremonial roles with the same doggedness that characterized his legendary administrative stamina. The exactitude and consistency of ceremonial presentation, maintained with only modest alterations throughout Franz Joseph's reign, must be seen as an important qualitative alteration of court procedures. Imperial *Zeremoniell* enhanced the prestige of the monarch, separating him from those around him and from the population as a whole, thereby increasing the importance of his occasional interaction with lesser mortals.

Imperial Inspection Tours of Galicia

No celebrations brought the image of the emperor to the provinces more effectively than imperial inspection tours and visitations (*Kaiserreisen*). The claims by the court and government to be the defenders of stability and order in a chaotic world received physical manifestation during these frequent travels. On

inspection tours the emperor became, as surely as he did when performing Catholic ceremonies in Vienna, a living symbol promoting dynastic loyalty and identification with the state he ruled. The second section of my project is a case study of Franz Joseph's three major visits to Galicia (1851, 1880, 1894) and the aborted 1868 *Kaiserreise* – my study will touch only briefly on the 1855 inspection tour undertaken during the Crimean War. This case study examines alterations in the presentation of the emperor and illustrates the growing mutual dependence between regional elites and the Vienna government.

Almost equal numbers of Poles and Ruthenians (Ukrainians)⁷ as well as a large number of Jews populated the Habsburg slice of the Partitions of Poland, known officially as the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria. Poles constituted the majority in the west, and Ruthenians in the east – although even in eastern Galicia, Poles and Jews outnumbered Ruthenians in many urban centers. Polish nobles controlled most of the land throughout this overwhelmingly agrarian province.⁸ The emperor's first inspection tour of Galicia in October, 1851, was one in a series of inspection tours undertaken by Franz Joseph in the years following the revolution. The government mobilized police and military forces to assist the court apparatus in turning these post-revolution inspection tours of the crownlands into public affirmations of the victorious 'Monarchical Principle.' For three weeks, Franz Joseph viewed military parades, visited fortresses, and made triumphant entrances into Galician towns while troops and police lined the streets.

The court and the government determined all aspects of the inspection tour, ignoring the appeals of the Polish nobility for a greater voice in the administration of the province. Polish nobles participated in the festivities only as passive courtiers in the emperor's entourage. In the 1860s, conservative Polish magnates played important roles in the development of the October Diploma, though their preference for a more federal reconstruction of the monarchy eventually lost out with the creation of the Dual Monarchy in 1867. The 1868 trip to Galicia – called off after the Galician Diet (*Sejm*) passed a resolution calling for constitutional changes in favor of autonomy – was to have been an acknowledgment of the leading role of the Polish elites in Galicia. The cancellation of the *Kaiserreise* demonstrates that the presentation of the emperor no longer depended on the will of the court and central government alone. In the constitutional era, with its political and press freedom, imperial celebration and the display of the majesty of the court could not be separated from regional and monarchy-wide political disputes.

To a far greater degree than was the case in 1851, or would have been the case in 1868, the 1880 *Kaiserreise* was a public event. In the first three weeks of September, from Biala to the Bukovinan border, enthusiastic crowds greeted the emperor as he knelt before relics of Polish saints held aloft by Roman Catholic priests or as he signed his name in Polish in gymnasium guest books. The scenes repeated themselves: cannon fire, chiming church bells, massive crowds, peasant bands on horseback, school girls in white dresses laying flowers along the emperor's path, torch-

light parades, mountain top bonfires, city illuminations, serenades, court dinners, aristocratic balls, early morning prayers at cathedrals and synagogues. During the 1880 imperial tour of Galicia, one can be sure that nearly every inhabitant either saw the emperor, talked with someone who did, read about his visit in the paper, or heard about it at a village reading hall or from the local Priest or Rabbi.

