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## Post-Cold War Nationalism in Germany and Austria: A Comparative Study

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Garett William Graubins

Honors Research Thesis  
Spring 1994

Post-Cold War Nationalism in Germany and  
Austria:  
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## CHAPTER I

### DEFINING NATIONALISM

A majority of the studies concerning the European continent have focused only upon the well-chronicled sagas left behind by specific countries. Volumes have been published on the French Revolution, German Empires, Italian Fascism, the Hapsburg Empire, and the rises and falls of each individual nation. An increasingly popular euphemism is put forth in Chaos Theory, wherein a butterfly beating its wings in Japan will alter the weather in New York City. In science as in life, it is well known that a chain of events can have a point of crisis that can magnify small changes.<sup>1</sup> From such a perspective, a study focusing upon only one specific European Nation is confined in its focus. Each event in Europe has historically set off chain-reactions, reverberating from nation to nation, effecting other courses of events. Perhaps at no time has this been more evident than in modern-day Europe, a conglomeration of different descents, languages, territories, customs, traditions, religions, and nationalisms. The optimal approach for testing hypotheses involving Europe, therefore, is a cross-sectional design in which these norms vary just as they do on the continent itself.<sup>2</sup>

In a multi-national study such as that being undertaken in this paper, a "common denominator" must be used to assure accurate and equal assessment of each subject -- a precisely-stated tool proves better than a dull

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<sup>1</sup>James Gleick, Chaos: Making A New Life Science (New York: Penguin. 1988) 23.

<sup>2</sup> Raymond M. Duch and James L. Gibson, "'Putting Up with' Fascists in Western Europe: A Comparative, Cross-Level Analysis of Political Tolerance," The Western Political Quarterly 55, March 1992: 238.

analogy.<sup>3</sup> The nationalisms currently presenting themselves in the European nations differ in numerous degrees which can only be measured with a high precision tool of inquiry. The tool of inquiry which will be applied throughout the mechanism of this paper will be a constant definition of nationalism.

A clear, widely accepted definition of nationalism has traditionally proven elusive. Nationalism has undergone changes just as nations or, more specifically, each of its components has adopted a different appearance. This does not, however, mean that no scholar has succeeded in accurately defining nationalism, but it is indicative of nationalism itself. Nationalism is contingent upon the climate during a particular period, during which several often unmeasurable factors contribute to the formation of a collective mentality. The predominant nationalism of a time and place is thus answerable to the factors which are given emphasis at that particular time. It is this relativism inherent in nationalism which helps it to elude man's attempts at defining it ; when nationalism is traced from its birth, it becomes apparent that its form is dependent upon many elements composing that specific period.

Nationalism itself is relatively young when compared to man's co-habitation on this planet. The French Revolution marks the first great presence of nationalism as a dynamic force. Before the period of the late eighteenth century, a maturation process was taking place, nurturing conditions which would make the emergence of nationalism possible. These conditions were political, economic, and intellectual and continue even

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<sup>3</sup> Ted Robert Gurr, Why Men Rebel (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 1971) 18.

today to fuel versions of nationalism.<sup>4</sup> These conditions have historically proven to be closely interconnected, reacting in both positive and negative ways with one another while effecting peoples in equally diverse ways. With the advent of nationalism, the masses were no longer in the nation-state, but of the nation-state.<sup>5</sup>

The birth of nationalism in the late eighteenth century cultivated within the masses a desire for a nation-state. The nation-state owes its existence to the birth of nationalism in the late eighteenth century and the growth of the two concepts -- nationalism and the integration of the masses into a common political form -- thus ran parallel to each other. Nationalism became a driving force in man's aspirations for a nation-state.<sup>6</sup> The form of nationalism bred by the French Revolution soon spread to all parts of the globe, becoming one of the main currents of the nineteenth century and, in the twentieth century became even a stronger force than religion as the main contributor to the fall of the Hapsburg empire.<sup>7</sup> Two World Wars, including the dramatic growth of fascism in Europe at that time, were fueled by nationalism and the subsequent Cold War likewise was born and died in part because of nationalism and insistence upon the sanctity of the nation-state and the ideologies staunchly supported by these nation-states. It cannot be denied that nationalism and the concept of the nation-state are forces which have been "more important in shaping the history of Europe and the world

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<sup>4</sup> Hans Kohn, The Idea of Nationalism (New York: MacMillan. 1960) 3.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>7</sup> Joseph Roth, Romane "Der Radetzky Marsch" (Köln : Verlag Kiepenhauer and Witsch. 1984) 499.

"Die Zeit will uns nicht mehr! Diese Zeit will sich erst selbständige Nationalstaaten schaffen! Man glaubt nie mehr an Gott. Die neue Religion ist der Nationalismus."

in the last two centuries than the ideas of freedom and parliamentary democracy or of communism."<sup>8</sup>

Each version of nationalism in the last two centuries has possessed different combinations of driving forces behind it. Historical climates and events leave their signatures on each nation-state and varying nationalisms. Lack of common specific elements, therefore, point to the possibility that nationalism does not exist as a clearly defined entity. Instead, as it plays the role of slave to history, reacting in no set way at each checkpoint, a multitude of manifestations of nationalism exist. As Peter Alter states, "it is more appropriate to speak of nationalisms in the plural than of nationalism in the singular."<sup>9</sup> Difficulty in submitting an accurate definition of nationalism, therefore rests on the fact that it is relevant to many factors which vary from nation-state to nation-state. One must avoid ambiguity while still incorporating elements which apply to each instance of nationalism. Our definition of nationalism begins with the nation-state, for it is a natural tendency of man to love his birthplace and all which it embraces -- childhood, shared language, land, climate, history, and all else that is familiar and comfortable. Historian and sociologist Eugen Lemberg describes these elements as the nuclei around which a group's awareness of its own location can crystallize, elements which "integrate the group and demarcate its environment."<sup>10</sup>

The actual, physical nation-state gives concreteness to man's attachment to the native soil, the *Heimat*, and to man's kin and kind.<sup>11</sup> It is

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<sup>8</sup> Peter Alter, Nationalismus (Frankfurt am Main : Suhrkamp Verlag. 1985) 4.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>10</sup> Eugen Lemberg, Nationalismus (Hamburg: Reinbek. 1964) 42.

<sup>11</sup> Kohn, The Idea of Nationalism, 18.

therefore fully understandable that this natural tendency of man is a prerequisite for nationalism as man will take pride in his land and be easily swayed to believe in its superiority.<sup>12</sup> The nation-state becomes a vehicle for man to translate his consciousness into deeds or organized action. According to Hans Kohn, "nationalism demands the nation-state; the creation of the nation-state strengthens nationalism. Here, as elsewhere in history, we find a continuous interdependence and interaction."<sup>13</sup> A core thus is formed for a definition of nationalism -- the love which man has for his birthplace and the nation-state as it is an active corporate will of the body which he loves.

It is no doubt easiest to gauge nationalism by how man expresses nationalist feelings through the body and mechanisms of the nation-state. Although manifestations of nationalisms are most easily observed at the nation-state level, nationalism may be found at the level of the individual. Also, nationalism need not always be dynamic as it can lie dormant as a state of mind so long as it gives 'national' messages preferred status in social communication and a greater weight in making decisions. In the opinion of Karl Deutsch, a nationalist devotes greater attention to those concepts which "carry specific symbols of nationality, or which originate from a specific national source."<sup>14</sup> Peter Alter also supports this view of nationalism as a system of prioritization in which the nation-state receives indiscriminate preference over all else. Alter, however, takes on perhaps a more extreme stance in believing nationalism motivates peoples to totally disregard other nations for the sacrosanct honor of their own nation. From this perspective, nationalism glows in a negative light, suggesting an extreme ideology

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>14</sup> Alter, Nationalismus, 23.



promoting xenophobia and racism.<sup>15</sup> Thus, it becomes readily apparent that nationalism as a mass movement with xenophobic tendencies can prove harmful to the prospects of a harmonious union of states as such a definition excludes from its purview all who do not belong to its own nation-state -- i.e. the vast majority of the human race.<sup>16</sup> Here it is important to note that the character of nationalism does not always adopt a dark cloak of xenophobia, but can be found as a state of mind receiving nourishment from hopes and desires to seek the common good for the *Heimat*.

