The Ambivalence of Identity

The Austrian Experience of Nation-Building in a Modern Society

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Nation-Building and Postwar Austria

An Introduction

THE CRUCIAL ROLE OF ELITES in the formation of national identity is a recurring topic in recent scholarship. The historical experience of the Republic of Austria casts new light on this important subject. Situated in a twentieth-century Western European societal environment, Austrian nation-building initially appears to reinforce established theoretical interpretations but ultimately transcends them.

The Ambivalence of Identity examines nation-building in Austria and uses the Austrian experience to explore the conceptual foundations of nationhood. There are convincing reasons for this dual focus. Austria is a small country, so the concrete circumstances of its genesis might seem of limited interest outside its borders. But Austrian historical developments have long inspired the theoretical debate of nationhood, and many central contributions to this debate were informed by the nationality conflict in Austrian lands.[1] Traditionally, Habsburg Austria has provided the background for these works. In the course of this study it should become clear that republican Austria is as valuable in understanding national identity as was its monarchic predecessor.

The instrumentalist school of nationalism provides the most promising theoretical approach for analyzing nation-building in Austria.[2] Focusing on the mythical superstructure that frequently surrounds the national self-image, it describes nations as social constructs developed

by nationalist elites.[3] In its traditional form, this scholarly interpretation clarifies the role of elites in creating a new sense of cohesion within a potential nation still fragmented along premodern lines; it explains a qualitative difference within a given entity. However, nation-building in postwar Austria is different in that it occurred at a later stage of societal development. The Austrian population had already experienced the influence of modern nationalism; this earlier experience had centered on German cultural images.[4] In order to achieve their national goals, the postwar Austrian elites had to transform the existing national consciousness of an already politicized modern population, that is, they had to change the reference group while maintaining the existing level of consciousness.

Centralized decision making in the Second Austrian Republic supported these ambitious objectives. United in a grand coalition government throughout most of the postwar period, the two major parties decisively influenced appointments to positions of political and cultural leadership. The prominent role of nationalized industries in Austrian economic life and the intertwining of political and economic decision making in Austria's system of social partnership included much of the economic leadership in this interconnected elite structure. This high degree of political integration secured administrative support for the new national conception.

Austrian nation-building relied pivotally on historical images and their careful reinforcement by civic institutions. The significant contribution of historians and historical interpretations to Austrian nation-building gives the Austrian experience special relevance for the larger debate about the nature of history. The impact of public institutions on national consciousness, for its part, casts new light on the crystallization of public opinion in modern mass societies and on the popular legitimization of new national concepts.

The role of consciousness in a process of nation-building that challenged an embedded alternative represents one of the theoretically most significant aspects of postwar Austrian identity. The Austrian case is not only intriguing from a theoretical point of view, however. Questions about nationalism and national identity have resurfaced conspicuously in Central and Eastern Europe, expressing themselves in the unification of East and West Germany as well as in the disintegration of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and the Soviet Union. History and geography locate the Republic of Austria centrally between national developments in Germany and in the Habsburg successor states of East Central Europe.

Indeed, the analysis of Austria's postwar experience shows that the country's own national question continues to be interconnected with the national question in neighboring countries. In the aftermath of World War II, divergent political identities began to form in German-speaking Central Europe, and the attempts to create transnational Yugoslav and Czechoslovak identities were resumed after their initial failures in the interwar years. In Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia, the national environment of the postwar era has come to an end. By contrast, Austria's national foundations appear intact, even if the country's new membership in the European Union and the end of the Cold War have begun to question fundamental symbols of Austria's postwar identity, such as neutrality and the State Treaty of Vienna.

Finally, postwar Austrian nationhood cannot be separated from the worldwide catastrophe that preceded it. For decades, a distinctly Austrian sense of nationhood seemed to disengage Austria from the unresolved questions not only about the German present, but also about the German past. The debate about the wartime role of the former Austrian president and secretary general of the United Nations, Kurt Waldheim, marked the end of this historical era. To many international observers, Waldheim came to symbolize a country with a less than comprehensive recollection of the past. Willingly or unwillingly, Austrians had to take another look at the foundations of their postwar experience.

Austrian National Identity in the Mirror of Postwar Historiography

As soon as the Republic of Austria was reestablished from the ruins of the Third Reich in the final days of World War II, political leaders emphasized the country's long tradition of cultural and political autonomy.[5] The corresponding scholarly debate, by contrast, evolved more slowly. Whereas references to a uniquely Austrian national identity and its distinctions from German patterns dominated official discourse, academic contributions were less visible. After all, Austrian historiography had been known for its Germanist interpretations, and the historians of interwar Austria had seen their preeminent task in documenting Austria's contribution to the history and development of the wider German nation.[6]

During the 1950s and 1960s, a number of popular histories of Austrian national identity appeared, and academics examined the issue in a series of essays.[7] It took several decades, however, before Austrian

scholars began to interpret Austria's national identity in major monographs. Some of the central works appeared within a fairly brief period in the early 1980s.[8]

In 1980, the native Austrian Felix Kreissler, professor of history in Rouen, France, published *La prise de conscience de la nation autrichienne, 1938–1945–1978.*[9] In this study, Kreissler traced the development of an Austrian nation back to the proclamation of the Austrian Empire in 1804, but especially emphasized the time period between 1938 and 1945. Through resistance to German occupation, Austrian national consciousness became complete. In this assessment, Kreissler is in agreement with the thesis put forward by the Anglo-Austrian historian Karl Stadler, who as early as 1966 had referred to a national struggle for liberation that had taken place in wartime Austria.[10]

In a very personally engaged contribution, the cultural historian Friedrich Heer synthesized his lifelong research on Austrian intellectual traditions in his monumental *Der Kampf um die österreichische Identität.*[11] Not incidentally, the title echoed the prewar liberal historian—and journalist—Heinrich Friedjung's influential *Der Kampf um die Vorherrschaft in Deutschland,* which had described Austria's ultimately unsuccessful struggle for predominance in nineteenth-century Germany from a distinctly Germanist perspective.[12] Heer juxtaposed a baroque, counterreformational Austrianist culture with its Protestant or anticlerical, German-oriented counterpart, which had its strongholds in areas that had most resisted the Counterreformation. Heer portrayed Austrian identity as less secure than that of other European countries and reproached prior Austrian governments for not having worked harder on implanting a uniquely Austrian national consciousness.

