

The spectre of Austria – Reappraising the rise of the Freedom Party from 1986 to 2000

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Sept. 8, 2009

Ph.D. Thesis

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Title of thesis: The spectre of Austria – Reappraising the rise of
the Freedom Party from 1986 to 2000

Key words: Austria, Austrian Freedom Party, corporatism, elitism,
fascism, FPÖ, Jörg Haider, populism, racism, right-wing
extremism, right-wing parties, right-wing populism



ABSTRACT

This thesis analyses the reasons behind the electoral successes of the FPÖ between 1986, when Jörg Haider assumed the leadership of the party, and 2000, when the party entered into a government coalition with the ÖVP. A widely held view is that the FPÖ's rise was caused predominantly by the party's right-wing extremist tendencies. The importance of the role of the party's populist critique of the Austrian elite has often been underestimated. The literature and public debate about the FPÖ is largely dominated by ideological assumptions rather than detailed empirical inquiry. This thesis evaluates the relative importance of the right-wing extremist and populist dimensions, drawing on a wide range of qualitative and quantitative sources, such as party documents, its yearbooks, speeches and statements of prominent members, election results and voter surveys.

An in-depth analysis of the data demonstrates that the extent of the expression of right-wing extremist views in the party's rhetoric, programmes and policies was smaller than commonly assumed. Voters were drawn towards the party primarily by its critique of the SPÖ/ÖVP elite rule that had characterised the Austrian political landscape since the Second World War. By highlighting and often exaggerating the shortcomings of the elite and Austrian corporatism, the party under Jörg Haider managed to appeal to the electorate. With their support, the FPÖ became the second largest political party at the national elections in 1999, thereby ending the SPÖ/ÖVP dual elite rule. Once the FPÖ joined the ÖVP-led government, the party quickly started to disintegrate resulting ultimately in a split of the party – a fate shared with other populist parties.

The FPÖ's rise to power and particularly the emerging new right-wing extremist parties in Europe call for a thorough investigation of the underlying factors behind the parties' success. The analysis and findings of this thesis therefore are of relevance beyond the Austrian context.

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In memory of my dear parents, Birgit and Kjell Adamson

Acknowledgements

Many people have been important for this thesis. My supervisor Robin Archer read the manuscript and offered advice. During the earlier stages of the process, I had numerous discussions with Alfred Felsberger in Vienna, who knew far more about Austrian politics than he ever admitted. I have had innumerable discussions along the way with my old friend Jens Sørensen, and his insight and enthusiasm was always a great support. I am indebted to my colleagues Aje Carlbom, Torbjörn Friberg, and Daniel Ankarloo for their wit and knowledge in all areas imaginable. Mahmoud Delkhasteh, colleague from the LSE, has been very supportive. Fredrik Ekelund was a good friend along the way. Peter Fleissner at the former EUMC in Vienna, read the manuscript at an early stage and generously pushed me forward. Willy Lasek and Heribert Schiedel at the Archive for the Austrian Resistance in Vienna never asked twice when I inquired about various material about the FPÖ. Richard Mitten questioned my initial perception of the FPÖ, and Hans-Georg Betz encouraged a more complex understanding of the concept of populism. I have had fruitful discussions with Kurt Richard Luther, who also offered vital material at the final stages of the process. I was fortunate to meet key members on the Austrian political scene. Eva Glawischnig presented the FPÖ in a critical light, whereas Lothar Höbelt and Peter Sichrowsky offered a view from inside the FPÖ. At the initial stages I had stimulating discussion with Melanie Sully, especially on the character and appeal of Jörg Haider. James Burton, my editor, was quick and competent. My greatest gratitude goes to Michaela, who kept addressing weaknesses and suggesting more fruitful paths, and to Nora, my daughter.

Milestones

- 1949 Founding of *Verband der Unabhängigen* (VdU) (League of Independents).
- 1950 Jörg Haider is born in Bad Giosern/Oberösterreich.
- 1955 Anton Reinthaler, former Nazi, creates *Freiheitspartei* as a rival to the VdU.
- 1956 VdU and *Freiheitspartei* merge into *Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs* (FPÖ).
- 1956 Reinthaler wins a landslide over Kraus. FPÖ's liberal wing is marginalised.
- 1958 Reinthaler dies and is succeeded by Friedrich Peter, previous SS soldier.
- 1958 Peter declares that the FPÖ is a party for nationals and liberals alike.
- 1964 *Salzburger Programm* (the Salzburg Programme) adapts a more liberal profile.
- 1966 German Nationalist splinter group forms *Nationaldemokratische Partei*.
- 1968 *Bad Ischl Programm* (the Bad Ischl Programme), introducing libertarian views.
- 1971 Foundation of *Atterseekreis* (the Attersee Circle) by young, liberal students.
- 1973 *Freiheitliche Manifest* gives voice to both liberal and libertarian sentiments.
- 1973 Intensification of tension between German Nationalists and modernizers.
- 1978 Peter loses election to Alexander Götz, German Nationalist.
- 1979 The FPÖ becomes member of the world-wide *Liberal International*.
- 1980 The liberal Norbert Steger wins election over the Nationalist Harald Ofner.
- 1983 The SPÖ loses absolute majority, and initiates negotiations with the FPÖ..
- 1983 Coalition between SPÖ under Vranitzky and FPÖ under Steger.
- 1983 The FPÖ reaches an all-time-low with 5.3 per cent of votes cast.
- 1984 In Carinthia, his home region, Haider starts an internal opposition to Steger.
- 1984 FPÖ is supported by 16 per cent in the Carinthian local election.
- 1985 Liberal views are strengthened in the new *Salzburg Programme*.
- 1985 Haider refers to WWII as 'events' in the Austrian newspaper *Profil*.
- 1985 Friedhelm Frischenschläger shakes hand with war criminal Walter Reder,
- 1986 Steger is outmaneuvered by Jörg Haider, who seizes power of the FPÖ.
- 1986 Vranitzky terminates coalition with the Freedom Party.
- 1986 The FPÖ is supported by 9.7 per cent in the National election.
- 1991 Haider states that the Nazi regime had a 'proper unemployment policy'.
- 1991 As a result, Haider is forced to resign as Head of Provincial Government.
- 1993 Heide Schmidt, Friedhelm Frischenschläger and other liberals leave FPÖ.
- 1993 The FPÖ leaves *Liberal International* followed by anti-liberal campaigning.
- 1995 Haider talks at Krumpendorf to war veterans and ÖVP and SPÖ politicians.

1995 Haider refers to concentration camps as 'punishment camps'.

1997 The Linz Programme erases all references to liberalism.

1999 The FPÖ achieves 26.9 per cent of votes cast.

1999 Coalition discussions between SPÖ and ÖVP unsuccessful.

2000 Government coalition between ÖVP and FPÖ

2000 EU-sanctions against ÖVP/FPÖ government coalition and against Austria.

2000 Jörg Haider resigns and is replaced by Susanne Riess-Passer.

2000 Haider tries to retain control over the FPÖ from Carinthia.

2002 The FPÖ receives 10 per cent of votes, almost 40% less than 1999.

2005 Split in the FPÖ. Jörg Haider launches *Bundnis Zukunft Austria* (BZÖ).

2008 Sum of FPÖ/BZÖ votes 28.2 per cent in National election.

2008 Haider dies in a car crash as a consequence of high speed and alcohol.

2009 In the EU-election, FPÖ receives 12.7 per cent and BZÖ wins 4.6 per cent.

2009 BZÖ receives 44.9 per cent of voters in the regional election in Carinthia.

Abbreviations

ATAKA – 'Attack', Bulgarian right-wing extremist party.

BZÖ – *Bundnis Zukunft Österreich*

BNP – *British National Party*

FPÖ – *Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs*

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

GRECE – *Groupment de la Recherche dans une Civilization Européenne*

LO – *Landsorganisationen*

OECD – *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development*

ÖVP – *Österreichische Volkspartei*

RAI – Italian TV

SPÖ – *Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs*

VdU – *Verband der Unabhängigen*

WHO – World Health Organisation

Glossary of Non-English terms

Alleanza Nazionale (AN) – Italian nationalist and right-wing populist party. Headed by Gianfranco Fini.

Anschluss – Political union of Austria with Germany, achieved through annexation by Adolf Hitler

Arbeiterzeitung – Austrian socialist newspaper. Discontinued 1991.

Atterseekreis – Circle of young students seeking to push the FPÖ in a liberal direction. Founded in 1971.

Bad Ischl – FPÖ's 1968 Party Programme seeking to fuse German National and National liberal views

Bündnis Zukunft Österreich – Alliance for the future of Austria. Founded in 2005.

Burschenschaften – 'Bursche', boy, lad; and '-schaft', -community. German or Austrian student fraternity, often linked to right-wing extremist views

Dansk Folkeparti – Danish right-wing populist party. Headed by Pia Kjaersgaard

Das Dokumentationsarchiv des Österreichischen Widerstandes – Archive for the Austrian Resistance

Österreicherklärung zur Nationalratswahl – Declaration of Austria at the 1994 National Election

Dritte Republik – Recurring political rhetoric of the FPÖ, aimed at replacing the Second Republic. 1945 until present.

Erbgesundheitspflege – Racial health care

Le Figaro – French conservative newspaper

Faire Marktwirtschaft – FPÖ version of market economy emphasising a conservative 'fair' market instead of a liberal 'free' market

Filzdemokratie – Sleaze democracy

Framskrittspartiet – Norwegian right-wing populist party. Headed by Siv Jensen

Freiheitliche Bildungswerk – The academic section of the FPÖ

Freiheitliche Manifest – FPÖ manifest giving voice to liberal views

Freiheitlichen – An eventually unsuccessful wider movement founded in 1995, in which the FPÖ constituted a core

Freiheitspartei – Rival to the VdU launched in 1955

Freiheit und Verantwortung (Freedom and responsibility) – Yearbooks of the FPÖ. 1993-2001

Front National – French nationalist, right-wing populist party. Headed by Jean Marie Le Pen.

Gazeta Wyborcza – Polish left-liberal newspaper

Gemeinschaft – Community; often with rightist connotations

Groupment de la Recherche dans une Civilisation Européenne – French 'new right' think tank

Ha'aretz – Israeli liberal newspaper

Handbuch des Österreichischen Rechtsextremismus – Handbook on Austrian Right-wing Extremism. Authorised by *Archive for the Austrian Resistance*. (See below).

Historikerstreit – 'Battle of historians'; 1986 West-German intellectual controversy about the historical interpretation of the Holocaust

Ideologische Missgeburt – '*Ideological freak*'. Used by Jörg Haider to describe Austria as a part of his pro-German rhetoric.

Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom – Movement for a Better Hungary. Hungarian nationalist party.

Junge Freiheit – German, right-wing populist/right-wing extremist weekly newspaper

Junktum – Question 1,3,5 is decided by one part, and 2,4,6 etc.. is decided by counterpart in a co-operation between two parts

Kärntner Nachrichten – Carinthian conservative/right-wing populist newspaper

Landsorganisationen – Swedish Union of Workers

Landtag – Regional Parliament in Austria

Lega Nord – Union of rightist and separatist parties in Northern Italy. Headed by Umberto Bossi.

Liberales Forum – Austrian Liberal Party. Headed by Angelica Mlinar

Liberal International – The world federation of liberal and progressive democratic political parties. Founded in 1947

Liste Dr Hans-Peter Martin – EU-critical party founded by the Austrian Hans-Peter Martin

Lumpenproletariat – Trash proletariat

Nationalrat – Austrian national assembly

Ny Demokrati – Swedish right-wing populist party. Active 1991-1994

'**ordentliche Beschäftigungspolitik**' – 'Proper unemployment policy'

'**Österreich zuerst**' – 'Austria First'

Die Paritätische Kommission für Lohn – und Preisfragen – The joint commission for wages and prices

El País – Spanish leftist-leaning newspaper

Partidul România Mare (PRM) – The Greater Romania Party; expansionist and right-wing extremist

Die Presse – Austrian conservative-liberal newspaper

Proporz – Short for proportional state shared by the SPÖ and the ÖVP

Die Republikaner – German nationalist and right-wing populist party. Headed by Rolf Schlierer.

Ring Freiheitlicher Jugend – The youth organisation of the Freedom Party

der Rumpfstaat – Nickname of Austria after the fall of Habsburg in 1918

Slovenská národná strana (SNS) – Slovak National Party

Der Stammtisch – ‘Table of regulars’; metaphor for a place for racist discussions

Spiegel online – Online edition of German weekly *Der Spiegel*

Sozialpartnerschaft – Austrian post-war power-sharing between the Socialdemocratic Party of Austria and the Austrian People's Party

Svenska Arbetsgivarföreningen – Swedish Organisation of Employers

Svenskt Näringsliv – Swedish Organisation of Industrialists

Sverigedemokraterna – Swedish right-wing populist and nationalist party. Headed by Jimmy Åkesson.

Ständestaatsystem – A state dominated by corporations, such as the Dollfuss government in Austria between 1934 and 1938

Straflager – Punishment camp

Verband der Unabhängigen – League of Independents (1949-1956). Predecessor of FPÖ.

Vlaams Belang – (Flemish interest), Belgian nationalist and right-wing populist political party. Headed by Bruno Valkeniers.

Völkisch – National, ‘originating from “the people”’

Volksgemeinschaft – Community of a people

Waffen SS – Combat arm of SS (Schutzstaffel), a section of the National Socialist Party

Yedioth Ahronot – Largest newspaper in Israel situated in the political middle-ground

Zur Zeit – Austrian right-wing populist and nationalist newspaper closely linked to the FPÖ

Chapter 1

Introduction

Around nine o'clock on Friday night on 10 October 2008, Jörg Haider appeared unexpectedly at *Le Cabaret*, a nightclub in Velden near Wörthersee, where *Blitzlicht Revue* – a new society magazine – was being launched. Shortly after midnight Jörg Haider headed home to attend his mother's 90th birthday party. In Lambichl, Klagenfurt, he overtook another car at high speed. Shortly thereafter Haider's car hit a concrete block at the side of the road, and was tossed around until it finally came to rest, severely demolished. Jörg Haider had suffered multiple lethal injuries and died shortly after the ambulance arrived at the scene.

