

Hannes Androsch.
Conditio Austriae

When asked about the nature of time, St. Augustine replied, “When no one asks me, I know it quite well, but when I must give answer to a question, I do not know it.” The same response could serve as an answer to the question of Austria. Hans Weigel warned that anyone who writes about Austria and what its identity is risks increasing the number of diverging and differing opinions on the country by attempting to reconcile them.

The modern Austrian Republic is a comparatively young state that arose as a consequence of the First World War. In that war not only the Habsburg monarchy but also the Ottoman Empire collapsed; abdication was forced on still more ruling houses, such as the Hohenzollern in Germany and the Romanovs in Russia. The political map of Europe underwent significant changes, moving in the direction of particularism, a process that is still ongoing. This was the beginning, after 400 years of dominance, of the diminishment of European significance, which continues to the present day.

The end result of the First World War opened the way for the nation-state movement that had been growing steadily since before the war. This movement had not been restricted to the Austro-Hungarian monarchy; it had been preceded in the last third of the nineteenth century by unification movements in Germany and Italy, two territories that had previously been fragmented. Seven nations were created from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the former territory of the Habsburg kingdom. After the end of the Cold War epoch in 1989 and the peaceful division of Czechoslovakia in 1993, the number climbed to eleven.

The Republic of Austria, which retains the historical name, is all that remains of the once-great monarchy of the Danube.

Austria became landlocked again, as the Austro-Hungarian monarchy actually had been as well: while it controlled a fleet capable of navigating the open seas, it never became a maritime power – and consequently never a colonial one either. However, in the nineteenth century several ships were equipped for and sent on journeys of natural-historical exploration. A reminder of this is Franz Josef Land, a group of islands discovered by an Austrian expedition in 1873, today under Russian control.

In the community of the 192 member states (as of 2010) of the United Nations (204 nations took part in the 2008 Summer Olympic Games in Beijing) Austria, with an area of 84,000 square km, ranks 111 in size, and, with slightly more than 8 million people, 92 in population. At the beginning of 2010 nearly 900,000 foreigners were living in Austria, 138,000 of which were German, 134,000 Serbs and roughly the same number of Turks. The great majority of Austrians are registered Roman Catholics. The second-largest religious group, with some 300,000 members, is Islam, which had been officially recognized religion in Austria as early as the era of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy.

The country’s territory measures 580 km from west to east, with a maximum width of 260 km and a minimum of just 34 km. Of the 2,637 km-long border, more than 1,200 km are shared with the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, and Slovenia, while the remaining 1,400 are shared with Germany, Italy and two non-EU member states, Switzerland and Liechtenstein. Geographically, Austria con-

tains the greater part of the lower eastern Alps, characterized by long valleys and the lower north-south passes from the Brenner Pass to the Tauern Pass and Pyhrn Pass. The country stretches from Lake Constance to Lake Neusiedl and from the Karawanken to the Karwendel Mountains. It is located on one of the main European watersheds; its rivers empty into the Baltic Sea, the North Sea and the Black Sea. The heart of Austria has always been the Danube. On its 2,850 km course from the Black Forest to the Black Sea, it flows for 358 km through Austria. The charmingly diverse Austrian landscape includes the Alpine foothills, the Bohemian Massif in the Mühlviertel and Waldviertel regions, the hill country in the east and southeast, the Vienna, Graz, and Klagenfurt Basins, as well as the spurs of the Hungarian lowlands in the province of Burgenland. Accordingly, Austria has a moderate alpine climate, favoured in the east by Pannonian and in the south by Mediterranean influences. The country is rich in forests, rivers, and lakes, although it has but scant mineral resources, among them gold, silver, iron ore, copper, oil, natural gas and, most importantly, salt from a prehistoric sea that was deposited in the mountains over millions of years. The mining of most of the iron ore is no longer worthwhile.

These points indicate that while the young Austrian republic has a short history, it has deep and far-reaching historical roots. Austria is very young and, at the same time, very old.

The oldest traces of human settlement in Austrian territory stretch back 100,000 years to the Stone Age. It is from this period, for example, that the stone tools date that were found in the Repolust Cave in Styria. Two small opulent female figurines, the 32,000 year-old Venus of Galgenberg and the famed 26,000 year-old Venus of Willendorf – both found in the fertile Danube valley – rank among the world's oldest works of art.

In the cultural history of humanity, the early Iron Age (800 – 400 B. C.) Hallstatt culture, named after the Austrian archaeological site, occupies a position of prominence. The mining and trade of salt helped the region around Lake Hallstatt to become an important economic centre. The oldest finds surrounding the mining of salt in the area, however, are approximately 7,000 years old, among them a well-preserved wooden ladder from the Bronze Age, unique in the annals of archaeology. The wealth of the Hallstatt culture as well as the reach of its trade contacts is

demonstrated by burial finds of valuable glass bowls from the upper Adriatic region and intricate ivory carvings from Africa and Asia. Salt is mined in the region to this day, and the white thread of salt production can indeed be followed through Austrian history into the present.

In the late Iron Age, the Hallstatt culture entered a period in which it was ruled by Celtic tribes, whose culture was characterized by strong Greek, Etruscan, and Roman influences. Many place names serve as reminders of the Celtic period, among them Linz, the capital of the province of Upper Austria and the 2009 European Capital of Culture, whose Celtic name was Lentos.

Following the unification of several Celtic tribes under the leadership of the Noric people around 200 B. C., the first state on Austrian territory arose, the Regnum Noricum. It included the south and east of modern Austria. The Noricum kingdom had close ties to the Roman Empire both through active trade and military alliances. One of the goods in great demand by the Romans was *ferrum Noricum*, a high-quality iron, the stability of which gave the Romans a technological advantage in their wars.

Around 15 B. C., the greater part of modern Austria was absorbed by the Roman Empire and divided into three provinces: Noricum; Raetia, an area settled by the Raetian tribes, which corresponds roughly to the provinces of Vorarlberg and Tyrol; and Pannonia, on the territory which is today the province of Burgenland. The northern borders were formed by the Danube, the territories across which were settled by Germanic tribes. From the remains of Vin-dobona, a Roman Legion camp along the Danube front, Vienna arose.

The Migration Period that began in the fifth century A. D. led to the fall of the Western Roman Empire. The Eastern Roman Empire continued to exist for another 1,000 years. The *Imperium Romanum* was regarded as the model state all the way up to the modern age. Along with Byzantium, the Holy Roman Empire saw itself as the *translatio imperii*, the legitimate successor to the Roman Empire. One reason for its political impotence was the centuries-long, often-bloody battles between the Emperor and the Pope for political pre-eminence, events which frequently had a paralyzing effect on the Empire.

On 25 December 800, the Frankish king Charlemagne was crowned the first Holy Roman Emperor in Rome. His coronation, as a continuation of the antique Roman Empire, represented a consolidation of his newly conquered kingdom, acquired in countless wars waged from the French Atlantic coast to Hungary and from the Medi-

terreanean to the Elbe. The new Holy Roman Empire was opposed by a Byzantine claim to the same universality; after the elevation of Charlemagne to Emperor, the Byzantine ruler added the moniker *ton Rhomaion* (the Roman) to his title Basileus. Constantinople's self-inauguration as a "second Rome" was not repudiated until the city on the Bosphorus fell in 1453. Much later Moscow came to be known as the "third Rome", with the understanding that there would never be a "fourth Rome".