Three factors contributed to the success of the 1880 *Kaiserreise* to Galicia. First, widespread celebrations of the imperial wedding in 1854, the 25th anniversary of Franz Joseph's ascension in 1873, and the 25th wedding anniversary of the imperial couple in 1879 had enhanced the growing popularity of the emperor. Second, with the fall of the Liberal government in 1879, Cisleithanian Minister-President Eduard Taaffe relied on Polish participation in his Iron Ring Reichsrat coalition. Finally, in Galicia, Krakow conservative nobles (Stanczyks) and their *Bürger* and east Galician magnate allies had solidified their control of Galicia. Their policy of loyalism had secured the use of Polish in schools, courts, and local government in the late 1860s and early 1870s and now seemed poised to gain even greater de facto autonomy for Galicia.⁹ The imperial visit promised to serve the interests of both Taaffe's government and the Polish conservatives. Taaffe had to confront German Liberals who viewed provincial autonomy and the dependence of the government on a largely non-German parliamentary coalition as threats to the unity of the state, while the Polish elites needed to establish their Polish national credentials in the face of criticism from a democratic opposition dis-

satisfied with the alleged servility of the Polish elites and conservatives' rejection of the Polish revolutionary tradition.

Not content to mutely attach themselves to the emperor's entourage, the confident Polish elites initiated the preparation of massive celebrations. The *Sejm* approved large sums of money and appointed a committee of leading politicians and nobles to organize every detail of the visit, ignoring the emperor's desire to avoid extravagant expenditure. The Polish dominated *Statthaltereien* encouraged local notables to inspire the peasant population to cheer the emperor's train along the entire planned route. Police and security forces quietly cleared towns of street urchins and watched the gathering places of undesirables. Citizens' Guards provided security, and newspapers touted the apparent lack of police and army measures as proof of Franz Joseph's popularity. Nobles vied for the honor of hosting the emperor, eagerly making costly renovations to their palaces to meet the tastes and needs of the imperial entourage.

The court and central government worked closely with the Polish conservatives. The court accepted provincial governor (*Statthalter*) Alfred Potocki's requests to relax court etiquette in order to honor important figures who did not possess imperial titles or sit in the provincial parliament with invitations to imperial dinners, soirees, and theater productions. Taaffe granted representatives of the official Vienna and Galicia government press special access to all events and seats in the emperor's train in order to guarantee "authentic and direct" coverage of the *Kaiserreise*.¹⁰ The *Statthaltereien* and Taaffe's government censored all

speeches, many of which were written not by local mayors and notables but by Polish *Statthaltereien* officials, who also penned most of the emperor's responses.

The conservatives used the *Kaiserreise* to define a series of Polish national symbols, all of which had been gained and supported due to the close relationship between the emperor and the Polish elites. Franz Joseph acknowledged cultural progress by visiting the Galician Diet, the Krakow and Lemberg Universities, and the Krakow Academy of Sciences, all of which were dominated by Polish conservatives. In a central symbolic moment, Franz Joseph agreed to return Wawel Castle to the people of Galicia and to designate this former home of Polish kings an official imperial residence. Conservatives praised the emperor for his support of Polish interests at these and other carefully orchestrated events. Editorials compared the oppression of Polish culture in neighbouring Russian Poland to the relative freedom under the Habsburgs and lauded the emperor for allowing the Poles use of their own language in schools, church, and government. The crowds who cheered the emperor and the speeches of the Polish elites appeared to confirm the conservatives' definition of national symbols.

However, not all the 1880 events conformed to the will of the Polish conservatives. Franz Joseph made sure to visit Ruthenian institutions as well – he himself had set the foundation stone of the Ruthenian National Home during his 1851 visit to Lemberg. Ruthenian associations set aside bitter disagreements over their national identity and produced a unified reception for the emperor. The

emperor also insisted on entering Lemberg's two main synagogues, where he, the attending generals, and Polish nobles were blessed by liberal and orthodox Rabbis. At every turn, peasants and widows of soldiers and government workers knelt in the mud before the emperor's carriage to plea for help or threw petitions for financial and legal support into the imperial coach. The thousands of petitions for imperial assistance attested to the fact that all was not as harmonious as the ideal Galicia created in media accounts of the inspection tour. Polish democrats criticized the conservative monopoly over the *Kaiserreise*, and rhetorically separated loyalty to the emperor from support of conservative policies.