His fatal accident made headlines in the international press. The German *Spiegel online* stressed Haider's slick, telegenetic qualities, his constant desire to provoke and shock, and his praise of the Nazi employment policy (Dambeck, 2008). In the weekend edition of the conservative French *Le Figaro*, Haider was labelled 'The leader of the Austrian extreme right'. (Anon. 'Autriche/Extreme-Droite: Mort de Haider' 2008). The Spanish *El País* also named him 'The leader of the Austrian extreme right', and added his penchant for racist and ultranationalist statements (Anon. 'Jörg Haider Fallece en Accidente de Tráfico' 2008). In Poland, *Gazeta Wyborcza* highlighted Haider's autocratic style, his anti-immigration policy and praise of the Nazi employment policy while labelling the FPÖ as extreme right and nationalist (Buras 2008). In Israel, *Ha'aretz* (anon. 'Austria Far-Right Leader Joerg Haider Dies in Car Accident' 2008) drew attention to Haider's anti-immigration campaigns, his praise of the Nazi employment policy, and the naming of concentration camps as punitive camps (*Straflager*); and *Yedioth Ahronot* noted that Haider 'triggered widespread condemnation and European Union sanctions' (Anon. 'Austrian Far-Right Leader Dies in Crash' 2008). *The Washington Post* described the FPÖ's far-right ideology, and its leader's anti-immigration policies. It was also noted that Haider had been challenging Austria's two long-reigning parties, the SPÖ and the ÖVP (Schudel 2008). Along similar lines, the *New York Times* referred to Jörg Haider as far-rightist, famous for his strong anti-immigrant and anti-European Union stance, for a series of statements, for example praising the *Waffen SS* and the employment policy of the Nazi regime. The *New York Times* also, however,

highlighted Haider's critique of the dominance of the SPÖ and the People's ÖVP (Freund and Kulish 2008).

In Austria, the Austrian President Heinz Fischer referred to Haider as a 'politician of great talent', who 'aroused enthusiasm but also strong criticism' (Freeman and Pancevski 2008). Former chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel claimed Haider was an 'extremely gifted politician' who 'knew how to listen and had a connection with the people' and the Austrian Chancellor Werner Faymann called Haider 'an exceptional politician' (cited in *The World Jewish Congress*, anon. 2008 'Austrian far-right leader, Jörg Haider, dies in car crash'). Former Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer described Haider as a 'remarkable person' and said that one should 'pay tribute to him' (Weinthal 2008). Heinz-Christian Strache, the leader of the FPÖ, said that Haider had 'heavily influenced Austrian politics and achieved previously almost unimaginable changes within the power monopoly of the Social Democrats and the People's Party.' Eva Glawischnig, the Green Party leader, whose faction strongly opposed Jörg Haider, referred to his abrupt demise as 'the tragic death of one of the most outstanding and controversial Austrian political figures of recent decades' (Freeman and Pancevski 2008). Among his sympathisers, and in particular in his home region of Carinthia, the reaction to Haider's death was one of great shock causing an eruption of emotion. Some observers compared it to the mourning in Britain after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, in 1997. Stefan Petzner, General Secretary of the Party at the time of Haider's death, openly wept on Austrian television, and Gerhard Dörfler, Haider's deputy at the time, said: 'In Carinthia, the sun has fallen from the sky' (Dörfler 2008). Even though this was an accident, conspiracy theories soon emerged. For instance, *Kronen Zeitung*, Austria's biggest newspaper, which had often sided with Haider and the FPÖ, called his last moments in life 'a riddle, adding that many questions still were left unanswered' (Pándi 2008).

Haider's sudden demise marked the end of a remarkable political career. In 1986, when he took over the leadership of the FPÖ, the party was on the verge of extinction. Within months, however, the party changed its image from an outmoded, marginal party to a young and vibrant movement. This was chiefly due to Jörg Haider's personality and leadership style. Already by the time of the national elections the same year, the party had won 9.7 percent of the electoral support,

compared to just 5.0 per cent in the previous election in 1983. The FPÖ's rise marked the beginning of a transformation of the Austrian political landscape. In the following national elections in 1990, the party was supported by 16.6 percent of voters, four years later, the party climbed to 22.5 percent, and after the election in 1995, when the party experienced a modest drop in voter support to 21.9 percent, it gained 26.9 percent in the 1999 national elections, putting it on a par with the ÖVP. At the time, it was widely thought that the dual party rule of the SPÖ and ÖVP, which had characterised Austrian politics since the end of the Second World War, had finally been broken.

The FPÖ under Jörg Haider was the subject of a large amount of scholarly attention, not only in Austria, but also internationally. The reactions to Haider's death went beyond what would be expected for a leader of a small party in a rather small European country. Evidently, the rise of the party, and its leader, expressed issues of considerable general significance and concern.

As the reactions to his death have shown, the rise of Jörg Haider's and the FPÖ is commonly associated with the party's right-wing extremist views. The present thesis will challenge this view, and through a thorough investigation examine the reasons behind the remarkable electoral appeal of the FPÖ between 1986 and 2000.

In this thesis, a few concepts play an important role, and must therefore be briefly defined at this point.

'Populism' constitutes the key theoretical concept in the discussion. The most widespread definition of populism is as *right-wing* populism – a political tactic on the rightist fringes of the spectrum. This definition will also be employed here. In general, populism has negative connotations, being closely associated with right-wing populist tactics and the manipulation of the electorate, allegations based on largely invented or exaggerated characteristics of an oppressive elite, etc. This interpretation of populism is also essentially based on the same sentiments as Fascism and Nazism. While populism can imply right-wing populism, it may also have an egalitarian character. Egalitarian populism simply aims at diffusing power to the electorate.

In the theory of populism, the elite are the opposite of the people. The elite are always deceitful, arrogant and corrupt. In the rhetoric of the FPÖ the elite referred to is that of the dual political rule between the SPÖ and the FPÖ. In general terminology, the elite has rightist connotations, seen as being in favour of the (conservative) oppressors and against the left – the workers, unemployed, immigrants, etc. In the present thesis, however, the elite is, in the terminology of the FPÖ, defined primarily as the left – Social Democrats, the 'hegemonic power'- while the people – represented by the FPÖ – no longer belong to the left but to the right.

'Right-wing extremism' constitutes another concept used here to discuss the FPÖ. The most conventional definitions of right-wing extremism, as used for example by scholar like Eatwell, Mudde and von Beyme, emphasizes the following elements: nationalism, the strong state, racism and anti-democracy (Eatwell 2004, p. 8; Mudde 1996; von Beyme 1998). Ethnic affiliation to a nation or a racial community is seen as being of paramount importance, and all other interests and values, such as liberal individualism or universalism, are subordinate or irrelevant. Consequently, right-wing extremism constitutes a far rightist version of relativism; i.e. the denial of human rights, in favour of an emphasis on collective entities and group rights. In this thesis sentiments in favour of 'nationalism' are not seen as expressions of right-wing extremism. These sentiments can also form the basis for a welfare state critique of the negative impacts of globalisation. A policy aimed at merely reducing the number of immigrants cannot be seen as right-wing extremist. Such a policy can also be driven by economic necessities and be proposed by parties of various ideological shades. Views according to which the 'interests' of the domestic citizen are seen as paramount are not necessarily right-wing extremist views. Often, these views are merely an expression of conservatism.

'Austrian corporatism' signifies the dual elite political rule between the SPÖ and the ÖVP, which dominated Austria's political, social, cultural and economic life from the end of the Nazi regime, until 1986, when this arrangement started to lose momentum. These two political parties cooperated by dividing vital decision-making according to a proportional system – the so-called *Proporz*. The basic foundation of Austrian Corporatism, however, is constituted by "social partnership", i.e. a systematic and institutionalised cooperation between capital and labour, as

represented, respectively, by the business associations and trade union confederations. Originating as a large-scale attempt to overcome the political fragmentation and turmoil of the Second World War period, Austrian Corporatism was always characterised by a “post-ideological” pragmatism (Lijphart, 1977, p. 102; Lehmbbruch, 1967, p. 25).

As an example of this pragmatism, vital economic decisions were dealt with through administrative organs ostensibly removed from ideological concerns. *Die Paritätische Kommission für Lohn- und Preisfragen* – where increases in wages and prices were determined – is an example of such an administrative organ (for a more detailed description of Austrian corporatism, see Chapter 5).

A brief summary of the chapters is presented below.

Chapter 2, 'Right-wing Extremism and Populism – A Review of the Literature', will present an overview of the academic literature on contemporary European extreme right-wing parties, focusing on the causes for their electorate appeal, their underlying ideologies and their relations to populism. Moreover, the chapter will assess whether and to what extent the literature regards the European right-wing extremist scene as a continuation of 'classic' right-wing extremism, fascism or Nazism or whether and to what extent it is taken to constitute a response and protest to 'new' social phenomena. Then, the focus will turn to the FPÖ and the period between 1986 and 2000, and the factors commonly seen as shaping the party's success. An analysis of right-wing extremism as a core factor will be followed by a discussion of the role of populism; here the failings within the Austrian elite are seen as paramount. Two different forms of populism will be presented: *right-wing* populism, expressing and exploiting mostly exaggerated flaws within the Austrian elite to maximise voter support, and *egalitarian* populism, pointing at *real* and substantial defects within the Austrian elite.

Chapter 3, 'Methodology', discusses the methodology and data sources used in the thesis. In seeking to find answers to the questions raised in the thesis, primary sources have been considered of particular importance; these include the FPÖ's yearbooks, party programmes, election results, survey results and exit polls, but also

statements, speeches and excerpts from books by prominent party members. Considerable attention is paid to Jörg Haider's statements and speeches. Two of his books are the focus of a more detailed analysis. Secondary sources dealing with the nature and the rise of the FPÖ offer additional information. As a notable case of international response, the 2000 EU-report on Austria and the sanctions are also discussed.

Chapter 4, 'Populism', outlines the core theoretical concept of the thesis. A common denominator of the concept of populism will be suggested. Then, two different expressions of populism will be outlined; right-wing populism and egalitarian populism. While the former expresses a largely invented and exaggerated critique of the elite, the latter builds its critique of the elite on real shortcomings, and advocates giving people real power. Therefore, typically populist features, such as the idea of the charismatic, larger-than-life leader and the idea of a conspiracy within the elite are not necessarily tied to right-wing populism, but can also be associated with an egalitarian form of populism. The FPÖ exhibits features of both forms of populism. While its critics largely highlight the characteristics associated with right-wing populism, such as the manipulation of voters and other 'dark' motives, the FPÖ sees itself as advocating greater political participation of the people.

Chapter 5, 'Austrian Corporatism – an Overview', presents the wider context of the corporatist arrangements of the Austrian elite system. Initially, a critical presentation of Austrian corporatism will be made. Critics have stressed the widespread corruption, the dominance of the SPÖ and the ÖVP over the life of the Austrian citizen. It has been portrayed as suffocating and stifling, combining high voting figures with political apathy. However, the system favoured economic rationality and progress as evidenced by Austria's post-war economic success story. By discussing the historical background and the frailty of the state, the importance of Austrian corporatism to social cohesion in the aftermath of the Second World War is highlighted.

Chapter 6, 'A Short History of the FPÖ from 1949 to 1986' will present the historical background and evolution of the party prior to Haider's leadership. The party's early years, when it mainly was comprised of members affiliated to the former Nazi regime,

will be addressed. We shall note the ways in which large groups of former National Socialists were able to disappear into the bureaucracies of the SPÖ and the ÖVP. Then, the overview will describe the party's evolution, which has often taken the form of a struggle between German nationalism and more mainstream, liberal ideas. The background to and brief existence of the government coalition between the FPÖ and the SPÖ between 1983 and 1986 will be presented. Due to Jörg Haider's key role in the present thesis, the presentation will stress his political strategy during the years preceding the party leader election in 1986, and also the election itself and Jörg Haider's successful coup against the incumbent Norbert Steger. It will also describe Haider's rise to prominence in Carinthia.

In Chapter 7, 'Analysing the FPÖ's Electoral Appeal – Rhetoric, Party Programme and Reactions', a detailed discussion of right-wing extremism as a cause for the rise of the FPÖ will be conducted. A number of Haider's controversial statements will be highlighted. Party programmes and the party's yearbooks will be subject to a close examination. The chapter seeks to assess to what extent these documents express right-wing extremist views or whether they can be said to involve rather more general populist themes. In addition, the EU-sanctions against Austria will provide a good example of an international, systematic response to, supposedly, a right-wing extremist party.

Chapter 8, 'Analysing the Appeal of the FPÖ – the Electorate', presents a wealth of quantitative data to support the findings of the thesis. Election results from elections in Haider's home region of Carinthia and at the national level will present the background to the electoral development of the FPÖ. Data on the socio-economic profile of the 'typical FPÖ voter' will be added. Subsequently, public polls describing the FPÖ voter in relation to voters of other parties will be assessed, followed by a cross-party comparison of capacities for solidarity. Finally, a thorough investigation of key factors for voting for the FPÖ will be made, based on a number of national election polls.

In Chapter 9, 'The FPÖ's Critique of the Elite', the party's own critical discussion of the Austrian elite system is discussed. Special attention will be assigned to Jörg Haider's 1993 *Die Freiheit, die ich meine* (1993a) and his 1997 *Befreite Zukunft*

(1997b), analysing the extent of the FPÖ's populist, anti-elitist critique. A brief overview of his cultural critique will be followed by a more elaborate discussion of his political critique of the Austrian elite and an overview of his considerably shorter economic critique. In addition, the FPÖ's 1994 *Österreichserklärung zur Nationalratswahl* will complement and support the findings in the two books by Haider.