In his two-volume work *Österreich Zweite Republik*, Georg Wagner, academic historian and director of the Austriaca collection at the Austrian National Library, presented extensive source material from both early and recent Austrian history to document the existence of a distinct Austrian nation.[13] Wagner saw Austrian continuities dating back two thousand years to the Celtic state of Noricum, but especially to the Habsburg hereditary lands as they developed in the eastern Alps around 1500. He interpreted Austria as a federal nation and defined this concept as situated halfway between a cultural nation and a political nation.[14]

Finally, the Viennese social historian Ernst Bruckmüller approached the topic from a more contemporary angle in his study *Nation Österreich*. Consistent with his own scholarly orientation, Bruckmüller devel-

oped a social history of Austrian nationhood.[15] Although he traced elements of Austrian identity through modern history and stressed the role of the individual provinces in the creation of the Austrian sense-of-self, Bruckmüller saw popular participation in public affairs as the centerpiece of consciousness formation. This Austrian national consciousness based on popular participation arose after 1945:

> In the case of Austria, its appears that the history since 1945 with the *success of reconstruction*, the achievement of the *State Treaty*, and a certain international renown of a number of Austrian top politicians . . . became the consciousness-forming phase of national participation.[16]

While clearly dominant in the Austrian debate, this national historiography has also encountered criticism. In 1978, the late doyen of West German historiography, Karl Dietrich Erdmann, sparked a lively discussion when he included twentieth-century Austrian history in a handbook of German history and insisted that it would be unproductive to exclude Austria from the German historical context. Erdmann subsequently developed his views more extensively in his essay *Die Spur Österreichs in der deutschen Geschichte,* which traced out the contours of German historical development in light of its Austrian components.[17] He was immediately challenged by Austrian historians; the debate that ensued has been termed the Austrian *Historikerstreit,* or historians' dispute, borrowing a term from the West German historical debate of the 1980s. Most prominent among Erdmann's critics was the Viennese historian Gerald Stourzh, best known for his research on the State Treaty of Vienna, who accused Erdmann of using the year 1938 as the norm for judging prior and subsequent historical developments.[18] Stourzh was supported by most of his Austrian colleagues; one of the few Austrian scholars who openly welcomed Erdmann's contributions was the respected Salzburg historian Fritz Fellner.[19] Fellner stressed that diversity, not homogeneity, had been the hallmark of German history and underscored the analytical importance of Austrian developments in the understanding of this traditional German polycephality. In Fellner's view, this wider, more nuanced, concept of German history forms an alternative to the more restricted, state-centered definitions of both Prusso-German and Austro-nationalist historiography.[20] Although one school of contemporary Austrian historians, among whose foremost representatives Gerhard Botz and Ernst Hanisch might be mentioned, has become increasingly willing to question central aspects of postwar

Austrian historiography, the type of broad approach to Austrian history favored by Fellner and a number of international scholars remains highly controversial in the Austrian debate.[21]

The Theory of Nationalism and Nationhood

The theoretical debate of nationalism and nationhood has been passionate and complex. Although analyzing these concepts has been an important scholarly enterprise since the nineteenth century, it has not led to convincing, generally applicable models. The divergent historical experiences of different populations resulted in divergent perceptions of nationhood, even if experiences as well as perceptions have become increasingly similar over time. Originally, concepts of nationhood tended to differ along political and geographical lines, but the analytical threads can be pulled together more easily now. The growing importance of non-Western experiences has blurred the once prevalent juxtaposition of Western and Eastern European models and can serve as a starting point for more universal viewpoints.

In the countries of Central Europe, including Austria, the conceptual dichotomy of *Staatsnation* and *Kulturnation,* introduced into the debate by Friedrich Meinecke, continues to dominate the scholarly discussion—notwithstanding its theoretical expansion and critical revision.[22] The *Staatsnation*, which signifies the political or civic nation, is constructed around the citizenry of a politically organized territory, in other words, a state, regardless of the ethnic and cultural composition of this citizenry and of possible ethnocultural continuities beyond the existing political borders. It is sometimes defined as a constitutional nation when it demarcates the nation by the reach of a liberal constitution; this reach will normally correspond to the political frontiers of a state. Its dependence on a specific constitutional content gives this conceptual variation a normative rather than empirical character, since even internal revisions of the political structure would terminate the existing constitutional nation. The concept resembles the comparably ideology-based, if politically diametrically opposed, class nation, which periodically provided the theoretical foundation of the German Democratic Republic and was envisioned to create a structure of coherence for *Soviet Man*. National community was tied to the (premised) identity of class interest, which would create a common consciousness. Both the constitutional nation and the class nation can be viewed as ideologically superstructured political nations.

By contrast, the typology of the *Kulturnation*, the cultural or ethnic nation, has personal rather than institutional foundations. According to this conception, the nation is a community of people who share cultural attributes, the most prominent of which is a common language. These cultural and linguistic criteria can be supplemented with images of a common ancestry or of shared historic experiences.[23] The ethnocultural concept of nationhood stresses noninstitutional criteria—political frontiers do not universally create or disjoin nations.

The voluntaristic conception of nationhood, which is expressed most aptly in Ernest Renan's classic dictum that the nation is a daily plebiscite, adds a further facet to this theoretical prism.[24] It tends to be seen as a subcategory of the *Staatsnation*, because the nation-creating will of this concept has commonly been tied to the population of a preexisting territorial unit. Its basic premise, however, is compatible with other theoretical models as well. An abstract understanding of the voluntaristic nation would even provide for individuals spread across the globe to merge into a nation through a common will; such broader approaches have not been given serious consideration, though.

In the contemporary international debate, the juxtaposition of civic/political, voluntaristic, and cultural conceptions of nationhood is echoed in the juxtaposition of subjectivist and objectivist interpretations, which underlies the most essential differences between the instrumentalist and the ethnocultural schools of nationalism. Due to the central role of these two scholarly traditions in the current academic debate, the relationship between them is of fundamental importance. During recent decades, the theoretical discussion of nationalism was dominated by the instrumentalist or modernist school; ethnocultural concepts provided the most persistent scholarly challenge.