The kingdom of Charlemagne soon began to dissolve under the weight of divided inheritances, as well as administrative difficulties. Its claim to legitimacy, however, was taken up by the states that subsequently arose. The Roman ideals of world domination, empire, and universal monarchy flourished in Spain and France, as well as in the Holy Roman Empire itself.

The official title of Holy Roman Empire – to which "German Nation" was added in the late fifteenth century – was used by German emperors from the Middle Ages until 1806. The Holy Roman Empire, however, was neither Roman nor Holy nor German nor an actual Empire.

The much vaunted *territorium imperialis* was also never a reality, foiled by countless secular conflicts between German emperors and the Catholic Church. The Habsburgs, for their part, were always faithful to the pope.

The Holy Roman Empire was in fact the first European community, in which more than 300 territorial states and free towns were included at the height of its power. Without true sovereignty and a unified economic policy, however, the Holy Roman Empire was a paper tiger, just as the EU threatens to become when its member states cannot agree on common financial, economic, defence, and foreign policy.

Under Charlemagne, parts of the formerly Roman provinces of Noricum, Raetia, and Pannonia were also brought under Frankish rule. During the Migration Period, the region that is today the Waldviertel was settled by the west-Germanic Rugii (and later the Slavs), Voralberg by the east-Germanic Alemanni, the south of modern Austria by the Slavs, and the northern Alpine region primarily by the Bavarii. From the early Middle Ages, the population of the Alpine and Danube regions – composed of Romanized Celts, Slavs, Rugii, Eurasian Avars, Alemanni and Bavarii, as well as the indigenous population – formed a cohesive cultural identity, which was naturally accompanied by the category of "not belonging". Trace elements of these subtle social phenomena are observable in modern Austrian culture to this day. The breadth of

regional, cultural, and political organizations can be seen as a manifestation of the same, from sporting, folk-culture, and singing clubs to wind bands and volunteer fire departments and aid societies.

Many customs, such as place and family names, still often demarcate the borders between the regions settled by the Bavarii and those settled by the Slavs; these borders stretch from Freistadt in Upper Austria over the Haselgraben valley to Linz, onwards over the Traun valley and the Salzkammergut, and across the Hohe Tauern and the Gasteiner valley to the Lesach valley in East Tyrol.

After the conquest of the Avar Empire, Charlemagne created the so-called Avar March as a border protection, in what is now Lower Austria. However, it did not resist the advances of the Carpathian Magyars for long. These Eurasian nomads were finally repelled by Otto the Great in the Battle of Lechfeld near Augsburg in 955. As a protection against the Hungarians, who after their defeat settled in the Pannonian lowlands and founded their own kingdom, a new march was created east of the river Enns.

In 976 the Babenberg Luitpold (Leopold I) was appointed Margrave by Otto II. In 996, in a deed of gift from Emperor Otto III, the grandson of Otto the Great, to the Bishop of Freising pertaining to lands in and around the present-day Neuhofen an der Ybbs, the name *Ostarrichi*, meaning land in the east, appears. To describe the territory of this margravate, which initially consisted only of small pieces of what are now Lower and Upper Austria, the more colloquial *Osterlant* was common as well. The Latin Austria did not occur in texts until the twelfth century.

Nevertheless, the Second Austrian Republic celebrated the 950- and 1000-year anniversaries of Austria with great pomp and circumstance. The celebrations were essentially the commemoration of a name day, which has nothing to do with the emergence of an organic historical identity. Furthermore, many of the titles used by the rulers of Austria showed no great devotion to the term Austria. Here, for example, is an excerpt from the official title of Franz Joseph I: "By God's Mercy Emperor of Austria, King of Hungary, Bohemia, Dalmatia, Croatia, Slavonia, Galicia, Volhynia, and Illyria, King of Jerusalem, Archduke of Austria, Grand Duke of Tuscany and Cracow, Duke of Lorraine, of Salzburg, Steyer, Carinthia, Carniola, and the Bukovina, Margrave of Moravia", etc., etc. The inherited title "King of Jerusalem" was already an anachronism in Franz Joseph I's time, and was retained only for historical and Christian-religious reasons. Former Habsburg territories in Switzerland, Alsace, southern Baden-Württem-

berg, and Swabia – once described as “Further Austria” (*Vorderösterreich*) – were likewise no longer associated with Austria. Conversely, parts of modern Austria have only recently joined the state. Salzburg did not come to Austria until long after Mozart’s death, in 1816. It had previously been an independent archbishopric for 500 years, and then, for a short time, part of Bavaria. Burgenland, which belonged to the Hungarian half of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, was first incorporated into Austria as an independent province in 1921/22. Taken as such, Austria was newly created out of its territorial pieces twice in the twentieth century.

The many terminologies of Austria are not easily united under a single name. The tract of land once described as *Ostarrichi* can be seen as a forerunner to the ruling house of Austria and the later Austrian Republic, just as the Margravates of Meissen and Brandenburg can be seen as the forerunners of Saxony and Prussia, respectively.

The March of Austria became a duchy thanks to a political swap. In the aftermath of a conflict between the influential Houses of Hohenstaufen and Welf, the Duchy of Bavaria went to the House of Babenberg. To mediate the conflict, Emperor Frederick I, a Hohenstaufen, gave Bavaria back to the Welfs. As a countermeasure, Austria was made a Duchy in 1156, although for all practical purposes it continued as an independently governed part of the Holy Roman Empire. The first Duke was Henry II “Jasomirgott”, who raised Vienna to the status of a ducal residence. He is commemorated by the Jasomirgottstrasse, across from the main door of St. Stephen’s Cathedral in Vienna’s city centre.

The Babenbergs were clever rulers, who used every means at their disposal to expand their territory. Through inheritance they obtained the Duchy of Styria, which was much larger than the modern province of Styria, as well as parts of today’s Upper Austria, Lower Austria, and Slovenia. To secure the support of the Byzantine Empire in the conflict with their archenemy Hungary, two Babenbergs married Byzantine princesses, who brought valuable cultural capital to their new homeland. This initiated the ongoing tradition of Vienna as the central meeting point of east and west. Marriage alliances between the newly ascendant western and the tradition-laden eastern rulers were rare. One particularly legendary example is the marriage of Otto II, the son of Otto the Great, to the highly educated Princess Theophano, who was made co-regent (*Coimperatrix Augusta*) during Otto’s lifetime, and who after his death reigned for Otto III until her son turned 15.

The presence of the Babenbergs is still felt in Austria, primarily through their numerous cultural productions. Among these are many monasteries such as Klosterneuburg; Heiligenkreuz, the primary burial site of the Babenbergs; and the Schottenstift in Vienna, which was built by Irish-Scottish monks summoned from St. Jakob’s, the Irish monastery in Regensburg. The Schottenstift was exempt from the jurisdiction of the sovereign prince and thus a refuge for asylum-seekers, as commemorated by the name “Freyung” (meaning liberation), a large public square in downtown Vienna in front of the monastery. Like Charlemagne before him, Leopold III, a Babenberg, was canonized. He remains anchored in the Austrian consciousness as the patron saint of Lower Austria and Vienna.

The origin of the Austrian national colours, red and white, is also traced to the Babenberg coat of arms, where according to legend they symbolize how the white garment of a Babenberg warrior was stained with blood during the taking of Acre in the Third Crusade. Historians assume that Frederick II “the Warlike”, the last of the Babenberg dukes, adopted a new red-white-red coat of arms to suggest the greater independence of Austria.

