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Sensing the Sound. Auditory Experience - Memory, Place and Emotions - Through a Study of Church Bells in Austria

Thomas Felfer

Doctor of Philosophy
University of Sussex
September 2021
I hereby declare that this thesis has not been submitted, either in the same or different form to this or any other University for a degree.

Signature:

Date: 30th of September 2021
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This thesis is dedicated to my daughter Clara Rose.
University of Sussex
Thomas Felfer
PhD in Media and Cultural Studies

Sensing the Sound. Auditory Experience - Memory, Place and Emotions - Through a Study of Church Bells in Austria

Summary
The aim of the thesis is to describe the relationship between sound, space and emotions through a historically informed study of church bells in Vorarlberg, Austria. In doing so it explores the complex and historically changing nature of auditory experience informed by memories and emotions in relation to place. Through the study of church bells the thesis examines how sounds are figured and reconfigured within the specific soundscape of Vorarlberg. The focus of the dissertation is influenced by the increasing attention given to senses in the field of humanities and social science. The thesis aims to rethink the relation between body and place through the study of sound. Using a combination of theories and approaches from sound studies, history of emotions and memory studies, the thesis will provide tools to understand the contribution to place-making informed by memories and emotions. Based on historical sources, different forms of media and through a series of oral history interviews the thesis will examine the intersection between sound, memories and emotions and explore how this contributes in creating a certain sense of place as well as group identities.

To achieve this goal the thesis is divided into three parts. Part one focus on the seizing of bells during the First and Second World Wars to unveil how sound is used in creating and highlighting different emotional communities. The second part uses the recasting of bells to examine sound as part of a particular memory culture; it also investigates how an attachment to sound is created and how this attachment is embedded within a certain experience of place. Part three demonstrates how sound is deployed within different forms of media with the use of bells, it also explores how sound can be seen as a tool that re-mediates different meanings. This will be illustrated through an analysis of bells on the Austrian radio, audio-visual documentaries and an exhibition based upon the use of virtual reality.

This thesis contributes to the understanding that sound informs a sense of place. Furthermore, it provides valuable insights on how the auditory experience is made up of embodied sensing alongside mediated and re-mediated meanings.
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Introduction

Throughout the journey of my PhD, doing research about bells raised a lot of questions about how and why I do this particular kind of research and why bells. At the beginning my response was that I am interested in research about sound and that I found documents in a local archive and thought these sources might be worth using and turning into a research project. Most people also assumed that I had a personal interest in bells or a particular attachment because why else spend a few years of your life with church bells?

I usually denied this assumption and answered that bells have a quite long existence in the world so they seem to be a good object for research about sound. After being asked the same questions again and again I started to think what is actually my personal relationship to bells?

After going ‘home’ again, I looked outside the window and saw on the hill our local church. I realised, I actually grew up next to a church so this led me to a personal recollection of my memories around bells. I want to offer a brief autoethnographic account in my introduction because it demonstrates the main aspects of the thesis.

I grew up in a small village in the countryside of Austria. My parents had a small farm so I spend most of my childhood outside, or at least these were the moments I remember the most or use when reconstructing my childhood. The house of my parents is directly under the church. The church was not only in sight but also the church bells played a part in my everyday life. Although I did not feel this was of importance because I do not consider myself religious, the church unconsciously influenced my childhood. I remember my parents commenting when they heard a bell ringing outside expected times. When this happened they usually said that somebody had died. I have a quite unspecific but still vivid memory of middays. I am outside and hear the bell ringing at high noon, especially on Saturdays when I heard bell ringing in combination with the siren test (which is still the case nowadays). This is not particularly linked to a stage in my life but rather a ‘feeling’ of being outside. I was also an altar boy in our local church and I can remember the sexton pressing some buttons to turn on the bells. The fascination at this time was not the technical aspect but more the fact that the sexton was an old and relatively small woman. It seemed always a huge effort for her to reach
the buttons. I remember the week before Easter because there were no bells. It was said the bells were flying to Rome during this week and we went around the village to go *ratschen*. This is where wooden noise makers substitute for the absent bells. I have no memories about the sound of the bells but of the sound of the ratchets. I have memories of being in the church tower. During the research for the PhD my father found the following picture and sent it to me.

![Figure 1: My dad and myself fixing the clapper of a bell, Johann Felfer.](image)

The picture shows my dad and me, my dad is fixing something in the bell and I’m assisting with the light. My dad explained to me that he was fixing the clapper of the bell, but I have no memory about this moment, but I seemed to enjoy myself at this very moment the picture was taken or at least I look focused. This shows that not all of my memories are ‘real’ memories but sometimes mediated stories through others.

During the preparation for my Masters thesis, which was research about sound memories, I got a CD from a friend who was working at the broadcast company at this time. On the CD were different bell recordings, when I listened to the CD for the first time and heard “It is 12:00pm you are listening to the bells of” followed by a recording of bell ringing, I was immediately sent back to my childhood. The sound triggered a memory sitting on the kitchen counter and talking to my mum while she was preparing food.
The research about bells made me also more ‘receptive’ to bells not only because I received a lot of little bells as presents during the last few years. I also started to pay more attention whenever I hear the ringing of bells. I have heard a very long and different ringing during my visit to Venice as well as during my stay in the region of South Tyrol in northern Italy, and I perceived the different ringing of bells in Greece during a holiday. It was not the first time I had been to Italy or Greece but because of my PhD I paid more attention to the ringing of bells than before. I also felt the deep emotional movement when I heard the bells ringing during the funeral of my grandmother. Recently, during the COVID-19 pandemic, I also heard the death toll a lot of the time. This made me think that the magnitude of a global event creates a sonification for the local place by making its impact audible through the ringing of bells.

These personal encounters with bells should help the reader to get attuned with the themes covered within this thesis. The brief personal accounts show how an experience of place is influenced by certain sounds. It shows how sound can trigger memories. Additionally, they demonstrated how sound is connected to a range of emotions. The range of associations was in connection to the sound but not necessarily about the sound of bells but rather as reference to certain people, places and times. Furthermore, the accounts illustrate that listening is not static and that the impact a particular sound can have changes over time, as well as the changing influence of the perception of sound in general.

The overarching object of research is church bells. It aims to understand and describe the relationship between sound, space and bodies. By looking at how bells are experienced, used and reused, it will be examined how particular sounds are embedded into our everyday lives. It will be shown how sounds are connected to emotions and how this emotional attachment is used within a web of power.

Additionally, bells will be used to illustrate the relationship between history and memory. All of this will be analysed through the body and senses.

Church bells will be used because of their culturally and historically privileged nature. Bells not only exist for a long time, but they also produce a very distinctive sound. This privileged nature of church bells within history and people’s auditive experience makes
them a fruitful object for my investigation. Within this thesis, church bells will be applied as a gateway object. Bells will be used to show how a sound object is loaded with meanings that resonate in ways that go beyond sound and the sonic. By applying a range of different methods, it will be shown how the meaning of church bells in a particular locale has changed in the last century.

Listening to sound will not solely be conceptualised through the ear but through senses and the body. In doing so the thesis will pick up on new developments in social sciences and humanities. Bells and sound will not be seen as something heard but as sensing with the whole body. It aims to describe how certain sounds are sensed with the body and what it means for people’s sense of place and self. A connection from the body will be drawn to emotions and memories in order to describe how bodies relate to each other. Under this perspective the body is not only human but the bell, the environment and places can be seen as an entity. The thesis aims to show how all these different bodies relate to each other through sound.

The geographical focus is on Austria, especially the west of Austria. The province is called Vorarlberg and borders in the south and west with Switzerland and Liechtenstein, in the north with Germany and in the east with the province of Tyrol. Its geographical location made the province quite unique for Austria. Even though it is a very rural region, the province has a lot of industry, mainly concentrated in the Rheintal valley. Tourism is another important economy and especially important in mountainous valleys. The total population of Vorarlberg is around 400,000 people and the biggest town Dornbirn has around 50,000 residents. The province is considered a conservative stronghold within Austria and all of the governors after 1945 came from the conservative party ÖVP. Religion has traditionally played an important role in Vorarlberg. Within the rural villages the church had certain power, which is partly still the case today.

The challenge of the thesis lies in its interdisciplinary aspiration. The research is not necessarily rooted within one field or research tradition. I draw on a rich and varied array of literature. However, the research is positioned within the interdisciplinary field of sound studies with an emphasis on social theory and cultural studies. The orientation towards sound studies provided tools to focus on a particular sound object and examine
its meanings from different perspectives. However, sound will not be essentialised as pure sound, but rather a contextualisation, an integration of sound in the political narrative of the thesis will be made. This approach required different methods, which have been developed through existing research on bells and combining them with approaches from sound studies. This helped to produce an original set of methods that will illustrate the potential but also the limitation of sound studies approaches.

**Structure of the Thesis**

The thesis starts with a literature review covering relevant theoretical concepts and how they have informed the research. Focus will be given to concepts around sound, body, memories and emotions. The chapter establishes how bells will be theoretically described and analysed within the thesis. Beginning with an overview about how sound can be examined within sound studies. Concepts about the body, emotions and memory will be introduced and described in order to illustrate how these concepts inform the research. Furthermore, the literature review gives an outline of the research questions.

The methods chapter presents the research design constituting the thesis. A review will be made of the different approaches used and how the research was conducted. Additionally, some of the dead ends encountered within the research process will be presented.

The main body of the thesis consists of three parts.

The first part covers bell seizures in the twentieth century. There will be a focus on the bell seizing during the First World War to show how the removal of bells impacted different emotional communities. Especially in the example of ‘sacrifice’ it will be shown how bells were used to express certain emotional connections to particular spaces. Presenting different requests from the villages will illustrate the emotional meaning for the local places. Letters and correspondence from official agencies of Vorarlberg, Church, and Empire will present what bells meant for the other entities. Additionally, focus will be given to the different newspapers and how they portrayed the removal of bells. The different perspectives should highlight the different emotional communities within the Empire and demonstrate how bells were not only used to express different
notions of emotional communities but also actualised people’s sense of place through emotions.

The chapter will show how the removal of bells was used to negotiate different attachments to certain territories. It will demonstrate how bells were not only used to support the war effort but also to communicate and express different senses of belongings. The chapter ends with a comparison between the seizing of bells in World War One and World War Two to show differences between the seizings especially in the example of the role of the official church in World War Two.

The second part focuses on bell recastings and personal memories about bells. It will demonstrate how the casting after the World Wars was used to promote different narratives of shared pasts to create cultural memory. Another focus will be given to how a personal attachment to bells is informed by an experience of place. The chapter considers bells as sites of memories to investigate how the recasting of bells after the wars were not only used to make sense of the wars but also to cope with its losses. Based on the example of a particular bell that was cast in many villages and was dedicated to the fallen soldiers, it will be shown how bells were used to produce shared pasts and also how it was produced through bells. It will be demonstrated how bells are used to create and promote cultural memory. The second part of the chapter will focus on personal accounts and how the bell castings after the Second World War were individually remembered. The personal accounts will reveal how the recasting of bells was experienced and remembered. It will be shown how the recasting was experienced as a collective moment charged with emotions of significance. The third part of the chapter will demonstrate how the sound of bells is sensed in the present. It will demonstrate the role of the environment and the impact of experiencing places in creating an attachment to bells and how an attachment is maintained through memory work.

The third part of the thesis focuses on re-mediation and how bells can be used to remediate certain narratives. Bells will be considered as carrier of meaning. The final part will demonstrate how bells are used as tools for reproducing and distributing cultural memory. The last part is divided into three separate chapters and special focus is given to how bells are deployed in different types of media. Chapter five examines the use of bells in audio-visual media. Based on the biggest bell in Austria called Pummerin,
the chapter will show how the recasting after the Second World War was covered in the newsreel *Austria Wochenschau*. Furthermore, it will examine two documentaries that used footage from the recasting to remediate and therefore sustain a certain collective narrative of the past. Chapter six focuses on radio and what it could mean when bells are broadcast on the radio. In the example of the history of the Austrian Broadcast Corporation ORF it will be shown how bells were used within its programme. It will be demonstrated how bells help to create imagined communities and imagined spaces. This will be shown through bells, their orientation towards existing cultural patterns and the everyday lives of the audience. Chapter seven will use the example of museums as sites of memories. Based on an exhibition that has been created for the Vorarlberg Museum, it will be shown how bells were used to remediate cultural memory. It will be demonstrated how the exhibition was created and perceived. Particular attention will be given to the exhibition's use of virtual reality (VR). This should aim to demonstrate how technology can be used to remediate cultural memory through engaging the whole body.

Each of the parts all have a slightly different ‘tone’ and at first sight there is supposedly no connection except they are about bells. The different tone was not only due to the variety of source material used within the parts but also because the analysis followed diverse frameworks. The conclusion will bring the various aspects together by revisiting key aspects of each of the parts and relating them to the sensing body.
1. Literature Review

My feeling is that an entire history and culture can be found within a single sound (LaBelle, 2010:xvi).

Sound scholar Brandon Labelle explains in the opening quote that a single sound can offer an entry into entire histories and cultures. My single sound is church bells. When talking to colleagues and other scholars about my research, one particular name was mentioned numerous times. French historian, Alain Corbin is best known for his major contributions in the history of sensibilities. His work on bells in the 19th century French countryside is considered one of the most important works on aurality (Smith M., 2004). For this reason, his study is an important foundation for the thesis. Parts of his findings will be referred to on numerous occasions. Corbin has shown that listening to bells in the past was an important part of reading the auditory environment and it was integral in the construction of identities of individuals and their communities (Corbin, 1999). In Corbin’s words he states: “Bells shaped the habitus of a community or, if you will, its culture of the senses. They served to anchor localism, imparting depth to the desire for rootedness and offering the peace of near, well defined horizons” (Corbin, 1999, p. 97).

The aim of the research is not to reproduce his findings and applying his study on a different time and geographical territory. It is rather to extend and contribute to his findings by adding a new perspective.

The thesis will look at a very particular region in Austria. Even though the geographical focus with Vorarlberg is quite narrow, the theoretical framework can be considered as quite broad. Based on different developments within social science and humanities, the thesis will draw on a wide range of perspectives that involve the body, emotions, memories, and media. The thesis will examine the role bells play both historically and contemporarily in creating a sense of place and belonging throughout the 20th century. It will assess the continuing role of bells as part of the living experience within Vorarlberg and their potential role in shaping collective emotions. The thesis also focusses upon the ways in which sound and bells possess particular memory value as a function of their
embeddedness within a dynamic relationship between individual perception, environment and collective attitudes.

In order to examine the relationship between sounds and our human world the thesis follows an interdisciplinary approach. For this reason, the literature review will draw on different theoretical strains that informed the research on how the sound of bells was perceived in the past and what it means to listen to bells today. To achieve this interdisciplinary aspiration, the research design was orientated towards a range of theoretical ‘issues’. Each theoretical block was chosen because they either offered intersections with sound or could be related to listening. The theoretical framework therefore assists with the examination and understandings of what it might mean to live within the threshold of a particular sound (bells) and how these sounds are used in creating meaning for both the individual and the collective.

To detect the different theoretical issues the thesis was orientated towards different claims of ‘cultural turns’. Since the 1970s there has been different claims of ‘turns’ within cultural studies. This was a response to the turning away from ‘grand histories’ of ‘master narratives’ and turning towards broader ideas on how to think about culture and cultural practice (Bachmann-Medick, 2009). Cultural turns are interdisciplinary and thus differ from paradigm changes because they do not necessarily promise dramatic new orientations. Turns are softer extensions (even if they might appear as revolutionary new perspectives). They provide a certain freedom to play with ideas. The thesis picks up on these ‘dynamic’ perspectives by using sound and bells as the basis to think about cultural and social values in broader terms.

The thesis did not set out to follow the ‘newest’ turn but to assemble the different insights from certain turns and apply it to sound and listening.

The focus on a single sound (church bells) should provide a different perspective on how people relate to each other as well as how they relate to places.

Sound studies focuses on the above issues and provides the theoretical baseline for the thesis and will be reviewed first. In doing so it will discuss the main discourses within sound studies in order to introduce the basic concepts that have informed the present thesis.

The literature review of the thesis will engage with writings about bells and the role bells played in constructing an experience of time and space as well as being used as an
expression for the collective. Furthermore, it will be shown how the sound of bells assist as a structuring device to create and display a range of social and cultural orders. These insights about bells will be extended through a focus on the ‘body’. Recent scholarship has brought about a new interest about the body; the focus is not only on how the body perceives the world but also about how bodies are interconnected within the world. The interest in the body has influenced different changes in humanities and social science. For example, within the field of anthropology of senses, this new attention on the body has created a “sensual revolution” (Howes, 2005, p. 5). Within the history of emotions, it has been described as an “emotional turn” (Boddice, 2017, p. 1), or the body is also centred within an “affect turn” (Clough, 2007, p. 1), which is influenced by new affect theories. This thesis will pick up on these new developments and examine the emotional dimensions of sound.

This literature review will discuss how this attention towards the body will be applied to the sound of bells and listening. The body will be conceptualised as social-cultural fleshly entity that perceives and acts out meaning and in doing so not only perceives the environment but creates it in first place. After conceptualising the body, a connection will be drawn towards emotions and feelings. Emotions and feelings will be conceptualised as “bio-cultural” (Boddice, 2019). The review of writings about emotions and feelings will enable the thesis to show how perceiving bells place them within a network of attributions, which is informed by emotions and feelings.

The final theoretical section focuses on memories. Reviewing individual memories, cultural memories and the media as creator and maintainer of memories will help to examine how bells can be understood as repositories of memories but equally importantly how sound and bells can be used as memory aids for individuals and collectives. In addition to this, bells have been used in a range of media to promote and create collective narratives. This therefore helps us to understand how sound is related to a range of memories, mediated and otherwise, in creating people's sense of place and belonging refracted through the sound of and absence of bells.

The literature review will conclude with tying the different theoretical strains together and present the main research questions.

The researching of bells has posed a range of challenges. To begin with it is not necessarily an under-researched topic. Finding the gaps has proven a difficult task and
the thesis does not intend to write about the ‘history of bells in Austria’. An overview about bells in Austria up to the 1900s can be found in Josef Pfundners and Andreas Weisenböcks book named *Töndes Erz* (1961). Additionally, historian Andreas Ulmer’s book series *Topographisch-historische Beschreibung des Generalvikariates Vorarlberg* (1894) provides an overview and historical descriptions of Vorarlberg’s churches and its inventory before the Second World War. One of the most substantial books about bells in Austria is written by Jörg Wernisch (2011). His book named *Glockenkunde Österreichs* lists, on more than 1000 pages, bell casters and also provides a catalogue of the different bells in Austria including Vorarlberg’s. They contain a list of the bells’ weight, age, tuning, as well as a brief historical overview on when they were cast. The most recent publication about Vorarlberg’s bells was written by the archivist Michael Fliri (2019). The book contains manuscripts from a monk and campanologist1 named Augustin Jungwirth. Jungwirth collected information about bells from most of the German speaking regions in Switzerland, Germany and Austria. His book provides a brief description about the seizing of bells during the First and Second World War. It also contains his catalogue of bells, which are dated up to 1919. Fliri’s book describes which bells survived the World Wars and it highlights the bells that still exist in Vorarlberg’s bell towers. All of these publications about bells were a useful starting point because they provide an overview about Austrian bells, particularly Vorarlberg’s. However, the publications gave no insights into what it actually means for individuals and groups to hear the sound of bells, this insight is where the thesis begins. I will examine how people felt and feel when they listen to bells. Therefore, this thesis will produce an original account exploring the various ways in which memories are connected with bells and connect the ways in which past auditory memories inform contemporary attachment to bells. Additionally, a review will be made on how bells are used to mediate symbolic meanings that inform people’s identities.

Because of the removal of church bells during the World Wars, the age of bells in Austria is fairly young and most of them were cast after 1945. The young age of bells allowed me to use mixed methods, such as archival research and oral history interviews.

1 Campanology focuses on the documentation of bells and aspects of shape, tuning or the production of bells.
1.1 Researching Sound

Situating the thesis within the field of sound studies assists in showing how bells can provide a range of insights beyond their material properties of size, weight and shape or their age. Examining bells through the lens of sound studies enables me to show how bells, as an example for sound and listening, are important in organising daily lives and in creating different identities.

Thinking about sound has a long tradition. The recent decades have formed the field of sound studies, which have in turn informed my thesis. Sound studies is an interdisciplinary field that summons different scholars from fields like media studies, cultural studies, history, cultural geography, literature studies, musicology, anthropology, acoustic ecology, urban studies and many more (Hilmes, 2005; Sterne, 2012; Bijsterveld and Pinch, 2012). The growing number of journals, articles and books about sound are a testimony of society’s growing interests, not only in music or acoustics but with sound in its broadest sense. Media studies scholar, Jonathan Sterne describes sound studies as:

a name for the interdisciplinary ferment in the human sciences that takes sound as its analytical point of departure or arrival. By analysing both sonic practices and the discourses and institutions that describe them, it redescribes what sound does in the human world, and what humans do in the sonic world (Sterne, 2012, p. 2).

One of the most relevant arguments within the field of sound studies is that listening and sound is not only a cognitive, musical or physical phenomenon, but rather as sociologist Les Back and sound scholar Michael Bull claim “sound and its reception are infused with cultural values” (Bull and Back, 2016, p. 7). This reveals that “sounds are embedded with both cultural and personal meanings” (Bull and Back, 2016, p. 9). When applied to my object of research, Back and Bull illustrate that listening to bells is not only an act of individual perception it is also embedded in different cultural and social values. Within this thesis sound and listening are not only seen and examined as a cultural text as applied within post-structuralist approaches but will also be analysed through the lens of culture as a discourse. The emphasis of sound and listening is on “all its performative actualizations as a complex, layered, and convoluted sensory cultural artefact” (Papenburg and Schulze, 2016, p. 12).
Another important point that informs the thesis is that sound and listening are-involved in the fabric of historical change.

Historian, Mark Smith argues that the senses are not universal but rather “a product of place and, especially, time, so that how people perceived and understood smell, sound, touch, taste and sight changed historically” (Smith, 2007, p. 4).

For this reason, we can turn to another definition of sound studies provided by sound scholar Karin Bijsterveld and sociologist, Trevor Pinch. They state that sound studies is an:

interdisciplinary area that studies the material production and consumption of music, sound, noise, and silence, and how these have changed throughout history and within different societies (Bijsterveld and Pinch, 2012, p. 7).

The thesis does not intend to recreate and describe soundscapes of the past but rather add another layer, which explores how sound leaves traces from the past and informs our present day.

Smith describes how the past can be understood through sound. He states:

that attention to the sensate and auditory past allows us a deeper appreciation of the texture, meaning, and human experience of that past and that this in itself sometimes helps us to reinterpret in modest but important ways what we already know (Smith, 2015, p. 133).

Smith highlights how through sound we can understand the experiences of humans. From sound alone we can capture meaning, experiences and sensations of individuals and communities. The thesis aims to further understand how sound embeds within the everyday. Bijsterveld further explains the deeper meaning that can be attributed to sound. She asserts:

In my view, a history that takes sound into account is most intriguing when it focuses on what was audible to both individuals and collectives of the past; on how these sounds spoke to and affected them; on how this reflected ways of engaging with, knowing, and valuing the world; and on how people organized and reorganized sound to create conditions worthy to live in (Bijsterveld, 2015, p. 10).

Bijsterveld reveals how research about church bells promises more than just the physical properties of bells. Research about bells influenced by sound studies will allow us to better understand how people relate to each other and their environment. This
thesis is not only a study about sound but about bells as a part of an auditory culture (Sterne 2012; Bull and Back, 2016). Therefore, bells can be seen as a sound object linked to the act of listening. Focusing on the auditory instead of sound highlights the dynamic between the sources of sound and its perceiver. Auditory, in this sense, is the “material, physical, perceptual, and sensory processes that integrate a multitude of cultural traditions and forms of knowledge” (Papenburg and Schulze 2016, p. 9). Bells within this understanding are part of the auditory experience, they are not only just out there and part of a meaningless sonic environment. In the context of the auditory, anthropologist Steven Feld has coined the term acoustemology to describe the role of sound (Feld and Brenneis, 2004). He claims, it attempts to “investigate the primacy of sound as a modality of knowing and being in the world” (Feld, 2003, p. 226). Feld’s description reveals how place, body and time can be intertwined with the auditory. Perceiving bells means their sound assists in engaging with the places and bodies and can be seen as part of the experiential knowledge of places and groups.

1.2 Researching Bells

A seminal work and starting point for research about bells with a socio-cultural focus is Alain Corbin’s (1999) Village Bells. The book not only provides the theoretical departure for the thesis, but his work can also be considered as an important contribution to the field of sound studies. In the example of the rural countryside in France during the end of the 18th and throughout the 19th century, Corbin has shown how bells were used not only as a sonic structuring device for everyday life but also to sonically display different social orders. Corbin’s study on the history of the culture of the senses shows how bells were closely linked to modalities of attention (Corbin, 1999).

Bells were of great importance for the auditory cultures of the past, but according to Corbin, at the end of the 19th century “the attention paid to bells gradually ceased to be a relevant index of collective sensibilities.” (Corbin, 1999, p. 43) Even though the production of bells became more sophisticated over time, Corbin asserts their meaning seemed to fall away, modes of attention collapsed, the usage and rhetoric of bells grew narrower so that, in short, a whole range of auditory messages were increasingly disqualified (Corbin, 1999, p. 307).
Bells were previously symbolic markers of people’s identities however Corbin proposes that they lost their purpose of creating a local sense of belonging. He claims that this decline was because communities found other symbols for their identity. In the past, people’s relationship with religion changed and bells were desacralised. Bell signals lost their function as a form of communication and steam engines, combustion engines and sirens enriched the soundscape, which took away the bells’ seal of modernity (Corbin, 1999). Corbin reiterates how the bell sound has lost its honour.

The honorific function of the bell has gradually been forgotten. The possibility of the people and the elites finding common ground in the shared evaluation of campanarian sonorities has lost its urgency and yielded to many other sorts of agreement (Corbin, 1999, p. 307).

Corbin’s analysis proposes the question, have bells really lost their honour or has its value just shifted? Bells are still ubiquitous in the Austrian countryside and people still talk about bells on a regular basis. Their discussions may critique bells, but this still reveals that they are moved by its presence. However, the sounds of bells might not have the same range of meaning and it may not be perceived as consciously as it was in the past.

The main objective of the thesis is to pose the question of: Do bells still evoke responses that assist in the construction of certain identities? And if so, how?

Corbin’s assessment on the meaning of bells implies they are no longer relevant for a more secularised European modernism. The thesis challenges this assumption because although the modalities of attention change throughout time this may not mean that bells are no longer attributed with value. Perhaps our auditory perception of bells has just shifted. This is further explained by anthropologist, Tom Rice, when he defines auditory perception as “sensory knowledge” (Rice, 2010). Sensory knowledge means that listening to sound is an ongoing development through “the interaction with the environment” (Rice, 2010, p. 43). Rice’ statement shows how the meaning of bells may have changed but their existence in the present environment means that bells still have some meaning. This thesis will examine sensory knowledge and how bells can create an emotional attachment to certain territories. It will be shown how living within the thresholds of bells is still an important ingredient in people’s sense of place.

Furthermore, the thesis will explore if the sound of bells still connects the individual to larger groups.
Before I unpack the main theoretical bodies that inform the research design, it is vital to review certain studies about bells. This will provide an understanding of why bells are a fruitful object for research as well as how to depart from these insights. The insights gained will be used as a conceptual baseline for the thesis; let us start by asking, what is a bell?

### 1.2.1 The Nature and History of Bells

Bells fit within the category of percussion instruments because they are struck to create a sound. Additionally, the mass of bells produces a sound and this classifies them as idiophones. (Price, 1983, p. IX).

In general, bells can be seen as a physical object or artefact because of their materiality and they are often perceived through their sound, which gives them an immaterial quality.

Campanologist, Percival Price considers bells the “most universal musical instrument, and an artefact of great social and religious significance.” (Price, 1983, cover). Bells are considered as one of the first instrument used all over the world (Morris, 1938, p. 121; Price: 1983, p. XIV). The first known sources of bells can be found in China 3000AD (Price, 1983). Price argues, there is “scarcely no other object in such a wide range of size” that can be compared to bells (Price, 1983, p. XIV).

During the Middle Ages and up to the Early Modern times, bells were known to produce one of the loudest noises (Smith, B., 2004). German historian, Phillip Hahn refers to this aspect and states “the bell was the loudest and most far-reaching sonic marker in times of peace” (Hahn, 2015, p. 525). Due to their loud sound, bells were useful in communicating messages to the people outside of the range of the human voice (Hendy, 2013).

The Middle Ages also marked a time when Christian Europe developed a thick network of sounds through the ringing of bells. This correlates with the technical developments that made it possible to cast louder bigger bells. The main purpose of bells was religious, and they were used to call people to mass, sermons, or vespers. Bells told people to pray in the morning, noon, and evening when the Ave Maria (Angelus) was rung. They were rung for weddings and funerals and the ‘passing bell’ informed people when someone had died (Garrioich, 2003). There were also many secular uses for bells. They were rung
as an alarm signal for fires and other emergencies. They were rung to announce when the gates of the towns were closed and the curfew bell indicated when fires had to be put out and lights turned off (Thrift, 1996).

Historian, David Garrioch discusses the past relevance of bells and states: “alongside human voices, bells were the most versatile. Even single bells could be rung in different ways [...]” (Garrioch, 2003, p. 10). This allowed bells to create a communicative language and it made them a useful tool in organising time and space. The spatial and temporal characteristics of bells protected people and made bells a tool to enforce power (Hendy, 2013). Historian, Niall Atkinson’s examination on the meaning of bells in Florence during the Renaissance highlights that the primary function of bells was to mark time, space, expression of collective emotions and preserve memories. Atkinson emphasises, “It gave voice to collective joy and sorrow by mourning the dead and celebrating feasts, and it served as a mnemonic device, anticipating holy days for the faithful and reminding them to pray” (Atkinson, 2016, p. 214).

Bells provided social, temporal, and spatial markers for individuals living within the thresholds of its sound. However, bells were not only an important tool in creating locality, but their sound was further used to mediate between smaller social groups and larger structures. Bells constituted a certain territory through connecting the existence of the individual with the community and they also connected the community with its broader entities (Corbin, 1999). According to David Garrioch, “bells helped to create multiple identities, some local and others much broader” (Garrioch, 2003, p. 15).

Garrioch describes how “News of more distant events was also conveyed by bells. A military victory or the birth, marriage, coronation or death of a member of the royal family let loose a torrent of ringing on all the cities of the kingdom” (Garrioch, 2003, p. 12). The temporal and spatial references of bells are significant for the thesis because it works to create emotional connections with a certain place.

Bells are an example of how sounds were assigned a set of meanings. Their sound helped to structure and organise social and cultural lives. Smith describes the different uses of sound as following:

Throughout towns, sounds served to coordinate civic, economic, and social life. Sounds functioned as a semiotic system, helping people to locate
themselves in space as well as time, with familiar sounds and their timing helping to establish the idea of community. [...] sound and ways of hearing were used to regulate, create, and arrange social hierarchies and define and extend social and cultural authority (Smith, 2007, p. 44-45).

Bells have a long history, and they produce a network of sounds (Corbin, 1999). However, Corbin states this network is never static because bells were always recast, so their sound was constantly reorganised. The recasts were instigated by the technological developments that made the casting of bells more sophisticated. Bells could then match the changing aesthetical taste of its producers and its sound became more harmonious. The era of recasting bells also accompanied the political changes of the West. Leading parties could audibly display the bells and enforce their power through its sound (Corbin, 1999; Hernandez, R., 2004; Hahn, 2015). Through their close connection to people’s everyday lives listening to bells was a crucial component of past lived experiences (Atkinson, 2012). The description of past meanings of bells illustrates how bells embody a broad spectrum of meaning. It also shows that bells can be considered a privileged sound object.

1.3 Bells and the Sensing Body

To expand on the findings from the reviewed works on bells, the thesis will use the ‘body’ as a focal point. Listening to bells is not solely examined through the ear but conceptualised through the body as sensing with the whole body. The sensing body is both a perceiving entity and active agent who is acting out or performing listening. This means by following Atkinson’s line of argumentation that bells structured time, space, were an expression of collective emotions, and were to preserve memories (Atkinson, 2016) that the sound of bells is aiding and accompanying the movement of bodies. The focus on body allows emphasis on the dynamics between sound, environment, and bodies. This dynamic field will be captured through urban studies scholars Jean François Augoyard and Henry Torgue’s (2014) concept of “sonic effects”. Focusing on bodies means that bells are not only seen as a single sound object but as part of the fabric of sonic environments that resonate with our bodies. They are part of what sociologist Jean Paul Thibaud (2011) calls “ambience”. The sensing body resonates to sound and the
sound itself resonates with the environment. To conceptualise the body as an active resonating entity the following review is orientated towards more general concepts of the body that have informed the research design.

In early anthropology the body was seen as a surface of culture often through decorations, tattooing and scarification. The body was examined within its central position in rites of passage ceremonies. The body assisted in transforming and transitioning people between the different stages (Turner, 1991). The body itself is seen as a carrier of memories. Sociologist Henning Eichberg states “The body is the material basis of our existence as human beings. The body tells our story” (Eichberg, 2007, p. 2). This does not mean bodies are neutral vessels. Sociologists, Mary Kosut and Lisa Jean Moore (2010) explain in their book body reader that the body is “the entry point into cultural and structural relationships, emotional and subjective experiences, and the biological realms of flesh and bone” (Kosut and Moore, 2010, p. 1-2).

Our bodies are central in constructing our sense of selfhood. Bodies are not given, they are rather ‘becoming’ through others. When informed by post-structural theories bodies can be seen as a social construct and this is because our understanding of gender, race, disability, or age is constructed through the body.

The work of French sociologist, Michel Foucault influenced many scholars on how to conceptualise the body. For Foucault, the body is directly involved in a political field of power relations. Moore highlights that, “in essence the body is a creation of culture and is modified as it is governed by various forms of power and manufactured through discourse” (Kosut and Moore, 2010, p. 10). This description situates the body as a construction through history and discourse. Michel Foucault focuses on “how body is represented and regulated” and therefore his main focus lies on governmentality of the body (Turner, 2012, p. 68). The body within this understanding is an outcome of the play of power. Foucault states that, power “reaches into the very grain of individuals, touches their bodies and inserts itself into their actions and attitudes, their discourses, learning processes and everyday lives” (Foucault, 1980, p. 39). Foucault positions bodies as “passive bodies where power is inscribed.” (Turner, 2012, p. 68) Listening under this understanding means that the perceiving body is an outcome of power and that how we evaluate what we assign with the heard is based on discourse and not necessarily our
own choice. However, listening and the body is only the outcome of power and discourse.

According to Kosut and Moore, Foucault has failed to acknowledge the way individuals can create and change discourses. In alignment with sociologist, Bryan Turner they state: “if we are determined by what we are permitted to know, then there is no theoretical space for human resistance to discourse.” (Kosut and Moore, 2010, p. 12). French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu conceptualises the body as a more active agent. Bourdieu sees the body through the lens of culture as he considers it an ensemble of social practice.

Bourdieu (1986) shows how social structures are not only inscribed on the body, they are also practised through the body itself. His concept of habitus can be described as dispositions that are central in acting out the social structures.

Kosut and Moore point out that the “body bears the imprint of social class based on habitus, taste and social location. [...] [T]he body is a resource to greater or lesser degrees and can be converted into economic, cultural and social capital” (Kosut and Moore, 2010, p. 11). Bourdieu’s concept of habitus does not only constitute practice it also informs the body hexis from body posture to the way we walk (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 93). Within this understanding power is not only inscribed on the bodies and listening, when we listen we also acting out certain social and cultural milieus. This acting out of structures can be seen particularly in Bourdieu’s thinking about taste (Bourdieu, 1986). However, habitus is considered static and is informed by an understanding of social class being assigned.

How we act out social relations with more freedom of choice is described by sociologist Erving Goffmann. He examines the body in relation to social structures. In comparison to Bourdieu and Foucault, Goffmann offers the body and individual more freedom and to some extent he assigns them with control over their social 'performance'. Goffmann points out that we must learn to manage our bodies so they follow the different social scripts within societies. He claims that we have more agency by choosing to act within different circumstances (Kosut and Moore, 2010, p. 12). Listening and our dispositions towards certain sounds are under this understanding based on performative choice where we chose which script we are acting out in which social contexts.

Goffmann’s description conceptualises the body as an ‘active agent’, therefore he disputes Foucault’s claim that the body is passive. Goffmann highlights that there are performing bodies not only where discourse is inscribed but where we perform social
structures with a certain amount of choice. Seeing the body as an active agent has an impact on how we think about the environment and how bodies also perform places and the environment.

Cultural geographer, Lynda Johnston provides an understanding on how the body and place are connected. She proposes:

Instead of thinking about space and place as pre-existing sites in which bodily performance occur, some studies argue that body performance themselves constitute and reproduce space and place [...] bodies and spaces are performative, that is, they have no ontological status or fixed characteristics. In this way space is not just a backdrop for bodies rather it plays an important role in constituting and reproducing social relations. Bodies and spaces are simultaneously material, imaginary, symbolic, and real (Johnston, 2009, p. 330).

This means that bodies are not only seen as performative agents who are acting out places but also create places through performance.

By people performing places they enter a relationship with the environment. This relationship is not solely one-sided, places are performed through bodies and the environment itself leaves an impression on the bodies. This connection refers to the centrality of senses and the sensing body (Howes, 2014a; Classen and Howes, 1996). Our bodies are closely linked to our senses and as anthropologist, Michael Herzfeld states, “we experience our bodies – and the world through senses [...]” (Herzfeld, 2001, p. 245). This sensual dialogue with the environment can be best described with atmosphere. The importance of atmospheres for the built environment can be seen in the work of Swiss architect, Peter Zumthor. He refers to atmospheres as an important feature for his work and he defines architecture as a body. Zumthor proposes that architecture is “a bodily mass, a membrane, a fabric, a kind of covering, cloth, velvet silk, all around me. The body! Not the idea of the body – the body itself! A body that can touch me” (Zumthor, 2006, p. 23). He further highlights the importance of sound in creating and perceiving atmospheres and he compares architectural interiors to instruments “collecting sounds, amplifying it, transmitting it, elsewhere” (Zumthor, 2006, p. 29). His description reveals how the body can resonate with an atmosphere through sound.

The thesis aims to emphasise the dynamic between environment, sound and bodies and conceptualise bells as what Jean François Augoyard and Henry Torgue (2009) have coined “sonic effects”. Augoyard and Torgue explain different effects for the study of sound and its perception. "Sonic effects" depart from what composer, Pierre Schaeffer
defines as a sound object and soundscape studies scholar, Murray Schafer termed as a soundscape. A sound object represents any sound of the environment whilst a soundscape is a sonic environment. Augoyard and Torgue claim that Schaeffer’s concept of sound object is too narrow and Schafer’s description of soundscapes is too broad. Therefore, Augoyard and Torgue propose “sonic effects” (Augoyard and Torgue, 2009, p. 6-7). Sonic effect is defined as an “interaction between the physical sound environment, the sound milieu of a social-cultural community and the ‘internal soundscape’ of every individual” (Augoyard and Torgue, 2009, p. 9). The concept takes not only into consideration that sound is perceived with the whole body but states that “sound undeniably has an immediate emotional power that has been used by every culture” (Augoyard and Torgue, 2009, p. 11). In this sense, it not only takes into account the physical environment of sound and its perceiving bodies, it also shows how our bodies emotionally respond to their environment. Furthermore, “sonic effects” emphasise that sound is important in creating the environment in the first place. Augoyard and Torgue assert: “As soon as sound physically exists, it sets into vibration a defined space, weather, vegetation etc.” (Augoyard and Torgue, 2009, p. 11). This illustrates how bells are intertwined with the physical environment, social values, attitudes, and the bodies senses. Additionally, how our bodies resonate with bells is informed by a particular atmosphere, or what Jean Paul Thibaud (2011) calls “ambience”. Thibaud explains that we feel an ambience rather than perceiving it and he asserts that “it is always charged with emotion” (Thibaud, 2011, p. 2). Therefore, an ambience can refer to the sensing body and challenges the idea of perceiving objects. Thibaud further defines ambience as, “not the way we interpret, recognize and understand the world we perceive, but rather the way we feel and relate to the world we sense” (Thibaud, 2011, p. 8). Through feeling an atmosphere our bodies respond to its place and this resonance forms the basis for our sensory experience. Thibaud states:

For sound – as for ambience – resonance is not a simple property among others; it is a basic and grounding phenomenon of the entire sensory experience. [...] there is no sensation without vibration and resonance, whether it be sound, light or texture (Thibaud, 2011, p. 7).

Thibaud explains that our bodies resonate with environments. Buildings and places are not passive, they respond to and amplify certain frequencies. He states, “In other words, resonance involves the ability of the body to incorporate and be affected by vibratory forces” (Thibaud, 2011, p. 8). According to Thibaud, resonance provides an
understanding of how our bodies attune to an ambience. He further highlights that “It helps to describe the very process by which I feel and sense the world” (Thibaud, 2011, p. 9). Ambiences are not only created through the environment but also by the way people live and technology. We are immersed in an ambience and even though it is a kind of backdrop to the everyday life we take notice of it and react to its presence.

Thibaud illustrates how bells can be seen as a part of an ambience to which our bodies resonate. Bells are not seen as a single sound object they are rather a part of the auditory fabric of certain places. Hearing bells is often not based on conscious perceptions but rather (as it will be shown within this thesis) on sensing, which is connected to certain feelings. Focusing on the body allows the body, emotions and memory to be thought of more closely together.

I want to argue that if we sense sound and make sense of a sound then it must have also something to do with emotions and feelings. To examine how we sense bells and how they are linked with feelings and emotions the following review will explore concepts about emotions. This review is based on the understanding that feelings are central in our contact with the world (Highmore, 2010).

1.4 Bells: Sensing Sound - Emotions, Affect and Feelings

As has been indicated in the previous section, the sensing body stands in close relationship to feelings. The sensing body is also a feeling body. The thesis expands on this relationship by looking at the role of sound in constituting the body and feelings. Sound seen as mediator between the ‘inside out’ of feelings and how people feel about bells as well as sound as ‘outside in’ and how it makes people feel to hear bells or live within their threshold for a longer time. To put it differently, the thesis asks about the impact of sound for the body and emotions and what this means for people’s sense of place.

The connection between emotions and bells is already shown by Corbin. In his analysis he often refers to emotions and feelings, but his investigation does not directly focus on these two aspects. He argues that bells evoked intense emotions in the past and he describes how bells connected individuals to a certain place. In Corbin’s words: “The emotional impact of a bell helped create a territorial identity for individuals living
always in range of its sound” (Corbin, 1999, p. 95). Corbin’s understanding poses the question, if the value of bells has declined does that mean the emotional connection with bells has also vanished?

The thesis will assess if bells evoke meaning in the present day whilst also investigating the emotional intensities linked to bells in the past.

To achieve this goal the thesis will be orientated towards the field of history of emotions. History of emotions is not only advantageous because it shows how emotions changed throughout time, but it also reveals how social groups can use feelings as tools for alignment. Within the field of history of emotions, historian Daniel Morat (2014) highlights that little thought has been given to the significance of hearing. This also becomes apparent when looking at the book *The History of Emotions: An Introduction* by historian, Jan Plamer (2015). Plamer describes that the field makes use of texts, images and archaeological sites. In his description Plamer makes no reference to sound. On the other end of the spectrum within musicology there is also a lot of work done on the emotional aspect of music however everyday sounds are most of the time ignored.

By looking at bells as an example for everyday sounds, the thesis aims to fill this gap by using 'sound' and all its material and immaterial aspects to focus on emotions. I will show how bells and sound are interlinked with emotions and how feelings are involved in expressing a sense of belonging. Furthermore, the thesis will examine how emotions can work to negotiate different understandings of belonging and this will be shown through a review on how the promotion of feelings and emotions help merge individual bodies into larger groups.

The involvement of feelings expressed through sound can also be seen with Corbin. He proposes that people’s dispute over bells can “reflect a form of attachment” (Corbin, 1999, p. XIX). This will inform my own research on the First World War’s seizing of bells. The case study of the Great War will help establish the emotional meaning linked to bells in the past. Through reviewing the recasting of bells after the First and Second World War in part two, I will show how past emotional meanings not only inform collective narratives but also promote and create forms of collective memories. The thesis will review how bells’ personal meaning and the attachment they create are informed by the environment, past and other bodies.
Before the review of some of the main practitioners within the field of history of emotions and how their work has informed the thesis, it is necessary to review some more general aspects about emotions and feelings and how to think about them.

The recent decades have seen a shift towards emotions in the field of social sciences and humanities. It seems that certain emotions are to some extent universal and evolutionarily anchored, such as fear or anger and this then causes the body to have a fight or flight reaction. This view is supported by a psychological stance. Psychologist, Antony Manstead, states that the field, does “not consider cultural meaning systems to be essential for the emotion system. Cultural meanings may affect interpretations and ideologies concerning emotions, but they do not influence the way in which emotional reactions unfold.” (Manstead, 2002, p. 2).

This psychological stance is opposed by social constructivists. They claim there are no basic emotions at all (Rosenwein, 2002). This view is informed to a great deal by an anthropological perspective, which emphasises “the primary importance of cultural meaning systems in both the experience and the expression of emotions.” (Manstead, 2002, p. 2). This illustrates how emotions and feelings can be shaped and informed by culture.

Psychology and social constructivism’s description on the body and emotions will be further explored with the use of affect theories. Affect theories can be defined in different ways because their position is dependent on the field of discipline they review. The theories align with the stance of psychology and they evolved from their critique on social constructivism and post-structuralism.

Affect theories draw on writings from Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari, and earlier scholars, such as Henri Bergson and Baruch Spinoza (Clough, 2007). Sound scholar, Christabel Stirling provides an understanding of affect. She claims, “affect points towards corporal states, sensing and auras rather than ‘their manifestation or interpretation as emotions’” (Stirling, 2018, p. 54). This reveals that the focus of affect theories relies on the sensing body. Philosopher, Brian Massumi describes affect as “intensity” and a force to “affect and be affected” (Massumi, 1995, p. 88). Besides their focus on bodies, the branch of new affect theorists defines affect as “pre-social” (Massumi, 1995, p. 91) and “pre-personal” (Leys, 2011). This illustrates that affect is
seen as prior to consciousness, ideology or meaning (Leys, 2011). However, historian Ruth Leys argues that some approaches of affect theories are rather rewriting the dualism between mind and body even if they aim to break with it. This is further supported by sociologist, Patricia Clough who states in her book Affective Turn that there is a “reflux back from conscious experience to affect” (Clough, 2007, p. 2).

Affect theories position affect in distinction from emotions, which they define as “qualified intensities” (Massumi, 1995, p. 88). Musicologist, Steve Goodman (2009), supports this theory as he applies it to his description on the physical aspect of sound. Goodman defines sonic experiences as a vibrational force. He describes how entities can affect other entities and the body is positioned as one of many entities in a vibrational force. Cultural theorist, Sara Ahmed (2004b) opposes Goodman’s claim and the approach of affect theories. She argues that a differentiation between affect and emotion creates a distinction between ‘direct’ feeling as affect and conscious recognition of feelings as emotions. According to Ahmed, the differentiation

negates how what is not consciously experienced may still be mediated by past experiences. [...] So sensations may not be about conscious recognition, but this does not mean they are ‘direct’ in the sense of immediate. Further, emotions clearly involve sensations: this analytic distinction between affect and emotion risks cutting emotions off from the lived experiences of being and having a body (Ahmed, 2004b, p. 39).

The thesis will not focus on what emotions are or if they differ from affect, rather, it will focus on what emotions do. Anthropologist, Monique Scheer (2012) suggests that emotions, affect and feelings are interchangeable. She places an emphasis on emotions as practices, “which build on the embodied knowledge of the habituated links that form complexes of mind/body actions” (Scheer, 2012, p. 209). The thesis will use Scheer’s approach as a basis, however it is still necessary to provide a working definition of how to conceptualise emotions or feelings. Historian, Bob Boddice (2019) defines emotions as “biocultural” (Boddice, 2019, p. 9). According to Boddice, “feelings are formed and experienced in a dynamic relation of body-brain and world [...]” (Boddice, 2019, p. 11). Boddice’s description shows how feelings are not only expressions of our ‘inner state’ or something from the ‘outside’ that makes us feel, they are the product of society, culture, body and environment.

Social psychologist, Shinobu Kitayama (1994) agrees with this understanding and claims emotions have a certain purpose. They are defined: “as a social, dynamically interactive
process of self, culture, and the body, within which the person seeks to achieve a degree of adaption to the cultural, semiotic environment” (Kitayama, 1994, p. 16).

Kitayama’s interpretation indicates that individuals seek to fit within larger groups and emotions can regulate the group and work to achieve a common ground. This highlights that emotions are both a discursive practice and embodied experience (Wulff, 2007). Furthermore, even if universal emotions exist our feelings are still substantially shaped by places and people as well as objects that change throughout the course of time.

The discursive nature of emotions is described within the work of historian, Peter Stearns and psychiatrist, Carol Stearns. The Stearns (1985) are important practitioners within the field of history of emotions. The Stearns coined the term emotionology to describe the attitudes or standards that a society or group within a society maintains towards emotions and their appropriate expression (Stearns, 1985). According to the Stearns, emotionology is a term that works to distinguish a society’s collective emotional standards from the emotional experiences of groups or individuals. An emotional standard refers to institutions and how they promote or permit certain emotions. The Stearns used the concept in their study to show how shifts in emotional standards can affect emotional expressions of people. Their research placed a focus on parental love towards children and revealed the connection between emotional standards and peoples’ emotional expressions. The study revealed that shifts on parental affection towards infants are to a greater extent influenced by standards rather than ‘instinctive’ emotional expressions. The Stearns pointed out that “it is likely – though not inevitable – that emotionological change will normally have some bearing on emotional experience” (Stearns, 1985, p. 829). Medieval historian, Barbara Rosenwein further points out what emotionology means. Emotionology “is not on how people felt or represented feelings but on what people thought about such matters as crying in public, getting angry, or showing anger physically” (Rosenwein, 2002, p. 824).

Rosenwein calls for a focus on people and their thoughts about emotional expressions. When applied to the emotional meanings attributed to bells, what does this mean? Having an attachment with bells is not only dependent on an individual’s emotional experience it can also be embedded within discourse. Additionally, different perceptions on how this emotional attachment should be reflected can create conflicts between
groups and institutions. Institutions have been described to promote emotional standards but also in a way control the emotional expressions of the masses. This reveals how emotions are embedded within a social hierarchy fuelled by power relations and a dominant emotional culture (Lemmings and Brooks, 2004). Another aspect that emotionology refers to, is the importance of media. Within emotionology media plays an important part in the standards created about how we ‘should’ feel. Media in this sense mediates meanings about bells but also uses existing attributions to mediate collective standards and narratives through bells.

Emotionology reveals how discourse and power relations can exist however, it does not engage with it enough to assist with the research on bells. Historian, William Reddy (2001) places a stronger notion on emotions and power in his book Navigation of Feelings. Reddy coined the term “emotional regime” and placed a strong emphasis on the powers that prevail. He writes: “Any enduring political regime must establish as an essential element a normative order for emotions, an ‘emotional regime’” (Reddy, 2001, p. 124). An emotional regime spreads and enforces dominant emotional norms and it is defined through the relationship between societies and their state. Historian, Jan Plamer points out an emotional regime focuses solely on the dynamic between state and its people and does not consider that there is more than one emotional regime amongst a society. For this reason, historian Barbara Rosenwein provides the most relevant concept with her “emotional communities”. She illustrates that power relations can be found between different social groups, not only the state and its people.

Rosenwein states that emotions have “communicative functions, whether with ourselves or with others” (Rosenwein, 2015, p. 5). This positions emotions as “tools with which we manage social life as a whole” (Rosenwein, 2002, p. 842). Through linking emotions with sound and space the thesis aims to unveil the different emotional communities and the role of sound in creating and maintaining these communities. Rosenwein defines emotional communities as groups similar to social communities. They can be guilds, families, parliaments, neighbourhoods, parish church congregations or monasteries. According to Rosenwein, emotional communities:

have their own particular values, modes of feeling, and ways to express those feelings. [...] [T]hey may be very close in practice to other emotional communities of their time, or they may be quite unique and marginal. [...]
Emotional communities are not always “emotional.” They simply share important norms concerning the emotions that they value and deplore and the modes of expressing them (Rosenwein, 2015, p. 3).

Rosenwein further highlights that during any time or life period societies contain more than one emotional community. There may be one dominant emotional community, but the concept allows more freedom than Reddy’s emotional regime. People move between one community and another and they adjust their emotional expressions and judgements according to the different groups (Rosenwein, 2002). Additionally, existing emotional communities can respond to similar material, technological and ideational conditions which helps to illustrate how the different emotional communities can have the same emotional attachment towards bells (Rosenwein, 2015).

The concept of emotional communities will be an important feature used in the thesis. The study will show how similar emotional attachment with bells can make its communities visible. Furthermore, the thesis will highlight how bells are used to negotiate between different emotional communities. A review will take place on how similar communities also share the same sense of place through their attachment to sound. Bells as subjects of material culture enable showing how objects are loaded with emotional value. This then constitutes a sense of belonging and highlights how sound works to create emotional communities.

However, Scheer illustrates how we must consider the external factors that shape these communities, and they are not as coherent and static as we may assume. She explains:

‘community’ or ‘regime’ (like “habitus”) can suffer from the same problems as the concept of ‘culture’ if it is seen as a coherent, somewhat mentalized, and rather static system of shared values, behaviours, and so on. In historical writing, these concepts need to be drawn into the everyday of social life via an emphasis on the practices that generate and sustain such a community or culture (Scheer, 2012, p. 216).

Scheer’s description illustrates the importance in considering the everyday life of people. This will be taken into account and referred to when defining people’s emotions. Additionally, the different emotions found within a group will be highlighted in the thesis. Ahmed points out that emotions “work to align individuals with collectives” (Ahmed, 2004b, p. 26). An attachment to bells creates a collectivity because emotions as described by Ahmed, are “sticky”. This refers to “what sticks, or what sustains or preserves the connection between ideas, values, and objects” (Ahmed, 2010, p. 29).
Certain emotions are stuck onto bells therefore bells can be considered as sticky.

Objects are sticky because they are already attributed as being good or bad, as being the cause of happiness or unhappiness. This is why the social bond is always rather sensational. Groups cohere around a shared orientation toward some things as being good, treating some things and not others as the cause of delight (Ahmed, 2010, p. 35).

Having an emotional relationship with bells means being affected by it. Ahmed states, “To be affected by something is to evaluate that thing. Evaluations are expressed in how bodies turn toward things” (Ahmed, 2010, p. 31).