Theodor Schieder supports the view that nationalism need not be only a mass movement but also a state of mind or ideology. In his definition, nationalism is viewed as both a political movement and an ideology which places the nations and the sovereign nation-state upon the highest pedestal as crucial indwelling values. The reaction between ideology and political movement is catalyzed by nationalism. Schieder in this way considers nationalism to be primarily a dynamic principle capable of "engendering hopes, emotions, and action while contributing to a solidarity among peoples for the purpose of achieving a common goal" for the nation-state.<sup>17</sup>

After important distinctions are drawn between nationalism as a movement of the masses and nationalism as an ideology of the individual, a skeleton of a definition of nationalism emerges. Nationalism results from joining a human tendency to love the *Heimat* with an actual physical or, as Benedict Anderson submits, "imagined", nation-state. This relationship of a matrimonial nature provides the seed for nationalism -- a state of mind which gives the utmost priority to matters and issues of the state. This

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>16</sup> E.J. Hobsbawm, Nations and Nationalism since 1780 (New York: Cambridge. 1990) 168.

<sup>17</sup> Alter, Nationalismus, 8.

relationship can adopt numerous outward appearances or it may lie dormant within the individual as a content love of the homeland. Outward manifestations can be noted in numerous ways, among them observations of political and cultural activity. Manifestations of nationalism, then, give us the most accurate measurements of nationalisms and it is from this springboard that we will be catapulted into a comparison study of two present versions of nationalisms -- that of a reunified Germany and that of Austria. Such a comparison will furnish our thus far skeletal definition of nationalism with muscle and tissue so that, at the conclusion of the study, a clearly defined body shall emerge -- a body which will dictate the course of events in Central Europe and carry the continent into the 21st century.

## CHAPTER II

### POST-REUNIFICATION GERMAN NATIONALISM

"The heavy doors click open and I look cautiously down the aisle of the courtroom. A slim man dressed in black, the defendant, is in mid-sentence: ' . . I am indeed a National Socialist, and I publicly acknowledge it. . . '"

Michael Schmidt, author of The New Reich, made the above observation not in Munich circa 1924, nor at the Nuremburg Trials following World War II, but in Frankfurt am Main in 1989.<sup>1</sup> Since that time, Germany has seen a revival of its past which she has so hard tried to bury. Following the *Wiedervereinigung* of 1989, a unified Germany has at times appeared to be merely resuming its habits which were abruptly halted at the end of the World War II by the splitting of Germany into two parts. Nazism, or neo-Nazism as the practice of xenophobic nationalism is called today, has reappeared, giving rise to concerns in Germany, Europe, and the international community. Neo-Nazism stands as a threat to any other form of German nationalism and thus deserves careful analysis if Germany is to truly escape the vice grips of her past.

Public discussion of neo-Nazism in united Germany is marked by fear of a growing, aggressive xenophobia, acceptance of violence against foreigners, and, correspondingly, a growing number of perpetrators and victims.<sup>2</sup> Further public discussion arises over possible contributors to these issues. Unemployment and unprecedented inflation, for example, have

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Schmidt, The New Reich (New York: Pantheon Books. 1993) 3.

<sup>2</sup> Klaus J. Bade, "Immigration and Social Peace in United Germany," Daedalus: Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences Winter 1994: 85.

contributed to dissatisfaction and disillusionment among the united German *Volk*. People are not preoccupied with the issues of culture over more traditional questions relating to economic growth because these issues are seen to be related, creating political tensions of a kind not previously addressed.<sup>3</sup> As a timeline of neo-Nazism since the end of the cold war escorts us through anti-foreigner violence in Hoyerswerda, Rostock, Mölln, Solingen, and other German cities recently scarred by hate, it becomes apparent that the causes of such violence must be sought and analyzed if an assessment of the strength of right-wing nationalism in Germany is to be found. Such an assessment will grant valuable insight into the direction Germany will be taking on a nationalism spectrum with xenophobia on the right and a more tolerant multi-nationalist spirit on the left.

Any society will resent an influx of strangers for which it is not prepared.<sup>4</sup> As the cold war ended and waves of foreigners sought more prosperous lives through Germany's liberal asylum laws, the two newly joined lands of Germany began to experience economic hardships. The *Wirtschaftswunder* guaranteed by Chancellor Helmut Kohl's soon yielded to the cold reality of ballooning inflation and rising unemployment. (See Figure 1) With economic problems demanding increased attention, the new Germany was not prepared for the number of asylum-seekers streaming across her borders.

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3 *Daedalus* Winter 1994: Preface.

4 Chaim Bermant, "Pride and Prejudice in Germany," *Chicago Tribune* 5 Sept. 1992, natl. ed., sec. 1: 19.

Euphoria over the economy emanated from Chancellor Kohl, who forecasted a *Wirtschaftswunder* in which economic integration of East and West Germany would flow smoothly. Increases in taxation were ruled out by Kohl as early as April 1990 as he pointed to the East German propensity to consume and the universal German characteristic to work.<sup>5</sup> Within months, however, Kohl's comments lost credibility when the President of the Bundesbank, Karl Otto Pöhl, resigned over vehement disagreement with the economic policies towards reunification.<sup>6</sup>

Unemployment in East and West Germany began to rise. Eastern German firms became casualties of the transformation into a capitalist and entrepreneurial economy while being surrounded by the chaos and disintegration of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Nowhere was this difficulty better exemplified than in Rostock, a main port of shipping traffic through the Baltic. Along with the ruin of the Soviet Empire came a fall in demand for Rostock's ships. At realistic pricing levels, Rostock's quality products were uncompetitive in the West and the old market for the ships, the Soviet Union, could no longer afford the prices. Businesses folded and people lost jobs. No other work was available in Rostock and unemployment rose by leaps and bounds, extending to well over 60%.<sup>7</sup> Such a situation echoed throughout eastern Germany as decrease in demand and rising prices translated to high unemployment rates. West Germany even began to see a rise in unemployment beginning in 1991. It soon became apparent that Kohl's *Wirtschaftswunder* was only a mirage.

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>6</sup> "Pöhl Grund für D-Mark," *Süddeutsche Zeitung* 10 Dec. 1993. (Obtained through LEXUS/NEXUS)

<sup>7</sup> Bermant, "Pride and Prejudice in Germany".

The unprecedented rises in unemployment contributed to increased appeal of the neo-Nazis. With jobless totals of 2.26 million in West Germany and 1.2 in East Germany, with 400,000 people on part-time employment creation programs in the West and 1.7 million in the East, the Right found itself in a promising environment. "Thus, in the first year of reunification the seed was sown and xenophobia stood poised to reap the harvest."<sup>8</sup>

In Why Men Rebel by Ted Robert Gurr, an abstract model for perceived justification for violence is submitted. Though it was proposed in 1960, the model still holds true today. Gurr cites justifications for violence as being effective "to the extent that they make sense to disoriented people in terms of their specific deprivations and their past experiences." In order to appeal to groups who experience deprivation, specific ideas are required in identifying the sources of deprivation and prescribing remedial action.<sup>9</sup> Such social movements succeed in uniting members to the extent that the movements' appeals suggest solutions which are appropriate to the particular situations of their audience.<sup>10</sup> In Germany, the groups experiencing deprivation grew in number as the unemployment rate climbed. A frustrated and discontented public, according to Gurr's theory, would seek specific ideas in identifying the sources of deprivation and prescribing remedial action. If such a specific idea surfaced, and was perceived as plausible, the German peoples deprived of jobs and subsequent livelihood would be moved to unite.

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid. 8.

<sup>9</sup> Ted Robert Gurr, Why Men Rebel (Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1970) 202.

<sup>10</sup> Hans Toch, The Social Psychology of Social Movements (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merill, 1965) 13-19.