The conclusion (Chapter 10) provides a synthesis of the main findings. Thereafter a discussion of the events following 2000 and the extent to which they support the findings of this thesis will be made. The thesis ends by discussing the FPÖ in the wider European context of right-wing populist and right-wing extremist parties. The rise of some of these parties, which underwent a massive increase in several EU member states during the last election to the European Parliament, shows that the observations and conclusions of the thesis have implications beyond Austria.

The academic debate on the rise of the FPÖ under Jörg Haider has been very intense. The majority of these discussions have concluded that the voters were above all attracted by the party's right-wing extremism (Zöchling 2000, Bailer-Galanda and Neugebauer 1997, Scharsach 2000a, Hainsworth 2000, Griffin 1991, Golsan 1998). Other scholars have stressed the party's protest potential, emphasizing that FPÖ voters were first and foremost anti-elitist and populist (e.g. Betz 1994, Pick 2000a, Sully 1997). Nevertheless, these two perspectives and their relative importance for explaining the success of the FPÖ at the ballot boxes have not been properly investigated and compared. In particular, there is a lack of empirical analysis of data from within the FPÖ policy circles, as well as systematic analyses of factors behind the voting patterns among those who voted for the FPÖ. The majority of studies also leave unanswered the question of the reasons *behind* Jörg Haider's aggressive political rhetoric. Using a variety of data sources, including policy texts and electoral results, this thesis offers a systematic assessment of right-wing extremism and populism as the two key explanations for the rise of the FPÖ since 1986. Party Programmes, key party statements and Haider's own books will be subjected to thorough analyses in order to elucidate the relative importance of right-wing extremist versus populist themes. The social-political background to the party's rhetoric, and in particular Jörg Haider's political style, will also be discussed in order

to elucidate the causes behind the rise of the FPÖ between 1986 and 2000. The thesis also deals with foreign reactions to the rise of the FPÖ. In particular, it asks whether the sanctions against the Austrian government were caused by Austrian voters with a right-wing extremist tendency; or if voters instead were motivated by populist feelings. The findings in the above investigation will be supported by statistical data and voter surveys, particularly exit polls indicating voters' motivations for voting for the FPÖ during four consecutive elections: 1986, 1990, 1994 and 2000. Using these data, we can address the question of whether the FPÖ voter was acting from a right-wing extremist foundation, or whether they were voting along lines that we could call 'populist' or 'anti-elitist'.

A determination of voter motivation for support of the FPÖ is not purely an academic issue. An understanding of political life requires that we know why the electorate moves in various directions, and what reasons these voters give for their decisions. These trends reflect basic social changes in society, and will generate diverse political responses and social policies. What, for instance, led voters to start supporting Green parties in the 1970s? And why have blue collar voters for some time been moving from the moderate left to the right? Change in voter behaviour is particularly important to understand the dynamics of right-wing parties, such as the FPÖ. Unless the reasons for their popularity are carefully analyzed, the response by 'political mainstream' may be counter-productive, further increasing the voter support of these parties. In order to find effective strategies against supposedly undemocratic parties and movements, it is necessary to know *why* they gain strength. Various explanations for the rise of these parties call for very different types of responses from democratic mainstream. Moreover, at present, Europe is witnessing an escalation in support for right-wing parties, particularly in the former Eastern Europe. These parties, many of which are no longer fringe movements, may not only pose a problem in their own countries, but to the democratic foundation of the European Union.

There is no denying that the interpretation for the rise of the FPÖ as a result of an increase in right-wing extremist element is important because it brings to light issues about the connection between the FPÖ and its historical link with Nazi Germany and the recurring presence of former National Socialists and revisionists within the party.

It also raises issues about Jörg Haider, who time and again brought notoriety to Austria. In this thesis, I argue that viewing the party's success as purely a manifestation of a right-wing extremist tendency is not born out by the data. I will argue that Haider's FPÖ, rather than appealing to right-wing extremist and elitist sentiments, rallied voters primarily through its vociferous, populist anti-elite criticism. In assessing the two 'driving forces' in the debate about FPÖ support – the right-wing extremist and the populist – we can obtain a fuller understanding of the sources of support for the rise of the party between 1986 and 2000. However, the issue is larger than Haider and the FPÖ. The FPÖ case is useful as a means of understanding the reasons behind the current appeal of parties on the rightist fringes. In particular, if such parties pose a threat to democracy, we need to understand the specific nature of this threat – is it right-wing nationalist or anti-elitist/populist? Failure to understand the factors behind FPÖ support may lead to a blanket 'naming and shaming' of anyone who may find some of Haider's critiques to be plausible. An overly sweeping and inclusive interpretation of racism and right-wing extremism only broadens the electoral base for parties such as the FPÖ. Only through more detailed analysis can we avoid succumbing to banalities and stereotypical allegations about the FPÖ and related parties and the appeal of leaders such as Haider, who is hardly an exception on the current European political scene. We need a more nuanced framework than that of simply concluding that "Yes, he is a fascist." Or "No, he is simply a harmless populist".

As was previously noted, the vast majority of scholarly work on the FPÖ has emphasized Haider's and the FPÖ's links to right-wing extremism, racism, and fascism. This thesis will demonstrate, instead, that Haider and FPÖ support is rooted in voters' populism rather than right-wing nationalism. Unlike previous studies which chiefly have emphasized links between the FPÖ and right-wing extremism, often relying on and reiterating overly critical secondary sources, the findings of the present thesis rest on an analysis of the party's own policy documents and other first-hand data such as voter surveys. The use of these primary sources will also contribute toward generating new insights and fresh ideas into the debate about the sources of right-wing support.

An analysis of the electoral appeal of the FPÖ can be conducted in many ways, using various research designs. Below, a few of these will be compared, and the benefits of the present research design described. One way of analyzing the appeal of the FPÖ is to identify tendencies toward general right-wing extremism within the party (Bailer and Neugebauer 1998; Merkl and Weinberg 1997; Golsan (ed.) 1998; Gremliza (ed.) 2000; Gress 1994). A second strategy is to focus particularly on the party's and Jörg Haider's links to anti-Semitism, pointing out statements or campaigns which resemble more classic anti-Semitic appeals (Schiedel and Neugebauer 2002).

While these research strategies can certainly generate valuable insights, they have as their point of departure a view of the FPÖ as right-wing *extreme*. These studies only seek to 'uncover' or 'reveal' the FPÖ's extremist character. This thesis will argue that the extremist segment of the FPÖ is confined to the party's right-wing section – both in terms of key politicians and in terms of why voters support it (here we might draw a parallel between the FPÖ and social democratic parties, which may contain a few genuine socialists and use the rhetoric of 'workers solidarity' in their platforms and rituals, but whose basic policy and voter support comes from those who do not readily have left socialist or communist ideologies). In the case of the FPÖ, the views held within a certain minor segment of the party have all too frequently been depicted as a valid description of the party as a whole, a conclusion which is never applied to social democratic or even Eurosocialist parties. The result is a biased caricature, with only scant scientific relevance to the party's core members or sources of voter support. An attempt to explain the rise of the party in its entirety must also seek to explain its appeal to the other, 'leftist' section of the party. In focusing on the FPÖ's populism, the present thesis attempts a more comprehensive description of the party's entire electorate. Populism as a political tactic does not rule out right-wing extremism, but populism should not be confused with right-wing extremism or anti-Semitism. This means that FPÖ voters may be voting for the party *despite* its right-wing extremist and anti-semitic tendencies rather than because of them. In short, they may be voting for the FPÖ because of its populist, anti-elite character.

The Viennese *Dokumentationsarchiv des Österreichischen Widerstandes* (Archive of the Austrian Resistance or DÖW) is a renowned institution, specializing in analyzing

war-time and post-war fascism and National Socialism. It also focuses on present day movements on the far-rightist scene, including the FPÖ. However, the DÖW, for all its exhaustive documentation, exhibits a similar bias as the sources mentioned above. While dedicating considerable resources to analyzing the FPÖ's connections to racism and fascism, it pays little attention to the FPÖ's vehement populist criticism of the Austrian establishment.¹ This means they cannot fully understand the rise of the party under the regime of Jörg Haider. The present thesis, therefore, will help restore the balance between the extremist-focused and populist-centered perspectives on the FPÖ.

As will be noted in chapter 6 – 'A Short History of the FPÖ from 1949 to 1986' – the party under Jörg Haider was not, as the Danish *Dansk Folkeparti* or the Belgian *Vlaams Belang* a 'new' political movement. Instead, the FPÖ (under the name of VdU) was established already in 1956 – one year after Austria emerged from Allied occupation. This has led many observers to pay special attention to the political heritage since the war-time period (Oswalt 1989; *Handbuch des Österreichischen Rechtsextremismus* 1993). Undeniably, this line of research is fruitful, not least due to the fact that the FPÖ kept exhibiting political programmes which had clear elements of right-wing extremist and even National Socialist thinking, and was often led by politicians with a more than dubious political repute. Still, it remains unclear whether a continuous line of history also means that a party's central political views as well as the predominant appeal of its electorate are based on an ideological legacy of the Second World War. This line of reasoning, while feasible, suffers from the fact that it is not always underpinned by empirical evidence. This thesis will argue that the link between Second World War fascism and the FPÖ is tenuous, if not misleading. Instead, the present thesis will argue that the rise of the FPÖ under Jörg Haider was not linked to the war period, but was caused by circumstances related to modern, post-war Austria – most importantly, a critique of Austrian Corporatism and the political compact between the SPÖ and the ÖVP. It will be shown that the FPÖ's populism and anti-elitism, directed against the Austrian establishment, emerged as Haider replaced Steger as party leader in 1986. The popularity of the FPÖ, therefore, is a result of the rise of anti-elitism in modern Austria. The 'enemy' to whom the FPÖ

¹ In a conversation with Willy Lasek, researcher at the DÖW, I asked about material concerning sentiments of populism and anti-elitism within the FPÖ. Lasek answered, however, that 'we do not have that here'. (14 Jan, 2002)

appeals is not the foreigner or the Jew, but the national, urban, corporate, cultural elite. The FPÖ promotes itself as a party of the 'people' against this elite.

Jörg Haider, who died in an auto accident in 2008, was always notorious for his blunt, and often aggressive statements and proclamations. Therefore, numerous scholars have underscored his personal utterances, not only as a key to the persona of the FPÖ, but also as the main explanation behind the party's popularity at the polls between 1986 and 2000 (Tributsch 1994; Bailer-Galanda 1995; Scharsach 2000a; Scharsach and Kuch 2000; Zöchling 2000). There is no denying that Haider had a flair for highly provocative language. Still, the bulk of this line of analysis tends to be content with statements about his rhetorical flair and less concerned with their meaning. This often leads to conclusions being drawn out of context, where a right-wing extremist focus becomes the only possible interpretation. The consequence is a situation where the populist nature of Haider's rhetoric is either downplayed or overlooked in favour of the more stigmatized, dangerous, nationalist or rightist views. Jörg Haider was a political chameleon, who leaped from advocating nationalism to endorsing neo-liberalism. The present thesis will seek to incorporate the complexities of Haider's politics. Instead of exaggerating the radical nature of his rhetoric, we will place Haider's statements in their social-historical context. We will show that what appear to be right-wing nationalist, extremist statements and policies are in fact more in line with populist, anti-elitist rhetoric. If this is true, we should see traces of popular support for Haider not only among traditional right-wing, nationalist groups, but also among more populist-oriented segments, even among the traditional supporters of the left. This tendency is not peculiar to Austria, of course. European politics is full of examples of working class groups who 'should be' voting left or social democratic, and instead voting for populist or right-wing parties who speak to their anti-elite concerns. What makes the Austrian case interesting, however, is the fact that the Austrian elite rule between the SPÖ and the ÖVP was often seen as a 'pure', textbook case of corporatism, at the same time as the increase in support of blue-collar workers during Jörg Haider's leadership was very clear (See Table 1 – 'Support of So-called 'Modernisation Losers' – FPÖ (Austrian Freedom Party), in Comparison 1995'; Table 8 – 'Socio-Demographic Profile of FPÖ Voters 1986 to 1999'). Moreover, the rise of Jörg Haider and his party presents a very rich case for analysing these socio-political trends.

This leads over to another important contribution of the present thesis. As noted above, research highlighting various forms of right-wing extremist tendencies within the FPÖ as the explanation for their electoral success tends to focus only on these factors. Similarly, scholars who wish to stress the historical links to Nazism, or Haider's personal utterances, or indeed, any other particular aspect within the FPÖ, will tend to highlight these aspects while paying less attention to other factors. This thesis has a different approach. We will analyze a range of different FPÖ political texts, without any preconceived assumption as to the relative weight of different factors. In focusing on these primary sources, we can obtain a broader understanding of the reasons behind the rise of the FPÖ between 1986 and 2000. In addition, by investigating a wide range of political texts, programmes, policy statements and speeches, we will demonstrate that the source of FPÖ's popularity lay primarily in its anti-elitism and populism. The right-wing, nationalist, 'fascist', 'neo-Nazi' labeling or name calling of these parties does little to explain the source of their support, the strength of their electorate, or even why they also decline under certain conditions.