This understanding aligns with historian, Daniel Morat’s analysis. He states, “Sound is a medium that brings bodies in relation to one another and sets them in collective motion” (Morat, 2015, p. 181).

The research on bells will reveal how sound can be embedded within collective emotions and how it has the power to stimulate and regulate these emotions through the sensations it bestows on the body.

Musicologist, Tia DeNora (1999) describes how sound can stimulate and regulate emotions. She demonstrates how music is used not only to set a mood but also to ‘create’ memories. Through her description of music as “technologies of the self”, DeNora refers to the function of music as an “ordering device” and she highlights how music is used as a resource, “for creating, enhancing, sustaining and changing subjective, cognitive, bodily and self conceptual states” (DeNora, 1999, p. 35). DeNora illustrates how music not only helps with mood management, identities can also be constructed through sound. Certain songs can help construct people’s own biographies because they remember people and their stages in life.

DeNora’s work illustrates how sound not only has a close connection with emotions but also with memories and how we remember. In this sense, I argue that how we sense and make sense of sound has a lot to do with the past and certain memories.
1.5 Bells: Sensing the Sound and Facets of Remembering

Sounds and sensory experiences (most of the time smells) can trigger memories. This phenomenon is described as “Proust-phenomenon”. The name can be linked to Marcel Proust’s (1913) book *Swann’s Way* where the narrator eats a madeleine cake dipped in tea. The taste of the little cake brings back memories of his aunt Leonie, the house, the garden, village and people. However, at first it is a feeling rather than memories that occurs to the narrator and after much thought the narrator defines it as a memory (Smith, 2016). The example illustrates the connection between memories, emotions, and sensory experiences.

Sound scholar, Michael Bull (2009) illustrates in his article “iPod nostalgia”, how iPod users reconstruct their identities through the music they listened to on the iPod. He highlights the connection between feelings, memory and sound and which can be also found in early descriptions of nostalgia. Nostalgia was first described through experiences of Swiss soldiers and it was based on a “shared, even though often imaginary, sensory experience” (Bull, 2009, p. 85). The soldiers’ feeling of nostalgia was triggered by alpine melodies. Bull states: “Auditory memories for these soldiers was represented by sounds of home” (Bull, 2009, p. 86) and nostalgia was “represented by a ‘mood’, the music played representing some notion of home” (Bull, 2009, p. 88). This shows how “sound is a powerful aphrodisiac when it comes to evoking memory” (Bull, 2009, p. 89). Like the nostalgia of Swiss soldiers, memories around bells can be “rooted to a particular geographical and sonic space” (Bull, 2009, p. 88).

Bells seem to create a sense of belonging to a certain territory and they may encourage a feeling of home. However, the power of bells to create a feeling of home may be linked to a form of nostalgia. Are bells only a form of nostalgia? A longing for the past, a yearning for one’s home. Or have bells become what sound scholar, Barry Truax (1999) calls a “sound romance”. Sound romance attributes certain sounds with a nostalgic quality. Truax explains,

> Many such sounds were often regarded as unimportant when actually current; yet later, hearing them may trigger strong memories. Sounds experienced during childhood, for instance, often become romances for the adult.” (Truax, 1999).

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2 Which is the first volume of *À la recherche du temps* (In Search of Lost Time).
But what can be considered as the memory of sound or auditory memories? Bijsterveld (2015) writes in regard to auditory memory she claims that psychologists used to describe the remembering of sound as an “echoic memory”, which means that humans are able to retain a few seconds of auditory information but our memory of words or sounds fade away after two to ten seconds. However, we are able to recognise and therefore remember voices even if we have not heard them for years (Bijsterveld, 2015, p. 7-8).

Augoyard and Torgue (2009) describe the phenomenon of involuntary memories through sound as “anamnesis”, which means “a past situation or atmosphere is brought back to the listener’s consciousness, provoked by a particular signal or sonic context” (Augoyard and Torgue, 2009, p. 21). An example of anamnesis can be found in certain songs that evoke childhood memories. Augoyard and Torgue explain anamnesis and state, “the more distant and unexpected the reference, the more the emotion may overwhelm the listener” (Augoyard and Torgue, 2009, p. 21). Involuntary memories are not as much based on sound than on its meaning for the listener. Bells can produce involuntary memories, not necessarily through their presence but rather through their absence. If bells were a part of someone’s everyday life in the past they can trigger memories when heard again after a long time.

Musicologist, William Kenny (1999) provides another example of the connection between memories, sound and emotions. He explains how music was listened to on the phonograph and it had the power to awaken powerful emotions connected to collective memories. Kenny describes the impact of recorded music on the individual and collective memories. In his own words, he states:

Many customers recalled and reaffirmed familial love and family identity by replaying recordings of music that they felt pointed to particular departed family members. Respondents preferred ‘old music well rendered,’ music that ‘takes us back to Grandfather days,’ tunes that brought ‘memories of home,’ old tunes that ‘take us back to the days of childhood’ (Kenny, 1999, p. 8).

Music can be understood as an expression of nostalgia but also as a kind of mastery of memories. Memories can be stimulated through sounds that help you remember certain moments (Kenny, 1999; Mocilovic, 2011). Applying these insights to the everyday sound of the bell reveals that sounds not only stimulate memories but they also provide a basis for collective memories. Sounds, in this sense, construct identities and also act as a stabiliser for the self-images of groups and individuals. Therefore, sound can provide a
kind of moral compass for groups. By looking at bells the thesis aims to fill the gap between memory studies and sound studies.

Karin Bijsterveld and media studies scholar, José van Dijck (2009) point out in their book *Sound Souveniers* that there is a lack of books on the subject of sound, music and memory. According to the scholars, the publications focus on the subject of sound and cultural practice but they do not focus on the relationship between sound and memory. Additionally, the authors found that publications on cultural memory rarely address sound. For this reason, their book aimed to bridge the gap by focusing on audio technologies in relation to personal and collective memories (Bijsterveld and van Dijck, 2009).

However, most of the contributors in their book focus on music and rarely address the everyday sounds. The thesis will address this by reviewing a singular everyday sound, the bell. The aim is to expand the perspective by examining sound, listening and memory in general terms.

In broad terms, memory can be seen as a form of experiential learning which is not only exclusive to animals or humans, for example machines also have a memory. Individual memory mainly lies in the domain of psychology and neuroscience. In psychology memory is considered something internal and differentiations exist between long-term and short-term memory. Short-term, or working memory is information that will only be retained for a short time period and it provides a response to something. Long-term memory means to retain data for a longer period and it is incorporated in larger structures of knowledge. Long-term memory is again divided between two categories. These are declarative or conscious retraining of data that can be articulated. Non-declarative or procedural knowledge of data is linked to knowing how to ride a bike (Cubitt, 2007).

What the definition from neuroscience shows is that memory and remembering also has something to do with the body.

Cultural geographer, Ben Anderson (2004) examines practices of remembering through domestic tasks. He illustrates how the act of remembering is based on a whole array of contextual body practices. His findings are supported by philosopher, Mary Warnock who considers memory as both mental and physical at the same time (Rossington, 2007).
My research does not intend to define what memories are, but rather examine the process of remembering and in particular what we remember through sound. However it is necessary to state that memory is seen as both mental and physical.

The connection with memories and bells is also pointed out by Corbin. He explains that:

Throughout our investigations we have been struck by how long events associated with bells were remembered [...]. Local events bite deeper into a person’s memories than do episodes occurring outside the group because the recollection is reinforced by a recording of details and circumstances (Corbin, 1999, p. 60-61).

The following review about memory is linked to three categories. I will review individual remembering, collective remembering and at mediated forms of remembering. Although these seem to be different categories nevertheless it is not possible to make a clean cut between them. The three categories of remembering will be connected to sound. The three analytical planes will be used to examine the role of sound and listening as a practice of remembering.

1.5.1 Individual Remembering

The reviewed examples about music and memory illustrate the potential of sound as an aid for remembering.

When remembering we simultaneously construct and maintain ourselves (Drozdezewski and Birdsall 2018). Oral historian, Alistair Thomson, refers to this process of construction and revision and claims memory is continually structured and interpreted:

Remembering is one of the vital ways in which we identify ourselves in storytelling. In our storytelling we identify what we think we have been, who we think we are now and what we want to become (Thomson, 2013, p. 13).

Applying these insights to the thesis can reveal how bells are embedded in the everyday lives of their listeners. It could be assumed that if people have memories about bells that bells still have some meaning. However, what roles do bells play in people’s lives nowadays and how is the sound linked to people’s lives and in particular to what certain moments in their lives? I want to argue that talking about and remembering bells can
assist the process of reconstructing the self through sound.

The field of Psychology describes memory as an ‘inner’ process and an act of the individual, however it is important to take into account that memory is always in connection with the ‘outer’. We mostly remember through ‘others’. Folklorist, Dan Ben-Amos states:

“People acquire or construct memory not as an isolated individual but as members of a society, and they recall their memories in society.” (Ben-Amos, 1999, p. 13)

Therefore, there is no such thing as individual memory.

1.5.2 Collective Remembering

Remembering is always influenced and shaped by a collective. This thinking about collective, cultural and social memory goes back to French sociologist, Maurice Halbwachs’ (1925, 1985, 1966) theoretical model on collective memory. Halbwachs’ core concept explains how individual memories are shaped by social environments, such as the people we live with to the media we use. We acquire schemata to recall the past but also to make sense of new experiences. The notion of collective memory is therefore based on the understanding that memories are often triggered by external factors. Memory studies scholar, Astrid Erll (2011) describes two fundamental concepts of Halbwachs’ collective memory. The first is that collective memory is the organic memory of the individual, which operates within the framework of a sociocultural environment. The second states, collective memory is the creation of shared versions of the past, which results through interaction, communication, media, and institutions from small social groups to large cultural communities (Erll, 2011, p.15).

Applying these two aspects on memories about bells means that what is remembered is also influenced by how it is remembered. Bells and talking about bells work as trigger for remembering as well as the placeholder for the social environment in which the remembering occurs. On the other side, bells could be seen as a carrier to produce and distribute narratives of shared pasts. Media is of special interest for the thesis because it will be shown how bells are used within different forms of media to remediate and distribute narratives of shared pasts.

Another characteristic of collective memory is its selectivity. We not only choose what to remember based on the context and our needs but also what shared versions of the past are produced and circulated is also based on selectivity. Speaking in general terms, there
is no memory that is solely individual and only through interactions with the world and communication with fellow humans can people acquire knowledge about dates as well as collective concepts of time and space, which influence our ways of thinking and experiencing (Erll, 2011, p. 15).

Applying the interrelationship between the individual and collective towards memories of sound (bells) shows that by interviewing people about their memories of sound it is possible to access different individual accounts that are influenced by shared versions of the past. It will be shown how the interrelation between the individual experience and the collective framework not only gives meaning to bells but also creates an attachment to bells and furthermore to places.

The concept of collective memory was further developed through cultural memory, which focuses on the representation and production of memories. Cultural memory shows a collective sense of belonging to a certain place. Cultural memory is seen as creating places through memory work. This memory work is mostly applied to the territory of a nation-state. Ben-Amos states:

The invention of nation-states called for a common past as well as a common future. Monuments urged the individual to remember, but to remember and define each individual as a member of a larger group. (Ben-Amos, 1999, p. 12)

This understanding illustrates how monuments, memorials and museums are fertile places to investigate memory. Within this perspective the bell itself comes into focus and how bells are used as tools for memory work.

French historian, Pierre Nora developed one of the most influential concepts of cultural memory around the notion of memory, history and nation. According to Nora, sites of memory are necessary because there is no real environment for memory. (Nora, 1989, p. 7) Therefore, we must create archives and monuments which “mark the rituals of a society without ritual” (Nora, 1989, p. 12). Nora’s sites of memories are not only museums or monuments but also anniversaries, food or clothes. Basically, his sites of memory are any cultural phenomena be it material, social or mental. They dictate what a society associates with its past and national identity (Erll, 2011, p. 26). Nora further highlights how groups create a collective sense of belonging to spaces through the practice of remembering, but one of the greatest problems with Nora’s sites of memories is its nation centeredness. However, Nora’s sites of memory is offering a useful input for
the thesis because it makes the connection between bodies and places through memory apparent. He illustrates not only how the reproduction of memories is connected to places but also how the perception of the environment is shaped through and based on collective versions of the past. As anthropologist, Tim Ingold (1993) puts it,

to perceive the landscape is therefore to carry out an act of remembrance and remembering in not so much a matter of calling up an internal image, stored in the mind, as of engaging perceptually with an environment that is itself pregnant with the past (Ingold, 1993, p. 152-153).

Bells could be seen as a kind of interface, a tool for remembering, as well as storage of memories and itself “pregnant with the past” as Ingold puts it. Composer and sound scholar, Barry Truax (2016) also highlights that auditory memories are not only conditioned by sonic input but by the way we experience place and time and in particular how we move through it (Truax, 2016).

The connection between place, memories and sound will be shown within this thesis. Bells are positioned as sonic monuments that provide a framework for remembering. Cultural memory, in this sense, is not only stored within the material properties of the bell but also through the ringing of them and its accompanying of people through time, days, years and life. This thesis will show how bells help to construct and maintain collective narratives and how they serve as a stabiliser of these narratives. This will become apparent in the review on the recasting of bells after the World Wars. It will be shown how bells as sonic monuments were not only used to commemorate a shared past but also to produce versions of shared pasts. Bells are a good example of how the creation of cultural memory is based on selectivity and a choice of what to remember and forget. The selectivity of remembering is based on present knowledge and the needs of the individual and groups (Erl and Ansgar, 2010, p. 5). The chapter about the recasting of bells will show that bells were not only used to construct a shared past but also to forget something, as well as tools for mourning. The creation of a shared past also helps people to forget. The recasting will demonstrate how local experiences and memories can be weaved together within national narratives. Not only the sound object itself but also the sound of bells can be used as a tool for commemoration. For example, by ringing at ‘special’ moments, bells actually provide an ideological framework for groups. This framework is not only based on religious meaning as it marks religious holidays but also through its ringing on other occasions. The bell can work as a tool to
commemorate and mark special moments for groups. To give some examples, all bells were rung in Austria on 8 May 2015 to commemorate the end of World War Two. The ringing started in the village Erlauf because it was an important place for the Austrian postwar narrative. Erlauf was the village where the Soviets and Americans first met to seal peace and therefore end the war in Austria. The ringing helped to distribute this narrative. Additionally, bells throughout the whole of Austria were rung on 13 September 2001 in condolence of the attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York. Last year, 2020, bells all over Austria were rung as a sign of solidarity during the COVID-19 lockdown and all the bells of Vienna rung after their terrorist attack on the 2 November 2020 (ORF Niederösterreich, 2015; Höller, 2015; Kraml, 2015; Wuthe, 2017, 2020; Knipp, 2019; Knapp, 2020; Caritas Österreich, 2021).

Bells, in this sense, work to connect people’s sense of belonging, be it global, national, regional or their local place of living through their memory work. Sites of memory often provide the didactic and ideological functions for social groups. Astrid Erll describes sites of memories as “cues” for cultural remembrance and she illustrates how these cues refer to the connection between the collective and the individual act of remembrance.

Individual memory processes are set in motion by cues. These cues can be intrapsychic in nature (for example, associations, other memories), but they can also belong to the material and social context of remembering (for example, pictures, texts, other people and parts of conversation) (Erll, 2011, p. 127-128).

Erll further refers to different scholars who state that archives, literature and statues are not per se ‘memory’ but rather media of cultural memory. She highlights that these cultural memories,

encode information and can prompt remembering or forgetting; archives and universities are likewise not themselves memory, but rather can serve as institutions of cultural memory, which gather, preserve, administer, and impart culturally relevant information about the past” (Erll, 2011, p. 100).

Bells, in this sense, can be seen as storage and tools for re-mediating cultural memories. The most influential approach in memory studies in the German-speaking world was developed by cultural studies and literature studies scholars, Jan and Aleida Assmann. Like Nora, the Assmanns’ concepts are indebted to Halbwachs’ thinking on collective memory. The Assmanns’ make “a qualitative difference between a collective memory that is based on forms of everyday interaction and communication and a collective
memory that is more institutionalized and rests on rituals and media” (Erll, 2011, p. 28). The Assmanns’ developed two forms of frameworks for collective memories, which are communicative and cultural memory. Communicative memory refers to the recent past and is based on everyday interactions that involve historical experiences of contemporaries. Whereas Cultural Memory\(^3\) transports a fixed set of contents and meanings that are maintained and interpreted through specialists, for example priests, shamans, or archivists (Assmann, 2011). Cultural Memory includes traditions, such as rituals and symbols. The Assmanns’ notion of Cultural Memory serves as a stabiliser and helps to create and maintain society’s self-image. If bells can be seen as sites of memory, how are they used to stabilise and maintain society’s self-image?

The Assmanns’ initiated a change in perspective within memory studies. Due to the contribution of the Assmanns’ less attention has been granted to the ‘sites’ that mediate memories and a focus has been placed on how memories can be created and the dynamics between humans and artefacts. The Assmanns’ reveal how artefacts circulate and interact with their environment to stabilise memories (Erll and Rigney, 2009, p. 3). The artefact of the bell offers an investigation on cultural memory material and immaterial properties to store and stabilise people’s self-image. As it will be shown within this thesis there are also many specialists involved in maintaining a group’s self-image through bells. By focusing on bells as stabiliser, the thesis aims to look at the different ways sound and bells are involved and used for memory work and the production of cultural memory. Bells are seen as the vehicle that transports memory-content however the transported content can change with time as well as how the memories are transported with the bells. This dynamic focus on cultural memory acknowledges “that the past is not given, but must instead continually be reconstruceted and re-presented” (Erll and Ansgar, 2010, p. 7). This means that not only the memories can change but also the way it is remembered varies. This dynamic focus on cultural memory is termed by Erll as “modes of remembering”. For Erll cultural memory can be seen,

as an on-going process of remembrance and forgetting in which individuals and groups continue to reconfigure their relationship to the past and hence reposition themselves in relation to established and emergent memory sites. Modes of remembering means that historical sites are not only out there and

\(^{3}\) The Assmanns’ used to write the term Cultural Memory in capitals.
static but remembering is seen as an active engagement with the past, as performative rather than as reproductive (Erll and Rigney, 2009, p. 2).

By focusing on modes of remembering it is possible to open the perspective towards the different forms of memory work and how bells are involved within them. In particular how bells are used within different forms of media.

1.5.3 Media and Remembering “Media Memory”

Media could be described as having a sort of memory in terms of their own archives and collections, but media is also important in distributing cultural memories. Erll’s modes of remembering highlight the importance of media in making cultural memory accessible but also in reproducing historical narratives. The memory studies scholar, Marita Sturken (1997) also puts emphasis on the active role of media and the medium in producing cultural memory. In Sturken’s words:

> cultural memory is produced through objects, images, and representations. These are technologies of memory, not vessels of memory in which memory passively resides (Sturken, 1997, p. 9).

Bells are not only seen as technologies of memory they are also used by other technologies of memory. Halbwachs was the first scholar to refer to mediation when he stated that memories derive from social context (Halbwachs, 1925, 1985, 1966, p. 20-2) but they are also informed to a great deal by media environments. Erll reiterates “there is no such thing as a pure, pre-media memory, or: the other way round, that all memory, individual and social, is mediated memory” (Erll, 2011, p. 132).

Bells mediate memories not only through their sound or their materiality, also when talking about them through speech, or when considering archives about bells, but also by using them within different forms of media such as film, radio or print. Bells are tools for mediation and remediation.

Mediation of memories works on many different levels. On an individual level memory can be mediated through oral communication. Memories are mediated through the use of photographs, music or films. Mass media is also a memory aid because it influences how individuals code their life experiences. On a collective level the circulation of knowledge and shared pasts are also dependent on mediation. Mediation can be found
through telling stories or performing rituals, through monuments but also through print, radio, television and internet. The different mediums circulate and store versions of a shared pasts (Erll, 2011).

In reference to the philosopher Marshall McLuhan, Erll further refers to mediation and claims, “the medium is the memory”. This illustrates that media not only maintains memories, but it also shapes our ways of remembering (Erll, 2011, p. 116). Media and their users create and shape memories and this tends to be influenced by specific cultural and historical contexts.

The dynamics of cultural memory show that mediation is not only a stabiliser for the self-images of groups, it also needs to be maintained and actualised by different forms of remediation. Cultural memory only ‘stays alive’ if the content has a certain meaning for the individual. The two-way road and the dynamics between individual and collective memory become apparent again. Erll describes this two-way road as following:

There is no pre-cultural individual memory. But neither is there a ‘Collective Memory’ that is totally detached from individuals and embodied solely in media and institutions. Just as the social environment and cultural schemata shape the individual memory, the ‘memory’ of a sociocultural formation must be actualized and realized in, or appropriated through, organic minds. Otherwise, commemorative rituals, archival material, and media representing the past will be useless and ineffective – dead material, failing to have any impact in memory culture (Erll, 2011, p. 98).

The process of remediating memories can be defined as the same story passed across different types of media. This process recreates memories and reproduces them again and again (Erll and Rigney, 2009).

The concept of remediation will be used within this thesis and applied to bells. It does not necessarily focus on particular narratives, but on how bells and their sound can be used as tools for remediation across different media forms in particular newspapers, radio and film. Bells are conceptualised as sonic monuments that assist in storing, stabilising and distributing cultural memory. They are positioned as artefacts for the mediation and remediation of memories and can be defined as “technologies of memory”. This multi-purpose of bells within memory work will be examined in regard to how memories of bells can forge an emotional attachment to certain places.
1.6 Aims of the Thesis

This literature review has tried to establish the way in which sound and listening is “infused by social and cultural values” (Bull and Les Back, 2016, p. 7) that sound and perceiving sound always stands in an historical context. Listening also means the experience of being in and knowing the environment. This could mean that a shift in the meaning of bells has changed the “sensory knowledge” (Rice, 2010, p. 543) of bells.

Listening means sensing with the whole body. Our bodies are moved by sounds and also respond bodily or emotionally to sounds and the environment. Within the act of perception, the body is seen as an active agent that acts out listening within specific social and cultural contexts but also senses the environment based on certain social and cultural values. As such bodies resonate with others as well as resonating with places. This resonance is an important aspect in constituting identities and a sense of place. The expression of collective body experiences is communicated through emotions and memory management. Through assigning certain feelings to sounds, social groups can create a sense of belonging. This illustrates that even if bells lost their meaning for the ‘everyday’ their sound can still be crucial in creating group identities. Sounds are in close relation to emotions and evaluating sounds also means an expression of collective emotional scripts. As past meanings echo in the present, past meanings can load the ringing of bells with emotional meaning to the contemporaries. The emotional echoes are maintained through a sort of memory work. Bells can assist in maintaining and distributing narratives of shared pasts. It is important to consider that the sounds of bells are not only vehicles to maintain and create memories for individuals and collectives but also the bell as material artefact works as memory storage. Media plays an important role in creating and maintaining narratives and bells could be seen as tools for mediation of narratives. Through the deployment of bells across different forms of media a collective notion might not only be kept alive, it may also maintain the role of connecting individual experiences with collective meanings or self-images.

To conclude, bells will be conceptualised as a tool that individuals relate to because their sound and the materiality itself assists in creating and maintaining a sense of place and self-images. The thesis will illustrate the centrality of bodily sensations in creating memories and feelings. It will be shown that a significance of bells in present days can
only be kept alive if there is a certain involvement of memories and feelings and a relation to the environment or places. The thesis will use bells to examine how personal meaning and the attachment bells create are informed by the environment, past and other bodies. The research questions are overlapping but follow the aim to show the centrality of the body in sensing sound and how sound can assist in relating the body to places through memories and emotions.

The research questions are:

- How does the sound of bells assist in producing and maintaining an emotional attachment to places and how are bells used as expression of emotional communities?
- How are bells used as tools for remembering and forgetting? And how do bells assist with memory work of individuals and collectives?
- How bells are sensed to assist the process of place making as well as in knowing and experiencing places. In other words, how are bells used in constructing the self in relation to place?
- How are bells deployed in different forms of media and what narratives are re-mediated using bells?
2. Methods

2.1 Ethnography of Sound

In the broadest sense the thesis can be described as an ethnography of sound. Tom Rice states that, “ethnographies of sound’ set out to describe and reflect upon the sound world of a particular group of people who may share a space or who are linked through a set of shared practices” (Rice, 2018, p. 239). According to social anthropologist Sarah Pink, “Ethnography is a reflexive and experiential process though which understanding, knowing and (academic) knowledge are produced. [...]” (Pink, 2009, p. 4). Ethnographies privilege the body as a site of knowing and embrace the subjective sensuous experience of the researcher (Drever, 2002). Ethnographies can be described as a twofold tool understood as product of representation and as process in terms of fieldwork practices (Barnard and Spencer, 2010).

The research design is dedicated towards the framework of phenomenology in order to describe subjective and cultural experience of sound. However, as cultural geographer Key MacFarlane (2020) points out, listening is not necessarily an immediate experience but rather highly mediated. This post-phenomenological stance “views the listening subject, not as something prior to experience, but as coming to be in or through experience” (MacFarlane, 2020, p. 299). MacFarlane stresses that post-phenomenology still links perception with the perceived. To resolve this faulty equation MacFarlane proposes to include Theodor Adorno’s negative dialectics. Adorno emphasises the importance of negativity to “acknowledge the world is more and other than it is” (MacFarlane, 2020, p. 299). Negative dialectics calls for a critical stance towards experience. Michael Bull (2000) also combines phenomenology with critical theory, which highlights the dialectic between structure and experience. In this sense the research follows Bull’s proposal for a critical phenomenology, which acknowledges that sound production and perception is always embedded within social contexts.
But how is an ethnography of sound carried out?

Ethnographies involve a direct contact with people that aim, to understand people's social lives and human experiences. The approach provides an insight into their values and social worlds by describing it at least partly in their own terms (Willis and Trondman, 2000, p. 5). Ethnographies are not necessarily limited to participant observation and it is widely acknowledged that it contains a family of methods (Willis and Trondmann, 2000; Rice, 2018; Pink, 2018). In my case I have used methods of ‘thick’ participation, archival research, interviews, an analysis of media, an array of sonic methods as well as a practice led experiment through an exhibition. The way from process to product within ethnographies is not a straightforward journey from A to B but seen as building blocks and testing grounds for theories as well as practice from which theories derive. In this sense the approach of “grounded theory” highlights the relationship and dialogue between theory and research (Barnard and Spencer, 2010).

2.2 Grounded Theory

The relationship between theory and data is in a constant negotiation. Writing a thesis considers permanent readjustment of the methodological and theoretical framework until the data collection achieved some degree of saturation. To achieve a flexible approach, I have decided to follow the methodological approach of the grounded theory developed by sociologists Anselm Strauss and Barney Glaser. Methodology and theory are in close connection and evolve from practice, whereas the collection of data is not seen as proof of theories but as an input for further theoretical development. The process of this interrelation between theory and data is called theoretical sampling. Sociologists Juliet Corbin and Anselm Strauss describing the difference between theoretical sampling and conventional methods as followed:

What makes theoretical sampling different from conventional methods of sampling is that it is responsive to the data rather than established before the research begins. This responsive approach makes sampling open and flexible. Concepts are derived from data during analysis and questions about those concepts drive the next round of data collection. The research process feeds on itself. It simply keeps moving forward, driven by its own power (Corbin and Strauss 2008, p. 144).
My personal starting point began with the ‘discovery’ of archival sources. During my time as head of the museum in Lech am Arlberg, I received a call from the local priest asking me if I want to have a look at their parish archive. I agreed and visited the archive. I started browsing through the boxes filled with records. Having an interest in sound, one box called my attention. It was named “bells”, after glancing at the first documents about technical issues with the local bells I found a folder with letters, newspaper articles and correspondence from the local parish priests about the removal of bells during the First and Second World War. I was astonished by the rich insights the records provided and so I decided to give a talk about the requisition in the museum to present this fascinating inventory. I did not know about the removal of bells during the World Wars, but after the talk, I was fascinated by how much the removal (even if not experienced personally) was in the collective memory of the audience. I had in my mind to pursue a PhD. This discovery made me think about the potential of researching bells. After being accepted as PhD candite at the University of Sussex, I began to apply the approach of the grounded theory.

Using grounded theory meant before starting my PhD in 2015, I made the first data collection during spring and summer 2015. This first stage was a broad collection of archival resources without a particular research question. The outcome of this early research informed the first theoretical framework and research questions. By looking at existing research about bells and their used methods, I then developed a mix of methods. The design rests mainly on ‘conventional’ approaches such as archival research, interviews and textual and discourse analysis. However, also field recordings or the use of sounds in the interviews as well as a practice-led project in form of an exhibition helped my research design to answer my research questions.

The historical records also informed the questionnaire used during the interviews. In the summer of 2016, another field trip was carried out. Methods applied during this stay included, archival research, field diaries, and participant observation alongside conducting of interviews. The historical data, field notes and interviews informed the next theoretical round and led to the adaption of the research questions. This stage informed the next round of fieldwork, which included accessing new archival material as well as conducting further interviews. After the evaluation of the collected data the theoretical framework as well as the research questions were further adapted. At this point, I curated an exhibition about the seizing of bells during the First World War at the
Vorarlberg Museum in Bregenz/Vorarlberg. I was using my existing data to provide the basis for a virtual reality (VR) experience. The exhibition itself was also a testing ground for my first findings, which I additionally presented at the opening talk. However, the exhibition was not only means of representation but also a tool to gain further data. Informal conversations during my visits and guided tours of the exhibition and questionnaires about the exhibition and the VR experience were further used as input. The outcome informed the final analysis of the collected data as did the first presentation of the findings at conferences. Based on the feedback and collected data from the exhibition a further adaption of the theoretical framework was made, which led to the final analysis to double check the findings.

2.3 Fieldwork and the Field

Fieldwork was the main source for the collection of data for the thesis. The ‘field’ was not necessarily a ‘foreign country’ but rather a familiar place, the country of my origin. I was not born in the specific research area but I spent about five years living there. My time in Vorarlberg led me also to the topic of doing research about bells. Orientated towards anthropology the thesis could be described as “anthropology at home” (Hannerz, 2010). This usually means a research is conducted in someone’s place of residence. In my case it is a research about home but not necessarily at home, because I wrote my PhD in the United Kingdom and not in Austria. I did not need to learn the language of my ‘field’ because it is my native language (although a different dialect is spoken in the research area). I did not need to spend a long time in the field in order to understand the cultural and social codes because I grew up within this culture. However, the spatial distance towards my field when analysing the data helped me to take a critical stance towards my findings. Additionally the conversations with my supervisors, who did not know anything about my ‘field’ helped me to carefully contextualise my findings.

Anthropologists usually spend at least a year continuously in the field however, because my research was designed as an ‘anthropology at home’ I decided to follow a method called “thick participation” (Spittler, 2010). The term was introduced by anthropologist Gerd Spittler who extended the approach of participatory observation towards a more
theory-orientated fieldwork. Thick participation highlights, according to Spittler, the thickness of participating in the field in the sense of a thick description coined by anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973). It emphasises the interpretative thickness but “thick” also means the socially close experience together (Spittler, 2010, p. 12).

The research involved shorter field trips, a few days or weeks, rather than classic anthropological studies, which are sometimes based on many years of visiting the field and staying for several months. Over the course of my PhD I spent time in the field on several occasions, which lasted from a few days up to three months. I tried to live within the village communities and observed not only the everyday life of the villages but also took ethnographic field notes about my own ‘sensing of the places’. Sociologist Brendan Brown (2013) highlights the benefits of fieldwork diaries as a research tool by using them as “repositories for critical reflection on the research process as it is unfolding” (Brown, 2013, p. 432). Brown further elaborates:

Fieldwork diaries act as the place where personal stories of rapport building and strange encounters are recorded. They afford researchers the space to record these important interactions and how they affected them personally (Brown, 2013, p. 433).

This means my field diary not only had descriptions about the places, reflections about my observations and the interviews but also how my body perceived the different places as well as my feelings within the field.

The fieldwork was conducted in three different valleys of Vorarlberg. The valleys were chosen because of certain similarities. All of the valleys can be considered as rural with a mountainous landscape and all of them were ‘living off the land’. This meant that people were either farmers and/or worked within tourism. The main touristic activities were hiking in the summer or skiing in the winter. The aspect of tourism was also relevant because it had a direct impact on the practice of bell ringing. Due to the influence of tourism, the villages have shifted their morning ringing (Angelus) to a later time and some villages have turned off their bells completely during the night. This change of bell ringing was also prevalent within the fieldwork because it raised questions about ‘outside’ influences and reflections about the sense of belonging for the different villagers. By living off the land, it was also assumed that the close connection from the people to the environment had some relationship to their perception of bells.
In addition to the fieldwork within the valleys, a village was accompanied throughout the whole process of casting new bells. The village cast steel bells after the First World War and decided to exchange these bells with bronze bells. The process was accompanied, beginning with the decision-making about what inscriptions would go on the bells, followed by the casting of the new bells in the bell foundry on 10 June 2016 until the bell consecration in the village on 2 October 2016. The process of a bell purchase was a rare chance to observe the main stakeholders who were involved in the decision-making process as well as the ritualised form of bell casting and the consecration, which helped to not only create a collective experience for the village but also an attachment to bells.

In order to achieve a thick participation, fieldwork was understood as a “polymorphous engagement” (Hannerz, 2010, p. 86). This means not only the use of participant observation but also archival research, oral history interviews, an analysis of media discourses (print, sound and audio-visual), an array of “sonic methods” where sound is not only the object of research but also a research tool itself as well as a practice-led experiment through an exhibition were used.

2.4 Archival Research

One pillar of the research design was based on written documents as well as on images, sounds and films. The first viewing of historical records was made in March 2015, followed by in-depth research between December 2015 and January 2016, proceeding with another field trip in Summer 2016 and completed with a last archival research trip in Summer 2017. Records from archives not only led me to the PhD, they also provided the basis for the development of the research design. The archives that have been consolidated, including the sources found, are listed as follows:

- Archive of the diocese Vorarlberg

The main resource for archival records was the archive of the diocese Vorarlberg in Feldkirch. This was because most of the parishes have no separate archive and send all their records to Feldkirch. The archive had not only records about bell seizures but also
detailed information about the bell stock within Vorarlberg, including correspondence with different bell founders or other bell related correspondences. The archive of the diocese was like a treasure, I didn’t know that these documents existed because I’m not a historian, but it not only directed me to other archives it also provided an important foundation for the research design.

• Communal archives
After contacting all archivists from communal archives in Vorarlberg I was directed to different archives that had records about bells, mainly about bell seizing during the World Wars, and about casted bells.

• Archive of the province of Tyrol
Until 1918, Vorarlberg was administered by the province of Tyrol the provincial archive was consolidated in regard to the bell seizing during World War One.

• ANNO database from the Austrian National Library
All Austrian newspapers are available on this platform. This was used to portray how the bell seizures were covered within print media.

• Austrian Mediathek
This is an online archive about audio-visual media, sound recordings and photographs. The database was used in regard to pictures and existing oral history interviews about bells as well as a resource for early broadcast recordings.

• Austrian National Library (ÖNB)
The Austrian National Library (ÖNB) was consolidated in regard to historic pictures and posters from official announcements.

• Provincial library of Vorarlberg
The main library for Vorarlberg is also the main archive for broadcast recordings from the research area of Vorarlberg. It was also used for communal chronicles in regard to bells.
• Austrian Broadcast Corporation Vorarlberg
The provincial broadcast station of Vorarlberg provided bell recordings, which are used for broadcasting. There are around 180 bell recordings, which means I have recordings from every church from Vorarlberg. I was given access to their database for metadata about the bell recordings. However, the metadata about the bell recordings was almost non-existent and only listed information about the place of the recording but no information about when the recordings were made or who made it. This information was only available after informal conversations with staff.

• “Dokumentations Archiv Funk” in Vienna
The “Dokumentations Archiv Funk” in Vienna is the main archive for broadcast resources. The archive was used to search through the correspondences about bells as well as in regard to early radio schedules, public value reports and annual reports form the Austrian Broadcast Corporation (ORF) and the early broadcast company RAVAG.

• Filarchiv Austria
The archive was used for to review historical films about bells.

The archival research resulted in over 1800 written records and photographs about bells. The relevant sources have been transcribed and translated into English. The historical records from the archives provided not only information about technical aspects of bells. Especially records about the First World War consisted of rich emotional vocabulary (Rosenwein, 2015, p. 6). Not only the correspondence between the parishes and the different agencies and institutions were filled with emotions but also the official announcements involved the appeal to emotions. For this reason, this data within the chapter becomes very important. In the presentation of the archival material, written archival records will be given a lot of space. Not only short extracts will be presented but whole letters or correspondences. This should allow the data to ‘speak for itself’ even though a contextualisation is always needed. The in-depth presentation of sources should allow the reader to not only grasp the ‘tone’ of the language used in the different sources as well as be given an insight into the experiences of past generations but also to spot recurrent topics of aspects, which should help to give the analysis an additional layer.
2.5 Oral History Approach and Interviews

I have conducted semi-structured biographical interviews. The interviews were based on people’s life experiences and a questionnaire was used to cover different topics. The different topics for the interviews occurred after the first analysis of the historical data. The historical sources informed the questionnaire but did not determine it. The questions were designed open to create new avenues. This should allow participants to articulate their thoughts as well as explore their own topics. My interest in the field was quite broad. I had an idea of possible groups I wanted to interview. I started with three groups: sextons, priests, and people from the general public. In order to produce a questionnaire three pilot interviews were conducted with a representative from each of one of my chosen groups. Based on the pilot interviews a selection of topics and potential interview partners had been made.

After getting my interview framework ethically approved, I started to approach potential interviewees. The interviews were conducted in Summer 2016 (June until September) with another field trip in Summer 2017 (July). Conducting reference interviews checked if new topics came up and if the research had reached a degree of saturation.

The interviewees were approached through local archives and museums. I received a list with possible volunteers and called them to ask for an interview and provided general information about my research. Most of the time the volunteers proposed other people, which led to interesting testimonies. The participants were born in lower to middle class households. In total 41 people were interviewed and the volunteers were born between 1914 and 1987.

The interviews with sextons were mostly about ringing schedules and their work of maintaining the church and which tasks are involved especially in regard to bells. Priests were interviewed as voices of authority. The most interesting accounts came from the general public. This group was interviewed about their memories and personal relationship to bells. Additionally, one interview was conducted in the capital city of Vorarlberg. One interview was conducted with the retired CEO of the last bell foundry in Austria. Some interviews were more informative than others and the research wasn’t based on conventional sampling methods. To give an example, the interview with the bell founder whilst interesting, provided some information about the decision making of bells. However, it did not fit the format of the thesis I was developing. For this reason, it
was rather used as complementary information. Another interview was conducted with a retired employee from the Austrian Broadcast Corporation in Vienna who was involved in the broadcasting of bells on the radio and one with a retired employee from the provincial Broadcast Station of Vorarlberg who was also responsible for providing the bell recordings for broadcast. There was no one willing to give an interview that was against or disliked bells, and the only critical account emphasised that he personally has no problem with bells. Critical accounts were only accessible through informal conversations and were used to contextualise the positive accounts about bells.

Having artificial interview settings to a certain degree could not be avoided. Most interviews were conducted within the social setting of people’s homes. This gave me also an insight into the different private lives of my volunteers. Although the topic was more about the general attachment and meaning of bells, which was considered as low-risk, I was mindful of ethical concerns and especially older people had often emotionally charged memories. Sometimes the seemingly unpolitical questions about bells led to trigger unprocessed trauma from the Second World War. In order to protect the identity of my participants most of the names of the volunteers were changed. It was the first time being interviewed by an academic for most of the people, however some of the interviewees already participated in local oral history projects. Most of the interviews were conducted at living room tables and some interviews were made during the working hours of the interviewees, which made the recording of the interviews sometimes challenging. Most of the older interviewees used memory aids (mostly pictures) and one interview was based on a personal memoir about bells. I took notes during the interviews for follow up questions. After the interviews I immediately wrote up reflections about the interviews.

There was also an interest into my person and people were surprised that someone conducted the research who was not from their villages, as well as the intergenerational aspect to talk to a young researcher.

Research is never isolated from influences from outside, and conducting an interview always means an intervention into people’s narratives. To give an example, on the day I started my research the United Kingdom voted for leaving the European Union. I mention this because this event has influenced my field trip insofar as it was always a topic in the conversations, more so because I am an Austrian who was doing a PhD in the UK. Interviewees wanted some firsthand information. This might have impacted the
general outcome of the interviews because it led people to reflect on their own sense of belonging to something like the European Union.

Most interviewees spoke in their local dialect. The interviews have been transcribed in full length, however only selected parts have been translated from German into English. Some interviews will be presented as case studies. This should help to portray the people behind their accounts, which should help to give their personalities more depth. In general, attempts were made to preserve the interviewees’ ductus of speech to give the participants their own voice.

2.6 Listening and Sonic Methods

An ethnography of sound aims not only to describe people’s experience of sound but also reflects on one’s own auditory perception as well as using sound as research tool. An ethnography of sound is dedicated to what Les Back and Michael Bull have termed “deep listening”. The authors state:

The kind of listening we envision is not straightforward, not self-evident – it is not easy listening. Rather, we have to work toward what might be called agile listening and this involves attuning our ears to listen again to the multiple layers of meaning potentially embedded in the same sound. More than this, deep listening involves practices of dialogue and procedures for investigation, transposition and interpretation (Bull and Back, 2003, p. 3-4).

In his edited volume *The Routledge Companion to Sound Studies* Bull (2018) sets out to contest his own notion of deep listening to ask not only what it means to listen but furthermore, “when we listen what is it that we hear” (Bull, 2018, p. xix).

To give an example that is relevant for the thesis, a reconstruction of past auditory experiences is always informed and shaped through our “modern ears” (Bull, 2018, p. xx). Listening needs to be situated within a particular historical setting with its need for careful contextualisation. Furthermore, listening approaches within sound studies are mainly informed by thinkers of the avant-garde. Within the thesis the focus is not on a concentrated focused listening but rather on everyday listening, which is seen as a both cognitive and physical act and always in relation with its environments. Additionally, the focus on listening in the Austrian countryside is not informed by an anti-urbanist sentiment that favours ‘natural sounds’ over ‘urban noise’. Instead, its focus is on what is
it that we hear when listening to different places. What these examples show is that “practices of listening need to be culturally and historically situated” (Bull, 2018, p. xxix), which is the main aim of listening within the thesis. Listening will occur in several aspects, but it is not a dominant mode of work. Listening will not be conceptualised in an essentialist way but as practices of listening that call for contextualisation. This means listening to bells is historical, cultural, and individualized in ways which sound studies do not adequately address. For example, the historical meaning is not reducible to individual listening. For this reason, there will be listening but not everything will be filtered through the act of listening. The different practices of listening will be articulated in different ways throughout the chapters.

I want to position my own listening practice in the field as a form of “phonographic method” (Gallagher and Prior, 2014). According to political scientist Michael Gallagher and human geographer Jonathan Prior, phonographic methods are useful for “highlighting hidden or marginal aspects of places and their inhabitants” (Gallagher and Prior, 2014, p. 268). Phonographic methods not only focus on recording but also on listening (playback), editing and mediation, with a special emphasis on performance (this could include broadcasting or installations). However, the methods still acknowledge the importance of the written word. Gallagher and Prior propose that a
descriptive, poetic and creative form of writing about sound can provide insightful and evocative interpretations, [...] written words can furnish contextual details about recording, location, sound sources, microphone positions and so on (Gallagher and Prior, 2014, p. 270).

Phonographic methods are not only understood as working with field recordings but to engage with the researcher’s own auditory experience within the field. As mentioned before, this was mainly achieved through field diaries and notes taken that tried to capture how sounds have been perceived in the field. This helped to reflect on one’s own personal experience as well as to better understand how the auditory experience of the participants is embedded within their everyday lives.
Presented as follows are some examples from the field diary. This should help to further introduce the field in a sensorial way, as well as challenges that occurred within the field. The description is a paraphrasing of the different notes.
24/06/2016  
I've started to listen carefully to the bells and it is really interesting that you can almost hear bells everywhere. But what's really noisy is the motorbikes, surprisingly lots of heavy machinery is audible, lots of Harley Davidsons or motorbikes that are strong and therefore produce a distinct sound. They are everywhere. No one complains about the motorbikes, which is interesting, maybe it's another sacred sound. The motorbikes also bring money. Another sound which is everywhere is the sound of the leaf blower, it is the time where farmers are busy working on the meadows so sounds of different machinery is everywhere. The countryside is anything other than quite at the moment.

25/06/2016  
Today I heard weather ringing for the first time. I have tried to record it but the quality is very poor because of the sound of raindrops on my umbrella. I also met a German hiker who was walking through the Alps. He has been walking every day since May and his tour started in Italy and ends up in France. I don't know why he is doing that but he said he was in the office on Friday and on Monday he started his journey. He described his journey as poor in stimuli. He said, you have a beautiful landscape but you don't have any other stimuli. He enjoys listening to bells and for him the visual impression gets completed with the sounds of the bells.

26/06/2016  
When I listen to the bells at high noon outside my hotel the bells have an interesting polyphony. I'm able to locate every bell around the valley, it is only one bell that is used at high noon which makes the locating of the bells easier and also the polyphony, they all are differently tuned, they ring together in polyphony.

First, I intended to use field recordings as a research tool. This related to John Levack Drever's (2002) call to reposition soundscape compositions as ethnography. Jacqueline Waldock (2016) writes, “it is more accurate to see soundscape composition either as an ethnographic tool or as producing an ethnographic gaze” (Waldock, 2016, p. 158). After making different recordings in the field I encountered the limitations of sound recordings for my particular research aim. I discovered that the recording reveals more about the person who recorded it, rather than the place it was recorded in. Isobel Anderson and Tullis Rennie support this observation according to them, field recordings are not objective documents of the sound environment but “subjective, expressive, meaningful and personal to the recordist” (Anderson and Rennie, 2016, p. 222). Different scholars acknowledge the benefits of sound recordings for representations beyond the text (Cox, Irving and Wright, 2016). However, for my research I decided to use recordings complementary to my field notes as tools for reflection within the fieldwork.
Another method that had been used for interviews was écoute réactivée. This method, invented by Jean François Augoyard uses environmental sound as a stimulus for the communication in interviews. It should help the conversational partner to talk about their personal experiences (Winkler, 1995). Anthropologist and science and technology scholar Anna Harris (2015) suggests that non-musical sounds are beneficial to trigger memories and stories that might otherwise be difficult to describe or remember. She describes the method of eliciting sound memories as following:

[T]he researcher does not ask questions directly of the respondent but instead seeks his or her thoughts on a given practice, event, or issue through the use of materials or places connected with it (Harris, 2015, p. 20).

After making good experiences with elicitation strategies during my Masters thesis I tried to use sound again in my interviews. The Austrian Broadcast Corporation provided sound recordings of bells. I used these recordings in the interview and played the participants recordings from their village bells. After trying to use these recordings during the fieldwork I encountered certain limitations. First there was a lack of articulation around sound, people were not used to describing their experiences through sound. The interviewees described the sound rather than associating thoughts with it. This might have been due to the very characteristic of bell sounds. In order to create associations, bells, seen as something like iconic sounds, might be too well known. After the first rejections from interviewees I stopped using the sound recordings. It seemed that asking questions and the sound of the voice triggered more associations than the actual recording of the bell.

An interesting aspect of the interview recordings was that many recordings had captured bell sounds in the background, however the interviewees never referred to the bells. This phenomenon highlighted to the artificial interview setting and that the volunteers were focused on the conversation rather than the sounds in the background.

2.7 Exhibition as Form of Fieldwork

The thesis not only aimed to create a representation through text but also experiment with more practice-led approaches in particular with exhibitions. The Vorarlberg Museum in Bregenz commissioned an exhibition and I was using this chance to not only
present the first findings but also to use the exhibition as a research tool to generate data.

Rupert Cox, Andrew Irving and Christopher Wright pointed out that museums can be used as laboratory sites “where various elements are brought together into relation with each other in a transformative process of generating new phenomena and new knowledge” (Cox, Irving and Wright, 2016, p. 3-4). Exhibitions help to create experimental ethnographic contexts, which, “links the realms of sensory perception, aesthetic appreciation and the operation of technology in describing cultural otherness, [...]” (Cox, Irving and Wright, 2016, p. 4).

The exhibition was about the removal of bells during the First World War and in order to somehow translate the otherness of the past it was decided to create a VR-experience to focus on sensory perception, as well as providing some aesthetic appreciation. The process of creating the VR-experience will be described in chapter seven. The exhibition and opening speech were used as a first presentation of my findings and at the same time as a resource for gaining more data. For this reason, questionnaires had been deposited at the exhibition space and more than 200 forms were returned. The questionnaires were used to describe the VR-experience and how the visitors perceived it. In this way the exhibition was not only used as a tool for representation but also to create a field in itself.

The research design outlined in this chapter described how an ethnography of sound is conceptualised within this thesis. Using a mixed method approach enables using sound and focusing on sound on many different levels. Sound is not only the object of research, but also the guiding force that informs the research design. Accessing a range of resources should provide a better understanding of how sound is sensed with the body and what role bells play for people’s sense of place as well as their sense of self and community.

Within this thesis, the aim of describing the meaning of bells within cultural and historical changes was best achieved through ‘conventional’ methods of archival research, text and discourse analysis or interviews. This showed that using sound and the sonic has its limitations. However, it is not the case that sonic methods have been left out. They were rather used as complementary methods.
The method of field recording could have been facilitated more for the use of representation. I have used field recordings for other projects as a tool for representation (Felfer, 2019) but decided to present some of my field diary entries instead within the thesis. Not emphasizing sound as representation also correlated with the decision to not pursue a "soundscape" approach. I did not intend to describe a soundscape but rather emphasise the experience of the people. Additionally, soundscape does not cover mediation or the historical nature of bells which will be addressed in my research.

A permanent loop between fieldwork and analysis should provide a critical approach and assists in readjusting the theoretical framework in order to better describe the findings. The sources used will be presented within the chapters. This should allow the reader to draw a connection between the sources used and conclusions made and it should help to make the methods used within the chapters more transparent.
3. “The Bell’s Journey to War”\textsuperscript{4} – Sound, Bells and War

3.1 Emotions and the Negotiation of the Auditory Space in the First World War

“I can hear the bullets outside,
The ringing is no more delight,
My boys from home,
Will not be alone,
I’m going now away,
To become a cannon today!”\textsuperscript{5}

This verse was written on a bell with chalk. The bell was seized during the First World War in Austria. The poem illustrates how words connect sound (bells) with war and emotions. This is shown when the bullets can be heard outside and the sound of the bell transforms into a canon. The verse highlights the connection between sound and war and a link can be found with sound and emotions when the feelings of the bell change. Additionally, a relationship between sound and the community can be seen. Bells were traditionally important for a community because they defined the local space and symbolised a sense of protection. The following verse states "boys from home, will not be alone, I’m going now away". It can be argued that in times of crisis the bells supported the community in a different form by being turned into cannons. This can be understood as an expression of sound in connection to emotions and space because the bells as local symbols are turned into objects of a ‘national identity’. In this sense, the verse covers the main aspects of this chapter. It is about changes in the auditory space, the connection of sound and space and how this connection is loaded with emotional meaning.

Bells are often connected with peace\textsuperscript{6} however, they also have a close connection with conflict, war and crisis. The Old English word “bell(e)” described as “loud noise” originally comes from the Latin word "Bellum" meaning war (Schafer, 2010, p. 102). “Loud noises” and “war” can be seen as interruptive moments in our lives. This chapter

\textsuperscript{4} Heading from the newspaper \textit{Vorarlberger Volksblatt} from 12 September 1916.
\textsuperscript{5} \textit{Bludenzer Anzeiger}, 2 September 1916.
\textsuperscript{6} The peace bell foundation lists different bells that are dedicated towards peace and freedom bells. Available at: https://peacebellfoundation.org/peace/peace-bells-around-the-world (Accessed: 6 May 2020).
illustrates how the silencing of church bells can also be seen as an interruption. Bells not only connect with war but similarities can be found in bell and ammunition material, making bells desired items for warfare.

Corbin explains that artillery commanders held the rights over bells of the towns they conquered. This resulted in the confiscation of their enemies’ bells for war purposes. On some occasions the bells would be resold back to the besieged communities (Corbin, 1999, p. 8). The Habsburg Empire followed a different approach by using bells from their own territories to support the shortage of warfare supplies. This demonstrates how state intervention was the driving force behind the requisition of bells. The state emerged in the eighteenth century and came into full impact at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The following chapter focuses on the correlation between place, sound, and emotions. It demonstrates how bells were used to negotiate ideas of ‘belonging’ through emotions and links the transformation from bell to gunmetal with aspects of warfare. The chapter reviews the scale of resources needed during The Great War and highlights how the War, which is often linked to ‘modern warfare’, or ‘industrial war’ was driven by emotional discourses.

This chapter consists of five sections and the first section is split into three parts. The first part identifies the structure of the Empire and its political entities. A description of the relationship between the Empire and Catholic Church is then made and finally, through the use of newspapers, the province Vorarlberg is introduced. The section highlights Vorarlberg’s different political voices and its position within the Empire.

The second section focuses on “emotional vocabulary” (Rosenwein, 2015, p. 6) used in writings during the First World War and the importance of the word ‘sacrifice’ is discussed. The section explains how sacrifice for the Great War affected the everyday life of the public. The feelings involved in these sacrifices will be made visible. Furthermore, village petitions that reflect the public’s attachment to their seized bells will be shown. They highlight the public’s connection to the local place through their bells. Overall, this section will reveal the embodied and material sacrifices made by communities through the seizing of bells in World War One. The third section takes a closer look at the
position of the press during World War One. Special attention is given to the Catholic newspaper Vorarlberger Volksblatt for its coverage on the removing of bells. The fourth section continues to use newspaper reports as a source of reference as they highlight the demise of the Empire after the second wave of bell removals. The section then shows written responses from the Empire about the saving of bells and the efforts made by Vorarlberg’s stakeholders to save their bells is revealed. The final section provides a brief comparison of the seizing of bells during World War One and Two. Additionally, the power of the church in regard to the seizures is explored.

The two main sources for this chapter are newspapers and archival material from Vorarlberg. They show correspondences between the villages and the church administration and amongst those officials. The sources will be examined for their “emotional vocabulary” (Rosenwein 2015, p. 6). This means I aim to discover words that describe an emotional attachment towards bells, therefore, they should reveal the conflict around the different understandings of a sense of belonging.

