Ruth Wodak and Anton Pelinka, editors

The Haider Phenomenon in Austria

The Haider Phenomenon in Austria

The Haider Phenomenon in Austria

Ruth Wodak and Anton Pelinka, editors

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2002 by Transaction Publishers

Published 2017 by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017, USA

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

Library of Congress Catalog Number: 2001034722

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

The Haider phenomenon in Austria / Ruth Wodak and Anton Pelinka, editors.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 0-7658-0117-5 (cloth : alk. paper) — ISBN 0-7658-0883-8 (pbk. : alk. paper)
1. Freiheitliche Partei èsterreichs. 2. Austria—Politics and government—20th century. 3. Haider, Jèrg. 4. Right and left (Political science) I. Wodak, Ruth, 1950- II. Pelinka, Anton, 1941-

JN2031.F73 H355 2001
324.2436'035—dc21

2001034722

ISBN 13: 978-0-7658-0883-7 (pbk)

Contents

Introduction vii

Part 1

1. FPÖ, ÖVP, and Austria's Nazi Past 3
Walter Manoschek

2. The FPÖ, Foreigners, and Racism in the Haider Era 17
Reinhold Gärtner

3. Discourse and Politics: The Rhetoric of Exclusion 33
Ruth Wodak

4. Who the Hell is Jörg Haider? 61
John Bunzl

5. A Man for All Seasons: An Anthropological Perspective on Public Representation and Cultural Politics of the Austrian Freedom Party 67
Andre Gingrich

Part 2

6. Austrian Exceptionalism: Haider, the European Union, the Austrian Past and Present 95
Andrei S. Markovits

7. Haider—The New Symbolic Element of the Ongoing Discourse of the Past 121
Michal Krzyzanowski

8. Anti-Foreigner Campaigns in the Austrian Freedom Party and Italian Northern League: The Discursive Construction of Identity 157
Jessika ter Wal

Part 3

9. Austria all Black and Blue: Jörg Haider, the European Sanctions, and the Political Crisis in Austria 179
Richard Mitten

10. The FPÖ in the European Context 213
Anton Pelinka

11. Constructing the Boundaries of the Volk: Nation-Building and National Populism in Austrian Politics 231
Rainer Bauböck

Contributors 255

Index 257

Introduction
From Waldheim to Haider

Ruth Wodak and *Anton Pelinka*

Sometimes—not often—Austria makes political headlines. In past years and decades, this has happened at least twice: in 1986, when the "Waldheim Affair" was debated worldwide; in 1999, when the Austrian Freedom Party, under the leadership of Jörg Haider, received 27 percent of the vote in the national election. The Freedom Party (FPÖ) became part of the Austrian government when it formed a coalition with the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) on February 4, 2000.

The two events generated discourse, which, both in Austria and beyond its borders, was similar and yet different. The similarities concern the difficulties of confronting Austria's Nazi past (Waldheim was part of the Wehrmacht; Haider, a member of the postwar generation, appealed to "old" sentiments; see Zöchling 1999, Ottomeyer 2000, Scharsach and Kuch 2000). In both cases, Austrians saw themselves as the victim of conspiracies against them, and a nationalistic, chauvinistic discourse emerged, in public as well as in daily life.

The differences lie in the importance of these elections and in their consequences. Waldheim served as a symbol of a generation that had "done its duty" (Manoschek 1986), while Haider stood for a right-wing populist program, and the FPÖ was the first party of its kind to be represented in the government of the European Union (ter Wal 2001).

International reaction to these developments cannot be understood without taking into account Austria's role in the Second World War.

In the following, we will summarize briefly the two phenomena before introducing the chapters in this volume. This short history and both the Austrian and European backgrounds are necessary to understand the strong emotions, international reactions, and scandals of 1986 and 1999/2000.

The Waldheim Affair

Postwar Anti-Semitism in Austria

In his book, *Der ewige Antisemit* (1986), the German-Jewish author Henryk Broder repeated the phrase attributed to Zvi Rix, namely that the Germans will never forgive the Jews for Auschwitz. In surveying past decades in Austria, it would appear that Broder's cynical phrase, an ironic description of the Germans' rationalizing projection, which was aimed at shifting the guilt to the victims, could apply equally well to Austria. Kurt Waldheim's 1986 presidential election campaign effectively put an end to many of the qualms Austrians might have harbored earlier. During the campaign, few Austrians with anti-Semitic convictions felt a need to keep their views to themselves, particularly in the context of private discourse, and anti-Jewish prejudice found various verbal outlets of a more or less explicit nature.

The sociologist Bernd Marin has characterized the postwar situation in Austria as "anti-Semitism without Jews and without anti-Semites" (Marin 1983, 2000). He assumed that anti-Semitism was functionalized and constantly used as a political tool, but that few dared to call themselves anti-Semitic after the Holocaust. This is generally true, although politicians like Oskar Helmer, a socialist and the first Austrian Minister of the Interior of the Second Republic, as well as Leopold Kunschak, the first leader of the Christian Austrian People's Party (ÖVP), made no great secret of their anti-Semitic attitudes even after 1945.

Anti-Semitism existed in Austria immediately before 1938, during the Second World War, and after 1945, and it is still present today. Throughout the past fifty-five years, statistical surveys, opinion polls, and content analysis have developed various standardized quantitative research and survey procedures for identifying and measuring anti-Semitic prejudice. Of course, these procedures are always dependent on the design of the studies, the intentions of the researchers, the questions

asked, and the samples themselves (e.g., Weiss 1987, Kienzl and Gehmacher 1987, and Gottschlich 1987). One of the polls (Kienzl 1987) identified an average of 7 percent of Austrians as radical anti-Semites; however, no one has clearly defined what a radical or less radical anti-Semite might be. In Kienzl and Gehmacher's study (1987) which presented this "famous" 7 percent, 40 percent of those asked gave no answer.