Chapter 2

Right-wing Extremism and Populism – A Review of the Literature

Ever since Jörg Haider assumed the leadership of the Austrian Freedom Party in September 1986 and the party witnessed a dramatic rise in popularity, it has been the subject of considerable scholarly attention. The literature on the Austrian Freedom Party is marked by a wide variety of perspectives on and interpretations of the nature and objectives of the party and the reasons behind its rise; many of them critical, others, although considerably fewer, with a more positive view. This chapter will provide a short overview of the academic literature on right-wing populist parties, with a focus on the Austrian Freedom Party. As a background to the Freedom Party in Austria a general discussion of the contemporary extreme right in Europe will be presented. This will focus on their ideological underpinnings, the idea and use of populism, and various explanations for their electoral appeal over the last decades. Thereafter, the different interpretations and perspectives in relation to the reasons behind the rise of the Freedom Party during Jörg Haider's leadership between 1986 and 2000 will be outlined. This discussion is organised according to the factors most commonly described as shaping or contributing to the success of the Austrian Freedom Party: the appeal of right-wing extremist ideas, and the party's and its leader's populist critique of the Austrian establishment.

These various themes will be discussed further in chapters 4 to 6. A detailed, empirical analysis of the role of right-wing extremism and populism in the rise of the Freedom Party will follow in Chapters 7 to 9. Similarly, the concepts of populism and corporatism, which provide the conceptual framework for the analysis, will be dealt with in greater detail in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 respectively.

The literature review will, after a brief consideration of the study and definition of right-wing extremism, deal with the ideological underpinnings of right-wing extremism, then examine to what extent right-wing extremist parties may also display clear populist characteristics. This will be followed by an overview of the literature on the factors of electoral appeal of right-wing extremist parties and a review of the weight given in the literature to right-wing extremism as a determining factor for the electoral success of the Austrian Freedom Party. The review will conclude with a

discussion of the importance of populism to the electoral success of the Freedom Party in the writings about the party.

The Study of Right-wing Extremism

Right-wing extremism, as a concept, has been conventionally defined to include right-wing fringe ideologies, such as Fascism/Neo-Fascism, Nazism/Neo-Nazism, and radical nationalism. The terms Fascism or Neo-Fascism suggest a continuation from or revival of the views prevailing in either Italy from 1923 until the end of the Second World War, or, more widely, in Italy and Germany during the inter-war period and the Second World War. The terms Nazism or Neo-Nazism refer to a continuation or resurgence of the ideology dominating Germany from 1933 until the end of the Second World War. Nazism or Neo-Nazism is nearly unanimously regarded as more extreme than Fascism. However, Stanley Payne (1997), renowned expert on fascism, has argued that fascism can also be seen as an overarching term, covering both Italian Fascism and German National Socialism. Scholars disagree as to whether the 'age of fascism' continued beyond 1945. Some scholars of the field imply that it did not. In the eyes of Ernst Nolte (1965, p. 401), scholar of fascism and instigator of the German '*Historikerstreit*' [battle of historians] in the mid 1980's, Hugh Trevor-Roper (1968, p. 18) and Stanley Payne (1980, p. 5) its era ended with the defeat of German Nazism and Italian Fascism. Hence, Stanley Payne's (1997) recent authoritative contribution in the field bears the title *A History of Fascism 1914-1945*. Furthermore, the issue of post-war fascism is given scant attention in recent standard publications on fascism, such as Walter Laqueur's *Fascism: A Reader's Guide* (1979) or George Mosse's '*Towards a general theory of Fascism*' (1979) However, other academics as well as left-leaning activists and publishers contest these conclusions. Stanley Payne's assertion that fascism was 'a historical phenomenon primarily limited to Europe during the era of the two world wars' holds true, as pointed out by Roger Griffin, 'only if considerable weight is placed on the word "primarily"' (Griffin 1991, p. 147; see also Payne 1980, p. 176). Then again, the debate about whether or not the age of fascism continues to the present seems to be to a great extent a matter of definition. If we accept that the fascist epoch is coterminous with the reigns of Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini, then fascism has, of course, ended for

good. If, however, it means more generally the mere existence of far right tendencies in society such as a homogeneous view of the nation and a scorn for certain aspects of modernity, then, fascism remains with us, and is likely to do so for the foreseeable future.

Right-Wing Extremism – Ideological Underpinnings

Starting with the ideological underpinnings of these parties, a wide array of plausible qualities have been proposed. It should be noted that in the literature there is no clear distinction made between parties labeled as right-wing, right-wing extremist, neo-Nazi or neo-Fascist/ post-war Fascist. The following overview therefore discusses the most common traits.

In the analysis of Uwe Backes and Patrick Moreau (Backes and Moreau, 1993), extreme right parties share a rejection of egalitarianism, and suggest an ethno-biological or spiritual community. Elbers and Fennema (1993, quoted in Ignazi 1997, p. 49) define extreme right parties by their opposition to democracy and by nationalist and racist attitudes. In discussing 'the extreme right', Paul Hainsworth emphasises 'ethnocentric, xenophobic, exclusionary and often outright racist representations of the nation' as the background to its opposition to 'immigration and multiculturalism' (2000, p. 10). In his influential study Roger Griffin (1991, pp. 166-9) divides 'neo-fascist' movements or parties into four broad categories, namely, revolutionary nationalism, crypto-fascism, revisionism and the new right. Accordingly, 'revolutionary nationalist' movements connote groups that reject all inter-war regimes as role-models, including National Socialism and Fascism. 'Crypto-fascists' are movements operating in the grey zone between the far right and the ultra right, among them the German *Die Republikaner* (The Republicans) under Franz Schönhuber, the Austrian Freedom Party under Jörg Haider; the Norwegian *Framskrittspartiet* (the Progress Party), and *Dansk Folkeparti* (the Danish People's Party). 'Revisionist' movements tend to consciously trivialize the Holocaust. Finally, 'the New Right', most prominently embodied by the French intellectual rightist movement *GRECE* (*Groupment de la Recherche dans une Civilization Européenne*) seeks to counter the decadence of the modern world by evoking mythical, spiritual ideas, such as those of Tolkien. In his exhaustive taxonomy, Cas Mudde examines

no less than 26 different definitions of the post-war extreme right, and brings to attention around 58 features that analysts have attributed to it (Mudde 1996, cited in Hainsworth 2000, p. 9).

However, as pointed out by both Hainsworth and Roger Eatwell (2004, p. 8), despite this richness of plausible core features of the post-war extreme right four main components recur in the literature: 1) anti-democracy, 2) nationalism, 3) racism and, 4) a strong state. These four features have been elaborated by other observers (von Beyme 1998; Mudde 1996). At this point, we may contrast the taxonomy of Cas Mudde to the one proposed by Piero Ignazi. In contrast to the abundance of factors identified by Mudde, mentioned above, Ignazi (1997, p. 49) proposes a radical monocausal definition, whereby the extreme right is seen as a 'political/ideological space where fascism is the key reference.' (See also the discussion in this thesis, Chapter 10, 'Conclusion'.) Apart from these often cited core ideological features of these parties, other key qualities have been suggested, such as traditionalism, Catholic integralism, and national populism (Duranton-Crabol 1991, pp. 24-7).

An Old or New Phenomena?

In discussing the ideological core of the European extreme right, the division between the old and the new right should be brought to attention. The question is: should the contemporary extreme right essentially be seen as a new social phenomenon in its own right, or merely the continuation of pre-WWII ideologies? Those who seek to stress continuity can draw upon a rich variety of indicators. According to Walter Laqueur, the salient qualities of fascism 'were (and are) self-evident: nationalism; social Darwinism; racialism; the need for leadership; a new aristocracy, and obedience; and the negation of the ideals of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution' (Laqueur 1996, p. 96). Rather than relying on a reasoned argument based on cautious analysis of social trends, 'Fascism has traditionally been based on myths, intuition, instinct (such as the will for power and the voice of the blood), and the irrational'. This, Laqueur adds, 'has not changed' (Laqueur 1996, p. 96). An alternative answer is suggested by the protagonists of the above mentioned 'new right'; an intellectual movement particularly strong in France and Germany, where old, traditional, and brutal concepts such as blood and race have been

replaced by 'softer' concepts, such as 'belonging', 'diversity', and (ethno-)'pluralism'. The key reason as to why this 'new right' is seen as a distinctly new political phenomenon is its recurring use of the ideas of the 'Conservative revolution' from the period of the Weimar Republic, and thinkers such as Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, and the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci. The new right has been thematised from various angles in the literature; Richard Stöss (1980) has dealt with the evolution of the new right in (West)-Germany since 1945, while Franz Gress, Hans-Gerd Jaschke and Klaus Schönekeäs (1990) have discussed the contemporary situation in Western Europe. Armin Pfahl-Traughber (1998) has analysed the (limited) impact on the current extreme right by values from the new right and the conservative revolution. Wolfgang Purtscheller (1994) sees the Austrian Freedom Party as within the family of the new right.

Right-Wing Extremist Parties – Populist or not?

As discussed above, the majority of analysts consider parties such as Front National, *Vlaams Belang* (Flemish interest) and the Austrian Freedom Party as extreme right-wing parties (See Hainsworth 2000; Hainsworth 2008; Merkl and Weinberg 1997; Merkl and Weinberg, 2003; Schain, Zolberg and Hossay 1999; Ignazi 2003; Dézé 2004; Hafeneger 1994; Scharsach and Kuch 2000). Over the last few decades, however, this definition has increasingly been challenged. Instead, populism as an explanatory factor for their electoral appeal has gradually gained popularity in the academic debate (See Dubiel 1986). As pointed out by Roger Eatwell, one reason for this has been the fact that very few would label themselves as 'extreme right', and that the label of 'extreme right' as a consequence would merely be used in order to delegitimise groups (Eatwell 2004, p. 11). Another, more common reason for this conceptual shift is, Eatwell claims, that so-called right-wing extremists in effect are not extreme (Eatwell 2004, p. 11; see also Betz 1994; Betz and Immerfall 1998; Taggart 1995; Taggart 2000). Eatwell's latter conclusions are also supported by Richard Stöss, who suggests that when empirical investigations are taken into account, the German *Die Republikaner* along with a great number of other parties commonly labeled as 'right-wing extremists' are better described as 'protest phenomena' (1994, p. 51).

What, then, are the various definitions of populism in the literature? 'Radical right-wing populism', according to Hans-Georg Betz (1993), has two 'faces': a neo-liberal version (including the Danish People's Party, the Norwegian Progress Party, and the Austrian Freedom Party), and a racist form of populism (comprising *Front National*, *Die Republikaner* and the Belgian *Vlaams Belang*). Betz also introduced a slightly different definition of an 'extreme right populism', including a) a radical, but not necessarily violent opposition to the existing political system, b) the rejection of the individual and social equality, c) the defense of the 'common man', and d) the emphasis on 'common sense'. In his taxonomy of populism, Armin Pfahl-Traughber suggests three dimensions: a) a relationship to the 'people'; b) recourse to an unmediated and direct relationship between the 'people' and the 'populist actor', and c) adherence to the naked truths at the table of regulars (*Stammtisch*) (Pfahl-Traughber, cited in Husbands 1999, p. 50) In a different context, Pfahl-Traughber makes use of populism in order to label those 'modernizing right-wing parties' which appeal to prejudices, traditional values and suggest unfeasible and 'populist' solutions to socioeconomic problems (Pfahl-Traughber, cited in Ignazi 1997) (A more thorough discussion of populism will follow in chapter 4.)

This does not, however, mean that the extreme right and populism (in its various permutations) must be distinct from one another. Instead, it is often argued that the border between them is blurred. As noted by Richard Stöss, the borderline between mere protest-politics and the extreme right is vague. This murky terrain between populism and the extreme right corresponds to Reinhard Heinisch's definition of populism, whereby a populist movement, 'even when embracing far-right ideas', is still 'more designed for maximum popular appeal than ideological rigor' (2002, p. 93). Notably, Stöss adds that political protests may, but need not, be linked to extreme rightist views (1994, p. 35). In other words, protest against the elite may occasionally rest on reality rather than politically opportune allegations. From an analytical point of view, however, the populist protest and right-wing extremist views are different because the former attacks the elite from the position of the excluded underdog, whereas the latter attacks (other) excluded and marginalised groups, such as ethnic minorities, immigrants and homosexuals from a (perceived) elitist position.

Explaining the Electoral Appeal of Right-Wing Extremist Parties

The main purpose of this thesis is to investigate the factors contributing to the electoral success of the Austrian Freedom Party. Therefore our attention now turns to the discussion in the literature of why people vote for extreme right-wing and populist parties. The distinction between the nature of these parties and their electoral appeal is not always clear. To begin with, there are structural explanations, which can be separated into those concerned with a) socioeconomic causes, b) political/cultural causes and c) anti-modernist causes.

Immigration and unemployment have featured prominently as key factors contributing to the rise of the extreme right in Europe. However, the link between socioeconomic factors such as unemployment and immigration and actual data on electoral appeal is inconclusive according to Terri E. Givens (2002, p. 138; see also Betz 1994; Kriesi 1995). Jörg Haider claimed that the number of immigrants in Austria had a direct impact on the number of unemployed Austrians. In addition, he spoke in favour of a reduction of the number of immigrants until Austria had reached full employment. Unemployment alone is also brought forth as a central component behind the rise of extreme right-wing parties. Richard Stöss observes an overrepresentation of the unemployed among extreme right voters. However, he adds, the correlation is weak, because unemployment can lead to a radicalisation in all directions (Stöss 1994, p. 31). Historically, unemployment has often strengthened a leftist persuasion.

Moving over to political/cultural causes, Piero Ignazi (1999, p. 30) suggests four hypothetical causes of the rise of right-wing extremist parties: a) the affirmation of neo-conservatism and neo-liberalism and a waning leftist hegemony (i.e. a rightward trend); b) an increasing political radicalisation and polarisation (i.e. a widening gap); c) the emergence of new issues in the debate, among them immigration, globalization and security; and d) a shrinking public confidence in party politics (i.e. tendencies towards populism). In the discussion below, special attention will be assigned to factors c) and d). A collectivist, Durkheimian explanation using the concept of 'Urban anomie' has been suggested by Nonna Meyer and Pascal Perrineau (1989), for whom 'Urban anomie' is the end result of a prolonged feeling of

exclusion and deprivation, and explains, in their analysis, the rise of Le Pen's Front National (See also Heitmeyer 2005, p. 419).