The political ambition of Frederick II – to raise the status of the duchies of Austria and Styria with Carniola to a kingdom and thereby draw even with the neighbouring kingdoms of Hungary and Bohemia – barely failed. Frederick II had stipulated that he was to marry the niece and heir of Frederick “the Warlike”. All preparations for the wedding had been made, but the bridal party was left waiting in vain for the bride, who, as a devout Catholic obedient to the Pope, refused to marry the excommunicated emperor. To have become a higher-ranking kingdom earlier in its history would certainly have boosted Austrian self-confidence, both inside and outside its borders (Brigitte Hamann).

The male Babenberg line ended when Frederick “the Warlike” died in battle against Hungary in 1246. Because there was no heir apparent, fighting broke out to control the strategically important land. To put an end to the Great Interregnum (1250–1273), the period of internal confusion and political disorder that followed the death of Frederick II, the remaining powers in the Austrian Duchy called on the King of Bohemia, Otakar Przemysl. He ensured his inheritance of the Babenberg ancestral homelands through a marriage with Margaret of Babenberg, thirty years his senior and the widow of the Hohenstaufen King Henry VII.

Because of the great extent of his power, Otakar seemed certain to ascend to the German throne as well. The prince-electors, however, understandably united in 1273 in support of the practically powerless Count Rudolph of Habsburg, who controlled only his ancestral home in Switzerland together with scattered territories in Swabia and Breisgau. The prince-electors' calculations and prognostications for the future sorely missed their mark. With the selection of Rudolph, they laid the cornerstone for 640 years of rule by the Habsburg dynasty, and after 1740 that of Habsburg-Lorraine, which with very few exceptions governed the Holy Roman Empire German Nation until its dissolution in 1806, and which in 1804 established the Austrian Empire. From this state emerged in 1867 the double monarchy of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which survived until the Habsburg kingdom fell with the end of the First World War.

The rise of the House of Habsburg on Austrian ground began in 1278, after Rudolph I defeated his archrival Otakar in the Battle of Marchfeld near Vienna. The Habsburg representation of the “evil Otakar”, immortalized in a drama of that title by Franz Grillparzer, does not conform to historical fact. Otakar, who had held a splendid court at both Vienna and Prague and was a promoter of an urban bourgeoisie, was long remembered in Austria as “the golden king”.

After the victory over Otakar, the Habsburgs established themselves as dukes of Austria and Styria. In the fourteenth century, they also gained Carinthia, Carniola, and Tyrol through inheritance. These lands in the eastern Alps were collectively referred to as the “Dominion of Austria”. Subsequent questions of inheritance led to three distinct groups of territories, for the control of which the various Habsburg strains often fought among themselves: the Lower Austrian lands (Upper and Lower Austria), the Inner Austrian lands (Styria, Carinthia, Carniola, Inner Istria, and Trieste), and the Further Austrian lands (Tyrol and Vorarlberg, as well as the nearer parts of Swabia and Alsace). These lands were re-unified by Frederick V of Habsburg, who was also King Frederick IV of Germany and Emperor Frederick III of the Holy Roman Empire from 1452, during his seventy-eight-year lifetime, in which he became the heir of all competitors and opponents in the family.

Emperor Frederick III also recognized the *Privilegium Maius*, a counterfeit charter produced by Rudolph IV, in

which the Duchy of Austria was declared an archduchy, with accompanying rights and privileges on par with those of an electorate. These included a commitment to the indivisibility of its composite territories, an independent judiciary protected from intervention by the emperor, and certain insignias as symbols of power. The title “archduke” was subsequently bestowed on all princes and princesses of the House of Habsburg at their birth. The legitimacy of the demands in the *Privilegium Maius* was claimed to derive from the Roman rulers Julius Caesar and Nero, who were to have accorded special rights to Regnum Noricum, which lay on ground that would later become Austrian.

Rudolph IV's reason for forging the *Privilegium Maius* was most likely the Golden Bull of 1356, which codified the prince-electors' position and privileges, but did not extend the same to the Habsburgs. Rudolph felt therefore neglected by his father-in-law, Emperor Charles IV, who had issued the bull. The urge to compete with this father-in-law, who had built up Prague with such distinction, must have motivated Rudolph to bring equal splendour to Vienna. During his lifetime, which lasted only twenty-six years, he founded and gave his name to the University of Vienna, still called the *Alma Mater Rudolphina*. After the University of Prague, it is the oldest university in German-speaking Europe. However, Rudolph's soubriquet, “the Founder”, comes from his clever and energetic efforts surrounding St. Stephen's Cathedral, whose construction he initiated and in which he lies buried. The collegiate chapter of St. Stephen's cathedral, which became independent from Passau and Salzburg, was headed by a provost given the title “Arch-Chancellor of Austria” by Rudolph.

With his legal recognition of the *Privilegium Maius*, Frederick III secured a significant legitimacy of power for his familial house. He was filled with a deep sense of mission to his house, one manifestation of which was his installation of his son Maximilian as king during his own lifetime. With Maximilian's marriage to Maria of Burgundy, heiress of the wealthy Netherlands, he laid the cornerstone for the Habsburg kingdom to become a great power.

Maximilian I was also the creator of the Austrian bureaucratic state. The British author and Austria expert Edward Crankshaw wrote with regard to the nineteenth century: “[...] the Austrian bureaucracy [...] was the most efficient, humane and incorruptible imaginable. It contained practically all the most able men in the Empire, selfless and devoted [...]”. The author Eduard von Bauernfeld, conversely, made this enigmatic remark: “Tremble, O Austria, before your petty bureaucrats!”

Emperor Maximilian, called “The Last Knight”, is best known as the builder of the “Golden Roof”, which has become a symbol for the city of Innsbruck. He received his soubriquet because he stylized himself as an ideal medieval knight in the Burgundian tradition. He is said to have been an admired tournament rider. As a lover of pageantry, a patron of the arts, and a promoter of science, however, he was also equally a magnificent representative of the Renaissance. Like his father before him, he dabbled in hermetism. The symbols he had encoded on the Golden Roof are as much an enigma as the sign AEIOU, which Frederick III had inscribed in many locations. The letters may represent a state motto such as *Austriae est imperare omni universo* or *Alles Erdreich ist Österreich untertan* (“Austria rules all the Earth”), or they may be an anagram of the name Jehova (IEOUA), or a mystical, personal monogram. They are certainly destined to be a riddle into eternity.

Maximilian I may also have been the first ruler to have a sense of Europe as such; he certainly had the first coins stamped that include the word “Europe” in their inscription. After being proclaimed emperor in 1508, he had an unusually large silver coin minted in Hall in Tyrol, a propagandistic symbol of his power. Its inscription presented him as, among other things, “King of numerous lands in Europe and almighty prince.” Five hundred years after this event, the mint in Hall in Tyrol – reopened in the 1970s – celebrated the anniversary with a silver Europe “Taler” coin, much sought by collectors.

Maximilian’s clever marriage policies helped the Habsburgs in the expansion of their power. The Latin saying *Bella gerant alii, tu, felix Austria, nube!* (“Let others wage war, but you, lucky Austria, marry!”) was already widespread during his reign. Through marriage, the dynasty secured the crowns of Bohemia and Hungary, just as, after the marriage of Maximilian’s son Philip the Fair with the Princess of Castile and Aragon, they obtained the rights to Spain and its newly conquered colonies.

The grandson of Maximilian and Maria of Burgundy, as Charles I King of Spain and as Charles V Holy Roman Emperor, ruled a kingdom on which the sun never set. This is the only period in history in which Austria can be connected with colonialism. The reign of Charles V ranked alongside the Mongolian Empire, the mogul empire founded in 1526 on the Indian subcontinent, the Chinese Ming dynasty, and the Ottoman Empire – which passed the peak of its power with the failed siege of Vienna in 1683 – as one of the largest empires in the history of the world.