Despite the grumbling of the Polish democrats, the emperor's respectful treatment of non-Polish institutions, and the presence of thousands of dissatisfied Galicians, the inspection tour ultimately benefited the Polish ruling elites. The conservatives had mobilized the autonomous Galician institutions to control most aspects of the visit. Vienna's main German liberal newspapers, usually critical of Polish participation in the Iron Ring, praised Polish commitment to a strong imperial state. The Vienna government acknowledged its dependence on the Poles, fortifying the political position of the Polish conservatives in the *Reichsrat* and in Galicia.

There were, however, limits to the conservatives' success. In the months following the inspection tour, Polish and Ruthenian factions organized public celebrations that directly challenged the Polish elites. At the same time that the upcoming imperial visit had been announced in

July, Polish democrats and veterans of the January Uprising of 1863 made public their intent to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the 1830 November Uprising. However, their ambitious designs failed to inspire much enthusiasm, and the provincial elites were able to counteract or suppress most of the planned events. The Catholic Episcopate forbade the holding of any church services beyond mourning for those who lost their lives in the uprising. Conservative newspapers denounced the glorification of events that cost Polish lives and damaged Polish interests, proudly juxtaposing the fruits of a policy of accommodation with futile martyrdom.

In the final analysis, the Polish democrats could only claim to represent the small number of Galicia's educated urban Poles. The Ruthenians on the other hand, posed a much more serious threat to the attempt by the Polish elites to portray themselves as the rightful and natural leaders of Galicia. Polish nobles and intellectuals often defined Ruthenians as Polish peasants who spoke an eastern dialect of Polish. The most important Ruthenian organisations, though divided by many issues, were united on one: Ruthenians were not Poles. In an attack on Polish hegemony, the same Ruthenian institutions that had produced a reception for the emperor in September convened an all-party Ruthenian Meeting in the National House in Lemberg, in conjunction with commemorations of the 100th anniversary of the ascension of Joseph II to the throne. On November 29th, the day Polish democrats celebrated an uprising for Polish independence, Ruthenians honored the emperor

liberator who had freed the Ukrainian serfs from the clutches of Polish overlords and praised Franz Joseph as the heir to Joseph II's alleged pro-Ruthenian sympathies. The Ruthenian reception for Franz Joseph, the Joseph II commemorations, and the subsequent Ruthenian Meeting proclaimed to the Poles and public opinion in the monarchy as a whole that Galicia was not, and could never be, a purely Polish province.

In 1894, Franz Joseph visited the Galician Exhibition in Lemberg. Once again, cheering crowds, censored speeches, and government and conservative newspapers underscored the attachment of Galicia and its elites to the emperor and the state he embodied. By 1894, however, the convergence of factors which led to the success of the 1880 tour had broken down. Although peasants and *Bürger* continued to line the streets and cheer the emperor, outside of the festivities themselves the Polish elites could no longer unify society behind their vision of Polish identity and imperial loyalty. Ever larger sections of Galician society organized into political groupings which were no longer content to seek fulfillment of their interests through the mediation of the conservative elites. New Polish peasant, socialist, and Ukrainian nationalist organisations defined their programs in direct opposition to the ruling elites and their narrative of Galician unity and state loyalty. Although the personal popularity of Franz Joseph increased in the last decades of the 19th century, the contrast between the secure and legitimate hierarchy of orders presented during imperial rituals and ceremonies and the reality of Galician interest group politics was too great to

make effective propaganda in the political context of 1894.