Anti-modernist causes for the electoral appeal of extreme right-wing parties can be divided into 'losers in the process of modernisation' and 'opponents to modernisation' (See Table 1, Ch. 4, p. 66). As outlined by Richard Stöss (1994, p. 43), the former explanation relates to a general sense of deprivation, for instance associated with unemployment and poverty, as wholesale explanations for increased support of extreme right-wing parties. The latter explanation, whereby the voters of the extreme right are depicted as (less passive) opponents to modernisation, is described by Butterwegge: The current extreme right constitutes the negation of a modern form of society, including its 'humanitarian basic values, its democratic and social accomplishments (welfare state arrangements, human and citizen's rights) within the framework of the nation' (Butterwegge 1990, p.16 f). In brief, the theory of opponents to modernisation stresses an active desire to replace an egalitarian modernity with a hierarchical form of society.

As indicated above, the plausible structural causes for voting for extreme right-wing parties are somewhat contradictory. In his thorough investigation of the German the Republicans Richard Stöss concluded that the supporters of the extreme right make up a very heterogeneous grouping. He observed a shift of voters from many parties; a mild tendency towards those of lower education; and no clear tendency regarding age, income, or religious persuasion. In the absence of decisive structural explanation, Stöss argues that 'supporters of the extreme right most of all are determined by specific political opinions and values' (1994, p. 34). Among these political opinions and values, Stöss includes nationalism, ethnocentrism, racism, anti-Semitism and authoritarianism. The electorate appeal for right-wing extremist parties is, hence, caused by a penchant for racism and authoritarianism – i.e. for right-wing extremism. It could be argued that as an explanation, this line of reasoning is close to circular.

Another central factor behind the rise of the extreme right is brought to attention by Walter Laqueur (1996) When old, traditional concepts such as blood and race have left the stage for the benefit of more defensive and reasoned arguments such as Indo-European values and a (ethno)-pluralist world of many colours, a new style is

also required. Therefore, Laqueur labels these smartly dressed, tanned and media-adapted rightist politicians as members of a new telecratie (1996, p. 93). Jörg Haider and Gianfranco Fini would be good illustrations of this.

Right-wing Extremism – A Determining Factor for the Electoral Success of the FPÖ?

Many observers have claimed that the appeal to the electorate of right-wing extremist ideas in their various shades and expressions has been the most important reason for the rise in popularity of the Austrian Freedom Party between 1986 and 2000. This overview will start with the views expressed in *Handbuch des Österreichischen Rechtsextremismus* (1993), published by the Viennese Archive for the Austrian Resistance.² The rise of the party since 1986 was, it is argued in the *Handbuch*, a consequence of a drastic shift towards right-wing extremist views, symbolised by, among other things, an integration of a large number of Neo-nazis; along with a systematic marginalization of Friedhelm Frischenschlager, Heide Schmidt, and other members of the party's liberal wing. Contrary to what might be expected, this radicalisation was accompanied by an increase in voter support, a trend that has caused great concern among numerous critical scholars. For example, Wolfgang Neugebauer, researcher at the Viennese Archive for the Austrian Resistance, has concluded that the right-wing extremist character of the Freedom Party under Jörg Haider constituted a danger for democracy in Austria (Neugebauer 1997; see also Wodak and Neugebauer 1997). In the eyes of the Austrian journalists Hans-Henning Scharsach and Kurt Kuch (2000, p. 287), the Freedom Party was 'right-wing extremist'; it invariably managed to attract an audience by making use of right-wing extremist rhetoric and socialising with members of the right-wing extremist scene. As for the party leader – Jörg Haider – Scharsach saw him as a 'right-wing extremist' (Bailer-Galanda and Neugebauer 1997, p. 50). The party managed to gain votes because it appealed to the fringes of the electorate. This right-wing extremist interpretation of the Freedom Party is shared by Hermann L. Gremliza (2000, p. 11),

² *Das Dokumentationsarchiv des Österreichischen Widerstandes*, the Archive for the Documentation of the Austrian Resistance, was founded in Vienna in 1963 by former opponents to the Nazi regime. It is an internationally established Austrian research institute focusing on historical and contemporary right-wing extremism.

according to whom the rise of the Freedom Party essentially is to be seen as a sign of a right-wing radicalisation of the Austrian electorate.

Some observers attribute the appeal of the party to its Fascist tendencies. According to Willibald Holzer, Austrian expert on Historical Fascism, the key attractions for the Austrian electorate constituted of: a nationalistic and revisionist view of history; the co-existence of old (and brutal) and new (and sophisticated) racism; a simplified distinction between friend and foe; a critique of democracy and the parliamentary establishment; fierce advocacy in favour of *Volksgemeinschaft*; an authoritarian perception of the state and the strong leader; an aggressive political style and a distinctly anti-feminist view (Scharsach and Kuch 2000, p. 287). Holzer's view of a new and sophisticated language is linked to the theory that the extremist ideas of the party may not always be apparent as they are often expressed in a codified language, disguised behind a veil of modernised rhetoric and a righteous anti-elitist 'protest' agenda only to be understood by a small number of the party's voters.³ In the eyes of Roger Griffin (1991, p. 167), terms such as 'liberal', 'progressive' and 'freedom' are nothing but attempts to hide 'ultra-right thinking'. Furthermore, the 'modernisation-thesis', which sees the movement towards a 'New Right' as a way to win over the electorate, has stimulated an interest in the ways in which this is being expressed in publications within the power sphere of the party. In this context, Reinhold Gärtner, Austrian expert in the field of the extreme right and the Freedom Party, should be mentioned; in particular his thematic investigation of the 'sophisticated' and 'intellectualised' rhetoric in a monthly magazine *die Aula*, closely affiliated to the party (Gärtner 1996). The examples above show that the issue of rhetoric and use of language remains an area of vital significance among critics of the Freedom Party. In particular, research has focused on various 'discourses of exclusion', be they discourses based on nationalism, racism or anti-Semitism. Ruth Wodak, a prominent linguist, has been at the forefront of this approach (e.g. Wodak *et al.* 1990; Wodak 2000). More generally, Brigitte-Bailer Galanda's *Haider Wörtlich-Führer in die Dritte Republik* (1995) offers a critical, systematised overview of the political language of the former leader of the Austrian Freedom Party. These views are shared by Anton Pelinka, Austrian historian and expert on the Austrian party system and the ideology of the Freedom Party. The old Nazis and the bourgeois-

³ For a discussion of this transformation from an "old right" to a "new right" furnished with sophisticated rhetoric, see Pfahl-Traughber (1998).

agricultural pan-German camp comprising the party's historical backbone were, they argue, attracted by Haider's rhetoric. However, Haider also managed to exploit the resentment among 'the losers in the modernisation process' as well as persuade significant parts of the young urban proletariat (See Table 1, Ch. 4, p. 66, and Table 8, Ch. 8, p. 173). Therefore, Pelinka maintains, along with 'an old-fashioned message', Haider made use of 'a successful post-modernist and "populist" style' (Pelinka 2008).

Undeniably, these right-wing extremist aspects constitute an important explanatory factor for the rise of the Austrian Freedom Party since 1986 when Jörg Haider took over as party leader, and researchers, the media and political commentators have been greatly influenced by this critical understanding. Still, according to other theories, the right-wing extremist aspect does not comprise the entire picture. Right-wing extremism does not constitute the primary or sole explanation for the Freedom Party's remarkable electoral appeal during Jörg Haider's leadership between 1986 and 2000. The following will present a summary of the literature on the subject. One question is: What is meant by Fascism? On what grounds has the Freedom Party so often been depicted as fascist? As noted by Walter Laqueur (1996, p. 7), the concept of 'Fascism' is widely seen as a concept of paramount evil, and it is uncertain to what extent the Freedom Party fits into this category (See also Kowalsky 1992, p. 29; Pick 2000a, p. 277). Insofar as the relation between Jörg Haider's Freedom Party and Fascism is questionable, it casts doubt on the argument that Haider and his party would represent a threat to democracy. While a critique of one democratic system may constitute an outright attack against democracy *per se*, this need not necessarily be the case. For instance, Hans-Georg Betz (2000, p. 269) has argued that Haider's Freedom Party, rather than seeking to end democracy, was defending it against authoritarian oppression.

As mentioned above, some observers have questioned the 'radicalness' of the rhetoric of Haider and other party members. Extremist statements need not always be indicative of an extremist character of the whole party. In fact, the message may also occasionally serve the sole purpose of provoking the party's political antagonists. According to Max Riedlsperger (1996a, p. 359), it is important to remain composed and not yield to emotions when faced with such rhetoric, because eliciting emotional reactions may be part of Haider's intention. As a final area of controversy,

this review will touch upon the various perceptions in the literature about the 'real' intentions of the Freedom Party. It is often assumed that these intentions are 'hidden'. Reinhard Heinisch, political scientist and expert on the Austrian party system, questions the weight of such an argument. During the international sanctions against Austria in 2000, all Austrian leaders, he claims, committed themselves to democracy and related principles, and it is very difficult not to take these statements at face value (Heinisch 2002, p. 244).

As the review of the literature has highlighted, the reasons for the electoral success of the Freedom Party have been the subject of intense debate. While many observers have emphasised the appeal of the party's right-wing ideological tendencies, its statements on nationalism, immigration and unemployment, some have highlighted other factors such as its populist appeal. While there is an abundance of material supporting each perspective, there is a shortage of literature concerned with comparing these two perspectives with the support of a thorough empirical analysis. This thesis intends to fill this gap by first offering the first systematic comparison. The following section will therefore review how the importance of populism has been treated in the literature.

Populism – A Factor of Success for the Party? An Overview of the Literature

Many authors agree that the success of the Austrian Freedom Party is due or at least partially due to Haider's populist appeal. Even though populism as a concept is vague, it still has some discernable core tenets, in particular: (at times) a stereotypical defense of 'the people', and (at times) an equally simplified critique of 'the elite'.

Relating to this critique is a second question concerning the intentions of the party leaders, i.e., whether this critique of the elite is a tactic or an end in itself. In other words, is the party *really* aiming for increased democracy, or does it have a hidden, right-wing populist agenda, whereby democracy is a means to achieve power, and populism a mere vote-catching tactic? In order to satisfactorily address these two very different questions, it is important to examine the role and performance of the Austrian elite. As Chapter 5 will show in greater detail, the post-Second World War

history of Austria is characterised by the dual rule of the country's two main political parties, the Austrian People's Party and the Social Democratic Party of Austria. While this arrangement has contributed to peaceful social, economic and political development in Austria, over the years this system has, according to many scholars, started to exhibit democratic deficits and flaws, particularly in the form of a lack of transparency and a rubber-stamp parliament (Luther and Müller 1992, p. 104). These flaws have been greatly exploited by critics of the system and are key elements of Haider's and the Austrian Freedom Party's discourse.

The electorate may be attracted either by the right-wing rhetoric, based primarily on unfounded allegations against the elite, or by arguments appealing to a more egalitarian and just society. Dealing with one of the core components of populism – the critique of the elite – the German and Austrian political theorists Claus Leggewie and Rudolf Burger lean towards the latter explanation for the Austrian Freedom Party's popularity (Riedlsperger 1995b). Contrary to more skeptical commentators, party sympathisers did not, in their view, support the Freedom Party because they craved for a highly centralised and neo-Fascist state. Anyone who instantly brings up parallels with a conquered Fascist past, they argue, fails to understand modern international realities. Stefan Immerfall, German political sociologist, argues that the reason why many Austrian citizens decided to vote for the Freedom Party was not that they longed for 'the recrudescence of fascism', or 'a highly centralised, neofascist totalitarianism' but instead because they favoured 'a smaller government' where the omnipotence of the ruling elite is broken, and 'in which the people play(ed) a more direct role in governing themselves' (Betz and Immerfall 1998, p. 27). In other words, its electorate wanted more influence, not less. Omnipotent parties effectively destroy democracy, as noted by the political journalist Hella Pick. During the period of the coalition between the Social Democratic Party and the Austrian People's Party, Austria was, she argues, turned into a democracy without an effective opposition, 'a mockery of democracy' (Pick 2000a). With its tremendous success at the polls, the Freedom Party brought this to public attention and used it to elicit more support.

Of course, criticising elitism within the Austrian political system does not necessarily imply the endorsing of all, or even the majority of the rhetorical fire by the Freedom Party. As pointed out by Göran Dahl (1999, p. 105), a leading Swedish sociologist in the field of political extremism, the party's successful 'anti-establishment profile' was

'not without ground' (See also Persson 1996). Even though a justified critique of the Austrian elite is an important contributing factor in explaining the phenomenal rise in popularity of the party, its importance in the literature has largely been underrated.

In the eyes of other commentators, among them Walter Laqueur, Brigitte Bailer-Galanda and Hans-Henning Scharsach, the Freedom Party's 'liberating' rhetoric, and its defence of 'the people's interests', however, are unconvincing. At this point, we must return to the question above: is the party merely seeking to increase popular participation, or does it have a hidden agenda? This question could be partly addressed by distinguishing between a well-founded critique of the elite and a critique based largely on imaginary, fabricated shortcomings of the elite. However, the literature on the subject rarely pays attention to this.

In the eyes of Walter Laqueur (1996, p. 218), the Freedom Party had merely created 'the illusion of a "participatory democracy", a euphemism for the manipulation of people unhappy with the political parties' performance.' In a similar fashion, the Austrian journalist Hans-Henning Scharsach describes a betrayal of the party's electorate: 'Haider's populist proposals of plebiscitary democracy pervert the very nature of this democratic instrument.' (2000a, p. 208). Whatever its voters had hoped for, Haider's real agenda had nothing to do with increased public participation in political matters. Thus, plebiscites cease to be a safety measure in the hands of the citizens against elitist tendencies within the political establishment. In contrast, 'the will of the people' is being exploited for the benefit of hidden authoritarian agendas and a malevolent populist elite.