The proponents of instrumentalism merged an essentially Marxian focus on socioeconomic interests with a more subjective intellectual tradition that criticized the nationalist paradigm from a standpoint of conservative universalism. This cross-pollenization of Marxist and non-Marxist scholarship on nationalism had been a recurrent feature of modern nation theory. The classical contributions of Marxist scholarship to the theory of nationalism, such as Otto Bauer's psychologically and historically oriented definition of a nation as an "aggregate of people bound into a community of character by a common destiny" and Joseph Stalin's criterion-based approach that defines a nation as a "historically evolved, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological

make-up manifested in a common culture" were to a larger degree informed by than opposed to non-Marxist theory of the time.[25] This interrelationship with non-Marxist scholarship became even more pronounced with the postwar academic ascent of the social sciences, which stimulated fresh interpretations of nationalism. The most important new concept in the explanation of nationalism in the early postwar era was modernization, which produced numerous models and began to dominate the theoretical debate.[26]

Modernization theorists reject descriptive explanations of nationhood and nationalism, which assign nation status to political entities that fulfill specific objective criteria. They see the idiosyncrasies of nation-building, which render any universal criterion-based definition difficult, as incompatible with a theoretical focus on such objective requirements. Nations arise out of fundamental changes that transform traditional into modern societies. Based upon this common assumption, various models of nation-building emerged.

One of the most influential interpretations derived from Karl Deutsch's study *Nationalism and Social Communication*, which first appeared in 1953.[27] Deutsch ascribes the development of national identity to the social mobilization that followed increasing urbanization, industrialization, education, and political participation and focuses especially on the communicational integration initiated by the emergence and spread of mass media. Another important submodel of modernization applies the popular social-science dichotomy of center versus periphery to the nation-building process. Territorial or social centers expand their influence to the periphery, which becomes integrated into a national structure through assimilation and coalition building. Finally, functionalist submodels stress the role of national identity in fulfilling the need for cohesion arising from the collapse of traditional communities under the impact of social change; nationalism develops in periods of social crisis at the onset of modernity.

The neo-Marxist theories of nationalism that developed in the 1960s built on modernization theory rather than replacing it. The academic success of neo-Marxist scholarship increased the significance of Marxian concepts for the discussion of nationalism outside the countries of the communist world. Apart from contributing to the ideology of national liberation that dominated the period of decolonialization, Marxian scholars focused primarily on the role of class interest in the development of nationalist thought. Like modernization theorists, Marxist scholars were not satisfied with interpretative approaches that

relied on premised cultural idiosyncrasies; for them, socioeconomic conditions and interests determined the specific development of nationalism.

Nation theory took a new turn when a group of scholars from a broadly defined Marxist or post-Marxist tradition opened themselves to a more subjectivist strand of interpretation and laid the groundwork for the instrumentalist interpretation of nationhood.[28] The roots of this intellectual influence can be traced back to the nineteenth century, when supporters of the established dynastic order expressed opposition to the emerging focus on individual and national self-determination. Refining this interpretation with his acclaimed 1960 study *Nationalism*, Elie Kedourie gained preeminence among conservative critics of nationalist ideas. Kedourie describes nations as constructs of alienated intellectuals, and nationalism as a doctrine invented in early nineteenth-century Europe.[29] Although this paradigm is hostile to nationalism, *inter alia*, because it classifies this worldview as an outgrowth of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, it also appealed to less conservative scholars who looked for a broader theoretical approach and wanted to add cultural and intellectual components to their economic analysis. Focusing on the mythical superstructure that frequently surrounds the national self-image, these authors developed and refined modernist theories of nationalism: they argued that nations are social constructs rooted in the self-interest of nationalist elites.

One of the pioneers of the new concept was Ernest Gellner, who explained the emergence of nationalism with the need for homogeneity arising in modern industrial societies.[30] Whereas different social groups in feudal agrarian societies were separated by too deep a gulf to permit the development of national community, the industrial state required interchangeable, culturally standardized populations that could be transferred according to economic needs. Nations are not inherent or natural institutions, and they did not engender the age of nationalism; instead, it was nationalism that gave rise to nations. In these new nations, unified high cultures take the place formerly held by established local cultures. Although nationalism relies on the symbolism of traditional community, it ultimately erodes this community by building up an industrial mass society.

Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* expands further the concept of constructed identity.[31] Anderson defines the nation as a cultural artifact, as an *imagined community*, as his now famous expression goes. The author emphasizes the distinction between invented and fabricated,

however; he ascribes very real and deeply felt reality to the nation and reminds the reader of the sacrifices it has been able to inspire.

Anderson aligns nationalism not with ideologies such as liberalism or socialism, but with cultural systems. Nationalism grew out of the demise of two cultural systems that preceded it—the religious community and the dynastic realm. National identity provides a form of continuity lost through the disappearance of religious certainties. When people lost their belief in holy script languages such as Latin, in divine rulers, and in cosmic concepts of history, the void was filled by national ideas.

Why was it the nation that took the place of earlier cultural systems? Anderson upholds the received view that the convergence of capitalism and print technology created the possibility of a new community based on language. He does not consider this point a sufficient explanation, however, because the nation-states of Spanish America and the "Anglo-Saxon family" were not established along linguistic lines. As a consequence, Anderson attributes primary importance for the rise of nationalism in the New World to the local-born European—also called Creole—elites that dominated the midlevels of colonial bureaucracy. Their realm of experience—the administrative colonial subdivision—became the new nation-state. Because of the relative underdevelopment of Spanish America, no encompassing Spanish-American nationalism was viable. In Europe, nationalism was carried by the bourgeoisie, which, contrary to the cosmopolitan nobility, based its professional and social coherence on linguistic communality. Both Creole functionaries and the European educated classes created nations along the lines of their professional universe.

Anderson asserts that this populist nationalism, which endangered the status of prenational elites, could be countered by an "official nationalism" devised by social groups in power. The latter form of nationalism tended to conceal a discrepancy between the nation and the existing territorial configuration and tried to assimilate minority populations into the dominant national group.