The 1898 and 1908 Imperial Jubilees

Orchestrated expressions of patriotism and popular participation in Habsburg imperial celebrations reached their apogee in the great jubilee years of 1898 and 1908. In the late 19th century the ruling houses of Europe competed to produce impressive displays of monarchical splendor. At the same time, many dynasties, including the Habsburgs, strove to instill loyalty in the politicized population through public celebrations.

In 1898, inspired by Queen Victoria's 1887 and 1897 Jubilees in Britain, the Habsburg court itself planned massive festivities for November and December. Previously, Franz Joseph had insisted that money not be wasted on celebrations in honor of the imperial family. In 1888, for example, the emperor had prevented official celebrations of his fortieth Jubilee apart from the long-planned unveiling of the Maria Theresia Monument between the new Court Museums across the Ring from the Hofburg. 1898, however, was to be different. Although eventually canceled due to the September 10 assassination of Empress Elisabeth, the court festivities were to have included a gala theater performance, church services in Vienna's Stephansdom, and a "Homage of the Peoples" (*Huldigung der Völker*) in the Winter Riding School. The planned court celebrations offered imperial loyalty as a means to overcome the ethnic and partisan strife that had paralyzed the Reichsrat. Perhaps the clearest example was the planned gala theater performance. The *Festspiel* was to depict scenes

from the heroic Habsburg past, culminating in the "Apotheosis" of Franz Joseph. The play portrayed Franz Joseph as the most illustrious descendant of a glorious family, who alone united the diverse population of the monarchy in peace, harmony and prosperity.¹¹ The 1908 court festivities revived the 1898 program, with the addition of a visit by Wilhelm II. and most of Germany's princes to pay homage to the Habsburg ruler.

The government, army, Church, and imperial family acted to bolster dynastic loyalty. Government newspapers heightened the importance of the Jubilees by printing daily notices about heroic events in Habsburg history. Millions of members of the armed forces and government ministries received commemorative medals in official ceremonies throughout the monarchy. In 1898, the Ministry of War issued a brochure to remind all members of the armed forces of their personal fealty to the emperor, juxtaposing an ideal, ethnically neutral and *kaisertreu* army with the irresponsible demagoguery of nationalist politicians. The Catholic Church appealed to imperial loyalty as a cure-all for the social and ethnic problems confronting the state with a special *Hirtenbrief* to be read from all pulpits in November, 1898. The episcopate denounced nationalism and offered a Christ-like Franz Joseph as a model for all good Austrians.¹² Members of the imperial family sponsored the production of beautiful commemorative books filled with articles on culture, economy, ethnography, the army, and the imperial family written by scholars, aristocrats and military officers, and illustrated in pen and ink by prominent artists.¹³

In 1898, Mayor Karl Lueger's Christian Socials were the only major German-Austrian party that did not attempt to claim the mantle of the revolutionaries of 1848/1849 by sending a delegation to the Tomb of the Fallen. Instead, Lueger chose to juxtapose social democratic and German nationalist adoration of the revolutionaries with his party's celebration of the dynasty. The Christian Social Party could not compete with the Social Democrats' spontaneous demonstrations in support of universal suffrage or with the annual May-day rallies. However, Lueger could and did use the Vienna city government to create displays of organized patriotism. In both Jubilee years, Lueger orchestrated a Procession of the Children. In 1898, 70,000 school children marched around the Ring to the glory of the emperor – and of Lueger. In 1908, Lueger's city council conveyed 80,000 children on the expanded city transportation system to Schönbrunn. In the palace gardens, actresses from the Burgtheater portrayed *Vindobona* and *Austria* and 1,000 children sang music written for the occasion, while the other 79,000 children cheered the teary-eyed emperor. All participants received commemorative medals and pamphlets. In their party newspapers Social Democrats fiercely denounced Lueger's use of the imperial cult, and Schönerer's nationalists denied the possibility of a German-Austrian state patriotism, proving themselves enemies of stability and opponents of the state. The Christian Socials used the Jubilees to assert that only their party could defend the middle-classes against social democracy, and that only the Christian Socials stood

for the unity of Austro-German identity, state loyalty, stability, and dynastic patriotism.