The Importance of the Party Leader

In populist parties, the balance of power between the party leader and his or her party is often an essential issue. For our present purpose, we must ask: did the personal style, personality and 'charisma' (literally meaning 'gift of grace') of Jörg Haider significantly contribute to the rise of the Freedom Party? (Gerth and Mills 1997, p. 52). Below, we shall not go into more detail regarding the concept of charismatic leadership as, for example, in Max Weber's classic discussion. For the purpose of this thesis it suffices to follow the short definition suggested by Roger

Eatwell, which defines charisma as: a) the ability to appeal to voters (external dimension), and b) the ability to hold a party together (internal definition) (Eatwell 2003, p. 65; Weber 1997). First, let us consider a few examples of this external dimension – the ability to attract voters. Those who believe that Haider's charisma had a central role in explaining the rise of the party often stress the correlation between the rise of the party and Haider's seizing of power in 1986. Throughout its existence, the Freedom Party had enjoyed the support of a fairly stable though small fraction of the Austrian electorate; but the year 1986 marked a drastic change. As noted by Hans-Georg Betz, within three months of the election of Jörg Haider in Innsbruck the popular support for the party increased from one percent to almost ten percent at the federal level (Betz 1994, p. 12). (For an overview of shares of the vote see Table 5 in Chapter 8, p. 166.) In the eyes of Göran Dahl, Haider's role is 'very significant' for the sudden rise of the Freedom Party, and 'should not be underestimated' (1999, p. 105). Kurt Richard Luther, British expert on the topic, emphasises the fact that the party's period of 'populist protest *par excellence*' between 1986 and 1999, coincided with Jörg Haider's leadership (2003, p. 192). In his overview of 'the charismatic leader thesis' for the party's rise, Roger Eatwell emphasises a certain form of external charisma – manifest in the focus on Haider in large sections of the Austrian media (2003, p. 66). Publicity as such, however, does not necessarily entail political support. The perception of Jörg Haider in the Austrian media contains darker aspects. Jörg Haider has often responded to serious criticisms by taking an issue to court, followed by accusations of 'defamation' and the like. Consequently, the most likely cost of any serious accusation – both in terms of time and, every so often, eventual fines – has led many journalists, politicians, and academics to think twice before voicing any criticism against Jörg Haider and his party. A famous court case resulted from a comment made by the Innsbruck political historian Anton Pelinka on Italian television in May 1999. In the interview Pelinka stated: 'In his career, Haider has repeatedly made statements which amount to trivialising National Socialism. Once he described death camps as penal camps. On the whole, Haider is responsible for making certain National Socialist positions and certain National Socialist remarks more politically acceptable.' In May 2000 the Criminal Court of Vienna found Pelinka guilty of 'defaming the character' of Jörg Haider. As a consequence, Pelinka was fined the equivalent of about \$4500 (Bischof *et al.* 2000). Pelinka was later acquitted at the provincial High Court in Vienna.

As far as the internal notion of charisma is concerned, it was no secret that Haider's personal political power within the party was virtually unparalleled in contemporary Western Europe. According to Roger Eatwell (2003, p. 66), Haider's control of his party between 1986 and 2000 offers a good example of internal charisma. However, in internal party matters Haider's charisma was often tainted by a more dictatorial attitude. The disrespectful manner in which he treated the liberals in the early 1990's bears the imprint of dictatorial behaviour. His dismissive attitude towards his fellow party members is displayed, as noted by Christa Zöchling, in the rituals of submission and strangely self-humiliating excuses by his party colleagues, such as, 'We have acted childishly', following Haider's announcement that, 'Occasionally, I feel as if I were a governor of a large kindergarten' (Cited in Zöchling 2000, p. 191). Haider has also, in a quite condescending manner, assigned 'homework' to his party colleagues. Equally reminiscent of anti-democratic principles, the unusual authority of Haider enabled him to dismiss no fewer than 700 elected political functionaries in 1997 and 1998 (Scharsach and Kuch 2000, p. 293; Mair *et al.* 2004, p. 161). Haider's power indicates, according to the *Handbuch des Österreichischen Rechtsextremismus*, an unparalleled 'inner-party totalitarianism' (1993, p. 352). Even though the consequences of these measures were negative for the expelled party members, it is clear that the party as a whole benefited from Haider's internal charismatic qualities. Moreover, these qualities are closely linked to his decisiveness and his crude and independent ability for action, qualities that, within the context of Austria, are likely to have been highly appealing to certain segments of the electorate who felt that the authorities needed to be shaken up or put in their place by impulsive, popular 'action'.

The above section has dealt with two fundamental explanations for the electoral appeal of the Freedom Party during Jörg Haider's leadership, namely right-wing extremism and populism. The explanation based on the appeal of right-wing extremism relies on the acceptance of certain views, including the position that in 1986, the party was swiftly radicalised towards a more right-wing extremist agenda; that the electorate was moving in a right-wing extremist direction, while Jörg Haider was described as a right-wing extremist; and that behind a veil of 'codified' liberal jargon, the party's successful rhetoric was extremist, or possibly fascist.

Others, however, have questioned the weight of these conclusions. It was hard to overlook the fact that the Freedom Party had always adhered to the democratic rules

of the game. Instead, populism was suggested as an alternative explanation. The system of the Austrian elite had struggled with immense problems of democratic legitimacy, which had been exploited very successfully by Jörg Haider and the Freedom Party. The key to the party's electoral success was not related to historical fascism but to a distinctly modern social phenomenon. Of course, these views were not left undisputed, which, again, led back to the issue of apparent versus real motives. Behind clever vote-catching tactics, Jörg Haider was never interested in increasing democracy, some argue, but in replacing an open, democratic system (that had minor imperfections) with authoritarian rule.

The literature review has brought to attention one of the more problematic and controversial fields within modern social/political debate. What is the main motivating factor behind the recent rise of European parties on the rightist fringes? The debate has largely been dominated by focusing on the appeal of the ideology of the parties, but increasingly this view is being complemented by assessing the importance of populism. The above discussion has presented some of the key arguments for these two fundamental views. These views and arguments will be analysed in greater detail in the following chapters, focusing on the development of the Austrian Freedom Party.

Even though there is a plethora of material on the rise and on the electoral appeal of the Freedom Party – in particular from 1986 onwards – explicit comparisons between the explanatory strength of right-wing extremism and populism are rare. The present thesis will conduct a comparison between the two, based on a rich variety of Freedom Party sources; party material, interviews, speeches, and books. Moreover, the EU-sanctions against Austria will be brought into the picture. Considerable emphasis will be placed on statistical material and exit polls. This quantitative material represents the foundation of the main argument of this thesis, namely, that the rise in support of the FPÖ can best be explained by the party's unflinching criticism of the Austrian elite rule of the SPÖ and the ÖVP.

Chapter 3

Methodology

As the literature review has shown, there is an abundance of written material about the Austrian Freedom Party, particularly from 1986 onwards. The party's political programme, its history and its electoral successes have received significant attention, with a particular focus on fascism, xenophobia, immigration and related issues. This thesis seeks to assess the reasons for the electoral success of the Freedom Party. This requires a careful assessment of the data and the methods that will be used to analyse the data. In order to understand the reasons behind the Freedom Party's success, two areas of interest will be highlighted: the debate concerning the Freedom Party and right-wing extremism, and the debate concerning the Freedom Party and populism.

Over the last few decades, the Austrian Freedom Party has been one of the most written-about political parties in Europe. Given Austria's modest size, the amount of attention devoted to the Freedom Party is all the more surprising. Despite this, however, the number of thorough investigations dedicated to the Freedom Party's own material has been fairly small. Often, second-hand sources, occasionally with a strong normative agenda, have been regarded as sufficient to support the analysis of the Party. Yet it is impossible to analyse any political movement without assigning due attention to its own documents and publications. This thesis therefore draws to a considerable extent upon primary sources; party programmes, internal documents, Jörg Haider's own publications and books, political declarations and speeches, and statements by prominent party members. Whenever the party's rhetoric is being analysed, attempts have been made to present the wider picture in order to avoid arriving at simplified assumptions and conclusions. When dealing with a party with indisputable populist tendencies, it is of vital importance to maintain academic impartiality, and not to yield to stereotypical images.

This thesis pays considerable attention to the statements and publications of Jörg Haider, the party chairman throughout the period of investigation. As the literature review has shown, during this time the party was dominated by Jörg Haider. While

much of this analysis has to be, by its nature, qualitative, an assessment will also be made of the relative weight given by the party to certain key issues in its yearbooks.

Election data and survey results constitute other important sources of data to support the research findings. Exit polls of the Austrian electorate, conducted by reputable research institutes, provide motives and stated motives for supporting the Freedom Party. Survey results will present correlations between social background and voting behavior.

Secondary literature, reports and analyses of various explanations for the recent rise of the party offer a third source of data. This includes a discussion of the EU-documents referring to the sanctions against Austria in 2000, as well as the 'EU report' ending the sanctions (Ahtisaari, Frowein and Oreja 2000). While part of this literature is based on scientific analysis, other parts are journalistic or polemical texts debating the party's policies, activities and ideology, or the party leader Jörg Haider himself.

Jörg Haider's Writings

Haider's own work is an integral part of the analysis. Haider authored six books (1993a; 1994; 1996; 1997a; 1997b; 2003) and co-authored several more. Two of his books are crucially important for understanding the Austrian Freedom Party's evolution and the development of its ideology and policies as well as Haider's own view of Austrian society and politics: *Die Freiheit, die ich meine. Das Ende des Proporzstaates. Plädoyer für die Dritte Republik* (1993a) (The Freedom I mean. The end of the proportional state. A pledge for the Third Republic); and *Befreite Zukunft jenseits von links und rechts – Menschliche Alternative für eine Brücke ins neue Jahrtausend* (1997b) (Liberated future beyond left and right – Human alternatives for a bridge into the New Millennium).⁴

⁴ Even though here *Die Freiheit, die ich meine* and *Befreite Zukunft* will be treated as the works of Jörg Haider personally, their true origins remain uncertain. According to Lothar Höbelt, Professor in History at the University in Vienna and former leader of *Freiheitliches Bildungswerk*, they were not written by Jörg Haider but by ghostwriters; *Die Freiheit, die ich meine* by Andreas Mölzer, prominent spokesperson of the Freedom Party's radical wing, especially during the early 1990s, and *Befreite Zukunft* by Peter Sichrowsky, former General Secretary of the Freedom Party, of Jewish origin, party

The focus on Haider's books and speeches raises an important question: how can assigning such an extensive role to Jörg Haider's books and speeches be justified in analysing the rise of the Austrian Freedom Party? Is there a danger that such an approach will lead to a focus on the political views and opinions of one particular person among many, instead of the general political views and opinions of an entire political party? As was discussed in the literature review, Jörg Haider had a very prominent position within the party; the party and its rise were therefore shaped to a great extent by him during the period of investigation. 'Until 2000', as noted by Müller, Plasser and Ulram (2004, p. 161), Haider '*de facto* made all important strategic and personnel decisions. Party bodies only ratified what had very often already been publicly announced.' This view is echoed by Duncan Morrow and Kurt Richard Luther, both British experts on the Austrian far right. 'The FPÖ', Morrow claims, 'is a strongly authoritarian party devoted to Haider's leadership' (Morrow 2000, p. 60). 'The loyalty of the FPÖ party elite', Luther argues, 'is oriented less to the party as such than to Haider himself' (1999, p. 141). The views he expresses in these books, along with a number of selected speeches and interviews, are therefore essential to the analysis.

Die Freiheit, die ich meine offers insight into the political rhetoric of Jörg Haider during the early 1990s, a period of indisputable success for the party at both national and sub-national levels. In 1994, the Freedom Party had 4.5 times more votes than in the 1983 elections, increasing from 12 to 42 seats in parliament. In Haider's home region of Carinthia, the party won 33 percent of votes at the local elections in 1994 (See charts and tables with results in national and local elections in Chapter 8, Chart 1, p. 164; Table 5, p.166, and Table 6, p. 167). Furthermore, 1993 represented, in the eyes of many observers, a turning point for the party. After 1986 a gradual radicalisation of the party's rhetoric occurred, culminating in the exit from the *Liberal International* in 1993, accompanied by the resignation of key members of the party's more 'leftist' wing, most importantly Heide Schmidt and Friedhelm Frischenschläger. *Die Freiheit, die ich meine* provides Haider's view of the core discussions of the party during one of the most important episodes in its history. In several chapters, Haider criticises the Austrian political establishment, presenting a cultural critique of leftist hegemony and artistic decadence, a political critique of liberal market ideas and the

representative at the European Union, and formerly a prominent advocate of market-oriented views within the Freedom Party. (Höbelt, personal communication).

Austrian elite in general, and an economic critique of the country's economic mismanagement and economic modernisation. Assessing Haider's critiques as expressed in this book help us understand the importance of anti-elite critique, whether this is well-founded or largely a voter-catching tactic, to the party's electoral success.

Befreite Zukunft was first published in 1997 at a time when the party had established itself as a forceful political party on the right fringes of the Austrian political spectrum. The increasing impact of globalisation, neo-liberalism and the country's EU membership (Austria joined the EU in 1995) had started to affect the entire political spectrum, including the Freedom Party, and increasingly influenced the party's rhetoric and programme. *Befreite Zukunft* provides a crucial document in evaluating the evolution of the political rhetoric of the party during this period of changing international circumstances. Similarly to *Die Freiheit, die ich meine*, *Befreite Zukunft* attacks the Austrian elite from a wide variety of angles. Even though on the international scene, at around this time the general trend turned against traditional right-wing populism and towards market views and commercialism, the party did not lose its popularity. On the contrary, its electoral support continued to increase throughout the final years of the 1990s.