An idea specifying the sources of deprivation among unemployed and discontented people surfaced. The idea which made the greatest sense to the discontented people in Germany was that the massive influx of foreigners was the direct cause for the failure of the *Wirtschaftswunder*. With the economy in trouble and no clear end in sight, widespread disenchantment with politics found one of its major outlets in populist and extremist reaction against uncontrolled immigration.<sup>11</sup> Prior to the close of 1992, when the coalition parties of the Christian Democratic Union, Christian Social Union, and Free Democratic Party, as well as the major opposition party, the Social Democrat Party, reached an agreement on legislation regulating political asylum, emigration, and naturalization of foreigners in Germany, the refugee law in Germany was perhaps the most liberal in the world.<sup>12</sup> In Figure 3, the massive increase in number of asylum seekers, or *Asylbewerber*, in Germany between 1987 and 1992 is shown. Under Article 16 of the German Federal Constitution, called Basic Law or *Grundgesetz*, all persons who claimed to be politically persecuted were entitled to seek asylum in Germany and remain until the case was settled -- a period generally lasting two to three years. This *Grundgesetz* represented part of Germany's atonement for racial persecution in the Third Reich. During this period, the *Asylbewerber* were granted housing, food, schooling, medical care, and a monthly check. Such policy bred resentment among taxpaying Germans and even more so among the growing number of unemployed.<sup>13</sup>

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11 "Germany: The Pressured Power," *Foreign Policy* Summer 1993: 44.

12 Stephen Chapman, "A normal nation dogged by an abnormal history," *Chicago Tribune* 4 Oct. 1992, natl. ed., sec 1: 3.

13 *Ibid.*, 3.

During the 1980s the number of *Asylbewerber* in Germany fueled the appeal of the extremist Right as such right-wing political parties as the *Nationale Partei Deutschlands* increased in popularity. However, the economy at that time was stable enough to the point where the *Asylbewerber* were tolerated and the number of discontented Germans was relatively low.<sup>14</sup> It was not until the reunification of Germany and the subsequent rise in unemployment and inflation that the number of discontented voices became significant enough to be heard. Enter the neo-Nazis and the xenophobic Right, dark shadows of Germany's past.

"What do they want here ? You know how they are. We should stuff them in a package and send them back. They live better than us. We pay for them and then they take our jobs away."<sup>15</sup>

The quote comes from a neo-Nazi and reflects the perceived link between the number of *Asylbewerber* in Germany and the frustration over rising unemployment. In comparing Figures 1,2, and 3, a correlation seemingly appears between the rise in the number of violent criminal acts committed by right-wing extremists and the number of *Asylbewerber*. Unemployment simultaneously displayed an upward trend, although it lags a full year behind the clear rises in right-wing violence and *Asylbewerber*. It therefore appears that, as public discontent grew, so too did the intensity of xenophobic activity. If dissidents -- in this case, the unsatisfied Germans or right-wing extremists -- don't feel their voices are being heard, they are likely to use terrorist tactics to publicize their existence and objectives, widen

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14 *Dangers from the Right* ?, 9.

15 "Lieber sterben als nach Sachsen," *Der Spiegel* 30 Sept. 1991: 31.

"Wat wollen die hier? Die kannste so, wie sie sind, in ein Paket schnüren und wieder wegschicken. Die wohnen besser als wir. Wir bezahlen für die, und dann schnappen sie uns Deutschen noch die Jobs weg."



popular support by providing symbolic models for aggression, and by demonstrating the regime's incapacity to provide protection, hoping ultimately to overthrow it.<sup>16</sup> Such has been the case with the right-wing in Germany. As the government displayed little commitment to addressing the asylum problems, the right-wing provided symbolic models for aggression through increased violence by neo-Nazis and skinheads and right-wing political parties sought more support for reforming the government.

It was in Hoyerswerda, a German town less than 50 miles from the Polish border, in the autumn of 1991 that German xenophobia first burst in the consciousness of a wider Federal Republic.<sup>17</sup> Prior to that date, there was little mention of xenophobia in German newspapers discussing the major problems facing a unified Germany. 230 *Asylbewerber* were housed in Hoyerswerda when neo-Nazi groups appeared :

"... shouting their hatred and their demand that Germany be made "alien free," they attacked the hostel in which the foreigners were housed. Their violence was premeditated, thorough, and sustained."<sup>18</sup>

Rocks and Molotov cocktails were hurled through the windows as hundreds of citizens stood idle in the streets without protesting. On-lookers even cheered as the police appeared not to stop the violent neo-Nazis, but to ferry away the asylum seekers. A shocked Germany asked herself why nothing was done to directly confront the xenophobic neo-Nazis. The neo-Nazis appeared to display more political self-confidence than ever before.<sup>19</sup>

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16 Gurr, *Why Men Rebel*, 212.

17 *Dangers from the Right?*, 12.

18 *Ibid.*, 12.

19 *Ibid.*, 12.

The events in Hoyerswerda were not isolated. Neo-Nazi attacks on foreigners reappeared in Rostock throughout 1991 before peaking in August of 1992 when several hundred neo-Nazis mounted a week-long campaign against foreigners designed to instill fear and drive them out. A total of nearly two thousand bystanders stood by and applauded. Xenophobic violence had reached a level of fervor not seen in Germany since the days of the Third Reich. The government, meanwhile, failed to display any resolve on the matter outside of anti-racist lipservice. Helmut Kohl, on 27 August, stated:

"those who threaten the lives and physical integrity of people, set houses on fire and stir up hatred of foreigners must be punished with the full severity permitted under our system of criminal law."<sup>20</sup>

Following these comments, it was a full four months before any formal action against the right-wing was taken by the coalition government. The police continued to appear at riots, making token arrests while others cheered. The criticisms of the lack of governmental action against the right-wing and the asylum issue mounted.

Democratic instability results in radical voting -- support for either the radical right or left.<sup>21</sup> While right-wing nationalist violence gained momentum, so too did the right-wing political parties in Germany. It is important to note, however, that the *Verfassungsschutz*, the major government agency currently countering xenophobic activity in Germany, has failed to produce evidence of overt collusion between the extremist parliamentary parties and the neo-Nazi street groups.<sup>22</sup> Under German law a

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<sup>20</sup> Hostility towards foreigners in Germany: Facts, analyses, arguments, 72. (A booklet distributed by the *Verfassungsschutz* and obtainable through Goethe Institut, Chicago, IL)

party can only be banned if its leaders openly advocate violence; it is not adequate grounds for banishment if they practice violence individually. Also, the traditional symbols of Nazism such as the Hitler salute or the swastika are strictly forbidden. As the right-wing political parties have thus far failed to reveal a link to neo-Nazi violence, they have earned the nickname "the respectable Right."<sup>22</sup>

The two main right-wing parties in Germany are the *Republikaner* and the *Deutsche Volkunion* (DVu). Both parties have granted immigration the spotlight on their platforms, hoping to extend debate on the *Asylbewerber* issue to a more profound and *völkisch* topic -- German nationalism and identity. Both parties are publicly anti-foreigner, campaigning under the warcry: "Germany for the Germans." At a time when a reunified Germany struggles for resolutions concerning the foreigner issue, the core issue of the right-wing has gone from peripheral to pivotal.<sup>23</sup>

The *Republikaner* Party has thus far proven to be the more popular of the two right-wing political parties in Germany. Led by former SS officer Franz Schönhuber, the Republicans have repeatedly cited a "criminalization of German history" -- the feeling that Germany should no longer be held hostage by the guilt of her misdeeds during the Third Reich. As long as she is made to feel guilty for the crimes of Adolf Hitler, they argue, she will never take proper pride in her identity.<sup>24</sup> It was this guilt, the *Republikaner*

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21 Raymond M. Duch and James L. Gibson, "Putting up with; Fascists in Western Europe: A Comparative, Cross-Level Analysis of Political Tolerance," *The Western Political Journal* Fall 1993: 237.

22 *Dangers from the Right?* 21.

23 *Ibid.*, 32.