The most elaborate single Jubilee event of either year was Vienna's 1908 *Kaiser-Huldigungs-Festzug*. Over 12,000 marched around the Ring in this colorful extravaganza. The first part of the procession depicted scenes from Habsburg history, with characters often portrayed by their direct descendants. Delegations from each province of Cisleithania, dressed in decorative versions of peasant and national costumes and many riding horses or posing on lavishly adorned wagons, participated in the 'ethnographic' section. The Galician and the Bosnian delegations elicited the most enthusiastic response from the crowds. The message was clear: all the peoples of the monarchy could enjoy the security to develop their national cultures under the watchful eye of the Prince of Peace, Franz Joseph. Financial deficit, a boycott by the Czechs, and some controversies surrounding the delegations from Galicia marred what was otherwise a great triumph for the dynastic ideal. 300,000–500,000 witnessed the *Festzug*,¹⁴ thousands drawn to Vienna from all parts of the monarchy by advertisements in provincial newspapers offering Ringstraße views of the *Festzug* and hotel rooms at discount rates. Programs, brochures, commemorative books, and souvenirs were produced and sold throughout the monarchy. Provincial newspapers spread details about this and other events to millions outside the Cisleithanian capital.

Though the events in Vienna were the most grandiose, millions celebrated the Jubilees throughout Cisleithania. Mili-

tary bands paraded through the streets of larger towns, waking the population before dawn with the imperial hymn and the Radetzky March. Church bells summoned millions to special religious services. Town governments, voluntary organisations, academic institutions, and military veterans' associations sponsored *Volksfeste*, founded charitable institutions, self-help organisations, and insurance funds, and built Franz-Joseph-Jubilee schools, hospitals, churches, and synagogues. In Galicia, hundreds of thousands of peasants bought inexpensive portraits of the emperor to hang in their windows during the ubiquitous illuminations held on December 2. In Bohemia and elsewhere, dozens of local communities unveiled statues and monuments to the ruler. In Vienna, among hundreds of small-scale celebrations, in 1898 the Nicotine Society of Vienna held a Kaiser smoke-in, while the Christian Women's Association sponsored what can only be described as a combination dynastic festival and anti-Semitic rally.

The Jubilees also furnished opportunities for enterprising businesses to cash in on the image of the popular emperor. Publishing houses produced books and brochures praising the emperor in the hope of receiving the official recommendation of the Ministry of Education for the use of their publications in the school system. Kaiser-Jubilee-Exhibitions showcased the development of everything from the fine arts to rabbit-breeding during Franz Joseph's reign. Manufacturers produced scores low-cost, including mass produced portraits, busts, and statues of the emperor, as well as postcards and medals. Many, perhaps hoping to use im-

perial approval as a marketing tool, sent requests to the court to have their products accepted as gifts for the emperor.

At the same time, the court and government attempted to channel interpretations of the Jubilee and to protect the honor of the imperial family. The Interior Ministry issued rules for accepting and rejecting requests to name buildings, foundations, and products after Franz Joseph. Makers of Kaiser cakes, Kaiser cigarettes, and other "unworthy" products did not receive permission to use the imperial name, while hundreds of schools, charitable foundations, newly built churches, synagogues, and other institutions did. Government newspapers throughout the monarchy attempted to define and heighten the importance of the Jubilees by printing daily notices about heroic events in Habsburg history. The Ministry of Education issued instructions for schools to hold pageants, plays, assemblies, and parades. In the end, however, though few political parties and voluntary organisations ignored the Jubilees, they often defined the significance of the symbol of the emperor in terms contradicting the message conveyed in official publications.