Both books gained public attention, and were for some time part of debates in the media, contributing to the popularity of the Freedom Party. More important, however, is the fact that both were highly influential in shaping the party programmes. Further, numerous discussions and themes featured in the two books later recurred prominently in the election campaigns, as Chapter 9 will show. According to Lothar Höbelt (2003, p. 160), *Die Freiheit, die ich meine*, 'was obviously designed' to replace Andreas Mölzer's 1990 *Jörg! – Der Eisbrecher*, (*Jörg! The icebreaker*) as 'a party campaign (auto)biography.'

Surprisingly, few political analysts have used these two books for an in-depth analysis of the Austrian Freedom Party. Many commentators seem to rely heavily on sensationalist media reports and statements, or speculative, excessively critical assumptions when commenting on the party's programme and ideology, rather than conducting thorough and objective analyses of the main party literature (See, for example, Cheles 1995; Dahlstedt 1999; Golsan 1998; Gremliza 2000; Harris 1990).

With a thorough qualitative analysis of these two books as well as other documents, we can focus on hitherto overlooked issues in developing an understanding of the Freedom Party's dynamics and evolution and thereby fill an important lacuna in the debate about the party. The analysis of the two books is complemented by looking at several key speeches and interviews of Haider and other prominent party members.

As shown in the literature review, Haider's writings and speeches have been the subject of numerous critiques and controversies. The analysis will also draw upon how his books and the speeches have been interpreted. The *Archive for the Documentation of the Austrian Resistance*, for instance, has gathered a considerable amount of material about the party. In 2000, as a consequence of the government coalition between the Freedom Party and the People's Party, a substantial investigation by the EU was made not only of the Freedom Party, but of Austria as a whole. The EU sanctions against Austria were a result of concerns amongst EU member states about the racist and fascist undertones of the party and the fear of there being a right-wing radical party in the middle of Europe, but also covered wider issues around asylum policies, the level of tolerance and other democratic credentials of the Austrian state. The ensuing EU report is also particularly important because of the uniqueness of the EU's reaction: never before had the EU so swiftly reached consensus. Therefore, the EU-sanctions and the associated report are vital for understanding to what extent right-wing views have shaped the party's development and the reaction of its electorate and the wider Austrian society.

***Freiheit und Verantwortung* – The Party's Yearbooks**

The second main source of primary data about the party's internal ideological debates is its annual yearbooks – *Freiheit und Verantwortung*. The Yearbooks were published between 1993 and 2001 by the *Freiheitliches Bildungswerk* (the Academic Section within the Freedom Party), based in Vienna.⁵ They comprise articles and reports about historical, intellectual and social issues written mostly by Freedom Party members, and sympathisers in other countries. However, they also feature articles written by individuals that may not be seen as party sympathisers, such as

⁵ Due to restructuring and internal party strife, the yearbooks were terminated in 2001.

the late former co-editor of the German Weekly *Die Zeit*, Marion Gräfin Dönhoff. The yearbooks provide a good reflection of the range of views prevalent within the party and among its supporters. A quantitative analysis of the content of all available yearbooks between 1993 and 2001 will be conducted, looking at the weight given to specific topics, giving an indication of the importance of certain issues such as criticism of the elite or right-wing extremist ideas such as those found in nationalist and racist discourse.

The Party Programmes

To complement the above sources, the present thesis also relies on the *Parteiprogramm 1985* and *Parteiprogramm 1997*, and also takes into account the *Österreicherklärung zur Nationalratswahl* of 1994 (Declaration of Austria at the 1994 National Election). These three publications will support the observations and conclusions derived from the analysis of Jörg Haider's two books and the Yearbooks. Also, they will offer a more hands-on source of information, describing not only the discourse and what was being discussed within the party, but also describing the party's policies.

Election Data and Polls

To test the hypothesis that anti-elitist themes, such as corruption and scandals, were the core reasons for the Freedom Party's electoral success since 1986, the thesis will draw on data from the elections and available polls. Four exit polls conducted by the German market research institute Fessel GfK – 1986, 1990, 1994 and 1999 – will be used for this purpose. Its Austrian branch, GfK Austria, is the leading market research institute in Austria, and its political research section is led by Dr. Peter Ulram, prominent expert in the field of opinion polls, quantitative analysis and Austrian politics. In analysing these election and survey data, we will focus on the following questions: What was the role of the right-wing extremist themes in these statistical investigations? What was the role of populist themes? The answer to these

questions will provide valuable information as to the core hypothesis in the present thesis.

Populism and the Austrian Elite

An important part of this thesis shall deal with the Freedom Party's critical discussion of the Austrian political elite. While Jörg Haider and the Freedom Party stated that they were merely describing what was going on, the members of the elite claimed that their allegations were unjustified. Therefore, it was decided that both the theoretical chapter on populism, and the background chapter on the Austrian elite rule, would be presented from two angles representing these two general perspectives.

The Political Context

Many studies of the Freedom Party have focused exclusively on the party itself, ignoring its place in the Austrian political spectrum (See Golsan 1998, 1-18; Gremliza 2000; Hainsworth 2008; Kestel and Godmer 2004; Oswald 1989; Zöchling 2000). The rest of the political spectrum in Austria, which to a large extent shaped and continues to shape the political agenda of the Freedom Party, is thereby left out of the picture or has its importance undervalued. This omission is particularly important in dealing with Austria, where issues such as national guilt and the legacy of the Second World War affect every party. Therefore, the present thesis will not only discuss the Freedom Party as an isolated phenomenon but will also discuss other political players. Similarly, although the rise of the Freedom Party occurred in Austria, the repercussions have at times been dramatically felt throughout Europe. Therefore, occasionally, the thesis will broaden the picture and discuss the rise of the Freedom Party from a wider European perspective. The EU-sanctions as a consequence of the government coalition between the People's Party and the Freedom Party in early 2000 prove a good example of this.

The Freedom Party displays, from many perspectives, right-wing populist features. The party expresses a remarkable capacity for sudden shifts in views and opinions, more, arguably, than either outright Fascist parties confined by their extremist ideology, or mainstream parties restricted by a fairly consistent political agenda. Shifting views and opinions, as Chapter 4 will show, are often typical characteristics of populist parties. These shifts, nevertheless, pose a problem for any scholar searching for the party's views behind what could be considered vote-catching tactics or empty rhetoric. To the extent possible, this apparent problem of reliability has been taken into consideration when analysing the ideological material of the Freedom Party. Yet the purpose of the thesis is to investigate the reasons behind the spectacular rise in popularity of the Freedom Party. The thesis will not venture into determining the party's 'true nature' or speculating whether party rhetoric was merely to catch and manipulate the voters.

While the current literature on the Freedom Party and Jörg Haider is rich, very few studies have explicitly compared right-wing extremism and populism as two different key explanations for the party's rise between 1986 and 2000. This thesis seeks to rectify this omission. In doing so, it has analysed a wealth of primary material of different types from the Freedom Party. This will hopefully make it easier to avoid taking on stereotypical views of the party, whether positive or negative. This is the purpose of the present thesis. This is also the reason why this thesis is important.

Chapter 4

Populism

Seen in this light, we are populists because we put ourselves in the place of ordinary men and women and fight for their minds.

Jörg Haider; *Declaration of Vienna*

(1993b, p.1)

The purpose of this thesis is to explain why the Austrian Freedom Party gained such popularity between 1986 and 2000. Two alternative explanations will be tested: (1) the party gained votes due to its right-wing (nationalist, xenophobic) extremism, and (2) its success was due to its anti-elitist, anti-centralist appeal in standing up for ordinary people against policies imposed from above. Both these explanations are linked to the concept of populism, in so far as the first sees the party as attempting to create a mob for its own purposes – which are inherent in populism – and the second seeks to liberate the people – which is also an inherent aim of populism. Populism encompasses, in other words, a very wide range of ideas; from manipulation to motivation, and from attacking democracy to fostering participation and democracy. As this thesis will show, the Freedom Party displays both these tendencies. Populism therefore offers an appropriate theoretical framework for the present thesis.

Debates about the character of populism seem to revolve around whether one or the other definition marks the political formation: i.e. whether the political group in question appeals to voters largely on the basis of nationalism and extremism or on the basis of its anti-elitist (anti-bureaucratic) stance. A common understanding of populism, as articulated by Jörg Haider and the Freedom Party, is that it involves acting on behalf of ordinary people, seeing the world through the eyes of the common people and, as Haider expressed above in the *Declaration of Vienna*, 'fight[ing] for their minds'. According to critics of the Freedom Party, however, this rhetoric of fighting for the common people should not be taken at face value. It masks, they say, a hidden authoritarian and right-wing extremist agenda. The debate entails that suggestion that the Freedom Party is either not populist at all, or at best,

that its populism is regressive or dangerous, a mere tactic for pursuing a right-wing extremist agenda.

This chapter will discuss the concept of populism, stressing issues that will be of use in the later analysis of the electoral appeal of the Freedom Party. First, the origins of the concept of populism will be presented. Then it will be argued that, despite its evasive character, populism still has some distinct features. These common features will then be used to analyse the continuing tension between two opposing notions of populism.

How are these two opposing forms of populism to be defined? The Swedish political scientist Thomas Knoll (2001) simply suggests the prefixes 'bad' versus 'good'. While the former ranges from right-wing populism to fascism, populism is, according to the latter, essentially democratic. The problem with this definition is that no one would support 'bad populism'. Along similar lines, Yves Mény has made use of 'negative' versus 'positive' populism (1998, p. 9). In this thesis, however, 'right-wing populism' will be compared with 'egalitarian populism'. The immediate benefit of using the concept of right-wing populism derives from the fact that it is an established concept with very clear connotations – such as preference for authoritarian leadership, a clear division between friend and foe, excessive social pessimism and an essentially fictitious political agenda. A possible downside would be that it may be seen as distinctly less extreme than racism, fascism or Nazism. However, this is not necessarily the case, as right-wing populism, as we shall see below, may easily be a cover-up for more extreme ideas. This link between populism and right-wing extremism is furthermore important, because expressions of populism can range from viewing the placing of power in the hands of the people as a primary objective, to displaying right-wing extremist tendencies, as the present thesis will show.

It would have been natural to contrast right-wing populism with 'left-wing populism'. Even though this dichotomy partly makes sense – not the least due to the chasm between equality and inequality – it still raises problems. In cases where right-wing populism carries negative connotations, 'left-wing' populism would be associated with benevolent qualities, and this is not inherently accurate. Also, this distinction

would make it impossible for any right-wing party to stand out other than as deeply problematic, simply by virtue of the fact that it is not left-wing.

The other side of this suggested dichotomy – egalitarian populism – can be traced back to an article by Margaret Canovan: ‘Trust the People! Populism and the Two Faces of Democracy’. Recent populist movements, Canovan argues, ‘are usually treated as pathological symptoms requiring sociological explanation’ (Canovan 1999, p. 2). In other words, they are unanimously seen as democratically problematic right-wing phenomena. ‘To suppose, however, that populists are simply right wing is to ignore the egalitarian impulse’ and mobilisation of “ordinary people” against the privileged, highly educated, cosmopolitan elite’ (Canovan 1999, p. 5). In line with Canovan’s analysis, right-wing populism will here be contrasted with the concept of ‘egalitarian populism’, expressing an interest in emancipating the common electorate and ‘the people’ from the shackles of big government and elitist oppression.

The Origins of ‘Populism’

The etymological origin of populism is the Latin *populus* meaning ‘the people’, either embodying the whole Roman state or else the people as distinct from the Senate. One might notice that one of the initial definitions of the concept assigns special attention to those outside the sphere of political power. Apart from these merely descriptive Latin meanings of *populus*, one may also find other interpretations, such as ‘the populace’ and the ‘masses’ that may be seen as somewhat pejorative. In some languages, such as German and Swedish, the related *Pöbel* would roughly translate as ‘mob’; implying a herd of aggressive and ignorant individuals, easily manipulated by the subtle strategy of the populist leader (See Knoll 2001, p. 267). Populism thus focused on those in society who lack access to political power. Furthermore, activities based on populism are regularly viewed as negative, or even hazardous to the political system.

As political doctrine, populism seems to be fraught with contradictions. On the one hand, exclusivist in its highlighting of ‘our folk’ against others; on the other hand,

seeking to be empowering and inclusivist in its highlighting of the ordinary masses against an oppressive cultural or political elite. Peter Worsley offers a critique of populism as being full of 'inconsistency, ambiguity, incoherence, contradiction, to enable the reader to read what he wants into those doctrines in the light of his social and psychological predispositions' (1969, p. 214); MacRae, however, considers Worsley's critique to be unproductive: 'People who criticise those who take ideology seriously often object that any given ideology is not unitary, not logically consistent, not clearly defined, and is plastic in its interpretation or ambiguous in the guidance to give action. Of course: what else' (MacRae 1969, p. 154)? Inherent conceptual ambiguities do not render any doctrine useless. On the contrary – any concept in the social sciences that would not allow for a range of fruitful interpretations would be futile, if it were intelligible at all.⁶ From this perspective, where contradictions and ambiguities are seen as vital, populism is no less fractured or contradictory than any other political doctrine, be it socialism or social democracy.

Common Features of Populism

The question of whether the variants of populism should be considered as aspects of a single unified doctrine has been addressed by Isaiah Berlin. For Berlin, it is a question of matching a theoretical doctrine with political practice. This clash of fitting theory to national practice leads to a 'cinderella complex'. While we have populism – the theoretical shoe – in our hands, this shoe simply does not quite fit, as we try it on real existing feet, i.e. on any factual social setting (Taggart 2000, p. 2). In other words, any down-to-earth, nation-specific variant of populism is in conflict with one or another of its universal features. Similarly, Ernesto Laclau points out that populism is an amorphous subject and preferably studied at a distance. Once we focus upon it more closely, however, we find that the various forms of populism differ to such a degree that we might feel tempted to drop the concept altogether (Laclau 1977, p. 145). I will argue that dropping the concept is neither necessary, nor productive. Despite vital differences among its various forms, a joint common denominator of populism shall be suggested.