New postcolonial nations could also resort to this "official nationalism." They inherited the artificial boundaries of colonial conquest, which rarely coincided with ethnic and linguistic borders, and embarked on the creation of a common national identity within these territories. Anderson delineates how westernized intelligentsias that received their education in European-led schools developed nationalist dreams informed by Western models. They saw the maps of European colonialism as their own guide-

posts and shared the Creole experience of professional development along colonial administrative lines. Therefore, languages did not represent a cultural heritage or symbol, but a practical means to generate imagined communities. In these new nations, colonial or newly created languages could serve as national languages.

This instrumentalist theory of nationalism, which bases nationhood on constructed traditions that serve the particular interests of the elites who generate them, found its most comprehensive expression in the work of Eric Hobsbawm. In his contributions to *The Invention of Tradition,* which he coedited with Terence Ranger, and in his study *Nations and Nationalism since 1780,* Hobsbawm documents the adaptations and innovations that surround national symbols such as folk dances, national dress, and ethnic festivals.[32] Hobsbawm deconstructs such tradition-carrying symbols by pointing to their conscious creation or transformation and applies the implicit lesson to the concept of the nation in general. Much of the subjective content of national identity is the outcome of careful social engineering. The underlying motivation for this invention of tradition lies in the political and economic interests of ruling elites. Thus, Hobsbawm combines modernist cultural theory with a more typically Marxist concept in which the class interests of the elites are the determinants of nationalist agitation.

In spite of his pronounced skepticism about the claims and motives of nation-builders, Hobsbawm acknowledges a populist element in the development of national consciousness. Before the beginning of true nations, which the author assigns to the time period following the French Revolution, "popular proto-nationalism" formed a net of cohesion that could serve as a building block in the subsequent development of nationalism proper. And even this nationalism, in spite of its constructed nature, cannot be understood without considering the hopes and desires of ordinary people in the emerging nation.

Much of modernist or instrumentalist theory relativized the power of nationalism and predicted its increasing supersession by alternative loyalties. When Walker Connor presented a collection of his articles on nationalism titled *Ethnonationalism* in 1994, the resurgence of nationalist sentiments that had characterized the preceding years had put much of current scholarship into question.[33] Connor's essays, in contrast, although first published between the 1960s and the early 1990s, seemed to have stood the test of time.

Connor argues that the terminological chaos that surrounds the

concepts of nationhood and nationalism has precluded a realistic assessment of their relevance and their political potential. Although scholarship has largely accepted the premise that the nation is not in and of itself identical to the sovereign state, the widespread identification of these key terms in popular and political usage—such as in the case of the *United Nations*—resulted in a fundamental lack of clarity even in academic writing. Too often, the development of a centralized state was termed nation-building, and nationalism was defined as loyalty to the state. Thus, the phenomenon that Connor sees as true nationalism—which frequently developed in outright opposition to the existing state—had to be described in different terms. Such substitute terms—among others, Connor lists tribalism, primordialism, and regionalism—evoke images of peripheralness and antiquatedness vis-à-vis the implied primary allegiance of state nationalism. As a consequence, most theorists of nationalism were unprepared for the strength of ethnonational consciousness when it openly expressed itself in such places as Eastern Europe.

Connor's oeuvre forms part of a less visible but persistent scholarly opposition to concepts of nationalism that neglect the role of ethnicity. Anthony D. Smith is the preeminent representative of a school that stresses the necessity of ethnic roots for the subsequent development of national identity.[34] Not only were most nations built upon preexisting ethnic foundations, but the absence of such foundations would constitute a serious impediment to the intended creation of a nation. While acknowledging the modernity of the nation-state and nationalism in their contemporary meanings, Smith underscores the continuity of cultural communitarianism.[35] In this focus, he echoes John Armstrong's allusion to the existence of "nations before nationalism," which tries to disengage the concepts of modern nationalism and culture-based group cohesion.[36]

In the sophisticated form represented by Smith and his closest associates, ethnist theory does not ignore the differences between traditional ethnies and modern nations. John Hutchinson sees modern cultural nationalists as moral innovators who stake out a medium path between universalist modernizers and isolationist conservatives by embracing development but insisting on following an autonomous path.[37] And Smith himself acknowledges the pivotal role of ethnic intellectuals, who turn a largely unreflected cultural affiliation into a conscious political reality.[38] In pursuing this objective, these ethnic intellectuals might indeed instrumentalize traditional symbols to gain

legitimacy for their reformist agenda. Smith insists, however, that this selective reading of an ethnic past could only function within the limits set by living traditions.[39]

In this study, the experiences of nation-building in postwar Austria establish the value and the limitations of the dominant paradigms of nationalism and national identity. As it occurred in a twentieth-century Western society, Austrian nation formation recast classic *topoi* of this process in a new societal setting. This altered environment both confirms and questions central tenets of established interpretation.

If one carefully analyzes the various concepts of nationhood, their demarcations frequently prove to be fluid, and their rigid juxtaposition becomes less persuasive. Most nations display characteristics found in a variety of theoretical models, and conceptual variances among national self-images tend to be based on the particular historical circumstances more than on irreconcilable ideological differences.

French nationalism, which is generally seen as the archetype of a state-centered conception, was not content with mere political loyalty; on the contrary, ethnic minorities enjoyed fewer cultural rights in France than in most other European countries. For the Corsicans and Bretons, French political nationalism entailed an adaptation to French language and customs that left little room for autochthonous cultural traditions.[40] At the same time, the process that Renan had defined as a daily plebiscite was not simply left to popular initiative, but relied on a thorough policy of national mobilization, as Eugen Weber demonstrated in his magisterial *Peasants into Frenchmen*.[41]

Civic participation, in turn, does not inherently conflict with cultural definitions of nationhood. Civic life frequently functions more smoothly in culturally homogenous societies, and it was hardly coincidental that the egalitarian social policies of the welfare state found their earliest and most comprehensive expressions in the countries of the Scandinavian north, in which a high degree of cultural coherence strengthened the sense of responsibility toward society's less fortunate.[42]

The multifaceted character of national identity is reinforced by the experience of non-Western societies. For a long time, the major works on nation theory focused on Western conditions and paid less attention to national developments outside the European-dominated parts of the globe.[43] But non-Western developments can contribute to a more differ-

entiated understanding of nationhood. The contrasts between Chinese and Indian developments provide particularly valuable lessons for the European discussion.