Preliminary Conclusions

My project is a study of the reassertion of Habsburg charisma under Franz Joseph. Clifford Geertz defines charisma as "a sign of involvement with the animating centers of society", and argues that rulers and political elites use mythic histories, "ceremonies, insignia, formalities, and appurtenances (...) crowns and coronations" to "mark the center as center and give what goes on there its aura of being not

merely important but in some odd fashion connected with the way the world is built".¹⁵ Under Franz Joseph, the Habsburg court endeavored to reassert the charisma of the emperor, to symbolically return him to the "center of things" from where he had been banished by revolution. The renewal of court ceremony reaffirmed the sacred nature of the political authority wielded by the pious emperor whose right to rule had been acknowledged by God and Church. Imperial rituals and celebrations were opportunities to reinforce imperial loyalty and to communicate ideas about the unity of the state via the promotion of the imperial image.

In the first decades of his rule, the court and government allowed relatively little public competition to define the symbol of the emperor. Censorship and police controls limited the development of a public sphere and retarded the growth of political movements. The print media celebrated the youthful emperor whose strong hand guaranteed order and peace. After the institution of constitutional government, the dynasty had to confront the increasing political mobilisation of society. Both the Liberals and the dynasty claimed to control the fate of the monarchy and to exercise the power to ensure its unity and stability. Under Taaffe, faced with the rise of national movements, the court and government presented imperial loyalty as complementary with, rather than as an alternative to, ethnic identity. This vision meshed well with the goals of the Polish elites, and in many ways the imperial inspection tour to Galicia in 1880 represented the ideal monarchy in 1880 represented the ideal monarchy Taaffe's system sought to create: a working political system based on the mutual

interests of the dynasty, its government, and of provincial elites secure in their own power. However, this ideal political system never existed in practice. Facing constant pressure from below to deliver on national and social demands, the Polish conservatives used the presence of the emperor to symbolically confirm their own political authority. With the increasing political mobilisation of society and the expansion of the electoral franchise, the dissemination of the image of the emperor as a symbol of unity became less tied to the actions of the provincial ruling elites and more open to competing interpretations.

During the great Jubilee celebrations the court, government, church, and army presented narratives associating Franz Joseph, and through him the state, with the fulfillment of all social and ethnic interests and the maintenance of peace. Imperial propaganda emphasized the moral and quietly heroic qualities of Franz Joseph, the tireless and self-sacrificing Father of all the monarchy's ethnic and social groups. Official celebrations and publications presented both his larger-than-life ceremonial persona and his hard-working and simple nature to reconfirm the central importance of the dynasty. Local and provincial elites also sought political advantage, cultivating the image of the emperor to bolster their own positions. The Christian Social party, for example, used imperial celebrations to define German identity within a context of dynastic loyalty. The Polish conservatives and Lueger's party claimed to be the loyalist representatives of their respective ethnic groups and defenders against the threats of radical nationalism and the so-

cialist challenge. By supporting and using the imperial cult, these regional ruling groups legitimized their own power and demonstrated their reliability to the court and the central government.

At the same time, peasant, nationalist, and socialist leaders increasingly felt compelled to offer competing interpretations of imperial celebrations, incorporating Habsburg or other heroes into alternative narratives of the monarchy's past, present, and future. In 1898, for example, in Vienna, Schönerer's German nationalists denied the possibility of German-Austrian imperial loyalty and publicly declared their refusal to participate in patriotic manifestations. Nationalists, socialists, and liberals praised the revolutionaries of 1848 rather than Franz Joseph, the beneficiary of the conservative reaction. In Galicia, Ruthenian and Polish factions tried to convince peasants to purchase only those portraits of the emperor produced by their respective groups, turning imperial loyalty into a plebiscite on national identity. In Bohemia, German communities often unveiled busts of the emperor in public spaces in elaborate ceremonies in order to counter the threat of Czech encroachment on what they viewed as German prerogatives and territory.