The requisition of bells in the Great War is mentioned in numerous chronicles. However, the event has not received an in-depth historical examination in regard to the province Vorarlberg. Historian Matthias Rettenwanders’ (2005) scholarly analysis will be a reference point for the chapter. He explores the seizing of bells for the province of Tyrol but he does not cover Vorarlberg. Additionally, Historian Claire Morelon’s (2019) recent article publication about the seizing of bells in the Habsburg Empire places a focus on the former Bohemia and does not mention Vorarlberg. Morelon’s article presents similarities to my findings, which I will acknowledge and refer to within the chapter.

Rettenwanders’ study describes the involvement of the church during World War One but he does not focus on the sound of the bells or the emotions they evoke. Furthermore, Morelon’s article focuses on a province that was less religious than Vorarlberg. Religious faith was considered a part of Vorarlberg’s identity, however, the removing of the bells will reveal how the public’s attachment to the local place was stronger than their alliance with religious establishments.

Numerous chronicles within the Vorarlberg collection from the Vorarlberger Landesbibliothek mention the seizing of bell during World War One.
3.2 Austria-Hungary – Dual Monarchy as “Multinational State” and the Many Feelings of Belonging

To understand the event of the seizing of bells and the different layers of communication that surrounded it, the structure of the Empire and its different political entities must be explained first.

Before World War I, Austria-Hungary was one of the largest political entities in mainland Europe, from Tyrol (where Vorarlberg was included) in the west, to Ukraine in the east (Llewelly and Thompson, 2017).


During the eighteenth century, Habsburg rulers implemented a set of administrative reforms to forge a state (Judson, 2016, 2017). By mapping geographies, counting people and numbering houses, the rulers aimed to create a more effective and centralised state. Alongside these measurements, the population of the Empire was reconceptualised from subjects to citizens. The aim was to diminish the power of local nobles and strengthen the position of the Empire under one ruler. After the Austro-Prussian War, in 1866, the Austrian Empire signed the *Ausgleich* (Compromise) with Hungary to create a dual

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monarchy. Each part of the dual monarchy functioned as its own state with its own constitution, government and independent parliament and used its own currency (although each currency was accepted amongst the different parts of the Empire). Both shared an integrated army and a common foreign policy as well as a shared common customs policy and foreign trade. The authorities responsible for administering both states were called k.u.k (Mutschlechner, no date a b; Stevens- Arroyo, 2015). Anthony Stevens-Arroyo states: “Technically there was not one country by the name of Austria-Hungary […] “ (Stevens-Arroyo, 2015, p.103-4). The law required all documents to be published in their official languages: German, Hungarian, Czech, Polish, Croatian, Slovene and Ukrainian (Stevens-Arroyo, 2015, p.103-4).

Austria-Hungary was created as a multinational state under one monarch, Emperor Franz Josef (Stevens-Arroyo, 2015, p. 102). The Empire went by many different names; it was called Austria-Hungary, Dual Monarchy, The Habsburg Monarchy, the Habsburg Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Empire (Healy, 2004, p. 15).

The Austrian half of the Empire was unofficially named “Cisleithania” and consisted of different provinces called crownlands. These crownlands spanned across Austria and parts of Croatia, Italy, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Romania and Ukraine. The Hungarian part was referred to as “Transleithania” and comprised of Hungary, Slavonia and parts of Croatia and Romania. Bosnia and Herzegovina belonged to neither of the two states and was administered by the joint Ministry of Finance and treated as a colony (Mutschlechner, no date b).

The Dual Monarchy was comprised of three government layers. The first layer consisted of two separate supranational parliaments, one in Vienna called, Reichsrat and one in Budapest called, Reichstag. The next layer, for the Austrian half of the Empire, was on a ‘national’ level. Each territory or crown land had its own ‘provincial’ parliament (Landtag), which was represented in the Reichsrat, through a governor called Landespräsident or Statthalter. Each crown land functioned as administrative authority. The last layer was made up of the municipal governments who were members of their

9 Which meant territory this side of the river Leitha, which was the historical border between Austria and Hungary.
10 Historical name for Slovenia and the northern parts of Croatia.
Pieter M. Judson points out that the different territories of the Empire largely functioned independently, with their own laws, institutions and administrative traditions (Judson, 2016). For this reason the political nationalism in Austria-Hungary could be seen:

as a product of imperial structures and regional traditions, not as sui generis expression of transhistorical ethnic groups the way that nineteenth-century activists argued. [...] Concepts of nationhood and ideas of the Empire depended on each other for their coherence. As intertwined subjects, they developed in dialogue with each other, rather than as binary opposites (Judson 2016, p. 9).

The ‘state’ was a tangled apparatus of municipal, provincial, state and imperial institutions. This entanglement was the reason why Maureen Healy highlighted: “Austria lacked a coherent Staatsidee – a unifying idea of state – that would emotionally bind disparate peoples to the multi-national, dynastic polity.” (Healy, 2004, p. 14). She elaborates by stating:

Residents of Vienna spoke and wrote of a state (Staat), a fatherland (Vaterland) and of a constituting half of an Empire (Reichshälfte), but they did not consider refugees from the eastern part of this half to be Austrians (Österreicher) (Healy, 2014, p. 1).

This indicates that people from the different territories within the Dual-Monarchy did not define each other as the “same” people. This lack of a collective identity was not only created by the people living within the different territories but also promoted by governmental agents who characterised people under different categories.

Judson points out that:

At the dawn of the twentieth century, the insistence that all people belonged to ethnic or national communities must be understood partly as a product of political work accomplished by nationalist activists. It was also, however, a product of the ways agents of the Empire categorized its diverse peoples in order to govern them more effectively (Judson, 2016, p. 10).

The Austrian-Hungarian monarchy cannot be simply described as a doomed Empire in terms of rising nationalism (Judson, 2017, p. 4). The imprecise definition of the state became too problematic to sustain a “supranational” Empire (Healy, 2014, p. 15).
The First World War and the removing of bells is of special interest for the dual-monarchy, because these events portray a more nuanced picture of the ‘fall’ of the Habsburg Empire. I will demonstrate how the requisition of bells and mobilisation of war efforts reveals the different emotional communities that existed within the Empire. I will show how the Austrian-Hungarian Empire struggled to create a unifying sense of belonging during World War One.

3.3 The Role of the Church within the Empire

Patrick Houlihan (2015) states:

At the turn of the twentieth century, the Catholic throne-and-altar alliance was alive and well in Austria-Hungary; indeed, the Habsburg Empire was the most Catholic of the Great Powers (Houlihan, 2015, p. 21).

Historically, the church played an important role within the Empire. Austria-Hungary was united more through religion than language. As Anthony Stevens-Arroyo points out, the Empire was “offering itself as a defender of Christianity against Ottoman persecution” (Stevens-Arroyo, 2015, p. 104).

The Empire was not only a multinational society but also multi-confessional. The ‘Austrian half’ of the Empire, which is relevant for this thesis, comprised of Uniate Catholics, Greek Orthodox, Protestants and Jews. Furthermore, the parts where the German speaking population was the dominant group, the overwhelming majority was Roman Catholic (Cole, 2003).

The hegemony of Catholicism and Monarchy was established during the Counter-Reformation. Ferdinand II helped ensure Catholicism became the all-pervasive ideology. This alliance helped to establish control over every aspect of social life of the community. Priests were responsible for birth and marriage registers, which provided the Monarchy with a valuable source of demographic data (Pörtner, 2001).

The connection between Empire and Church pervaded almost every aspect of life. This was not only religious life but also public life, such as education. In 1774, the Archduchess of Austria and Queen of Hungary, Maria Theresa, established general education requirements for children. The historian Judson writes, that the aim of this
education was,

to provide the peasantry the requisite moral and economic training to become productive and orderly members of society, but she [Maria Theresa] did not want to give them so much education that they themselves might question the order of religion and state (Judson, 2016, p. 40).

Most teachers for the newly established primary schools were clerks and this secured “the role of the church in determining the content for education as well as the Habsburg’s broader institutional relationship to the church in the eighteenth century” (Judson, 2016, p. 40).

However, during this period Maria Theresa, and later her son Joseph II, additionally implemented reforms that gradually regulated the church and placed it under state supervision. An additional occurrence that challenged the monopoly of the Catholic Church was the Patent of Toleration, which was issued by Joseph II in 1781. The document granted equal rights to Catholics and non-Catholics in regard to economic, civil, religious and educational matters. However the Catholic Church still retained considerable privileges compared to the other religions (Valdés, 1997; Judson, 2016).

At first glance, it can be argued that this development fits within the process of the constant decline of religion and aligns with the modernisation of societies. However, it has been argued that this is not the case. Historian Laurence Cole, who researched the history of the Habsburg Empire, argues that so-called ‘Josephism’ did not break with the power of the church but rather, “represented an alliance between state and Catholic reformers, both of whom acknowledged the central place of the church in society as a whole” (Cole, 2003, p. 300). Bishops were automatically granted seats in the Herrenhaus (House of Lords), as well as in the provincial diets (Cole, 2003, p. 300).

In the nineteenth century, after the Ausgleich, a process of secularisation and religious revival found its stage within the “culture wars”. The clash was between Liberals and the Catholic Church who disagreed over civil marriages and schooling (Clark and Kaiser, 2003, p. 11). The Liberals’ political agenda dismantled the church’s privileged position on marriage, religious freedoms and schools, bringing the church under state control more than ever before (Cole, 2003, p. 290). However, in the battle of mass support

11 The umbrella term of the reforms of Joseph II.
Catholics often outperformed Liberals, especially in rural areas (Clark and Kaiser, 2003, p. 6).

The outbreak of the First World War was used in favour of the Catholic Church. Historian Matthias Rettenwander (2005) highlights in his book Der Krieg als Seelsorge (The war as pastoring) the involvement of the Catholic Church within the First World War. According to Rettenwander, the church claimed the outbreak of the war was a punishment from God because people had forgotten their saviour and religious duties. Therefore the war was seen as righteous and framed as “holy” to test people’s faith and patriotism. After the outbreak, people sought moral support and guidance. This led to a surge of people attending religious services and pilgrimages. The Church interpreted this phenomenon as a revival of faith and seized the opportunity for “religious mobilisation” (Rettenwander, 2005, p. 99). People from different social and political backgrounds came together to pray and this was seen as proof of a religious revival.

Even though, as Rettenwalder argues, the seeking of moral support was based on traditional “folk-beliefs” this change in behaviour in August 1914 was seen as proof of a turning point (Rettenwander, 2005, p. 102). The church claimed to observe a moral decay in public behaviour prior to World War One at the time of the “culture wars”. The public’s return to God at the outbreak of war strengthened the church’s position within the Empire and it was seen as proof of their assessments about the war.

3.4 Vorarlberg’s Loyalty to Emperor and Religious Territory

Prior to the eighteenth century, the west of Austria consisted of many dynasties with each possessing its own political administrative rights. Due to Maria Theresa’s state reforms, many dynasties were clustered together to form an administrative unity. This led to the establishment of the province Vorarlberg. Vorarlberg became an administrative entity under the crown land of Tyrol (Barney, 1988, p. 35). The purpose of the Habsburg’s administrative reforms was to forge a centralised state. It can be argued that this led to the formation of different ‘national’ territories and the creation of a collective sense of belonging within the various provinces.

In 1805, the Habsburg Empire lost the war to France (one of many losses during this time). This led to an ally of France, Bavaria, ruling over Vorarlberg from 1806 to 1814. In
1814 Vorarlberg reunited with the Habsburg Empire. This period revealed the people’s loyalty to their Emperor and showed the strong alliance between church and throne. Their joy found its expression with decorated houses and celebrations, which were accompanied by processions, mass and the ringing of church bells for many hours (Barney, 1988, p. 104).

The nineteenth century was essential in establishing a sense of belonging for the territory of Vorarlberg. Historian Markus Barney (1988) states in his book *Die Erfindung des Vorarlbergers*, that the years after 1848/49 were crucial in developing a *Landesbewusstsein* (sense of identity), which framed a self-understanding in the people who resided in this territory. Important ‘institutions’ were created, like the establishment of local newspapers, the founding of the chamber of commerce in 1850 (*Handelskammer*) and the creation of the *Landesmuseumsverein* in 1857 (historical society). The aim of these institutions was not to disconnect from the Empire but to create and promote an identity (way of being), which would distinguish the province of Vorarlberg from the crown land of Tyrol. The different institutions worked to ‘create’ a different way of being, which was evident through their independent history and economy. Vorarlberg was one of the most industrialised territories in the Monarchy but most of its citizens defined themselves as rural Catholics anchored within a peasant tradition (Pichler, 2015, p. 12). This view was predominantly promoted by liberal elites, industrials and academics, whereas the citizens of the countryside in Vorarlberg did not contribute to these political efforts. In 1861, these occurrences led to the formation of the provincial diet (*Landtag*) (Barney, 1988, p. 154). The diet was a provincial parliament, which gave Vorarlberg control over its own agriculture, forestry and public buildings. Additionally, the diet sent two representatives from Vorarlberg to the *Reichsrat* in Vienna. However, administrative authority of the province was managed by the *Statthalterei* (prefecture) in Tyrol until 1918.

In Vorarlberg people defined themselves as not only loyal to the Emperor but also devout Catholics. The conservative Catholic newspaper *Vorarlberger Volksfreund* titled the outbreak of the First World War as “a fight against non-Christians” (quoted in Barney, 1988, p. 314).

After the outbreak of the war Vorarlberg’s piety increased. The *Vorarlberger Volksfreund* writes on 6 September 1914:
After the recent war events in the last few weeks, the population has become pleasantly serious. Everywhere, no matter where you go, you can witness that churches and religious services are busier than they have ever been (quoted in Pichler, 2015, p. 126).

Vorarlberg’s churches saw the outbreak of World War One as a “righteous war” and many “war prayers/devotions” and blessings were organised by the church. The churches in Vorarlberg had a strong connection to the Habsburgs but due to the church’s close relations with people in the different parishes, the local priests soon realised the flaws of the war (Schallert, 1975, p. 147). This realisation made the removing of the bells a battleground amongst the various emotional communities.

This brief description of the Empire and its different ‘powers’ highlights the important aspects linked to the requisition of church bells in Vorarlberg during the First World War. The previous section has explained how the ‘state’ was made up of different institutions and administrative authorities, which shaped an understanding or image of ‘the Empire’ and its different ‘nations’. In this sense it can be said that the Empire was shaped through administrative reforms into a multinational state and this formation assisted in the creation of different ‘nationalities’.

Local communities used imperial structures to promote and influence their own understanding of a sense of belonging. Furthermore, religion as a ‘moral compass’ was not only important for the rulers of the Empire but the church. The church was granted special powers and authority and this played an important role in the everyday life of local communities. These occurrences can be seen in the province of Vorarlberg.

Vorarlbergers were loyal to the Emperor and devout Roman Catholics, they also formed their own image and identity after the establishment of their different institutions.

3.5 Newspapers and the Political Voices in Vorarlberg

Newspapers, as asserted by historian and political scientist Benedict Anderson (1983, 2006), play a pivotal role in the creation of an “imagined community”. Anderson describes the act of reading a newspaper as a “mass ceremony” because of its “almost precisely simultaneous consumption” (Anderson 1983, 2006, p. 35). He goes on to write:

It is performed in silent privacy, in the lair of the skull. Yet each communicant
is well aware that the ceremony he performs is being replicated simultaneously by thousands (or millions) of others of whose existence he is confident, yet of whose identity he has not the slightest notion (Anderson 1983, 2006, p. 35).

Although Anderson's concept highlights the rise of nationalism and how a sense of nationhood is created, it can also be used to understand how the Empire became an imagined state. The various newspapers in the Habsburg Empire acted as voices of different emotional communities.

Newspapers are a good source to understand how the Empire was imagined in Vorarlberg because they represent the different voices of political powers. An examination on the coverage around bells suggests that Vorarlberg's different newspapers promoted their own emotional communities.

The developments of the press in Vorarlberg during the nineteenth century were strongly linked with the rise of the different political powers. By the end of the nineteenth century, the political landscape in Vorarlberg consisted of three camps. The most popular and a stronghold in Vorarlberg were the conservative Catholics. Their ideology was in alignment with the Empire and they promoted loyalty to the Emperor and Church (Pichler, 2015, p. 25).

The second ‘camp’ was called the liberals. Liberal party members were bourgeoisie who initially promoted a liberal republican political agenda. They gained popularity during the 1860s, however, over time the party agenda became more nationalist. By the end of the nineteenth century the liberals promoted a German-nationalist ideology, which aimed to secure a privileged position for the German speaking population within the Empire. More radical supporters of this agenda sought a unification of the Empire with Germany (Pichler, 2015, p. 23).

The third ‘camp’ was a minority group in Vorarlberg, and they were called Social Democrats. During the party’s formation period, at the end of the nineteenth century, Social Democrats were monitored by Vorarlberg’s authorities. They were hindered and penalised because of their political stance of granting more powers to the working class. Most of the followers of this movement were found in towns, whereas in the rural areas Social Democrat supporters were almost non-existent (Pichler, 2015).
Each political power had its own newspaper as its official voice to reach the public (Nägele, 1970). At the dawn of the First World War Vorarlberg published two daily newspapers, the conservative Catholic Vorarlberger Volksblatt and the official gazette of the Vorarlberger government Vorarlberger Landes-Zeitung, these were the two most popular newspapers. Vorarlberg’s three regional newspapers covered the areas of Feldkirch, Bregenz, and Bludenz-Monafon and they were published once or twice a week. The liberals used the Vorarlberger Volskfreund newspaper as their main publication publishing three times a week, whilst the Social Democrats used the Vorarlberger Wacht, which only published once a week (Wanner, 2014, p. 35).

The different political opinions promoted in the newspapers are evident when looking at the coverage of bells. It was also interesting comparing the different number of entries about bells between political camps. Although the newspapers were founded at different times, the amount of entries gives some sort of clue about the significance of bells between the camps.

The Vorarlberger Landes-Zeitung was founded in 1863. It was used for official announcements and the voice of its political powers were loyal to the Emperor (Wannner, 2014, p. 41-4). ANNO, the database of newspapers from the Austrian National library, lists 467 entries about bells from 1863 to 1913 (52 between 1910 and 191312) in the Vorarlberger Landes-Zeitung. The stories cover the casting of new bells in Vorarlberg to the customs linked to the bells. The newspaper also reports on the bell ringing that occurred to commemorate the death of Pope Pius X13 and the assassination of the heir to the throne, Franz Ferdinand 14.

The conservative Catholic newspaper Vorarlberger Volksblatt referred to bells the most and was founded in 1890. There are 1041 entries about bells in ANNO from 1890 and 1913 (132 between 1910 and 1913). The newspaper promoted “absolute loyalty to the Emperor” (Wanner, 2014, p. 41) and the editors of the newspaper consisted of Empire loyalists and priests.

12 To compare a defined timeframe it used the year of foundation of the last newspaper 1910 until 1913 a year before the outbreak of World War One.
13 ANNO: Vorarlberger Landeszeitung, 21 August 1914, p. 3.
14 ANNO: Vorarlberger Landeszeitung, 06 July 1914, p. 3.
Before the outbreak of the Great War the Vorarlberger Volksblatt wrote about the casting of new bells and their ringing for special occasions, such as weddings. The newspaper highlighted that bell ringing is an expression of a collective emotion. This is particularly evident in its coverage on the assassination of the heir to the throne. Furthermore, the Vorarlberger Volksblatt reported on bell ringing across the Empire being an expression of collective grief for the loss of its leader. This was not only mentioned once but continuously between 4 and 11 July 1914. The Vorarlberger Volksblatt also reported on the death of the heir Franz Ferdinand and Pope Pius X both were commemorated with bell ringing across the whole of Vorarlberg. During the First World War, after the first group of soldiers’ bodies were returned to Vorarlberg, the newspaper described bell ringing as a symbol of a collective loss amongst the different villages. The Catholic newspaper coverage on bell ringing not only forged a connection between the Empire and its people but it also portrayed an image of a Catholic Volk (people/nation). Corbin explains, that bells in this sense did not only serve to anchor people in “localism” (Corbin, 1999, p. 97) but they also connected the people to their wider communities.

Historian Richard Cullen Rath (2003) describes a similar portrayal when he writes about public noisemaking helping to connect communities. He states that, “bell ringing and public noisemaking in general connected folk to community and community to the imagined nation and the invisible realm of all spirit” (Rath, 2003, p. 50). Rath further explains that,

Instrumental sounds served local communities as much as they did an incipient British nationalism. [...] By the end of the sixteenth century, national unity began to be expressed by ringing bells on “crownation day” throughout all of England simultaneously. Across the country, the sounds of local bells marked the full extension of the nation. When they sounded a national identity into being by giving it a public hearing, their reasons were local and their own as well as national. They rang in the nation much like they rang in the years and the seasons. It was a way of belonging to something larger than the face-to-face community, whether that something was located in space, as was the nation, or in time, as was the calendar and the seasons (Rath 2003, p.51).

15 ANNO: Vorarlberger Volksblatt, 4 July 1914, p. 3; 5 July 1914, p. 1; 6 July 1914, p. 3; 8 July.1914, p. 2; 10 July 1914, p. 2; 11 July 1914, p. 2.
It seems that Benedict Anderson’s imagined community (1983, 2006) was not only established through vision and the reading of newspapers but also through sound and the listening to bells. Bell ringing in this sense created different imagined communities through the act of simultaneous listening. This also helped create different emotional communities.

The positive stance towards religion that can be found in the Vorarlberger Volksblatt differs substantially in the Social Democratic newspaper Vorarlberger Wacht. The newspaper was established later in 1910 and only had 13 entries about bells from its first publication until 1913. The newspaper Vorarlberger Wacht only had a few subscribers because the readers were considered to be working class and poor. Therefore, it was offered for free in pubs in order to reach a larger audience (Wanner, 2014, p. 42).

Vorarlberger Wacht was very critical about the church’s power in the Empire and bell ringing was used as a form of critique. This is demonstrated in the newspaper’s report about the unfair conditions of accessing electricity under the heading “more light”. The paper states:

[...] electrical light is apparently expensive, which means due to the need of saving money customers are forced to use candles or lanterns as light every morning and evening because the electricity is switched on too late. Obviously this regards the poorest class, who are forced to live in a dark flat or work in dark barns. [...] An exception is only made on request from the church, for example during this year’s mission when everything was lit up an hour longer in the morning and evening, so much that even the strongest unbelievers or someone from another religion wished that there would be mission all year long. [...] people from the electric company should get paid more in order to extend the time of the light and on the other hand the sexton can get paid less, which would release us from the unnecessary ringing of bells. We have the pleasure to hear in the morning between five and eight around 7 to 10 times the bells. Our local council seems to be more in with the church and that’s shown with the smallest religious occasion. [...] the church lives in luxury whereas our roads and streets are in terrible conditions [...]16

The newspaper also held a positive stance towards bells. It acknowledged an emotional attachment of the people to bells when writing about bell ringing in the mountains. The

16 ANNO: Vorarlberger Wacht, 11 June 1914, p. 5.
sound of the bells was promoted as a general right for the poor and hard working people\textsuperscript{17}.

The political camp of the Liberals was represented through the \textit{Vorarlberger Volksfreund} and \textit{Feldkircher Anzeiger} and both newspapers had low numbers of readers. The party’s German-nationalist agenda was promoted in the \textit{Vorarlberger Volksfreund}, which was founded in 1890. The newspapers content was anti-imperial, anti-semitic and although it acknowledged the religious notion of Vorarlberg, it was heavily critical of the church. This is shown in the entries from ANNO, the database lists 92 entries about bells from 1890 to 1913 (30 between 1910 and 1913). The \textit{Vorarlberger Volksfreund’s} mention of church bells was often linked to its attack of the church. This is shown in the newspapers report in 1910 about 15 minutes of bell ringing on the \textit{Katholikentag} (day of Catholics). The paper did not highlight how bell ringing gathered a diverse group of believers together on the day but instead it promoted a racist attack towards the attendees who spoke a different language to German.

The \textit{Katholikentag} on Friday evening at 6:45pm was introduced with 15 minutes of bell ringing. [...] Mainly churches, monasteries and pubs were decorated. Beside, that the decoration was little, a sign that the uninvited guests were not very welcome. It has to be noted that the majority of Catholics in Innsbruck did not take part in this ceremony. [...] Even though the local council promised to only speak German in the big city hall, the promise was ignored on the opening evening and speakers were talking in Polish and Czech languages. [...] What might the innocent German speaking audience have thought when hearing these hostile sibilants? Unfortunately, they could not hear the difference or see how these representatives from foreign-language \textit{Völker} (races) see themselves above other races [...]\textsuperscript{18}

During the outbreak of the First World War, the \textit{Vorarlberger Volksfreund} did not support the war however, this changed when Austria-Hungary joined in alliance with Germany. In relation to church bells, the \textit{Vorarlberger Volksfreund} did mention bell ringing as a commemoration of the heir to the throne. However, when writing about bell ringing for Pope Pius X the paper did not focus on his death and instead complained about the poor behaviour amongst the Catholic youth at the event.\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{17} ANNO: \textit{Vorarlberger Wacht}, 23 July 1914, p. 5-6.
\textsuperscript{19} ANNO: \textit{Vorarlberger Volksblatt}, 27 August 1914, p. 4.
3.6 Sacrifices as an Expression of Different Emotional Communities

The First World War produced a “war economy” that was driven by sacrifices. Austrian military historian, Manfred Rauchensteiner states in his book, *The First World War and the end of the Habsburg Monarchy*, “the conversion to a war economy required time and above all a considerable number of sacrifices” (Rauchensteiner, 2013, p. 201). These sacrifices altered many aspects of the everyday life of the people and this created visibility of the various emotional communities within the Empire. The term sacrifice was used as a tool to appeal to the feelings of the public. The word was central in aligning the people’s stance towards war and Empire, for whom they were asked to sacrifice their everyday lives. In order to promote sacrifices an important feature used was propaganda.

As military historian Stig Förster points out, “The Great War arguably was the first major armed conflict to be sustained by systematic propaganda.” (Förster and Chickering, 2000, p. 14) The Habsburg authorities did not have a well-coordinated propaganda programme and the promoting of patriotism was carried out more by the church (Healy, 2004, p. 126).

The Church had long been an essential pillar of support for the Habsburg dynasty, and its representatives in Vienna turned out to be excellent transmitters of propaganda during the war. (...) Early in the war, church attendance spiked (Healy, 2004, p. 127).

The church was not the only power responsible for pushing propaganda. Every newspaper and letter underwent checks by public organisations and bodies who were commissioned by the Empire. This was to prevent negative correspondences about the war (Judson, 2016, p. 1035-7).

In comparison to the Second World War, the Great Wars’ propaganda was not as systematic, it was more a ‘side product’ of the war effort. However, this does not mean there were no strategies used in promoting the war. Through the use of emotional vocabulary, the Empire used the war to enhance ‘patriotism’ and promote a certain understanding of a sense of belonging.
3.6.1 Sacrifice of “Flesh” (Bodies)

The framing of collective emotions was the basis used to create an alliance with the Empire. Propaganda was used to ignite certain feelings and emotions amongst the people and this helped shape individual bodies into larger groups. Scholar Sara Ahmed (2010) describes the formation of “collective” feelings as “sticky”. Emotions are “sticky” because they help to sustain and preserve a connection between ideas and objects (Ahmed, 2010). By appealing to feelings the Empire tried to stick certain emotions onto particular bodies. For example, the Empire attempted to create a patriotic body, which felt proud to be Austrian or a citizen of the Empire. Feelings in this sense helped align people together to form a collective (Ahmed, 2004a, 2004b). According to Ahmed “emotions do things, and work to align individuals with collectives – or bodily space with social space – through the very intensity of their attachments.” (Ahmed, 2004b, p. 27). In this understanding emotionality “involves an interweaving of the personal with the social, and the affective with the mediated” (Ahmed, 2004b, p. 28).

Furthermore, Ahmed states:

> feelings rehearse associations that are already in place, in the way in which they ‘read’ the proximity of others, at the same time as they establish the ‘truth’ of the reading. The impressions we have of others, and the impressions left by others are shaped by histories that stick, at the same time as they generate the surfaces and boundaries that allow bodies to appear in the present (Ahmed 2004b, p. 29).

In the case of Austria-Hungary, the idea of heroism (particularly of men) influenced the people’s collective emotions and this helped establish different collective feelings within the provinces. Gerhard Wanner (2014), a historian who focuses on the history of Vorarlberg, highlights in his book *Für Gott Kaiser und Vaterland*, that heroism had previously been promoted within the province during the nineteenth century. Heroic memories of the Franco-Prussian war were used by political entities to form a particular collective memory and this was promoted through the building of monuments (Wanner, 2014). This helped create different emotional communities because the feeling of pride was essential in creating a feeling of heroism. Pride was the main force in promoting a sense of identity because it aligned people’s feelings to places. This was not only prevalent in Vorarlberg but also the whole Empire. The notion of pride creating a sense of identity was informed by the German Romanticism movement. The movement was driven by an overemphasis on emotion and terms like fatherland and *Heimat* were used
to ignite a connection with the emotion of pride. Home can be defined in many ways and this is evident in the examination of the First World War. In relation to the Habsburg Monarchy, home was the restoration of honour, which was destroyed by the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand. Home asked for its people to defend the endangered existence of the Empire (Wanner, 2014, p. 163). It supported the promotion of becoming a hero and restored the pride of the fatherland.

The Catholic Church contributed to this emotional alignment, it created a religious notion of belonging by appealing to people with the virtue of “duty”. Duty was filled with moral connotations that promoted a collective religious emotional allegiance towards the Empire (Wanner, 2014, p. 163).

The war was seen as the holy duty of men to die for their fatherland and dying for a cause was often linked to the term sacrifice. Emotional vocabulary such as the word sacrifice was used as a propaganda tool to appeal to the different emotional communities and negotiate different feelings of belonging. This leads one to question, what had to be sacrificed? The emotional discourse that occurred with the requisition of bells will be further explored in the chapter.

It was not only bodies and men that were sacrificed but also women were asked to contribute to the war effort by making sacrifices at the home front. Historian of modern Europe Maureen Healy (2004) writes about the involvement of civilians, particularly women and children, at the home front during the First World War. She describes two key terms that framed civilian participation in the war, “holding out” and the “willingness to sacrifice”. Healy states that:

Durchhalten, "holding out" or "endurance," was an essential passive duty. Unlike the soldier, who performed duty actively – fighting, defending or displaying acts of bravery – the civilian’s duty was to wait and perhaps suffer, but to do so quietly. Holding out was a means of honouring the more celebrated sacrifice of soldiers. The highest home front virtue was Opferwilligkeit, the willingness to sacrifice resources and especially comfort (Healy, 2004, p. 34).

This emotional appeal aimed to not only bind the people together but it also worked to forge a strong allegiance to the Empire.
3.6.2 Sacrifice of Metal

One comfort the public was asked to sacrifice was metal. Prior to World War One, 90 percent of the Monarchy’s copper demand was imported (Wegs, 1976; Morelon, 2019). Once the war began, the Empire was challenged by a blockade of allied forces. This halted the Monarchy’s imports and due to its increase in military needs Austria-Hungary was short on many of its resources. The Empire acquired new sources to manage its increased demand. Therefore, the public was asked at the beginning of the war in 1914 to donate metal of all forms. The programme that carried out the collection of metal was called the *patriotische Kriegsmetallsammlung* (patriotic war metal collection). The term patriotic was used to instigate a certain emotion. The programme’s title did not just call for a collection of metal it also highlighted the patriotic duty of everyone on the home front, which was to sacrifice their most valuable object. To persuade and motivate the public, the War Ministry published announcements that appealed to its citizen’s emotions and feelings. The Ministry’s propaganda used a range of moral connotations that centered on heroism and a willingness to sacrifice. They also used religious connotations of the war as a “holy duty”.

![Figure 3: Call in different languages, ÖNB, KS 16212365 POR MAG.](image-url)
The following announcement discloses the moral connotations used to ask for support for the war effort:

Thank you for your donations!

[...] The war metal collection is a glorious testimony of the boundless willingness of sacrifice from our population!

[...] It is the duty of our heart to say sincerely, thank you in the name of the fatherland. We do not need to fear any enemy as long as the patriotism of the public contributes with such a commitment and willingness to sacrifice. Again, the public gave the army what was needed to gloriously finish the holy duty. The public has shown gratefulness towards the heroes of our army who returned disabled. Due to the public’s massive contribution to the metal collection providing rich resources they have shown thankfulness in a touching manner. The public has strengthened its ties and love with our army, whose ultimate victory over the enemy we’ll soon celebrate by the grace of God.20

The monarchy aimed to force a binding relationship between the battlefield and home front. Additionally, the announcements tried to appeal to the feelings of the public to create an emotional attachment between the Empire and its people.

The church’s role in dispersing propaganda can be seen in their participation in promoting the war metal collection programme. The official gazette Diözesanblatt was a publication for clerks and it highlights the church’s involvement. Priests were instructed to work with their local authorities in promoting the acquisition of metals for the war.21

At the beginning of World War One, the process of metal collection operated well. The public showed a willingness to sacrifice and the enthusiasm to donate metal was kept alive. Combined with reports of the military’s first victories and belief of the war ending soon, the people’s willingness for sacrifice was depicted as an “an inexhaustible mine”. The War Ministry asserts, “The public will show the foreign enemies that their love for the fatherland is like an inexhaustible mine that helps to sharpen the sword for peace.”22

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20 Austrian National Library (ÖNB): KS 16214982 POR MAG.
21 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: Brixener Diözesanblatt, 1915, Nr. 5, p. 49; Brixner Diözesanblatt, 1915, Nr. 8, p. 77.
22 Austrian National Library (ÖNB): KS 16214982 POR MAG.
3.6.3 Sacrifices of Local Identity

Initially, the collection of metals was introduced on a donation basis and this included church bells. However, as the war progressed the Empire changed its stance and made the offering of metal compulsory, when needed. This occurrence led to the removing of church bells.

There were many different administrative institutions involved in the requisition of bells, which showed the complexity of the task. The order to demand bells acquired additional resources, which came from the War Ministry. The Ministry of Religion and Education was responsible for all of the churches within the Empire. In relation to the province Vorarlberg, the Ministry delegated information of new bell requirements to the Statthalterei in Innsbruck, which then, forwarded this onto the Ordinariate in Brixen, South Tyrol. The Ordinariate would inform the General Vicariate in the town Feldkirch of Vorarlberg, who then distributed the information to all the local parishes within Vorarlberg. This was the usual procedure throughout the process of requisition the church bells.
In October 1915 the *Diözesanblatt*\textsuperscript{23} published an announcement, which stated the bell stock of the Empire had to be assessed to prepare for the possibility of relinquishing the bells for war. The attached form, as shown below, is a report from a local parish in Vorarlberg. The reports helped give an overview of all the existing bells within the parishes. The records were used to decide which bells would be kept and which could be melted.

The form discloses basic information regarding the bell numbers, size, weight and age. It also contains a comments section for the bell’s special religious purpose or historical importance.

![Image of the form](image)

Figure 5: Report sheet, Fontanella Vorarlberg, Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch, X.V. 2.1.

The “Diözesanblatt” publication anticipated that the order to sacrifice bells would arrive at any moment. To draw away negative attention it was announced that the removal of bells would be financially reimbursed and the churches would receive 4 Krone’s for each donated kilogram of bell material. The Empire also used the possibility of a bell requisition as leverage if the churches chose not to comply with the Ministry of Religion and Education’s requests (Rettenwander, 2005). The enforcement of a requisition would prevent the churches from proposing which bells to keep and the bell assessment forms

\textsuperscript{23} Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: *Brixner Diözesanblatt*, 1915, Nr. 13, p. 85.
had already been heavily used to submit petitions to keep certain bells.

On 22 January 1916, the decree was released that two-thirds of Vorarlberg’s bells had to be delivered to the imperial metal collection. In Vorarlberg, the official institutions of the church (Ordinariate in Brixen and General Vicariate in Feldkirch) did not oppose the Empire’s demand but tried to act as a mediator between the people and their military (Morelon, 2019, p. 207). They did not publish any statements that complied with the state’s requirements but they also ensured they were not associated with any resistance on the local level (Rettenwander, 2005, p. 333). Public enquiries on keeping the bells were directed to the local parishes. This approach of sitting on the fence is evident in the wording used in the institution’s decree.

We are aware the request made from the k.u.k war administration for such a large quantity of bell material will be painful for the clerks and the whole population of the country. The signed General Vicariate, therefore, asks that your highness will promote this sacrifice that has been asked for your fatherland, in consideration of the great general interest of our k.u.k. war administration and the fatherland. General Vicariate, Feldkirch, 22 January 1916.”

The General Vicariate anticipated the pain felt by the requisition of bells however, the office also highlighted that sacrifices were for a greater cause to support the fatherland. This illustrates the nuanced approach taken by the church institution.

The criteria issued by the War Ministry for bell preservation was based on the artistic value of the bells and their use for religious practice. The parishes were allowed to keep one third of their bells and the general rule to exempt the bells was that they had to be cast before the 1700s (Morelon, 2019). Regional preservation agencies were held responsible in distinguishing which bells could be saved. Bells for religious practice were viewed the most valuable by the churches to maintain their services, however the preservation agencies granted more significance to bells with historic value (Rettenwander, 2005, p. 333). In summer 1916, the War Ministry ordered the removal of bells from the local parishes. This led to the first wave of bell removal in June 1916 the removals were delegated to private companies (Rettenwander, 2005). Many

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provinces within the Empire, including Vorarlberg, tried to interrupt the removals process by continuously submitting requests to save as many bells as possible. As the demand for material grew a second wave of removals was launched in 1917. The War Ministry’s announcement of this removal differed from the first. All bells with a diameter larger than 25 cm were demanded. This meant that churches with larger bells were in danger of losing all of their bells. Religious purposes were no longer a reason to keep the bells and the date criteria of bell preservation mentioned by the War Ministry changed from being before the 1700s to before the 1600s.25

3.7 Expressions of Locality, Bells as Local Symbolic Capital

Community petitions were sent to the authorities and written by priests who acted as spokesmen for their parishes (Morelon, 2019). Priests often attended meetings with “local”26 and “church”27 councils. Through their consultations with the local councils, clerks ensured “unanimous decisions”28 were made with the parishes. The preservation of as many bells as possible was not an individual request from the priests, it was the “wish of the people.”29

The clerks held a special position within their village’s social hierarchies, as well as a duty to represent the official church. This meant they had to be thoughtful and act with caution. The church wanted to protect its status and power within the parishes but it also had a duty to support the war effort for “God, Emperor and Fatherland”. The position of the priests in regard to the bells was somewhat divided but the sheer amount of requests made to retain the bells reveals the overall stance of their local communities. The petitions written by the priests on behalf of the public will highlight their emotional attachment to a certain place through sound. These letters were examined because of the emotional vocabulary prevalent in the public’s reasons for keeping certain bells. They explain why bells were important to the community and how they created a sense of locality. Furthermore, they highlight the significance of emotions when the Empire

26 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: Koblach X.V. 2.6.4; Ludesch X.V. 2.6.5; Klösterle X.V. 2.6.5; Nüziders X.V. 2.6.5; Lingenau X.V. 2.4; Reuthe X.V. 2.4.
27 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: Altenstadt X.V. 2.6.4; Mittelberg X.V. 2.4.
28 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: Fontanella X.V. 2.6.5; Dalaas X.V. 2.6.5.
29 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: Bezau X.V. 2.4.
negotiated between the different villages. The local communities had an emotional relationship with the Empire through their correspondences and to ensure these emotions are put at the forefront a substantial amount of petitions will be reviewed.

The letters show a difference in opinion between small villages in remote areas and towns however, both found great value in their bells. Towns and larger villages were more willing to comply with the Ministry’s requirements to relinquish their bells and the authorities had anticipated this by assuming countryside residents would resist the bell removal because they were more religious. Therefore, the removal of bells began in towns (Rettenwander 2005, p. 330). Some of the villages complied with the war administration’s request and were willing to sacrifice their bells. The village Altenstadt was even willing to offer more than the required two thirds and stated, “The sacrifice of the splendid big bells is very hard, but it is for God, Emperor and Fatherland!”

Another village wrote, “The removal of the bells is very hard but in times of hardship for the fatherland every mourn and complaint needs to be silenced.”

It is evident that some of the communities were in agreement with the Empire, their emotional attachment to the local space through sound was portrayed as a sacrifice for a greater cause. But although some the villages complied with the Ministry’s request some of their petition letters contained mixed emotions, which could be read as an undertone of resistance. The following two examples state:

There is a large regret in the local parish, because our beautiful and harmonic peal, which was purchased under huge sacrifices will be torn apart. However, we are willing to take this sacrifice for the fatherland that is in need.

The writer of this letter allows himself to remark that the whole public feels pain at the thought of tearing apart this beautiful harmonic and wide sounding peal. The beautiful bells having to leave the high tower in the uncertainty that such a beautiful harmony cannot be cast again (it is painful). However, the public is willing to give their hardest sacrifice if the fatherland is in urgent need.

30 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.6.4, Altenstadt, 3 March 1916.
31 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.4, Warth, 30 January 1916.
32 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.6.5, Bludesch, 26 January 1916.
Due to the prospect of receiving bell reimbursements, it can be argued that some villages tried to increase their local prestige by upgrading their bells. Alain Corbin describes bells as “symbols of pride” (Corbin, 1999, p. 54). He points out that “the solidarity for bells was not religious it was more an object of prestige for the village” (Corbin 1999, p. 46).

The village Marul states:

The tuning of the bells is bad and that the state is welcome to purchase the bells, of course for compensation, because the parish is very poor.34

A church in the town Dornbirn even made preparations for the casting of new bells with the reimbursement money and expressed a wish for a new peal. The church states:

The writer of this letter presumes himself worthy enough to report that after gaining permission granted by the local church administration [parish], he would like to use this opportunity [of the seizing of bells] to get a new better suitable peal for the town and the church. He has already made contact with the bell foundry Graßmayr in Feldkirch.35

Many of the reasons given by the communities to keep the bells were mundane. Some villages wrote about the complications that can arise when removing the bells and they claimed bell removal from the church involved difficult construction work such as dismantling parts of the belfry.36 Village in remote areas often mentioned the bad road conditions. Some letters said “it would be impossible to transport this bell on our poor roads, which is the worst in the whole of Vorarlberg.”37 The parish ”is cut off from the traffic” and should, therefore, be “the last parish to hand over the bells”38. It was argued that the expensive cost of transport meant fewer benefits for the state. Even though the Austrian-Hungarian Empire was in an alliance with Germany, parishes did not want to be associated with the Germans’ war efforts.

A village, only accessible through Germany, claimed:

The removal of the church bells is very hard for the people, even more, because it is a wonderful harmonic peal and the people worry that within their lifetime they will never have such a beautiful peal.

34 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.1, Marul, 26 October 1915.
35 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.6.2, Dornbirn, 15 October 1915.
36 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.1; Doren, 24 October 1915; X.V. 2.6.4, Dafins, 8 February 1916.
37 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.6.5, Raggal 26 October 1915.
They also think it is strange to remove our bells for the German war effort because we wouldn't get permission for the transport into the Empire from the German authorities. If the fatherland needs our bells, despite everything we are willing to make the sacrifice [...].

The village Bartholomäberg in the alpine mountains provided a range of reasons for keeping their bells. The village pointed out:

The reason why the writer of this letter decides to urgently request to keep the first bell is because of the following:
The big bell is very essential due to the wide expanse of the local parish and not only to call for service but also to alarm the people when a fire, avalanche or other hazards arise.
The removal of the bell will be very complicated and very expensive because one of the corners in the tower needs to be completely removed. No less complicated and expensive would be the transport to the train station due to our steep and bad road conditions.
In addition to that, the bell is the most beautiful and best sounding bell in the whole valley of Montafon, the people are very attached to the bell and its removal would be the worst for the people.

The majority of petitions mentioned the largest bell. These bells were the most vulnerable because of size and weight, they also held the highest prestige within the village. The bells were not only valued by the locals, sometimes they were described as “the best sounding bell in the whole valley” like in the case of the village Bartholomäberg. The sound of the bell was the emotional glue, not only for the villagers but sometimes for their regions. In relation to these special bells, it was claimed, “people generally say widespread that there are no more beautiful bells [as this one]”

Local pride was not only based on the beautiful sounds of these bells. It was highlighted that the bells had “a reputation in the whole area and far across the borders of our parish because it is an excellent weather bell with an extraordinary sound.” Bells were rarely mentioned as items of value in the narratives of the Empire but they were most important for the local community of a village or a valley and portrayed as emotional emblems of the local identity.

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41 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.6.1, Gortipohl, 26 January 1916.
42 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.4, Lingenau 26 January 1916.
Historian Claire Morelon (2019) supports this observation and asserts that in the East of Austria emotional investment into bells was encapsulated more in hometowns.

It is evident that the largest bells within the villages of Vorarlberg have the strongest connection with the auditory space. People located themselves within the threshold of its sound. Furthermore, the bells helped to construct a belonging to a given territory (Corbin, 1999, p. 46). The founding figure of soundscape studies, Murray Schafer refers to this connection and states, “In a very real sense it [the bell] defines the community, for the parish as an acoustic space, circumscribed by their range of the church bell” (Schafer, 1994, p. 54).

Corbin echoes this statement and claims: “A bell was supposed to be audible everywhere within the bounds of a specified territory. [...] bells are the marking that served to constitute a territory” (Corbin, 1999, p.98, p. 210). Additionally, historian Niall Atkinson supports this view by referring to the unifying character of the sound of bells that “bridged the gap between society and space” (Atkinson, 2016, p. 232).

In his study about the Soundscape of Early Modern England, Bruce Smith identifies church bells as the most obvious soundmarks in early modern London (Smith, B., 2004). He refers to the Bow Bells and their connection to territory by highlighting its importance as a symbol of identification for the Cockney community. It was argued that a true Cockney is one born within the sound of the Bow Bells, “the bow-bell rang out over an acoustic community that was also an identifiable speech community, with its own dialect, its own varieties, its own register” (Smith, B., 2004, p. 88). Listening created an emotional attachment not only with the local space but also within these local communities. This relationship between space and communities is evident within the villages of Vorarlberg.

The largest bells seem to hold great importance to their communities and this helps us understand why it was a challenge for the Empire to create a solely positive emotional connection with the public when seizing their most valuable bells.
Some petitions highlighted the importance of hearing the largest bell in a certain space. Blons stated:

The church is not in the middle of the village it is on the edge. Smaller bells cannot be heard everywhere so we really need the biggest bell to call for service and to alarm for any fires or avalanches [...] 43

The petitions illustrate how the sound of bells is an aid that creates a sense of belonging to a particular place. This aid emotionally anchored the locale and not the imperial. The public’s auditory experience of the bells is evident in these petitions and it refers to the local space. Furthermore, this experience correlates with the concept of emplacement. Anthropologist David Howes suggests that the paradigm of emplacement is a sensuous interrelationship of body-mind-environment that is involved in creating a feeling of home (Howes, 2005, p. 7).

Additionally, many of the petitions mentioned the importance of the largest bell in relation to space. In Vorarlberg, houses were either scattered within the village or there was a wide expanse between properties, this meant that smaller bells were not heard by everyone collectively. The largest bell was important because of the infrastructure of the villages and it played an important role in the everyday lives of its residents. Although the largest bells were given priority, bells within chapels were also viewed as a necessity because they were located high up in the mountains. For example, most people living in the villages were farmers and from spring until summer they followed their livestock across the different pastures high up in the mountains. 44

The arguments used by small villages to keep their chapel bells show that the population of the countryside valued their religious practices. A priest from a small village named Vandans wrote, a bell in a chapel is needed “because of the two church services twice a week from Easter to October.” 45

A priest from Koblach wrote: “Because Neuburg is a remote and far away area the chapel is used for Sunday service and every evening for prayers.” 46 The villagers mention of the

43 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.6.5, Blons, 27 January 1916.
44 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.6.5, Buchboden, 6 February 1916.
46 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.6.4, Koblach, 2 February 1916.
religious purpose of bells illustrates how bells provided a sense of time by structuring the day, week and season.

Humans tend to organise their lives periodically. Bells support this reproduction of time by marking the different cycles of the day, week and year throughout human life.

Geographer Nigel Thrift, who examines bells in medieval times, highlights the importance of bells for a consciousness of time itself. Thrift (1996) reveals the connection between bells and the formation of time consciousness by explaining how there was an increase of devices to mark the time in the period 1100 to 1300. According to Thrift, the main source of time making was the bell (Thrift, 1996, p. 16-7).

Niall Atkinson supports Thrift’s findings in his explanation on how the ringing of bells created a sonic architecture in Florence during the Renaissance. He states, “time was heard rather than seen” (Atkinson, 2016, p. 324). Atkinson points out that the general patterns of bell ringing and the creation of a certain sense of time were similar all over Europe, however, “each city had its own particular internal rhythms that defined its singularity, much as its local architectural permutation were linked to larger regional and national styles” (Atkinson, 2016, p. 201).

Corbin reiterates this claim by explaining that bells were a crucial element to mark time for the community. Furthermore, he states that bells “transmitted information about the major events of private life, and solemnized rites the passage” (Corbin, 1999, p. X).

These examples show the relationship of the interwoven rhythms of bells with the everyday life of people. The process of repetition anchored sound into the everyday life and constructed the experience of time in general terms. The messages and signals mediated through the bells were precise. Therefore, those familiar with its message or signal, such as local residents, were the best people for decoding it. Historian David Garrioch states, “Those who knew the code could immediately tell what day it was, what time of day, and what liturgical season” (Garrioch, 2003, p.12).

This reference to everyday life, time and space is also apparent in many of the petitions. The possibility of losing their bells provoked a strong emotional response from the communities. The bells accompanying the everyday life created a sense of familiarity and this is highlighted in a petition that stated “the ear is used to the sound”47.

47 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.4, Sibratsgfäll, 31 January 1916.
Furthermore, Jakob Hämmerle, a priest from the village Lech wrote to the regional preservation agency stating:

Evidence for the big attachment to the mentioned bell is the fact that some of the politicians of the local council started to cry when they heard that the biggest bell will be seized [...].

To highlight the magnitude of relinquishing the bells the word sacrifice was ubiquitous in many village petition letters. The letters point out that many people had “made a great number of sacrifices” to purchase the bells, therefore it held great importance. These past sacrifices connect the sound of the bells with the communities’ collective effort to attain them. Bells were portrayed as a collective property and they defined the local emotional community, not the Empire or the church. A letter from the village Silbertal illustrates the importance of the bells to the collective. The letter stated:

The abandonment of the bells is very hard for the community. For a widely scattered village, a heavy chime is not luxury it is a real need. A pleasant chime is a joy and pride. The community has made huge sacrifices to get the bells and therefore the bells have become dear to the heart and soul. The bells are new and the donors are still alive. They would see that with the removal of the bells, their hard savings and sacrifices would be lost. The parish asks if it is anyhow possible to cancel this sacrifice. If this sacrifice for the defence of the Fatherland is inevitable, it will be made with pleasure but also with a lot of pain.

The parish’s mention of the bells’ donors being alive reveals a connection between memories and values. It can be argued that the significance of bells was influenced by the relationship between memories and sound (object). Bells were deemed important if they had a connection to the cultural memories of their local communities. For example, bells cast in villages were viewed more valuable than those cast in a bell foundry. Therefore, bells were used to construct local collective narratives. Furthermore, bells were significant if they had been recently cast and remained a part of the public’s immediate memories. Bells represented the social fabric of villages and the most powerful people of the parishes donated them. A priest from Bürserberg wrote: “The donors and their powerful relatives are still alive, so the removal would be very

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50 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.6.1, Silbertal, 2 February 1916.
unpleasant.”\textsuperscript{51} This value of memories was not only limited to the lifetime of the donors it also stretched over generations. A priest from the village Krumbach wrote, “their offspring is still alive.”\textsuperscript{52} The villagers’ attachment to bells was created through their personal experiences of sound and the artefact of the bell. Therefore, the significance of bells for its community was not based on artistic value but rather memory value. This mindset of the people conflicted with the understanding of the authorities that old bells were worth protecting the most. For some villages, the newness of the bells was their main reason for protecting them. The following petition stated:

\begin{quote}

With huge efforts, the peal was installed in 1912 and has been considered by experts and musicians very successful, its removal would cause huge pain to the local inhabitants and the priest would need to mobilise them because most of the people have spent their private money to get them. Therefore the signed parish and the local council have asked to keep at least the biggest bell. [...] The removal of the bells will cause an outcry from the people in the whole country and if victory and peace are achieved the joy and cheer will be muffled because the bells for the preacher will be missing.\textsuperscript{53}
\end{quote}

The Empire did not understand the extent to which the public valued their bells. This reveals the struggle of the state to cater to and align with the emotions of its people. Local clerks found themselves caught in the middle of this conflict. They faced pressure from the authorities to ensure the bell quota was reached and they were in fear of a backlash from their local communities. One priest wrote “if it has to be a sacrifice I at least don’t want any unnecessary damage (for the parish)”\textsuperscript{54} another remarked “Will the public create a stir... who knows!? Who knows!?”\textsuperscript{55} A priest named Martin Schwärzle from the village Bezau reiterated his efforts to protect the two largest bells in his parish by stating, “to avoid possible accusations from the local public that I have not put any effort into preserving the bells, these accusations would be harsher towards me if other villages achieved their wishes and I didn’t make this attempt to preserve our bells.”\textsuperscript{56}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[51] Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.6.5, Bürserberg, 27 January 1916.
\item[52] Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.4, Krumbach 29 January 1916.
\item[53] Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.6.5, Fontanella, 4 February 1916.
\item[54] Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.6.5, Nüziders, 27 January 1916.
\item[56] Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.4, Bezau, 4 February 1916.
\end{footnotes}
The petitions show that the Empire's demand for the seizing of bells attracted a lack of enthusiasm for the war because of the sacrifices required to facilitate it. Historian Daniel Morat supports this statement and claims, enthusiasm was concentrated in the cities and rooted in bourgeois and nationalistic student societies. Rural and working class areas did not welcome the war in the same manner (Morat, 2015, p. 178). Petitions from the villages give testimony to the difference in collective feelings between city and village residents. Letters from the countryside were more critical of the war and this is illustrated in a village located in the Bregenzerwald valley named Sibratsgfäll. The village's petition displayed anxiety at the thought of relinquishing the bells. The parish stated:

The required contribution of such a huge amount of bell material is very hard for the people in Sabratsgfäll and has caused the deepest anxieties in these times of war.  

Bregenzerwald valley's residents submitted many critical reports due to their reputation, to be proud of their roots, independent and confident. Another village within this valley named Lingenau stated:

The local population is unwilling to hand over their bells, which are their joy and sorrow and provides them with the most intimate connection with the feeling of home (Heimat). The priest himself should be very careful because a requisition as a patriotic act has the danger of making people feel like the priest himself would be responsible for the removal of the bells, but this sanction is also against the priest. [...] Villages in the mountains and villages with new peals since the last decade should be spared as long as possible. [...] It seems that the reimbursement takes more than half a year, so the k.k. war administration should take into consideration reimbursing additional costs for removal or costs which are caused by damage. In general, the paid price should be high enough for a new purchase of bells after the war. This should be possible to prevent an additional burden for the churches.