The persistence of anti-Semitic attitudes in the above-mentioned opinion polls is ascribed to a small group of right-wing radicals. The number of such (radical) anti-Semites could thus be carefully delimited and their numbers shown to be falling. Anti-Semitism is also frequently identified with a purely racist variety of anti-Jewish prejudice which is equated with Nazism or with the Nazi extermination of the Jews (the "Auschwitz" symbol), thereby effectively excluding or minimizing other anti-Semitic trends in Austria, such as the Christian or the Christian-Social traditions (see Reisigl and Wodak 2001; Mitten 1992).

With the collapse of the Third Reich, many in Austria as well as in Germany were forced to acknowledge the extent of the Nazi crimes. Their doubts, feelings of guilt, and need to justify or rationalize their behavior encouraged the development of strategies for "dealing with the past": playing down the actions and events themselves, denying knowledge of them, or transforming the victims into the cause of present woes. Moreover, since the Moscow Declaration of 1943 was interpreted as an Allied offer of support for Austria's claim to have been the first "collective victim" of Nazi aggression, such reversals were able to draw upon an especially potent form of legitimation.

The putative victim status also made it possible to deny any responsibility that went beyond individual crimes. The newly constructed Austrian identity produced stronger feelings of nationalism, which, in turn, reinforced a specific definition of insiders and outsiders and the separation of "us" from "them."

Compared to the wave of anti-Semitic hostilities unleashed by the events of 1986, prior scandals were minor affairs. In 1986, during the "Waldheim Affair," there was a perceptible shift in public discourse, which developed a distinctive "us" and "them" pattern. The in-groups in this discourse ("Us") were Austria (note the metonymic-synecdochic *totum pro parte*), Waldheim (often taken as a *pars pro toto* for all "respectable" Austrians), the People's Party, the *Wehrmachtgeneration*,

all the people who wanted to stop thinking about the past, those who were interested in the future, etc. The out-groups, ("them") were, apart from the Jews, leftists (note the directional metaphor), those Austrians "who foul their own nest" (in German, *Nestbeschmutzer*—note the defamatory nationalist naturalizing metaphor), and *das Ausland.* This macro-toponymic metonymical collective singular describing everything outside the national borders of Austria could mean the international press and, ultimately, "the powerful Jews on the U.S. East Coast" (see Mitten 1992). Between these two poles of referential dichotomization were "Jewish fellow citizens," the beloved "*jüdische Mitbürger.*"

In the discourse about Waldheim's Nazi past, the exclusionary boundaries of the "us" group have shifted constantly. Nonetheless, in the context of the disclosures about the president's wartime past, the constant allusion to the "us" group facilitated creation of a *Feindbild Jude*, an image of the Jew as the enemy, which, in turn, reinforced existing prejudices. Certain taboos did exist at the time—for example, the avoidance of making explicit, manifest anti-Semitic remarks on TV or the radio—but even those taboos were broken in 1986 (see Wodak et al. 1990; Gruber 1991; Reisigl and Wodak 2001; Mitten 1992).

Anti-Semitism in postwar Austria must be viewed chiefly in relation to the manner in which alleged or real guilt, with alleged or actual accusations, is dealt with. One can observe that the topic of anti-Semitic prejudice in Austria is not exhausted by merely repeating the clichés of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. There are also additional new material roots and motives for anti-Semitism, and several new topoi have been added since 1945. The fear of revenge, although an old motive, has acquired a new urgency in the context of assigning blame for the Holocaust, be it the actual guilt of many or the feelings of guilt of others. Closely related to that is the fear that Jews will reclaim the property which was "aryanized," that is, stolen from them. The Austrians' postwar identity is grounded on the formulation of the 1943 Moscow Declaration, according to which Austria was the first victim of Nazi expansionism/aggression. The incriminating part of the declaration speaks of Austrian responsibility for Nazi crimes. "Digging up the past" is now seen as a threat to this image, all the more so when it recalls events which are not easily denied.[1]

The Waldheim Story

The "Waldheim Affair"[2] is the term conventionally applied to the controversy surrounding the disclosure of the previously unknown past of Kurt Waldheim, former secretary general of the United Nations, during his campaign for the Austrian presidency in 1986. The affair not only focused international attention on Waldheim personally, but also raised broader questions about the history of anti-Semitism in Austria (Mitten 1992a,b). To use a coded idiom more appropriate to post-Auschwitz political debate, "the Waldheim camp"—the Christian democratic Austrian People's Party, which had nominated him—helped construct a *Feindbild*, a hostile image of Jews which served both to deflect criticism of Waldheim's credibility and to explain the international "campaign" against him. The central assumption of this *Feindbild* was that Waldheim (synecdochizingly equated with "Austria") was under attack by an international Jewish conspiracy, the "*Ausland*." Waldheim was thus portrayed as an innocent victim.

The relatively uneventful early phase of the election campaign ended abruptly in March 1986, when the Austrian weekly news magazine *Profil* published documents revealing details of Waldheim's little-known activities during the Second World War. *Profil's* disclosures were followed on March 4 by nearly identical revelations by the World Jewish Congress (WJC) and the *New York Times*. Waldheim had always denied any affiliation of any kind with the Nazis and had claimed in his memoirs that his military service ended in the winter of 1941–42, when he was wounded on the Eastern front. The evidence made public by *Profil*, the World Jewish Congress, and the *New York Times* suggested the contrary: Waldheim had been a member of the Nazi Student Union, and he had also belonged to a mounted unit of the *Sturmabteilung*, or SA, while attending the Consular Academy in Vienna between 1937 and 1939. Other documents revealed that Waldheim had served in the Balkans after March 1942, in the Army Group E, commanded by Alexander Loehr. This unit was known for its involvement in the deportation of Jews from Greece and for the savagery of its military operations against Yugoslav partisans.