Charles V, however, was not able to realize the *monarchis universalis* ideal of world dominion. Plagued by the demands of his office, among them the rising Turkish threat in the east, the military power struggles with the King of France, Francis I, along with Protestantism and peasant rebellions in the German lands, he abdicated as Holy Roman Emperor in 1556 and withdrew to the Escorial in Madrid, which had been built at his behest.

His kingdom was divided between his son Philip and his brother Ferdinand. The latter had already in 1522 relieved him of administrative responsibilities in the Holy Roman Empire and the inherited Austrian lands. Henceforth the Spanish Habsburgs, who also proudly bore the name of “Casa de Austria”, were the mightiest dynasty on earth.

The Spanish line died out in 1700 as a consequence of their policy of marrying within close family circles, because the last ruler, Charles II, was unable to produce an heir. At the time it was not known that repeated incest was a cause of physical and mental deficiencies. “Don Carlos,” in fact, had little to do with the idealized figure presented by Friedrich Schiller. Charles V was no tragic hero; rather, he was given to excessive violence and was moreover mentally impaired.

The House of Austria fought to inherit Spain, but was forced to accept that the other European powers, led by France, opposed the creation of another global kingdom. The loss of the War of the Spanish Succession meant significant losses of power for the Habsburgs. They subsequently focused on expanding their power into eastern and southern Europe. Just as the river of Austria’s destiny, the Danube, flows from west to east, the politics of the Habsburg kingdom were characterized by an intensive eastward focus. It was only after the Second World War that Austria, despite its neutrality, demonstrated a strong western orientation.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the energies of the Habsburgs were primarily absorbed with re-Catholicization and the repulsion of the Turkish threat. In 1683, the Turks had reached Vienna for the second time. While in 1529 it had been – aside from the fighting spirit of the Viennese – primarily inclement weather that caused the Turkish retreat, the effect was produced in 1683 by the reinforcements that hurried to Austria’s aid under the Polish King Sobieski. Like the March of Avar and the march described as *Ostarrichi* before it, Vienna became the bulwark of the Occident. The two Turkish sieges, with all their legends, remain fixed in the Austrian consciousness.

A popular belief survives that the Turks brought coffee to Vienna during the second siege, founding the enduring Viennese coffeehouse culture.

The victory over the Turks led to the blossoming of the Baroque in all its splendour. Numerous secular and religious buildings were erected in that period, which, such as the abbeys of Melk and Göttweig, have since come to define the Viennese cultural landscape. The onion-shaped towers that characterize so many of the churches in the southern German-speaking region and South Tyrol performed a double function: they were highly visible symbols of Roman Catholicism's triumph not only over the threat of Islamization, but also over the Protestants.

By 1600 the Austrian population had been almost entirely converted to Protestantism, with the exception of Tyrol, which accordingly earned the moniker "holy land". In the seventeenth century, however, Austria was thoroughly Catholic again. The re-establishment of a single faith was often violent, and came at the cost of the expulsion of more than 100,000 Protestants, many of whom were welcomed by Prussia as skilled farmers and craftsmen. The re-Catholicization was also used to replace the stubborn, predominantly Protestant aristocracy with compliant immigrants from Spain, Italy, Flanders, Portugal, Ireland, and German countries. This extremely un-Austrian solution created no small number of fissures in Austrian society, as Friederich Heer has written. The cultural sociologist Ilsa Barea sees in this an important reason why a strong middle class never developed in Austria. Moreover, the victory over Protestantism, which never again gained a foothold in this country, led to a reinforcement of the "marriage" between throne and altar. For many years the state church reinforced the ideologies of state power, and the baroque *pietas Austriaca* were an integral support of the throne in its apostolic majesty.

The first Christian communities on Austrian territory existed as early as the Roman times. One of the best-known was Lauriacum an der Enns, in what is today Upper Austria. A re-Christianization, beginning in around the seventh century, originated with Irish-Scottish monks and consequently also with the episcopal see in Salzburg, which was founded by Saint Ruprecht, the patron saint of the city and province of Salzburg. The Habsburgs' uncompromising stance on the religious question was also a factor in the outbreak of the Thirty Years War. The Defenestration of Prague on 23 May 1618 – outraged followers of Luther

threw two Catholic regents from a window of the Prague Castle – was the spark that ignited the powder keg of Protestant-Catholic tension, which had been running high since the Habsburg revocation of previously guaranteed religious freedoms in Bohemia. The Thirty Years War devastated Europe, as is shown by its effect on the population of the Holy Roman Empire, which decreased from fifteen million to ten million in the years between 1600 and 1650.

In 1648 the Peace of Westphalia was signed, which reinforced the Peace of Augsburg (1555). Anyone who did not wish to accept the official state religion was entitled to emigrate. The division of Europe into the Protestant north and the Catholic south, which persists to this day, dates from this period. There were also territorial adjustments that effected a realignment of Europe, in which absolutism after the French paradigm became the predominant form of governance. After the Peace of Westphalia the Holy Roman Empire was little more than a loose alliance of states. The formal arrangement of the Holy Roman Empire was devoted to maintaining the political status quo.

The Holy Roman Empire was not prepared for the onrush of revolutionary France. In 1804, only a few months before Napoleon crowned himself emperor in Paris in the presence of the pope, Emperor Francis II elevated the inherited Habsburg lands to the status of an empire and became Francis I, their first emperor. In 1806 Francis II stepped down from his position as Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, German Nation. It was forthwith dissolved, as his move rendered its name an empty shell. Its ideal of the universal realm could not withstand the rising tide of nationalism.

An attempt to reconstitute the state in the form of a German alliance failed: because of contention with Prussia, Austria failed to gain ascendancy in Germany. The Prussian defeat of Austria in 1866 was followed by the foundation of the North German Confederation, out of which the German Reich was created in 1871.

In its last phase, old Austria was the refuge of political conservatism. Economically, it was an "industrial agrarian state". The liberal reforms of Maria Theresa and the enlightened absolutism of Joseph II laid an excellent basis for the industrialization of the Danube monarchy, but the potential remained unrealized. The main reasons were on one hand an often insufficient disposition to industry among the capital-rich aristocracy, and on the other the reactionary economic policy of Prince von Metternich, which reinforced the status quo. Industrial development was hindered out of fear of the revolutionary potential of

an industrial proletariat. As a result, economic development in the Habsburg monarchy fell increasingly behind the rest of Western Europe. The progress of infrastructure upgrades, domestic industry and international trade relations was significantly behind that of other European states such as France, Germany, and England. For example, while industrial production in Germany increased nearly tenfold between 1800 and 1888, the increase in Austria was only half as great. Even in comparison with the global average of a sevenfold increase during the aforementioned period, Austria's performance was sub-par.

To complete this portrait of missed opportunities, some attention must be paid to the failure of an initiative of Minister-President Prince Felix of Schwarzenberg, who held his office from 1848 until his death in 1852. He campaigned for a unified Central European economic zone, which would have included seventy million people. The Schwarzenberg Plan, which built on the ideas of the Trade and Finance Minister Carl Ludwig Freiherr von Bruck, proposed the creation of European free trade zone centred around the German Confederation and including the territories today described as Benelux, as well as Scandinavia and the Northern Italian regions then controlled by Austria. Prussia pre-empted this by establishing hegemony with regard to trade to its own advantage. When Prussia succeeded in reaching a most-favoured nation agreement with France in 1862, the Habsburg monarchy – four years before its military and political defeat at the hands of Prussia – had to suffer its “economic Königgrätz” (Heinrich Benedikt).