It is evident that discussions around the removal of bells caused public resistance. One village wrote, “The loss of the bells is very hard for the people and threatening voices

57 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.4, Sibratsgfäll, 31 January 1916.
59 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.6.5, Lingenau, 29 January 1916.
have been heard." 60 Another village feared "In the case of a sale it could cause huge riots." 61

The villagers' emotional attachment to their bells made the possibility of physical resistance likely. The people's solidarity and emotional alignment with the Empire was at a breaking point because their attachment to the local place was stronger than their loyalty to Emperor and Monarchy. The following letters capture the public's emotions and can be considered a signal of the Empire's downfall. The petitions will be shown in great depth.

The village Sulzberg wrote:

To the reverent FB General Vicariate in Feldkirch.
Due to the case of actual misery and urgent needs, our public has been willing, as it has been sufficiently documented, to provide huge sacrifices. But the removal of the baptised holy bells, which have been in use for many years, is very hard and should only happen when the ultimate need appears for this demand, especially when such huge amounts are required. This is [questioned] even more because the public has the opinion, due to the recent victories of our army and the progress in the land of the enemy, that enough material has been captured and new suppliers have been accessed. An effort should not only be made to prove the patriotism of the public but it should more so be the aim to foster and stimulate, or at least to keep the patriotism alive. 62

Hittisau stated:

The news about the requisition of our bells has partly caused discouragement and partly unwillingness. The public does not understand why, despite the constant news about victories, the baptised bells need to be used for the terrible duty of war. Moreover, it is said that in parts of the country with more danger of war than Vorarlberg they still have their bells. The day when the bells will be removed will be the worst day for our parish in these times of war. Almost everyone holds the opinion that the local priest should insist on keeping this beautiful peal, even more now that we have handed over our copper roof and still not received any reimbursement. Under these circumstances, I think it is advised to be very reserved in this matter and to avoid the unwillingness of the public, which may increase into riots against the local church authority. 63

60 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.4, Grossdorf, 29 January 1916.
61 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.6.5, Raggal, 09 February 1916.
63 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.4, Hittisau, 27 January 1916.
Additionally, the village Egg stated:

> The announcement from the k.k. war administration to hand over two-thirds of the total weight of the bells from Egg [name of the village] has caused great displeasure, dejection, general grief and discouragement from the local population. [...] If this [the biggest] bell is taken it will cause sorrow and increase the displeasure to a maximum for the local people.⁶⁴

The removing of bells invoked a clash of emotions between the parishes and the Empire because the people’s willingness for sacrifice to support the war was contested by their unwillingness to hand over the bells. The letters show how bells were too important for the local space. The public’s willingness to sacrifice had reached its limits when it came to the removal of their bells.

The Empire’s misconception of its people’s collective feelings can be seen in the authorities’ written responses to the public’s petitions. The responses reveal how Vorarlberg’s needs were dismissed in favour of supralocal solutions. The authorities tried to promote a sense of solidarity between the different provinces therefore, the public was informed that everyone in the Empire was sacrificing collectively. All of the provinces were told they had already been favoured due to the unforeseen delay in bell demands. The war administration had received unexpected high amounts of metal donations for the war programme therefore, bell seizeings occurred later than expected. Additionally, the Vicariate asserted that church bells in conquered territories had already been made use of so the seizing of the bells within the Empire was their last resort.

The authorities assumed their correspondences would secure public support. However, this approach was ineffective because the removing of bells was still viewed as unfair treatment towards Vorarlberg’s villagers. Morelon points out that public demand for a more equal share of the burden of war was also apparent in the other parts of the Empire, such as Bohemia (Morelon 2019). The General Vicariate in Feldkirch published a statement that told the public they did not have to sacrifice more than the other provinces and to encourage more support the authorities announced the importance of solidarity between the Empire’s different provinces.

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⁶⁴ Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.4, Egg, 28 January 1916.
The announcement stated:

Our patriotic sacrifices and our compassion with the other areas of the fatherland, which have been affected by the war, urge us to be considerate and to hand over the bells.\textsuperscript{65}

Many of the Empire’s provinces gave similar reasons for keeping their bells. The authorities response to the public’s petitions is highlighted below:

The wishes that were often expressed in Vorarlberg such as preserving the biggest bell because of the wide scattered villages, being considerate of donors who are still alive, and the preservation of bells with special beautiful sounds, has also been expressed in other Dioceses.\textsuperscript{66}

Vorarlberg's communities were made aware that the reasons given for saving their bells were invalid. This was because the Empire had chosen to only preserve bells with historical value. The institutions did not class bell seizures as a heartfelt event. It was a project that required all of the Empire, which included Vorarlberg, to make their sacrifice and contribute to the war. Furthermore, it is evident that the only concern of the authorities was to obtain the required amount of metal, they did not care how this was collected. This is pointed out in the following statement.

The authorities announced:

The war administration is indifferent on how the demanded two-thirds of the weight is collected. Either every church offers their two-thirds, or one church offers more to help the churches in the neighbourhood to preserve their own.\textsuperscript{67}

The state became more and more impatient with the villagers and their submission of petitions. Their letters were described as a “pointless harassment” of the authorities.\textsuperscript{68}

The following two extracts show growing tensions between the authorities of the state and the authorities of the church, who were accused of being reluctant in imposing the Empire’s requirements. The war administration announced:

There have been a growing number of requests from different churches, most of the time on behalf of the people. These requests have been sent to the war ministry, the ministry for religion and education, war and state administration, high-ranking individuals and many more. Most of the

\textsuperscript{65} Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.6.6.13, Feldkirch, 16 February 1916.
\textsuperscript{66} Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.6.6.13, Feldkirch, 16 February 1916.
\textsuperscript{67} Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.6.6.13, Feldkirch, 16 February 1916.
\textsuperscript{68} Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.6.6.34, Militärkommando Innsbruck betr. Eingabe an Kriegsministerium, 16 October 1916.
requests made have been regarding the biggest bells. [...] The administration is required to accommodate the requests but a change of the bells is only possible if the requested amount is provided or a nearby figure. Most of the time these requests made have been unsuccessful and denied. Even when the applications have been denied these same requests have often been repeated.69

The Hungarian half of the Empire also received a large amount of petitions. This resulted in the Hungarian Ministry of Religion and Education asking church officials to stop sending letters (Morelon, 2019). The churches in Vorarlberg continued to send requests, which resulted in the war administration’s tone of language becoming harsher in their written responses. In one of their replies, the war administration makes the General Vicariate aware that the removal of bells is a duty of the church in order to support the war and Empire. The letter announced:

The constant submission of requests to preserve the biggest bell or to change the bells with non-acceptable material etc. In almost every request the patriotism of the public has been explicitly pointed out, followed by reasons why the bell(s) should be preserved. For example, there has been a special love or attachment to a certain bell, most of the time the biggest bell or the beautiful sound or harmony of a specific bell, there has also been a request for consideration of donors. These reasons testify everything else than the love to the fatherland, which is always stated at the beginning.70

The church’s reluctance to choose a side resulted in its loss of power with the Empire and local villages. Historian Matthias Rettenwander, who writes about the removing of bells in Tyrol, points out that the passive stance of the church in regard to the seizing of bells caused an image damage which led to the clerk’s loss of authority (Rettenwander, 2005, p. 342). The bell seizures reveal how the Empire and church institution lost legitimacy during the First World War.

69 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.6.6.34, Militärkommando Innsbruck betr. Eingabe an Kriegsministerium, 16 October 1916.
70 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.6.6.34, Militärkommando Innsbruck, 26 October 1916.
3.8 The Removal of Bells in the Newspapers

Based on language a similarity can be found between village petitions and newspaper reports. Both writings contain a substantial amount of emotional vocabulary. The removal of bells received a lot of coverage in the newspapers and this shows the different opinions between the political camps in Vorarlberg. Newspapers promoted different ideologies about the war and Empire and this will be reviewed when looking at the removing of bells because tabloids used the event to promote their own agenda. Initially, the vast majority of newspapers reported that bell seizures was a worthy sacrifice however, it can be suggested that this coverage was because of the Monarchy's influence.

To prevent negative coverage, in 1914, the Empire requested all newspapers be censored. Vorarlberg had its own censorship office. The office reviewed public posted letters and checked local newspaper prints, these were then sent to the chief prosecutors office in Vienna to be re-checked (Wanner, 2014, p. 37). Censorship was very strict because newspapers were not allowed to publish anything critical about war losses, the economic situation, strikes, demonstrations, negative information about the home front or other war-related topics (Wanner, 2014, p. 35). These restrictions made the public question the validity of their reports. The tabloids tried to diffuse these doubts and claimed, “The silence [about the war] can only increase our faith in the supreme army court” (quoted in Wanner, 2014, p. 39). Irrespective of the Empire’s censorships, newspapers later found a way to voice their own critique. This will become evident in their coverage on the removing of bells.

The official newspaper of the local government was the first to report on the demand of church bells for war purposes. The following article illustrates how the newspaper covered the bell removing.

*Vorarlberger Landes-Zeitung* reported:

> The Viennese *Diözesenblatt*, the official gazette from the diocese of Vienna published the following: As pleasant as the results on the voluntary donation of church bells to the war administration have been, the high demand of metal makes it necessary to make a general claim of church bells for war purposes.71

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There was no glorification of the war in the newspaper’s report and the removing of bells was not staged as a holy duty. Additionally, there was no call for sacrifice. Furthermore, the newspaper later reiterated that bells with historical value were exempt and the requisition of all bells would be reimbursed. This illustrates Vorarlberger Landes-Zeitung’s neutral stance on the removal of bells. The tabloid’s coverage was very subtle and the topic of bells was described with little to no enthusiasm.

The socialist newspaper Vorarlberger Wacht was critical of the war and the church. The following article saw the war metal collection as unfair treatment towards the public and prioritised the bells removal from the church.

The newspaper wrote:

I think it would be appropriate if the minister of war would first demand the church bells, and the copper of the roofs from the churches and monasteries, instead of the household equipment and our pots. One bell in every tower is more than enough and if this has been done, and if there is still a need for copper, they should ask for our pans and pots.72

Another article from the newspaper stated:

We hear that our bells need to say goodbye to us and two-thirds of the weight of our comrades will be demanded. This would mean that only the biggest bell and maybe a small one would remain in our village in Rankweil, all the other bells would leave the Liebfrauenberg [The mountain where the church is]. [...] If it will come to this event that the state demands two-thirds of the bell material we hope that this will be enough. We the poorest devils have the consolation of this requisition, that when we die, all of us will be guided with the same bell. It is not like the past when the biggest bell rang only for the rich.73

The socialist newspaper Vorarlberger Wacht positioned the bells removal as unimportant. Removals were not labelled as a duty for the fatherland and all published news of the event was not melancholy. Vorarlberger Wacht did however, support the idea of the church contributing more towards the war than its people. Furthermore, the financial costs linked to the removal of bells received criticism. The newspaper reported:

The church bells also need to be used for the war. It is rather surprising for us that engineers are needed to destroy the church bells. The task will cost a

73 ANNO: Vorarlberger Wacht, 10 February 1916, p. 3.
lot of money and the company concerned with these tasks will make a lot of profit.\textsuperscript{74}

The German nationalist newspaper \textit{Vorarlberger Volksfreund} supported the war because of the alliance between the Empire and Germany however, no support was mentioned for the church. In 1915, the tabloid published a poem with the title: “Down with the bells in iron times!” which means “remove the bells in times of hardship”. The poem called for bell removals to destroy the enemy and give them “devastating lives”. Furthermore, \textit{Vorarlberger Volksfreund} chose to attack the church by stating, people do not need bells to “show the way to god” because they can “find it alone”.\textsuperscript{75} Enthusiasm was shown for the war and bells were seen as a help for the cause.

The following announcement stated:

\begin{quote}
After the handing over of household equipment made of copper to the state, our church bells must follow. It is undoubtedly wistful to think that in the future their voices will not be heard anymore. But let us leave this aside and let’s hope that the remaining comrades will soon ring for peace.\textsuperscript{76}
\end{quote}

Almost every newspaper wrote about the Protestant church in Feldkirch Vorarlberg that gave up its only bell. Even the \textit{Vorarlberger Volksfreund} wrote about the church that donated its only small bell.

The newspaper announced:

\begin{quote}
Today, the only bell from the Protestant church in Feldkirch with a weight of 190kg was handed over to the war administration. The bell was of special importance to the Protestant community because Mr Douglas, one of the founders of the church has donated the bell. [...] Against expectations, this bell has the honour to be the first under numerous church bells that will be removed from the bell tower to protect the embattled fatherland.\textsuperscript{77}
\end{quote}

Morelon claims Protestant churches showed a greater willingness to surrender their bells. These churches were known for losing most of their bells to support the war. Overall, more than fifty Protestant communities within the Empire were left without a bell altogether. Morelon points out that Protestant churches were not allowed to possess bells before 1849 and a possible reason for the churches’ losses was the newness of their bells (Morelon, 2019, p. 209). Additionally, it can be argued that the bells removal

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\textsuperscript{74} ANNO: \textit{Vorarlberger Wacht}, 3 December 1916, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{75} ANNO: \textit{Vorarlberger Volksfreund}, 11 December 1915, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{76} ANNO: \textit{Vorarlberger Volksfreund}, 8 August 1916, p. 4.
\textsuperscript{77} ANNO: \textit{Vorarlberger Volksfreund}, 10 October 1916, p. 4.
\end{flushright}
from the Protestant churches reveals a hierarchy between different religious groups, with Catholicism ranking the highest. Morelon highlights that Catholic churches might have felt more eligible in putting forward requests because of the strong ties that existed between Monarchy and the Catholic faith (Morelon, 2019, p. 210).

The most intriguing reports on the bell removing came from the Catholic newspaper Vorarlberger Volksblatt. The tabloid was loyal to the Emperor and it was also the voice of the church. In an article written on 17 June 1915, Vorarlberger Volksblatt reported on the donation of bells made by Archbishop of Brixen. It also reported on the 143 bells voluntarily donated by the diocese of Linz. The report refers to Voralberg and its attachment to bells. Furthermore, it highlights the alliance between church and Monarchy.

The report stated:

A well sounding peal i is also the soul of the parish, which communicates every feeling from joy to sorrow like described by poets and it will be hard for the church to remove a bell from a well sounding peal, which is so dear to the hearts of the people. We have many of these bells in Vorarlberg (Bregenz, Wolfurt Feldkirch, Bludenz, Bürserberg etc.) but there are also bells that can be gone without. If it’s the case to keep the enemy away from our neighbours as well as to protect the church and "Heimat" (home) we will bring this sacrifice. When we win, we will gain material for bells from the metal that brought destruction to the enemy and it will ring again delightful and peaceful from the bell towers.78

This article reveals the strong connection between the church and Empire. The author defended the Empire and Catholicism. It is evident the word sacrifice was used to create an emotional bond between the church and Vorarlberg. “Vorarlberger Volksblatt” reiterated the public’s duty to sacrifice for ‘our’ homeland and the removal of bells was glorified and staged as a ‘patriotic act’. During this time the church was promoting bell seizures as a righteous punishment because of the decrease in piety amongst the public. Furthermore, Bell removals was linked to the call for people to support the church and this is illustrated in the following article.

78 ANNO: Vorarlberger Volksblatt, 17 June 1915, p. 4.
The Vorarlberger Volksblatt wrote on 15 August 1916:

The seriousness of the times is shown especially in the removal of the baptised bells. They have also been called for their duty of war to defend our enemies. The farewell to the bells is very hard; they were the voices that announced powerfully our feelings of joy and sorrow, of anxieties and hope. Unfortunately, we have to say goodbye and we have to confess that we weren’t listening all the time when the bells were calling, they called for praying and a lot of us were ashamed to follow the call with a sign. They called for service but the call did not show up. So let’s be honest and let’s confess, we have deserved punishment. If the bells sound for the last farewell, we should have two things in mind. Firstly, that when the bells come back, the old or new ones, we should listen more to the calls from the bells and get our lives more in harmony with the bells. Secondly, the sacrifice is huge, but it’s for the fatherland, so we should be joyful when bringing this sacrifice. [...] The bells announced their arrival when they were raised in the tower; it is also reasonable for them to sound together when they leave. It was particularly nice that the bells were not destroyed and could be removed undamaged. I don’t like the idea of the bells being destroyed at home. It is the last respect to the beautiful bells like to so many in Vorarlberg. The metal collection already achieved a great success; let’s hope that the provided huge amount of bell material is enough and that the terrible war doesn’t require everything. Let’s hope that there are bells left to announce the peace, therefore bells with an exceptional sound and beautiful harmony should be preserved. It is also well known that the bell founder Chiapani in Trent has betrayed the fatherland. Even if his bells are very beautiful, it should be no harm if we give away his bells to beat the traitor.79

This article tried to stage the removals of bells as a necessary task to support the soldiers fighting on the battlefields. Furthermore, it illustrates how the requisition of bells helped create an alliance between the battlefield and home front to support the fatherland. Parallels can be seen between the relinquishing of bells and departure of soldiers. Vorarlberger Volksblatt did not ask the public to be in solidarity with the other provinces but rather asked for support for their ‘own’ men.

Furthermore, the newspaper stated:

The thought that the departing bells are on the side of our brothers, sons and fathers, makes it easier for us to say goodbye and we cheer to them: “So go with God, for the Emperor and the Empire, and soon bring us peace!”80

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79 ANNO: Vorarlberger Volksblatt, 15 August 1916, p. 4-5.
Morelon explains the departing of men to go to war was used to soften the blow of bell requisitions. She states, “In a time when men were giving their lives for their country, the requisition of bells could be presented as a relatively less painful sacrifice” (Morelon 2019, p. 208).

It can be argued, that this did not soften the impact of losing the bells and rather elevated the value of bells to the same level as human life. This connection is highlighted in the tabloid's reports on the emotions of the community once their bells were taken. A reference to the public “shedding tears” was a recurrent theme used in the articles. Morelon states,

> Compared to family members or friends, bells were a personalized member of the community whose absence was felt as keenly as that of a human. [...] The parishioners’ tears visibly expressed the sense of loss provoked by the bells’ seizure (Morelon 2019, p. 223).

A newspaper article written by the Vorarlberger Volksblatt on 5 September 1916 highlights the correlation between human life and the church bells:

> Some eyes shed tears in the last days as the bells were put down from the towers to get called for their military service. The strongest part of our society fights on different fronts to fight against our enemies. Now our strongest bells were called up to the front to raise their voice against our enemies. Our country is very attached to bells, especially to big bells. Their holy voices called for service or warned against hazards and danger, now their voices should scare our enemies. We were strong when our brothers, sons and fathers went out for war. It was a big sacrifice, but we made it. We send the holy bells forward to support our heroes so that they will not flinch.\(^81\)

Similar to being drafted for war the bells were “called for military service”. Furthermore, Vorarlberger Volksblatt’s coverage on the removing of bells conflicted with many petition requests made by the parishes. The articles portrayed the importance of bells as a testimony of loyalty to the Empire. This was not in accordance with many petition letters, which highlighted the significance of the bell’s preservation. It can be argued that due to censorship the tabloids could not fully identify with all of the feelings of the public that were evident in the petition letters.

The removal of the bells was accompanied by farewell ceremonies. The ceremonies

attempted to create a collective enthusiasm towards the bells going off to war. The newspapers expressed these ceremonies as “a testimony for the sheer willingness to sacrifice”. On 12 August 1916 the *Vorarlberger Volksblatt* wrote from the town of Dornbirn:

The removal of the bells was guided with a 15 minute long farewell ringing, which filled the eyes with tears. How attached our people/folk are to bells could be observed at the removal today. The square around the church was crowded with spectators old and young, who followed the slow lowering of the bells with mixed emotions. More or less successful pictures were taken from different angles to capture this historical moment. One particularly successful picture, that shows the bell and the whole bell tower behind the picturesque landscape, was taken by Mr Diem. This picture will be available as a postcard only a few hours later.\(^{82}\)

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\(^{82}\) ANNO: Vorarlberger Volksblatt, 12 August 1916, p. 4.
postcard from the village Bludesch had the printed title, “With your sons, I am moving away to protect you and your home to be safe.”

The removal of bells attracted a coming together of the people, which staged a collective moment. Morelon argues, that in this context, “the day of the requisition was one of those moments that actualised existing ‘emotional communities’, creating communities of loss” (Morelon, 2019, p. 221). She draws focus to the feeling of loss, which she coins as a community of loss. Morelon describes the farewell ceremonies as staged rituals in which bells were decorated with wreaths like a consecration. According to Morelon, this created a “repertoire of mourning” (Morelon, 2019, p. 222) that can be compared to a funeral. This again links the requisition of bells with the death of soldiers. It can be argued, that the atmosphere of grief and feeling of loss were made transparent in the farewell ceremony and this evoked emotions about past losses. Furthermore, Morelon explains how the seizing of bells reinforced emotional communities, making them transparent. The bell ceremonies revealed the characteristics of the people, which helped define their emotional communities. The following article describes the traits of a people from a village located up in the mountains. They were portrayed as humble, religious and loyal farmers.

The article announced:

Today, our bells had to say goodbye to the beautiful church and the daring mountain village with its simple inhabitants. Since 1864, they had proclaimed the praise of God and called to the peaceful mountain dwellers and the shepherds on dizzy heights “morning and evening and hearts up!” No wonder the farewell was difficult and the people of Schröcken could not resist crowning the doomed bells with their alpine flowers for their last walk; After all, they were good friends, who so often did not want to stop ringing due to fire, water or avalanche danger. It was out of pity and for the benefit of the struggling residents.

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83 ANNO: Vorarlberger Volksblatt, 26 September 2016, p. 5.
84 ANNO: Vorarlberger Volksblatt, 4 October 1916, p. 4.
The traits of Vorarlberg’s emotional communities were often described in newspaper reports on bell ceremonies. The *Bludenzer Anzeiger* wrote:

Hundreds of spectators watched the removal and the last way of the “Bludenzer” big bell. Many people accompanied the rich decorated bell on its last way to the train station. The bells announced joy and sorrow and some tears were shed when they left the town.\(^8\)

\(^8\) ANNO: *Bludenzer Anzeiger*, 16 September 1916, p. 3.
Farewell bell ceremonies were often pictured with a lot of spectators. The bells were placed at the forefront of these events, which granted them special visibility. German Musicologist Annelies Kürsten claims in her chapter Der Klang der Glocke ist ein Stück Heimat (The sound of the bell is a part of home), normally bells are heard and not seen but through the removing of bells they became visible (Kürsten, 2017, p. 68). Bells were often displayed in front of churches to give the public a last chance to see them. This new visibility seems to have reignited the public’s special attachment with their bells and furthermore, reminded them of its significance.

The removal of the bells was accompanied by farewell ringings, which led to the sensory experience influencing the emotions of the public. Therefore, the farewell ringing could be seen as a collective moment of listening that helped define certain emotional communities. Morelon states, “Before being taken away, all the bells were rung together for one last time. This last peal constituted a special auditory experience. It intervened at an unusual time and signalled in itself an extraordinary event” (Morelon, 2019, p. 224). Morelon reiterates, that the ceremonies were a “very immediate sensory experience” (Morelon 2019, p. 224).
The following article highlights the special attachment the public had with their bells. In relation to the farewell ceremony in the village of Mittelberg, the Vorarlberger Volksblatt wrote:

Last week was under the sign of putting down the bells. The village hoped for a long time to be spared out from this sacrifice because of the remote location, but it should not be. Mittelberg, which has indisputably the most beautiful peal in the whole valley celebrated the last solemn ringing on Thursday. All bells sounded together for the last time before two of them were put down. In the end, the biggest bell rang again to say: "Goodbye", we are going to fight for "God, Emperor, and Fatherland". The impression of the last ringing was very emotional and will be remembered for a long time in the public.86

Many of Vorarlberg’s newspapers gave special coverage to the visual aspects of the farewell ceremonies and this is evident in their publications. They covered the decorations placed on the bells, the bell’s inscriptions and the transportation of the bells out of the villages. These reports strengthened the symbolic meaning of bells as a form of “collective memory”. Morelon supports this claim and states, ceremonies invited the public to “admire their local monuments” (Morelon 2019, p. 215).

However, this new visibility was not always positive. The war administration tried to save money by destroying some of the bells in the bell tower and the newspapers covered this event with regret. The following two articles stated:

Unfortunately, the bells in the tower had to be smashed to save costs for the k.u.k. Aerar. What was missing was that solemn moment that attracted people to watch when the bells slowly drifted down to earth. From our beloved bells, only pieces came down and only a few came to witness the work of destruction. They may go to the destiny which the cruel war now gives them, to become fire, which throws off destruction to the enemy, as opposed to their actual destiny.87

The wish of the people that the bells can be removed without destroying them couldn’t be complied with, because of the higher costs for the war administration [...]. Yesterday the bells were rung for half an hour – their own ringing for death! During this wistful way of saying goodbye some eyes shed tears and also the people in Switzerland mourned. But let’s console ourselves

87 ANNO: Vorarlberger Volksblatt, 22 September 1916, p. 5.
for the victory, nothing is too much and the bells will help to achieve this victory!\textsuperscript{88}

Due to censorship and a control of information during the war, newspapers promoted seizings as a sign of willingness to sacrifice and a testimony for the people’s enthusiasm for war. However in this case, the article reveals the special attachment local communities had with their bells because visual and auditory aspects helped create this collective emotional memory of loss.

\textbf{3.9 It was not Enough! – The Second Wave of Bell Removals and the Downfall of the Empire}

In 1917, during the second wave of removals, newspaper reports began to portray an image of a struggling Empire. Almost every newspaper covered the second claim of church bells with little to no enthusiasm. Gone were claims on the public having pride in sacrifice and newspaper coverage on farewell ceremonies had ceased. Positive outlooks on the requisition of bells disappeared from the news and the feeling of loss and regret became undeniable.

An article written on the 24 August 1917 is one of numerous reports that show regret towards the losing of the bells. The article announced:

\begin{quote}
To the greatest regret of the whole population, two bells are removed once again from our once magnificent peal, only the smallest should remain lonely in the tower. The ringing will be a whimper about the cruel war and a call for peace.\textsuperscript{89}
\end{quote}

The socialist newspaper \textit{Vorarlberger Wacht} claimed:

“If you think carefully about this seizure, you tend to think the war will take another year.”\textsuperscript{90}

\textsuperscript{88} ANNO: \textit{Vorarlberger Volksblatt}, 25 August 1916, p. 5.  
\textsuperscript{89} ANNO: \textit{Vorarlberger Volksblatt}, 24 August 1917, p. 2.  
\textsuperscript{90} ANNO: \textit{Vorarlberger Wacht}, 31 May 1917, p. 4.
The Catholic newspaper *Vorarlberger Volksblatt* chose to use the second wave of removals to stage a critique on modernism. This can be seen as a continuation of the culture wars that began in the nineteenth century. *Vorarlberger Volksblatt* promoted an image of injustice. The tabloid announced that cities were allowed to preserve their cultural goods, whilst rural areas needed to sacrifice everything. Rettenwander explains that the seizing of bells was interpreted as an attack from the modern state towards religion and the local identity of villagers in the countryside. He claims the modern state was framed by the Catholic Church to target rural identities because of the countryside’s resistance towards modernisation and secularisation (Rettenwander, 2005, p. 337).

*Vorarlberger Volksblatt’s* coverage on the seizing of bells portrayed a dualism between the countryside and towns. Rural villagers were viewed as pious and humble whilst townsmen were seen as modern and secular. They were depicted to not like each other, however, a commonality can be found in their emotions regarding the confiscation of bells. Morelon claims that, “[t]he difference between the impact of requisitions in urban and rural areas is more complex than a dichotomy between attachment and indifference and reveals a complex range of emotions linked to bells” (Morelon, 2019, p. 221). She goes on to write:

> The role played by bells in this sense of place in both rural and urban settings complicates our conception of modern forms of belonging. Far from consigning bells to a pre-modern remnant, it blurs clear-cut delineations of a backward countryside and progressive cities (Morelon 2019, p.232).

Irrespective of their differences, a sentimental feeling of loss resonated with both town and village residents in regard to Bells. Bells are not a modern artefact yet an emotional attachment existed between the townsfolk and their bells.

An article written on the 18 July 1917 called for “equal sacrifice” in attempts to revive past village reservations about the “modern state”. The report reveals the newspaper’s agenda to deviate blame away from the Catholic church. Furthermore, a growth in nationalism can be seen in the newspaper’s announcement.

*Vorarlberger Volksblatt* reported:

> When peace comes, only a few parishes will hear the joyful sound of church bells. Thousands of them, big and small, who served for decades for the work of peace, called on people to serve God and to pay obedient tribute to
emperors and kings that have already gone to war. They were born to announce peace and now they are bullets to defend the assailing enemies. Although some of them left their old throne of peace, they were ready to go to war, but now they are somewhere broken, smashed, unfit for military service, permanently disabled. The hard times required these sacrifices. The people said goodbye to their faithful friends and comrades in the church tower with a melancholy mood but brought this sacrifice for the good of the fatherland. [...] Now, the news that apparently even the lonely tower guardians of peace and order are called for military service, all fit, except the oldest invalids. Who will then announce the peace? - It is probably not immodest to make the authorities aware that an equal distribution of our war efforts should apply to the dead materials. The state and even each individual community have worthless statues that are far inferior in terms of cultural value to the church bells. None of these has yet served the purpose of the war and it is not the church that is leading the war, but the state. There are cities, in their exaggerated art-modernism, that have erected monuments in public places, contrary to the healthy feeling of the people, who scorn any morality. It would probably be a small sacrifice to dedicate these hundred pounds of metal to the defence of the threatened fatherland, rather than taking the last bells. The people cannot understand when they hear that there are large quantities of metal here and there, which are registered and not picked up, or on large financial institutions that are covered with copper roofs, or when war metals are used in new buildings in the capital Vienna. Leave the few bells to the people, take the big brewing kettles and much else, then you, Austria, will be able to summon your Christian people with the sound of church bells when the final victory comes.  

This article reveals the anti-modernist position of the Catholic Church and the relationship between cities and the countryside. The distinctions made between Vorarlberg and Vienna is a sign of the break of unification that occurred amongst the provinces within the Empire. However, it can be suggested that this occurrence was accelerated by the second wave of removals and unexpected length of the war. The effect of this breakdown led to the Empire’s demise.

Furthermore, reports on the second wave of bell removals revealed an increase in anti-Semitism. One of the Empire’s largest ammunition factories was based in Budapest and was run by a Jewish industrialist named Manfred Weiß. Many newspapers targeted

91 ANNO: Vorarlberger Volksblatt, 18 July 1917, p. 4.
Weiß and accused him of making a profit from the seized bells and his Jewish identity was constantly highlighted. Rettenwander claims that this coverage helped the church shift blame for the requisition of church bells onto Jewish people who were seen to benefit from the war, and modernist movements. The Jewish community had a reputation for wanting a secular society (Rettenwander, 2005, p. 340).

*Vorarlberger Volksblatt* wrote about a bell request written to the Ministry of Defence. The article claimed:

> Provincial newspapers report that church bells, which are so sacred for Christians, are left for private speculation, which includes Jewish speculators. Since the churches and church administrations have made the sacrifice of their bells with willingness, albeit with a heavy heart, but in defence of the fatherland and for the protection of our sons and brothers, who provide dangerous service on the front. The thought of giving these bells to private undertakings as an object of speculation would need to be blamed in the strongest terms.\(^\text{92}\)

At the end of 1917, rumours about speculation and the misuse of metal circulated within the press. Newspapers accused Manfred Weiß of misusing the metal collections and making a profit instead of producing ammunition (Morelon, 2019, p. 211). *Vorarlberger Volksfreund* claimed, that the nation was subject to the “profiteering” Jewish mistreatment of bells. Furthermore, a church bell was found in a pub in Vienna and this caused the newspaper to comment:

> Can the Jew Manfred Weiß do what he wants with the bells handed over to him? The competent authorities will probably have to answer this question. Clarification is certainly necessary.\(^\text{93}\)

In May 1917, nine parliamentary questions (and a motion) were submitted on behalf of different territories on the subject of church bells (Morelon, 2019, p. 211). The Diet of Vorarlberg submitted a petition to the Ministry for Culture and Education stating:

> To the k.k. Ministry for Culture and Education in Vienna. [...] The willingness to hand over the last bells, if the time is urgent, is beyond doubt. But we want to point out that in other places equivalent metals can be found, which have not been requested so far. Not that these objects are less valuable, but metal objects made of brass and similar, which can be easily substituted with iron, can be found in various palaces, official buildings or trains. A range of objects, such as monuments or similar can be found in

\(^{92}\) ANNO: *Vorarlberger Volksblatt*, 5 December 1917, p. 3.

\(^{93}\) ANNO: *Vorarlberger Volksfreund*, 6 June 1918, p. 3.
public places, public parks or luxurious buildings. Their removal would be no loss, neither for art nor for the public moral. The remaining bells in the country are mostly for special historical and artistic value, and are essential from a standpoint of cultural preservation and needed for religious service. The people have seen with a heavy heart and have been deeply moved by how their bells were taken, but they have accepted this sanction with a patriotic attitude. The removal of the last remaining bells in the country would without any doubt cause deep anxieties in the public. Even more, because it is generally known that, as stated above, there are still things available that would better suit for a war purpose than the removal of the last church bells [...].

This request presents Vorarlberg as a religious province with its own sense of identity. It is evident that Vorarlberg’s representatives used an anti-modernist approach to secure the bells. Monuments and art were seen as irrelevant artefacts that conflicted with Vorarlberg’s own sense of belonging as a religious society. The main speaker of the letter was Jodok Fink and he was a member of the Christian Social Party. Internal conflicts within the conservative Catholic camp led to the establishment of a new party. The Christian Social Party’s political aim was more anti-capitalistic and they wanted to represent farmers and craftsmen (Pichler, 2015, p. 24). Fink was a born farmer and then he became a politician. He was viewed as the farmers’ representative and he held a seat within the Austrian parliament. Fink was the main figure behind Vorarlberg’s administrative independence from Tyrol in 1918. His letter to parliament placed Vorarlberg at the forefront and helped define the collective identity of the province. The public were heard as residents of Vorarlberg and not as individual villagers. Some villagers referred to Fink’s letter in their petition requests. These requests sought to delay the bell seizures and this could be read as their acknowledgement of the change in identity from villagers to Vorarlbergers. However, Fink did not save the bells and the efforts of the politicians were fruitless.

The Empire’s desperation to seize more bells can be seen in the following letter. A harsher tone was used in official correspondences and this highlights the closeness of the Monarchy’s downfall. Furthermore, the Empire’s struggle to keep the different

94 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.5.6, Bregenz 20 July 1917.
95 Available at: https://themavorarlberg.at/kultur/jodok-finks-letzter-gang (Accessed: 1 May 2020).
territories united is shown in the war administration’s announcement about the second wave of bell seizures.

A letter from the k.k. Military command asserted:

The k.k. Military Command in Innsbruck telegraphs to the General Vicariate an order that should be delivered to the reverend parishes. The order is that they should surrender the useless resistance against the removal of the church bells because a removal is inevitable. The General Vicariate has asked the deanship to mediate regarding the new demand of church bells and help delay it. Additionally, all bishops from the alpine countries have submitted a request regarding the removal of bells. Vorarlberg especially was supported with a request from all the members of the diet. It was sent to the kk. Ministry of Culture and Education. The request asked for preservation of the last remaining bells. All these efforts to stop the second claim of bells or even to just delay it have been fruitless. Another resistance is useless and the reverends are advised to cause no more problems. If these parishes are left without bells the General Vicariate is advised to request bell swaps from the Military command in Innsbruck.96

Researcher Viktor Kleiner was a prominent figure in Vorarlberg’s decision-making on bells. From 1914 to 1938, Kleiner was awarded the role of Landeskonservator (highest official of the cultural heritage preservation), and he was responsible for the final decisions made on the preservation of historical and artistic bells. Kleiner was a researcher with a reputation for establishing the historical archive of Vorarlberg. He was also on the board of the historical museum of the province. Kleiner’s research focused only on Vorarlberg, he gave numerous talks and published articles in newspapers, as well as books, to educate the public about the history of the province.

Historian, Markus Barney points out that through his work, Kleiner was an important person in establishing a “sense of identity” within Vorarlberg (Barney, 1988, p. 279, p. 318). Kleiner’s attempt to preserve the church bells created a coherent image of Vorarlberg and this can be seen in his project work. His solution of ‘bell swaps’ aimed to save bells and bring communities together and it was promoted throughout the whole war. Kleiner’s project required some churches to offer all of their bells to preserve more significant bells in the other villages.

96 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X.V. 2.5.2, Feldkirch, 5 September 1917.
A case study of his scheme can be found in the village Lech. Kleiner decided to protect all four of Lech’s bells and declared the bells as historically essential, although their age and inscriptions did not fall within the criteria.

To protect their bells Lech’s parish made loan agreements with three villages. One of Lech’s bells was lent to the neighbouring village named Warth because they had given away their whole peal (all of their bells) and two bells were lent to other villages because they had also sacrificed their bells.

The logic behind Kleiner’s decisions about which bells to preserve were not coherent, but his proposal of bell swaps shows how the seizing of bells unified the different villages in creating a larger community, Vorarlberg.

As the Empire’s military defeat became certain, regional governments in the cities, Prague, Zagreb, Krakow and Budapest seized power. In October 1918 the Habsburg monarchy broke apart (Cornwall and Newman, 2016). The end of the First World War drew a completely new political and geographical landscape within central Europe. The removal of bells had claimed around 15,000 to 18,000 tonnes of copper (Wegs, 1976, p. 193; Morelon, 2019, p. 200). Vorarlberg lost almost 90 percent of its total weight of bells\(^\text{97}\). Austria went from being one of the largest entities in Europe to becoming a small country that nobody wanted with a struggling economy. Therefore, Austria began its search for a new identity.

To summarise, the requisition of bells profoundly transformed the soundscape of the villages and the painful impact of war found its sonification on the home front. The Empire’s call for metal took a fundamental component of the local identity away. Morelon states, “The attachment that people felt for their bells was linked to a sense of place and connection with their own community” (Morelon, 2019, p. 213). The Empire’s misconception of its people’s sense of place contributed to the demise of the Monarchy. Morelon supports this claim and states, “As bells were quintessential symbols of the ‘homeland’, the attack on them perpetrated by the state in a war to supposedly defend the homeland helped weaken Habsburg legitimacy” (Morelon, 2019, p. 231).

The Empire’s call to sacrifice aimed to create a patriotic community in alliance with its leaders. However, Morelon explains that the bell’s leaving awakened the public’s

\(^{97}\) Vorarlberg had 470,000 kg before the war (Vorarlberger Volksblatt, 12 January 1916) and around 55,000 kg after the war (based on bells recorded before World War Two).
consciousness about their sense of place. This made the various emotional communities transparent (Morelon, 2019).

The public’s outcry when their bells were removed shows the sentimentality of bells to the people. This conflicts with Corbin’s view that bells lost their meaning at the beginning of the twentieth century. The understanding that bells are a pre-modern phenomenon can be questioned because bells still had importance for the everyday life in Vorarlberg. Feelings, as described by Ahmed (2010) are “sticky” and this is evident in the relationship between the communities and their bells. The public’s reaction revealed a strong attachment that the Empire could not sever. Morelon concludes, “the absence of objects can have as much of an impact as their presence” (Morelon 2019, p. 228).

3.10 World War Two and the Seizing of Bells

The confiscation of bells was also prevalent in the Second World War but in comparison to World War One bell restrictions were harsher and more systematic. Furthermore, the church’s behaviour in the Second World War was ambivalent towards National Socialism. The church went from being a nationalist supporter to a condemnner of Hitler’s regime. National Socialism was portrayed as an anti-Christian movement however, scholars have argued that Christian clergy did welcome the Nazi movement and their anti-Semitic propaganda (Steigmann-Gall, 2003). Historian Richard Steigmann-Gall explains how Nazism and Christianity were not polar opposites. He asserts in his book The Holy Reich. Nazi Concepts of Christianity 1919-1945, that Nazism was aligned with Christian ideals. The party elites identified with Christianity and referred to the faith for their moral conduct (Steigmann-Gall, 2003, p. 3). At the beginning of the war, Austrian churches embraced the Nazi movement and announced a “solemn welcome”. In the 1938 referendum, the church instructed communities to vote yes for Hitler, and Vorarlberg voted yes by 98.09 percent (Pichler, 2012). The Bishop of Vorarlberg did not favour the public’s support for National Socialism (Bitschnau, 2011) however, the official church aimed to achieve a coexistence with the Nazi party. In 1938, after the Anschluss (the annexation of Austria to Germany), the church received constant push back and any priests who resisted the regime were sent to concentration camps or executed. Restrictions made by the regime resulted in the ringing of bells being banned.
or limited. Bell ringing for baptisms and weddings was banned. Bells were permitted to ring for natural hazards and air alerts. The regime restricted bell ringing for no longer than three minutes for funerals and religious services. In 1940 the ban was lifted and bell ringing for all religious ceremonies was permitted. As the ban was lifted, the Nazis announced their need for bell material. The public was told the confiscation of bells would be soon. Bells were grouped into four categories from A to D. Category A contained the least valuable bells, which were melted immediately. Category B bells were classed more valuable and were kept in warehouses in case they were needed. Category C bells were stored in warehouses but they were placed behind category B because of their value. Category D contained preserved bells, which were allowed to stay in the bell towers.98 The National Socialist Party made the public aware that the assessment of bells would be more thorough and less leeway would be given than in World War One.99 It is evident this message gave the people little hope for saving their bells. There are limited archival resources available for the Second World War, however, records show that most of the bells were placed in category “A”.100 Furthermore, the Nazis’ banned farewell ceremonies for bells in 1941. The authoritative stance taken by the party towards the bell seizures is illustrated in the following announcement:

Farewell bell ceremonies are not allowed to be carried out. However, during normal service before the removal of bells it is allowed to read out an official statement from the church, which should prepare the people for the removal. Priests are allowed to say some words about the removing of the bells as long as the speech is short and politically correct. It needs to be carefully pointed out that this action should support the Fatherland and not weaken it.101

The Nazis’ interpretation of political correctness held a completely different meaning. To avoid being persecuted the church did not publish an official statement on the bells’ removals. Instead the parishes were advised to be cautious. The Church Administration stated:

The apostolic administration has reservations against a standard statement regarding the removal of bells and wants to abstain from it. It also advises the priests to better say nothing about the removing of bells at all, because these

98 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X. 4.1.1.1, Innsbruck, 19 March 1940.
99 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X. 4.1.1.1, Innsbruck, 19 March 1940.
100 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X. 4.1.2, Erste Glockenablieferung 1940-1941; X. 4.2.2 Zweite Glockenablieferung 1941-1943
101 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X 4.2.1.1, Erlässe, 7 January 1942.
statements could be misunderstood and reinterpreted which would cause new inconveniences.102

In 1943, a complete ban on bell ringing was imposed and priests were instructed to hand over their belfry keys to the local mayors.

By the end of the war around 300,000 tons of copper from church bells was transferred to the German war economy. The bells came from Germany, Austria and occupied territories. Austria lost more than 70 percent of its bells (Freeman, 2016, p. 450).

After the war approximately 2000 bells were discovered in Hamburg and 150 of those bells came from Austria. Austria’s request for their bells brought up discussions around guilt and victimhood. Historian Kirrily Freeman’s article about World War Two bell seizures points out that after the war, British officials chose to delay the return of bells from warehouses to German cities. In regard to Austria, questions were raised about their involvement in the war. Was Austria a German collaborator or the first victim? Freeman answers,

The final decision regarding Austrian bells, made in August 1946, was that they be treated as ‘foreign’ and repatriated immediately. [...] One thousand seven hundred fifty bells were released. Since Austrian bells were initially stored with and treated as German bells, however, it became extraordinarily difficult to distinguish them (Freeman, 2016, p. 445).

The Nazis’ seizing of Austrian bells helped reinforce the country’s victim myth. Austria managed to position itself with the help of Allied Forces as the first victim of Nazi-Germany. However, research has shown the standing ovations the Nazis received when they entered Austria.103 Finally, the difficulty found in differentiating Austrian and German bells suggests that close collaborations existed between the countries.

102 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch: X 4.2.1.1, Erlässe, 11 January 1942.
103 See also pictures from ÖNB, Grafiksammlung H4821.
4. Bells in Peace

The previous chapter placed a focus on war, whilst this chapter's focal point will be peace. History books tend to link war and peace to failures and successes and this seems to be the narrative for most cultural memories. Swiss historian, Jörg Fischer explains the significance of war and peace when he writes in his chapter *Friedensherstellung und Friedenswahrung*, that peace and war produced important sites of memory in European history (Fischer, 2012).

In general, humans tend to remember the exceptional experiences in their lives and not the ordinary. We may remember our first day at school but we wouldn’t recall what we did on a random day in the past. Our extraordinary experiences produce sites of memory, these sites help us collectively commemorate the past and create our sense of belonging.

This chapter will link bells with the memories of our past and these are the main questions that will be addressed throughout the whole chapter. How can bells create and promote a shared past, not only as material objects but also through listening? What kind of commemoration is preserved in the object as well as the sound? Bells possess a material quality in terms of their materiality and inscriptions but they also have an auditive quality through sounding. The material qualities aid a remembrance from the traces of the past, which are captured in the artefact. This leads you to question, does the sound have any meaning or is additional memory work required to access these sites of memory? Can the auditory qualities of bells help to keep certain memories alive, or do they mediate memories? Furthermore, how do these sites of memories affect the body and how do they mediate a certain cultural memory?

This chapter is split into three parts and a focus is placed on two elements, the material and immaterial. Material aspects of bells include it’s inscriptions and place, whilst immaterial aspects involve the sensing and experiencing of bells throughout the body. Overall, the following chapter will examine the auditory experience created through the listening to bells. A review will be made on how the experience of sound creates personal and collective memories and how this informs a bodily experience of a place.
Additionally, a focus will be placed on how we remember and not what we remember. In doing so, bells will be viewed as immaterial artefacts as well as material.

The first part of the chapter will begin with a consolidation of bells as sites of memory to investigate how a sense of belonging intertwines with the different narratives of a shared past. This part sets up the framework for the following section because it highlights that sites of memory include monuments. The next part will discuss how Austria’s Federal Monuments Authority (BDA) as official agents promote and protect material cultural heritage. This section will discuss why bells fall within the BDA’s category of sonic monuments. The following section will provide an exploration on warrior and hero bells and their role as sites of memory. There will be an examination on how warrior and hero bells are material artefacts that store traces of the past. To conclude, the final part will highlight how people commemorated the First World War through warrior and hero bells.

The second part of the chapter will examine six case studies. A focus will be given to individual interviewed accounts about the seizing of bells in World War Two. There will be an exploration of participants’ memories about the recasting ceremonies after World War Two and a review will be made about how people relate their narratives to a certain experience of place. Finally, there will be an exploration on how these experiences create a sense belonging through sound.

The third part of the chapter is split into nine sections. All sections contain different interview accounts about people’s memories and experiences of bells. Overall, the third part will highlight how the sensing of bells constitutes a sense of place and belonging. The body and its relationship with bells will be interwoven throughout all of the sections. This will stress the importance of the body in attributing meaning and attachment towards bells. The third part will include a review of bells as postmemories, There will be a focus on how an attachment to bells can be created through time, religion and memory management. Furthermore, it will reveal how bells are intertwined with the experience of a place as well as how bells are used as a tool for othering through the creation of a ‘they’ and ‘we’ perspective.
The sources for this chapter are oral history interviews and bells cast after the First and Second World War.

### 4.1 Sites of Memory

Historian Pierre Nora (1989) explains that sites of memory are our manifestations of past times but they are always constructed through the present day. Sites of memory have a strong relationship with the process of remembering and forgetting. They are not static past references but rather a reconstruction. They possess material and immaterial characteristics and promote a cultural memory that can be experienced by the individual. Sites of memory can be described as irrelevant until a value is placed upon them. According to Jörn Rüssen, sites of memory are forms of memory that work within the context of archives, museums, monuments or local historic societies. They can also be found in immaterial forms such as events of commemoration (anniversaries, celebrations) (Rüssen, 2006, p. 84).

Historian, James E. Young (1993) supports this statement in his claim that monuments hold no meaning until official agencies load them with value. Young’s works around monuments and memorials reveal how historical sites contain layers of national myths. He asserts that these myths construct and explain a shared past, which inform our own memories (Young, 1993). As will be shown in this chapter, bells seem to be similar to monuments and memorials because they mark the triumphs of heroes and pay honour to the dead. Therefore, Young’s description can be seen to align with bells. However, his hypothesis on the “layers of national myths” (Young, 1993, p. 5), poses further questions. An important aspect about sites of memory is that they help to keep a certain memory of individuals or events alive. This then works to create a sense of unity for a collective.

Cultural theorist, Astrid Erll writes,

> sites of memory are places where groups of people engage in a public activity” through which they express “a collective shared knowledge [...] of the past, on which a group’s sense of unity and individuality is based (Erll and Ansgar, 2010, p. 62).
It is important to review what monuments commemorate and to know where sites of memories exist. Monuments and sites of memory can be a part of the landscape. Most monuments are placed in market squares, crossroads, and churchyards or near public buildings (Winter, 1995, 2014). In Austria, many memorials that commemorate the world wars are located in churchyards or main squares. Historian, Jörn Rüssen states that sites of memory can construct topographies of history within our everyday life (Rüssen, 2006, p. 84). He claims they have a dimension of affect in which history becomes “visible, audible, tangible and experienced with all the senses” (Rüssen, 2006, p. 85). By involving the body an emotional reaction is created and this is evident with bells. Artefacts can stimulate emotions and memories that have the capability to affect the body. Sites of memories have the ability to affect bodies through stimulation but they have to be accessed through active engagement. They remain as a code in which a sense of belonging is created. A code, in this sense, has a different meaning for everyone. Sites of memory intertwine body and landscape with constitutive and constituting. They are always in a process of (re)formation (Waterton, 2013). Emma Waterton asserts that sites of memory are a part of a museumscape and they “can become part of the living body, absorbed into an embodied encounter” (Waterton 2013, p. 71). We feel the sites as part of a wider landscape but we also ‘feel the past’.

American Performance studies scholar Diana Taylor (2003) offers another helpful thought that can be applied to bells and their construction of memories. Taylor claims that a rift exists between the archive, which consists of materials like texts, objects or buildings and the repertoire, which contains spoken words, dances and rituals. The archive consists of ‘supposedly enduring’ materials and the repertoire is considered ephemeral. Taylor describes the repertoire as an embodied memory. “The repertoire, whether in terms of verbal or nonverbal expression, transmits live, embodied actions. As such, traditions are stored in the body [...]” (Taylor 2003, p. 24). The archive and repertoire coexist in constant interaction. However, Taylor highlights that historical researchers do not use the repertoire and texts have been positioned as the most useful tool in creating historical consciousness (Taylor, 2003).
4.1.1 Bells as Klangdenkmal (Sonic Monument)

The Federal Monuments Authority of Austria (BDA) is responsible for preserving the material past of the country therefore, bells fall within this category. The BDA protects cultural heritage artefacts and provides a service of historical and technical knowledge. The authority’s aim is to preserve the authenticity and value of cultural heritage and this is described in their mission statement as “an irreplaceable capital for the future.”104 Their statement provides an insight into the significance of preserving material cultural heritage. The website states:

The Federal Monuments Authority Austria protects and maintains the material cultural heritage of Austria and demonstrates the social importance of this task. Monuments bring the past to mind, form our cultural landscape, are part of our identity and an important element of the image of our country as well as a significant factor in economy and tourism.105

This statement highlights how a shared past creates a group identity. Monuments are described as being a part of “our identity” and in this case the ‘we’ refers to Austrians. The BDA points out that material artefacts create a ‘we’ feeling. They also highlight the importance of monuments for the economy and tourism because they portray a certain image to others. Furthermore, the significance of monuments can be linked to the spaces they occupy. Monuments define a certain territory and are a part of the ‘cultural landscape’. However, memory work is often needed to recollect their histories. BDA can be seen as an important agency in defining communities’ shared pasts. They influence how a shared past is mediated to the outside world. Additionally, monuments show how a nation wants to be perceived.

Alongside organs and other historical instruments, bells are considered “sonic monuments”. Since the 1970s, sonic monuments were given their own department within the BDA. However, it was not until the early 2000s that bells received special attention. This makes bells a recent topic within cultural heritage. Department Head for special materials (BDA), Gerd Pichler describes the characteristic of sonic monuments. He points out that bells as “sonic sites of memory” contribute to the creation of a collective past through senses and emotions.

104 Homepage of BDA. Available at: https://bda.gv.at/english/ (Accessed: 18 May 2020).
105 Homepage of BDA. Available at: https://bda.gv.at/english/ (Accessed: 18 May 2020).
According to Pichler, a monument is an “artwork plus time” (Pichler, 2008, p. 11). He explains that “sonic monuments” work on different sensual levels because they are aesthetically pleasing but also the “whole body” gets to experience them (Pichler, 2008, p. 6). This can be seen as a reference to the affective dimension of sonic monuments. Furthermore, Pichler highlights that sonic monuments create an emotional connection between the artefact and people. He explains that monuments have historical values that are charged with present day values. The interaction of these values makes the viewer emotionally react. However, the extent of the reaction is rooted in the receptivity of the perceiver (Pichler, 2008, p. 7). In other words, monuments only speak to a certain group of people who share similar values. This statement connects with Barbara Rosenwein’s concept of “emotional communities” (Rosenwein, 2015, p. 6). Bells as sonic monuments produce certain emotional communities through their emotional attachment with the everyday and values of the past.

Pichler claims in his book Klangdenkmale (sonic monuments) that the sound of bells was heard by “many before us” (Pichler, 2008, p. 7). He explains that sounds build a bridge to the cultural past because bells have accompanied people for a long time through festive and tragic moments (Pichler, 2008, p. 7).

Bells have become a recent topic within the field of cultural heritage. According to Pichler, this is because recent practices on bell preservation favour restoration over recasting. He explains that a lack of knowledge about preservation led to the recasting of bells in the past. Additionally, it was financially advantageous for bell founders to recast bells instead of fixing them (Pichler, 2008, p. 36).