Waldheim himself initially denied having belonged to any Nazi organization and claimed to have known nothing about the deportation of Jews from Thessalonica. The general strategy of the Waldheim camp was to brand any disclosures a "defamation campaign," an inter-

national conspiracy by "the foreign press" and "the Jews" ("*im Ausland*"). In addition, Waldheim stated that he had simply forgotten to mention such minor events in his life because his injury had been the major *caesura*. In the course of the election campaign, the World Jewish Congress became the main target of criticism, and the torrent of anti-WJC political invective from ÖVP politicians helped promote and legitimize anti-Semitic prejudice in public discourse to an extent that had not been seen since 1945. Waldheim also attempted to link his own fate to that of his generation and country by claiming that he, like thousands of other Austrians, had merely done his duty ("*er habe nur seine Pflicht erfüllt*") under Nazi Germany. This euphemistic, relativizing, positive presentational argumentation topos relies on at least two rules of reasoning: First, if someone does his/her duty, he/she is a conscientious, responsible person; second, a conscientious, responsible person cannot be blamed for his/her deeds (see Benke and Wodak 2001; Heer 1999; Manoschek 2001). Waldheim's self-exculpating argumentation resonated positively not only with many Austrian voters of his generation, but also with members of the younger generations, the children of the *Wehrmacht* soldiers. Waldheim finally won the second round of the election on June 6, 1986, with 53.9 percent of the vote.

Contrary to Waldheim's expectations, however, interest in the unanswered questions about his past did not wane after the election (see Wodak, Menz, Mitten, and Stern 1994). Waldheim did not receive an official state invitation from any country in Western Europe, and some official visitors even avoided traveling to Vienna because they did not want to call on him. In April 1987, the U.S. Department of Justice announced that it was placing Waldheim on a watch list, further reinforcing his pariah status (see Mitten 1986 for more details). More broadly conceived, the "Waldheim Affair" symbolizes the Austrian postwar unwillingness or inability to adequately face the implications of Nazi abominations.

The Haider Phenomenon

The Rise to Power

On October 3, 1999, the FPÖ (currently the second largest party in Austria) won 27 percent of the vote after having run an election campaign based on blatant and explicit ethnicist and racist slogans against

foreigners. In this election, the Social Democratic Party lost 6 percent, while the conservative People's Party, the ÖVP, managed to maintain its level of support. The Greens were the only progressive party to succeed in attracting more votes, gaining 2 percent (now about 8 percent). The Liberal Forum with Heide Schmidt failed to win any seats in parliament.

During the campaign, both the Social Democratic Party and the People's Party (the ruling coalition government until October 1999) seemed paralyzed. On October 1, 1999, thousands of people gathered on St. Stephen's Square and applauded FPÖ leader Jörg Haider as he gave his last pre-election speech, welcoming "our Viennese citizens" and promising them protection "against foreigners and against unemployment." The slogans "*Stop der Überfremdung*" ("Stop overforeignization") ("foreign infiltration" was found in an article about Haider) and "*Stop dem Asylmißbrauch*" ("Stop the abuse of asylum") were accompanied by loud cheers as well as some whistles—a sign of disapproval in Austria – from those who dared. Police were stationed all around the square and the atmosphere was tense, but most bystanders had broad smiles on their faces. Moreover, the headline of the *Neue Kronen Zeitung* was already celebrating Haider's "March into the Chancellery" four days before the election.

What has Haider now become, and what kind of party is the FPÖ in 2000/2001? Does this rise of populism, racism, and hostility towards foreigners/xenophobia correspond to broader social changes in Europe, or is it a uniquely Austrian phenomenon?

After the Second World War, in 1949, "liberals" with a strong German National orientation but no classical liberal tradition (see Bailer-Galanda and Neugebauer 1993:326), who felt they could not support the SPÖ or the ÖVP, founded the VDU (*Verband der Unabhängigen* or League of Independents), which became the political home of many former Austrian Nazis. The FPÖ, founded in 1956, was the successor party to the VDU; it retained an explicit attachment to a "German cultural community." In its more than forty-year history, the FPÖ has, therefore, never been a "liberal" party in the European sense, although there have always been tensions between its more liberal and more conservative members. In 1986, Haider was elected party leader, unseating Norbert Steger, a liberal. Since 1986, the FPÖ has attracted thousands of new voters, and in the fall 1999, accounted for 27 percent of all the votes cast in Austria (1,244,087 voters). By 1993, the

FPÖ's party policy and platform had become anti-foreigner, anti-European Union, and widely populist, very similar to Le Pen's party in France. Since the summer of 1995, the FPÖ has de-emphasized the close ties between the Austrian and the German cultural communities because opinion polls showed that the majority of Austrian citizens no longer accepted such a self-definition. In the fall of 1997, the FPÖ presented a new party program, which, in its calculated ambivalence, emphasized Christian values and succeeded in attracting new voters. The FPÖ is currently the largest right-wing party in Western Europe (Mitten 1994; Bailer-Galanda and Neugebauer 1997; Pelinka 2001) and, more than any other Austrian party, persuasively sets the xenophobic and anti-foreigner tone in Austria. The electoral success the FPÖ achieved with populist slogans is even more surprising in view of the fact that Austria is one of the richest countries in the world today, and its inflation and unemployment rates are among the lowest in Western Europe. Comparisons with the Weimar Republic or with Austria between the two world wars—which the FPÖ often used during the election campaign—are thus completely wrong.

What, then, can account for the success of Haider and his party (a classical *Führerpartei*)? We would like to offer some explanations which illustrate that while there are Austrian peculiarities on many levels, there are also supranational, and indeed global (economic and ideological) implications and phenomena. Since 1945, Austria, a very small, neutral state with a population of eight million, has had difficulty establishing its new identity vis-à-vis Germany and trying to come to terms with its Nazi past (Wodak, de Cillia, Reisigl and Liebhart 1999). Efforts to establish a strong identity and a positive in-group, however, often result in the formation of negative out-groups. After the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989, Austria lost its function as a "bridge" between the East and the West and still has not found a new compensatory role. Joining the European Union (EU) in 1995 also failed to solve the problem. On the contrary, there has been a noticeable increase in tensions between national state ideology and supranational convictions.