East Asian countries with their long tradition of independent statehood and limited exposure to colonial domination developed a sense of national identity that echoes European experiences. Not that the development of societal bonds necessarily followed identical paths—such a claim would be unsubstantiated in a European and all the more so in a multicontinental comparison. But in China—and in Japan—one can observe the gradual development of collective identity based on cultural and territorial elements that also characterizes many European nations.[44]

Chinese identity is defined by a history of political and cultural continuity. Its essence has been associated with three fundamental elements: ancestry and kinship, the authority of the state, and cultural community. The long tradition of centralized power that underlies the concept of state authority is combined with expected conformity to the cultural and ritualistic norms that mark Chinese life. These political and cultural elements are supplemented with an imagery of ancestral community, which functions as an important marker of identity.[45]

The strong emphasis on kinship in Chinese thinking is reflected in the traditional significance of clan affiliation in Chinese society. Early Chinese nationalists, who accused their compatriots of ignoring the interests of the overall nation in favor of those of their clan, formulated their theory of nationalism as an extension of clan solidarity. Sun Yat-sen, the leader of the revolution of 1911 that ended imperial rule in China, expressed such a hope in his much-debated three principles of the people *San Min Chu I:*

> If this worthy clan sentiment could be expanded, we might develop nationalism out of clanism. If we are to recover our lost nationalism, we must have some kind of group unity, large group unity. An easy and successful way to bring about the unity of a large group is to build upon the foundation of small united groups, and the small units we can build upon in China are the clan groups and also the family groups.[46]

Sun Yat-sen saw Chinese identity as a structure of concentric circles in which family loyalty, clan loyalty, and national loyalty are built upon each other. Although Sun distinguished this communal approach to national identity from the individualist Western model, many European nationalists would have sympathized with his conception.

Another important aspect of Chinese identity is the unity of culture or civilization that has bound together Chinese people regardless of current political conditions. The long tradition of the Chinese script language as well as the philosophy and ritual of Confucianism have made these elements powerful symbols of identity. This cultural foundation was so significant that it was seen as underlying China's political structure as well; John Fairbank stated that "China's external order was so closely related to her internal order that one could not long survive without the other."[47] Thus, all three elements of Chinese identity—kinship, culture, and state tradition—were intertwined into a sense of community that predates the advent of modern society in China. A specifically modern and political form of nationalism represents a recent phenomenon, but important aspects of Chinese identity had formed at an earlier historical stage.[48]

Whereas the (Han) Chinese conditions underscore the long-term development of cultural communitarianism and the ultimate merger of political and ethnocultural allegiances, the Indian experience has been complicated by competing concepts of allegiance. The Indian political scientist Partha Chatterjee has provided important insights into the national *problematique* in his home country by investigating the language and philosophy of Indian nationalism.[49] Chatterjee criticizes nationalist discourse in India, which he uses to exemplify Third World anticolonial nationalism, for remaining bound to the power structure it claims to have overthrown. It wanted to negate the conceptuality of colonialism and affirm autochthonous national power. As a language of power, however, it remained dominated by its colonial counterpart.[50]

Chatterjee argues that India's ruling classes have turned nationalism into a state ideology to legitimize their own rule. The life of the whole nation has not actually been subsumed in the life of the new state. As a consequence, this nationalism remains vulnerable to populist, traditionalist rebellions, which can be based on ethnicity or on antimodern, anti-Western cultural and religious fundamentalism. Much that has been suppressed in the creation of postcolonial nation-states resurfaces in an undirected popular resistance to the existing power structure.

Chatterjee fundamentally describes the adoption of the phenomenon Anderson termed "official nationalism" in postcolonial polities whose ethnic composition does not favor the nation-state. Thus, he illuminates that the opposition between ideological and cultural forms of nationalism does not merely constitute an analytical dichotomy but also a distinctly political juxtaposition of competing loyalties. Whereas

the East Asian environment tended to be characterized by mutually reinforcing sets of allegiances, the Indian conditions showed marks of confrontation.

Conscious policies of nation-building and long-term cultural processes form a theoretical dichotomy that can be reflected in political reality, Western and non-Western alike. These factors can reinforce each other or compete with each other. The focus on ethnocultural continuities dating back for centuries that overlooks the fundamental change in societal interconnectedness that began in late eighteenth-century Europe cannot provide a full picture; neither can the exclusive reference to the recentness and inventedness of national concepts and symbols that ignores cultural continuities that do exist.

In this study, a practically applicable definition of nationhood will be approximated in the following manner: *A nation is a large-scale human association, aiming at a basic degree of continuity, within which a primary sentiment of affinity, based upon objective criteria that cross ideological, social, and economic boundaries, has developed*. Through the requirement of size, this definition distinguishes nations from families and clans, for which, in addition, the objective commonalities are exclusively descent oriented. The interpolation "that cross ideological, social, and economic boundaries" draws a distinction, on the one hand, vis-à-vis political movements, which in special cases can also be large-scale human associations with the intent of continuity, and, on the other, vis-à-vis socioeconomic categories such as class. The crossing of ideological and socioeconomic boundaries is not an abstract but a pragmatic precondition; it is only required if, as has been the norm, there exist subgroups divided by such boundaries within the respective population.[51]

Due to the constant changes in human social structure, there will be no final answers in questions of national identity. The introduction of fundamental theoretical parameters provides a useful basis for examining the specific Austrian case, however, and makes it possible to apply its lessons to the theoretical debate. By demonstrating that conscious nation-building can occur in a modern Western society, Austria's postwar development reinforces constructionist perceptions. The Austrian experience seems to substantiate the basic tenet of instrumentalism, which ascribes the forming of national identities to the conscious efforts of nationalist elites. By taking this conception to its logical conclusion, however, the lessons of Austrian nation-building move beyond it and question the understanding of identity it contains. At the same time, the Austrian experience confirms the importance of cultural

attributes for a population's sense-of-self—and limits it by demonstrating the possibility of differing forms of consciousness within otherwise identical populations. Thus, Austria's national development ultimately transcends received interpretations of nationhood and moves the discussion of nation theory to a new level.