24 *Ibid.*, 28.

maintained, which prevented Germany from administering proper attention to the interests of Germans themselves and the seriousness of the foreigners abusing Germany's liberal asylum laws.

In 1989, the *Republikaners*, though a member of the "respectable right", a party with an anti-foreigner platform nonetheless, shocked Germany by winning seats in the Berlin City Senate, obtaining 7.5% of the vote. Later that year, Schönhuber's party gained 7.1% and 6 seats in the European Parliamentary elections -- a higher total than the stalwart parties of German politics. In Bavaria, a traditional stronghold of National Socialists during the Third Reich, the *Republikaners* garnered over 14% of the vote. The reunification of 1989, however, initially translated to a set-back for the right-wing. However, they capitalized on the ever-increasing immigrant issue and growing reluctance toward the economy to make great gains again in 1992.<sup>25</sup>

In 1992, both right-wing parties experienced increased popularity while confronting the central issues of a more powerful unified Germany -- a Germany which in their opinion could be proud of her national identity. As further discussion of the immigration issue spread closer to the dry underbrush of neo-Nazism, the main ruling parties saw the need to take action. Xenophobic fire threatened to spread unless the big parties could persuade its sufferers that 1) Germany's borders were not an un-policed free-for-all, and 2) that keeping out all foreigners, even if at all possible, would be wrong.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> "Survey on Germany," *The Economist*, 23 May 1992: 14.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

Government efforts to quash the rise of the radical Right adopted a two-pronged attack. Chancellor Kohl brought the government's efforts to the public's attention at a cabinet meeting on 2 December, 1992:

"In the past few days it (our constitutional democracy) has proved once more that it is willing to use all the means at its disposal in combatting extremist violence and terror."<sup>27</sup>

The offensive against xenophobia enlisted four working groups to compose a mass effort by the *Verfassungsschutz* to coordinate all government action to counter extremist violence and terror with the aid of departmental secretaries. The *Verfassungsschutz* Advisory Groups covered problems ranging from violence among young people to protective measures by police and intelligence authorities.<sup>28</sup>

The other prong of the government's attack on xenophobia attempted to isolate the apparent core of the problem -- the issue of asylum. Germany's liberal asylum laws were examined as right-wing, anti-foreigner violence increased. This reconsideration of Article 16, Section 2 of the Basic Law was initially seen as pandering to the right-wing groups, adding legitimacy to their platforms. However, others argued that curbing the flow of *Asylbewerber* would serve the obviously desirable purpose of defusing social tensions.<sup>29</sup>

The governing coalition and the Social Democrats reached a compromise agreement in December of 1992 on new regulations on asylum.

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<sup>27</sup> Hostility towards foreigners in Germany: Facts analyses, arguments, 21.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>29</sup> "Survey on Germany," The Economist: 9.

The new regulations still begin with the statement, "*Politische Verfolgte genießen Asylrecht*" ("persons prosecuted on political grounds shall enjoy the right to asylum" ) and continue to add that persons from a member state of the European Community, or from another "third state" which adheres to the Geneva Convention or to the European Human Rights Convention, will not have the right to asylum. In such cases where it is agreed one has no right to apply for asylum based on the fact that the state is considered "secure", officials have recourse to deportation, or *aufenthaltsbeendende Maßnahmen*.

Since the government's main parties have cracked down on rightist organizations and addressed the asylum issue, right wing violence has seen a dramatic decrease. (See Figure 2) In January of 1994, the amount of right-wing violence continued the downward trend, falling from 36,279 in January of 1993 to only 13,154.<sup>30</sup> At the same time, popularity of right-wing political parties has at least for the meantime subsided, a fact which has relieved fears among German politicians, considering 1994 is an election year. With the "respectable Right" neutralized, it would seem some sort of correlation exists between the fall of xenophobic violence and the measures taken by the government. Such a correlation, when broadened, poses a more profound question : Does right-wing nationalism in Germany rely upon foreigners as a spark ? If so, does the current trend mean that Germans, Europeans, and other members of the international community can breathe a collective sigh of relief ?

These data do in fact seem to point to a direct connection between right-wing nationalism in Germany and the influx of foreigners. However,

caution must be practiced when attempting to draw such a conclusion. As discussed in Chapter 1, the concept of nationalism encompasses all which is embraced in the *Heimat* -- childhood, shared language, land, climate, history, culture, and all else that is familiar and comfortable to the native.<sup>30</sup> In gauging the effect of foreigners treading on the soil of the *Heimat*, one must also consider the number and character of the the strangers, their degree of strangeness, their concentration in any one area, the rate of influx, and above all the prevailing economic climate.<sup>31</sup> As the present economic climate shows little sign of improving, this factor would not seem to play as great a role as the former. Still, however, the fact that unemployment continues to grow is reason for concern when the factors which seemed to lead to neo-Nazi violence in Rostock are considered.

The apparent correlation shown by the data is in no way definite, as numerous factors must be considered when debating the "German Question." For example, does German reunification represent an attempted fusion of two distinctly different identities -- that of the communist East and the capitalist West -- or is it a rejoining of the *Volk*, or one distinct national identity which merely took a 45 year hiatus? Germans of 1990 tended to view reunification in the latter perspective, 73% of East Germans subscribing to the idea of there being a single German identity. In 1993, following increased discontent and instability, only 22% of West Germans and 11% of East Germans said they shared a common identity.<sup>32</sup> Such statistics point at a

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30 Eugen Lemberg, Nationalismus (Hamburg: Reinbek 1990).

31 Bermant, "Pride and Prejudice in Germany".

32 Anne-Marie Le Gloannec, "On German Identity," Daedalus: Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences Winter 1994: 142.

present perception of the *Wiedervereinigung* as being little more than a legal binding of two different peoples.

Germany has historically been situated at a crossroads between East and West. In the twentieth century this geopolitical position translated to a flashpoint between materialism, capitalism, and democracy of the West and communism of the East. Right-wing nationalism seems to be more of a natural defensive reaction to the end of the cold war than a renewal of the Third Reich. Both real and imaginary threats fuel defensive reactions -- "and a combination of international population movements with the ultra-rapid, fundamental, and unprecedented socio-economic transformations so characteristic of the third quarter of our century."<sup>33</sup> Nazism provides a convenient means for right-wing groups to deal with discontent, as it represents a united Germany's last great attempt to address these problems.

In analyzing German history and her various nationalisms, we confront a profound discontinuity and its consequences. There has been a crucial discontinuity of both state and nation in the German historical experience and "this lack of unity . . . is in fact the central problem of German history"<sup>34</sup> Discontinuity has again greatly affected Germany in the wake of the cold war as ideological and human barriers dispelled euphoria. It is difficult in Germany for people to give the utmost priority to a *Heimat* when two *Heimats* exist, exacerbating the differences in ideology, history, and culture

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<sup>33</sup> E.J. Hobsbawm, Nations and Nationalism since 1780 (New York: Cambridge University Press 1990): 165)

<sup>34</sup> Dick Verheyen, The German Question (Boulder: Westview Press 1991): 14.



of the last 45 years. This development, which has traversed a broad range of opinion and objection, has resulted in intolerance and bigotry.<sup>35</sup>

When one reflects upon the concept of a unified German identity, the mind immediately shifts to images of Adolf Hitler addressing throngs of nationalistic Germans, or the extermination of millions of Jews at the hands of a culture in which nationalism had reached a point of fanatical racism. Consequently, many "character analyses of Germany have focused on Nazism and World War II and the pressures and emotions of war have often had a clearly negative impact on their quality."<sup>36</sup> A unified Germany searching for a common identity thus bears a huge weight on her shoulders. Other nations can behave selfishly or even stupidly without being suspected of monstrous intentions, but Germany's history dooms it to relentless scrutiny. "Though there may be more neo-Nazis in Boise than Dresden, two brownshirts in Germany will always inspire more alarm than 20 anywhere else."<sup>37</sup> This fear is justified when the shadow of Adolf Hitler leads neo-Nazis to raids on asylum-seekers, but seems exaggerated in light of other predominant nationalisms of today, the discontinuity of Germany's past, and the walls which still divide Germany.