Viewed from a historical perspective, racist, ethnicist and xenophobic prejudices are strongly rooted in the Austrian tradition (as noted above). Ethnic groups have often been blamed for economic and social problems. Before World War II, Jews were discriminated against, and anti-Semitism was a "normal" feature of Austrian political cul-

ture. Today, at the beginning of the new millennium, hostility towards foreigners has once again become *quasi* normal. When the first immigrants from the former Eastern Bloc arrived in Austria in 1989–90, all the political parties except the Greens used discriminatory slogans. None, however, were as explicit as those used by the FPÖ in the 1999 election campaign, when the most prominent FPÖ campaign poster read "*Stop der Überfremdung*" ("Stop foreign infiltration "), a term coined by the Nazis and used by Goebbels in 1933. What little opposition there was to the FPÖ discourse came from parts of the Catholic and Protestant churches, Vienna's Jewish Community *(Kultusgemeinde),* the Green, Liberal, and Communist parties, and some intellectuals. The two major parties, fearing they would lose support if they voiced opposition or used counter-slogans, never publicly condemned the racist and xenophobic propaganda until one week before the election on October 3, 1999.

Moreover, Haider's personality and his suntanned, telegenic appearance are significant factors in the FPÖ's popularity. Haider is certainly a charismatic politician who is adept at using rhetorical persuasion and suggestion in his political self-presentation (for example, in the media). He has proved adept at constructing a new image of himself as a statesman, for example, by participating in summer courses at Harvard University for three successive years.

With respect to the supranational European level, the FPÖ politically functionalizes worries about the EU plans for eastern enlargement, using it to increase the fear of unemployment and of being "colonized by the Islamic culture." The globalization rhetoric of EU policy, with its main focus on flexibility and competitiveness as a safeguard against unemployment, is a further source of misgivings (Weiss and Wodak 1999; Muntigl, Weiss and Wodak 2000). People are afraid of losing the traditional security provided by the Austrian welfare state and implemented over the past twenty-five years of Socialist and grand coalition governments. Change seems inevitable, but the coalition parties have not succeeded in proposing adequate alternative measures. Moreover, they seem to be trapped in the Austrian model of "social partnership," which has made significant change very difficult. The FPÖ, on the other hand, promised to protect jobs, accused the coalition parties of giving in to "international pressure," and proclaimed the need for a *Wende (turning point or change)* in Austrian politics. In response, the trade unions, in a radical departure from their

1993 stance, participated in the anti-foreigner discourse, and increasing numbers of traditional Socialist voters, such as workers, joined the FPÖ. It should be pointed out, however, that foreigners in Austria account for only 10 percent of the population. The populist argumentation, of course, provides no constructive programs, but simply responds to people's fears and gives them simplistic answers (see Taggart 2000; Taguieff 1999) (see ter Wal in this volume).

The search for a new identity and the discursive identification of scapegoats are not only Austrian issues, but supranational ones. The competition of the European economy with the USA and Japan has resulted in a "competitiveness rhetoric" (neo-liberal concepts) which is taking over economic debates (Krugmann 1998) (see Wodak in this volume). The phenomenon of globalization is one of the main factors at the core of anxiety about the future, and it reinforces nationalism, ethnicism, xenophobia, and racism. Thus, although Austria is in many ways unique, it is also a case study for European problems.

The "Measures against the Austrian Government"

The FPÖ is not a uniquely Austrian phenomenon. Some parallels to Haider's party can be found in other European countries. The party's anti-immigration agenda and its xenophobic rhetoric are very similar to those used by the French Front National (FN), the Belgian Vlaams Bloc, or the Italian Lega Nord (see ter Wal 2000). The FPÖ's anti-EU attitude is not so different from the anti-European sentiments of the "anti-Maastricht" wing of the British Conservatives. It can be argued that the anti-NAFTA (North American Free Trade Association) sentiment instrumentalized by some U.S. politicians (like Pat Buchanan [Reform party]) and especially the U.S. Republican party's increasing use of slogans and policies directed against immigrants, do not differ significantly from the approach the FPÖ uses (Riedlsperger 1978).

The specifics that can explain the European reaction to the FPÖ's access to government are to be found not only in the contemporary policies, but in their link to the past. The FPÖ must be seen in the context of Austria's tendency to reject Austrian responsibility for Nazism and to accept the existence of a party like the FPÖ, established by former Nazis for former Nazis, in the mainstream of Austrian politics. The Waldheim affair heightened suspicions that "the Austrians" had not learned their lesson as "the Germans" had (see above).

This is the background for the unusual response of the other fourteen EU governments when the coalition cabinet between the conservative People's Party (ÖVP) and the FPÖ was established in February 2000. Backed by a European Parliament resolution, the EU 14 declared that their bilateral relations with the Austrian government would be downgraded to a purely technical level (see Pelinka and Mitten in this volume).

These measures against the Austrian government, which were soon termed "sanctions" (and which most of the Austrian media called "sanctions against Austria"), turned Haider and his party into a European case. The coalition cabinet, led by Wolfgang Schüssel (ÖVP) and Susanne Riess-Passer (FPÖ), used its isolation in Europe to construct a kind of patriotic agenda: Loyal Austrians should side with their government against the "unjustified, illegal sanctions" (Charim and Rabinovici 2000). Austria's foreign policy focused on a single issue, the sanctions, and nothing else mattered.

Meanwhile, the EU 14 had made their point but were unsure what to do next. They commissioned a panel of three "wise men" to investigate and report their findings. The panel declared that the measures or sanctions might be effective on a short-term basis but would be counterproductive in the long run (Kopeinig and Kotanko 2000).

But even after bilateral official contacts resumed, the Austrian government was not really out of the woods. The report had characterized the FPÖ not only as a right-wing populist party but also as a party with some extremist and radical elements (report, 88, 106; see Kopeinig and Kotanko 2000). The European spotlight is still very much on Austria because of the peculiar nature of the FPÖ.