The Structure of the Study

This first chapter has familiarized the reader with the purpose of the study and its theoretical and historiographical context. It surveys earlier analyses of nation-building in Austria and engages the literature on nationalism and national identity with the goal of integrating the Austrian experience into the broader theoretical discussion. In particular, it focuses on theories of nation formation that interpret this process as initiated and guided by political elites. Set in a later historical period than customary Western nation-building, the Austrian experience casts new light on this important theoretical approach.

Chapter 2 discusses the prevalent view of Austrian nation formation, which sees this process as a direct outgrowth of postwar political stability and economic prosperity. The chapter explores the value and the limits of this explanation. It examines the central features of Austrian postwar society, such as the consensus politics of the grand coalition and the social partnership, the advances in economic performance and personal income, and the stability of political and economic life. At the same time, the chapter also analyzes the intensification of economic and communicational ties between Austria and other German-speaking regions throughout the postwar era. Conflicting socioeconomic influences ultimately direct the analysis of Austrian nation-building toward more expressly political and intellectual factors.

Chapters 3 and 4 examine the two foremost pillars of these political and intellectual developments. Chapter 3 explores the role of historical images in the formation of national identity. It debates central aspects of postwar Austrian historiography, especially its interpretation of the country's national development, but also puts the specifically Austrian findings into the larger metahistorical framework of history's place in science and society.

Chapter 4 investigates instruments of public policy that influenced the discourse on nationality questions. The distinctly Austrian national consciousness that gained support in the postwar era had to compete with the traditional German sense-of-self that persisted among seg-

ments of the population. In this intellectual environment, Austrian nation-building profited from the influential status of public institutions in contemporary Austrian society. The role of these institutions in the crystallization of popular opinion provides important information about the formative elements of national identity.

In chapter 5, the focus shifts from the elite level to the popular level. The chapter analyzes quantifiable indicators of Austrian public identity, especially opinion polls. It debates the value of surveys in understanding public opinion and focuses particularly on theories that illuminate social adaptation in modern mass societies. Informed by these theories, the chapter charts both support of and resistance to different concepts of nationhood in twentieth-century Austria.

The final chapter assesses the current status of Austrian nation formation and its implications for the general understanding of nation-building and national identity. It examines the impact of political elites and public institutions on popular identity and explores both the potential and the limitations of conscious policies of nation-building. In the course of this examination, contemporary Austria proves just as valuable in the conceptualization of nationhood as its Habsburg predecessor, which inspired many early researchers in the field. Whereas Habsburg Austria became paradigmatic for its interethnic nationality conflict, the postwar republic witnessed intraethnic divisions along the lines of national consciousness. As a consequence, the analysis of national consciousness assumes a central role in this study of Austrian nation-building.

Notes

1. Notable examples would be Otto Bauer's *Die Nationalitätenfrage und die Sozialdemokratie* (Vienna, 1907) and Karl Renner's *Das Selbstbestimmungsrecht der Nationen* (Vienna, 1918). But a number of theorists of nationalism who do not focus primarily on Austria are also deeply influenced by this country's experience; one might mention Hans Kohn and Eric Hobsbawm in that context.

2. This interpretation of nationalism is also known as the modernist school.

3. The major studies by Ernest Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm, and Benedict Anderson are analyzed later in this chapter.

4. In recent years, several North American scholars have described the intensification of German national consciousness in late nineteenth-century Austria. Among these contributions one might mention Gary Cohen, *The Politics of Ethnic Survival: Germans in Prague, 1861–1914* (Princeton, 1981); Jill Mayer, *The Evolution of German-National Discourse in the Press of Fin-de-*

Siècle Austria, Working Papers in Austrian Studies 94-4 (Minneapolis, 1994); and Pieter Judson, "'Not Another Square Foot!' German Liberalism and the Rhetoric of National Ownership in Nineteenth-Century Austria," *Austrian History Yearbook* 26 (1995): 83–97.

5. See Hanns Haas, "Zur österreichischen Nation—Eine Spätlese," *Zeitgeschichte* 18 (1990/91): 305.

6. See the discussion of this historiography in chapter 3. The terms "Germanist" and "Austrianist" are used in this study for the two competing identity conceptions in Austria. The Germanist conception views Austrian identity as part of a larger German identity, however defined, whereas its Austrianist counterpart rejects the affiliation of Austrian with any form of German identity.

In Austria, this distinction is reflected in terms such as *österreichnational* and *deutschnational*, *österreichbewußt* and *deutschbewußt*, as well as *nationalösterreichisch* and *nationaldeutsch*. Among these, the term *deutschnational* is somewhat ambiguous, because it also refers to a specific political movement. This ambiguity is removed in Austrianist discourse, however, in which the term *deutschnational* tends to be applied to all forms of German orientation in Austria and thus corresponds directly to Germanist.

7. In the 1950s, one of the more engaged discussions of this topic occurred in the December 1955 issue of the Austrian journal *Forum*; in the 1960s, *Die Österreichische Nation: Zwischen zwei Nationalismen* represented a collective effort of dedicated Austrianists. [Albert Massiczek, ed., *Die Österreichische Nation: Zwischen zwei Nationalismen* (Vienna, 1967).]

8. This historiographical introduction focuses on major monographs written by postwar historians. There are numerous shorter contributions to the discussion, as well as a number of interesting book-length treatises by political scientists. The most significant ones, Peter Katzenstein's *Disjoined Partners: Austria and Germany since 1815* (Berkeley, Calif., 1976), and William Bluhm's *Building an Austrian Nation: The Political Integration of a Western State* (New Haven, Conn., 1973), are discussed in chapter 2. The various contributions by the Austrian political scientist Albert Reiterer, particularly his essay "Die konservative Chance: Österreichbewußtsein im bürgerlichen Lager nach 1945," *Zeitgeschichte* 14 (1986/87): 379–397 and the edited volume *Nation und Nationalbewußtsein in Österreich* (Vienna, 1988), are indispensable reading as well. Interesting data can also be found in the recently published study *Identität und Nationalstolz der Österreicher*, ed. Max Haller (Vienna, 1996). For an introduction to pre–World War II writings, see the pertinent section of chapter 3.