In 1960, Hans Kohn wrote:

"political nationalism under present conditions conflicts with the main trends of human affairs, which is away from isolationism and towards interdependence. The aim of right-wing nationalism is not service and cooperation but exclusiveness and monopoly."<sup>38</sup>

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35 David T. Zoud and Frank Zitka, "The walls that still divide Germany," The Chicago Tribune 24 Sept. 1991 final ed., sec 2: 17.

36 Verheyen, The German Question: 14.

37 Chapman, "a normal nation dogged by an abnormal history," Chicago Tribune 4 Oct. 1992 natl. ed., sec 1: 3.

Today, a great stress is placed upon multi-lateral agreements and missions. The UN adopts a greater global role than ever before and other agreements such as GATT or Maastricht boldly state that no country can benefit from isolationist polities. At the same time, there is constant evidence of the possibly divisive nature of nationalism in such cases as secessionist movements in the old nation-states of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. There seem to be two contradictory trends in nationalism presently at work: one encouraging integration and the other yearning for fragmentation of states. These two forces are unfolding concurrently in Germany.<sup>39</sup>

Discontinuity has thus far discouraged Germans from embracing the right-wing policies of her past. So long as different pasts, real or imagined, linger in the German psyche, no single national identity will emerge. The different pasts occupy center stage in the issue of why East and West are distinctly different.<sup>40</sup> It is almost no matter that the political West German identity, actually possessing political structure, is a stable one compared to the the East German.<sup>41</sup> If it is left to East Germans to integrate into the West, the *Ossis* will continue to feel alienated, being only observers in their current social and cultural metamorphosis.<sup>42</sup> Alienation only breeds resentment, bigotry, egoism, and ignorance -- all of which threaten the successes reached through the reunification of Germany.

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38 Hans Kohn, The Idea of Nationalism (Toronto: Collier Books 1960): 23.

39 Gidon Gottlieb, "Nations without States," Foreign Affairs May/June 1994 vol.73: 112.

40 Le Gloannec, "On German Identity," Daedalus: 142.

41 Ibid., 143.

42 Zoud and Zitka, "The walls that still divide Germany," The Chicago Tribune 24 Sept. 1991 final ed., sec 1:3.

For an identity to emerge in a united Germany, all Germans will need to share common pasts and a common goal. The lack of continuity in a German state has created two distinct pasts which a unified Germany will need to negotiate. On one hand, a unified Germany will need to share rather than shun memories of the last unified German state. Secondly, a *new , post-cold war* past in which references to cold war Germany are not made will need to be developed, for it was during the cold war when the two Germanys grew apart and it will be in memories of the cold war that differences between the two Germanys will be most apparent. Time will be a major requirement. These pasts of both Germanys will need to be analyzed and reoriented toward a democratic future.<sup>43</sup> Such a process is already taking place; the German government displayed resolve to this process of integration in its action against a resurgence of Germany's neo-Nazi tendencies. Today, as right-wing activities appear to be subsiding, the two Germanys may be overcoming the first major test of the new Germany, preparing to focus her sights on one German *Identität* which is proving capable of dealing with resurgences of her dark past. In Germany, such issues merit attention, for 'those who do not face their past are bound to relive it.'<sup>44</sup> Democracy and integration have been and must continue to be the driving forces of Germany, forbidding a xenophobic nationalism from taking root.

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<sup>43</sup> Le Gloannec, "On German Identity," *Daedalus*: 145.

<sup>44</sup> Paraphrased from booklet distributed at Auschwitz Concentration Camp Memorial, Oswiecim, Poland.

### CHAPTER III A NEW AUSTRIAN IDENTITY?

Behind the State Opera House in Vienna and adjacent to the *Hofburg* is the *Albertinaplatz* which exemplifies the Austrian question of nationalism. The *Hofburg* is an icon of the glory days of Imperial Austria and the Hapsburg Empire. On the *Platz* stands an upright slab of concrete upon which names are engraved. The slab commemorates victims of racism and anti-semitism -- dark shadows of Austria's past which includes the reduction of the Jewish population from 200,000 before World War II to mere hundreds afterward. Only a few blocks from the monument, along the *Kärntnerstraße*, one can find the headquarters for the *Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs* (The Freedom Party of Austria), Austria's growing right-wing party. The setting presents an appropriate contrast for a study of the "Austrian Question" of nationalism.

Occupying a landmass slightly larger than the state of Massachusetts, Austria is today a country lost among the massive change taking place around her. The Soviet Union has crumbled, surrendering republics now struggling to establish free-market economies while searching for national identities lost during the regime. The road to West European Unity has unleashed potholes and pratfalls as various nations struggle with domestic issues. Along the southern fringe of Central Europe, a war rages on. Despite her small size and neutral status, Austria's role should not be underestimated. Austria is in fact an integral part of Western Europe, sharing its common political, economic, and cultural principles. Furthermore, this small country will act as an

outpost between Eastern and Western Europe in years to come, heavily influencing the nature of the continent.<sup>1</sup>

A man stands at the *Albertinaplatz* distributing leaflets. The leaflet does not demand a high level of intellect to understand. It pits two pictures side by side with the apparent intention of drawing a parallel. The picture on the left side is of a vandalized Jewish gravemarker during World War II. Two letters, "SS", and a swastika leave no doubt of the identity of the perpetrators of the crime. The picture on the right is also of a desecrated Jewish *Grabstein*, only the defacing spells out "*Sieg Haider*" ("Victory Haider"). Framing the two pictures is the question, "*Ist das Ihr Ziel, Herr Haider?*" ("Is this your goal, Mr. Haider?")

"Austria," as the Freedom Party of Austria's (FPÖ's) National Chairman, Jörg Haider, stated in his Vienna Statement oratory of 7 April, 1992, "is at the point of changing in a lasting way." This declaration, unlike many of Haider's other statements, is indisputable. A main issue seems to be whether Austria, a land with a reputation for being "tradition-bound, inert, ossified, unwilling, and unable to move with the times," will be able to sustain such a change.<sup>2</sup> With the end of the Cold War and the opening of the borders between the financially stable West and impoverished East, hundreds of thousands of immigrants have streamed into the countries of Austria and Germany, applying for asylum. Such figures do not consider the thousand of illegal immigrants who cross borders under cover of night. The

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<sup>1</sup> Barbara Jelavich, *Modern Austria* (New York: Cambridge University Press 1987) 327.

<sup>2</sup> Karl R. Stadler, *Austria* (New York: Praeger 1971) 1.

immigrants, or *Ausländer*, seek a better way of life in a more prosperous and stable society.<sup>3</sup>

Residents of Austria have grown disgruntled over the decline of living standards. Unemployment has reached unprecedented levels. (See Figure 4) Jobs have become scarcer, housing problems have developed, and crime rates have skyrocketed. The target of these frustrations, just as in Germany, has become both the government and *Ausländer*, breathing life into anti-foreigner, skinhead, and neo-Nazi movements to push the foreigners out. "*Ausländer Raus!*", a popular slogan of the Nazis during World War II, has found a second life.

In Austria, the neo-Nazi movement has yet to evolve into as great a problem as in Germany; She has not experienced the same massive waves of attacks against homes for *Asylbewerber*, Jewish memorials, and foreign residents as in Germany.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, there have been isolated acts of racism. In the academic school year 1992-1993, the author personally witnessed such acts and has been informed that such activity has not subsided. Swastika graffiti can be found in streetcars, in the subways, and in numerous other public sites. Children at Gymnasiums harass immigrant children. Rallies against anti-foreigner violence are required to be supervised by police in riot gear. In Eisenstadt on 1 November, 1992, a Jewish cemetery was vandalized with gravemarkers being toppled and anti-foreigner messages being painted. It has become apparent that the foreigner problem in Austria stands a danger of escalating to the level of that in Germany if action is not

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<sup>3</sup> Dr. James Wilkie, *Burden Sharing* (Vienna: Federal Press Service 1991) 23. (Distributed by the Austrian Press and Information Service, Washington, D.C.)

soon taken. The FPÖ has attempted to seize this opportunity, and today represents the voice of the right-wing in Austria.