The report made it clear that Austria's human rights' record was not significantly different from that of other European countries. But that had not been the point of the measures: The EU 14 had sanctioned the Austrian government for giving the FPÖ cabinet status, for legitimizing an extreme rightist party. The EU 14 were motivated by the desire to set an example and to provoke a debate.

Both while the sanctions were in place and after they were lifted, there were interesting developments in the Austrian polity and especially its party system. While there is no scientific proof that these changes were direct results of Austria's international isolation, it is at least probable that the conflict between the Austrian government and its European partners had some impact on the trends.

- Within the governing coalition, the Austrian People's Party benefited. It gained a significant number of votes in the Styrian regional elections in October and is sometimes neck and neck with the Social Democrats in public opinion polls. The loser was the FPÖ, which has posted significant losses in all regional and local elections since February 2000. Recent polls show a general decline in voter approval of the Freedom Party.
- Among the opposition parties, the status of the SPÖ seems to have stabilized, with losses in Styria, wins in the Burgenland and Vienna regional elections, and an approval rating in public opinion polls that is more or less the same as it was in October 1999. The Greens seem to be the big winners: In all regional elections as well as in polls, the party has done and continues to do significantly better than in October 1999. This must be seen in the context of the virtual disappearance of the Liberal Forum (LIF), a centrist but strictly anti-FPÖ party.

This situation could mean the beginning of a two-bloc system: one bloc consisting of a strengthened ÖVP and a weakened FPÖ; the other a "red-green" bloc which is becoming significantly though not dramatically stronger. This would seem to indicate that the ÖVP will continue to be bound to the FPÖ for a long time to come, and that the fundamental consensus of the Second Republic, which is based largely on the formal and informal understanding between the center-right (ÖVP) and the center-left (SPÖ), has come to an end (Pelinka 1998, 15–36).

Some argue that there is also a positive side to this development: Austria has overcome the *Proporz*, its traditional system of clientelism, and is on its way to becoming a more competitive democracy. The rise of the FPÖ is seen as the bitter pill Austria had to swallow for having opened up its two-party cartel. (See e.g., Harvard International Review: Austria's Right. Winter 2001.) But it must be considered that the Austrian version of "consociational democracy" was the method specifically chosen to develop and stabilize a small European democracy in the tradition of the Swiss and Dutch understanding of democracy rather than the Anglo-American (Lehmbruch 1967; Lijphart 1977).

"Normalization?"

One of the reasons the three "wise men" argued that the bilateral measures had been productive was the assumption that the Austrian

government felt obliged to respond in a very constructive way (report, 115; see Kopeinig and Kotanko 2000). The two aspects of this positive response were:

- An international agreement to compensate the survivors of the Nazi system of forced labor.
- An international agreement to compensate the victims of the "aryanization" that took place in Austria 1938 and the following years.

Both agreements exemplify Austria's negligence in dealing with Austrian responsibility for Nazi crimes. Negotiations for these agreements had started before the Schüssel-Riess-Passer coalition came to power, but Austria's international isolation had put pressure on the government to reach an agreement as soon as possible. The Austrian government was strongly motivated to demonstrate that it had nothing to do with the Nazi past and that the rationale behind the EU 14's measures had been based on a misconception.

The two agreements demonstrate that it was (and is) not just the FPÖ that gives the Austrian method of dealing with the Nazi past its distinct character. Former governments under the leadership of the Social Democrats had also been unable to reach such agreements: Beginning in 1970, social democratic chancellors, leading either one-party cabinets or coalitions with the (pre-Haider) FPÖ or the ÖVP, had shown little interest in coming up with solutions. What made the agreements possible was the unique isolation in which the newly established Austrian government found itself.

The lesson to be learned for Austrian democracy is that international pressure does pay off; that by itself, the Austrian political system was (and probably is) incapable of finding a decent solution to a problem that originated in Austria decades ago.

Is this an early indication that Austrian politics has lost its specific qualities? In a certain way, the founding of the Schüssel-Riess-Passer government could be seen as a significant step towards normalcy:

- For the first time since 1945, Austrian democracy had produced a "minimal winning coalition"—a form of government typical of most European parliamentary systems. (Müller 1997). The grand coalition which had ruled Austria between 1945 and 1966 and again from 1987 until 2000 was out. The smallest coalition majority in parliament, brought together by the second and third largest parties, started to govern. This,

as well as some signs of further decline in the "social partnership" (Karlhofer and Tálos 1999)—the network between business and labor so typical of Austrian political culture—demonstrated that Austria was already less of a "consociational democracy" in Arend Lijphart's sense and more of a "competitive democracy" or a "majoritarian government" (Lijphart 1994).

- Because of his strong desire to be included in such a coalition, Jörg Haider did not go for the chancellorship himself. Instead, he offered the position to the chairman of the ÖVP, despite the fact that the ÖVP had won the same number of seats but received some thousand votes less that the FPÖ. Haider also resigned from his party chairmanship after the sanctions were imposed—a clear indication of the impact those measures had. Haider's retreat could also be seen as one step towards normalcy: Was the FPÖ on its way to becoming a mainstream center-right party?

It is, of course, impossible to predict future developments, but the degree of "normalization" in Austria clearly has a European dimension. As long as Austria's European partners have reason to see the FPÖ as a non-mainstream party, as long as no European party organization admits the FPÖ to its ranks, as long as Haider's official retreat has changed neither his dominant role in the party nor the party's outlook (Scharsach 2000; Scharsach and Kuch 2000), "normalization" remains a concept, not a reality.