It can be suggested that bells were not considered historical artefacts but rather objects of the everyday life. Therefore, less focus was given to their preservation. An examination on the production of bells reveals that bells were often recast in alignment with contemporary tastes. Therefore, no value was seen in restoring them.\footnote{Bell shapes and sizes changed continually since the eighth century. Bell casting became more and more professionalised and the sizes of bells became bigger. Bells were not only recast because of wars or due to seizures, but also in order to make them more musical. One example of a wave of recasting could be found in the nineteenth century in Austria. Up to this time bell towers had bells from different periods, which means their bells did not necessarily “fit” together. New bells were cast with the use of the existing material from the older bells. The recasting had the purpose to make the whole peal more harmonic, and in accordance with the contemporary aesthetical taste (Wernisch, 2006).} Bells were...
anchored within the everyday and their production was informed by their *zeitgeist*. The shift from recasting to restoring broken bells implies that bells became less relevant for the everyday life. It can be suggested, that bells are now seen as an artefact of the past therefore, they are in need of protection and saving from getting lost and forgotten.

Bell material itself is a product of a certain time and this is evident with steel bells. The production of steel bells began at the beginning of the twentieth century. Steel was seen as an affordable modern material therefore, bronze bells lost sales. Austria’s loss of church bells in the First World War led to an increase in bell demands and for this reason the Austrian steel factory, Böhler, in the province Styria, began to produce bells made of steel. Böhler was only active during the interwar period, however, the public was provided a high supply of their bells. Due to it’s material, steel bells were exempt from being seized in World War Two. Therefore, they have survived until this present day (Wernisch, 2006).

![Steel factory Böhler producing steel bells, Böhler Kapfenberg.](image)

The production of steel bells can be seen as a necessity because a different type of bell was needed to supply high demands after World War One. These bells can be considered involuntary sites of memory because their materiality is a memorial of World War One.

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Today, a nostalgia exists for a certain type of bell. Steel bells are being replaced with bells made of bronze. Sometimes, the exchanged bells are displayed as visible monuments. They are placed in churchyards or put alongside other monuments to commemorate the World Wars. This supports the analysis that bells are a site of memory.

Figure 12: Steel bell from the First World War placed in a churchyard, Nüziders Vorarlberg. The bell was cast in Germany in the steel factory of Bochum, which has stopped its production, Thomas Felfer.

The time period a bell is produced in and its materiality can link bells to a particular era. Additionally, the inscriptions found on bells contribute in becoming sonic monuments. In the following section the term “warrior bells” will be explored. These bells can be described as an expression of a collective memory. They provide an insight into the different forms of memory work found in village communities and they will reveal the temporality of monuments.
4.1.2 “Warrior Bells” and “Hero Bells” from the Research Area and their Inscriptions

Austria has an estimated 15,000 church bells. Most of them were cast after 1945 and only 15 percent were made before the Second World War (Wernisch 2006). The research area of Vorarlberg lost 90 percent of their bells during the First World War and about 70 percent after the Second. Many villages were left with only one bell and this caused a surge in bell castings. One occurred during the interwar period and another wave began after the Second World War.


In the twentieth century, bells named warrior or hero bells were cast. These bells can be classed as memorials because they were linked to the World Wars. Furthermore, they can be seen as a product of a certain time with a particular meaning. Many villages chose to cast the bells because they were a dedication to the fallen soldiers. The inscriptions written on the warrior and hero bells provide an insight into the way communities mourned and commemorated the war. Before 1918, there were no bells dedicated to warriors or heroes they were only bestowed on religious saints. The casting of warrior and hero bells became popular after the First World War and they were also cast after the Second World War. However, the inscriptions written after the latter war referred to the bells as heroes less.

The bell recasts after World War One were connected to war, however, the recasting after World War Two was somehow disconnected from the war. After the Second World War, bells became a sign of a new beginning. They were used as a tool for forgetting instead of commemorating. This does not mean that bells after the Second World War were not seen as an instrument for mourning. Most war memorials were placed in churchyards and this helped connect the bells with war and loss.

War memorials were used as a tool to make sense of the wars. In the case of the First World War, memorials helped the newly formed country called Austria rediscover itself. Austria was a fraction of the old Empire in size and the country was in search of a new
identity. Therefore, sites of memory, such as the warrior and hero bells, were important in creating a collective memory. This helped promote a sense of belonging.

War memorials promoted a patriotic space. An emphasis was placed on the universality of loss due to the fallen soldiers of the war. The memorials were orientated towards political and aesthetic traditions that existed before the Great War. Winter states, “These local war memorials arose out of the postwar search for a language in which to reaffirm values of the community for which soldiers laid their lives” (Winter 1995, 2014, p. 79). The language used in war memorials sought to help war survivors with their trauma and families cope with their losses. However, army survivors were hardly associated with war memorials, the focus was much more on the fallen wartime heroes (Uhl, 2011). This can be seen in the inscriptions written on the warrior and hero bells.

The bells helped portray a certain image of World War One’s fallen soldiers. They were pictured as brave heroes who fought to defend the fatherland. Additionally, the inscriptions written on the bells were influenced by people’s traditional values. Winter states, they incorporated “euphemism about battle, ‘glory’ and the hallowed dead” (Winter, 1995, 2014, p. 2). This can be seen as a continuation of the language used during the Great War to support the war efforts.

A bell from a village that was cast in 1932 highlights the language of heroes used by the different communities. The following inscription states, “I want to tell and report to the children of the future, of fallen war heroes and their bravery [...]” (Wernisch 2006, p. 611).

The inscriptions also referred to traditional beliefs about the power of sound. The villages often associated the sound of bells with the supernatural and they believed that bells had special powers (Haid, 2008). Cultural geographer, Nigel Thrift points out that, “bells were thought to be able to drive away evil and disease, and able to help boost the prayers of the faithful towards heaven” (Thrift 1996, p. 19). Another belief held by the public since the Middle Ages and perhaps even before that, was that the sound of great bells could ward off thunder and lightning (Rath, 2003, p. 48). Historian, Keith Thomas (1971) states in his book Religion and Decline of Magic that in the sixteenth and seventeenth century England held the same belief about bells and special powers. People believed that after their consecration, bells were bestowed with powers.
Additionally, the consecration was said to protect people against evil spirits and this gave bells the power to dispel thunder and lightning because demons were believed to be responsible. Furthermore, when a raging storm broke out the bells were rung to control the weather (Thomas, 1971, p. 31). These ancient beliefs about the special power of bells were prevalent in the inscriptions on hero and warrior bells. The ringing of the bells was said to carry the inscriptions to heaven (Rath, 2003, p. 49). This reveals how warrior and hero bells can seen as a commemorative sound.

Campanologist, Percival Price comments on this when he writes:

> It did not matter if they were in a speech not understood by (some of) the people. They were not there to be viewed by men, but to be spoken to angels and demons contending for men's souls (Price, 1983, p. 127).

Warrior and hero bells can be seen as a material artefact of commemoration and the ringing itself seems to be a process of commemorating through sound. This highlights how sound alone had enough power to honour the fallen soldiers. Almost every bell used the phrase, “As often as my tones sounded from the tower, think and pray for those who were fallen for you.”

Winter states that local war memorials often listed the names of the fallen soldiers (Winter, 1995, 2014). The list of names highlights the value bestowed on men who fought on the battlefields. In reference to the soldiers, a bell cast in 1922 has the following inscription, “Sons of the homeland sacrificed their blood and heart for the fatherland. This announces my sound and their names on my bronze [followed by the 17 fallen soldiers]” (Wernisch 2006, p. 642). Winter further highlights the memorial’s aim and states, “The living can go on about their lives in freedom because of the selflessness and dedication of the men who fell.” (Winter, 1995, 2014, p. 95).

Additionally, bell inscriptions reveal the local connection people had with their fallen soldiers, territory and in a broader sense, their relationship with the First World War. Warrior and hero bells can be seen as a bridge between micro and macro histories. They reminded the public of the war as a global event and highlighted the impact the war made locally.

107 Archiv der Diözese Feldkirch.
Bell casting after the World Wars functioned as a symbolic act of recovering. According to Winter, “war memorials marked the spot where communities were reunited – where the dead were symbolically brought home [...]” (Winter, 1995, 2014, p. 98). Winter’s statement is evident in the following pictures of bell ceremonies. They were festive occasions that revealed the resilience of the communities.

Figure 13: Bell consecration in Montafon, Archiv Montafon.

Figure 14: Bell consecration in Raggal 1923, Privatarchiv.
Figure 15 and 16: Bell consecration in the village Sonntag, Privatarchiv.
These photos illustrate how the recasting of bells, in particularly warrior and hero bells, are a product of a certain time and place. Therefore, it can be suggested that the meanings given to these sonic monuments changed over time. Winter reiterates that war memorials were:

located specifically in time and place. Once the moment of initial bereavement had passed, once the widows had remarried, once the orphans had grown up and moved away, once the mission of veterans to ensure that the scourge of war would not return had faded or collapsed, then the meaning of war memorials was bound to change. [...] Their initial charge was related to the needs of a huge population of bereaved people. Their grief was expressed in many ways, but in time, for the majority, the wounds began to close, and life went on (Winter, 1995, 2014, p. 98).
The public’s moving on meant that warrior and hero bells soon became an artefact of the past. There were no bell anniversaries and nowadays hardly anyone notices them hanging in bell towers. In this present day, only the few people who have a personal relationship with the World Wars know they exist. The recast bells are as much a symbolic ritual of remembering the war as well as forgetting it.

Winter asserts that:

Ritual here is a means of forgetting, as much as of commemoration, and war memorials, with their material representation of names and losses, are there to help in the necessary art of forgetting (Winter, 1995, 2014, p.115).

It is evident, that the recasting of warrior and hero bells after the World Wars helped communities mourn their losses. The bells became a tool for forgetting as much as remembering. However, only segments of information about what the war represented were linked to the bells. For example, there was no mention of who the heroes fought for or the pain the war invoked. Additionally, the deported and killed villagers from the Second World War were not explained through the bells. The bells only represented the male bodies of soldiers and heroes that had fallen for the fatherland.

Furthermore, warrior and hero bells were mainly cast in countryside villages. Towns and monasteries did not cast many of these bells. This indicates that villages in the countryside chose to remember and forget their fallen soldiers more than those in towns or cities. Furthermore, the warrior and hero bells reveal that monuments are not a storage of memory but rather a symbol that tends to change its meaning over time.

4.2 Between Remembering and Forgetting - Bells and how “I Remember”

Personal attachments to sound are linked to memories and this will be made evident in the accounts given by Vorarlberg’s earwitnesses. Murray Schafer describes an earwitness as someone “who testifies or can testify to what he or she has heard” (Schafer, 1994, p. 272). Schafer’s definition of an earwitness refers
to the direct experience of various authors who wrote about sound (Schafer, 1994, p. 6). Sound scholar, Carolyn Birdsall further developed this description in her reference to earwitnesses in oral history interviews (Birdsall, 2009, 2012). Birdsall states, that interviews are “an important method for elucidating how earwitnesses perform, remember, and perceive the role of sound in mediating past experiences” (Birdsall, 2009, p. 170).

The interviewees will be defined as earwitnesses to review sound memories about bells and the act of remembering. The participants accounts will highlight how sound can be used to reconstruct the self and the past. Birdsall describes sound memories as a reconstruction of the past that highlights “expressive, affective and performative characters of memories” (Birdsall, 2016, p. 111).

The following section will review six case studies, two women and four men. The case studies are based on the public’s personal experiences of the Second World War. All of the earwitness accounts captured were from when they were children or young adults and some participants experienced the seizing of church bells in the Second World War. Additionally, all participants were witnesses to the arrival of the new bells after the war. The accounts will show how memories about bells are influenced by personal experiences and each case study will reveal how sound is remembered or forgotten. The sound memories will be linked to particular social contexts, experiences of place and bodily experiences. The various memory accounts about the bell recasts will highlight the symbolic meaning behind the recasting of bells for the ‘newborn’ Austrian state. Furthermore, the bell recasts will illustrate how emotional communities were established through sound and how bells are attached to certain emotional temporalities. Therefore, it can be suggested that particular meanings are intertwined with certain historical and temporal experiences.
4.2.1 Case Study 1 – Brandon

Brandon was born in 1920 and he is the oldest person from the presented case studies. He lives in an intergenerational household with one of his children and his grandchildren. Unfortunately, Brandon’s wife passed away a few years before the interview. He was the eldest of five children and his father died when he was young.

Brandon grew up ‘miserably poor’ as he called it and this was the general theme found in most of the case studies. He was brought up in a religious household but did not become an altar boy. According to Brandon, this was because he needed to work throughout the whole summer on the pastures up in the mountains. All of the interviewees from Brandon’s village, including Brandon, mentioned after the Second World War only one bell was returned and it came from storage in a nearby town.

Brandon had no personal memories of how the bell was returned. Furthermore, he did not witness the seizing of bells because he was one of the 35,000 Vorarlberg soldiers that fought in the war (Pichler, 2012, p. 592).

Brandon was the only person that mentioned the warrior and hero bells. This was because he drew a comparison between World War One and Two and the impact they both made on the villages. In his own words Brandon claimed:

The first bell, the biggest bell has the names on it of the warriors who fell in the First World War. In the First World War seven or eight men fell and in the Second 17, which is unbelievable for such a small village.

His reference to the lost lives of the war helped Brandon support the narrative of Austria as a victim of war with involuntary involvement. Furthermore, the conversation about bells triggered Brandon’s memories from the war. His recollections are a good example of the ambiguity of memory that can be found within Austria. Brandon’s memories provide an understanding of the perspective of a ‘perpetrator’ in the Second World War. His accounts seem to correlate with the myth of the “saubere Wehrmacht” (clean or unsullied armed forces). Historian, Michael Tymkiw describes this myth as the belief that members of the Wehrmacht “either did not know about the Nazi genocide or did not directly participate in the killings” (Tymkiw, 2007, p. 485). The Nuremberg war crimes tribunal highlights the myth’s purpose. They stated that by claiming to be a “saubere Wehrmacht” soldiers were protected and could not be charged as criminals.

108 Interview Nr. 21.
Brandon’s descriptions of his involvement in the war are presented as a travel log with different stops until his surrender in Croatia, 1944. Brandon became a prisoner of war and spent roughly 10 years in Egypt in captivity. Furthermore, his accounts about his drafting seem to detach him from looking guilty. Austrian Historian Meinrad Pichler (2012) writes in his book Nationalsozialismus in Vorarlberg (National Socialism in Vorarlberg) that at the beginning of World War Two only volunteers and the younger generations were drafted but throughout the course of the war the regulations became stricter. At the beginning of 1945, everyone born between 1884 and 1928 had to be enlisted (Pichler, 2012). In the case of Brandon, this applied to him. However, at the beginning of the war he was released from service because when he was five he lost sight in one of his eyes. Due to the change in army regulations he was later considered fit for service and Brandon was assigned to the occupation forces but was soon delegated to the fight division. This description helped him portray himself as rather uninvolved in his enlisting. Brandon further supported the myth of the saubere Wehrmacht when he claimed his army did not shoot any bullets in their surrender but he almost died of starvation in captivity. Brandon mentioned around 1000 people died whilst he was in captivity. In his own words he recalled his army’s surrender:

[…] and then it started, English ships arrived from the Mediterranean sea and they had triplet missiles and they shot at us and the artillery came closer and closer until they arrived at our line, it was wild, we were hiding in holes (laughing) […] the partisans lay in front of us and we could see them. No bullet was shot and everything became quiet. […] We discussed the situation and agreed that the superiority is too strong and a lot of people would die, it made no sense and we would lose anyway, it was over. So we agreed to surrender, we came out of our hideout and started to wave with our hands, the others approached us immediately […].

His description is not only a good example of the myth of the saubere Wehrmacht it also reveals the Austrian postwar narrative. A certain portrayal of Austrian soldiers can be found in numerous war memorials. Historian Heidemarie Uhl (2011) asserts that the sites presented a counter narrative to the victim myth. Uhl points out that the image of Austrian soldiers transformed during the 1950s. The soldiers were no longer portrayed as victims of war, they were seen as heroes “who had sacrificed their lives in devoted obligation to their duty (treue Pflichterfüllung), in order to protect the Heimat against impetuously intruding enemies” (Uhl 2011, p. 188). Brandon’s accounts did not align
with this narrative. In relation to the enemies of Austrian soldiers, he stated:

there were also good people, you can find good people everywhere. You can go wherever you want and find them and I always say the best thing is talking to each other instead of starting to fight and I was always lucky.

Brandon’s return to Austria in 1956 informed his only sound memory about bells. He claimed:

I have one memory and I can even hear the bell now. After my release from captivity in Egypt, we arrived in Venice with the ship. It was high noon and the bells were ringing, and then some of the men started to cry, I also started to cry (gets teary eyed) because for the first time after years we were hearing the bells again (laughing). This is the most beautiful memory I have about bells. It just came to me now. When we arrived, the bells were ringing and some of us were crying. For such a long time we had been in the desert in Egypt on the Suez Canal (laughing) oh dear, it was a hard time, but you have to take it as it comes. This came to me spontaneously. This is unique and is my memory about bells.

His memory caused a bodily reaction (teary eyes) and an emotional response seemed to be conjured through the act of remembering. Brandon’s memory of the sound left an auditive imprint, when he said “I can even hear the bell now”.

After his return from captivity, Brandon worked for the local church. He was a carpenter so he also constructed the scaffolding for their bell ceremony. He referred to his wife who had a particular personal connection with bells because she was one of the godmothers of the bells cast after 1945 in her home village.
Brandon witnessed a bell ceremony after his return in 1957. His descriptions of the event are based on visual aspects rather than sound. He recalled the purpose and weight of the logs to scaffold the bells and the decorations placed on the scaffolded logs. Brandon pointed out that the public was involved in hanging the bells. He recalled how they collectively lifted them up into the bell tower. The public's lifting of the bell was mentioned by most of the interviewees. As a collective the public symbolically returned their bell back to its designated place. Brandon's description of the recasting of bells seems to establish a sense of place through a collective performance. Furthermore, his mention of the collective helped him reinforce a sense of community. Brandon’s memory indicated that an emotional community bond was re-established through the village’s attachment to bells. The commemoration of war did not seem to be the focal point of his memories about the bell ceremony.
Figure 20: Picture of bell ceremony 1957 with Brandon’s scaffolding, Privatarchiv.

Figure 21: Lifting of the bells by the public, Privatarchiv.
James was born in 1932 and he lives alone on a farm. He grew up with six siblings and looked after the farm with one of his sisters who died in 2012. James’s relationship with bells resulted in him writing a memoir about the bells from his village. His sister helped him write the book, which meant it had a special emotional value for James. James decided to write out of fear that the stories he was told and experienced would be forgotten. When he became an altar boy the priest from the village told stories about the bells and the time before 1914. For 30 years he was the village priest and according to James, this gave his stories more credibility. James was always interested in what he describes as “beautiful bells”. Furthermore, his book was handwritten, which he explained was because people told him it has more value than having something printed. James had a religious upbringing, which was influenced by his mother who he referred to numerous times in the interview. He considered his mother to be very religious and very attached to bells. James’s relationship with bells was influenced by the priest but also by his mum.

In the interview, James chose to read from his book and he sometimes stopped to add additional memories. His interview revealed the special value he placed on the book and when he referred to people in photographs, James always located the places where they had lived and who currently lived in their houses. His descriptions focused on places and past everyday life events of his village. James’s accounts moved between the past and present and sometimes he spoke about the past to link it with the present. His reference to the past and present was always located within his village. Time was constructed as variable for James however, the place (village) was always static. This is due to his own experience of living in the same village for his whole lifetime. In this sense, he witnessed how his environment over time changed. James portrayed a rather nostalgic view of the village’s past social life because he reminisced about the sense of community that had been lost.

James’s book covers his village’s first bell arrival in the nineteenth century up until the recasting of bells in the 1950s. The first section is based on stories given by his priest.

109 Interview Nr. 2.
and mum. In this part, James used pictures to highlight the bell casting events after the First World War. James mentioned the events held great significance for the valley, not only for the village. Furthermore, he highlighted that before and after World War One the public transported the bells into the village. There was great difficulty found in transporting the bells because of the distance between villages and Vorarlberg’s mountainous landscape. This collective struggle is echoed in village bell petitions that were written during World War One. Most of the interviewees had the same account as James in regard to the transportation of bells. Furthermore, their description of this event reveals a community’s collective effort and a strong sense of belonging. Evidently, people were bound together because of the remoteness of their villages and their love for the bells.

Figure 22, 23 and 24: Transport of the bells in 1923, Privatarchiv.
James’s account of the bell ceremony after World War One was followed by a description of the picture above. The picture shows different priests from the valley and the Deacon of Feldkirch. This photo triggered James’s memory of the Second World War and the challenges that it posed.

In James’s words he stated:

I knew the priest very well. He baptised all of us (laughing). We were 7 children... After he died there was another priest but he had to leave during Hitler, because that was a time with many supporters for Hitler, I don’t want to talk about it, but our Mother was the opposite. [...] I can only remember it a little bit, but when Austria came to Germany in the 1930s there was an election and nobody dared to vote for no but our mother and the priest of the village voted no. Only two people in the whole village, well I don’t know if everyone else voted for yes but they knew immediately who voted for no (laughing). My mother was in danger of getting sent to a concentration camp. Hitler was, in general, against the church and the 1930s, at least that’s what people have said, were miserable times. There was no work and Hitler gave them work again, but this backfired because then came the war. First Poland and so on, my brother was also in the war but he died of hunger in captivity, well [...] (Pause and then he keeps on reading from his book).

Some ambiguity can be found in James’s description of World War Two. He justified the public’s support for National Socialism and tried to explain why people were misled. However, he asserted that his mother did not support Hitler, which positioned him as an opponent of the war. In his reference to the anti-Christian stance of Nazism, James
seemed to portray himself as a victim of the war and the loss of his brother further reinforced this narrative.

James’s recollection about the seizing of bells involved his mother because she had a strong attachment with the bells.

James explained:

I remember it well when the bells were taken in 1942. (Reads from the book) “unfortunately this wonderful peal of bronze was taken with another small bell to support the war effort. Especially the biggest bell caused a deep grief in the parish (laughing)”, I know this very well. The bell was famous because of its wonderful sound. This is true, I don’t remember the sound, but the people have told each other how good the sound was. [...] (reads) “on the 23rd of June 1942 our bells were rung for the last time.” We children were standing at the door with our mother and we were listening to the bells. Our mother was crying because she knew the bells would soon be gone to support the war. It was 1942 and I was 10 years old. I can’t remember how the bells were sounding but I remember very well that our mother said come and listen well. We were opening the door and the bells were ringing for a long time [...] After that the bells were displayed for a few days at the cemetery. It was very sad to see. Three bells were taken and only the smallest bell was left.

James’s memory of the bell seizings is loaded with emotional vocabulary and it does not contain any sound memories because James mentioned twice that he had no memory of the sound of the bells. Furthermore, the feeling of admiration for the bells can be seen as a collective emotion, this is evident in James’s description of the parish grieving. The emotions of the individual villager are also made apparent in James’s mother’s crying and his reaction towards seeing the bells at the cemetery.

James’s accounts placed a strong emphasis on the visual and this is further highlighted in his description of the bell ceremony after the Second World War.

James stated:

I remember it very well the people waited full of excitement for the arrival of the bells. [...] Women were responsible for decorating the bells and also the lorries were decorated. They put a lot of effort into it and it was really beautiful.

The public’s joy for their new bells can be seen in the ceremony’s accompanying parade. The local brass band played and the fire brigade was dressed up in their uniforms. After the Second World War, most village bell ceremonies were ordained by Bishop Benno
Wechner and this gave the event added value and even more prestige. Additionally, James described how the bells were lifted by the public and this framed the collective effort. The arrival of the village’s new bells was symbolic because it marked a new beginning. After the Second World War, lorries transported the bells and this made distances appear shorter. Additionally, the remoteness of the villages, especially those in the mountains, no longer posed a problem for the people. The new transportation method was symbolic of the technical advances that had occurred and of Austria’s new found prosperity in the 1950s. The new bells were a symbol of peace although they made no explicit reference to conflict, this differed to the hero and warrior bells. The presence of the bells already highlighted their previous absence, which was due to the war. The event created a collective moment and demonstrated the continuous emotional attachment the people had with their bells. Furthermore, the public’s loss of bells in the past helped reinforce the notion of victimhood.

Figure 26: The arrival of bells also displayed new wealth and technological advances, Privatarchiv.
Figure 27: Arrival of the bell in the village, Privatarchiv.

Figure 28: The bell’s entry into the village, Privatarchiv.
4.2.3 Case Study 3 – Benjamin

Benjamin was born in 1933 and he currently lives with his wife. He has six children and he had two siblings who have unfortunately passed away. Benjamin grew up on a farm, which he took over from his parents. He also became a politician and he was the vice mayor of his village. Furthermore, Benjamin was a member of the provincial government, in which he spoke for agricultural agendas. He was also a member of the national parliament and he represented the Christian Conservative Party (ÖVP). His agricultural background and religious upbringing influenced his political career. It also instigated his involvement with the local church. Benjamin’s relations with the church led to him joining the bell committee and this was the main reason that Benjamin was interviewed. Additionally, it was discovered that he was the brother-in-law of James (case study 2).

The picture below was Benjamin's memory aid and it was the day when the contract for the new bells was signed.

Figure 29: Signing of the contract for getting new bells, Privatarchiv.

\[110\text{ Interview Nr. 17.}\]
Benjamin (the third person from the left) is sitting with the local priest, the bell founder and the main stakeholders involved in the bell decision-making process. He pointed out that this picture now has historical value because these events now make history.

Benjamin's religious upbringing influenced his first memory of bells. In his own words, Benjamin stated:

Well, the earliest childhood memory is at my grandfather from my mother's side's place. (Pause) [...] He was quite old at this time and he had mobility problems. He went on Sundays or when they were ringing for service to the lädili (terrace), as it was called back then. So he went out of the house, they ring for the Evangelium (gospel) with the smallest bell and then with the biggest, and I was at his place because he was looking after me, and when they rang the biggest bell for the consecration he knelt down and prayed the consecration supplications. (harrumph) [...] This is my earliest memory and it is also really clear because I was very impressed. The grandfather, who was normally a very active man, he monitored everything and ruled the business of the house (knocks on the table). But during the consecration, and this is the reason why I can hear the bells in combination, the bell in combination with his praying it was all the same process to me. But this is definitely the earliest memory about bells, yes (pause) and now I'm the same age as my grandfather at that time.

Benjamin's memory about sound seems vivid in his descriptions. He recalled the actions of his grandfather and linked it to a sound. The sound of bells was intertwined with a prayer and this highlights how sound, like in many of the other case studies, is connected to a particular people. Additionally, Benjamin touches on the emotions in his description when he recalls how a strict man (his grandfather) turned soft when he listened to bells. To conclude, it can be suggested that time played a part in triggering Benjamin's memory because he mentioned he is the same age as his grandfather was back then.

Benjamin recalled another connection he had with bells through his father. His father was a godfather of the village's bells that were cast during the interwar period but they were later seized by the Nazis. According to Benjamin, his parent's generation started the conversation about getting new bells after the Second World War. They had a stronger connection with bells and this was due to their experience of loss. He spoke
about how they lived through two bell seizings because they witnessed the First and Second World War.\textsuperscript{111} After the First World War, it took five years to recast new bells and after the Second World War it took ten years to recast the bells. This seems to explain why the older generation contested the long wait for new bells after the Second World War.

Benjamin stated:

During the times of poverty [after the Second World War] no one was thinking about new bells. But the older generation, which had this strong attachment to the bells that were taken in [19]42, they said we need bells again.

Benjamin explained that the process of getting new bells after the Second World War involved negotiations about materiality. Furthermore, discussions arose amongst the public about the value of religion and the pricing of the bells.

Benjamin said:

In the early [19]50s, when everything became better, we said “how should we start” because the bells were outrageously expensive. We contacted the bell founder for a first meeting and we handed out a list to ask for donations and people gave as much as they could give and it was (with emphasis) far too little money. After that we were visited 'Riezlern' (another village) they had steel bells from a bell foundry from Bochum (Germany) and this was a company, which was considered as one of the best for steel bells with the best sound. We took a simple transistor radio with us and travelled to a Sunday service where every bell was rung and we recorded the peal and then we travelled home again. We, who were there, we thought “well, if we don’t have more money, we can also live with that peal”, better this way than waiting much longer for new bells. (Pause) [...] older people said “no no, we don’t need steel bells”, but steel bells had an another advantage, the village Schoppernau decided after the First World War to cast steel bells and they weren’t taken, because the Nazis had enough steel, they didn’t need the bells. [...] Everyone with a forest was asked to provide wood, [...] in the end it was enough to buy bronze bells and there was money left over to buy an electric ringing system. [...] it was a huge sacrifice to get the bells, and then there was also a huge celebration when the bells arrived, [...].

Benjamin’s village voted for their preferred bell material this helped them reach a final decision on which bell to purchase. The main argument against steel bells was their quality of sound and low prestige. This resulted in bronze bells being the village’s

\textsuperscript{111} The bells after the First World War only existed for around 18 years in the village.
preferred choice. The negotiations of bell material reveal that bells still held prestige.
Bronze bells were valued for their sound quality and the village was in a rush to show their prosperity through the purchasing of these bells.\textsuperscript{112} The villagers coming together to finance the purchase reveals how the bells can be considered an object of collectivity. In a collective effort people chose to budget their money and they sold wood to purchase their desired bells. According to Benjamin, the bell ceremony was a collective moment of joy because the people had sacrificed together. The village made past sacrifices that resulted in them living without their bells and then they made sacrifices to purchase their new bells. Benjamin pointed out that before the bells were hung in the tower the public would go and visit them. They would touch them or knock on them to listen to their sound. Therefore, it can be suggested that bodies seeing and touching the bells amplified and ignited a connection between the people’s memories and the sound. It also marked a special occasion because the villagers were given a rare chance to visually be close to the bells. The people’s collective effort also highlights the power of the church. Benjamin stated:

I mean at this time everyone healthy went to Sunday service, and at this time, no one had a mobile phone and lots of people had just one clock in their house, the bell was also a timekeeper, it was of great importance, the strike of the hours (knocks on the table) but also the mornings, at this time the bell always rang at 5am, this was the time of day where the farmers went into the barn. It was in a way the beginning of the working day and it rung on Saturday and on Friday. This is also the case nowadays. They ring at 3pm in the afternoon, the death hour of Jesus Christ, and then there is afterwork ringing. People felt so much joy on Saturday, because of the hard labour and when the bell was ringing after work, yes! (laughing). And another day was Sunday. On Sunday the biggest bell started at five o’clock in the morning to introduce the Sunday, and it rang for a long time, and then again at 8am. People said it was for the people at the distant houses. The Sunday service started at 9am and to be on time you needed to leave at this time, and this was needed, people from ‘Stein’ hardly managed to arrive within one hour.

Benjamin’s vivid description of the bell ringing times reveals how the rhythms of sound, everyday life and religion are interwoven. This interaction of sound with the everyday invokes emotion and therefore, creates meaning. The bells link the quotidian with the

\textsuperscript{112} Most of the bells in the valley were cast between 1955 and 1957, St. Gerold – 1 bell in 1957, Raggal – 4 bells 1956, Fontanella – 3 bells 1955, Sonntag – 4 bells 1955, Thüringerberg - 1 bell 1951 and Blons – 3 bells 1947 and 1 bell in 1945.
extraordinary through its creation of temporal and spatial actions. This dynamic constructed the public’s sense of belonging.

Benjamin’s village’s only remaining bell after the Second World War is located in a different church to the recast bells. He explained that whenever he heard the bell memories of war were triggered in him.

In his own words, Benjamin stated:

I have a special relationship to it [to the bell]. (Pause) During the war a lot of people were needed for military service, including also the sexton from the church. We had over 20 fallen soldiers and there were from time to time Kreuzsteckungen (symbolic funerals) and during the Alpzeit (alp season, time in the alps in the summer), a lot of families lived in the Alps at this time, there were no altar boys. I had to serve during the service and take over the sexton’s duties. (With emphasis) It was a courtesy. In the funeral procession, there was no corpse, just a birch-cross was carried up in front, but the attendees came on foot, how else should they arrive? As soon as the first people could be spotted, [...] the bell had to start ringing and I was always at the top floor of the belfry, I had a very far sight from there, [...] therefore, the Kreuzsteckungen are so alive to me, and the sorrow (pause) which hit the families at this time if another young son or father lost his life in the war. Like they said during Hitler, the hero’s death for “Führer (leader) Volk (people) and Vaterland (fatherland)”, but I never could hear that phrase. I had such an aversion to war.

Benjamin’s aversion to war was explained through his description about his family. They resisted the Nazis propaganda by secretly listening to the Swiss radio instead of the Austrian station. Due to Vorarlberg’s closeness to Switzerland it was possible to listen to forbidden radio stations. Benjamin’s family would gather around the radio and cover the radio light with a towel. They would then turn off the lights to listen to the Swiss news.

According to Benjamin:

They were bringing news in the German language from the front, and you could hear the truth, and we were listening to the Swiss channel, this was possible with the Volksempfänger radio, they couldn’t disturb them. The Berumünster radio station could be disturbed ‘wouwouwouwouw’ (makes a sound) but if you listened carefully you could understand.”

In the interview, Benjamin used sound to sing a song about the Hitler youth. This helped him recall how they were “bred to fanaticism”. Birdsell further describes the notion of remembering through the act of making sounds. She points out, that remembering is
informed by auditory experience through body language and sound making (Birdsall, 2009). Furthermore, Birdsall proposes categories to differentiate the different ways of remembering. These categories are based on the work of cultural geographer, Ben Anderson (Anderson, 2004, p. 6-17). Her category of habit memory is of special interest because it aligns with Benjamin’s interview accounts. Birdsall explains:

Habit memories are acquired through the repetition of actions, often until they are internalized as intuitive or automatic mechanisms. These corporeally inscribed habits suggest that the past continues to form part of the present in the form of lived and embodied actions (Birdsall, 2009, p.173).

Additionally, Birdsall provides an insight about interviews that she conducted. She spoke with members of the public about their experiences of World War Two. When Birdsall’s interviewees recollected the Hitler Youth, they stomped their feet and began to march out the timing of a certain walk. Additionally, they sang old folk songs that had been appropriated by the Nazis (Birdsall, 2009).

Birdsall’s description can be used to understand why many of the bell interviewees acted out the sounds they remembered. The acting out of sound memories was evident in Benjamin’s accounts when he displayed a use of habit memory, through his action of waving whilst he sang the Hitler Youth song.

Benjamin’s accounts of Nazism seem to reveal some ambiguity. When asked if the confiscation of bells received support from the people. Benjamin responded:

I don’t know, during the Nazi times a few people had an incredible fanaticism for Hitler and this was bred. If someone said... (pause). I think no one dared say no (about the bells staying), because they (the bells) had a huge status. I cannot say anything about this... (pause) I don’t know anything about this... (pause). You need to distinguish this (pause). There was a lot of unemployment in the (19)30s and we had a lot of farmers with debts, especially small farmers in our area and when Hitler came, everyone who raised their hand got a refinancing. They got two cows and their debt was waived and they could carry on. There were very enthusiastic people, but there were a lot who saw through the ideology after a short time [...].

This account reveals Benjamin’s inner conflict with his memories. He was hesitant to disclose any information about Nazi supporters and he chose to defend his community by justifying their rationale. Benjamin’s hesitance to unveil the people’s support towards
Nazism was apparent in many of the other interview accounts. It reveals the selectivity and manipulation of memories to portray a certain picture of places and its people. The villagers’ sense of belonging needed to be framed by a favourable story. Their apparent lack of support for the requisition of bells helped portray them as victims who had no choice in the war. This can be seen as a survival instinct to distance them from Nazism. Furthermore, it reinforces the image of victimhood.

Figure 30: Bell ceremony in Benjamin and James’s village, Privatarchiv.

Figure 31: The godfathers and godmothers of the bells, Privatarchiv.
Figure 32: Consecration of the bells, Privatarchiv.

Figure 33: The ‘youth’ from the village in front of the bells, Privatarchiv.
4.2.4 Case Study 4 – Peter

Peter was born in 1934 and he was once the mayor of the village. He grew up on a farm and was altar boy in a bell ceremony after the Second World War. His village recast three bells in the year 1947 and another was cast after an avalanche in 1955. A connection between Peter and Brandon (first case study) can be found because Peter comes from the same village as Brandon’s wife. She was godmother of the bells in the 1947 ceremony. Peter brought a photograph for the interview. The photo was taken at the 1947 bell ceremony, he used it as a memory aid and he claimed it was evidence of his experience.

![Image of ceremony](image)

Figure 34: Ceremony of the consecration of bells, Privatarchiv.

When asked about his memories of bells, Peter said:

Well, the bells were taken. I have a distant memory of how they were taken, I think it was in 1942 or 43, but I can’t remember anymore. But here, (points at the picture). I was an altar boy, so I have more memories about that [...]. It was a big event and I have another picture as well. The whole street was crowded with people, no car could pass anymore, but there were not many cars anyway. The bell foundry conducted the hanging of the bell in the tower. I think it was a sixfold pulley and around 40 people had to pull on a rope to lift the bell into the tower. [...] It was in the year 1947 when the first three bells were cast [...] people wanted to have bells made of bronze again, so they collected money. I also went from house to house to ask for donations and the godfathers of the

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113 Interview Nr. 12.
bells were a bit better off, not rich, there were no rich people in our village, but they could afford to donate more money [...] In our village we had very musical people. We were a village full of singers and we were famous for that in our valley. Our people knew more about good sound. They said if we get bells, they should be made of bronze. Especially our teacher in the village she promoted this decision. So we got three bells of bronze.

Peter’s description aligns with the accounts from the other case studies. They all highlight the importance of bells for the community. Bells can be seen as a symbol of collectivity. This is evident in Peter’s account of the public’s collective lifting of the bells. Their collective efforts are further highlighted in the donations they made to purchase the bells. Even children were actively involved in collecting money and this shows that everyone, including the young and old, saw value in the bells for their community. The village’s decision to recast bronze bells refers to their want of prestige. Peter pointed out that bronze bells were an expression of musicality. He claimed this was befitting for the local population because they were considered musical people. Therefore, the sound of the bell can be seen to represent a particular musicality of the local space. Peter’s description of the bell ceremony is mainly based on visual clues. Sound does not seem to be a part of Peter’s recollections. However, he does discuss sound and his descriptions are filled with sound. Bells were usually not rung during the consecration ceremonies. They were baptised and then lifted into the tower and it took some time to install them so they could ring accordingly. This explains why the ceremony produced a rather visual memory for Peter instead of a sound memory. The event was out of the norm and it was visibly extraordinary, whereas the sound of the bells was anchored in the everyday life. Peter’s reference to sound is more apparent when he was asked about his general understanding of his village bells.

Peter stated:

Well, how should I put it, it means the bells calling the people to service. There was ringing when something bad happened. So it means a lot for me, I couldn’t imagine a village without bells. If you can’t hear them anymore something is missing (Pause) I can also hear the bells from the neighbourhood where I live. In the past I was living high up in the mountains so I could also hear the bells from St. Gerold and the bells from Sonntag and from Fontanella (almost all bells from the valley). Where I live now I can only hear the bells from St. Gerold when the wind is coming from the right direction. [...] bells were also ringing in our small parish when somebody died or at a baptism. They were a sort of
messenger but today it is different. For me personally, when I heard bells in
the past it meant mostly ringing for service and this is still the case today. But
there was also ringing when there was a fire or other disasters. We had no
siren, so it was called Sturmläuten (Alarm ringing). These are the memories
from my childhood. If a bell rang strangely you knew something happened
because people were ringing by hand. When I was an altar boy I was also
ringing by hand, also when somebody died. This was done with the biggest
bell. Five minutes ringing, then for one-minute silence and then again five
minutes, then another minute silence and again five minutes. This was the
signal when a man died. Women had five minutes, silence, and again five
minutes. It was quite intense so you had to be strong. I remember it very well.
I started a course in a college for agriculture in 1955 and the biggest bell was
new. When the first man died in the village, after we got the bell, I could
ring the death signal. So I could ring the biggest bell for the first time, alone, three
times five minutes, but I was really strong at this time so I could do it, you
needed to be strong and have good stamina, or the bell wouldn’t swing fully
and then it didn’t sound nice.”

Peter’s description presents religion as the main purpose of bells. This aligns with the
understanding of the Federal Monuments Authority of Austria (BDA). The historical
division of the BDA argues that bells are objects of religion and their main purpose lies
within a religious context. The division points out that bells are owned by the church
and make up part of the building’s inventory. Bells and churches are described as
intertwined. When a church is listed (which most of them are) the bells are protected as
well (Pichler, 2008, p. 8). Peter’s description highlights how the public’s emotional
attachment to bells is informed by their religious beliefs. Furthermore, the language
used in his accounts reflects the religious landscape of Vorarlberg.

However, Peter also disclosed how sound can have a secular meaning in his definition of
the bells as an alarm. His reference to sound revealed his sense of place because the
different bell sounds of his childhood and the sounds he heard in the present define the
village space and this shaped his experience of the place. According to Peter, something
would be missing if there were no bells at all. This meaning given to the bells is not only
constructed through his individual experience but also through the community. Peter
pointed out the importance of bells to the people when someone died or when someone
was born. The sound of the bells was linked to the experience of the community and this
was expressed through the bells ringing.

Peter refers to the body when he rings the bell by hand. Furthermore, many of the other
interviewee accounts also described the ringing by hand as a privilege and a task for
‘strong men’. The bell tower itself was defined as a gendered space, because only men were allowed to ring the bells by hand. It was a place for masculinity because of the strength needed. The task of producing sound was very much a male domain.

Peter’s account of the bells presents a nostalgic undertone because he pointed out that many things have changed. The bell changed not only through purpose but also through its relationship with the individual. A change of purpose is evident in Peter’s claim that bells do not need to be rung to alarm people anymore and a change in relationship is apparent in his description of the body. He spoke about the strength he no longer had to ring the bells by hand and the closeness he had to bells because of his role as an altar boy.

4.2.5 Case Study 5 – Mary

Mary was born in 1936 and she grew up on a farm nearby a town. Her relationship with bells is linked to her religious faith, which was very much influenced by her family. Mary grew up in a very religious household, her family were all practicing Catholics. Her grandfather was a sexton and her father helped build a church in her home village, in 1955. Mary’s uncle was a priest in the village she grew up in and her aunty was a nun. In the 1950s, she moved to another village up in the mountains and this is where she met her husband. Her husband was a tailor by trade but he was also a sexton in the village. Mary’s life was surrounded by the sound of bells and this is highlighted in her reference to her husband’s role of ringing the parish bells. Furthermore, Mary claimed, “bells always played an important role in my life”.

Mary often drew connections between bells and her family. When asked if she still listened to the bells, she replied:

I hear them always, I hear them always, I open the windows and listen. It is something like a voice, but I don’t know if it is a voice from heaven, or a voice from the soul, or is it something else, but I don’t take it for granted, it’s something special. It has a special purpose it has a purpose when bells are ringing, they remind you to pray, or when you should stop working. In the past we were praying when we heard the bells, but no one does this anymore. When the bells rung in the evening we knew we had to go back home, it was also time to finish work and to spent time together with the family. This was the case on our farm […] It’s a pity that so much gets lost nowadays. Today, bells annoy

114 Interview Nr. 30.
people but maybe they need a different purpose.

Mary’s recollection of the religious meaning of bells was only a foreground of her description. She humanised the bells as voices that accompany the everyday life, not only in a passive way but rather directly. They instructed the people on when to pray or stop working and this granted them with an important purpose. In her accounts she connected sound to the body differently to the narratives of the interviewed men. Mary’s description emphasised how the body resonates to the sound rather than producing it. Furthermore, her statements are loaded with nostalgia. She reminisced about a lost world of her childhood, which she then linked to the changed meaning of bells. Mary proposed a new construction for the temporality of sound when she claimed the bells needed to be loaded with new meaning again. This suggests that different and new meanings are valued for the present everyday life.

Family and the special characteristics of Sunday were important for Mary. She pointed out that they supported her attachment to bells. In Mary’s own words, she stated:

Actually, bells are very important in my life. They rung every Sunday, this is one of my memories, it was the sign to go to church. It was an attunement with Sunday and Sunday is very important for me. I dress special and you are in a heightened mood and the bells help me feel that [...] I couldn’t imagine a world without bells, they are part of my life, it’s not a direct call but a symbol for Sunday and it makes me happy. Sunday is not for sport, for me it is for contemplation so that we can start on Monday again [...] We didn’t work on Sunday on our farm, even if the weather was bad during the week. We never brought the hay in on Sunday and still managed to finish work on time like the others. My father always said we have more luck than the others (Pause) maybe this was the case or it was destiny, I don’t know (Pause) Today a lot of things are different.

Mary’s attunement with Sunday involved the bodily acts of walking to the church and adorning herself for service. The sound then accompanied the body as it helped her elevate her mood to feel happy. Additionally, Mary linked Sunday with her family and her past experiences of peace this also influenced her mood.

Another memory of Mary’s linked the bells with war. This memory was vivid and it sparked an emotion of anxiety. When asked about her childhood recollections of church bells, Mary revealed:
The bells during air raids. Bells were also ringing for air raids. I was going to school and when I heard the bells I was hiding in the bushes, or during my First Communion, there were also air raids and we were not allowed to go to church. It was in April and in May the war was over. In April there were air raids this is very deeply captured in my heart. [...] bombs were falling on the train station in Feldkirch (a town nearby the village) and the alarm was made with bells and sirens and we went with the whole family into the shelter, [...].

Mary’s recollection of the bells is once again linked with the body. She describes hiding in the bushes or in the shelter when the bells would ring as an airraid. Her memories linked the body with sound and this can reveal the emotions of a person or a people. The temporality of the sound may be the same but the associated feelings and physical reaction can differ.

After World War Two communities tried to find their normality. For many of the villages the ending of the war marked a new beginning. At the same time a new church was built in Mary’s village. The church construction was already planned before the war because the people wanted their own parish.

Mary described the ceremony:

The ceremony was a big event. My sisters performed beautiful long poems and even from today’s perspective it was a big sensation. There was the deacon and a lot of famous people who helped us organise this great event. There was scaffolding and the bells were lifted into the tower. When the bells rang for the first time people were close to tears. I still remember it very well, I remember this time and feel like a little girl again (laughing) young and tiny. We all were wearing long dresses and accompanied the bells or performed poems. It was a very special event after the war. My uncle made our village a parish, we were a community and this was the reason for us to celebrate, it was very special [...] It was a new beginning for everyone.

The inauguration of the church was accompanied by the hanging of new bells. The arrival of the bells strengthened the community and evidently it created a collective bond. Mary’s memory seemed vivid because she felt like a young child again when she told the story. Furthermore, her recollection about the ringing of the bells can be seen as symbolic. The ringing seems to represent peace, a new beginning and a collectivity of the community. This evoked certain emotions from the people for example, they were nearly brought to tears.
Figure 35: Transport of the new cast bells, Privatarchiv.

Figure 36: Consecration of the new bell for the new church, Privatarchiv.
4.2.6 Case Study 6 - Karen

"Marienglocke is my name, the biggest bell of all I am,
at evenings I sing, on holidays I ring.”

This is a verse that Karen recited at a bell ceremony in the year 1954. She impersonated the town’s biggest bell and in 2016 she could still recall the verse by heart.

Karen was born in 1938 in the capital city of Vorarlberg, she is the only person that did not grow up on a farm. She has two brothers and one sister and she is the only case study interviewee who comes from a middle class background. Her grandparents owned a shop and her father was a building engineer. He was involved in the engineering for their local church tower. In Karen’s interview she mentioned there is a difference between towns and villages and explained that villages in the countryside are more

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115 Interview Nr. 37.
116 Own translation, paraphrasing in order to create a rhyme again.
attached to bells than townsfolk.

In her description of bells she focused on locations and pointed out the places she could hear the bells.

In her own words, Karen stated:

I could hear the bells where I grew up. It was like a clock for me. I could hear it very well. Where I live now I can only hear the bells when all the windows are open and there is no traffic, otherwise I cannot hear them. [...] I now live without bells, only when the windows are open am I allowed to hear them or when I go to church. But I hear them when I’m outside and then you can hear all the bells from the different towers. The best spot is at the lake, when you walk along the lake you can hear all the bells. This is tremendous it is such a sound you can really hear it. This is not possible in the town, this is only possible at the lake and I think we have special bells in our town.

In Karen’s description of the sound of bells she referred to her present experience of sound. She recalled the sound as she went for walks by the lake and explained the difficulty of hearing the bells because of the city traffic. Furthermore, in this account Karen’s only reference to the past placed a focus on the time keeping aspect of the bell. She explained how easy it was to hear it. When she further referred to the past and the bells, Karen stated:

As long as I went to school I attended the so-called school service. It started in the morning at quarter past seven and this was completely normal for me. We all attended it, and after that, started school. If you could hear the bells on the way to service, you knew you were late and needed to hurry up. First down the hill and then up again. This was where I grew up, you first needed to walk down and then up and lastly there were stairs at least 20 stairs, but this was normal, unbelievable. You couldn't imagine this nowadays.

The body is central in Karen’s description of the purpose of bells. This is evident when she discusses hurrying up to the sound of the bell and the effort made to walk to school. Her description of the sound of bells from her past does not seem to insight positive memories, it is linked to order and structure. Karen’s most present recollection of sound seems to be more appreciative.

Karen had no memories about the removal of bells neither did she remember a time without the bells. However, she could recall the bell ceremony because she had a personal involvement.

Karen stated:
I have no memories about the seizing of bells, but they had to be removed, otherwise there would be no need for new bells. It was the case in many villages or the old bells returned. I didn’t know about that no one told me. I heard about the seizing when I was an adult. [...] The bells were placed in the churchyard on scaffolding where they were also baptised. But there was also an event in a venue, where the whole parish was invited to celebrate the bells. I was watching when the bells were lifted into the tower. I still went to school during this time and after school I was watching the bells. It was a sensation, one bell was so huge, I don’t know the exact size and they also had different names but I can’t recall the names [...] I was the only girl [who impersonated a bell] because the other bells were impersonated by males and there was one person who impersonated the tower. I was 16 and the others a little bit older, one of them has already died and I have no idea about the others. [...] The special thing about the poem was the training before. We were trained how to pronounce it properly by someone from the national broadcast company (ORF). This was very important because we had no idea how to emphasise and perform it properly. I think we were wearing white dresses and the public was very delighted. They donated a lot of money [to get the bells] and this was the reason for the celebration.

Karen did not highlight the sound of the bells. However, in her recollection of the ceremony she referred to the impersonators’ voices and explained that they were trained to perform a poem. Karen’s description of the bell ceremony highlights the special meaning given to the bells by the townsfolk. This is made evident in her reference to the people’s delightful mood when the bells were seen. Furthermore, she mentioned that the whole parish was invited to the ceremony. Karen’s account did not present any nostalgia and her tone in describing the event was neutral. Her emotions did not appear to be moved by the bells, however she did use them as a tool to locate herself in her place (home).
4.3 Bells Memories and Postmemories

Most of the case study accounts were presented from the perspectives of children or young adults. Narratives do not need to be chronological 'facts' or connected to a particular date, they can be composed through rememberable and narratable memories. Literature scholar Aleida Assmann (2011) states, “biography depends on interpreted memories that are connected in a memorable and narrable form.” (Assmann 2011, p. 246) These stories give shape to what Assmann calls "meaning", which is considered the backbone of human identities (Assmann 2011, p. 246). Memories about the recasting of bells and sound give meaning not only to the individual biography but also to the collective. The case study descriptions reveal the importance and intensity of memories instead of a 'historical truth'. Furthermore, people’s accounts about the recasting of bells show the importance of bells for the identities of a collective group.

In the interviews, some people had no direct memory of war but they still experienced a feeling of loss and strong emotions. An older woman named Regina, born in 1946, described her emotional connection with war, loss and the ringing of bells. Regina stated:
It could also be possible, because my grandmother had lost two sons in the war. [...] She always cried and her whole body shook when she visited the memorial for the soldiers of the Second World War and she went every time because she lost her two sons. The woman was shaking and crying and I was a small child who loved her grandmother. It is deep inside me, [...]. It is very intense and it is possible that the war has amplified this feeling. The whole thing, church bells, the memorial for the fallen soldiers, everything is at the church. Maybe it would not be so intense if there was no such thing, no dead uncles.117

Regina had no personal experiences of war, however the bells emotionally impacted her. Bells can be seen as a symbol of a loss transferred between generations. The emotions Regina experienced from her grandmother formed a memory of the war, even though she was not an earwitness of the event itself. The occurrence of a traumatic experience passing down through generations has attracted a lot of academic attention. This topic was orientated around the experiences of Holocaust survivors. Literature scholar, Marianne Hirsch (1997, 2012) coined the term postmemory to describe the inter-generational and transgenerational act of transferring traumatic events. Her use of the word ‘post’ can be linked to the temporal and spatial delay experienced in transference and the process used to mediate knowledge.

Hirsch explains:

Postmemory describes the relationship that the generation after those who witnessed cultural or collective trauma bears to the experiences of those who came before, experiences that they ‘remember’ only by means of the stories, images, and behaviors among which they grew up. But these experiences were transmitted to them so deeply and affectively as to seem to constitute memories in their own right. [...] These events happened in the past, but their effects continue into the present. (Hirsch, 2012, p. 106-107).

To clarify, this review does not seek to compare the victims of the Shoa with the interviewees. It aims to reveal the phenomenon of emotions being transferred from one generation to another. Hirsch further defines postmemory and explains it can be transferred through photographs and visual media. Therefore, it can be suggested that bells work as a tool to mediate memories and emotions. Regina revealed how sound can inflict and transfer an array of emotions onto people. The emotions were mediated through the ritual of commemoration, the sound of bells and Regina’s crying

117 Interview Nr. 29.
grandmother. Regina had not met her uncles but their stories alongside her grandmother’s actions created a sound memory of bells and this left Regina with an imprint of emotions.

An interview account from Tanya further highlights how the sound of bells can mediate memories of war. Tanya was born in 1946 and she stated:

Well, the small bell of the Anna chapel in Faschina (a pasture in the Alps) was something very impressive. The Anna chapel is very close to our pasture and we always stayed there from May until mid July and then again in the autumn from September until Christmas. [...] the bell rung now and then, because it was a Stifterglocke (bell with a special dedication) donated by a couple. Their son returned from the Second World War uninjured. He needed to go to war when he was 16 and came back without any injuries and they had made a promise, so they donated this bell. In their promise letter they wrote that everyone is allowed to ring the bell when visiting the chapel so we went there many times as children, we prayed there and our mother gave us flowers to put down and of course we always rung the bell, it was something very special.

The sound of the bell symbolised surviving soldiers returning home. Tanya had no personal connection with war or the couple’s uninjured son, however her encounter with the bell formed a memory that was influenced by the experience of war. Tanya’s postmemory reveals that bells are not only charged with meaning through their physical appearance, they are also charged through the sound.