The FPÖ has historically been among the weakest parties in Austrian politics. Born from a group of almost a half-million ex-Nazis in 1949, the party's traditional short-coming has been a vague platform irrelevant to issues at hand in Austria.<sup>5</sup> From 1956 to 1986, national election results indicated only a snail's pace gain in popularity of the FPÖ while the two main parties, the Sozialistische Partei Österreichs (SPÖ) and the Österreichische Volkspartei (ÖVP), continued to share an overwhelming majority.<sup>6</sup>

During the early 1980s, while the FPÖ continued to flounder nationally, a rising leader of the FPÖ found a firm base of support for a future of the party. His name was Jörg Haider and he found popular support in Carinthia, a *Bundesland* in southern Austria which shares borders with Slovenia and Italy. The Carinthian power base, a *Bundesland* experiencing significant animosity towards minority Slovenians, provided firm footing for a young Haider as he rose to national prominence by capturing a large portion of the vote. Haider's merciless tongue-lashing of what he described as the "old parties", their "power monopoly", their "privilege economy", their policies and (mal)practices, was in full accord with the current political trend against the SPÖ.<sup>7</sup> Haider garnered a majority of the popular vote in the 1984 Carinthian election via his "völkisch" nationalism while becoming an if not controversial then popular figure by "exculpating ex-Nazi military figures on the grounds that they had just done their military duty."<sup>8</sup> With a new policy which could potentially unite the FPÖ, Haider used his victory in

Carinthia as a springboard for his assault on the nation-wide FPÖ liberal policies.

As Haider grew in popularity in the years following his victory in Carinthia, so too did the entire FPÖ party. In 1986, Haider rose to the National Chairmanship of the FPÖ through what has become known as the "Haider Putsch". The years following the Putsch continued the trend of increasing popularity within the FPÖ, as the party made giant strides in local elections. (See Figure 5) This success has occurred at the cost of both the small and grand coalitions composed of the SPÖ and ÖVP. In the national election of 1991, the FPÖ more than doubled their previous representation at the national level, earning 33 seats while the grand coalition continued to slide toward political uncertainty.<sup>9</sup>

Just as the issue of immigration provides the right-wing parties of Germany with a specific platform finally meriting national attention, the FPÖ benefits from the advent of extreme immigration problems faced by Austria. Between 1981 and 1991 net foreign immigration totaled 270,000. At the 1991 census there was a *resident* foreign population of 518,000 persons without Austrian citizenship. This amounts to 6.6 percent of the total Austrian population of 7.8 million in 1991.<sup>10</sup> Haider charges that foreigners are cheating natives of jobs and apartments in Austria, where the global economic recession has taken effect. This effect is most accurately reflected in the growth in Austrian unemployment since 1990. (See Figure 4) The main thrust of Haider's attacks on the issue of immigration took the form of the *Ausländer Volksbegehren* and became the focus of intense public controversy since its conception.



The *Volksbegehren* represented an attempt, as Haider stated in his Viennese Statement, to:

"... create something in the way of human right to a homeland as a corrective measure for the general freedom of movement, which is guaranteed by the colorful palate of European languages and cultures."

The document outlined a method by which Haider felt Austria could best deal with the problems of mass immigration over her borders. The *Volksbegehren* aimed to address resulting problems facing Austrian society such as housing shortages, decline in the quality of education, corrupt business practices, unemployment, and rising crime rates. Under the Austrian Constitution, the *Volksbegehren* required 100,000 signatures if it were to be placed on a ballot for public vote. Garnering the required amount of signatures would have been a victory for Haider. The require 100,000 signatures were obtained and Austria at the close of 1992 stood poised for debate on an issue which would give a clear indication of the future national identity of Austria.

Haider envisioned the *Volksbegehren* as a mechanism to "equip an open society with the moral strength to develop visions which will continue the hallmarks of future political activities."<sup>11</sup> Opponents of the *Volksbegehren* saw it as a populist approach with an ultimate goal of fascist totalitarianism. A campaign began in which the grand coalition and FPÖ argued their respective sides.

On 24 January, 1993 a crowd estimated at 250,000 gathered before the Parliament building in Vienna to take part in *Lichtermeer* -- the "sea of

light". The demonstration symbolized support for immigrants and foreign refugees under attack from Haider's party platform and neo-Nazi violence. The demonstration was part of a larger counter-movement formed in solidarity by a group called "SOS-Mitmensch". SOS-Mitmensch received strong support from political parties, the Catholic Church, and Austria's *Bundespräsident*, Thomas Klestil. The movement greatly reduced support for Haider's proposal. The Austrian Courts, meanwhile, dissolved many extreme right-wing organizations and jailed a number of their leaders.<sup>12</sup> The demonstration against the *Volksbegehren* translated to a humiliating failure for Haider and the FPÖ.

The *Volksbegehren* received only 1/2 of the 400,000 signatures expected by Haider. It appeared to many as if it were the beginning of the end for the FPÖ. The prospects for the party adopted a more dismal appearance in March 1993, when the third-ranking officer of the party, Heide Schmidt, left the party after publicly divulging her concern for ever-increasing rightist tendencies within the party. Schmidt's departure reduced the number of FPÖ seats from 33 to 28 as other dissatisfied FPÖ leaders followed her lead to a newly-formed party, the Liberale Forum.<sup>13</sup> As a further nail into the FPÖ

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4 "Austrians show solidarity with Foreigners," *Idaho State Journal* 24 Jan. 1993.

5 F. Parkinson, *Conquering the Past: Austrian Nazism Yesterday and Today* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press. 1989) 260.

6 *Meilenstein des Aufstiegs*, 12-13. (Book released by the FPÖ - 1010 Vienna Austria, Kärntnerstraße 28)

7 Professor Adam Wandruszka, "The 'Third Force'," *Austria Today* Jan. 1992: 21.

8 Parkinson, *Conquering the Past*, 268.

9 *Meilenstein des Aufstiegs*, 15.

10 *Austria and the New Migration*, 168. (Distributed by the Austrian Federal Press Service, Vienna 1990)

11 Jörg Haider, *Wiener Erklärung*. (Book released by the FPÖ)

12 "Country Report," *Business International* 12 Apr. 1993.

coffin, the Federation of Austrian Industry cut financing to the FPÖ. The forecast for the FPÖ suddenly became bleak, as Haider's influence on domestic politics was expected to diminish.<sup>14</sup>

While the FPÖ and Jörg Haider gained in popularity with the increase in foreigners, debate proceeded within the coalition government in Austria on how to deal with the problem. With a future wave of *Ausländer* expected within 5 years, both from the former Soviet Union and overseas developing countries, Austria stood little chance of controlling immigration without adopting reform. Reform of Austria's immigration policies has taken the form of a series of measures designed to keep immigration under control while at the same time integrating foreigners at a rate acceptable to the Austrian population. The first stage was the *Federal Care Act of 1991*, followed by the new *Asylum Act*, which went into effect 1 June 1992 and was a "major means of combatting abuse of the asylum procedure." Just as in Germany, asylum seekers in Austria are entitled to housing, food, schooling, and medical care until the application for asylum is processed. Implemented on 1 January, 1993 the *Foreigners Act* regulates the entry and residence of aliens. The fourth in the series of acts designed to better control the influx of immigrants while also indirectly countering the FPÖ was the *Non-Residence Act*, entering into force on 1 July 1993, which "encompasses all those persons who intend to make Austria the center of their lives whether for occupational or residential reasons."<sup>15</sup> It is worthwhile to note

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<sup>13</sup> "Alibi Weg: Der Anspruch seiner Stellvertreterin könnte Österreichs Populisten Jörg Haider um alle Kanzler-Chancen bringen," *Der Spiegel* June 1993: 141.

<sup>14</sup> *Business International*:7.

<sup>15</sup> *Austria and the New Migration*, 169.

here that the author has recited these laws as they were communicated to him by the Austrian Consulate. There was no further clarification of the laws.