The economic boom of the *Gründerzeit* – which followed the Compromise with Hungary of 1866/67 and the subsequent series of good harvests in years in which Western Europe had bad ones – came to an abrupt end on 9 May 1873, during the Vienna World's Fair, following a dramatic wave of speculation. The stock market crash brought an end to the short-lived period of Austrian economic liberalism, as the exaggerated disposition to risk yielded to risk aversion. The desire for security and state regulation gained antecedence again. Austria mutated to a land of “privileged concerns [...], of businesses guarded by guarantees and letters of protection, which robbed them of their capability”. This observation by Robert Musil has never become obsolete in Austria.

The modernization of the economy was especially inhibited by the reactivation of high import levies, which further secured the interests of the labour and manufacturing sectors. This defence against change however, soon became an

economic stumbling block. Up until the First World War, only the Russian Tsardom demonstrated a lower intensity of export activity than the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In 1914, the economic position of the Habsburg monarchy in relation to Western Europe was worse than it had been a decade before.

However, the monarchy ultimately collapsed not as direct result of its economic woes, but rather under the weight of nationalist and social tensions. Winston Churchill was moved to say that to every province, every nation of the old Habsburg Empire the new-won independence brought agonies such as the old poets and theologians were wont to reserve for the damned in hell.

The subsequent vacuum of power brought great suffering to Europe and paved the way for a massive redistribution of political power. The Czech historian and politician František Palacký had already in 1848 warned the national convention in Frankfurt: “Imagine Austria dissolved in a mass of larger and smaller republics – what a welcome opportunity for the Russian world empire!”

Dyed-in-the-wool Austrians have struggled till this very day to come to terms with the downfall of the monarchy. The old Austria, in which Germans, Hungarians, Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Ruthenians, Croats, Slovenians, Serbs, Romanians, Italians and Jews found a homeland, is a thing of the past. The universally oriented monarchy of the Danube was finally broken by nationalism and became therewith a testing ground for global collapse (Karl Kraus). The diversity of its peoples, however, made the melting pot of Vienna an incubator for both modernism and new political ideas.

The “last glimmer of the fairy-tale city” (Otto Friedländer) was populated by figures like Arthur Schnitzler, Stefan Zweig, Joseph Roth, Elias Canetti, Franz Werfel, Max Brod, Robert Musil and Hermann Broch. In real life, the Vienna of that period was also the temporary abode of the chess-playing Leo Bronstein alias Trotsky, who haunted the literary Café Central; of Josef Dzhughashvili alias Stalin, who lived on Schönbrunnerstrasse and wrote a study of national identity at the behest of his mentor Lenin; of Josip Broz, later known as Tito, who worked as a machinist in Wiener Neustadt; and of two members of parliament, Alcide De Gasperi and Tomas Masaryk, who would later become a founder of the European Community and the president of the Czech Republic, respectively. Theodor Herzl, the culture editor of the *Neue Freie Presse*, wrote – in reaction to the Dreyfus Affair in Paris – his

work about a Jewish state, founding the Zionist movement. His vision was fulfilled; the warning he issued just before his death, “*Macht keine Dummheiten, während ich tot bin*” (“Don’t do anything stupid while I’m dead”), went unheeded. During the same period, Vienna also lodged, in a poor working-man’s home, the picture-postcard painter Adolf Hitler, who fashioned an ideology of anti-Semitism and racism from the teachings of Schönerer and Vogelsang, which were used to populist means by mayor Karl Lueger. It was to become a monstrous political reality. Together with economic need and political discontent, such thought also fed a regrettable anti-Jewish tradition in Christianity, most notably in Roman Catholicism. A new racism was ushered into the nineteenth century through Darwin, Gobineau, and Chamberlain.

Viennese society also inspired Sigmund Freud, who held a lectureship in neuropathology at the University of Vienna. He lodged on Berggasse in the ninth district, where he developed a theory of psychoanalysis, not the least part of which saw in the unconscious mind a society on the edge of collapse. Out of the discussion ignited by Freud, further Viennese schools quickly developed: the Viennese school of individual psychology, founded by Alfred Adler and the Viennese school of existential analysis and logotherapy, founded by Viktor Frankl.

It may be seen as a typically Austrian fate that Freud’s teachings were never embraced in his own land, while they were highly respected in the USA. The question of which country has ultimately drawn the greater benefit could perhaps be determined by the Austrian School of economic thought. Among the most prominent representatives of that school, founded by Carl Menger, are Eugen Böhm-Bawerk, Friedrich Wieser, Israel Kirzner, Oskar Morgenstern, Fritz Machlup, Gottfried Haberler, and Ludwig von Mises, whose student Friedrich August von Hayek won the Nobel Prize in 1974 for his work on the theory of the interdependence of economic and social phenomena. Among the most important economists with Viennese roots are Josef A. Schumpeter and Peter F. Drucker, the founder of modern management theory. Drucker happily recounts an anecdote that he sat as a child on Schumpeter’s lap when his parents visited the older economist. Schumpeter’s theory of interdependence cycles and the role of innovation received much attention after the fall of the Iron Curtain, but primarily during the global crisis in the first decade of the twenty-first century. To his regret, however, he was never offered a position at his alma mater in Vienna.

The Vienna of the fin de siècle was a world-renowned intellectual centre, where adventurous new ideas were developed alongside new scientific systems and disciplines. The lion’s share of these intellectual innovations arose from the synthesis of pre-existing parts, by taking new perspectives to unify formerly disparate disciplines. Characteristically, most of these Austrian thinkers took an open systematic approach, conceptually opposed to the traditionally Austrian rejection of pure abstraction and the breaking of taboos. Rather, they favoured increasingly integrative, interdisciplinary thought. Such thought led the philosopher Sir Karl Popper to develop his theory of an open society, just as it led the biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy to his general systems theory, and to the poetic work of Hermann Broch. All three capitalized in this way on a specifically Austrian world-view. Popper ushered the “therapeutic nihilism” that developed in the Viennese medical school, along with the natural-scientific principle of scepticism, into the disciplines of philosophy and the social sciences. The scepticism of one’s own propositions, the ferreting out of contradictory evidence, the desire to re-examine one’s findings: all these characteristics of Nestroyesque self-criticism became, as the issue of the specifically Austrian world-view, also the hallmarks of the new scientific work (William M. Johnston, Carl Schorske). Names in philosophy associated with this movement are the aforementioned Karl Popper, Moritz Schlick and Ludwig Wittgenstein; in mathematics, Rudolf Carnap, Otto Neurath, Hans Hahn and Abraham Wald; in logic, Kurt Gödel, Herbert Feigl and Friedrich Waismann; in sociology, Paul Lazarsfeld, Maria Jahoda and Hans Zinsler, who together wrote the internationally renowned 1933 study *Die Arbeitslosen von Marienthal* (“Marienthal: The Sociography of an Unemployed Community”); in physics, Erwin Schrödinger, Victor Franz Hess, Ernst Mach and Lise Meitner; in chemistry, Carl Djerassi; in neuroscience Eric R. Kandel; in economic psychology, Ernst Dichter, the father of modern advertising psychology and motivational research; in psychiatry, Julius Wagner-Jauregg; in medicine, Lorenz Böhler, Karl Landsteiner, and Otto Loewi; in political science, Hans Kelsen; in music, Gustav Mahler, Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg, Anton von Webern, Ernst Krenek, Franz Lehár, Emmerich Kálmán, Edmund Eysler and Robert Stolz; in the visual arts, Gustav Klimt, Egon Schiele, Oskar Kokoschka, Richard Gerstl and Alfred Kubin; in dramaturgy, Max Reinhardt; and in architecture and design, Otto Wagner, Kolo Moser, Josef Hoffmann, Adolf Loos and Clemens Holzmeister – just to name a few.