A postmemory can be mediated through the act of a bell being recast because the material artefact of bells and its sound can be used as a tool for commemoration. The meaning attributed to bells through their recasting is shown in the postmemory account of Ursula.

Ursula was born in 1968 and she stated:

When I was young I always heard the story from my grandmother. When they came to take the bells our grandmother told my aunty and father that this is her bell because she was the godmother of this bell. [...] When they planned to cast a new bell [in our church] we thought it would be beautiful if our grandmother would have a bell again and so our family decided to donate a

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118 Interview Nr. 3.
bell. [...] I always have the feeling this is our bell.\textsuperscript{119}

The requisition of bells made the various emotional communities transparent and this has echoed into the present day. The previous three accounts show how bells can build a bridge to the past and they illustrate the value of bells to its community. Bells were the fabric of Heimat and this feeling was very much anchored within the local place. Their sound played a role in creating a feeling of home and so did the material aspect of the bell itself.

4.4 Bells as Storage of Memories

Material aspects of a bell, such as its inscriptions and materiality, load the bell with memories that give it cultural value. Additionally, a bell’s ringing times can assist with the storage of memories. The ringing mechanism of bells is automatically programmed nowadays to ring at a certain time. However, in the past this was not the case and the mechanism was managed manually.

A church sexton named Robert, born in 1946, explained how the bells function changed. He stated:

I remember it very well. I was a boy when the bells came in (19)55. I was nine years old [...] and until this time bells were rung by hand but after you only needed to turn on the bells, but you still needed to go to the church an hour before service to turn the bells on. [...] During the week at 6am in the morning or at five like it was in the past, at high noon and in the evening this was automatic [...] and in (19)95 you could program [the ringing of bells] 14 days ahead. When the church was renovated in 2006 it became even more modern and you only needed to turn on the bell manually when someone died, because this was outside the norm [...] this was very good, but it has changed.\textsuperscript{120}

The change in the bells’ function positioned the body away. The public could no longer ring them by hand and this evidently impacted many people’s relationships with their bells. However, the change in function to automatic received some praise from the interviewed priests. They said that the bells scheduled ringing time had remained the same but the technical adaption provided a more secure pattern of ringing. This worked

\textsuperscript{119} Interview Nr. 38.
\textsuperscript{120} Interview Nr. 25.
as a precise memory storage for the public. The newly set programme did physically distance the people away from their bells but it also stabilised the times for the everyday life. The bells ringing programme was still charged with a pattern of the past however, the technology used to regulate its sound had evolved. Additionally, sextons no longer rang the bells but they still played a role in their management. They were responsible for the type of sound they produced and they had to ensure they functioned correctly at all times.

The bells’ precise system of ringing created a better way of remembering and this helped load spaces with certain local characteristics. Trainer of Austria’s sextons, Martin Salzmann illustrates how the ringing of bells influenced memory work and memory value.

Salzmann stated:

The Läutordnung (rules of when to ring a bell) has survived from older days because of the automatic control. Quite early we began using an automatic control for the ringing and after that nothing changed anymore. Basically, when it is programmed it stays (laughing). Whereas, if you ring it by hand the passing on is not as reliable. I have a new software with 160 different ringings across the year, this is not a lot but it shows the different ringings, it was already reduced. I know from the times before the seizing of bells it was very different. We had different congregations, this was like unions [...] the different status groups had their congregations and everyone had their dedicated bell. When someone died you were always ringing separately with a dedicated bell so people also knew who died. This was stopped after the war but we still try to differentiate between normal days during the week and holidays, so there are still differences. [...] The ringing in general is not as present anymore in the public as it was in the past. In the past people connected something with it, they literally knew for whom the bells tolled (laughing). [...] So we try to update it now a little bit to give the ringing a purpose again.\textsuperscript{121}

Salzmann’s training sessions provide guidelines on how and when to ring bells. His sessions stress the importance of having a continuity of ringing certain bells at certain times. Salzmann’s sextons are told not to “change the ringing every month”\textsuperscript{122} because a Läutordnung needs to be maintained over a long period of time. Salzmann said that this provides an orientation for the parish and its people. He mentioned that having the same

\textsuperscript{121} Interview Nr. 22.
\textsuperscript{122} Interview Nr. 22.
ringing pattern was important because people needed to know why the bells were ringing. The Läutordnung can be seen as another bridge to the past, however its current main purpose is to help people remember particular events of life as well as holidays throughout the year. This helps them recognise their locale, which creates a sense of place.

Salzmann further reiterated how bells are the storage of memories:

You should notice (when you hear the bells), Okay! This is during the week and this is a holiday or this is a baptism. So basically the ringing somehow reflects the colour of the church throughout the year. [...] The bell is something that is connected to a feeling of Heimat, you can say what shapes the society in the villages is unconsciously influenced by bells. Bells shape the society in a village and you are used to the sound of bells since you are little, the bell accompanies festive and sad moments and it is always emotionally connected with the sound and this is the nice thing about the liturgy, it involves every sense and the bells are a part of it [...].

Salzmann’s account shows how different cultures use stabilisers for memory. According to Assmann, stabilisers come from technical characters and they range from material objects to the medium of writing (Assmann, 2011, p. 238). This positions bells as a stabiliser for memories. They possess material characteristics of inscriptions and immaterial components, such as ringing. To clarify, bells are not empty vessels of memory they can only help to stabilise memories attributed by humans. Therefore, people themselves influence what kind of memories bells use to stabilise.

4.5 Sensing Bells Through the Body

Sound affects the body and this forges a stronger imprint in people's memories. Sound can also evoke certain emotions, which then influence the value attributed to certain memories. Assmann proposes that internal mechanisms of humans can make memories less forgetful (Assmann, 2011). Therefore, the body and its senses can be defined as an archive. Asmann’s analysis highlights that through listening, the body stores a memory, however to be stored the sound itself must trigger an emotion.

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123 Interview Nr. 22.
Social anthropologist, Paul Connerton (2011) describes how the human body can be used as an inscription of memories. His proposal displays the link between the body and cultural memory (Connerton, 2011, p. ix). Connerton’s examination of tattooing and scarification highlights how the body can present an external biographical memory. Connerton’s analysis suggests that the surface of the body stores memories. However, it can be argued that the surface alone is not the only storer of memories because the whole body itself can be seen as an archive (Connerton, 2011).

In relation to sound memories or the auditory experience of bells, the body can be understood as what Pierre Bourdieu (1977) calls a “body hexis”. His term refers to, “a permanent disposition, a durable manner of standing, speaking, and thereby of feeling and thinking” (Bourdieu 1977, p. 93-4). By defining the body as memory storage, the body itself is presented as a content of culture.

Bourdieu describes the value of the body. He explains:

> The principles em-bodied in this way placed beyond the grasp of consciousness, and hence cannot be touched by voluntary, deliberate transformation, cannot even be made explicit; nothing seems more ineffable, more incommunicable, more inimitable, and therefore, more precious, than the values of given body, made body by the transubstantiation achieved by the hidden persuasion of an implicit pedagogy, capable of instilling a whole cosmology, an ethic, a metaphysic, a political philosophy, through injunctions as insignificant as “stand up straight” or “don’t hold your knife in the left hand” (Bourdieu 1977, p. 94).

Performance studies scholar, Diana Taylor (2003) offers a useful concept to analyse auditory experiences and sound memories through Bourdieu’s description of a body hexis. She positions cultural practices as a performance that involves a system of learning, storing and transmitting knowledge (Taylor, 2003). Listening, in this sense, can be defined as a performance, which involves the whole body and the act of hearing. Taylor explains how these performances include scenarios. According to Taylor, scenarios are “meaning-making paradigms that structure social environments, behaviours, and potential outcomes” (Taylor, 2003, p. 28). Scenarios are defined as an extension to narratives. They include plots but also corporeal behaviours such as attitudes, language, tones and gestures. In a performance scenarios enrich and activate social dramas. They evoke encounters, conflicts and resolutions. These social dramas have been produced through social, political and economic structures, however
scenarios work to elicit them. Scenarios all have their own localised meanings, although they are often classed as universally valid (Taylor, 2003, p. 28).

Taylor orientates scenarios towards Bourdieu’s concept of habitus, however scenarios are conceptualised as more flexible and less static than a habitus. Scenarios, like the concept of habitus, places a focus on value however, a habitus differs and links these values to the social structures of class. A scenario works to highlight particular repertoires of cultural meaning (Taylor, 2003, p. 31).

To understand how the act of listening is performed within different scenario’s attention should be given to the senses and the whole body. When applied to bells, it can be suggested that the body only bestows a bell with value if it aligns with the scenarios of its social group. Furthermore, the value given to the bells can be seen in the body’s reaction to its sound.

There were many interview statements that referred to the body and its reaction to sound. An interviewee named Lucas said that sound “goes through all your bones”\textsuperscript{124} and another named Carl stated, “[...] it touches you when you hear a bell”\textsuperscript{125}. The sound of bells was literally felt by its listeners and it was connected with emotions. Listening to bells evoked a certain type of sensation and this is shown in an interview account of Lisa. Lisa said, “I think I can feel it, the vibrations.”\textsuperscript{126}

Some interviewees mentioned that the whole body responds to the sound of bells. Tanya said, “it brings the whole human being to resonate (laughing).”\textsuperscript{127}

The sensations people felt when the bells touched the body was frequently mentioned. The dynamic between body and bells helped strengthen the villagers’ emotional attachment with bells. This relationship is highlighted by Inge:

- Basically, a bell is something special and I have the feeling that the sound moves through the human being. Well, in my case, I have the feeling that my inside starts to resonate (laughing) and I think that is why bells are so beautiful.\textsuperscript{128}

\textsuperscript{124} Interview Nr. 24.
\textsuperscript{125} Interview Nr. 15.
\textsuperscript{126} Interview Nr. 33.
\textsuperscript{127} Interview Nr. 3.
\textsuperscript{128} Interview Nr. 7.
The body itself instigated the emotional attachment Inge assigned to the sound of bells. This occurrence was reported by most of the interviewees through their description of the ringing of bells by hand. The act of ringing the bell was a performance and the whole body was required to pull the rope. In this social performance one person rang each bell, which involved a scenario of a personal encounter with their bell. Bell ringing by hand was a sound performance and it was mostly described with enthusiasm. All of the male interviewees mentioned how special it was to encounter the ringing of bells by hand.

4.6 Sensing the Place Through Bells

The interviews revealed how the human body can perform its local place through sound. They also highlighted how bells produce an auditory experience that is informed by an experience of a place. The sound of bells can connect the body to a place. Not through the conscious listening of a person but through the sensation they experience within their whole body. Furthermore, bells can be seen as a bridge between the body and landscape.

Cultural geographer, Emma Waterton makes reference to the place and body when she states, “I know this landscape not just with my eyes or in memory but as a body, too”. (Waterton, 2013, p. 70)

The sensing of a place through bells can be seen in the accounts given about listening to sound to predict the weather. The interviewees claimed they would hear certain bells and could forecast the coming weather. Their awareness of the bells can be linked to their experiences of the space. Tanya illustrated how this dynamic existed. She stated:

I can hear the bells from Sonntag (name of village) when the weather is changing. [...] Basically every time you can hear a bell from a neighbouring village the weather is changing and massive [...] You can hear the bell and you say, “The weather is going to get bad I could hear the bells from Raggal” (name of a village).

Tanya’s listening to the sound of bells relayed a message she could only understand because of her lived experience in a certain place. An experience of the place was needed
to make a prediction about the weather. However, how bells are experienced and internalised can depend on how the place people dwell in is performed. Anthropologist, Tim Ingold proposes how people perceive their landscape. He suggests a “dwelling perspective” is necessary because it provides an understanding of people’s lived and everyday involvement in the world (Ingold, 1993). This means that predicting the weather from listening to bells required an experience of the place over a long period of time. Ingold further explains, “to perceive the landscape is therefore to carry out an act of remembrance and remembering is not so much a matter of calling upon an internal image, stored in the mind, as of engaging perceptually with an environment [...]” (Ingold, 1993, p. 153). Listening to bells involved sensing the space. It was an active engagement with the landscape, which was dependent on a person’s experience of a particular place. Ingold highlights this dynamic:

A place owes its character to the experience it affords to those who spend time there, to the sights, sounds and indeed smells that constitute its specific ambience. And these, in turn, depend on the kinds of activities in which inhabitants engage. It is from its relational context of people’s engagement with the world, in the business of dwelling, that each place draws its unique significance (Ingold, 1993, p.155).

Ingold’s description illustrates how sound, sensing and listening is an inseparable part of an experience of a place. He further highlights how sound can be described as a component of the landscape. According to Ingold, sound is an “action” (Ingold, 1993, p. 162) and this suggests that dwelling in a place allows bells to connect with the body’s experience of the place. Dwelling is defined by Ingold as moving along with the world not acting upon it or doing things to it. He reiterates, “Our actions do not transform the world, they are part and parcel of the world’s transforming itself” (Ingold, 1993, p. 164).

Cultural geographer, Michael Carolan (2008) explores the idea of sensing the landscape ‘as a body’. This is based on his research about farming and non-farming residents in rural Iowa. Carolan’s research revealed that people know their places and their surroundings through their bodies. He claimed “their ‘being-in-the-world’ [...] is deeply sensuous, habitual and corporeally enacted” (Waterton, 2013, p.70).

This aligns with Ingold’s description of a dwelling perspective. Both Carolan and Ingold highlight that the sensing of bells is closely linked to a performed place. People’s perceptions of bells are intertwined with the knowledge of the place through the body.
The experience of a bodily sensation of bells is often loaded with personal and collective memories. This sensation is then anchored by an experience of living in the place. Bells help people engage with places on different sensory levels and the value attributed to bells is derived from people’s experiences of their environment. Places and listening, in this sense, are both performed.

### 4.7 Memory Management

Priests are important agents of bells because they aid the public with their memory management and assign a special attachment to the bells. All of the interviewed priests highlighted the importance of seeing bells to create an emotional attachment. To communicate the different meanings of bells the priests would visit the bell towers with children. This was often done in preparation for the children's First Communion. Most of the priests stressed that seeing the bells was a highlight and ritual for the children because they always requested to see them before their First Communion.

Priest Joseph stated:

I always do that before the First Communion (when they are around 8 years old). They are allowed to visit the bell tower because the children request it quite early. It is something special for the children to be allowed to visit the bell tower to see the bells. It is a part of it, they request it from the first year on and I always have to say “no not until your preparation for the First communion, then you are allowed to visit” [...] they get an idea of the bells, they see how many bells we have, the different sizes and you can see the different inscriptions. On the biggest bell there is information that says ring it when somebody dies. [...] One bell also commemorates an avalanche and has all the names from the victims on it.\(^{129}\)

To connect with the bells the children needed to see them but also touch them. This reveals the importance of encountering bells through a variety of senses. Additionally, although most bells were cast after 1945 the priests still tried to portray them as ancient and this was done particularly through the bells’ inscriptions.

This is shown in priest Peter’s account:

I always go up with the children and they can see the bells and touch them to know that they are up there. [...] or the inscriptions that are engraved on the bells, it is not something that you can find in the library, you strike on it and

\(^{129}\) Interview Nr.14.
the messages leave the tower almost everyday, this is only the case with bells [...].

Seeing and touching bells assists its process of memory management. The priests illustrated this form of memory management because they chose to interlink a rite of passage ceremony with the act of visiting and interacting with bells. The combining of events connected the individual experience of encountering bells with the collective ceremony of the First Communion. Ceremonies are considered important for village communities and they are often connected to bells. This bonds the bells with the supposedly positive memory of religious life events. Most of the interviewees revealed how bells are charged with value when they are actively seen. The children charged the bells through a religious ceremony however, bells can be made visible in different ways. The previous case studies revealed that before and after the Second World War, bells were made visible through the extraordinary event of war. The children and villagers saw bells through different paths, however, both formed a bond that gave them a sound memory. To clarify, a bell becoming visible does not mean those who encounter it are emotionally moved. Tanya showed a lack of enthusiasm about bells as she discussed the process of fixing them. Most discussion on this topic was emotionally withdrawn and this is illustrated in Tanya’s account:

I just know that there was a scaffolding with the bell and there was money collected to fix the biggest bell. It was not a “folk history” it was a history of the parish council who made the decision and managed everything and then the bell was back and fixed. It was definitely different after the Second World War. The bells were seized, it was completely different than if the bell had a crack and needed to be fixed. I can imagine the joy after the Second World War to get four new bells again. It was definitely different but I was born after the war so I only know about happy times.

Tanya’s account shows that individual bodies are not always emotionally engaged with bells. It is dependent on the topic, time, and as Diana Taylor describes it, the bodies’ “repertoires”. Individual bodies store different repertoires of memories and this means a recollection can evoke little or no emotion. Tanya’s explanation of only experiencing the happy times with bells can be described through philosopher, Ernst Bloch’s (1977) concept of “nonsynchronism”. He states:

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130 Interview Nr.11.
131 Interview Nr. 3.
Not all people exist in the same now. They do so only externally, by virtue of the fact that they may all be seen today. But that does not mean that they are living at the same time with others. (Bloch, 1977, p. 22).

When this is applied to people’s sound memories it means their being in time and space is based on their own lived experience. This illustrates that the generation who experienced the war attributed a different meaning to bells than people born after the 1950s. Furthermore, sound memories and auditory experiences of bells exist in different forms at the same time. When listening to the sound of bells, people use different repertoires and this attributes a difference in values towards bells.

4.8 Bells as Expression of Religion

Every participant stated that the value of church bells is first and foremost religious and almost all of them appreciated the presence of bells as a religious object for their communities. It is important to understand how religion is used to help bells create a certain sense of place and a particular feeling of belonging. The significance of religion for the experience of the place is highlighted in numerous accounts. The participants referred to their religious upbringing in their discussions about bells and this connects the social life of a village to the church and its rituals around bells.

Some interviewees highlighted that the people’s faith connects them together and creates a sense of place. Their bells were emotionally charged and this helped create a sense of belonging for the local and global Catholic Christian community.

Priest Peter explained the religious meaning of bells for village communities. He stated:

The three times of ringing at six, twelve and again at six, so basically every six hours during the day, this ringing should actually call for prayer, most of the people don’t know this, they say well it is six or twelve [...] the bells should help during the day to acknowledge for a moment the presence of god, a quick prayer like Shema Yisrael or Allahu Akbar [...]. We have the Angelus and basically we are meant to recite three little verses from the bible Hail Mary which should be prayed at high noon, in the evening and in the morning.\(^\text{132}\)

\(^{132}\) Interview Nr. 11.
Priest Peter highlighted how communities are rooted in a tradition of faith. Bell ringing seeks to help people acknowledge the presence of God and it works to connect its believers together. The ringing of bells is an expression of an imagined Catholic community and this is further shown in the bells’ death tolling of Jesus on every Friday at 3 pm.

Priest Peter stated:

The death tolling for Jesus is actually quite impressive because usually every parish rings their bells at different times [...] but the only ringing where you can hear the whole valley is the ringing on Friday afternoon at three. The whole valley is ringing, not only the whole valley the whole world or at least the Catholic world and this is somehow impressive [...].

The synchronous ringing of bells still occurs in this present day and it aims to create a feeling of unity amongst people. Priest Peter’s description shows how different local spaces connect through their listening to bells. The whole Catholic (or at least the people living within the same time zone) world hears the church bells at the same time and this experience attempts to forge a bond between the people. To clarify, this is based on the presumption that most villagers are active followers of the Catholic faith.

Almost every interviewee referred to death tolling and this shows how communities attribute high regard to certain bell rings. Death tolling has a particular sound that informs the public to pay their respects. Villagers recognise its particular sound and this can be described as a form of auditory knowledge. Additionally, some bells produce different rhythmic patterns for men and women and this helps people assign a gender to the deceased.

Priest Peter highlights the auditory knowledge of villages:

and then everyone is waiting to know if it is a man or a woman and then it goes really quick its unimaginable but within no time everybody knows, this is something that is completely different in towns (laughing) [...] but here it is really incredible, also the children know a lot, which is also something special.

133 Interview Nr. 11.
134 Interview Nr. 11.
Death tolling relays information to local communities and it reassures village relatives that their deceased loved ones are a part of the church, therefore a part of the community. The ringing equips people with an auditory consciousness that seeks to unite the local space as a community through sound. Most village residents still know each other and this is why death tolling was described as a mainly social instead of religious message. To clarify, this does not mean that bells do not fit within the context of religion. Tanya explained that in the past the death sound was valued so greatly that people stopped work when they heard it and prayed. Most interviewees referred to the ringing as an act of commemoration, which works to connect the parishes with people and create a sense of belonging. Death bell ringing is one of the few sounds that is actually listened to attentively in this present day. It is still highly regarded and appreciated by villagers.

The sound of church bells is still a symbol for religion and this reveals the prevailing power of the church within its communities. Church buildings are situated at the centre of villages and the ringing is still described by some as a central part of life. Priest Joseph reiterated this admiration when he stated, “Bells are a part of Heimat for me, it is a part of our lives, I see that the church is the centre of life, not only from the outside, it determines the everyday life [...].”

When asked how people would feel if the bells were gone, priest Joseph responded:

Well, I would miss them [the bells] because a lot works through emotions. You connect certain things with emotions, things that are important in your life and if you grew up next to a church then church bells are a part of life. [...] I have to say I don’t hear the bells in the morning because I am used to it, but when you abandon these things more and more you also abandon a part of our culture and you should not underestimate this. You might not even realise that it exists but you might miss it if it’s gone. Symbols or sounds, this is also a part of tradition because you also need to protect the internal not only the external, we are not only rational beings we are emotional [...] and if you abandon certain things something else is also falling apart, like memories, positive and negative they have a huge impact on you. It would take away parts of the spiritual home if you abandon such things. You need to provide a replacement. People always tell me, especially when they are old, about their childhood memories and what they experienced in church. We always think we are
rational but there are many other important aspects. We are also sensual beings, the holy smoke, festive dresses, the whole rituals you can not describe it rationally it is connected to emotions, positive and negative.\textsuperscript{137}

Priest Joseph's account reveals that bells are still seen as the fabric of home and their main value is embedded within religion. He could not perceive the bells because they were a part of his identity and this further highlights the relationship between bells and the body. Priest Joseph's link of bells with emotions reveals how the body's senses and feelings can inform a sense of place. His description of people as sensual beings connects bells with a religious bodily performance that works to inform a sense of belonging.

4.9 Bells and Time

Bells evoke certain emotions when connected with certain life events. This is evident in rites of passage ceremonies and particular life events. Bells ring from the beginning of human life until its end. Therefore, they accompany people throughout their whole lives.

The interviewees often referred to bells accompanying them and this is illustrated in Toby's account.

Toby stated:

\begin{quote}
The bells accompany you through the whole life. When you were born with the baptism the bells were ringing, then in your First Communion, Confirmation, this was always a big event and you always were accompanied by bells, later when you got married and when you die, every time, yes [...]\textsuperscript{138}
\end{quote}

Toby's account reveals that a central aspect of bells is time. According to Ingold, churches resonate with the cycle of human life. He states that church bells ring for births, marriages, deaths and the different seasons and months (Ingold, 1993). Ingold proposes that churches and bells are features of the landscape that appear as monuments of the passage of time (Ingold, 1993, p. 169).

\textsuperscript{137} Interview Nr. 14.
\textsuperscript{138} Interview, Nr. 16.
The sound of bells at special events or rites of passage ceremonies are linked with the heightened feelings of people in these events. Florian was questioned about his experience with bells and he responded:

I always feel it very intensely at All Saints, you are at the graveyard and you can hear the bell when it starts swinging even before you can hear the ringing 'hsch hsch' (imitates the sound of a swinging bell), and then it starts and of course you are in a heightened mood, but basically it gets through all your bones if you hear it for five minutes so close.\textsuperscript{139}

Bells accompany certain social performances, such as going to church for special occasions or dressing up festive for a service. Additionally, they always escort the whole ritual around a church service.

Bells not only accompany special moments in life, they ring throughout the whole day and every Sunday for service. Sunday ringing often brings up feelings, this can be in a religious context, when bells signal people to “prepare for a religious act”\textsuperscript{140} or in a social context when they symbolise a coming together of the community for service. The interviewees often mentioned coming together for Sunday service. However, it was described as obligatory and no excuse was accepted for not attending church. Regina claimed it was socially unacceptable not to go to church and she described it as a forced gathering.\textsuperscript{141} Bells were said to contribute to the social bonding of the community, although this was not on a voluntary basis. Life events and the sound of bells can be seen as an interrelated phenomenon. Sound creates and accompanies special moments in life and people assign special moments with the sound of bells. Additionally, bells can be seen to aid the unity of a community but they also work as a tool for exclusion. If you are not a part of the bells' religious community then you may feel excluded from the events it accompanies. Bells, in this sense, reaffirm exclusion.

The sound of bells can be engrained into human life and this is highlighted in numerous interview accounts. The participants claimed that the repetition of the sound of bells created familiarity. Repetition can be described as a feature of time and familiarity is often associated with a feeling of home.

\textsuperscript{139} Interview, Nr. 10.
\textsuperscript{140} Interview, Nr 13.
\textsuperscript{141} Interview Nr. 29.
Furthermore, repetition and periodics of the world are important features in creating meaning. It can be suggested that sound is located in a periodic world, therefore it is embedded within the landscape (Augoyard and Torgue, 2009, p. 97). The repetition of church bells works to create a familiarity, which then shapes people’s sense of place. An interviewee named David illustrates this dynamic.

David stated:

It is basically the same, like if you live next to a train. At the beginning it annoys you but then there is something missing if it is not there anymore. The bell is like a river, in my opinion it is quite a pleasant feeling. [...] It is like the water, that you can drink here everywhere. You take it for granted and this is the same with the bells. [...] You grow up with it [the bells], it’s like the trees, the pasture, the church tower and the bells, it is a very deep sound, (laughing) almost native. It is pleasant and tranquil, yes [...] I could live without bells but in our area it is a part of it [...] a bell is somehow a feeling of Heimat or you connect it with a feeling of Heimat, it connects people. It is definitely because of our Christian faith and this is deeply connected with each other and somehow it creates a feeling of safety and protection [...].142

The previous three accounts reveal how the constant repetition of the sound of bells is consciously and unconsciously perceived throughout people’s lives. Bells highlight special events in our lives but they can also simply refer to the periodics of the world, such as the seasons or the days passing by. We sense these occurrences but we often grant them with little or no value. Additionally, David’s description of how bells are embedded within the place can lead to its sound being taken for granted. Bell ringing is a part of the countryside’s landscape and it has been defined as a “kind of cachet.”143

4.10 Bells and a Feeling of Home

Bells can create a feeling of home even if you are away from your local place. This is shown in Regina’s account when she stated, “I can feel it even nowadays, when I’m a stranger somewhere and I hear a bell the place is like Heimat.”144

142 Interview Nr. 15.
143 Interview Nr. 7.
144 Interview Nr. 29.
The sound of the bells provided Regina with a familiarity, which she connected with the feeling of home. This is not always the case, for others the sound of a non-local bell can be unpleasant.

Most of the time particular bells are connected to particular places. This can result in a different circumstance where bells from a different place than home are perceived as unpleasant. Florian reiterates this in his account:

I think the familiar creates a feel-good effect. When I’m next to another church, I sometimes consider the bells as noisy if it is a rattling bell because we have better bells in our village. But it is basically the bells which you are used to.145

Local bells are still charged with strong emotions for many people still alive from the past, and in this present day people’s connection with bells cannot be compared to those from the past. This is also apparent with the older generation because as they age their relationship with a bell can disintegrate. The emotions can almost fade away and this is highlighted in Toby’s account.

He stated:

When I was a little boy, I loved it, it really touched me when I was in the church and it was a special holiday and you could hear the bells ringing, it was a special atmospheric mood. When you get older you get hardened and become callous but as a child it touches you. A special holiday and the organ was playing and everything, [...].146

Toby revealed that the emotional impact of bells is stronger if a connection exists with childhood. Childhood can be seen as one of the greatest influences on our memory. When asked to recall important moments most of the time we go back to our youth. A person’s childhood can influence their present relationship with bells and its sound. This is highlighted in Regina’s account:

This has something to do with the age. Because with children, if they don’t know it, they don’t miss, or can’t miss anything. You don’t miss something you don’t know, but if you are used to it. [...] for me it means secuerness somehow, because, yes, because church also is of great importance to me. But I don’t know how it would be if I were (knocks on the table) 12 or 14 years old. Because that is definitely the age, which has an impact on it, to have this sentiment for bells.147

145 Interview Nr. 10.
146 Interview Nr. 16.
147 Interview Nr. 29.
Some interviewees explained why the meaning attributed to bells has changed for the newer generation. According to Inge, bells had a greater meaning in the past because people listened more attentively to the sound of bells. Bells were anchored in the everyday life of the people and this no longer seems to be the case.\textsuperscript{148} Patricia considered bells in the past as a background sound that was “just part of the everyday so you didn’t hear it consciously”\textsuperscript{149}. The past was a time when bells were elevated as something “deeply connected” to a way of being.\textsuperscript{150} Nowadays, bells are used to connect generations because people from the past have “left something from themselves” (Ingold, p.152) through sound. According to an interviewee named Philipp, bells are an expression of one’s “culture”\textsuperscript{151}. The following statement reveals how bells can be elevated to an expression of the cultural self. An interviewee named Lisa explained the value given to bells in the past is culturally significant for the present day.

Lisa stated:

\begin{quote}
They knew when it was mass [...] or they knew if somebody died or you could hear that it is six o’clock in the evening, this has something to do with the past. [...] It is connected to history, how should I put it we live with history it is in our roots and if you have no roots you don’t know where you are coming from and how your ancestors lived and then it becomes complicated. I think this is the reason why so many people are uprooted and I think a tradition and a rhythm like the seasons, this is an essential part of life.\textsuperscript{152}
\end{quote}

The previous accounts position bells as a symbol of the home. This was based on personal childhood memories alongside people’s traditional beliefs. Bells were situated as a cultural tool passed down to maintain the traditions of the people. They were considered more important for the past generations, therefore some villagers classed them as a landmark of honour.

\textsuperscript{148} Interview Nr. 7.
\textsuperscript{149} Interview Nr. 13.
\textsuperscript{150} Interview Nr. 13.
\textsuperscript{151} Interview Nr. 18.
\textsuperscript{152} Interview Nr. 33.
4.11 Bells and Tourism

In the interviews, some participants claimed there was a difference in upbringing between people from the countryside and townsfolk. Regina stated that going to church and listening to bells was classed more important for villages than towns. The main reason used to draw a difference between the countryside and towns was their appreciation of bells. Requests made by Austrian and foreign tourists to silence bell ringing during the night positioned townspeople as disliking of bells.

Tourism is an important part of the economy for Vorarlberg and most tourists use the landscape in terms of skiing or hiking. People from towns often take holidays in Austrian villages and some of them show a different appreciation for the ringing times of the bells. This is not only seen as a cultural clash between countryside and towns, villagers portray it as an abandoning of your own culture. Toby highlights this cultural clash in his statement:

> Unfortunately, today there are not only touristic places that turn off bells and this seems to me an abandoning of your own culture, a denial. It is only because of some other interests that are far less important than the cultural meaning behind it, it’s a great value.

Toby's description about tourists and bell ringing reveals the act of othering. Critiquing the ringing of bells was perceived as disrespectful of the countryside's way of life and it sparked anger and resentment from some of the villagers. Tanya stated:

> There were complaints from guests that this (the bell ringing) is too early and if the bells could be turned off in the morning, as though it would be such a little thing. I could not understand it, if you cannot tolerate the bells you should not go into a small village, you might have to move to a town where there are no bells and also no other noises, so I could not understand it. [...] After a while more and more people said, “Could we change it, that it does not ring so early?” [...] So they have changed it, the bell does not ring at five o'clock in the morning anymore. You get used, this, this is without any question, but just this manner that someone comes into a village and says “change this”, I did not like it.

Theresa reiterated:

> The discussions around the bells were always that guests want to sleep and I was of the opinion that our bells are part of the village. Everyone says we have

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153 Interview Nr. 29.
154 Interview Nr. 16.
155 Interview Nr. 3.
a beautiful church building and our church tower is wonderful, so huge and massive and many people find it impressive and that big bells are part of it is also self-evident. Many people have complained that they cannot sleep during the night but in my opinion if there was a train next to it or an aeroplane or some other traffic noise or wherever you are, if that was in Italy or somewhere in Switzerland where you have the train, you live with that. I could not understand it and in general a bell, for me, is the opposite, an emotional and heimisch (homey, native, feeling of home) tone that is very close to me, that does not bother me, it is not noise. Noise is something different than the tone of the bell, it has definitely a different quality [...] these are things that are part of a village and when I hear the stories from my father how hard they fought to keep the bells during these hard times, attacked 'with neck and crop' for the bells, they resisted and said these are our bells [...] but then all of this is forgotten, but I don’t know who is really responsible for it, if the residents were more responsible for it than the guests? I have recently heard again that the guests have more complaints [...].156

Theresa and Tanya’s accounts highlight the village’s annoyance about the change of bell times. This anger was also directed at people living in the countryside, however, some interviewees understood and spoke about the disruption of bells. Inge claimed, it’s actually “nothing serious (changing the bell time)”157 and Patricia said that bells can be annoying if you live next to a church.158 The interviews reveal a division amongst the people about the change of bell ringing times. Additionally, everyone that supported the change still highlighted the importance of bells to its community. They claimed bells are a part of the countryside’s culture.

Bells may not have meaning in everyday life like they had in the past but they have transformed into a symbol of the landscape. Bells are a special characteristic of the countryside and they are often described as being a part of the atmosphere159. The Austrian countryside is charged with symbolic meaning and church bells constitute a part of it. For some people, bells not only represent the space but also the people itself. These people are often described as ‘Christians’ and they are known as devout believers. The sound of bells describes an image of a place and its people. Therefore, bells can be seen as an iconic sound. People’s attachment to bells is based on a fragile interaction

156 Interview Nr. 36.
157 Interview Nr. 7.
158 Interview Nr. 13.
159 Interview Nr. 34.
between material and immaterial aspects and individual bodies can be positioned as the archives of these memories. They work to assign and change different meanings towards bells and this was shown in the stories of its people.
Sound and Staged Identities Through Re-Mediation of Bells

Besides the bell tower, we encounter bells in many ways in our everyday life. When we turn our smartphones onto silent mode, we usually see a bell icon and its symbol is used in lifts as an alarm sign. Bells can be found in songs or are used in films. The symbolic value attributed to the bell is constantly evolving and its cultural significance looks like it has transformed from an object of the everyday to having iconic status. Furthermore, their circulation seems to amplify the iconic status of bells. According to media anthropologist, Jo Tacchi:

Within material culture studies, objects, and their consumption, use and display, are seen as communicating and constructing (or reconstructing) values and meanings on many levels, such as the personal, and the social, the local and the global (Tacchi, 1999, p. 13).

The following three chapters will focus on the distribution of bells. It will be shown how bells as objects with certain symbolic values are used to remediate other symbolic values and how the act of re-mediation can use existing patterns as a basis to create new and different forms of meaning. It will be examined what narratives bells carry and how they are used within different forms of media. By looking at how bells are deployed in media it will be assessed what particular narratives bells can carry. According to sound scholar, Karin Bijsterveld:

Over time, particular sounds can become iconic for particular locations through the conventional ways in which they are deployed in written narrative, in film and in radio, as well as through subsequent inter-textual references (Bijsterveld, 2013, p. 15).

To test the iconic status of bells the thematic connection between the following three chapters is the idea of remediation. Remediation can be understood as a type of borrowing. Media studies scholars, Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin (2000) explain in their book *Remediation: Understanding New Media*, that remediation is a process of transferring content from one medium to another. Bolter and Grusin describe how visual experiences are remediated between different types of media and they highlight how certain components can be deployed across different forms. They propose the transference of particular components between paintings and photographs or film and virtual reality. However, as media studies scholar Carolyn Birdsall points out their analysis seems to leave out the remediation of sound (Birdsall, 2016, p. 133). The
following three chapters will use the concept from Bolter and Grusin to explore how bells can be used as a tool for remediation. However, their understanding will be a bit stretched. The emphasis when using remediation within the next chapters will be more on the transformation and not so much on how sound and the experience of sound is remediated between different types of media. The bell is at the centre of re-mediation and how bells are re-mediated will be examined, not just their sound. To put it in more general terms, how ‘cultural content’ is re-mediated through bells. For this reason ‘re-mediation’ will be written with a dash.

Each of the following chapters will review a case study. Chapter five will focus on audio-visual media, chapter six will explore the sound of the radio and chapter seven places a focus on the experiential and multisensory experience of virtual reality within a museum.

Chapter five will use the example of Austria’s biggest bell the Pummerin. After providing a historical overview of Austria’s biggest bell the chapter examines how the bell created a sense of belonging to the national sphere. By reviewing how the recasting of the bell was staged in the newsreel Austria Wochenschau, it will be shown how the bell was used to promote a certain narrative. It will be shown how the bell helped to re-mediate the victim myth of Austria as victim of war. Based on two documentaries it will be shown how the bell was used to not only reproduce the victim myth but also create and re-mediate a collective memory of the ‘good old times’ before the First World War with the purpose to overshadow Austria’s involvement in World War Two.

Chapter six will be on broadcasting bells on the radio. Based on the history of the Austrian Broadcast Corporation (ORF) it will be shown how bells were used within radio and how they became a regular feature in the daily schedule of the provincial radio stations in Austria. Broadcasting of bells on the Austrian radio will demonstrate how sound is used to re-mediate experiences of locality as well as its orientation towards everyday rhythms. Bells will be examined as a tool that creates spatial and temporal reference points. The chapter will reveal how these reference points work to create an emotional attachment with the audience. As bells accompany everyday life so does the radio. Therefore, there will be an exploration on how bells and radio help to reorganise time and space.
The sources for chapter six were annual reports from RAVAG (the first broadcast company in Austria in the early years of broadcasting), public value reports from the Austrian Broadcast Corporation (ORF), radio programmes, archival material from the ORF as well as oral history interviews. Another resource was listening to the different radio stations. Since November 2019 the Austrian Broadcast Corporation (ORF) introduced an online player that allows people to listen to all stations on demand. The online portal provides radio programme recordings up to seven days after they are aired. This makes a comparison of the different stations much easier and more accessible.

Chapter seven is about the multisensory media virtual reality and an exhibition I created for the Vorarlberg Museum about the removal of church bells during the First World War.

As shown in chapter four, museums are considered as sites of memory. In the example of the Vorarlberg Museum, it will be demonstrated how museums have changed from the beginning of the twentieth century. Museums are not only storage for cultural memory they are becoming places where cultural memory could be ‘experienced’. The chapter will show how bells are used to re-mediate cultural memory through senses. By discussing how the exhibition was created and how VR was used it will be shown how the content of the exhibition was re-mediated through engaging the whole body.
5. Re-Mediation of Bells in Film

5.1 Historical Background of the Pummerin

The Pummerin is the biggest bell in Austria, and it is considered the most iconic bell in the country. The bell was cast in 1711 and it was staged as a display of strength of the Habsburg Empire. Emperor Josef I donated the bell to commemorate their victory over the Ottomans in Vienna, 1683. The material for the bell came from ammunition that was captured after the battle. Its arrival was exhibited, and 200 men pulled the bell into Vienna (Wernisch, 2006).

![Figure 39: Symbolic depiction of the creation of the Pummerin, Wien Museum, Inv.Nr. 14.945/2.](image)

![Figure 40: Transport of the old Pummerin 1711, WienMuseum.](image)

The bell was named *Josefinische Glocke* in honour of Emperor Josef, but because of its low sound it was later renamed Pummerin in the nineteenth century. Pummerin was too heavy for the bell tower and after 1878 its ringing was forbidden. People could only hear the bell on special occasions, such as the funeral of Emperor Franz-Josef I in 1916. After 1925, it was permitted to ring Pummerin but the bell was only rung for special occasions, such as Christmas, Easter or All Saints (Wernisch, 2006; Prayer, 2018). The high prestige attributed to Pummerin was evidently amplified because it rang only on these occasions. People could only hear the bell if an occasion...
was considered important. This is supported by Austrian historian, Peter Payer. He claims that the relatively rare audibility of Pummerin and its massive volume in sound charged the bell with a mythical value that made it from the very beginning a central symbol of identity. This was not only for Vienna but also for the whole of the Empire (Payer, 2018, p. 77). The Pummerin was well loved by the people, and it was displayed in many different artefacts from pictures, postcards to coins and postage stamps.

5.2 New Beginnings? The Pummerin and the Victim Narrative of Postwar Austria

The Pummerin is closely linked with the Second World War and the period just after 1945. Austria was in the midst of World War Two and it was coming to an end. An unrelated issue linked to bells drew the attention of the media and its people. On 12 April 1945 the Pummerin was destroyed in a fire at St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna. The destroyed cathedral was staged as “ground zero” in Austrian history. Historian, Ina Markova (2018) examined a photo of the burning cathedral and proposed that it was a key picture in the creation of a national narrative of postwar Austria. The photo helped to portray German National Socialism as barbaric, pagan and anti-Austrian. The image revealed the people's loss at a time of war and this helped promote the victim narrative for postwar Austria.

Figure 41 and 42: Burning St. Stephen’s Cathedral 1945, ÖNB, H8951/1, H8951/2.
Historian, Ernst Bruckmüller (1998) supports this observation in his claim that the symbolic meaning attributed to the cathedral was based on the destruction and rebuilding of Austria after the war. The destroyed cathedral was the symbol of a destroyed Austrian identity through war and National Socialism. The rebuilding of the cathedral started in 1945 and it was granted great symbolic meaning. In December 1948 the cathedral reopened for service again. Vienna did not have enough money to renovate the whole building, so in 1951 the different provinces of Austria stepped in and helped. The provinces donated money towards different parts of the building. This joint effort left visible traces within the cathedral, for example the province of Styria donated the door and Vorarlberg donated the benches. The joint effort of the different provinces made the cathedral a symbol for the whole of postwar Austria. It helped establish the national sphere in terms of centre and periphery. Vienna and the cathedral were at the centre but they were in close connection with the periphery of the different provinces. The province of Upper Austria donated a recasted Pummerin in 1951. The casting of the bell was charged with symbolic meaning on many different levels. By using the remaining and rescued pieces of the old bell the new bell was already loaded with a symbolic value of the past. But the casting itself became an important symbol of value for the people after the Second World War. The reproduction of the Pummerin was not only a display of Austria's regained economic power, it was also a way of mediating a distinction between its unpleasant past of the Second World War and the present day.

The significance of the bell was promoted by the media at this time. From the casting up to its arrival in Vienna the Pummerin gained a lot of attention. The casting and transporting of the bell was displayed in a lot of photographs. There were two attempts necessary to cast Pummerin and this received at least 37 photographs, which are archived in the Austrian National Library (ÖNB).\(^\text{160}\)

\(^\text{160}\) The ÖNB has 335 pictures of the whole recasting. Online available: https://search.onb.ac.at/primo-explore/search?query=any,contains,Pummerin&tab=default_tab&search_scope=ONB_gesamtbestand&vid=ONB&facet=rtype,include,Fotografie&offset=0, (Accessed: 9 September 2021).
Figure 43: Second attempt of casting of the Pummerin, 1951, ÖNB, FO600070/09 POR MAG.

It is of no surprise that the Pummerin was featured in the *Austria Wochenschau* newsreel. The *Austria Wochenschau* was an important audio-visual media tool used after the Second World War. It was considered a vital tool for the rebuilding of Austria in terms of an ideological nation (Blecha 2015; Pestchar and Schmid 1990). The *Austria Wochenschau* (AW) was a weekly newsreel that was screened in Austrian cinemas. The Austrian Film Archive website describes the impact the newsreel made on the people in its following statement:

> The interest of its owners, the Republic of Austria, lay in the transmission of images of Austria that would elevate the positive endeavours of this small country on a national and international scale as well as serve to develop a national identity.\(^{161}\)

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On 2 May 1952 the *Austria Wochenschau* featured the arrival of the Pummerin into the capital. The segment showed the journey of the bell from Linz. The Pummerin was staged as “a symbol of Austrian harmony and unity.”

The significance of Pummerin was solemnly celebrated and this was shown in its procession. The bell took a long route and it was transported from Upper Austria into Vienna.

![Figure 44: The Pummerin leaves Linz, 1952, ÖNB, US 10.025/1 POR MAG.](image)

The above image is taken from a video produced by the *Austria Wochenschau*. It shows the departure of the Pummerin.

In 1938, Hitler gave his first speech in Linz during the *Anschluss*. The people supported his party and cheered them a few years before the video from the bell transport was made. All of this seems to be forgotten because people were celebrating the Pummerin and what it symbolised. The event of transporting the Pummerin was attributed high

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symbolic value because the bell needed to pass the demarcation line between the Soviet and Allied occupied zones. The Pummerin passed the Russian zone without any checks and this was staged as a symbolic moment for the political future of Austria and the unity of its people again.

Figure 45: The Pummerin is passing the demarcation line at the Enns bridge as it enters the Russian Occupied Zone, ÖNB, US 10.025/5 POR MAG.

In the video the narrator emphasised the importance of the bell and said, “the people came from their towns and villages to cheer the bell.”¹⁶³ Every stop of the Pummerin was shown alongside the huge cheering crowds.

The video ended with the first ring of the bell and the narrator announced, “Now our Pummerin rings for the first time and across the country and towns the bells of Rome answer.” The bell was positioned as a ‘we-symbol’ not only for Vienna but for the whole of Austria. *Austria Wochenschau’s* video helped to create a postwar national narrative in Austria of not looking back and only looking forward. *Austria Wochenschau* was aware of the “power of images” and the producers used this to actively shape the image of Austria (Blecha, 2015). Historian, Laurin Blecha (2015) points out that *Austria Wochenschau* skilfully used symbols and metaphors to curate an Austrian identity based on the seemingly unloaded times of the Habsburg Empire and

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this worked to transform Austria into a Second Republic. Austria had encounters with Austro-fascism after the First World War in 1930 and this was deliberately left out to create a positive narrative. The Pummerin was a welcomed symbol, and it was resourced because it could combine the 'good old times' and the new. There are similarities in the recasting of village bells after the First World War and the staged recasting of the Pummerin after the Second World War. Both provided an identification for the people and both used the recasting as a return to supposedly better times. It is an example of the selectivity of cultural memory.

5.3 Pummerin and the Re-Mediation of Cultural Memory

The footage from the Austria Wochenschau was further used by another production company to create a similar narrative. A lot of footage was used for the new documentary and the Pummerin was once again a central reference point in discussions about the destruction of war and the reawakening of the nation through the recasting of the bell. The documentary is called Die Stimme Österreichs (The Voice of Austria) and it was released in 1953. The film was commissioned by the United States Information Agency. The US Information Service Branch (ISB) was then responsible for its production and distribution in Austrian US-controlled territories. Die Stimme Österreichs was further exchanged by ISB with Allied Forces of the other zones and the documentary was used alongside other productions to implement US policies (USIS 1948; USIS 1952; Fritsche 2013). Additionally, The Public Affairs Division operated Information centres, which served as libraries and aired films such as Die Stimme Österreichs (USIS 1952).

The documentary was categorised as a Kulturfilm (culture film) and this was the same strategy used by the Third Reich to disperse propaganda. This shows how film practice did not break from the traditions of the Third Reich but there was rather a change in focus. This blurred line between war and postwar is revealed through the people involved in the creation of the film.
The documentary was produced by Willi Forst and directed by Ernst Haeusserman. These two people were paradigmatic of the paradoxical history that occurred after the Second World War. Willi Forst was a key figure in the production of ‘Vienna Film (Wien Film)’ and he continued to make films in Austria after the Anschluss in 1938 (Stewart 2006; Austria Forum, 2020). Film scholar, Maria Fritsche (2013) states that Willi Forst exculpated the personnel of Wien-Film from any involvement in Nazi politics by constructing the myth of Wien-Film as a place of ‘charming Austrian resistance’ against the Nazis. Forst even accused those forced to emigrate of opportunism, and suggested that those who had stayed and furthered their careers in Nazi Germany were actually heroes of resistance (Fritsche 2013, p. 34).

Forst’s understanding of his involvement with Nazism reveals the country’s ease in subscribing to the myth of Austria as Hitler’s “first victim”. Visual culture scholar, Janet Stewart (2006) points out:

While Forst himself may have concentrated on directing apolitical Vienna films, he also served on the Advisory Council of the nationalized film production company, Wien Film, created after the German government took possession of the Austrian company Tobias-Sascha in the aftermath of the Anschluss (Stewart 2006, p. 101).

Stewart highlights how Forst profited from the Nazi regime. Furthermore, the seemingly apolitical productions dispersed during the war fulfilled a purpose of promoting a collective war effort. Fritsche describes the purpose of the movies as following:

Goebbels needed this kind of escapist entertainment films, whose political content was obscured by their cheerful tenor, to distract the German people from oppressive politics and the hardships of the war. Wien-Film thus became the feel-good factory of the German Reich that helped to keep the war machine running (Fritsche 2013, p. 34).

The director of the film experienced a different reality to Forst because he needed to flee Austria because of his Jewish origins. Haeusserman returned from the United States after the Second World War and directed the film while he was a U.S cultural officer. Oliver Rathkolb (2014) writes about his approach in making the film. Rathkolb states:

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165 The film credits list Carlheinz Langbein as director.
As an émigré returning to his former country, Ernst Haessermann was in a better position than many of his American colleagues to appreciate the strong dose of Catholicism in Austria’s cultural life. He had been commissioned to produce a documentary on U.S. aid; in fact, Haussermann turned Die Stimme Österreichs into something resembling an epic describing the cultural and political framework of the country (Rathkolb 2014, p.201).

Haussermann commissioned the scriptwriter Harald Zusanek to view the material of the Austria Wochenschau and from that the script was written. The film was aired in Austria and the United States. Haussermann’s aim was to express his gratitude to the Americans and to show how Austrians made use of their aid (Kinsksy-Weinfurter 1993).

It is no surprise that the documentary, with its use of the Pummerin, promoted a narrative of a new beginning and Austria was positioned as a victim of Nazi Germany. The film described the first years of Austria after the war. The destroyed Pummerin was portrayed as a destroyed Austria and this was used to explain how the country recovered from the war. The film captured the years 1945 to 1953 and the seasons within it. Spring revealed Austria’s awakening and in summer and autumn Austria got its voice back. In winter, the country appeared to live in peace again.

The film started with the Austria Wochenschau’s footage on the transporting of the Pummerin. Upbeat orchestral music accompanied the scene as it showed the transporting of the bell and the excited people surrounding it, wearing traditional Austrian clothes. When the bell arrived in Vienna the music changed and a song with a livelier and quicker tempo was played. The narrator of the film, Judith Holzmeister announced: “Life is unstoppable. We are crying for joy about the new Pummerin and we have forgotten about the old one.”

The sequence showed crying people excited to see the new bell. The narrator said: “We think about how bad it is now and forget about how much worse it was”, then the music stopped, followed by the ringing of a bell and a close up of the old Pummerin. When the sound of the bell faded into silence the narrator announced “the voice of Austria is silenced” this was accompanied with pictures of the broken bell.

166 Die Stimme Österreichs, 1953.
167 ibid.
168 ibid.
Interestingly a close up was made of a broken bell piece and it had an imprint of the old emblem of the Habsburg Empire. The display of the emblem reveals the tone of the whole film. The hidden message of the film was to get people to forget the recent past and orientate towards the image of an innocent Austria destroyed through the war. The documentary tried to use its influence to show what kind of Austrian image it wanted to portray.

In terms of staged identities, the film portrayed a throwback to times before the Second World War. Historian, Oliver Rathkolb (2017) provides an analysis on the film’s impact. He asserts the film promoted and created certain sites of memory for postwar Austria alongside producing a victim narrative. According to Rathkolb, the Pummerin symbolised the people’s “good old culture that was destroyed during the Second World War” (Rathkolb, 2017, p. 34).

Rathkolb’s analysis can be seen in the following visuals and narration. The commentator said, “After the liberation of the desperate past, it is America that returns the memory of the great old past”, the accompanied visuals showed the crown jewels of the Habsburg Empire.169

The video constructed a particular cultural identity of Austrians and this was shown in its choice of classical music. The Vienna Philharmonic orchestra was played whilst the commentator announced “a sound that the whole world is listening to”170. Classical music was evidently used to construct the aesthetics of a dreamy beautiful postwar Austria (Rathkolb, 2017, p. 35).

This is illustrated in the documentary’s airing of a picturesque Austrian countryside in the winter. The countryside’s mountainous landscape was shown and people were captured skiing whilst the narrator said, “Austria is already a little bit Austria.”171 The countryside was portrayed as traditional and unchanging and this is shown in the scene of people harvesting whilst the narrator said, “Life is not searching for a new rhythm it still has the old one […]”172.

Rathkolb (2017) proposes the emphasis placed on the countryside aligned with the Catholic ideology of Austria. Scenes were also captured of farmers working in the countryside. They were shown riding horses whilst tending to the land and workers

169 Die Stimme Österreichs, 1953.
170 ibid.
171 ibid.
172 ibid.
were filmed rafting timber. In reality the film aired an outdated community because farmers and workers no longer used those tools or methods of transportation in the 1950s (Rathkolb, 2017).

The documentary ended with the same scene that was played in the beginning. The film reshowed the arrival of the Pummerin in Vienna and the narrator said, "The old bells are dead but there are new ones."173 This was accompanied with a close up of the Pummerin’s inscription named, Pax Libertate “peace in freedom”. The documentary seemed to silence the time during the war. There was no mention of the part Austria played and this seems to be the norm in documentaries from the 1950s. They collectively promoted a narrative that overshadowed and silenced the war that had just ended and Allied Forces enabled this position.

The filming of the Pummerin can be presented as a cloak that covered up Austria’s unwanted past. In turn, this presented an image of victims who had suffered loss during the war. Therefore, Austrian citizens were distanced from Germany and had no reason to feel any guilt in relation to the part they played.

Fritsche (2013) reiterates this occurrence in her statement about efforts made to create a certain narrative in Austrian cinema:

As a union with Germany was no longer desired (or opportune) after the downfall of the Third Reich, Austria’s elites made considerable efforts to highlight the differences between Germany and Austria and promote a unique Austrian identity. This construction of an Austrian nation was first of all directed at the Austrian people, many of whom still considered themselves (at least culturally) German; although an Austrian sentiment existed in parts of the population, a clear concept of Austrian nationhood had yet to be actively produced. Furthermore, Austria’s political and cultural elites also sought to convince the international community that Austria was different from Nazi Germany, an ‘innocent victim’ rather than a perpetrator, and thus deserving of being granted a better treatment” (Fritsche 2013, p. 4).