As reforms of the asylum laws have been implemented, the number of asylum-seekers has declined. (See Figure 6) Such data would seem to simultaneously lead to a fall in the popularity of the FPÖ as well as the core of their platform, an anti-foreigner message. When the other hardships which beset Haider and his party are also considered, it becomes astonishing that the FPÖ and, consequently, right-wing nationalism in Austria continues to gain momentum. In local elections this past March (1994), the FPÖ obtained 33% of the vote in Carinthia, 20% in Salzburg, and 17% in Tirol. When compared to the last local elections in these *Bundesländer* in 1989, the FPÖ gained an average of 3%.<sup>16</sup> Following on the heels of these victories, Haider is preparing himself for a successful National Election this upcoming October.

Whether enough voters will warm to Haider's message in time for October is disputable. People are still attempting to decipher the political messages which he delivers. Is the message of Haider a stark right-wing message and, if so, should the public beware, lest they are in favor of a right-wing Austrian government? Or, is the message of Haider merely a liberal attempt to cope with Austria's deteriorating situation? Physically, Haider embodies a very appealing image to the public -- young, handsome, charismatic, a great orator, and with a call to Austrians to have a love for their homeland.<sup>17</sup> This call impetuous flows smoothly into Austrian's

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<sup>16</sup> "Austria: Austria's Election Results Detailed," Reuter Textline, 13 Mar. 1994.

<sup>17</sup> Parkinson, Conquering the Past: 275.

ears, ears which have lacked the sounds of nationalism, at least outward nationalism, for some time.

Austrian history, just like German history, suffers from a great lack of continuity. Her history is sliced into eras of varying characters, elements, and, subsequently, nationalisms. Up until the fall of the Hapsburg Empire, the Austrians had always maintained their status in the hub of the empire. Austrians felt they were the core from which proceeded the formation of the great power in Central Europe and, even more, of the great Hapsburg empire.<sup>18</sup> Perhaps ironically, then, the Hapsburg empire fell partially as a result of evolving nationalisms within its borders. In fact, it has long been customary to look upon the Republic of Austria as the child of the Paris Peace Conference and the Treaty of St. Germaine.<sup>19</sup> World War I left in its wake a small Austrian state in place of the once behemoth Hapsburg dynasty. Economic woes beset Austria and the question of "Austrian history" resurfaced time and again. Austria had no place in the world of the interwar period -- "Austrian history", as understood by the Austrians, consisted of everything which took place in Central Europe between "antiquity and the end of World War I in 1918."<sup>20</sup>

Austria emerged from the ruins of the once-mighty Hapsburg Empire without an identity, falling deeper and deeper into depression while struggling to pay war reparations. The terrible conditions after the war gave rise to a conviction that Austria as an independent state was simply not

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<sup>18</sup> Fritz Fellner, "Introduction: The Genesis of the Austrian Republic," Modern Austria ( Palo Alto: Society for the Promotion and Scholarship Inc. 1981): 1.

<sup>19</sup> Stadler, Austria, 107.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 2.

economically viable. Most Austrians renewed their pan-German feelings to rally in support of a union with Germany "as an answer to their national aspirations and harsh economic realities."<sup>21</sup> The Interwar period came to a close as the Nazis rose to power in Germany and declared the *Anschluss*, or the incorporation of Austria into the Third Reich, with an Austria eager to embrace a new identity. Euphoria died a painful death, however, as the *Anschluss* drew Austria into a devastating war and subsequent crushing defeat.

Post World War II Austria suffered from a similar identity crisis as the post World War I Austria. Vienna became known as 'four-in-a-boat' as the four victorious powers occupied the city and the country. Little national identity rooted itself in this era. However, the seeds were planted for the Second Republic -- an era which has introduced Austria to hopes of a national identity. The Allied powers opted not to penalize Austria for Nazi crimes, concluding that National Socialism in Austria was "a dead horse whose carrion would decompose in a natural manner."<sup>22</sup> The carrion was declared officially decomposed in 1955, when Austria signed the State Treaty, receiving their small country in return for a declared neutrality.

Since the signing of the State Treaty, Austria has embarked on a search for this 'national identity' which has proven elusive since the fall of the Hapsburg Empire. She has prospered economically and today Vienna reigns as an international crossroads between East and West. As Walter Maass

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<sup>21</sup> Jelavich, Modern Austria 326.

<sup>22</sup> Walter B. Maass, Country Without a Name (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing 1979) 161.

states, " The Austrians have learned to live and work together peacefully, but among the older generation the past is still an agonizing subject and a source of sometimes acrimonious discussion."<sup>23</sup> A flashpoint is thus created in which a yearning for an established national identity of old and a dissatisfaction for the contemporary identity jostle each other in a search for a distinctly new identity. At the same time, the current identity, which contrasts sharply with that of the old Hapsburg Empire in which Austria wielded a major portion of the power, tip-toes over issues which perhaps merit a non-neutral stance. This debate then returns us to such an issue -- the issue of immigration.

Jörg Haider and the FPÖ face the prospect of a sink-or-swim national election this upcoming October. Should the FPÖ perform well on its anti-foreigner, "Austria First" platform, the role of Austria will be that of a more assertive, isolationist Republic.<sup>24</sup> Borders will be fortified, Austria herself will form coalitions with other nations, and Austria **will not** have as strong a campaign for European Union membership under a Haider-led government.<sup>25</sup> If the National Election results in a voting trend back toward the center, the SPÖ and ÖVP, Haider will have suffered an if not insurmountable, then huge, set-back. As the number of Asylum seekers in Austria continues to show a downward trend, Haider's platform may be dissolving under his feet. Since the coalition parties favor EU membership, an Austria would emerge from the election prepared for a more international

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<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 158.

<sup>24</sup> Translated from the 1993 FPÖ Slogan: "Österreich Zuerst !"

<sup>25</sup> "Österreichische Freiheitliche gegen den EU-Beitritt; Keine Empfehlung für die Volksabstimmung," *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* 11 April, 1994, Ausland sec.: 2.

role, signaling a decrease in concern over issues upon which the FPÖ platform are based.

The National Election, however, should not be billed as a major turning point for Austria, with the future of the small republic hanging in the balance. The likely outcome of the election will see a public feeling more comfortable with the immigration issue, but casting protest votes unless the economy shows an improvement. Such a protest vote, in the author's opinion will not result in a massive swing in seats in the national government. However, it may send a firm message that Austrians are prepared for a more assertive national identity.