Many great artists, philosophers, writers, and scientists were lost to Austria through the events of the two World Wars, whether through emigration, death in battle or extermination in the Holocaust. Austria never fully recovered from this intellectual bloodletting.

The outbreak of the First World War came, according to Franz Kafka, from “an appalling lack of imagination.” The incredible ignorance of the complicated political realities led to the vacuum of power that was the inevitable consequence of the dissolution of Austro-Hungary, a development, like the *Anschluss* in 1938, that many saw as something to be accepted with resignation. Hugo von Hofmannsthal mused cryptically in 1919: “for that which is to come, we are more deeply prepared than anyone else in Europe.” Hofmannsthal, however, certainly did not foresee just how much suffering would be entailed. Given an average lifespan, an Austrian civil servant born in 1900 would have had to survive two World Wars, learn five national anthems, take seven oaths of office, use five currencies, lose his savings on multiple occasions and learn six names for his country. This accounts, along with the dearth of liberalism in Austrian history, for some of the contradictions in the Austrian soul.

The news of the outbreak of the First World War was greeted by Sir Edward Grey (1862-1933), then Britain’s Foreign Minister, with the words: “The lamps are going out all over Europe; we shall not see them lit again in our lifetime.” Sir Grey’s dismal prophecy would be fulfilled. The death and destruction of the First World War bore sad witness to his prescience, just as the Second World War would, following after an intermezzo of just twenty-one years. The division of Europe at the Yalta Conference in February of 1945, and the subsequent determination of the zones of occupation in the Potsdam Conference, meant that the lamps of Europe were not destined to be re-lit simultaneously. In the parts of Europe that fell under the dominion of Soviet imperialism, the lamps indeed remained unlit until 1989, the year in which the Iron Curtain was finally rent, the Berlin Wall fell and the disintegration of Soviet hegemony became visible to Western eyes. In Western Europe the lights had begun to burn forty-four years earlier, in 1945.

Austria, rising again in 1945 within its borders of 1918, saw its existence as if rebuilt from the rubble. Unlike the situation in 1918, however, in 1945 there was no doubt as to the political and economic viability of the country, and certainly not as to its will to live.

When the foundation of the republic of “German Austria” was declared from the steps of the Parliament in Vienna on 12 November 1918, the future of the new state – about which the French Minister President Georges Clemenceau is to have said “*L’Autriche c’est ce qui reste*” (“The rest is Austria”) at the signing of the Treaty of St. Germain – was more than merely uncertain. Not even the borders of Austria were definitively drawn. The wish of the population of Vorarlberg to merge with Switzerland, expressed in a referendum in May 1919, was rejected by the Swiss government, and the intentions of the local government of Tyrol to form an independent republic were denied as a violation of the entente. And the terms of the Treaty of St. Germain, which expressly forbid the union of the two countries, put an end to the idea of merging German Austria with the newly republican Germany, a notion propounded by Social Democrats such as Karl Renner, Otto Bauer and Adolf Schärf. Consequently, the name “German Austria” had to be changed to “Republic of Austria.”

The territory of the new state was finally established on 19 September 1919 at the chateau of St. Germain outside of Paris, when Austrian State Karl Renner signed a peace treaty – which he referred to as the “State Treaty” – between his country and the twenty-seven “allied and associated powers”. The remains of the large realm that had once held fifty-three million people within its borders now contained scarcely seven million. The young republic was a state against its will, a “state no one wanted” (Hellmut Andics), and a state whose economic viability was deeply doubted by everyone.

One part of society mourned the lost empire, while another dreamed of a new one. The new republic, constituted from the remaining assets of the bankrupt multinational state, found one piece of common ground, namely its rejection of monarchism. Karl Kraus varied the anthem of the defunct empire thus: “God preserve, God protect us from the emperor of our land [...]. Never again may our destiny be united with the Habsburg throne.”

The Treaty of St. Germain was even worse and more humiliating than the Treaty of Versailles had been. The tenets of Thomas Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen-Point Plan, especially the right to self-determination, were shamefully neglected. The resultant hobbling of the Austrian economy, already given slight chances for success, sharpened the economic and social crises of the inter-war years. Hardly any country felt the economic consequences of the First World War as intensely as Austria.

The First Republic was an economically shattered country. Cut off from the former economic centres of the empire and burdened with high reparations, the small country was threatened with a hunger catastrophe. This was only avoided with the help of Swiss and American food aid. A guaranteed loan in 1922 from the League of Nations in Geneva, intended to stop inflation, produced long-term high unemployment in the 1920s because it came with strict budgetary requirements. Unemployment only worsened after the global economic crisis of 1929. In 1931 the most important bank in the country, the Creditanstalt, collapsed, an event that in its explosiveness was comparable to the downfall of Lehman Brothers in 2008. An additional blow to Austria's financial sector was the decline and fall of the huge insurance company Phönix.

Out of 1.6 million non-self-employed people in Austria in 1933, 557,000 were without a job, approximately 40 per cent of which no longer received money from the state. The economic downward spiral was only accelerated in Austria by the "1,000-mark sanction" levied in May of 1933 by the National-Socialist regime in Germany – which, in contrast to the "Austro-fascism" of Engelbert Dollfuss, came into power legally. According to this regulation, every German who travelled to Austria had to pay a fee of 1,000 reichmarks. The consequences for Austrian tourism, even then an important industry, were devastating.

These conditions contributed greatly to the instability of the domestic politics of this young parliamentary democracy, as well to an increase of internal tension. It even came to the formation of opposing paramilitary militias, the republican *Schutzbund* (Republican Defence League) of the Social Democrats and the *Heimwehr* (Home Defence Force) of the Christian Socialists. They were soon perpetually at loggerheads with one another. After parliament was disbanded in 1933, an authoritarian *Ständestaat* arose, which entered into an unholy alliance with the Roman Catholic Church. In the following year, a short but consequential civil war led to the Social Democrats being banned. In the same year, on 25 July 1934, an attempted purge was carried out by the National Socialists. This was violently struck down, with the dead numbering nearly 300, among them Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss. The Nazi party was then banned; many of its members were interned, and many more fled to Germany.

The small state of Austria managed to resist pressure from Hitler for another four years, but the utterly incompetent financial and economic policies of the Dollfuss and Schuschnigg governments – which prioritized increasing

gold reserves over cutting unemployment – put the republic in a life-threatening position. The National Socialist party itself had, up until its being banned, never garnered much support. In the last free election, in November of 1930, the NSDAP had received only 3 per cent of the vote. In 1938 there were barely 13,000 (illegal) members of the NSDAP, less the 0.2 per cent of the population. After Hitler increased his pressure on Chancellor Kurt Schuschnigg on 12 February 1938 at Berchtesgaden, the latter called for a referendum. Because Hitler knew that any referendum would produce a clear majority opposed to German annexation, he ordered the *Anschluss*. Schuschnigg closed his last radio address with the words: "We yield to force" and "God protect Austria". On 12 March 1938, German troops marched into Austria. The annexation of Austria into the Third Reich was thus complete. Not even the name "Austria" was kept, and the first replacement name, Ostmark, soon gave way to *Alpengau* and *Donaugau*.