9. Felix Kreissler, *La prise de conscience de la nation autrichienne, 1938–1945–1978,* 2 vols. (Paris, 1980). Published in German in as *Der Österreicher und seine Nation: Ein Lernprozeß mit Hindernissen* (Vienna, 1984).

10. Karl Stadler, *Österreich 1938–1945* (Vienna, 1966).

11. Friedrich Heer, *Der Kampf um die österreichische Identität* (Vienna, 1981).

12. Heinrich Friedjung, *Der Kampf um die Vorherrschaft in Deutschland 1859–1866,* 2 vols. (Stuttgart, 1897–98). An abbreviated English translation of Friedjung's work appeared in London in 1935 under the title *The Struggle for*

Supremacy in Germany 1859–1866.

13. Georg Wagner, *Österreich Zweite Republik*, 2 vols. (Thaur/Tirol, Austria, 1983–87).

14. Ibid., 1:540.

15. Ernst Bruckmüller, *Nation Österreich* (Vienna, 1984). After the substantive completion of this study, Bruckmüller's work appeared in a second, enlarged version.

16. Ibid., 221. Italics in the original. The translations of this and subsequent non-English sources are my own. Bruckmüller's book was the last major contribution to the Austrian nation-building debate before the Waldheim presidency, and the international controversy engendered by this presidency gave the international renown of Austrian politicians a somewhat different connotation. (*Nation Österreich* was published in 1984.) Next to these large-scale monographs that examine Austrian identity in a broad fashion, there are, of course, more specialized studies that examine or illuminate certain aspects of this identity (and its relationship to other ones), such as Norbert Schausberger's *Der Griff nach Österreich: Der Anschluß* (Vienna, 1978). See also note 8 above.

17. Karl Dietrich Erdmann, *Die Spur Österreichs in der deutschen Geschichte: Drei Staaten, zwei Nationen, ein Volk?* (Zurich, 1989).

18. Gerald Stourzh, *Vom Reich zur Republik* (Vienna, 1990), 54.

19. Fritz Fellner, "The Problem of the Austrian Nation after 1945," *The Journal of Modern History* 60 (June 1988): 264–289.

20. Erdmann's and Fellner's findings were subsequently taken up by the American historian Harry Ritter. [Harry Ritter, "Austria and the Struggle for German Identity," published in the *Working Papers in Austrian Studies* series as issue 92-8 (Minneapolis, 1992) and in a special issue of the *German Studies Review* (Winter 1992).] In particular, Ritter saw their constructive value in their encouragement of systematic comparative studies of Central European history, in their challenge to a narrowly *kleindeutsch* interpretation of German history, and in their contribution to a self-critical and truthful assessment of Austrian history and identity. David Luft, from his standpoint as a cultural and intellectual historian, defined Austria as "a region of German culture," as expressed in the title of his 1992 article in the *Austrian History Yearbook*, and placed Austria firmly inside a polycentric German cultural realm. [David Luft, "Austria as a Region of German Culture: 1900–1938," *Austrian History Yearbook* 23 (1992): 135–148.]

In his recent dissertation, Matthew Berg, while focusing on Social Democratic postwar identity in Austria, also examined the development of national identity in Austria and saw the foremost relevance of his research topic in the fact that "Austria's various historical connections to and its present strong economic and cordial political relationship with a Germany that is at times abstraction, at other times concrete entity, has been sometimes problematic, often profitable, occasionally ambiguous, but never insignificant." [Matthew Berg, "Political Culture and State Identity: The Reconstruction of Austrian Social Democracy, 1945–1958," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1993), 418.]

21. Botz addressed the issue head on in his important essay "Eine deut-

sche Geschichte 1938 bis 1945? Österreichische Geschichte zwischen Exil, Widerstand und Verstrickung," *Zeitgeschichte* 14:1 (1986): 19–38; Ernst Hanisch examined the topic in essays on provincial Austria during World War II and most recently again in segments of his study, *Der lange Schatten des Staates* (Vienna, 1994), a social history of twentieth-century Austria.

As an indicator of the emotional sensibilities that surround this issue, one might want to consult the reaction to Harry Ritter's article "Austria and the Struggle for German Identity" that three younger Austrian scholars published in the *German Studies Review.* [Margarete Grandner, Gernot Heiß, and Oliver Rathkolb, "Österreich und seine deutsche Identität. Bemerkungen zu Harry Ritters Aufsatz 'Austria and the Struggle for German Identity,'" *German Studies Review* 16:3 (October 1993): 515–520.]

22. Friedrich Meinecke, *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat* (Munich, 1907).

23. Otto Bauer stressed the historical experience; Walker Connor delineated the importance of ancestry myths.

24. Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation* (Paris, 1882), 27. See also Anthony D. Smith, "Nationalism and the Historian," in *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, ed. Anthony D. Smith (Leiden, Netherlands, 1992), 61.

25. Otto Bauer elaborated extensively on the nationality question in his study *Die Nationalitätenfrage und die Sozialdemokratie* (Vienna, 1907); for his definition, see Otto Bauer, "Die Nationalitätenfrage und die Sozialdemokratie," in *Werkausgabe*, ed. Arbeitsgemeinschaft für die Geschichte der österreichischen Arbeiterbewegung (Vienna, 1975), 1:194. The Stalin quote is taken from his 1913 essay "Marxism and the National Question," printed in English in Joseph Stalin, *The Essential Stalin: Major Theoretical Writings, 1905–52,* ed. by Bruce Franklin (Garden City, N.Y., 1972), 60.

26. Prior to the emergence of modernization theory, the Anglo-American discussion of nationalism had been dominated by a more traditional criterion-based approach. After earlier beginnings with scholars such as Carlton Hayes, research expanded greatly after the end of World War II. [For Hayes, see his study *The Historical Evolution of Modern Nationalism* (New York, 1931).] Hans Kohn interpreted nationalism as "a state of mind, in which the supreme loyalty of the individual is felt to be due the nation-state," which underscored the psychological factors that form a central part of national community. [Hans Kohn, *Nationalism: Its Meaning and History* (Princeton, N.J., 1955), 9.] Louis Snyder defined it as "a condition of mind, feeling, or sentiment of a group living in a well-defined geographical area, speaking a common language, possessing a literature in which the aspirations of the nation have been expressed, attached to common traditions and common customs, venerating its own heroes, and, in some cases, having a common religion." [Louis Snyder, *The Meaning of Nationalism* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1954), 196f.] Definitions of nationhood that are organized around specific objective prerequisites, such as common territory, language, historical experience, heritage etc., represented—and to a certain extent still represent—the most common approach to the theory of nationhood. These definitions can be called "criterional definitions."