The experiences of its two filmmakers and the documentary itself reveals how the film about the Pummerin presented a paradoxical identity of Austria after 1945. It can be suggested that after the war Austria did not encounter ground zero in its history. The fire at St. Stephen’s Cathedral was used to create a storyline from the time of the Habsburg Empire, which excluded Austria’s part in the war. Irrespective of the new

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173 Die Stimme Österreichs, 1953.
storyline, producers continued to use Third Reich aesthetics in their airing of the Austrian identity. Fritsche supports this observation when she writes:

Austrian cinema did not break free from [the] cinematic traditions [of the Third Reich] after the Second World War, but showed strong stylistic continuities. While they were in fact more diverse than often acknowledged, the films produced after 1945 displayed characteristics which contemporaries regarded as typical of Austrian cinema: a light-hearted narrative style, an emphasis on music and on the beautiful landscape, [...]” (Fritsche 2013, p. 10).

In the 1980s the Austrian victim narrative collapsed because of the 'Waldheim affair'. In 1986, during the presidential election a candidate named Kurt Waldheim, who was also the former UN Director General, was suspected of being involved in war crimes. Waldheim became president and a commission was made to investigate Waldheim's past. The United Nations War Crime Tribunal found that Waldheim witnessed war crimes but they could not prove he had any personal involvement (Filzmaier, 2018). The affair was seminal in the understanding of Austria's involvement during the Second World War. It slowly dismantled the concept of Austria as the first victim of Nazi Germany. However, traces of the victim narrative can still be found in this present day.

5.4 Pummerin and the Persistency of Narratives

In 2016, the Pummerin as a symbol of Austria was reproduced in another documentary. The film was titled Pummerin – Die Stimme Österreichs (Pummerin – The Voice of Austria) and it was produced by Peter Berger for the Austrian Broadcast Corporation (ORF). The documentary premiered on 28 March 2016 and it was aired on channel 3 of the ORF. Since its release the film has been broadcast 17 times by the ORF and it was aired once on the Swiss channel 3sat. The airing of the film coincided with festivals or anniversaries, for example, the film was shown on 8 May 2017 and 2019 in commemoration of the end of World War Two in 1945. On 26 October 2018, it marked the Austrian national day and in 2019 it was aired on Christmas Day. The broadcasting itself can therefore be seen as a re-mediation of cultural memory. Media studies scholars, Paddy Scannell and David Cardiff explain how the BBC established itself as an agent of national culture through the calendric role of broadcasting and its cyclical

174 Email from ORF customer service from 30 January 2020.
reproduction throughout the year (Cardiff and Scannell, 1987, 1991). Scannell proposes that broadcasting, “sustains the lives and routines, from one day to the next, year in year out, of whole populations” (Scannell 1986, p. 3). Through repeatedly airing film content on certain days, the film can be linked to these particular days and its viewers. Therefore, this cycle of repetition can help to re-mediate certain cultural narratives.

The 2016 Pummerin documentary made use of a lot of historical footage. Certain historical narratives were reinforced and this made the documentary interesting in terms of how bells were staged as a national symbol. The documentary featured different accounts that reiterate the meaning of the bell. Historians, a bell founder, representatives of the church and journalists all speak in the documentary. The film included oral history accounts, historical footage from the radio and extracts from historical films.

The title of the documentary was Pummerin – The Voice of Austria which is almost the same as the documentary from 1953. Both titles referred to the Pummerin as a national symbol. The 2016 documentary reinforced the narrative of the Pummerin as a symbol for all Austrians and part of the Austrian identity.

At the beginning of the film the Pummerin was shown swinging as the clapper hit the bell for the first time. The documentary then provided historical footage from the Austria Wochenschau and it used its original voice-over that said “and now the journey of triumph starts for the biggest bell in Austria”.175 A well-known actor in Austria named Otto Schenk witnessed the arrival of the bell and commented on the emotional impact it made on the people. He said: “we have been moved, you can not imagine that.”176 Many commentator accounts in the film described the Pummerin as the “soul” or the “voice” not only of Vienna but also of Austria and the Pummerin was staged as a “symbol of freedom and autonomy.”177

In the documentary, priest Toni Faber of St. Stephen’s Cathedral and the Archbishop of Austria, Christoph Schönborn, presented an analysis of the bell and reinforced the image

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176 ibid.
177 ibid.
of Austria as a Catholic country. Archbishop Schönborn announced, “When the Pummerin rings, it gathers the whole country together”\textsuperscript{178} and priest Faber said, “the bell is the consciousness of Austria, which articulates and voices festive and tragic events of Austria.”\textsuperscript{179} The priests explained that the Pummerin would be rung at important events, such as state and religious funerals and this reveals the close connection between the state, church and bells. However, the documentary did not portray bells as symbols of religion and more attention was given on how Pummerin was a symbol for the reinvention of Austria after the Second World War.

The film portrayed a picture of Austria after 1945 that was not “only destroyed but also occupied [by the Allied Forces]”\textsuperscript{180} and this worked to reinforce the country’s victim narrative. The documentary’s historical footage and its oral history accounts portrayed a similar picture of the nation to the Pummerin’s 1953 original film. The former Vice-chancellor of Austria, Erhard Busek, shows this alignment. In the film he announced, “the casting within Austria was a question of national pride and it proved that we Austrians are capable of doing that. It was to get over an unpleasant part of history.”\textsuperscript{181} All of the films eyewitness accounts reinforced the historical importance of the Pummerin.

All scenes with the bell were accompanied by these eyewitness accounts, such as the passing of the demarcation line at the Enns Bridge. Historical footage from the Austria Wochenschau’s film alongside the original voice-over announced, “the bell travels as a symbol of a happy future for our country”\textsuperscript{182} and this was said as the bell was transported through the countryside.

The Pummerin’s arrival in Vienna was described as “very emotional”\textsuperscript{183} and journalist, Hugo Portitsch highlighted Austria’s narrative of a new beginning. Portisch said in the film the “Pummerin is not only a symbol of Vienna but of the whole of Austria and during a time of quadruple occupation the Pummerin was a symbol of independence, of the new republic and of the new Austrian life.”\textsuperscript{184}

\textsuperscript{178}Pummerin – Die Stimme Österreichs, 2016.
\textsuperscript{179}ibid.
\textsuperscript{180}ibid.
\textsuperscript{181}ibid.
\textsuperscript{182}ibid.
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The documentary also linked the Pummerin with an iconic phrase used by the first chancellor Leopold Figl. Figl signed Austria’s state treaty and declared, “Austria is free!” This phrase was accompanied by historical footage of the Pummerin and then the commentator said, “The bell announces the freedom of Austria.”\textsuperscript{185}

The depiction of the Pummerin in the reviewed films helped promote and re-mediate historical narratives and sustain a certain cultural memory. The chapter has demonstrated in the example of the Pummerin that some bells are of particular value in creating and maintaining cultural memory in terms of nation-building.

The Pummerin and the rebuilding of the cathedral created a spatial relationship between the centre of Vienna and its periphery of the provinces. Bells, as it has been demonstrated in chapter three, create a sense of belonging through centre-periphery dynamics. The church was considered as the centre of the village, centre and periphery is mediated through the sound of the bells and their audibility throughout the whole village. The St. Stephen’s Cathedral can be considered as the centre of Austria. In order to make the Pummerin a carrier of the spatial centre-periphery relationship its “sound” needs to be amplified. The symbolic amplifying works through media and the re-mediation of meaning to create a collective emotional attachment to the bell and what the bell represents. The centre-periphery dynamics enable bells to emotionally connect bodies. Village bells provide connection to the local place, the Pummerin and the staging of the recasting of the bell provided a connection with the national sphere of Austria. However, Pummerin was already important in the Habsburg Empire in terms of centre-periphery. The tower of the cathedral was the symbolic centre of the Empire and the distance to the different crown lands was always measured from the point of the tower (Eickhoff, 2009, p. 190).

Social and cultural historian, Emma Robertson (2008) shows how bells contribute to establishing a sense of belonging. Robertson demonstrates in the example of the Overseas Service from the BBC how Big Ben was used to create a notion of Britishness. Big Ben was used to create images and memories of Great Britain and an emotional connection between the British Empire and its colonies. Robertson states:

\textsuperscript{185} Pummerin – Die Stimme Österreichs, 2016.
Radio sounds would be used to trigger fond visual memories of Britain—‘fairy pictures in the air’—yet such memories were not necessarily dependent on lived experience. These were national, even racial memories, formed outside of national boundaries but held in the collective exile consciousness and crucial to an ‘imagined community’ of Britishness, which could survive any distance of time and place. Through radio, through ‘swift-winged sound’, Britain could be re-imagined by exiles throughout the Empire. This was an essentially nostalgic version of Britain, which worked to exclude listeners who could claim no such memories of the Mother Country. (Robertson, 2008, p. 462)

In case of the Pummerin not only radio (where it is aired once a year) but its redeployment in audio-visual media was used to create an imagined community. According to Robertson Big Ben was important in establishing a relationship between centre and periphery by signalling that the only “right” time comes from London (Robertson, 2008, p. 463). The special meaning of Big Ben was not only assigned by producers but also by the audience, which refers to an interaction between producers and audience in the creation of cultural memory. Robertson, clarifies: “The Empire Service did not offer a complete version of Britishness; rather this was formed in the interaction of broadcaster and listener.” (Robertson, 2008, p. 463).

The history of the Pummerin of being destroyed in the Second World War made the bell a useful carrier of the victim myth. The recasting was staged as a collective moment with special meaning for the national sphere of Austria. The Pummerin shows how cultural memory is re-mediated within a dialogue of producer and audience. The significance of the recasting was not only assigned by the media but also by the public who participated enthusiastically in the process of the recasting. The recasting was not only used to create a version of a shared past and an emotional sense of belonging, but also to portray and create an image of the “Austrian identity”.

The research has shown that the Pummerin could be considered as “sticky” (Ahmed 2010) and certain emotions and attributions are stuck on the object. This can be seen in the persistency of the “victim myth”. Even if this version of a shared past was officially disqualified, the example of the documentary from 2016 has demonstrated how long certain narratives can be reproduced and stuck onto objects.
Robertson considers Big Ben as “aural iconography” (Robertson, 2008, p. 461). I want to argue that The Pummerin could be considered as “aural iconography” as well. The bell helped to create and promote an image of Austria not only based on nostalgic versions of the past but also on selectivity. Through permanent circulation and reuse in media the bell offers and provides an emotional identification to Austria.
6. Re-Mediation of Bells in the Austrian Radio

As an introduction to the chapter the following interview accounts about bells on the radio present an overview of the aspects discussed in the chapter. They demonstrate what people associate when hearing bells on the radio and also show how radio is embedded in people’s everyday lives.

Lisa: For example on New Year’s Eve they always broadcast the Pummerin. When I was little my dad used to always turn on the radio and say “listen, this is the most famous bell of Austria”. He always turned up the volume and I thought well it’s just a bell, but nowadays I do exactly the same.¹⁸⁶

Caroline: It’s interesting because every peal is different. [...] I always hear it because the radio is turned on in the background and it’s also interesting because you get some information about the parish [...] We listen to our station not channel 3 (Ö3). I listen to Radio Vorarlberg because I want to know what is happening in our province.”¹⁸⁷

Benjamin: We have done that for decades, because we have lunch on time at high noon or a little bit before and then we turn the radio on and sometimes I’m upset because I realise that I have missed it. I say to my wife, “now we have missed the bells again” it is always interesting. First because you hear different bells and second because they give some additional information, it is interesting when they talk about bells in the whole of Austria, like Burgenland, and then the big and small bells, or like in Tyrol they sometimes have quite original stories, and after that the world news. But the bells, it is always interesting for us, the bells, yes at least for our generation bells are something precious. They were the caller, to call to the service [...].¹⁸⁸

Toby: I listen to them almost every day, it is the time when we have lunch and then I hear them. Basically, it’s interesting because if you know the country you know where the regions that are poorer are because they have smaller bells. Burgenland has very small ones, Lower Austria towards the border to Czech Republic or Slovakia also has smaller bells, whereas Salzburg and Tyrol they have big bells.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁶ Interview Nr. 33.
¹⁸⁷ Interview Nr. 5.
¹⁸⁸ Interview Nr. 17.
¹⁸⁹ Interview Nr. 16.
Phillipp: I listen to it on a regular basis. My wife actually listens to channel 1 (Ö1) and we eat at 12 o’clock sharp and then I switch to Radio Vorarlberg where they broadcast the bells. You can see the status of the people, like in Carinthia there are small bells and in the regions with more money you can hear big bells.\textsuperscript{190}

The previous accounts reveal the importance of not only looking at the radio content but also how radio content is consumed. The interviewees illustrated how radio can be seen as an “encultured sound” (Wall, 2018). Media studies scholar Tim Wall calls for an “approach that integrates understanding of radio’s form and the experience of consuming it” (Wall, 2018, p. 381). When this understanding is applied to the interview accounts it means that certain domestic tasks like eating lunch can be combined with the act of listening.

The interviews not only show how sound and radio are consumed but also how the sound of bells can be linked to certain imagined spaces. This is seen in Toby and Phillipp’s account about small bells and poor regions.

Hearing bells on the radio is nothing unique for Austria, and many stations all over Europe broadcast bell ringings in their programmes.\textsuperscript{191} The airing of bells on the radio seems to be a popular occurrence. In the case of Austria many different local broadcast studios have their own collection of bell recordings. However, their recordings provide no additional information about where the bells were recorded or who recorded them. They seem to be ‘just’ a part of the radio practice.

Every day, the Austrian Broadcast Corporation (ORF) broadcasts a different local peal at high noon and they always follow the same procedure. The commentator says, “it is 12

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\textsuperscript{190} Interview Nr. 18.
\textsuperscript{191} The Swiss Radio (SRF, DRF, srf.ch) broadcasts \textit{Glocken der Heimat} (bells from home) since 1925 (srf.ch). The purpose of the ringing at Swiss International Radio (SRI) was to share some Swissness with citizens who live outside of Switzerland. Deutschland Radio Kultur broadcasts every Sunday the bell ringing from the \textit{Freiheitsglocke} (liberty bell) of Berlin and follows a tradition started in 1950 by RIAS (radio and television station in the American Sector of Berlin during the Cold War). BBC Radio 4 broadcasts Big Ben every day to start the 6pm news, the midnight news and the Westminster hour on Sunday. Bells are also broadcasted on the radio programme bells on Sunday. Available at: \url{https://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/radio4/entries/644509f6-e682-4d59-ba55-ccc39fd1228c}, (Accessed: 1 October 2019).
\end{flushleft}
o’clock you are listening to the bells of the parish (name of the village)”, this is followed by bell ringing and additional information is given about the church. Every day they followed the same process but use different peals from different parishes. The bell ringing is then followed by the news, weather forecast and traffic information.

Broadcasting bells on the radio can be seen as an interesting object of research because radio and bells are both a medium of sound. Both have the ability to create a certain relationship with the listener and they can be interlinked with space and time (Cardiff and Scannell, 1991).

Broadcasting bells on the radio can change the spatial and temporal outreach of bells because the range of bells is amplified when broadcast. This means that bells can reach a far wider space across the borders of a parish to a far larger audience. Furthermore, the radio’s airing of bells at particular times works to create a time-based orientation for people.

Sociologist, John Thompson (1995) explains how communication media has contributed in changing social life. He states:

> In a fundamental way, the use of communication media transforms the spatial and temporal organization of social life, creating new forms of action and interaction, and new modes of exercising power, which are no longer linked to the sharing of a common locale (Thompson, 1995, p. 4).

Thompson’s analysis reveals how the broadcasting of bells on the radio can transform its spatial and temporal organisation.

The Austrian radio’s use of bell recordings reveals how sound can be re-dispersed numerous times and how bells can be independent from their local space or place of origin. Through the radio the sound of certain bells can be listened to at different times and they are recognised no longer just locally but by the nation. Thompson proposes that bells on the radio help create a “space-time distinction”.

> Any process of symbolic exchange generally involves the detachment of a symbolic form from its context of production: it is distanced from this context, both spatially and temporally, and re-embedded in new contexts which may be located at different times and places (Thompson, 1995, p. 21).
6.1 The History of the Austrian Broadcast Corporation (ORF) and their Relationship with Bells

The broadcasting of bells in Austria can be traced back to the country’s first radio airing. During these times the purpose of programme schedules was not fully understood and this is shown through the radio’s broadcasting of bells. Even today, the radio hosts asked could not explain why their stations played the sound of bells at high noon and they had little understanding of the reason why bells were aired at all. Scannell points out that “there was a moment when ‘how to do broadcasting’, in all respects, had to be discovered” (quoted in Moores, 2005, p. 18). By looking at the history of the Austrian radio and how bells found their way into the daily schedules enables the retracing of how the understanding of ‘how to do broadcasting’ changed over time.

The sounds of village bells are now aired on regional Austrian radio stations through the Austrian Broadcast Corporation (ORF). Austrian broadcasting began with the establishment of the Österreichische Radio-Verkehrs AG” (RAVAG) in Vienna, 1924. In the following years the first provincial stations were opened in Graz in 1925, Klagenfurt and Innsbruck in 1927, Linz in 1928, Salzburg in 1930 and Bregenz and Dornbirn in 1933192 (Godler 2004). The following image shows the location of the different radio stations.

Figure 47: Map of Austria, geology.com.

192 The research area of Vorarlberg had two radio studios in the beginning.
In the early days, Austrian radio stations mainly used bells to mark special occasions. An annual report from 1927/28 reveals this occurrence in its announcement “the honouring voices of bells introduced the beginning of the new year [...]” (RAVAG 1927/28, p. 17). This practice has survived up to the present day and it is evident in the radio’s broadcasting of the Pummerin bell’s ringing since the 1930s until now at midnight am on New Year's Eve (Wernisch, 2006, p. 1042). The Pummerin bell’s ringing is also aired on national TV every year at the same time as the radio’s broadcast.

An annual review from Austria’s early years of broadcasting found that in the past the more special bells were aired on special occasions. For example, the Vatican bell and the bell for the fallen soldiers in Roverto, Italy, were also aired on particular days (RAVAG 1931).

Between 1924 and 1938 RAVAG’s main understanding of the purpose of radio was “music, literature and science” (Godler, 2004, p. 33). Although this did not include religion, church services were broadcast on the radio. This shows that they paid respect to religious ceremonies, and it highlights the religious shape of Austria prior to World War Two. Radio producers were not fully engaged with religion, but they still respected it and its cultural values.

After the Anschluss of Austria to Germany in 1938 RAVAG was renamed Deutsch-Österreichischer Rundfunk (German-Austrian Radio) and from 1939 it became the responsibility of the Deutsche Reichspost (Ergert, 1974).

All of its stations in the East of Austria were coordinated from Berlin and the stations in the West were managed from Reichssender München (Munich), apart from Dornbirn in Vorarlberg, which was coordinated by Stuttgart (Godler, 2004). During World War Two the radio showed its power in influencing the people. It portrayed an imagined community to manipulate the “masses” through propaganda. The Second World War made a huge impact on the world of radio and bells. The ringing of bells was forbidden and its sound was silenced in the radio. Church services and the broadcasting of bells were removed from the radio in 1939 (Badenoch, 2005, p. 586).

The Nazi regime led to Austrian radio reinventing itself just after the war in 1945 and it then became the responsibility of the Allied Forces (Godler, 2004).
The Allied Forces supervised the content aired on the radio and its rebuilding and broadcasting was delegated to Austrian radio producers. The producers were sceptical of the previous centralised approach of the Nazis so they separated the stations in 1945. Historian and journalist, Viktor Ergert (1974, 1975, 1977) explains in his book series 50 Jahre Rundfunk in Österreich (50 years of broadcasting in Austria) that Austria disintegrated into four isolated zones of occupation and also produced four separate broadcast companies (Ergert, 1975). The radio station Rot-Weiβ-Rot was monitored by the United States and had stations in Salzburg, Linz and Vienna. The British Forces monitored broadcast company called Alpenland, which had stations in Graz and Klagenfurt (McVeigh, 2006; Rathkolb, 2014). The Soviet Union controlled RAVAG in Vienna, Lower Austria and Burgenland and the last broadcast company was called Sendegruppe West. They had stations in Innsbruck and Dornbirn in the west of Austria and were monitored by France (Godler, 2004).

The banning of bells in the Second World War positioned them as unrelated to Nazism. Media studies scholar Alec Badenoch (2005) provides a further explanation when he proposes, “In the postwar era, church bells were once more highly symbolic, as the voice of both a church and a local tradition that had been silenced by the war” (Badenoch 2005, p. 387). Badenoch's analysis reveals how bells were used to re-establish a new Austrian radio that opposed the regulations imposed on them throughout the war. He further provides a review on Germany and its relationship with bells just after World War Two, and his analysis can be applied to Austria. Badenoch proposes that the radio’s broadcast of Sunday services used existing cultural patterns from before the war to legitimise the new radio stations to their audiences. The aired services targeted families and they were orientated around their daily and weekly schedules. Badenoch illustrates how bells were used by the radio to create a notion of Heimat. As Sunday services in the church gathered people together so did the Sunday programmes that were broadcast. Families gathered around the radio to hear the religious services and the broadcasting of church bells amplified the feeling of Heimat. Badenoch reiterates, “The sound of church bells, just like the church tower at the centre of the townscape was an important feature of Heimat imagery” (Badenoch, 2005, p. 587).

He further explains the significance of bells in re-establishing the radio and claims:

For the new Allied-run stations, providing these programmes once more represented a way of reconnecting the established broadcasting traditions, as
well as to the universal Christian values implied by the churches.” (Badenoch 2005, p. 586).

Christian values were embedded in the daily schedules in most of the Allied Forces monitored stations. The Sendegruppe West was considered the most religious broadcast company and this can be seen in their daily programme schedule. Sendegruppe West stations mostly started the day with the airing of bells, organs, news and then weather (Radio Österreich, 1954). Broadcasting bells on the radio can be linked to special calendric events but also the concept of dailiness. Scannell provides an explanation, by stating:

The institutionalization of broadcasting can be interpreted as its routinization in order to produce and deliver an all-day every day service that is ready-to-hand and available always anytime at the turn of a switch or press of a button. It means making programmes so that they ‘work’ every time – not now and again or mostly but always (Scannell, 1996, p.145-146).

According to Scannell, broadcasting articulates a sense of time by producing a daily cyclical service. Radio helps to sustain the cyclicity of our everyday life and it organises itself around our routines and repetitive cycles (Scannell, 1995). Scannell further explains:

The broadcasting calendar creates a horizon of expectations, a mood of anticipation, a directness towards that which is to come, thereby giving substance and structure (a ‘texture of relevance’) to everyday life (Scannell 1995, p. 155).

Scannell’s analysis of dailiness attempts to theorise the role of broadcasting within the concept of social reproduction (Moores, 2005, p. 16). His description can be extended to the role of bells on the Austrian radio. Bells can be seen to not only reproduce a certain space but also to create a social reproduction of time through serving its target audience’s everyday life rhythms. The use of bells on the radio produces imagined spaces and helps to sustain routines. The content is also influenced by the characteristics of the targeted listener. Historian and media studies scholar, David Hendy (2000) provides an understanding of this occurrence.

Producers may design programmes to deliberately attract certain audience sectors – and they will always have some notion of who they expect to listen. These concepts of the ‘radio audience’ shape programming, and mould our listening experience (Hendy, 2000, p. 115).
By broadcasting bells on the radio, its producers assume that listeners attributed certain values to bells. Broadcasting bells on a daily basis reveals the radio’s shift from using special bells for special occasions to using bells on a regular basis. Since the 1950s the broadcasting of bells on the radio has become a more and more regular feature. The American monitored Rot-Weiß-Rot group was the first station that started broadcasting bells at high noon in the 1950s (Radio Österreich, 1954). This was a time when Austria gradually gained its independence from the Allied Forces and this was accompanied by radio stations becoming state-run organisations. In 1953, radio was no longer transmitted in Amplified Modulation (AM) it became Frequency Modulated (FM) and it was renamed Radio Österreich (Ergert, 1974). After the signing of the State Treaty in 1955 the remaining stations were fully integrated and the radio station was newly named Oesterreichischen Rundfunk (Austrian radio) (McVeigh, 2006; Rathkolb, 2014).

The newly created state programme continued with the practice of playing bells on a daily basis. Oesterreichischer Rundfunk’s first station named Erste Programm started broadcasting bells in the 1950s. After 1956, the radio stations started to offer information on which bells they were broadcasting. Additionally, the radio began broadcasting regional bells, not only special bells on special occasions (Radio Österreich, 1956). There was a shift in focus from special bells being played occasionally to regional bells being aired on a daily basis. This shift was accompanied with structural reforms, such as a refocus on the local audience. Regional radio stations were created alongside the national and this helped producers target a smaller scale audience. The appearance of bells at high noon presented what Scannell calls, “zoning”. He states:

time-through-the-day is zoned from breakfast time to bed time. These zones are part of the fundamental way in which broadcast services are arranged to be appropriate to the time of day – which means appropriate to who in particular is available to watch or listen at what time and in what circumstances (Scannell, 1996, p.150).

Radio content is orientated towards what its listeners may be doing at particular times of the day and it is also linked to who would listen at certain times of the day (Scannell, 1996). The radio’s playing of bells at high noon referred to the people’s existing everyday patterns. Additionally, the set times linked to the ringing of bells helped people navigate their lives around the time of its airing.
The power relations between the centre and its periphery in terms of the capital Vienna and its different provinces were also negotiated through the radio. The different local radio producers and their governors from the different provinces proposed a federal structure of the radio with a focus on locality. They produced guidelines that provided a civic education on broadcasting and outlined what to avoid that could harm the reputation of Austria (McVeigh, 2004). Literature scholar, Joseph McVeigh (2006), states that radio:

sought to avoid polemics of any kind, to cultivate ‘die Grundsätze des guten Geschmacks’ (the principles of good taste), and refrain from offending ‘die natürliche Moral’ (natural morality); similarly, the listener should not be burdened with ‘eine allzu aufdringliche Werbung’ (overly forceful advertising) (McVeigh, 2006, p.250).

In the 1950s, broadcasting focused on producing conservative content that was not fuelled by immoral language. However, broadcasting in Austria during the 1950s and 1960s was very much controlled by its political parties. This changed in 1966 with the establishment of the Austrian Broadcast Corporation (ORF). The duties of the ORF were anchored in the broadcasting law and the director was independent from political instruction. This was the starting point of the changes that made broadcasting in Austria what it is today. ORF’s mission statement from 1966 sought to educate the people and the youth and mediate and promote art and science. It also aimed to present impeccable entertainment and provide objective information and critical commentary on public and cultural life (Godler, 2004). ORF pointed out that its main purpose was to educate and entertain the nation and not to present a critical commentary on politics. Media studies scholar James Curran (2002) describes ORF’s position as a “liberal narrative”, which portrays radio as a process of democratisation. In the 1960s Austrian broadcasting became “free from government” (Curran, 2002, p. 4) and this “diminished the knowledge gap between the political elite and the general public because it made informing the public an institutional priority” (Curran, 2002, p. 6). However, it has been argued, “broadcasting remained subject to a political elite dominating the state” (Curran, 2002, p. 36). It can be suggested that media will always support and sustain “the social order as a consequence of controls exerted through the market, state and elite cultural power” (Curran, 2002, p. 38).
In the year 1967 ORF was reformed and it forged a new organisational structure. Instead of having two mixed channels (Mischprogrammen) they changed to three structure channels (Strukturprogramme). Austrian journalist and radio host, Ernst Grissemann was held responsible for one of the newly founded channels. Grissemann stated that the new channels in Austria were orientated towards the basic structure of the BBC. Austria tried to copy the four channels of the BBC but produced different content to target the Austrian audience (Godler, 2004). The first channel was dedicated to "culture". The channel used to broadcast "Ernst Musik" (classical music) and talks on various topics. The second channel was shared by the different provinces of Austria (Österreich Regional) and focused on regional content and folk music. The third channel was orientated towards "entertainment", and it targeted a young audience (Godler, 2004). Curran provides an analysis on UK broadcasting that can be applied to Austrian radio. He explains that broadcasting uses "the populist narrative" (Curran, 2002, p. 21) to describe its transformation “from an elitist channel to one which was closer to the people’, leading to ‘the democratization of popular choice” (Curran, 2002, p. 21). This is made through a reorganisation of radio “into generic channels, offering differentiated programme schedules for different publics” (Curran, 2002, p. 21). The newly formed three channels targeted different audiences and this revealed how the radio tried to adapt its content to closer match the expectations and tastes of its different audiences. The difference in radio stations expressed a certain “media habitus” (Kommer, 2010).

Media studies scholar, Golo Föllmer (2006) explains:

choosing a specific radio station is, [...] often an expression of the individual desire and social necessity to be part of a specific group and, [...] a way of accumulating further cultural capital and adopting markers signalling a 'media habitus' (Kommer 2010) appropriate to the values relevant to the group in which we wish to remain or to which we would like to belong in the future (Föllmer 2016, p. 304).

ORF’s choice to provide different content offered the audience a platform to find themselves and identify with their social groups. Producers aired bells because they assumed their audience would value its sound. However, it can be suggested that people tuned in to hear and connect with their local place through sound. This reveals the role of bells in helping people find themselves and their social groups through its sound.
The provincial channel was important in terms of bells on the radio. A former director of the Austrian Broadcast Corporation, Gerd Bacher described the duties of the provincial channel. He said:

The channel Österreicher Regional (ÖR) has the main function to reflect the different provinces, to display the Austrian diversity and to foster local, conservative entertainment (Godler 2004: 77-8).

Österreicher Regional was orientated towards a local conservative audience and their content seemed to align with the tastes of the Austrian majority.

Radio helps to establish wider spatial structures but it is also anchored in a sense of locality. Hendy reiterates: "For most listeners of the time, though, radio is not an international medium, but rather a national or, especially, a local one." (Hendy, 2000, p. 23). The interplay of different communal identities comes into place. The content of Österreicher Regional took on a local notion and this forged a relationship to the audience. It can be suggested, that ORF created a local channel simply to narrow its target audience. However, the switch meant that people could receive local information about their communities and this brought them closer to home and enhanced their local experiences.

An interesting feature of Österreicher Regional was how it would broadcast Ringsendungen (relay programmes). These were radio shows that were produced in one local station and then aired across the other nine stations (Godler, 2004). This meant that local content from one region was broadcast by the others. This helped create unity amongst the various locales. The shows provided an imagined space for Austria as a united country with its many different regions. Curran calls this the “anthropological narrative” and refers to “the nation as cultural construct” (Curran 2002, p. 26). He explains that, “media have played a part in its construction” (Curran 2002, p. 26). Through creating a framework of shared local experiences the radio can be seen to forge a sense of national identity. According to Curran, radio brings “together the diverse elements of national life, and presented them in a single, unified context” (Curran 2002, p. 30). This illustrates that different aspects of the national life can be merged together to “evoke a sense of national unity” (Curran, 2002, p. 30).
“Autofahrer unterwegs (Drivers on the road)” was a radio show mentioned by most of the interviewees when they explained their experiences with bells on the radio. This reveals that the show had a special place in the collective memory of its audience. In 1957, the radio show became a permanent feature of the local channel, therefore the sound of bells was played on “Autofahrer unterwegs” everyday at high noon. “Autofahrer unterwegs” was a Ringsendung and it was produced in Vienna but was broadcast across the different regions. The programme was classed the most popular show on radio and it held an important place in the collective memory of postwar Austria (Neumeier, 2003; Godler, 2004). “Autofahrer unterwegs” was based on seriality. Media studies scholar, Shaun Moores describes seriality as a production that includes standardised shows, such as situation comedies, game shows or current affair discussions. The programme can be reproduced on a regular basis and this creates a familiarity for its audience (Moores, 2005).

The purpose behind the creation of “Autofahrer unterwegs” was described in the interview conducted with one of its producers Lore Neumeier. Neumeier stated:

Phillips wanted to make car-radios more popular and set up a radio show that was catered towards selling their products. Nobody believed that the show would become so popular and we received letter requests for a long time after the show that asked why the show was cancelled.  

According to Neumeier, the show gained a large amount of written feedback from the public however after reviewing ORF’s archive only two letters were found that discussed bells. Neumeier claimed that most of the letters were destroyed after ten years. The small amount of requests regarding bells shows how their presence was possibly taken for granted or seen as a fixed part of the radio shows experience and not given a lot of attention by the audience.

Neumeier referred to the requests in her interview account. She stated:

Most of the time we received requests about music and questions regarding interviews from the show and sometimes there were also requests about bells. Some people might not have understood which village the bells were broadcast in.  

Neumeier explained the importance of bells for the show:

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193 Interview Nr. 40.
194 Interview Nr. 40.
They [the bells] were always part of the show, since we used to broadcast during high noon [...] We were the last show that every local station would collectively broadcast and the bells at high noon were a fixed part of it, and because we aired to the whole of Austria it was decided to create a cycle that every province can contribute their own bells, and the local stations also produced their own recordings.\footnote{Interview Nr. 40.}

At times, *Autofahrer unterwegs* would broadcast its shows directly from the local villages and the bells played on the station came from the visited villages. The show created spatial reference points between local coverage and the whole of Austria. So did the church bells, they created a connection between the audience and their locale. Through hearing the sound of bells the audience could recognise their local place. When asked about the purpose of the church bells at high noon, Neumeier responded:

Well, it lifted the mood during high noon, it somehow created a moment of tranquillity, the people who worked were not affected by the bells unless they were listening to the radio in their workshops, or in the pubs or shops, [...]\footnote{Interview Nr. 40.}

ORF archivist, Michael Hummer, echoes Neumeier’s account about the relevance of bells at high noon. Hummer states, “originally the bells should mark the half of the day. They should invite to contemplate for a moment to take a break” (Hummer, 2015).

A multitude of localities was united through the collective experience of listening to the sound of bells and this created an imagined community of Austria. Bells were once again orientated towards dailiness because the audience expected to listen to bells at high noon. This was also the time the ringing of church bells could be heard from the local towers.

According to media studies scholar, Morten Michelsen, (2019) radio has the ability to create a huge palette of imaginary spaces. It recreates physical spaces, social spaces and it redefines spatial relationships. Michelsen reveals how radio can offer a spatial identification and a spatial orientation, not only in a geographical sense, but also in a social sense. Hendy reiterates Michelsen’s diagnosis by stating:

\footnote{Interview Nr. 40.}
People's feelings about community, about territory, work and weekends, roads and traffic, memory and play, and what might be happening across town’ are seized by radio so that I can ‘map our symbolic and social environment (Hendy, 2000, p. 188).

Hendy, and Michelson’s analyses reveals how the Austrian radio’s local and nationwide structure and content can organise the space of a country. Furthermore, local bells are still broadcast on their regional stations and then aired across Austria’s other local stations. In this present day, only the sound of the bells is transmitted across the local territories and this creates a spatial orientation for the locality, its provinces and the whole nation.

The 1970s involved the structural development of Austria’s regional stations and this was in dialogue with its audience. This reorganisation was based on a 1973 listener survey, which led to ORF distributing more local content. This reorganisation shifted more attention onto countryside residents. The station’s scheduled programmes were tailored to suit the needs of Austrian countryside audiences. In the 1970s Österreich Regional was classed the most listened to station in Austria. The reorganisation of the channel was accompanied with the building of nine separate TV and radio studios across the regions (Godler, 2004). The buildings were identical in terms of their technical facilities and also in their appearance. This attributed them with the name “Peichl-Cake” in reference to the architect Gustav Peichl.

Figure 48: Studio in Styria, ORF Steiermark. Figure 49: Studio in Carinthia, ORF Kärnten.
The similarity found between the buildings was another symbolic gesture used to create unity between the different regions.

In 1993 another change occurred when private radio stations were legally permitted to broadcast in Austria and this created a new competition for the ORF (McVeigh, 2006). Austria’s 1995 reforms positioned the regional radio stations as they are today. The local stations defined themselves as Heimatradios (radios of home) and their target audience widened to include local minorities (Godler, 2004). For example, Burgenland’s local station provided dedicated programmes in Hungarian and in the south of Carinthia they produce shows in Slovenian. The province of Tyrol has a separate studio in Bolzano/South Tyrol (Italy). It seems like ORF tried to recreate and cater to the territories of the ‘old’ Habsburg Empire through language and location.

According to media studies scholar Michelle Hilmes, radio has the ability to bring the “public in the privacy of one’s home” (Hilmes, 2012, p. 354). Hilmes applies Anderson’s concept of an imagined community to radio and explains how broadcasting helps to create a sense of nationhood. She proposes that the early years of radio provided a sense of unity, in terms of physical space by bringing together the distant geographical places, but also unity in terms of “cultural unity” (Hilmes, 2012). Hilmes highlights this with an example of how the ‘Standard English’ language was distributed across USA through radio. The different radio networks helped establish a national culture of speaking English to promote and create a certain sense of unity. Radio can work to create an imagined community. This occurrence does not only create a unity amongst people it also forges a clear distinction between centre and periphery (Michelsen, 2019, p. 39).
As the church tower in a village creates a centre periphery structure, so can the radio. Although village bells come from local regions, their broadcasting is still co-ordinated and managed from the central station in Vienna. This highlights the dynamic of power between the centre and its periphery. Furthermore, radio structures can reach out to the cultural minorities in its nation and create unity amongst these people whilst they are based in a different place.

In the present day, the local channel station still attracts the highest audience number in Austria. In 2020, Oesterreich Regional had a market share of 35 percent. In the provinces Oesterreich Regional is the most listened station as well as with people over the age of 35 (ORF Medienforschung, 2020). The market share figures indicate that Oesterreich Regional’s listeners fit within the older range bracket. A difference was also found between the provinces and the capital of Vienna. Oesterreich Regional’s main listeners came from the countryside and this explains why ORF’s strategy was to prioritise local content.

Furthermore, bells can be seen to correlate with the local identities of their place. The former radio producer of ORF Vorarlberg, Otto Vonblon highlights this in his description of the relationship between the central station in Vienna and its local studios in relation to bells.

A longer excerpt from the interview should illustrate how bells are programmed:

The allocation of bells came from Vienna, they decided how many bells are aired from Vorarlberg and when, on this Sunday or during the week. There was a plan with the number of bells that came from Vorarlberg and they tried to connect the bells with the programme. If there was a Frühschoppen (Sunday gathering) or an event or another live coverage from a village, then they also programmed the same bells from the village. [...] Once I received a request from a teacher from a village who asked why their bells were not broadcast? So I checked the archive and realised that it was one of the old recordings and we could not use them anymore. He offered to send a new recording and some information about the church because it was just renovated during that time so we could update the information and produce a new recording. [...] In the beginning we contacted the villages in advance of when their bells were being broadcast, but we stopped it because it was outdated, but the people realised it anyway, if there was a live show from a particular place, people expected their bells, it had an impact on the people [...] Bells are a part of our culture, a
memory about the childhood and in general in my opinion it is an important Volksgut (part of popular culture).197

Vonblon’s description shows how the bells met the expectations of its audience, not only in terms of time but also in terms of space. When a live show was broadcast the audience expected to listen to the bells from this particular place and hearing the bells from their home village seemed to amplify the feeling of locality.

In this present day, radio schedules announce which local bells are aired and this is based on an annual plan. Additionally, differences exist in the broadcasting of bells across the local stations, for example Vienna no longer broadcasts bells anymore. The region of Tyrol only broadcasts bells from its own region and South Tyrol in Italy, they do not air bells from other provinces. Lower Austria only airs a minute of bell ringing whilst the other stations play one and a half minutes. Over the years the time allocated to the broadcasting of bells has decreased from three minutes to one and a half minutes. This evidently reveals that the value the radio attributed to bells has diminished over time. A review on the different radio stations and their reference to bells has found that only the province Styria mention the broadcast time of bells in its schedule. The other stations also aired the bells at noon but they do not to mention this on their ‘lunchtime’ programmes.

Since 2007, the ORF has published public value reports that offer an insight into how broadcasting is defined in Austria. The report provides a phrase that has been referred to many times. It states, “Austria is nine times Austria” (Public value report 2007-2011). This phrase highlights how the Austrian identity can be seen as a mosaic of different regions and how the radio can remediate local identities through its local coverage.

197 Interview Nr. 42.
6.2 Radio and Everyday Life

Through broadcasting bells on the radio the spatial and time-based needs of its audience can be met and these needs are embedded in the everyday life of its listeners. Artist and sound scholar Sophie Arkette describes the relationship between the everyday practice and radio:

Radio, with its repetitive format provides individuals with a secure framework within which to regulate and pace their lives. It could equally be regarded as a surrogate companion which accompanies the individual in work and domestic tasks (Arkette, 2004, p. 164-5).

Radio can be seen to frame people’s daily routines and repetition can be seen as essential in creating a connection between the listener and its producer. Repetition can be found in the everyday, repetition can be found in the sound of bells and repetition can be found in radio schedules. Additionally, high noon bell ringing fits within people’s existing routines of lunchtime and this ensures that an audience is reached. ORF’s orientation towards broadcasting local content from Austria’s regional channel provides a platform for Austria’s local church bells. The local bells work as a tool to promote a local identities. The audience can hear their local bells and this positions regional stations closer to their people. The airing of local bells can be seen to create an imagined community. Austria is portrayed as a country of different localities united through sound. Additionally, the interviewees stated that the exposure of local bells give people an insight into the wealth of the different provinces. Therefore, the village bells can be seen as a symbol of the local identities within Austria.

Differences can be found between bell ringing in villages and the bells broadcast on the radio. The parishes’ bell ringing at high noon (Angelus) is often performed with one bell, whereas when aired on the radio the bells are rung with their full peal (with all its bells). In local parishes the ringing of the peal is performed on special occasions. However, when played on the radio the bells are elevated to a special ringing and this highlights the differences between the radio and local church. The airing of local bells is loaded with speciality, whilst the parishes position them as a part of the everyday practice. The radio can be seen to attribute a meaning to local bells that is not necessarily rooted in the practice of church.
Additionally, no interviewees or producers mentioned this difference in meaning linked to bells and this may be because the sound of bells are embedded within the radio as they are embedded in everyday life. The sound of bells on the radio reinforces their iconic status through their spatially and temporal detachment from their place of origin.

Bells on the radio do not necessarily re-mediate narratives as seen with the Pummerin but rather re-mediate time and space through temporal and spatial reference points. This should help to create a relationship between radio station and its audience. The airing of bells extends its listening community and offers local points of reference that are rooted in the everyday. Bells are a part of people’s lived experiences of sound and help the audience to identify with the radio station. As bells call the people to church, they can also call the people to the radio. Additionally, local bells are broadcast to the ‘masses’ and listened to in local private spaces and this then works to create a feeling of home through the radio station. Bells on the radio not only create a private-public relationship but also a relationship between the villages and the national sphere of Austria. The multitude of local bells not only reproduce local spaces but also the nation’s space by being heard throughout the whole of Austria.

It has been shown that broadcasting bells is closely linked with the history of Austrian radio. The radio practice of using bells after the Second World War shows similarities to how the Pummerin was used to re-mediate a postwar narrative. The fact that bells were banned during the Second World War was used for the absolution of radio’s involvement during the war. The programming of bells in the radio schedule after the war goes hand in hand with the restructuring of the Austrian Broadcast Corporation. Broadcasting bells at high noon was based on an image of the audience. Broadcasting local bells was aimed to create a connection with local audiences in order to represent the provincial radio stations. The times when bells are broadcast is orientated towards existing cultural patterns, however when broadcasting bells, the cultural framework is going to be reproduced at the same time.

This chapter has demonstrated how broadcasting bells helps to establish imagined communities and imagined spaces. Bells do not need to carry specific histories or memories when broadcast on the radio. By orientating the broadcasting to existing
cultural patterns, radio reproduces cultural and social frameworks and acknowledges
the bells’ meaning and attachment to the people.
7. Re-Mediation of Bells Through Virtual Reality

In 2015 I was commissioned by the Vorarlberg Museum to create an exhibition about the removal of church bells during the First World War. I wanted to use the exhibition not only to present my first findings but also as a field of research. The exhibition was shown from December 2018 until March 2019 and a central piece was a virtual reality (VR) experience. By using VR the exhibition aimed to contribute to new developments around museology. The following chapter discusses the exhibition and how virtual reality was used. It will discuss how museums as sites of memory produce and re-mediate cultural memory and how museums rediscover the senses by engaging the whole body of the visitors.

Museums are constantly evolving, and this alters the museum experience itself. In this present day, most museum visitors still observe artefacts from behind glass. This occurrence of visually observing objects is an invention of the nineteenth century (Macdonald 2006; Ross 2010; Latham and Simmons 2014; Mörsch, Sachs and Sieber 2017). In the past, people were permitted and encouraged to touch the exhibits because touching the objects was said to enhance the museum experience and further educate its visitors. It was thought that touching museum objects would establish a special intimacy with its creator. During these times the majority of society was superstitious and they believed in the power of healing through touch. Therefore, visitors touched museum artefacts in hope of the power rubbing off on them (Howes, 2014b).

In recent years, due to the influence of “sensory studies”, museum professionals have reintroduced the senses into the museum experience and this development has been termed a “Multisensory Museum” (2014) or “Sensory Museology” (2014). It aims to create a museum experience that “is a multi-layered journey that is proprioceptive, sensory, intellectual, aesthetic, and social” (Levent and Passcual-Leone 2015, p.xiii). Nowadays museum visitors are engaged in multisensory ways and the use of technology enhances their experience. The presence of sound is mainly found through audio guides or ‘sound showers’ (special speakers). It can also be found in the use of historical soundscapes.

To discuss the museum experience it is necessary to consider the museum itself. This is important because by looking at the historical changes within museums its re-mediation approach can also be positioned within these changes.
Literature scholar, Andreas Huyssen states:

The museum is a direct effect of modernization [...] it is not the sense of secure traditions that marks the beginning of the museum, but rather their loss combined with a multi-layered desire for (re)construction. A traditional society without a secular teleological concept of history does not need a museum, but modernity is unthinkable without its museal project (Huyssen 1995, p. 15).

Museums help reconstruct and promote a certain cultural heritage and this can construct a sense of belonging to different spaces, such as nations or regions. This is the mission and foundation of the Vorarlberg Museum and through its history it will be shown how museums have evolved throughout the years. In 1857, Vorarlberg Museum’s establishment was instigated through the constitution of the first history society. The society aimed to showcase the province’s past and highlight the differences and unique character of Vorarlberg in comparison to its neighbour Tyrol. The society created archives and published historical articles. Historian Markus Barney describes the society as an important contributor in creating a sense of belonging for the province in the times of Habsburg Empire (Barney 1988).

Director of Vorarlberg’s Jewish Museum, Hanno Loewy, states:

In 1857, when liberal representatives of the bourgeoisie in Vorarlberg formed the state museum association and demanded the foundation of a state museum, the unity invoked (and thereby ultimately the invention of the state of Vorarlberg) was expressed in the form of a political separatism from Tyrol, for which this new “unique” culture and history was then put to use (Loewy 2016, p. 82).

In 1905, the society opened the Vorarlberg Museum to highlight the originality of the province. In 1959/60 the museum was then redesigned and in 2009 it closed for refurbishment until 2013. The new Vorarlberg Museum exhibits on four floors and it has a total exhibition space of 2400 m2.\(^198\)

Vorarlberg Museum’s refurbishment can be linked to its newly found way of protecting and re-mediating the past. The museum no longer focuses on showcasing exhibitions

\[^{198}\text{Vorarlberg Museum. Available at: https://www.vorarlbergmuseum.at/museum/geschichte/, (Accessed: 16 March 2021).}\]
through old conservative forms it is now seen as a modern form of “mass media” (Huyssen, 1995). This shift in focus is visible in the museum’s postmodern architecture.

To offer a variety of different narratives, the Vorarlberg Museum’s exhibitions showcase socially relevant topics. They use artefacts from their old existing collections, but they also work to enlarge their collection. Vorarlberg Museum’s collection has around 160,000 objects. They consist of traditional material artefacts in the form of secular art, folklore objects, archaeological artefacts and ecclesiastical relics. The art dates back from pre-history to current times and the folklore objects have become a part of Austria’s popular culture. One of Vorarlberg Museum’s curators, Peter Melichar, provides a description about the meaning attributed to artefacts. He proposes that objects do not say anything about the past until they are researched, developed and displayed.  

All of the museum’s collections are connected to the province of Vorarlberg and this encourages visitors to engage with the cultural heritage of the province. Irrespective of the museum’s main focus, all exhibitions are presented within a national and international context.

Vorarlberg Museum’s mission to promote its region’s past in a modern format aligns with my research interests and this prompted me to exhibit the event of the requisition of bells in the museum.

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The idea for the exhibition started before my PhD journey in April 2015. In early 2015, our first talks began and then I was commissioned to manage the project in April 2015. The museum wanted to commemorate the First World War and placed a focus on the province of Vorarlberg. The event of the removal of church bells seemed to be an interesting approach to gain an insight into the lives of Vorarlberg’s villages during the First World War. The basic idea was to provide content that communicated the meaning of bells through space and time, but to also tell the story, or the history, of the removal of bells during the war. I wanted to highlight what caused this event and reveal the impact it made on a local level.

The aim of the exhibition was to showcase content that was relevant to Vorarlberg but to present it within a national and international context. I also sought to encourage a critical reflection on history and this was inspired by Vorarlberg Museum’s mission statement. It states, “We recognise our moral responsibility to create and cultivate an open-minded but critical awareness of history [...]”.200

Discussions were made with the representatives of the museum (director, curators, technicians and marketing) about which medium to use to display the content and several concepts were proposed. In 2016, I attended a virtual reality (VR)-Lab and in 2017 I was inspired by a VR experience called Ghost Gallery and its creator Andy Baker presented it. This led to my proposal of the use of VR as a medium and the museum agreed to work with the production team from Brighton. In January 2018 it was finalised that we would use VR to re-mediate the story or history of the Great War. Game designer and artist, Maf’j Alvarez was responsible for the artistic direction and creative content. IT specialist Andy Baker was responsible for technical solutions and sound artist, Anna Bertmark managed its sound design. I was the project manager and I provided historical content and sources for the VR experience. I also examined how history can be re-mediated through a virtual reality. The VR experience sought to unpack emotions from its viewer through engaging the whole body. We aimed to engage with the various senses through virtual reality. Vorarlberg’s memories of the seizing of bells were unpacked through combining VR with an oral history approach. The experience showcased people’s accounts with bells through a virtual bell. Furthermore, the archive

became an important aspect to gather Vorarlberg's memories of the war and bells. Archives do not store complete stories of the past. They provide fragmented and selective sources, which need to be constructed or reconstructed, and I wanted to showcase the process of piecing together fragments of the war. All of this was incorporated into the VR experience.

The exhibition was exhibited in the Atrium. The atrium is an extension of the museum square and it is treated as a semi-public space. People can visit the area without a ticket and it is often used to give the different communities within Vorarlberg a platform to engage with the public (Anwander, 2017). A 4m high cardboard church tower was put up in the atrium for the exhibition. Additionally, artefacts about the removal of bells were included and they consisted of bell photographs, duplicated bell reports and an actual steel bell cast in 1917. This bell was exchanged with a bronze bell in 2016. The bell was the first bell cast in Vorarlberg during the First World War and it was displayed on a wooden pallet to show how it was presented for the seizings. Furthermore, the visitors could touch the steel bell and this helped stimulate their senses. The walls of the atrium displayed texts with information and the information helped inform visitors about the historical context around bells during the First World War. The texts described the meaning attributed to bells in the past and they explained the process of seizing bells. The texts also informed the visitors about the recasting of bells after the War and all of the texts were accompanied with pictures linked to bells. A war movie was aired in the atrium for the exhibition. The movie was from the year 1917 and it showed how the seized bells were transported to the ammunition factory in Budapest. The Empire's main weapons producers were located in Budapest and in these factories the bells were destroyed and melted into metal blocks. The aim of the whole exhibition was to use this mix of media to stimulate the visitor's whole body.
Cardboard benches were placed in the atrium to provide visitors with options as they experienced the VR, as well as to provide feedback and to listen to bell recordings. Quotes from the different villages in Vorarlberg were printed on the benches alongside fragments of pictures from the removal and recasting of bells. This worked to introduce the visitor to the experience. The benches added a locality to the exhibition and they were an aesthetical hint for the VR experience itself. Another spatial reference was made through the listening station. The visitors could listen to different bell recordings from Vorarlberg. The recordings came from the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation ORF-Vorarlberg because they were used on the radio. When listening to the different bell recordings the visitors could read replicated bell reports that detailed the requisition of bells during World War One.

Vorarlberg Museum's professionals recognised that many of the senses need to be engaged with for visitors to really enjoy their museum experience and this is reflected in their website’s mission statement:

Using past and present eyewitness accounts and original artefacts, we seek to harness the museum’s potential to appeal to the senses as well as to impart
intellectual knowledge. Our aim is to create a vibrant dialogue between [hu]man and object.\textsuperscript{201}

This was the basis for the exhibition and our aim was to engage with as many of the senses as possible. Therefore, bells were included for touch, pictures and videos were used for the visual, bell recordings for sound and the centrepiece was the VR experience that engaged the whole body.

Figure 55: Opening evening of the exhibition, Vorarlberg Museum.

### 7.1 Why use Virtual Reality

Vorarlberg Museum changed its focus to exhibit through “new museology” and this went hand in hand with the larger number of visitors it attracted. Huyssen describes the contemporary museum visitor as someone who seems “to be looking for empathic experiences, instant illuminations, stellar events, and blockbuster shows rather than serious and meticulous appropriation of cultural knowledge” (Huyssen, 1995, p. 14). Huyssen states that the world of museums transformed and evolved and this can be seen at the Vorarlberg Museum. The museum changed from exhibiting through traditional mediums to using modern approaches that attracted a larger audience (Huyssen, 1995). Huyssen further explains the aim of modern exhibitions:

To lift the object out of its original everyday functional context, thereby enhancing its alterity, and to open it up to potential dialogue with other ages: the museum object as historical hieroglyph rather than simply a banal piece of information; its reading an act of memory, its very materiality grounding its aura of historical distance and transcendence in time (Huyssen, 1995, p. 33).

Instead of presenting descriptive exhibitions, the Vorarlberg Museum's curators want to create a dialogue with their visitors. They try to offer multiple narratives of meaning that cater to the tastes of their audience. Huyssen further describes the purpose of museums for its audience. He proposes that visitors are engaged with hearing and seeing stories about others. They seek to understand the self through others and the museums provide this space and this ensures they are not fixed as people or take their lives or identity for granted (Huyssen, 1995, p. 34).