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**Figure 1**



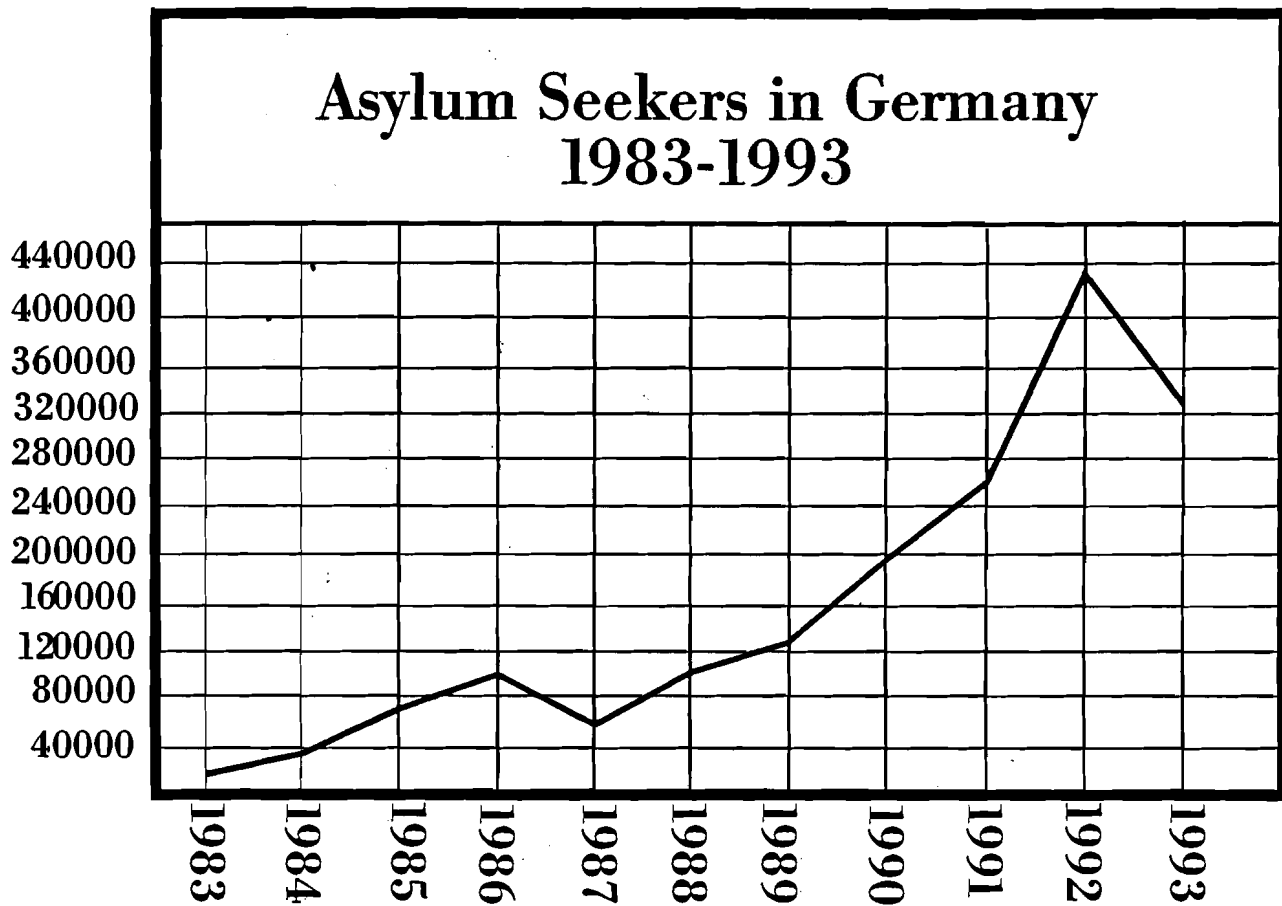
Statistics obtained from The Economist, 1991-1994

**Figure 2**



Statistics obtained from Hostility towards foreigners in Germany: Facts, analyses, arguments, distributed by *Verfassungsschutz*, available through Goethe Institut, Chicago, IL.

**Figure 3**



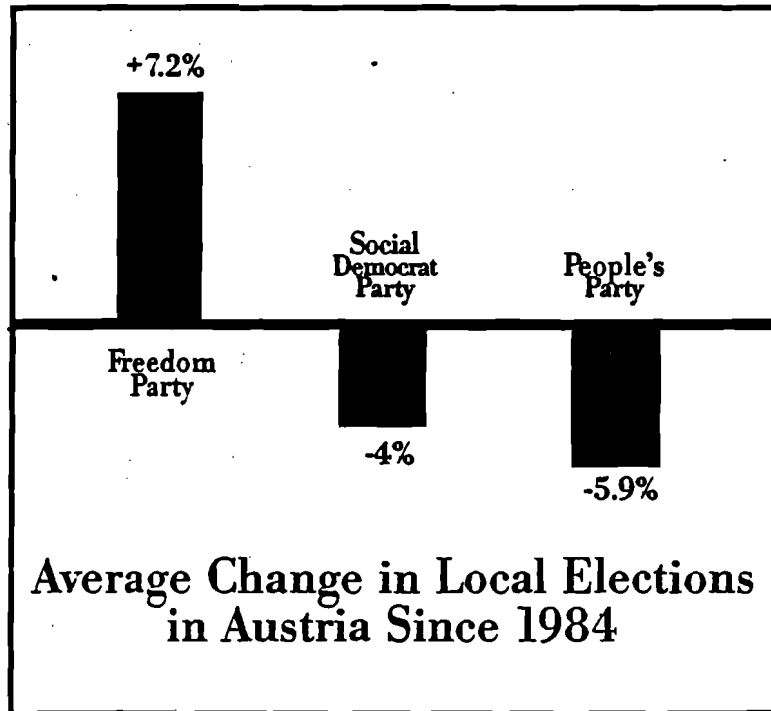
Statistics obtained from Hostility towards foreigners in Germany: Facts, analyses, arguments, distributed by *Verfassungsschutz*, available through Goethe Institut, Chicago, IL.

Figure 4



Statistics obtained from The Economist, 1991-1994

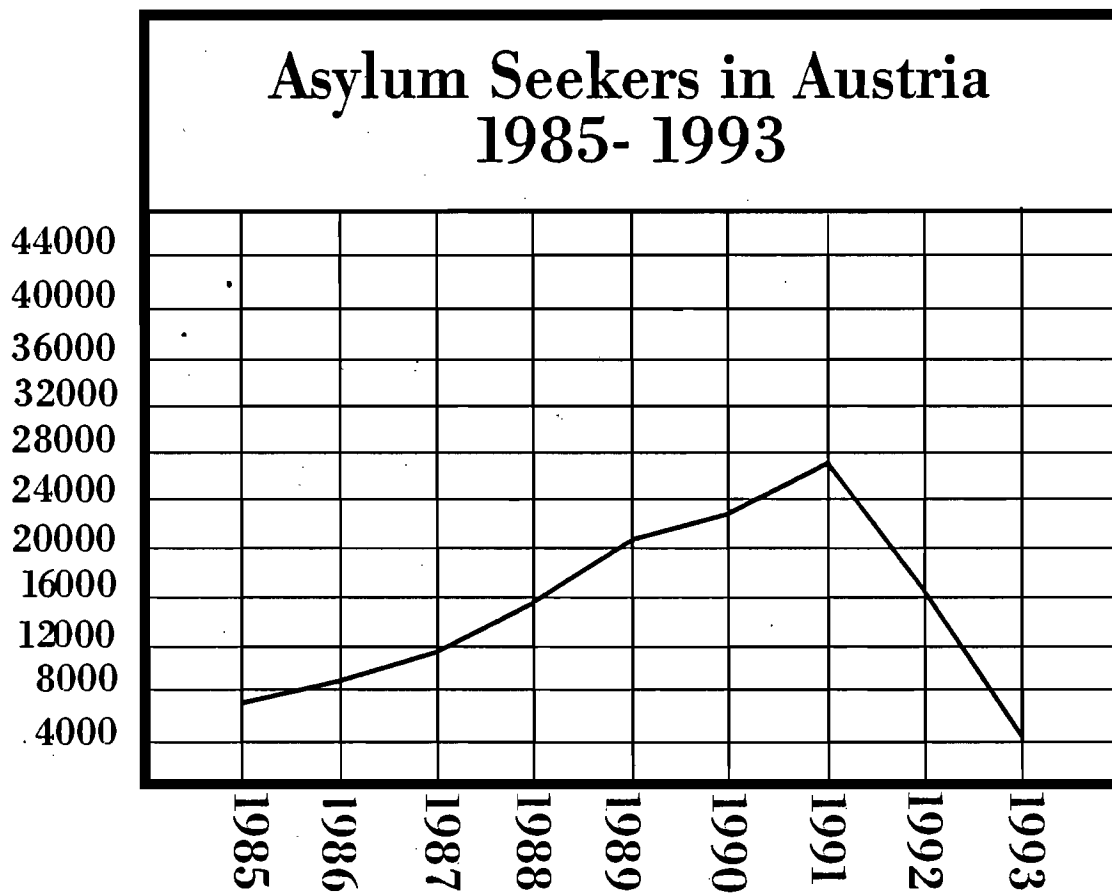
Figure 5



Statistics obtained from Austrian Press and Information Center, Washington, D.C.



**Figure 6**



Statistics obtained from Austria and the New Migration, distributed by the Austrian Press and Information Service, Vienna, 1990.