The decision in 1898 to break with the emperor's own reticence and appeal directly to the population for imperial loyalty reflected the perceived danger of ethnic tensions. Official publications did not denounce national culture and identity, but offered respect and loyalty for the emperor as a means of fulfilling legitimate ethnic interests and ameliorating national conflicts. The outpouring of voluntary expressions of imperial loyalty all

over Cisleithania suggests that much of the population hoped that national tensions could be overcome. National movements had to acknowledge the continued popularity of the emperor and of the state he symbolized. Those who prayed for the emperor's health on his birthday, traveled many miles to witness the imperial visage passing by on a train, donated money to build churches and fund charitable institutions in the name of the ruler, bought postcards, cups, pamphlets, portraits, and stamps on the occasion of imperial Jubilees, also constituted the potential base of all the monarchy's national movements and the constituencies of all the parties represented in the *Reichsrat*. The organisation of national politics was often couched in the language of dynastic loyalty, the same language disseminated in countless editorials in government newspapers, school texts, and sermons delivered by thousands of clergymen. Although the constitutional government, court, church, and army could no longer monopolize public discussion of the importance of the dynasty, imperial celebrations grounded the dynasty in the natural order of things and seemed to confirm, at least for a moment, the existence of an imagined community of "Austria".¹⁶

Notes:

1 I exclude the Hungarian half of the monarchy (Transleithania) for several reasons. First, Franz Joseph was officially crowned King of Hungary in 1867 and the Hungarian noble elites viewed imperial Jubilees as holidays in a neighbouring country. In addition, though Cisleithania moved toward universal male suffrage, the franchise in Transleithania

remained essentially unchanged from 1867 to 1918, guaranteeing the political domination of the Hungarian nobility. Because I am interested in the assertion of imperial power and prestige in the context of increasing democracy, Hungary remains outside the scope of my research.

2 Eric Hobsbawm, *Mass-Producing Traditions. Europe, 1870-1914*, in: Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge 1983, 263-307.

3 Examples include Richard Wortman, *Scenarios of Power. Myth and Ceremony in Russian Monarchy*, Princeton 1995; Thomas Richards, *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England. Advertising and Spectacle, 1851-1914*, Stanford 1990.

4 Studies of Habsburg imperial celebrations include Andrea Blöchl, *Die Kaisergedenktage. Die Feste und Feiern zu den Regierungsjubiläen und runden Geburtstagen Kaiser Franz Josephs*, in: Emil Brix and Hannes Stekl, Hg., *Der Kampf um das Gedächtnis. Öffentliche Gedenktage in Mitteleuropa*, Wien 1997, 117-144; Elisabeth Grossegger, *Der Kaiser-Huldigungs-Festzug Wien 1908*, Wien 1992; James Shedel, *Emperor, Church, and People. Religion and Dynastic Loyalty during the Golden Jubilee of Franz Joseph*, in: *Catholic Historical Review*, 76 (1990). 71-92; Zbigniew Fras discusses the emperor's trips to Galicia in *Mit dobrego Cesarza*, in: *Polskie mity polityczne XIX i XX Wieku*, Wrocław 1988 and *Podroze cesarza Franciszka Jozefa I do Galicji*, in: Marek Czaplinski, ed., *Z dziejow Galicji, Slaska, Polski i Niemiec*, Wrocław 1994. The most comprehensive overview of the Habsburg court structure remains Ivan Zolger, *Der Hofstaat des Hauses Österreich*, Wien 1917. Recent studies of Franz Joseph briefly consider imperial celebrations: Steven Beller, *Francis Joseph*, London and New York 1996; Stanislaw Grodziski, *Franciszek Jozef I.*, Wrocław 1990; Jean-Paul Bled, *Franz Joseph*, Oxford 1987. On the role of the military as the school of patriotism, see Laurence Cole, *Vom*

Glanz der Montur. Zum dynastischen Kult der Habsburger und seiner Vermittlung durch militärische Vorbilder im 19. Jahrhundert. Ein Bericht über 'work in progress,' in: ÖZG 7 (1996), 577–590; Istvan Deak, *Beyond Nationalism. A Social History of the Habsburg Officer Corps*, Oxford 1990.