Justification and Victim Discourses

Although the two phenomena ("Waldheim" and "Haider") certainly differ in many ways, the discourses surrounding both events are similar and, to a certain extent, predictable. These discourses, as recent qualitative studies (Wodak et al. 1990; Reisigl and Wodak 2001) have shown, follow a certain pattern which gives rise to nationalistic and chauvinistic emotions, symbols, and actions:

First, a conspiracy is constructed to explain why many outside Austria suddenly oppose certain Austrian policies. The conspiracy is often linked to "certain circles" (an allusion to "Jews on the East Coast") or to Social Democratic policies, and it enables politicians and Austrians to deny being guilty of having created or contributed to the problems. Ultimately, it allows them to see themselves in the role of the victims: Austria(ns) as the victim(s) of the EU, of a worldwide Jewish conspiracy, etc.

Secondly, a scapegoat is found to justify the actions of Austrian politicians. Foreigners, Jews, "*Vernaderer*" (a new term used for all those "who speak badly about Austria"), the European Union, etc.—all these different groups are or have been, at some time or another, thought guilty of causing the problems in Austria.

Thirdly, accusations are denied, mitigated or redefined. The media and politicians rarely attempt to use rational arguments to explain how their positions differ from those of their opponents. The "in-group" is presented in a positive light, while the "out-group" is debased and portrayed negatively. Euphemisms serve the same function.

Fourthly, a counterattack is launched: The "others" have done the same thing; or even worse, analogies are used, such as: everyone knows that there is racism everywhere. This line of argumentation seems to imply that "we are all the same."

Fifthly, the roles of the victim and perpetrator are reversed. Waldheim or Haider are not to blame for the problem, nor are certain kinds of policies or discourses. Instead, the guilt is projected onto the victims: the Jews, the foreigners, or the critics are then seen as the cause of the international isolation or the so-called sanctions.

Lastly, the accusations directed at Waldheim or the new Austrian government are redefined as accusations directed at Austria or all Austrians. This justifies a chauvinistic approach (see Wodak 2000a,b; Ötsch 2000; Czernin 2000 for a more differentiated and longer description of these discursive patterns). The "whole of Austria" feels it is under attack and must defend itself.

The "new" discourses since February 2000 manifest some other patterns as well, for example:

"Anything goes": When politicians in Austria deny or distort obvious facts, or even lie, it either only creates a small scandal or nothing at all happens. This is, of course, not a new phenomenon: politicians throughout the centuries and around the world have occasionally been known to have trouble with the truth (see Reichert 1999). What is astounding is that there are no repercussions for obvious distortions, which the media generally exposes within twenty-four hours. One example: Josef Kleindienst, a police officer and former member of the FPÖ, published a book (2000) in which he provided evidence to support his claim that numerous persons from the FPÖ had had illegal access to police personnel files, data

and computers. Haider's immediate reaction was to claim that he had never seen Kleindienst before and had never had any contact with him. The next day, several newspapers published pictures of Haider and Kleindienst shaking hands. This so-called *Spitzelaffäre* is still being investigated by the police and courts.

The discourse of silence": Even when public figures make statements that oppose, contradict or violate the preamble of the new coalition agreement, the ÖVP and the chancellor often keep quiet or mitigate the events. Again, an example: In his first speech on June 4, 2000, Ernest Windholz, a high-ranking politician from Lower Austria, repeated the SS oath, "*Unsere Ehre heißt Treue.*" A scandal ensued. Windholz denied having known the oath, claiming that his use of the same wording was "pure coincidence" (http://www.derstandard.at, 05.06.2000). The chancellor relativized Windholz's statement and took no action. Education Minister Elisabeth Gehrer (ÖVP), however, recognized a need for more information about the Nazi period and its rhetoric. A booklet intended for use in schools and containing examples of this kind of rhetoric has since been published (February 2001) (but unfortunately, the booklet does not contain these recent examples of politic rhetoric).

"Taking the opposition to court": In May 2000, Haider and his former lawyer and close friend Dieter Böhmdorfer (now Minister of Justice) held a joint press conference in Klagenfurt, Carinthia. Haider voiced the idea that politicians who oppose the "interests of the Austrian state" should be sanctioned and maybe even removed from office. Böhmdorfer replied that the idea was "certainly worth pursuing" ("*sicher verfolgenswert*"). The "three wise men" mention these statements in their report and point out the danger they pose to freedom of expression (report 93–96; see Kopeinig and Kotanko 2000).

Perspectives

Austria has found its way into the European Union. After decades of soul-searching and arguing about being a "bridge" between East and West, Austria developed a clear preference for a Western orientation. The beginnings of this tendency go back into the immediate post–1945 period, when the overwhelming anti-communist attitude of most Austrians—uniting friends and foes of the Nazi regime—had an

impact on Austria's international outlook (Stourzh 1998, Bischof 1999, esp. 52–77).

This orientation has come to what appears its logical conclusion: Austria's entry into the European Union. Since joining the EU, however, Austria has had to learn a hard lesson: that membership in the club of European democracies is not without its consequences. It was the Union—more precisely, the governments of the other 14 EU member states—that created the strong point of standards Austria has yet to completely fulfill. It is interesting to note that it was this very union of liberal, Western democracies that pointed out Austria's peculiarities.

What the EU pointed out does not constitute a specific record of Austrian policies. Austria does not treat asylum seekers any worse than most of the other EU member states do. Austria does not violate the rights of ethnic or religious minorities in a way that could be seen as unique and scandalous from a European perspective. But that was not the motivation behind the diplomatic sanctions imposed by the EU 14. The real reason for those measures was the particular character of the Freedom Party. The FPÖ—what it represents, its substance, its very nature—was and still is the main reason why Austria and the Austrian democracy cannot expect it to be "business as usual" with the EU.

There are some indicators that can be used in the future to measure Austria's "normalcy": Will the FPÖ be accepted as a mainstream party in the European Parliament? Will the FPÖ be seen as a party of the same political ilk as the French Gaullists, the Spanish Conservatives, or the Scottish Nationalists? Will the FPÖ be able to win partners beyond the Austrian borders—partners who are not fringe groups of the Italian Lega Nord?