With the exception of Mexico, no state protested the annexation. The rest of the world accepted Hitler as chancellor, with his anti-democratic policies and his unjust state, just as it had earlier accepted the equally illegitimate Austro-fascist regime. Court was paid to Hitler for almost seven years, for example at the 1936 Olympic Games. The sad climax of this policy was the Munich Agreement of 30 September 1938 and its consequences.

It is a fact that the *Anschluss*, which was militarily implemented on 13 March 1938, was enthusiastically greeted by a majority of the Austrian people. The dark period of Austrian history associated with this date, however, must be seen in the context of the economic misery, internal strife, political polarization, the persecutions of the Austro-fascist dictatorship, and especially in the light of the events of 1933 and February of 1934. Without this run-up, the subsequent events would have been unimaginable. The ignominious, nightmarish climax of this abysmal political development occurred on 15 March 1938 on Vienna's Heldenplatz. The result of the referendum of 10 April 1938, in which more than 90 per cent of the population voted to accept the annexation, is also historical fact. However, an enormous campaign of both terror and propaganda by illegal Nazis had preceded the vote, and even Karl Renner and Cardinal Innitzer had recommended voting "yes". There was additionally the threat of incurring the persecution of the Gestapo if one voted "no", as in most polling places one was required to cast his or her vote publicly.

In addition to the cheering masses on the Heldenplatz, however, there was also a great number of people, who sat

quietly at home, filled with anxiety and foreboding. It is not to be forgotten that the resistance mobilized almost immediately after the Anschluss, and that it too suffered heavy losses. From today's perspective, from the position of security and political freedom, it must be – particularly for the younger generations – difficult to imagine what immense courage and personal strength were required to oppose the Nazi regime, with its totalitarian ubiquity and terrible consequentiality. Hanna Arendt has thoroughly analyzed the subject in her book *The Origins of Totalitarianism*.

In Austria, as elsewhere, the Nazis mercilessly persecuted their opponents. Between the invasion of the German troops and the referendum staged by Hitler, approximately 76,000 people were arrested by the Gestapo. On 1 April, ten days before the referendum, the first victims of political persecution were transported to the concentration camp at Dachau. Among them was a large number of political leaders of the future Second Austrian Republic. Some 65,000 of the 180,000 Jews living in Austria were taken to the camps and murdered over the following years. A further 16,000 Austrians died in Gestapo custody, nearly 20,000 non-Jews perished in concentration camps and approximately 3,000 were sentenced to die and executed by the People's Court. Over 274,000 soldiers and 24,000 civilians died in the war.

These events, however, did not have the effect of producing a cohesive Austrian identity. This began more after the end of the Second World War and the seven years of Nazi dictatorship. A positive Austrian self-conception did not emerge until freedom was restored and efforts began to remove the traces of the occupation and rebuild the country. It formed the basis for Austria's rise from a poorhouse into the company of rich industrial states, in which – according to the findings of Eric Hobsbawm, the eminent British historian with Viennese roots – the average citizen lives better than a monarch did 200 years ago. Austria managed, in the lee of the Cold War and with the help of the Marshall Plan, to become an economically thriving nation with a great deal of social and domestic security, broad prosperity, an intact natural environment and an all-around high quality of life.

Austria first became a nation of its own free will after 1945, and especially after 1955. It required the horrors of the Nazi period, the Second World War and the ten-year occupation by the Allied Forces for the Social Democrats and the Christian Socialists, the bitter rivals of the First

Republic, to reconcile. It must not be forgotten that the Social Democrats had already been subjected to political persecution during the period of Austro-fascism, between 1934 and 1938. Both parties, however, were victims of the Nazis. Their representatives landed in the prisons and concentration camps, and in the cellblocks they found common ground that transcended ideological borders.

In the Second Republic, a “grand coalition” of the major political parties, the SPÖ and the ÖVP (the Social Democrats and the Austrian People's Party), became the dominant form of government. The concordant politics, however, came at a cost: that of placing a taboo on pre-1938 Austrian history. A true examination of the era of Austro-fascism, and also of the positions of the Allies in the years 1919, 1933 and 1938 has never truly been carried out.

After 1945, the government of Austria severely prosecuted former National Socialists, but not, however, the corresponding crimes of Austro-fascism, even though such a programme had been included in a draft of Chancellor Karl Renner's original platform. In the draft, Renner placed National Socialists and Austro-fascists in the same category, yet he abandoned his rigorous position in 1946, speaking out instead for a more nuanced approach to the “Nazi problem”, in which adjudicating responsibility and guilt would be done in a case-by-case manner.

The Americans were the most rigorous in pursuing former National Socialists and Austro-fascists in Austria. The task was given to the CIC (Counter Intelligence Corps) attached to each unit of the American army. The CIC had categorical lists of people who were to be automatically arrested and interned at the detention centre in Glaserbach, near Salzburg. This so-called “Automatic Arrest List” originally included the leaders of the *Heimwehr* militia; as fascists they were placed in the same category as the National Socialists. It soon became evident, however, that the American program could not be carried through in all its intended rigour because it would have entailed the arrest of numerous government figures, such as Leopold Figl and Julius Raab, who had been interned in the concentration camps. This only caused to reinforce the taboo surrounding the Austro-fascist era and its roots.

In terms of Austria's Nazi past, the first post-war government issued strict laws regarding the punishment of Nazis and war criminals. The 1945 constitutional law regarding “war crimes and other Nazi atrocities” was particularly severe. There were more than 130,000 court proceedings for crimes under the *Verbotsgesetz* (The Prohibi-

tion Act) and for violations under the *Kriegsverbrechergesetz* (The War Criminal Act). Nearly 600,000 Austrians were registered under the Punishment and Atonement Laws as being personally guilty of committing crimes in the name of National Socialism; 100,000 of them were fired from public offices, and nearly as many barred from professional practice. These events, extensively covered in the media, received great public attention. Another part of the punishment of the Nazis was their exclusion from participation in the first free election, in November 1945.

It is lamentable – and not only from a modern-day perspective – that, the denazification process and prosecution of Austrian war criminals focused exclusively on personal guilt, resulting in a grave oversight, namely of the need for an appropriate discussion about Austria’s collective guilt and its policy of reconciliation with the victims of the Holocaust and those forced to flee the country. Austria cast itself as a victim, which as a state and a legal entity had ceased to exist during the seven years of National Socialist rule, and which further more bore no responsibility for the Anschluss and the events that followed. This position was reinforced by the Moscow Declaration of 1 November 1943, in which the Allies, quite without Austrian influence, described Austria as the first victim of Hitler: “The Governments of the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and the United States of America are agreed that Austria, the first free country to fall a victim to Hitlerite aggression, shall be liberated from German domination. [...] They declare that they wish to see re-established a free and independent Austria [...]” The Allies, then, saw themselves as the liberators of Austria, and they dedicated themselves to the mission of restoring an independent Austria.

However, the Moscow Declaration also included this passage: “Austria is reminded, however, that she has a responsibility which she cannot evade for participation in the war on the side of Hitlerite Germany, and that in the final settlement account will inevitably be taken of her own contribution to her liberation.”