During the recent years virtual reality has received growing interest within the context of the museum. Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) are becoming more publicly available and the year 2016 was called “the year of VR”. In 2017 the Kremer Museum launched 74 Dutch and Flemish paintings that are only accessible through virtual reality and in 2017 the Tate Modern showcased a 3D virtual reality model of the artist Modigliani's Paris studio. The National Museum of Finland used VR to send visitors back in time to the year 1863 and they stepped inside a painting from R.W Ekman. In 2019, the Louvre launched *Mona Lisa Beyond the Glass* the experience let its visitors virtually discover details about the painting. The use of VR offers a completely ‘new’ museum or gallery experience. VR-enthusiast Adrian Hon (2015) has claimed that VR could even destroy the presence of museums because everything that a museum can do VR can do better. However, historian Chiel van den Akker argues “digital technology enhances and extends the museum experience rather than replacing them with something else” (Van den Akker and Legene, 2016, p. 131).

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VR claims to be an immediate experience because as you put on a VR-headset you enter into a different world. It seeks to immerse the whole body into its experience and this seems to align with the museum’s stance of engaging its visitors with its collections through a multisensory approach. Van den Akker and Historian Susan Legene further highlight how technology can add another layer to the museum experience. They claim in their book “Museums in a Digital Culture” (2016) that the “process of meaning-making involves a growing variety of information technology” (Van den Akker and Legene, 2016, p. 7) most of the time with claims of “new modes of sensory experience” (Van den Akker and Legene, 2016, p. 7). VR claims to create a different sense of presence because you are engulfed in its experience and you become its centre. Furthermore, history can be remediated through the medium of VR and this reveals how old material can be transported into new modes of media. When applied to the exhibition we aimed to extend the user’s museum experience and engage with history by remediating it through a virtual experience.

7.2 How was Virtual Reality Used in the Exhibition and How was it Created

In April 2018, Andy Baker, Maf’j Alvarez and I conducted our first field trip for the exhibition. The purpose of the field trip was to gather information for the exhibition and present VR-demonstrations to Vorarlberg Museum’s representatives. We collected audio-visual data to build the first VR prototype and we captured 360° photos and videos of Vorarlberg’s different bell towers and villages. In August 2018, a second field trip was conducted. Pictures were taken of the museum atrium and Anna Bertmark made sound recordings of Vorarlberg’s church towers and the atrium. The recordings were combined with sound observations to create the soundscape for the VR experience. The first prototype was created in August 2018 and it was presented to Vorarlberg Museum’s representatives. In October 2018 the final version was trailed at the Old Market in Brighton. The presentation sought to collect feedback that was later

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206 During the showcasing from Thursday 3 until the Sunday 7 October we recorded around 50 people who tried the experience.
used to tweak the VR experience. Additionally, observations were made on the handling of the VR headsets and the user experience. This prepared us to train the museum staff and we could detect any possible issues around the handling of the headset before the exhibition.

Figure 56: First prototype testing August 2018, Maf’j Alvarez.
Figure 57: User testing at the VR-Lab Brighton October 2018, Thomas Felfer.

Figure 58 and 59: Testing of the first prototype in Vorarlberg August 2018, Maf’j Alvarez.
User requirements

Certain requirements were put in place to ensure the safety of the user. The permitted age bracket was 8 to 70 years and the demonstrations revealed that the viewing of the experience should not exceed 10 minutes. An important aspect for the experience was to have free movement, therefore the user could sit or stand and this helped inexperienced users engage with the virtual environment within safe boundaries. This also made the experience accessible for a larger age group.

Technology - Headset

Andy Baker made the decision on which technical equipment to use. He obtained the most suitable headset model for the exhibition and waited for as long as possible because there were constant new developments with virtual reality technology. This approach provided us with an affordable headset but most importantly it had no cables or restrictions that obstructed the user’s free movement. The exhibition provided three headsets for the VR experience and we wanted to ensure the users could move around. However, by providing wireless headsets this impacted the VR’s visual design. Free movement was a top priority so the “real world” was not fully replicated and we used a graphic novel aesthetic. Additionally, having a wireless headset made the equipment handling easier. The experience was listened to through closed ear noise reduction headphones and Anna explained that the noise reduction was important because it makes the experience more effective.  

Figure 60: Screenshot of the church from the virtual environment, Andy Baker.

Anna Bertmark: Email from 22 January 2020.
Figure 61 and 62: The village as virtual environment outside the church, Andy Baker.

Figure 63: Screenshot of the virtual environment outside the bell tower, Andy Baker.

Figure 64: Sound sources within the virtual environment, Andy Baker.
7.3 Description of the VR Experience

The VR experience lasted between five and six minutes. It was dependent on how long the user spent at the beginning and at the end of the experience. The VR experience can be linked to different spatial points, such as the atrium as the physical space of the body and the village bell tower as a virtual imagined space. At the end of the experience the user was transported into a fire pit. It was a symbolic gesture that represented how the bells were seized and melted in fire for ammunition.

The VR experience used a vertical layout. Maf’j explained that this allowed users to “move the camera up and down to different parts of the experience. This meant that viewers would not need to move [...].” This approach gave the user a first person view because they could manoeuvre their heads and experience their surroundings. The producers guided the VR’s spatial scenes but the users could move around within the different scenes.

Sound design was an important aspect of the experience. The content was about sound, and it was a creative component of VR. Sound can help enhance a narrative it can guide the body through a virtual space. Anna provided a description of the VR sound design. She stated:

The aim of the sound design was to provide a sense of pace, hence the regular and constant ticking and bell chimes, as well as to give an immersive and believable sense of place to lull the viewer into the experience and feel as if they’re ‘there’. Sounds that can be heard from outside the belfry allows for the viewer to use their own imagination to paint a picture of the activity outside. [...] The voice over not only guides and narrates the story, but also gives a voice to the bell, enabling the viewer to "empathise" with the object and the history. The sound design provides a lot of the emotional design for the experience as a whole.

The user listened to the village story through the bell and they could move freely in the virtual space. The main storyline was situated in a virtual bell tower that was located in the centre of a random village in Vorarlberg. The experience used the virtual space of a

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209 Anna Bertmark: Email from 22 January 2020.
bell tower to highlight the historical dimension. This means that it tried to make the user experience the past, not necessarily the ‘authentic past’ but a different time and space.

At the start of the experience the user was placed in a replicated space of the museum’s atrium. The user could see a bell in front of them, it was placed on a pallet like in the real atrium. Recorded sounds of the atrium were included to replicate the real space and give the virtual place a similar feel to the actual atrium. The users could look around and make themselves familiar with the virtual environment and when they pressed the controller the experience started.

![Figure 65 and 66: Start of experience and virtual atrium, Andy Baker.](image)

The user's first stroke of a bell lifted them up into a bell tower and they were placed in front of another bell. The sound of the narrator announced “Vorarlberg Austria 1736”. This was a random date used to create a historical dimension before World War One when bells were cast in the villages. As the user was elevated into the tower the narrator said:

> I am a bell. The voice of the village. Forged in the earth by the people. (Sound of bell stroke). My voice is big, reaching far and wide (sounds from different bells). At first I was rung by hand in harmony with nature to keep people informed and safe.

This image is shown to the user as they arrive in the bell tower. They are placed in front of a bell that is accompanied with the sound of different bells.
The narrator then announces, “Gradually the mechanical clock took control of me”. Sounds of a clock are aired and accompanied with the ringing of bells. The narrator then says, “Now I become the voice of order and progress and production. The village lives and works by the rhythm of time.”

The different bell sounds were accompanied with emulated sound waves and the sound of a ticking clock. The sound waves emphasised the spatial importance of the bell and appeared to extend the threshold of its sound. The repetition of sound through the clock and bell referred to their cyclicity within the everyday. Repetition was reinforced through rhythmical patterns and this referred to the repetitive character of people’s lives and the past significance of bells for the villages.
Whilst the user was in the tower they could look outside of the window and see the village. This allowed them to see the outside environment without walking into its space.

Figure 69: Window in bell tower with view outside the window, Andy Baker.

The experience aimed to stimulate the user's emotions and this was carried out through the sound and different colour tones. The changing colours in the background worked to stimulate different moods, for example a dark grey background appeared when the narrator said “news of the war arrived in 1914”. This was accompanied with the ringing of the bell and then the big bell started to swing. After the announcement the colour tone changed and the narrator began to talk about sacrifice. The bell ringing and ticking of clocks was then accompanied with gunshots from afar and then the narrator said, “in 1916 the war machine came for me, the requests emerged from its mouth: letters and propaganda”. Then documents appeared in front of the bell, there were two letters from the church and one letter from the state.

Figure 70: Document in front of the bell, Andy Baker.
The experience aimed to use a participatory approach when telling its story. The documents worked to involve the user and they were showcased through a traditional display. The user could walk towards the document and browse through it as the narrators read out loud. They provided a voiced summary of the document to get a clear message across to the user without them having to read it.

The removal of bells in the villages was portrayed through the smashing of the bell. The user was given the option to smash the bell but if this did not occur the bell would smash itself. The sound of the smashing bell was accompanied with a sub-bass sound and this worked to create a more physical experience of the sound. The sound was followed by the user falling into a fire pit and the parts of the bell surrounded them. Whilst the user was in the fire pit they experienced the transformation of the bell into ammunition. Bombshells appeared, and the narrator said, “I was forged into weapons of great power, power to destroy all life, all people and all voices”.

Figure 71: Smashing of the bells, Andy Baker.
Then near the end, the sound of an explosion was heard and a constant 'peep' sound was played. The sound was similar to a tinnitus and it then faded into a complete white environment. The user was then brought back into the replicated atrium space where the experience ended. The user could hear the recorded sounds from the atrium and writing on a wall was displayed that revealed the total amount of copper melted from bells during World War One.

When we started the process of producing the experience the decision was made to use a female voice as narrator. This was not because “die Glocke” (the bell) is a female gender in German but because we wanted to add an additional layer to the experience. The aim of the exhibition was to provide an insight into the home front during the war and to avoid the focus shifting onto soldiers. Therefore, an emphasis was placed on the involvement of women. Using a female voice for the bell seemed to be the right decision. The decision was also made to avoid using an “old voice”. Maf’j voiced the English narration and a moderator from Vorarlberg named Nina Hofer voiced the German version. A local speaker from the area was used to provide another local reference to the province. The experience did not seek to create ‘authenticity’ and the use of an old voice might have been linked to the actual people who gave oral history accounts. The VR experience used a different approach to history, it was not solely factual but also artistic. This was why a call and response method was used between the historical research and
the artistic outcome. This produced a rather poetic voice-over, however we were cautious of it becoming too theatrical. In the experience, the documents were narrated by male voices. This was not to try and create a voice of ‘authority’ or to create a binary between public (male) and private (female). To clarify, we were aware that this choice might have unconsciously created an unintended dualism.

After we decided to use VR, discussions were made on how to include it in the bell’s exhibition. It was proposed that we only showcase the VR experience but we soon discovered that virtual reality cannot replace traditional artefacts but it can enhance the museum experience. This was also confirmed with the feedback we received from the first testing of the prototype.

7.4 Analysis of the Experience

After the exhibition the VR experience was analysed. The analysis aimed to examine how the VR experience was perceived and was based on a survey that was handed out during the exhibition. Additionally, personal observations were made during the VR’s process of creation. I observed every step of the production process and tested every stage from the first draft of the prototype up to the final version of the experience. I personally had no previous experience with virtual reality before the project except from the visits I made to the VR-Lab in Brighton. Before I proposed the idea of using virtual reality to the museum I trialled a google cardboard headset and I was shown other VR experiences by Andy. I followed Andy’s recommendation because some of the headsets were not suitable for our purpose.

Having tested every step of the process I gained an insight into the creation of VR and this was included within the analysis.

The exhibition started from December 2018 to March 2019 and during this time the visitors had the chance to fill out surveys. The exhibition recorded around 8000 visitors and this resulted in 237 completed feedback forms. The survey was therefore not representative, but trends can be seen.

Most people enjoyed the experience with 65 percent of the users describing VR as very good, and 27 percent commented that it was good. Of the visitors surveyed, 53 percent had never used virtual reality and 45 percent sometimes or rarely used VR. Only one
percent were regular users. The largest age group made up 27 percent and they were aged 50-69. Of the visitors surveyed, 21 percent fell within the 8-12 bracket and 53 percent were women. Men made up 37 percent of visitors and 10 percent did not declare a gender.

Training the museum staff helped ensure the users had secure guidance. It was already assumed that most of the visitors would have no previous experience with virtual reality. Therefore, the staff were provided with information about movement within the virtual space and they were also provided with additional guidelines. Staff were trained to use and explain the handling of the VR-set to visitors. They received a brief training session about how to use the headset, how to charge it and how to adjust the settings, such as the volume. Health and safety was also covered to ensure users could sit and stand safely and to prevent any unnecessary injuries as they experienced VR. The staff were also trained in rebooting the software in case the programme did not work anymore. The VR exhibition ran for four months and this was a new terrain for the technology we used, as it was only trialled over a weekend during the test phase in Brighton.

The staff training decreased our technical issues, however some of the surveys reported that the weight of the headset or the need to hold the headset during the experience was uncomfortable. Some users had problems with the volume, it was either too loud, too quiet or they heard no sound. The exhibition was shown during the winter season and this caused some of the visitors’ glasses to fog up. In general the use of the headset with glasses was an uncomfortable experience.

Media studies scholar Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin point out the aim of electronic mediums and this correlates with the exhibition’s users’ experiences.

[...] it wants to be transparent. The digital medium wants to erase itself, so that the viewer stands in the same relationship to the content as she would if she were confronting the original medium. Ideally, there should be no difference between the experience of seeing a painting in person and on the computer screen, but this is never so (Bolter and Grusin, 2000, p. 45).

Bolter and Grusin’s analysis highlights that the VR user does not forget that they are wearing an interface. This is illustrated in the survey accounts and I personally felt that I was wearing an interface with every VR technology I tested.
The visitors pointed out that virtual reality is a novelty and they appreciated the approach of using technology within the context of a museum. The experience itself was described as “sensational”\textsuperscript{210} and “very informative”\textsuperscript{211} to “quite boring.”\textsuperscript{212} One user wrote, VR is “an additional approach to history, [...]”\textsuperscript{213} and another pointed out it was, “the connection between technology and history (13-19\textsuperscript{214}).” The users described the experience as a “historical background combined with animation (20-34)”\textsuperscript{215} and “a brief summary of the history.”\textsuperscript{216} One visitor summarised the experience and said, “I have never experienced museum that close (35-49).”\textsuperscript{217}

The visitors pointed out that they had “learnt something”\textsuperscript{218} and commented “I enjoyed it because I could understand everything much better through the goggles and the film.”\textsuperscript{219} The reference to the VR experience as a film shows that VR can remediate other media formats, such as films or computer games. This was further referred to when a user wrote, “it feels good to be part of the life or in other words part of the film (13-19).”\textsuperscript{220}

In the survey the visitors could highlight the best features of their experience and the 360° visual aspect of VR received the most votes. Of the users surveyed, 51 percent said it was the best and 44 percent favoured having free movement. The storyline and narrative received 37 percent of votes and the overall visual experience received 28 percent. The sound of the bell was the best feature for 27 percent of the users. When asked about the level of emotional impact the VR experience evoked, 30 percent of people said a little bit and 30 percent answered that it was a medium emotional experience.

\textsuperscript{210} Questionnaire Nr. 58.  
\textsuperscript{211} Questionnaire Nr. 126.  
\textsuperscript{212} Questionnaire Nr. 69.  
\textsuperscript{213} Questionnaire Nr. 25.  
\textsuperscript{214} The numbers in the brackets refer to the age group if mentioned by visitors.  
\textsuperscript{215} Questionnaire Nr. 238.  
\textsuperscript{216} Questionnaire Nr. 28.  
\textsuperscript{217} Questionnaire Nr. 230.  
\textsuperscript{218} Questionnaire Nr. 87.  
\textsuperscript{219} Questionnaire Nr. 80.  
\textsuperscript{220} Questionnaire Nr. 216.
Bell sounds
The users only explicitly mentioned the bell sounds a few times and this shows that although the experience was about the bells its sound became an embedded feature. Therefore, the sound of the bell played a minor role. This may be due to the embeddedness of bells within the everyday lives of the users. However, the bell itself was mentioned a few times. A user wrote “the bell speaks”\textsuperscript{221} and another liked the “execution of narrative by the bell [...] (20-34).”\textsuperscript{222} Some people appreciated how close they were to the bell and others liked being in the bell tower. Most of the comments referred to the bells narrative or the spatial and bodily experience they felt from the bell.

Visuals
The chosen headset technology influenced the experience’s aesthetic output. The choice to use an ‘unrealistic’ environment helped prevent certain issues around freedom of movement. However, a lot of comments were made about the visual design and some were positive but some were negative. The technological restraints did not allow us to include the historical records in high resolution and the documents’ low resolution attracted critique. This shows that a virtual experience does not need to use ‘realistic’ high resolutions to be impactful but the information provided should be easy to read. Some visitors did critique the resolution and aesthetics whereas others felt it “looked real”\textsuperscript{223} or appreciated that it was “not a real environment.”\textsuperscript{224} Some did not like spending so much time in front of the bell and others commented that the visual input was lacking in variety. Some visitors felt too close to the bombshells and one person commented, “The pictures and the narrative did not match.”\textsuperscript{225} Others liked the “view outside the window [...] (20-34)”\textsuperscript{226} and it was described as visually pleasant.

\textsuperscript{221} Questionnaire Nr. 129.
\textsuperscript{222} Questionnaire Nr. 62.
\textsuperscript{223} Questionnaire Nr. 95.
\textsuperscript{224} Questionnaire Nr. 74.
\textsuperscript{225} Questionnaire Nr. 30.
\textsuperscript{226} Questionnaire Nr. 209.
Narrative

The experience’s narration mainly received positive feedback. The users appreciated that “a story was told (8-12).” The narrative was welcomed and it was seen to amplify the experience because “everywhere something was happening (8-12).” The narration ensured the user was a “part of it (the experience) (35-49)” and it was described as “liveliness (50-69).”

360° view and free movement

Having a 360° view and free movement within the experience attracted many comments. This shows that moving within a virtual space can be considered the most impactful feature of virtual reality.

The user’s movement within the virtual environment needed to be guided from the outside, except if users chose to sit or stand. This was because of space restrictions in the real space. Additionally, the body was missing feedback because the person’s full presence was not available.

Figure 73 and 74: Visitors experiencing virtual reality, Vorarlberg Museum.

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227 Questionnaire Nr. 150.
228 Questionnaire Nr. 161.
229 Questionnaire Nr. 214.
230 Questionnaire Nr. 215.
In most VR experiences the simulation of one’s own body is missing and this is pointed out by the senior curator at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI), Sarah Tutton. She claims:

It’s this idea of being disconnected from your physical body as you are immersed in the virtual, so you’re looking around in a virtual world but you don’t see your own body and you don’t know what’s going on around you. And that, apparently, creates anxiety in some visitors because there is a disconnect between your physical body and your sensory experience, your visual experience (Tutton, 2018).
This occurrence can be seen as falling into the Cartesian dualism of body and mind. The dualism illustrates how the body and mind can be seen as disconnected. The producers did not locate the body in the storyline and this allowed the user to free float like a ghost within the virtual environment.

Some comments were made about motion sickness but having the option to look around and walk, overall received positive reviews. The users felt they could “discover everything” and they liked that they could “move by themselves.” Having authority over their movement created a sense of presence within the virtual space but also within the narrative itself and this amplified the “live-experience (50-69).”


> The fact of letting the user walk around the VR setting increases the sense of presence of the experience because he or she moves naturally through a real space, without the aid of artificial devices to simulate the movement. The user does not need to practise in order to gain skill in moving around and the sense of motion is real (Hernandez, L., 2004, p. 1).

As mentioned before, the user’s presence within the virtual space is not comparable with the presence in the ‘real space’ because of the missing feedback from the body. The users were also not aware of the real space parameters in the virtual world. During the test phase we tested different scales within the environment and in theory you can move much faster or slower or greater or lesser distance in a virtual environment than compared to a real space. For the final VR version, we decided to use a real-time scale. This meant the distance the user walked in the real space was the same distance they walked in the virtual space.

Walking through walls and windows was not an intended feature of the experience, but many people used the chance to walk outside the set out borders. Many users commented that they appreciated the “infinity (13-19)” and the “possibility to move across boundaries within a safe space.” Some users liked that they could “walk

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231 Questionnaire Nr. 12.
232 Questionnaire Nr. 77, 143, 162, 234.
233 Questionnaire Nr. 155.
234 Questionnaire Nr. 120.
235 Questionnaire Nr. 65.
outside the window”\textsuperscript{236} or “walk through the walls”\textsuperscript{237} and others commented they could “move through the air (50-69).”\textsuperscript{238}

Most of the user feedback can be linked to the body and how it perceives a virtual environment. Although some of the comments said the visuals looked fake, some users pointed out that “everything seemed real”\textsuperscript{239} because it was “3D.”\textsuperscript{240} They also said they felt “right at the heart of the event.”\textsuperscript{241} During the test phase I realised how ‘real’ the virtual environment could feel, especially when I fell from the church tower. It always caused a bodily reaction and I felt I was on a rollercoaster ride. Even after numerous tries the fall always gave me a weird sensation in the pit of my stomach.

Computer Scientist, Javier Mari-Morales (2019) study on the psycho-physiological patterns of experiencing an art space and a 3D immersive model found that people can perceive the virtual space just like a real physical space. The participants of his study were more aroused by a virtual museum space than a physical one. However, Mari-Morales admits that this could be due to the novelty of the technology because his subjects had no previous experience with virtual reality (Mari-Morales, 2019). The study shows that the VR experience can be real enough to evoke physical and emotional reactions. The users can feel as they would feel in the real world (Bolter and Grusin, 2000, p. 163-5). This can be seen in the visitor comments about the exhibition. The users wrote that the experience ”appealed to multiple senses”\textsuperscript{242} and “felt real”\textsuperscript{243} and they were “emotionally touched despite the obvious graphic design.”\textsuperscript{244} In general, the users continuously referred to emotions. Some visitors “felt to be in a different world”\textsuperscript{245} and therefore could “sympathise with the historical matter.”\textsuperscript{246} Some felt they could

\textsuperscript{236} Questionnaire Nr. 14, 41.
\textsuperscript{237} Questionnaire Nr. 51, 97.
\textsuperscript{238} Questionnaire Nr. 144.
\textsuperscript{239} Questionnaire Nr. 138.
\textsuperscript{240} Questionnaire Nr. 130, 213.
\textsuperscript{241} Questionnaire Nr. 9.
\textsuperscript{242} Questionnaire Nr. 10.
\textsuperscript{243} Questionnaire Nr. 202.
\textsuperscript{244} Questionnaire Nr. 66.
\textsuperscript{245} Questionnaire Nr. 29, 168.
\textsuperscript{246} Questionnaire Nr. 200.
“experience history”\textsuperscript{247} or “the real hardships of the past days.”\textsuperscript{248} However, one user referred to the danger of “losing touch with reality.”\textsuperscript{249}

The survey found that the younger audience was more focused on the VR experience, whilst the older users were more interested in the information it provided. This was the reason why younger visitors asked for more virtual interaction and the older users claimed the experience was sometimes too fast to follow. Virtual reality’s ability to create a sense of presence can be considered as the most powerful tool in re-mediating history. The experience can simulate an environment that makes you feel “really there”. However, the users are still aware they are in an experience because it is mediated through an interface.

To conclude, the exhibition was using virtual reality to engage the visitors with the whole body. Together with the Vorarlberg Museum we chose this technology to contribute in new developments in museology. The exhibition was an experiment to test how historical research could be re-mediated through the use of technology. The virtual reality experience offered also to examine the role of listening when experiencing virtual reality. Even though sound was not perceived as a special feature by the visitors, sound played an important role. Sound contributed in the mediation of the narrative by creating different ambiances that not only guided through the experience but set the mood and therefore created the emotional dimension. The status of sound and listening within the VR experience refers to the status of sound and listening in our everyday life. It is a reference to the sensing body and how we sense an ambience. The users described their sensation as a sense of presence. However, the sense of presence is informed by the past. The VR experience has shown that sensing means sensing through frameworks. The visitors did not experience the virtual reality as something impartial but through their social and cultural framework.

\textsuperscript{247} Questionnaire Nr. 165.
\textsuperscript{248} Questionnaire Nr. 186.
\textsuperscript{249} Questionnaire Nr. 118.
The previous three chapters demonstrated how bells are used as tools for re-mediation. Re-mediation is understood as borrowing cultural content and redeploying it with the use of technology and media.

The audio-visual examples illustrated how a bell can become a national symbol. It showed how the recasting of the Pummerin was used to create and promote a narrative of Austria as victim of the war. This narrative was then reproduced and re-mediated with documentaries by using the bell to stage it as not only a symbol of Austria but to describe and promote an image of the “Austrian nature”. It has been demonstrated that the Pummerin can be considered as an important symbol for politics of identity.

Chapter six about bells on the radio has shown how bells are used to create imagined spaces and communities. It has been demonstrated how broadcasting bells is closely connected with the history of radio in Austria. Local bells are used in promoting a self-image of the station by providing local content and being “close to the listener”. The schedule when bells are aired is orientated towards existing cultural patterns. Bells and the radio stations correlate with people's everyday lives. The audience gets identification through hearing their local village bell on the radio. The different local bells broadcast throughout the whole of Austria create an imagined space of the national sphere. Bells on the radio can be considered as tools for re-mediating time and space, and assist the radio stations to create an imagined community.

Chapter seven, about the exhibition in the Vorarlberg Museum, has shown how museums as sites of memory rediscovered the senses in the re-mediation of cultural memory. By discussing the exhibition and its use of virtual reality it has been shown how bells can be used to re-mediate historical content through engaging more than one sense. It was shown how VR engages the whole body and how the movement as reference to the body and sensing with the whole body was considered at the best feature of the VR experience.

In general, it has been shown that media and information technology plays an important role in creating, reproducing and distributing cultural memory. Bells are useful carrier for the re-mediation of cultural memory. The reuse of bells in media elevates their status to an even more symbolic object. Bells could be used to promote quite different narratives, dependent on how they are deployed in the different media forms. By
reproducing cultural memory again and again certain narratives, as it has been shown in the example of the victim myth, are quite persistent. They almost become a stabiliser of a group’s self-image and the re-mediation sustains this self-image.

The chapters about re-mediation have also shown the centrality of the body, be it when listening to the radio in terms of how it is consumed within everyday life, or be it with using virtual reality in the museum to show how the virtual environment was sensed with the body. The re-mediation of cultural memory needs to be bodily engaging in order to create meaning. Bells as iconic sound with a particular sensory dimension are useful tools in engaging the body when re-mediated through media and information technology.
Conclusion

The thesis started with a personal account, and I also want to finish the thesis on a personal note. During the final year of my PhD, I became a father. Accompanying a human in its becoming is not only fascinating and challenging but also very insightful. Infants are already able to hear in the womb from about 15 weeks onwards. Before babies are born, they get attuned to their surrounding sonic world, although in a muffled way, they start sensing the world. After birth, most babies cannot only hear perfectly, but they also remember what they heard. Babies are attuned to the voices they perceived and familiar sounds help them to calm down. However, their vision still develops in the first few months. For the first few months babies mostly depend on their hearing. Observing my child starting to track the sources of sounds was stunning. Discovering how much of perceiving their new world works through listening also opened my ears. This personal episode made me start to think about the status of listening again. It not only exemplified the importance of listening in experiencing and knowing the world as well as making sense of the world, but it also showed me how much listening is connected with memories and feelings. It seems that familiar sounds are not only remembered but also attributed with positive or negative emotions. The interconnectedness of sound, memories and emotions also became apparent within the thesis.

The thesis expanded on an array of approaches and theories on sound, body, emotions, and memories as well as through a mixed method approach to demonstrate how bells are charged with memory and emotional values.

The research about bells set out to examine listening and sound and what perceiving or being exposed to certain sounds means for people’s sense of self, sense of community and sense of place. The question of how the sound of bells assists in creating a sense of place and a sense of belonging was approached through examining the interconnectedness of sound, memories and emotions, with its focal point on bodies. The thesis demonstrated a study of sound that passes through time. Sound in this sense was not essentialised but contextualised to demonstrate a history of bells as well as assisted me in doing memory studies informed by a history of emotions. It was a way to understand the variety of sounds in space that help people to construct their sense of
place and identities. Bells are culturally and historically of a privileged nature, but as it has been shown this privilege takes on complex narratives that required an original and imaginative use of a range of methods, some of them are innovative in the field, to grasp the meaning in one area of Austria over the course of the century. Based on existing work about bells and archival material, a mix of different methods has been developed and applied. The achievement of the thesis is its use of a wide range of methods, to produce an original historically grounded analysis of church bells in a particular locale, Vorarlberg. This furthered the understanding of the significance of the bells. It also demonstrated certain limitations of sound studies approaches. It proved successfully how different methods can be applied by filtering them through a sonic lens. Choosing church bells as the main object of research was influenced by different decisions. Guided by archival sources it has been shown that church bells are sound objects with special meanings. Bells are embedded within the sounds of everyday life. The mediation and remediation of bells assisted in the amplification of bells as an “iconic sound”.

Within this conclusion key aspects from chapters three to seven will be revisited. The findings will then be connected with the sensing body conceptualised in the literature review (chapter one). This should assist to provide diagnoses on how bodies sense sound and what it means for a sense of place to hear bells.

Chapter three. The seizing of bells during World War One has shown how people used bells to express their emotional attachment to certain spaces. The chapter highlighted the correlation between, sound, emotions and place and especially the close relationship between emotions and spaces. The seizing of bells can also be seen as a negotiation of different emotional connections to spaces. The methods that have been applied within the chapter were archival research and discourse analysis of newspapers. Focusing on what Barbara Rosenwein (2015) has termed “emotional vocabulary” enabled me to demonstrate the emotional dimension of warfare during World War One in which sacrifice was central in the emotional warfare of the Habsburg Empire. By emphasising sacrifice the Empire tried to create a connection between body and space through emotions. It was the duty of a patriotic body to sacrifice for the fatherland. The appeal to make sacrifices not only tried to create collective emotions but also an alignment to the Empire. The Empire thought that sacrificing bells was the duty of the people as well as testimony for the willingness to
sacrifice for God, Emperor and Fatherland. The removal of bells was staged as an expression of people’s emotional attachment to Empire. The villages on the other hand thought that the Empire was taking something away that belonged to the local communities. The official church remained in the middle of these positions, because on one side the church was in close alignment with the Empire and on the other side, they did not want to lose power in the villages.

The sacrificing of bells was also a way to connect bodies from the home front with the bodies from the battlefields and aimed to connect the different spaces.

Attachment to the biggest bell was especially important and indicated an emotional alignment with the local space and the centrality of the body in creating a sense of place. The biggest bell was seen as most valuable because of its high symbolic prestige within village. To hear the sound of bells in the whole village was considered as an important feature in the villagers’ efforts to save the biggest bell. The efforts to preserve the biggest bell made the connection between sound, local place, and bodies apparent. The requests also revealed that bells still had a connection to everyday life. Bells were additionally seen as memory objects rather than art-historical artefacts. By connecting bells to the donors or to past sacrifices made in getting the bells, highlighted people’s emotional attachment to their locale. The range of emotions regarding the removal of bells ran the gamut from willingness to sacrifice to worries about riots.

The nature of the emotional community of the local space became transparent through the removal of bells, and through this the provincial space of Vorarlberg strengthened its emotional alignment with its inhabitants. By pursuing supralocal solutions in terms of bell swaps, officials in Vorarlberg created an emotional community in the province of Vorarlberg.

Newspapers as the voices of the different powers and political camps used the silencing of church bells for their own various means. The analysis of newspaper coverage enabled the dissertation to demonstrate the involvement of media in creating and supporting different emotional communities.

The connection between sound, emotions and places was further demonstrated through farewell ringing that created a collective moment of listening. Not only the ringing constituted the local emotional community but also the farewell ceremonies.

This was also described by Morelon (2019) when stating that emotional communities were “actualised” through the removal by creating communities of loss. The seizing reinforced in this sense the local emotional community.
The emotional impact of removing bells on the body can be seen in the numerous accounts about “shedding tears” as an expression for being emotionally moved by the removal of the bells. The removal of church bells highlighted the different emotional communities and how artefacts, in the case of the thesis sonic artefacts, can be used to negotiate different understandings of a sense of belonging. The chapter demonstrated how certain sounds are emotionally charged and this emotional connection is based on people’s experience of place and others.

The seizing of bells during the Second World War was different from the First World War seizure. The official church was on the side of the Habsburg Empire during the First World War, whereas in the Second World War the Nazi regime was against the church. At the beginning the church was a supporter of Hitler but after 1938 the church was constantly restricted by the Nazi regime. The different power relations between church and regimes can also be seen in the seizing of bells. The seizing was much more systematic and rigid, farewell ceremonies were banned and the official church had no leeway to intervene in the process in World War Two. The difference between World War One and Two can also be seen in the different symbolic meaning of the recasting of bells after the wars.

Chapter four, Bells in Peace, presented a multitude of memories connected to bells. The methods that have provided the data for the chapter were an analysis of bell inscriptions and interviews. Especially in chapter four the limitations of sonic methods became apparent. After experimenting with different phonographic methods, they were rather used as complementary tools and the final approach was made through interviews with a questionnaire. Within the chapter I demonstrated how bells are involved in memory work, how bells are used to create a shared past as well as how bells are sensed in the present.

Bells were conceptualised as sites of memory or sonic monuments. Bells as sites of memory can be seen as tools to create an emotional connection to spaces. The example of the Federal Monuments Authority of Austria (BDA) demonstrates that bells are seen as being sensed with the whole body and their benefit for memory work lies within their ability of being sensed with the whole body, which is used to create a “we-feeling”. Bells understood as sonic monuments are experienced with all senses and affect bodies. Sonic monuments create a collective past through senses and emotions. The example of bells
as sites of memories demonstrated that monuments only speak to a certain group of
people, so the cultural code needs to have a relevance for the perceiving body.
The way in which bells are used as sites of memory is demonstrated through the
example of the recasting of bells after the First World War and in particular in the
example of warrior or hero bells. Based on the dismantling of the Habsburg Empire after
the First World War, the remaining “Austria” was searching for a new identity. The
recasting of bells provided people a tool for creating a collective sense of belonging
through memory work. Bells were dedicated to the fallen heroes from the First World
War. The ideological return can be seen in the continuation in language of fallen heroes
or battle glory. The inscriptions on the bells showed that soldiers were seen as heroes.
This provided an ideological connection to the old Habsburg Empire. The inscriptions on
the “hero bells” also showed the belief in the special powers of sound. When the
dedicated bells were rung the fallen soldiers were automatically commemorated, the
recasting of bells can be considered as an act of recovering, together with helping people
to mourn. The body was central in the recasting of bells. On one side the body of the bell
as a surface, as well as the bodies of the people who were involved in the organisation
and the celebration around the recasting of bells.

The presented case studies focused on the recasting of bells after the Second World War
and demonstrated how the recasting of bells can be related to people’s identities and
sense of place. The earwitness accounts showed how memories of the war were
connected to the recasting of bells. The accounts show how personal experiences of the
recasting were mixed with collective narratives. The case studies have also shown how
talking about sound could trigger a range of other memories.
The self was constructed through sound in relation to the lived places and people. Bells
were used to remember people from past generations. The bell in this sense connected
people from different times. The thesis shows how bells are used in transferring
emotions through generations. Bells can be seen as mediator of postmemory, even if
people had no personal experience of war they related the bells to war and people who
experienced war. This not only created an emotional connection between people but
also an emotional attachment to bells.
The presented nine “aspects” helped to show how bells are sensed through the body and
what it means for people’s sense of place in present days.
The meaning of bells in creating an emotional attachment needs to be kept alive and requires permanent reproduction. Bells are first and foremost religious objects, so priests and sextons are the main specialists in maintaining the cultural memories about bells. The religious context is also centred around the body and the Catholic church engages bodies through all of the senses in their rituals and ceremonies. Bells play an important role in creating a bond between church and bodies.

When the body is less involved in engaging with bells, the attachment to bells also decreases. The body needs to be involved in perceiving bells. Another aspect is how bells and bodies are involved in performing or acting out places. The different ways in the sensing of bells demonstrates how the body itself can been seen as an archive (Taylor, 2003). Bells on one side help to perform time and space as well as in creating an alignment with other people. Equally, the body “repertoire” produces a range of corporate behaviours or attitudes towards bells.

The thesis has demonstrated that perceiving bells is embedded in how people live in places and experience them. This extends to an understanding of the relationship between bells and the weather. This connection of bodies and the environment through bells charges bells with feeling of home by considering bells as an important feature of the landscape. They are also used to express an understanding of a particular ‘culture’. Bells in this sense are transformed from an object of the everyday to a symbol of landscapes or cultures, which is also used for ‘othering’. The othering through bells, for example, was apparent when tourists complained about bells. Bells create, represent and mediate understandings of space but also of people’s sense of self and collectives.

Chapter four has demonstrated how the echoes from the past not only leave an impression on bells, but also were mediated through bells. These echoes constitute a symbolic landscape and culture which influences the attachment to bells in the present day. Bells in the present day could still be considered as creating emotional communities. Bells are involved and used within memory work to create and promote a shared past.

It has been shown in chapter four that even if bells are not so much anchored in everyday life their status can be considered as iconic. However, the meanings attributed to bells constantly changed throughout time. I argue that bells had an iconic status long before the twentieth century. Bells are carriers of meanings rather than having a fixed
set of meanings. Bells became iconic not only because of their loud sound and versatile utilisation, but also because of their distinct sounds. Bell sounds are easy to recognise, they are constantly reproduced and circulated within societies. Their permanent reuse and re-mediation amplifies their iconic status.

Chapters five to seven picked up on the iconic status of bells and showed how bells are deployed in different forms of media. The chapters demonstrated what happens when bells were extended from the local place through a discussion about the re-mediation of bells in film and radio and in the example of the museum. The methods that have been used were archival research, interviews, and a practice-led approach with an exhibition. Chapter five used the example of Austria’s biggest bell the Pummerin to show how the bell became a national symbol. The Pummerin already had a special meaning during the Habsburg Empire, but because of its destruction at the end of the Second World War, the bell also became a symbol for postwar Austria. The destroyed bell symbolised the destroyed identity and the recasting was used to stage it as the reawakening of Austria after the Second World War. The transporting of the bell during this time in Austria offered an expression of collective emotions together with an opportunity to experience a range of collective emotions. This feeling of unity was promoted by the newsreel Austria Wochenschau. The bell not only provided a tool to create a narrative of new beginnings but also promoted stereotypes of people’s identity.

The bell provided a way to whitewash Austria’s involvement in the war whilst simultaneously distinguishing itself from Germany. The bell became a thankful symbol of the victim myth of postwar Austria. The recasting caused a lot of attention from newspapers, radio stations and it was also filmed. The permanent reuse of these images and reportages also re-mediates the victim myth of Austria. It has been shown in two documentaries how the Pummerin was used to re-mediate Austria’s postwar narrative.

Chapter six discussed broadcasting bells on the radio. The example of the Austrian Broadcast Corporation (ORF) demonstrated how bells are used to express the identity of the station but also to maintain and offer an identification for the audience. Bells broadcast on the radio are based on a space-time detachment. However, the time when bells are aired on the Austrian radio (at high noon) is orientated towards existing cultural patterns. The dissertation discussed the ways in which bells were used since the beginning of broadcasting in Austria. After their silencing on the radio during the Second World War, bells found their way back into the schedule and became a permanent daily
feature of the local broadcast stations. The different village bells helped to create an imagined community as well as an imagined space. Local bells help to promote locality and create a kind of supralocal sameness and a sense to belonging to the particular radio station.

Chapter seven examined the museum as site that creates and promotes a sense of belonging. The example of the Vorarlberg Museum demonstrated how museums have changed into multisensory museums by a rediscovering of the senses. By discussing an exhibition that has been created for the Vorarlberg Museum the dissertation has shown how bells could be displayed in a museum by engaging more than one sense. I argued that the use of virtual reality is one way to engage with more than one sense whilst also placing the body at the centre of the exhibition. The way in which sounds have been perceived in the VR experience allows us to draw a connection to the status of sound and listening within everyday life. Listening is part of something, a backdrop for sensing atmospheres or ambiences, which is supported by Thibaud’s (2011) understanding of “ambience”. The sensed sounds act as a backdrop rather than at the forefront, more mood than description and more emotional than factual. These dualities sound like a Cartesian duality but the aim of the thesis was not to produce a binary of body and mind but to demonstrate the centrality of the sensing body as whole with biological and sociocultural conditions.

**Sensing Bells – Resonating Bodies**

The thesis demonstrates that sensing sound also means resonating with sound. Sounds help to bring the different bodies and the environment into relation with one another. Sound is not only a vibrational force, how bodies respond to sound is not only based on physical and biological properties, but also to a great extent on sociocultural frameworks. The resonance of bodies is informed by sociocultural values and attitudes. Bodies move within these frameworks. The framework can change, and the symbolic bracket can move but resonance stays.

The resonant body was conceptualised as an active body where power is both inscribed whilst permitting a range of freedoms. The resonant body senses the environment and sounds through emotions. The emotions are informed by personal and cultural memories as well as re-mediated meaning through technology and media. How we sense
and resonate to sounds is informed by the past. Past echoes reverberate with the sensing body. Sensing is how it makes us feel and is more emotional rather than rational. The thesis has contributed to the understanding of how sound can be carrier of memories and emotions and how this informs our sense of place. The resonant body senses and acts out places that are charged with memories and emotions. It could be stated that bodies also resonate to the emotions and memories of places.

The sensing body resonates with sound and sound resonates with environment. The thesis contributed to the understanding of the contribution of bells, and sound, in producing and sensing an “ambience”. Bells are intertwined with physical environments, social values, attitudes and the sensory through the body. We sense bells as part of an “ambience” these ambient qualities are also used when re-mediating bells.

The research has shown how sound helps to bring bodies in relation to each other but also in relation to the environment. Sound can trigger memories, but it has been shown that bells are rather used for memory management. Bells help to create a feeling of home through emotional and memory values. When bells are charged with values and connected to an experience of the place then there is an attachment to bells, if not then bells become a resonant shell, sensed through an alternative framework.
Bibliography


RAVAG *Jahresbericht 1927/28*.


## Appendix

### Ethical Review Material

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethical Review Application (ER/TF96/1) Thomas Feller</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Title</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Status</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Department</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Email</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Applicant Status</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Supervisor</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Project Start Date</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Project End Date</strong></td>
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<td><strong>External Funding in place</strong></td>
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<td><strong>External Collaborators</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Funder/ Project Title</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Name of Funder</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Project Description</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Question</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>A1. Will your study involve participants who are particularly vulnerable or unable to give informed consent or in a dependent position (e.g. people under 18, people with learning difficulties, over-researched groups or people in care facilities)?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A2. Will participants be required to take part in the study without their consent or knowledge at the time (e.g. covert observation of people in non-public places), and / or will deception of any sort be used?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A3. Will it be possible to link identities or information back to individual participants in any way?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A4. Might the study induce psychological stress or anxiety, or produce humiliation or cause harm or negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in the everyday life of the participants?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A5. Will the study involve discussion of sensitive topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use, ethnicity, political behaviour, potentially illegal activities)?</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>A6. Will any drugs, placebos or other substances (such as food substances or vitamins) be administered as part of this study and will any invasive or potentially harmful procedures of any kind will be used?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A7. Will your project involve working with any substances and / or equipment which may be considered hazardous?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A8. Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses, compensation for time or a lottery / draw ticket) be offered to participants?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A9. If you have answered 'Yes' to ANY of the above questions, your application will be considered as HIGH risk. If however you wish to make a case that your application should be considered as LOW risk please enter the reasons here:</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## B.1 Data Collection and Analysis (Please provide full details)

**B1. PARTICIPANTS:** How many people do you envisage will participate, who they are, and how will they be selected?

I hope to collect 30-40 interviews. The investigation is planned in different places in Vorarlberg/Austria. There are two main criteria for recruiting volunteers. One is a broad age (18+) and the second is the "distance" to sound. This means people from a close relationship to bells (members of the church) to people with no relationship to bells (public). Every high noon, the Austrian Broadcast station plays different church bells and members of the broadcast station will be interviewed about this practice.

**B2. RECRUITMENT:** How will participants be approached and recruited?

The applicant worked the last years in the area of the research. During that time he was part of the working group Communal Archives in Vorarlberg. The archives see themselves as memory storage as they already collect different material from the public. Therefore the archives will be used to get access to the public. The participant works also together with the archive of the diocese Feldkirch (main archive for the church). This archive will be used to get access to members of the church. Members from the broadcast station will be contacted via Email. The applicant is going to have an exhibition in 2017 about church bells at the Vorarlberg museum. During the exhibition visitors will be asked to share their memories and bell stories. The recruitment is based on snowballing this means one person recommends another and the next person recommends another and so on.

**B3. METHOD:** What research method(s) do you plan to use; e.g. interview, questionnaire/self-completion questionnaire, field observation, audio/audio-visual recording?

The main method is the narrative interview. Based on biographic interviews the participants will be ask about their daily life and bells. The interviews will be audio-recorded.

**B4. LOCATION:** Where will the project be carried out e.g. public place, in researcher's office, in private office at organisation?

People from the church and the broadcast station will be interviewed in their offices. People who are visiting the exhibition will be interviewed in the museum. People from the public can choose between the archives or their homes.

## B.2 Confidentiality and Anonymity

**B5. Will questionnaires be completed anonymously and returned indirectly?**

N/A

**B6. Will questionnaires and/or interview transcripts only be identifiable by a unique identifier (e.g. code/pseudonym)?**

Yes

**B7. Will lists of identity numbers or pseudonyms linked to names and/or addresses be stored securely and separately from the research data?**

Yes

**B8. Will all place names and institutions which could lead to the identification of individuals or organisations be changed?**

Yes

**B9. Will all personal information gathered be treated in strict confidence and never disclosed to any third parties?**

Yes
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B10.</td>
<td>Can you confirm that your research records will be held in accordance with the data protection guidelines (see guidelines on research governance website)?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B11.</td>
<td>Can you confirm that you will not use the research data for any purpose other than that which consent is given?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B11a.</td>
<td>If you answered NO to any of the above (or think more information could be useful to the reviewer) please explain here:</td>
<td>There will be no self-completion questionnaire used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B12.</td>
<td>Will all respondents be given an Information Sheet and be given adequate time to read it before being asked to agree to participate?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B13.</td>
<td>Will all participants taking part in an interview, focus group, observation (or other activity which is not questionnaire based) be asked to sign a consent form? If you are obtaining consent another way, please explain under 15a below.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B14.</td>
<td>Will all participants self-completing a questionnaire be informed that returning the completed questionnaire implies consent to participate?</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B15.</td>
<td>Will all respondents be told that they can withdraw at any time, ask for their data to be destroyed and/or removed from the project until it is no longer practical to do so?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B15a.</td>
<td>If you answered NO to any of the above (or think more information could be useful to the reviewer) please explain here:</td>
<td>There will be no self-completion questionnaire used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B16.</td>
<td>Is Criminal Records Bureau clearance necessary for this project? If yes, please ensure you complete the next question.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B17.</td>
<td>Are any other ethical clearances or permissions required?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B17a.</td>
<td>If yes, please give further details including the name and address of the organisation. If other ethical approval has already been received please attach evidence of approval, otherwise you will need to supply it when ready.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B18.</td>
<td>Does the research involve any fieldwork - Overseas or in the UK?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B18a.</td>
<td>If yes, where will the fieldwork take place?</td>
<td>The fieldwork is planned in different places all over Vorarlberg/Austria. Austria is the home country of the applicant and he is insured there. Vorarlberg is a rural area and a very safe place. The applicant has worked there for the last four years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B19.</td>
<td>Will any researchers be in a lone working situation?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B19a.</td>
<td>If yes, briefly describe the location, time of day and duration of lone working. What precautionary measures will be taken to ensure safety of the researcher(s)?</td>
<td>During the historical research I will spend some time alone in different archives. But the archives are supervised so people are always around (but not in the same room).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B20.</td>
<td>Are there any other ethical considerations relating to your project which have not been covered above?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B20a.</td>
<td>If yes, please explain:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INFORMATION SHEET

STUDY TITLE:

Sensing the sound: Auditive experience – memory, place and emotions – through a study of church bells in Austria.

I’m undertaking a PhD in Media and Cultural studies at the University of Sussex. My Thesis is about sound experience using the example of church bells. This research proposes to understand experience in relation to sound and listening. It hopes to explore how sound is perceived and the associations it carries in everyday life. The investigation will take place in Vorarlberg.

Interviews are very important for my study. I warmly invite you to participate for an interview about your experience and memories in relation to sound and about your daily life.

The interviews will be recorded and conducted by me (Thomas Felfer). The interview could ideally be complemented by additional materials (relevant documents or pictures) provided by you.

Your identity will remain anonymous by changing the places and names.

Your contribution is on voluntary basis and you can withdraw from your participation at any stage through the project.

The interview(s) and any further materials will be professionally processed and archived according to participants’ specifications detailed in the respective consent forms.

I thank you for your willingness and I’m looking forward to speak with you.

CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
Thomas Felfer
School of media film and music
Silverstone Building
Brighton
Email: t.felfer@sussex.ac.uk
Phone: 0774 6731447
Phone: (AUT) +43 650 5555241

SENSING THE SOUND. AUDITIVE EXPERIENCE – MEMORY, PLACE AND EMOTIONS – THROUGH A STUDY OF CHURCH BELLS IN AUSTRIA
<Date>
INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

Thank you for your willingness to participate in the project “Sensing Sound. Auditive experience – memory, place and emotions – through a study of church bells in Austria”.

1. Purpose:
This document confirms the agreement made between Thomas Felfer (University of Sussex) and ........................................................................................................ (name of the Interviewee), of ........................................................................................................ (address of the Interviewee), in regard to the recorded interview(s) which took place on .....................................................................................................................[date(s)].

2. Declaration
I, .............................................................................. (Interviewee), have had the project explained to me and I have read and understood the Consent Form, which I may keep for records.

My participation is voluntary and I can withdraw at any stage of the project.

My identity will remain anonymous by changing the places and names.

The interview will be recorded and deposit. My personal information and data will be collected and processed by Thomas Felfer (University of Sussex). Any further use of the interview needs to be permitted according to the Requirements.
3. Complementary Materials
In the case where the recorded interview is complemented by a written account, copies or originals of documents, pictures or similar materials in various formats, and of which I am the copyright holder, I allow Tomas Felfer (University of Sussex) to use the material for the project: „Sensing Sound. Auditive experience – memory, place and emotions – through a study of church bells in Austria“. Every further use needs to be permitted.

I specify below what complementary materials have been provided:
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4. Requirements
I will be given a transcript of the interview concerning me for my approval before being included in the write up of the research. I am entitled to a copy of my recorded interview, and prefer to receive it as Audio CD or Memory Stick.

I impose certain requirements on the use of my recorded interview and any complementary materials (please tick the appropriate box):
I do not have any restrictions or special requirements and I authorise my recorded interview and any complementary materials to be used in following projects: conferences, exhibitions, further publications, radio features and podcasts.

I do not need to remain anonymous.

I want that the recorded interview will be destroyed after the project.

6. SUMMARY

Through this Consent Form I agree to the collection and processing of my personal information and data by Thomas Felfer (University of Sussex). I understand that Thomas Felfer will retain control over my personal information, and will deal with my personal information in strict accordance with my wishes, for the purposes outlined to me beforehand, and in accordance with all the obligations of the Data Protection Act 1998. Thereby, this Consent Form provides Thomas Felfer (University of Sussex) with the necessary permissions and assignments in order to use my recorded interview and any complementary materials specified above.

I can withdraw at any stage of the project.

By signing below, all parties indicate full acceptance of this agreement.
Thomas Felfer

Explanation of the changes in the Information Sheet and Consent Form

The use of photographs has being withdrawn.

Information Sheet:
The new Information sheet contains an explanation about the identity that names and places will be changed.

The sentence: "Your participation is on voluntary basis and you can withdraw from your participation at any stage through the project." is written in bold letters to make it clear that the interviewee could resign any time.

Changes in the Consent Form:
The consent form includes at the beginning now a "Thank you" to provide a bit more sensitive approach. However, some "legalistic" phrases are important to protect the rights of the interviewee and to define the future use of the material. An oral explanation will be conducted with enough time and patience. This should also provide a sensitive approach.

Declaration:
The declaration regarding to photographs has been deleted. I made clear that the participant could withdraw at any stage. Information about the identity will save the anonymity and is explained in the declaration. It also includes that the interviews will be deposited but any further use of the recorded interviews needs to be permitted according to the Requirements.

Complementary Material:
It is not necessary to assign the copyrights to me. The participant just allows me to use the material as part of the project.

Requirements:
The restrictions are changed into requirements because every participant will automatically remain anonymous; every further use of the material needs to be permitted by the participant. The requirements including now:
a separate box regarding the personal identity. Participants can choose not to remain anonymous. There are cases like expert interviews were the interviewee doesn’t need to stay anonymous (or is used to public attention).
There is a separate box that the recorded interview could be destroyed after the project.
If the interviewee has no restrictions, he or she could choose to:
I authorise my recorded interview to be used in following projects: conferences, exhibitions, further publications, radio features and podcasts
The agreements "Copy of Recoded Interview" has been deleted and is now included into the requirements. The box for choosing the copy (Audio CD or Memory Stick) has been changed into a sentence.

Summary:
The summary includes the declaration again that the participant could withdraw any time.
# Certificate of Approval

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference Number</th>
<th>ER/TF96/1</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Title Of Project</td>
<td>Sensing sound: Auditive experience - memory, place and emotions - through a study of church bells in Austria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Investigator (PI):</td>
<td>Thomas Felfer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Thomas Felfer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration Of Approval</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Start Date</td>
<td>01-Jun-2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date Of Approval</td>
<td>22-Feb-2016</td>
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<td>Approval Expiry Date</td>
<td>01-Sep-2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approved By</td>
<td>Jayne Paulin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of Authorised Signatory</td>
<td>Janet Boddy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>22-Feb-2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*NB. If the actual project start date is delayed beyond 12 months of the expected start date, this Certificate of Approval will lapse and the project will need to be reviewed again to take account of changed circumstances such as legislation, sponsor requirements and University procedures.

Please note and follow the requirements for approved submissions:

Amendments to protocol

* Any changes or amendments to approved protocols must be submitted to the C-REC for authorisation prior to implementation.

Feedback regarding the status and conduct of approved projects

* Any incidents with ethical implications that occur during the implementation of the project must be reported immediately to the Chair of the C-REC.

Feedback regarding any adverse and unexpected events

* Any adverse (undesirable and unintended) and unexpected events that occur during the implementation of the project must be reported to the Chair of the Social Sciences C-REC. In the event of a serious adverse event, research must be stopped immediately and the Chair alerted within 24 hours of the occurrence.