Austria and Austrian society must come to terms with the standards Europe considers self-evident. Austria and Austrian society have to accept the fact that the European Union considers itself the antithesis of the very same message the FPÖ is still sending:

- Historical revisionism through the use of ambivalent rhetoric with clear apologetic subtexts regarding the Nazi past.
- Ethnic egotism and a xenophobic outlook with respect to "the others," defending the borders of and within the EU against immigrants.
- Understanding democracy primarily as an exclusive and not as an inclusive system by constructing obstacles to the political integration of "foreigners."

Austria has to realize that there is sufficient evidence to prove that the process of political "re-socialization," which was so decisive for post–1945 Germany, has not been implemented–at least not deeply enough—in post–1945 Austria (see Harms, Reuter and Dürr 1990). Austria cannot return to square one and restart the process of building an Austrian democracy, but it can agree to pay the price of membership in the club of European democracies. That price is Europeanization, and not only in the sense of customs, agrarian policies, the European Monetary Union, and the European Single Market. Europeanization especially means coming to terms with the fact that Europe has reason to believe that Nazism—not Fascism or Communism—was the most profound experience of the twentieth century.

Until Austrian society changes its cavalier attitude toward its past, Austria will not be fully accepted by the European society which has been shaped by this very experience.

Introducing the Volume

This volume contains eleven papers by internationally prominent scholars from the fields of political science, history, anthropology, and linguistics. The numerous trans—and interdisciplinary approaches make it possible to view the many aspects and dimensions of the "Haider phenomenon": the rhetoric and its impact, daily life in Austria, and the influence of right-wing populism on culture and folklore, as well as the sociopolitical background and developments. Only such a multilevel approach can facilitate an understanding of both the specificities of this Austrian phenomenon and the European dimension of such policies.

Part 1 focuses on the development of the Freedom Party, its politics, and the personality of Jörg Haider. Walter Manoschek discusses Austrian postwar history and how the ÖVP, the FPÖ and the SPÖ dealt with or are dealing with the Nazi past. Reinhold Gärtner continues with a detailed analysis of the FPÖ's anti-foreigner policies, and Ruth Wodak provides an in-depth report on the rhetoric of exclusion, the specific populist rhetoric used by the Freedom Party. John Bunzl then explores the personality of Jörg Haider and his charismatic appeal to many audiences. Finally, Andre Gingrich describes the impact of populist policies on Austrian culture.

Part 2 presents views of the Haider phenomenon from outside Austria. Andrei Markovits provides an American perspective on the Haider phenomenon, while Michal Krzyzanowski chronicles the reactions of the Polish media. Jessika ter Wal compares the FPÖ with the ideologies, policies, and rhetoric of Italy's Lega Nord and the Allianza Nazionale.

Part 3 addresses the latest developments in Austria in the year 2000 in relationship to explanations of Haider's rise to power: the European Union sanctions, their impact on Austria, and the search for a new *Wertegemeinschaft* (value system) in the European Union.

Richard Mitten explains why he believes the sanctions were counterproductive; Anton Pelinka presents arguments for a positive evaluation of the bilateral measures. Finally, Rainer Bauböck contributes a detailed explanation of the Haider phenomenon in the Austrian and European contexts.

Notes

1. The postwar situation in Germany was different (see Stern 1991). The victim discourses are thus not new for Austria; they are a characteristic of Austrian public discourses and sentiments (see Wodak et al. 1994).
2. For a detailed description and interpretation of the chronology of events see Mitten 1992b.

References

Bailer, Brigitte, and Neugebauer, Wolfgang. (1998). "Die FPÖ: Vom Liberalismus zum Rechtsextremismus," in *DöW: Handbuch des österreichischen Rechtsextremismus.* Vienna: Deuticke.

Bailer-Galanda, Brigitte, and Neugebauer, Wolfgang. (1997). "Haider und die 'Freiheitlichen'" in *Österreich.* Berlin: Elefanten Press.

Benke, Gertraud, and Wodak, Ruth. (2001). Memories of the War. The Narratives of Wehrmacht Soldiers," in Nelson, D., and Dedaic, M. (eds), *War with Words.* Den Haag: De Gruyter (in print).

Bischof, Günter. (1999). *Austria in the First Cold War, 1945–1955. The Leverage of the Weak.* London and New York: Macmillan and St. Martin's Press.

Broder, Henry K. (1986). *Der ewige Antisemit.* Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag.

Charim, Isolde, and Rabinovici, Doron (eds.). (2000). *Österreich.* Berichte aus Quarantanien. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Czernin, Hubertus. (2000). *Wofür ich mich meinetwegen entschuldige. Haider, beim Wort genommen.* Vienna: Czernin Verlag.

Gottschlich, Hugo. (1987). "Der Fall 'Waldheim' als Medienereignis." Vienna: Projectreport.

Gruber, Helmut. (1991). *Antisemitismus im Mediendiskurs. Die Affäre „Waldheim" in der Tagespresse.* Wiesbaden and Opladen: Deutscher Universitätsverlag/ Westdeutscher Verlag.

Harms, Kathy, Reuter, Lutz R., and Dürr, Volker (eds.). (1999). *Coping with the Past. Germany and Austria after 1945.* Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press.

Heer, Hannes. (1999). *Tote Zonen.* Hamburg: Edition Hamburg.

Karlhofer, Ferdinand, and Tálos, Emmerich (eds.). (1999). *Zukunft der Sozialpartnerschaft. Veränderungsdynamik und Reformbedarf.* Vienna: Signum.

Kienzl, Heinz, and Gehmacher, Ernst (eds). (1987). *Antisemitismus in Österreich,* Eine Studie der österreichischen demoskopischen Institute. Vienna: Braumüller.

Kleindienst, Josef. (2000). *Ich gestehe. Was ein Polizist über die Exekutive weiß.* St.Andrä/Wördern: Kleindienst Verlag.

Kopeinig, Margaretha, and Kotanko, Christoph. (2000). *Eine europäische Affäre.* Vienna: Czernin Verlag.