Nearly 40,000 Austrians lost their lives in the country’s resistance against the Nazi regime, victims of the People’s Courts, Gestapo prisons and concentration camps. And nearly all members of Austria’s first post-war government came from Nazi prisons and concentration camps. Twelve of the seventeen cabinet members of the first Figl administration were former prisoners of concentration camps. They had become victims themselves, doomed to death. Many of the members of the first *Nationalrat*, the National Council, after the war had been politically persecuted on

multiple occasions. The question remains, however, what can be demanded in this regard from the inhabitants of a country under a totalitarian, terrorist regime.

In this context, it is also possible to understand why, at the Conference of Foreign Ministers on 14 May 1955, a contentious passage in the preamble of the original draft of the “State Treaty for the Re-establishment of an Independent and Democratic Austria” was redacted at the behest of Foreign Minister Leopold Figl. In the passage, post-annexation Austria is described in the following terms: “As an integral part of Hitler’s Germany in the war against the Allies and associated powers, and against the United Nations, and that Germany used Austrian territory, Austrian troops, and material resources to this purpose, and that Austria cannot avoid the responsibility associated with its participation in the war.” One day later, on 15 May 1955, the treaty was signed.

In the course of the democratic stabilization process in the post-war era, it proved increasingly difficult to continue to exclude the some 550,000 registered Nazis, nearly one twelfth of the Austrian population, from political life. Moreover, Austria’s enormous loss of intellectual and human-resource potential, which was already dangerously thin as the result of the two mass exodus waves in 1933 and 1938, very soon led to shortages in terms of filling important positions. Consequently there was a serious dearth of teachers, physicians, pharmacists, civil servants and business executives. This made amnesties a necessity.

The end of the policy of exclusion concerning registered Nazis was also accelerated by the onset of the Cold War. As a result of this development, the Western Allies largely gave up their reservations with regard to the Nazis and began to see them instead as reliable anti-communists. One outcome of this change of attitude was that the Americans provided the head of espionage of the SS, Wilhelm Höttl, with a villa in Gmunden to allow him to re-activate his old network of SS agents to combat the communist threat.

In the 1949 parliamentary elections, former members of the NSDAP were for the first time permitted to participate again in the political process. All of the established political parties, including the communists, found themselves courting this block of voters. This election even saw the establishment of a new party to address these voters: the *Verband der Unabhängigen* (League of Independents/VDU). The founding of this party was supported above all by the SPÖ, which recognized an opportunity to draw the votes of these former Nazis away from the ÖVP and thus divide

the conservative camp. In the parliamentary elections on 9 October 1949, the VDU, with a voter turnout of nearly 97 per cent, captured just under 12 per cent of the votes. In 1955 the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) emerged from the VDU, and in 2005 the BZÖ (*Bündnis Zukunft Österreich*), in turn, broke away from the FPÖ. The BZÖ for its part later suffered a further division by a political splinter group in Carinthia.

The democratic form of government has become an elemental component of the Austrian self-identity. The sanctions imposed on Austria in 2000 as a consequence of the inclusion of the FPÖ in a coalition government were, as even Brussels later came to realize, a serious mistake. Against the better judgement of the EU, Austria was made a scapegoat, an example for other countries, because the rise of right-wing radicalism had already become a political problem in other parts of the EU, such as in France with Le Pen. By the time of the sanctions, this phenomenon had largely lost its magic due to the government participation of Austria's right-wing, populist faction, because the lofty promises made in order to capture votes remained largely a lot of useless talk. The success of the right-wing populists, however, is a danger signal for the established democratic parties and their poverty of ideas in dealing with the impending tasks that are arising through a constantly changing world, tasks that cannot be addressed with the problem-solving models of yesteryear or even yesterday. Globalization, the weak spots that have become glaringly apparent in the current financial and economic crisis, the gratifying increase in our life expectancy and the necessity of guaranteeing the livelihood of a growing world population all demand new intellectual approaches, new focuses in policies concerning education, science and research, and new forms of economic and socio-political regulation. The silence of the established parties on these issues provides fertile ground for the growth of political "Pied Pipers of Hamelin", and both are the surest way of losing our future before it has even begun.

After 1945 Austria learned from its past. The high attendance – in particular on the part of the younger generation – at the events surrounding the "50th Anniversary of the State Treaty" celebration and the privately organized exhibition of the same name in Vienna's Belvedere Palace was evidence that Austrians have a great interest in the story of the origins of their country as a republic. And this has been underscored by an ever-increasing number of specialist publica-

tions and documentaries devoted to modern Austrian history. It is thus that much more regrettable that this country has to date neglected to do justice to this interest by establishing a "Museum of Austrian History".

The support of international security and peace has become a central foreign-policy doctrine of this country. Thus, after 1945 Austria developed into one of Europe's most important countries in terms of its acceptance of asylum-seekers. Since 1945 nearly two million people have found their way to freedom in and via Austria. Among them were 500,000 Jews (some 400,000 in the 1970s alone) from the Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries. In 1956 approximately 180,000 Hungarians arrived in this country, followed by some 162,000 Czechs and Slovaks after 1968. After martial law was imposed in Poland in 1980/81, approximately 33,000 Poles came to Austria as a result. In the more recent past, Austria took in 80,000 refugees from Bosnia and donated large sums of money to the needy people in neighbouring countries. To give only one example, these private donations by the Austrian population to the victims of the war in Bosnia amounted to twice the sum that all EU countries together made available as the official aid package for Bosnia.

Following the re-establishment of its political independence, Austria, which until 1989 lie directly next to the Iron Curtain and in the slipstream of the Cold War, began a clear Westernization process. It joined the OEEC – now the OECD – the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, as well as numerous other international organizations, and participated in a large number of UN peacekeeping operations. And in August 1979 Vienna became the location for the world's third permanent UN headquarters. The selection of Vienna, which was made back in the period of East-West confrontation, was to cement Vienna's claim as an international meeting place, and even more importantly, to underscore Austria's integration into the international community of states.

The implosion and subsequent decline of the Soviet empire, and with it the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989, brought with it the opening of Europe to the east and restored a certain geographical logic to the region. And Austria was one of the greatest beneficiaries of these developments.

In 1995, as soon as it was politically feasible in the aftermath of the Cold War, Austria – along with Finland and Sweden – joined the European Union. In a referendum on 12 June 1994, 66.64 per cent voted in favour of membership. On 1 January 2002 the euro became the sole

currency of Austria. However, Austria had anticipated, so to speak, the introduction of the euro with the hard currency policy it had implemented in the 1970s, and by linking the schilling to the German mark – in keeping with early European efforts at monetary cooperation.

The history of the Second Republic became a success story.

The clearest indicator of this is the mass prosperity and a high degree of welfare service and social security this country offers: after the Second World War the weekly working hours in Austria were reduced from forty-five to thirty-eight hours, and the minimum holiday was increased from two to five weeks per year. In 1955 there were 150,000 automobiles in Austria; in 2010 there were 4.3 million. In 1955 some 500,000 Austrians had a telephone (about 100,000 of these lines were shared with three other

parties); now, in the first decade of the twenty-first century, Austrians have an average of one mobile phone per capita. In 1955 each person – there was no subdivision according to private households at the time – in this country had an average of 105 euros in savings deposits. In 2009, according to statistics, private savings deposits in Austria amounted to approximately 159 billion euros, an average of 19,011 euros per capita.

Österreich über alles, wann es nur will (“Austria Over All, If She Only Will”) is the title that Philipp von Hörnigk, a German-born economist who emigrated from Frankfurt to Vienna in 1684, gave to his book, which was to prove “how, by means of a well-run national economy, the imperial hereditary lands will rise above all other states in Europe”. With the developments after 1945, Austria has provided the proof for Hörnigk’s theory.