27. Karl Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication* (Cambridge, Mass., 1953).

28. This does not mean that the foremost representatives of instrumentalism were necessarily practicing Marxist scholars, but rather that their work was visibly influenced by Marxian concepts and methodologies. Instrumentalists such as Gellner could indeed be quite critical of Marxism, particularly on a political plane; at one point, Gellner referred to himself as a "post-Marxist." [Ernst Gellner, "An Alternative Vision," in *Encounters with Nationalism* (Oxford, 1994), 185.]

29. Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism,* 4th ed. (London, 1993).

30. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford, 1983). Gellner refined his argument subsequent to the publication of his seminal work and allowed more room for genuine traditions that predate modern nationalism. He remained adamant about his central argument, however, which links nationhood and industrialization. See his thoughts in "From Kinship to Ethnicity," in *Encounters with Nationalism* (Oxford, 1994), 34–46, and in "Nationalism and Marxism," in ibid., 1–19.

31. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London, 1983).

32. Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* (Cambridge, England, 1990); and Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, England, 1983).

33. Walker Connor, *Ethnonationalism* (Princeton, N.J., 1994).

34. See his studies *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford, 1986) and *National Identity* (London, 1991).

35. Smith develops this approach most explicitly in his essay "The Problem of National Identity: Ancient, Medieval and Modern?" *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 17:3 (July 1994): 375–395.

36. John Armstrong formulated his views in a study with the programmatic title *Nations before Nationalism* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1982).

37. See John Hutchinson's study *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism* (London, 1977).

38. See Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (Reno, Nev., 1991), 64.

39. Anthony D. Smith, "The Origins of Nations," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 12:3 (1989): 356.

40. The belittling attitude toward the French minority languages, which have traditionally been addressed as mere *patois*, held by Renan can be seen in Eugen Weber, *Peasants in Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870–1914* (Stanford, 1976), 89.

41. Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870–1914* (Stanford, 1976).

42. Over the last decades, in turn, the increasing individualization and cultural diversification of the Scandinavian societies was echoed by intensified resistance to policies of income redistribution.

43. In recent years, however, this focus has been widened, both by Western authors such as Benedict Anderson, who included non-Western experiences in theoretical works on nationalism, and by the lucid works on non-Western nationalism by scholars from these countries, such as Partha Chatterjee.

44. The Japanese conception resembles the Chinese. Lacking the geographical isolation of their island neighbors, however, the Chinese had to develop their sense of belonging in a more sustained interrelationship with outside communities, with a non-Chinese "other." Japan's geographical isolation from neighboring states produced a unique level of homogeneity and self-sufficiency, in which a long tradition of independent statehood overlaps with ethnocultural distinctiveness. In this respect, Japan could be said to represent the archetype of Western European island identity, in which the congruence of physical separation—based on mountains or water—and cultural peculiarity creates a comparatively stable communal identity. Japanese identity displayed radical breaks of continuity in its interrelationship with the outside world, but its internal anchoring remained secure.

For a recent investigation of Japanese national identity that applies more contemporary analytical approaches than Delmer Brown's classic *Nationalism in Japan: An Introductory Historical Analysis* (New York, 1955), see Kosaku Yoshino, *Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary Japan* (London, 1992).

45. See Lynn White and Li Cheng, "China Coast Identities: Regional, National, and Global," in *China's Quest for National Identity,* ed. Lowell Dittmer and Samuel S. Kim (Ithaca, N.Y., 1993).

46. Sun Yat-sen, *San Min Chu I: The Three Principles of the People,* translated by Frank Price (Taipei, 1990), 31.

The popularity of this understanding is reflected in the interpretation of the distinguished reformist historian Liang Qichao's conception of society in a recent intellectual biography: "Liang's concept of *qun* [society] derives largely from the traditional belief in an organic community, closely modeled on the extended family, that has always been posited and incorporated into the cosmology of an essentially agrarian culture." [Xiaobing Tang, *Global Space and the Nationalist Discourse of Modernity: The Historical Thinking of Liang Qichao* (Stanford, 1996), 66.]

47. John K. Fairbank, "A Preliminary Framework," in *The Chinese World Order: Traditional China's Foreign Relations*, ed. John K. Fairbank (Cambridge, Mass., 1968), 3.

48. This did not diminish the difficulties in creating this modern nationalism. The efforts necessary to transform a civilization, a world that rested in itself, into a modern nation among nations are described in recent studies such as John Fitzgerald, *Awakening China: Politics, Culture, and Class in the Nationalist Revolution* (Stanford, 1996), and Xiaobing Tang, *Global Space and the Nationalist Discourse of Modernity: The Historical Thinking of Liang Qichao* (Stanford, 1996).

49. See Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton, N.J., 1993), and especially *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?* (London, 1986).

50. Chatterjee also argues that most liberal or Marxist interpretations of Third World nationalism—regardless of the nationality of those who advance them—have applied Western models and standards to cases outside the Western World. They did so because Western concepts of reason and science were seen

as universal. In spite of its ideological support for anticolonial movements, Marxist historiography, too, adopted sociological models that fit nationalism to global and inescapable modern constraints, or functional models that judged specific nationalisms by their presumed consequences for world history.

51. One could, in other words, add the qualifier "if present within this human community"; for all practical purposes, such an addition would be superfluous, since socioeconomic differentiation, at least, has so far been present within all nations. If a classless society were to evolve at some future moment in time, however, it could represent a nation even if the communal characteristics do not cross social and economic boundaries, provided the remaining definitional requirements are fulfilled. A nation could, furthermore, constitute itself along socioeconomic divides, as long as the common attributes did not transgress class lines.