5 Elisabeth Kovacs, *Kirchliches Zeremoniell am Wiener Hof des 18. Jahrhunderts im Wandel von Mentalität und Gesellschaft*, in: *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchives* 32 (1979), 109–142; Hubert Ch. Ehalt, *Ausdrucksformen absolutistischer Herrschaft. Der Wiener Hof im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*, Wien 1980.

6 Anna Coreth, *Pietas Austriaca. Österreichische Frömmigkeit im Barock*, 2. Aufl., Wien 1982.

7 The Habsburg government officially termed the "Ukrainians" of Galicia "Ruthenians" (Ruthenen). Galician "Ukrainians" also generally referred to themselves as Ruthenians (rusyny) prior to 1900. "Ukraine" and "Ukrainian" usually designated lands and populations across the border in the Russian empire. See John-Paul Himka, *Galician Villagers and the Ukrainian National Movement in the Nineteenth Century*, Edmonton 1988; John-Paul Himka, *Socialism in Galicia. The Emergence of Polish Social Democracy and Ukrainian Radicalism (1860–1890)*, Cambridge 1983; Paul R. Magocsi, *Old Ruthenianism and Russophilism. A New Conceptual Framework for Analyzing National Ideologies in the late 19th Century Eastern Galicia*, in: Paul Debreczeny, ed., *American Contribution to the Ninth International Congress of Slavists*, vol. II, 1983.

8 On Habsburg Galicia, see Christoph Freiherr Marschall von Bieberstein, *Freiheit in der Unfreiheit. Die nationale Autonomie der Polen in Galizien nach dem österreichisch-ungarischen Ausgleich von 1867*, Wiesbaden 1993; Andrei Markovits and Frank E. Sysyn, eds., *Nationbuilding and the Politics of Nationalism. Essays on Austrian Galicia*, Cam-

bridge (Mass.) 1982; Stanislaw Grodziski, *W Krolestwie Galicji I Lodomerii*, Krakow 1976.

9 On the Polish conservatives, see Lawrence Orton, *The Stanczyk Portfolio and the Politics of Galician Loyalty*, in: *The Polish Review* 27 (1982); J. Forst-Battaglia, *Die polnischen Konservativen Galiziens und die Slawen 1866–1879*, phil. Diss., Universität Wien 1975; Kazimierz Wyka, *Teka Stanczyka na tle historii Galicji w latach 1849–1869*, Wroclaw 1951; Wilhelm Feldman, *Stronnicwa I Programy polityczne w Galicyi, 1846–1906*, Krakow 1907.

10 *Kriegsarchiv*, GA 1880/82/15 (Statthalter Alfred Potocki to Minister President Eduard Taaffe, August 18, 1880).

11 Christiane Thun-Salm, *Des Kaisers Traum*, Wien 1898. The play was canceled in 1898 and performed as part of the court celebrations in 1908.

12 *Gedenkschrift für die Soldaten anlässlich des 50-jährigen Regierungs-Jubiläums S. M. des Kaisers Franz Joseph I.*, Wien 1898; *Wiener Diöcesanblatt*, Nr. 22 (1898).

13 Among the most important of these Ignaz Schnitzer, ed., *Franz Joseph und Seine Zeit. Cultur-historischer Rückblick auf die francisco-josephinische Epoche*, Wien 1898; Max Herzig, ed. *Viribus Unitis. Das Buch vom Kaiser*, Wien u. Budapest 1898.

14 Grossegger, *Kaiser-Huldigungs-Festzug*, see note 4, 89.

15 Clifford Geertz, *Centers, Kings, and Charisma. Reflections on the Symbolics of Power*, in: *Local Knowledge. Further Essays in Interpretative Anthropology*, New York 1983, 124.

16 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London 1983.