Krugman, Paul. (1998). *Pop Internationalism.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Lehmbruch, Gerhard. (1967). *Proporzdemokratie. Politisches System und Politische Kultur in der Schweiz und in Österreich.* Tübingen: Mohr.

Lijphart, Arend. (1977). *Democracy in Plural Societies. A Comparative Exploration.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

_____. (1984). *Democracies. Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty-One Countries.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Manoschek, Walter. (2001). "Wehrmacht und Holocaust." Vienna (unpublished manuscript).

Marin, Bernd. (2000). *Antisemitismus ohne Antisemiten.* Wien: Campus Verlag.

_____. (1983). "Ein historisch neuartiger 'Antisemitismus ohne Antisemiten,'" in J. Bunzl and B. Marin (eds), *Antisemitismus in Österreich.* Innsbruck: Universitätsverlag.

Mitten, Richard. (1987). "Ohne KURToisie." *Profil* 11 May 1987.

_____. (1992a). *The Politics of Antisemitic Prejudice. The Waldheim Phenomenon in Austria.* Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

_____. (1992b). "New Faces of Antisemitic Prejudice: Reflections on the Waldheim Affair," in R. Wistrich (ed), *Austrians and Jews in the Twentieth Century.* London: St. Martin's Press.

_____. (1994). "Jörg Haider, the Anti-immigration Petition and Immigration Policy in Austria." *Patterns of Prejudice* 28/2, 24–47.

Müller, H.-P. (1997). "Spiel ohne Grenzen?" *Merkur.* Deutsche Zeitschrift für europäisches Denken, Sept./Oct.:805–820.

Müller, Wolfgang C. (1997). "Österreich: Festgefügte Koalitionen und stabile Regierungen," in W.C. Müller, K. Strom (eds.), *Koalitionsregierungen in Europa. Bildung, Arbeitsweise und Beendigung.* Vienna: Signum.

Muntigl, Peter, Weiss, Gilbert and Wodak, Ruth. (2000). *European Union Discourses on Un/employment. An Interdisciplinary Approach to Employment Policy-Making and Organizational Change.* Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Ötsch, Walter. (2000). *Haider light. Handbuch für Demagogie.* Vienna: Czernin Verlag.

Ottomeyer, Klaus. (2000). *Die Haider-Show. Zur Psychopolitik der FPÖ.* Klagenfurt: Drava Verlag.

Pelinka, Anton. (1998). *Austria: Out of the Shadow of the Past.* Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Reichert, Herman. (1999). *"Lüge" und "Selbstgespräch". Zwei Kommunikationsmodelle.* Vienna: Ed. Praesens.

Reisigl, Martin, and Wodak, Ruth. (2001). "Austria First." A Discourse-Historical

Analysis of the Austrian 'Anti-Foreigner-Petition' in 1992 and 1993," in Reisigl, M., and Wodak, R. (eds.), *The Semiotics of Racism.* Vienna: Passagen Verlag.

Reisigl, Martin, and Wodak, Ruth. (2001). *Discourse and Discrimination.* London: Routledge.

Riedlsperger, Max E. (1978). *The Lingering Shadow of Nazism. The Austrian Independence Movement.* New York: Columbia University.

Reinfeldt, Sebastian. (2000). *Nicht-wir und Die-da. Studien zum rechten Populismus.* Vienna: Braumüller.

Scharsach, Hans-Henning. (1993). *Haiders Kampf.* Vienna: Kremayr & Scheriau.

Scharsach, Hans-Henning (ed.). (2000). *Haider. Österreichs rechte Versuchung.* Reinbek: Rowohlt.

Scharsach, Hans-Henning, and Kuch, Kurt. (2000) *Haider. Schatten über Europa.* Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch.

Stern, Frank. (1991). *Im Anfang war Auschwitz. Antisemitismus und Philosemitismus im deutschen Nachkrieg.* Gerlingen: Bleicher.

Taggart, Paul. (2000). "Populism and the Pathology of Representative Politics." Paper presented *in Workshop on Populism,* European University Institute, Florence, January 14–15, 2000.

Taguieff, Pierre A. (1998). "Populismes et antipopulismes: le choc des argumentations," in *Mots,* vol.55 nr. June 1998:5–26.

ter Wal, Jessika. (2000). *Racism and Xenophobia and the Discourse of the Freedom Party in the Year 1999.* Diskussionsforum Technische Universität Wien.

_____. (2001). "Comparing Argumentation and Counter-Argumentation in Italian Parliamentary Debate on Immigration."in Reisigl, M., and Wodak, R. (eds), *The Semiotics of Racism.* Vienna: Passagen Verlag.

Weiss, Gilbert, and Wodak, Ruth. (2000). "Debating Europe. Globalisation Rhetorics in European Union Committees," in Bellier, I. and Wilson, T. (eds). *An Anthropology of Europe.* Berghahn.

Wodak, Ruth. (2000a). "The Rise of Racism—An Austrian or a European Phenomenon?" *Discourse & Society* 11(1):5–6.

_____. (2000b): "Wer echt, anständig und ordentlich ist, bestimme ich!"—Wie Jörg Haider und die FPÖ die österreichische Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Zukunft beurteilen. In *Multimedia: 5–8.*

Wodak, R, de Cillia, R., Reisigl, M., Liebhart, K. (1999). *The Discursive Construction of National Identity.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press (revised and shortened translation of Wodak, R, de Cillia, R., Reisigl, M., Liebhart, K., Hofstätter, K. and Kargl, M. 1998).

Wodak, R., Pelikan, J., Nowak, P., Gruber, H., de Cillia, R., Mitten, R. (1990). *"Wir sind alle unschuldige Täter!" Diskurshistorische Studien zum Nachkriegsantisemitismus.* Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp.

Wodak, R., Menz, F., Mitten, R., and Stern, F. (1994). *Die Sprachen der Vergangenheiten: öffentliches Gedenken in österreichischen und deutschen Medien.* Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp .

Zöchling, Christa. (1999). *Haider. Licht und Schatten einer Karriere.* Vienna: Molden.

Part 1