⁶ Displaying a common feature among purists in the social sciences, Peter Worsley (1969, p. 214) only allows for two positions: complete consistency or uselessness.

Populism is generally regarded as originating from below, from those excluded from the sphere of economic and political power. The short-lived American People's Party of the late 19th century was, to take one example, a proper mass movement, having 'truly bottom up' features, and the Swedish *Ny Demokrati* (New Democracy) of the early 1990s headed by a Count by the name of Ian Wachtmeister, and Bert Karlsson, a successful music producer and self-made man, was also to a great extent the product of a thrust from below (Taggart 2000, p. 26). In contrast, the Russian populism of the 19th century was a top-down project. It emanated from the intellectuals from abroad, upon whom the exhortation by the tsarist critic Alexander Herzen had the impact of a clarion call: 'to the people, to the people, there is your place, you exiles from seats of learning'. However, their progressive mission failed because the rural population in Russia turned out to be conservative by nature and faithful to the Tsar (Ulam 1981, p. 102). Normally, populist parties are led by charismatic leaders, such as Jean-Marie Le Pen, Jörg Haider, Umberto Bossi, Silvio Berlusconi, Juan Peron in Argentina, the Dutch Pim Fortuyn, and perhaps, Pia Kjærsgaard of the Danish *Dansk Folkeparti*.⁷ Still, the above mentioned American People's Party was not tied to any single leading figure (Taggart 2000, p. 36). Populism has also been regarded as an essentially rural, anti-urban, movement (Ionescu and Gellner 1969). Today, Bolivia offers a good example of this rural form of populism. However, as a consequence of the shrinking social and political importance of rural society, this characterisation of populism has gradually been replaced by a definition which emphasises the social frustrations of disaffected masses, both urban and rural. The Italian parties, *Lega Nord* and *Alleanza Nazionale*, and the Austrian Freedom Party are examples of urban forms of populism.

Many theories about the origin of populist movements stress the harmful effects of modernisation, and more specifically the tension between the effect of modernisation and dislocation on traditional regions and social groups. Paul Taggart has sought to come to terms with this problem by distinguishing between 'traditional populism' and 'new populism' (Taggart 2000, p. 73). The vagueness of the concept of populism would, then, be reduced. All these apparently opposing figures and characteristics may thus be associated with the concept of populist ideology: the down-trodden

⁷ Weber (2005, pp. 182-188), in what he refers to as the *Veralltäglicung* (routinisation) of Charisma, optimistically argues that Charismatic leaders gradually will be replaced by anonymous and reliable bureaucrats.

peasant and the privileged intellectual; the traditionalist critic of modernisation and the progressive moderniser; the rural anti-urbanist and the disaffected city-dweller; the charismatic single leader and the leaderless collective movement. Given these varying associations and opposing views, is it valuable to talk of 'populism' as a general idea?

Before ending with this general and universal core of populism, we can summarise by noting that populism is invariably of a reformist nature, incapable of offering fundamental 'root and branch' reform (Taggart 2000, p. 1). This is an important distinction between populism and fascism. The prospects for a successful populist movement are generally poorer under conditions of social stability, for instance within an authoritarian state. Hence, populist movements are likely to flourish during periods of transition, such as the current social transformation in Scandinavia from a secure welfare state towards neo-liberal deregulation. It could be argued that both the rise of the populist Swedish *Sverigedemokraterna* (Swedish Democrats) and the no less populist Danish *Dansk Folkeparti* (Danish People's Party) can be explained by an increasing social insecurity, resulting in calls for fierce critics who will stand for law and order and side with the people. Notably, populism is invariably against big business and globalisation, and in favour of nationalism, and hence of exclusion and inclusion.

Following the work of Edward Shils, Paul Taggart and others, it will be argued here that the general and universal core of populism lies elsewhere. As mentioned above, populism has to do with *populus* – 'the people'. Within populist movements, the people – here understood as the common people who are the objects of elite projects – are seen as essentially virtuous and authentic. Whether the populist movement originates from below or from the intellectuals, whether it is led by a charismatic leader or not, whether it is mainly of a rural or of a predominantly urban character, and regardless of whether it is anti-modernist or modernist, its key objective is constituted by the fight for the rights of the 'oppressed people'. From the populist perspective, in all its aspects, the elite constitutes the complete adversary of the people: it is deceitful, manipulative, hypocritical, superficial, snobbish and accumulates illegitimate power and monetary fortunes behind the backs of hardworking people.

In a populist scheme, the people as well as the elite are often depicted as homogeneous entities. For Paul Taggart the very notion of 'the people' implies 'an

undifferentiated mass', whereby conflicts and differing views *within* these two respective fields are systematically denigrated (2000, p. 96). Hence the essential populist conflict involves two organisms each attempting to exert its authority over the other. This fundamental ontology of 'the people' versus 'the elite' is supported by a number of scholars in the field. According to William Kornhauser, and in particular his theory of mass society (1960), this dichotomy – an unresolvable conflict – between a homogeneous people and a homogeneous elite is seen as one of the more generally applicable features of populism. Yves Mény (1998, p. 19). argues that 'anti-elitism constitutes a key feature of populism'. According to Edward Shils, the key to understanding populism lies in the relationship between elites and masses (1956, pp. 100-1). Finally Margaret Canovan finds no other common themes than 'appeals to the people and a distrust of elites' (Canovan, 1981, p. 264). In brief, the core of populism is constituted by the defence of a homogenous people and the critique of an illegitimate or seditious elite.

Two Different Forms of Populism – Right wing and Egalitarian Populism

Now, this common denominator – the defence of the people and the critique of the elite – will be used in order to present two diametrically opposite forms of populism – right-wing populism and egalitarian populism. The underlying questions are: What is the nature of the people? Are they seen as acting subjects or merely as objects for ulterior motives? What is the nature of the elite? Is it manipulative or democratic?

The following chapter (Chapter 5) will focus in greater detail on the Austrian elite and Austrian corporatism. The remainder of this chapter will first emphasise the weaknesses of the Austian elite system, before providing a more comprehensive discussion of its social and economic benefits. This and the following chapter will stress the tensions between the Austrian Freedom Party under Jörg Haider and the Austrian elite.

Elaborating on right-wing populism as one particular form of populism may seem strange. In fact, the definition of populism is in most cases closely tied to 'right-wing'; indeed so closely that 'right-wing' almost feels implicit in populism as a political

concept. Why is this? It is because populism has very often constituted a tool for politically extremist purposes. Since the elite are always small in number and the people are large in number, any attempt to overthrow a regime must seek support among the people. The speeches of Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini were, for instance, rich with populist rhetoric. This leads onto an observation of critical importance for the present thesis. Populism should not always exclude right-wing extremism. The presence of populist themes does not, as noted by Brigitte Bailer-Galanda and Wolfgang Neugebauer, researchers at the Viennese Archive for the Austrian Resistance, rule out right-wing extremism. Rather, the populist approach is a convenient manner in which to *present* a right-wing extremist or fascist *content*. Moreover, today right-wing populism constitutes a perfect mask for right-wing extremists. Therefore, populism is always suspect (Bailer-Galanda and Neugebauer 1997, p. 51).

A critical interpretation of populism may start with the centre of the populist party – the party leader. He – it is generally a ‘he’ – often possesses charismatic qualities. Whereas anonymous rational/legal authority in Max Weber’s analysis is seen as trustworthy and accountable, charismatic leadership is irrational, invariably unstable, setting itself up as omnipotent and above the law. Partly influenced by Weber’s distinctions, personal charisma is associated with an autocratic form of leadership. In Europe charismatic politicians such as Silvio Berlusconi and Jean Marie Le Pen have contributed to an almost automatic association of populist parties with flamboyant, even eccentric, unstable, egotistical leaders. Instead, critics regard the faceless and anonymous bureaucrat as a role model. Politics is not about flamboyant performance, but about daily problems and routines.

In his daily political endeavours, a populist politician is socially very active, often seen on the street with the people talking and shaking hands. This is seen as problematic, not only because socializing exhibits the very essence of populism, in that such a figure appears to be trying to win the vote of everyone he meets, but also because spending so much time meeting the people takes his attention away from more urgent political matters. In fact, he is more distant from the audience than politicians who do not take this populist approach. Shaking hands is hence seen as detrimental to the

people, and an excuse for an all-encompassing, and unpersuasive political programme where ideological differences have been 'overcome'.

This tendency towards show rather than content leads on to another vital component of populist rhetoric – namely a conspiratorial view of politics. Accusing the elite of a conspiracy to subordinate or control the people lies at the heart of much populist rhetoric. The populist leader is there to expose this conspiracy. Evidence which contradicts this conspiracy is viewed as part of an even more devious conspiracy. According to conspiracy theory, the elite is never to be trusted. This is why it suits populist rhetoric so well.

Above it was claimed that the populist politician often socializes with the electorate. He also shares their general distrust of politics. Therefore, populist politicians project themselves as not craving power, presenting themselves instead as on a mission to save the people from the devious, unscrupulous elite. Populist leaders always project themselves as reluctant politicians. However, once in power they may dominate the vocabulary of political debate (Taggart 2000, p. 112). This is because they make use of a simplified political rhetoric. Of course, certain parties, such as Jean Marie Le Pen's Front National, have to some extent managed to define the topics of official political debate without gaining political power. In a sense, criticising and influencing the political agenda without ever taking responsibility has become something of a *raison d'être* for numerous European populist parties.

Furthermore, this reluctance to hold political office is often part of a romantic, sentimental self-perception (Taggart 2000, p. 61). 'Ross Perot claimed that he did not want to run but felt obliged to do it' (Taggart 2000, p. 42). This image of moralistic sacrifice – 'there's a job out there and someone's got to do it' – can be seen as a thin layer disguising egotistic or even dictatorial inclinations once the quest for political power has been accomplished. The people are manipulated for the benefit of a populist elite without scruples.

One reason why populist politicians – once in power – may determine the content of the political discourse is because they fail to recognise political complexities and instead make use of appealing – and 'populist' – stereotypes. However, this is often only a short-term phenomenon, because the inconsistency of its overambitious, all-encompassing, and ultimately unrealistic political programme soon becomes evident.

Hence, a populist movement may fail to mobilise the population not because the programme is unrealistic – as many such programmes are – but because there is a gap between its promises and practical, economic realities. The major factor of electoral success is, rather, an unflinching critique of the elite. When a populist party becomes part of the political establishment, it is confronted with a dilemma: in order to remain anti-elitist it must renounce power and remain in opposition; alternatively, if it tries to remain in power, its entire anti-elitist rhetoric must cease. In such cases, it becomes evident that the remaining political programme is very similar to that of other, more established parties. As a consequence, a populist party that is successful at the ballots is, paradoxically, threatened by disintegration. These two options – retreat or consternation – make many populist movements unstable.

The common denominator of populism is its homogeneous view of the people, who are generally framed by the borders of the nation. Yves Mény notes that populist parties are often seen as xenophobic, racist, and nationalist (1998, p. 9). Alien forces, be they globalisation or immigrants from third world countries, are under constant attack in populist discourses. Populism is therefore regarded as intimately linked to racism; indeed populism is almost unthinkable without a racist agenda and hatred towards foreigners and immigrants. Moreover, as argued by Armin Pfahl-Traughber, populism evokes the image of brutal whispers at 'the table of regular customers' [*der Stammtisch*] and the idea of the ignorant and deeply conservative 'common sense' of the ordinary person (1994, p. 18). Along similar lines, Wolfgang Kowalsky asks whether the people always can be trusted to adequately assess their attitudes toward ethnic minorities and other marginalised groups (1992, p. 34).

This homogeneous people is tied to an organic conception of the nation. In this metaphor, the people constitute the body, while the populist leader constitutes the head – having the capacity for reflection and guidance, and being willing to give a voice to the downtrodden common person who no longer is able to speak for him/herself. The downtrodden and abused common people are also occasionally, however, seen as full of insight and depth of feeling. Whether portrayed as downtrodden and inarticulate, or as commonsensical and authentic, 'the people' are depicted in terms of one or another simplified theoretical image. The people are 'unable to cope' with globalisation, migration and cultural diversity. Hence, these

'deeper' implications of populism not only lead to racism and virulent nationalism: they are also invariably linked to an elitist and pejorative perception of the people.

Finally, the common denominator of populism – a defence of the people and a critique of the elite – means, according to its advocates, that a populist agenda seeks to reduce the power of representative democracy for the benefit of direct democracy, through, for example, increasing the use of public referenda and other ways of giving a voice to the common electorate. The populist critique is a critique of the elected representatives, contending that they have 'betrayed' their constituents. The critics of these populist views, however, fail to take this at face value. Instead, it is seen as a standard technique from the repertoire of populist tactics, namely a means of pitting the people in its entirety against the elite. For these critics, wherever such populist tactics succeed, they produce anti-democratic effects. Rather than broadening the scope for public influence in politics, such tactics (when successful) cause the electorate to turn away from the established elite to a considerably smaller, protest-based elite, often viewed as irrational, where most of the power remains in the hands of the charismatic leader.

The democratic critique of populism suggests that populism as such breeds political extremism. Instead of being liberated or emancipated from the elite, the people are subject to abuse, manipulation and exploitation by an unscrupulous, egotistical leader who may change his tune once he gets his hands on state power.

With this general understanding of populist doctrine and mobilisation, let us come back to the central question of this study: explaining the sudden rise of the Freedom Party between 1986 and 2000. Here we will concentrate on the nature of the populist electorate. While populism thrives in situations of fear and insecurity, for example where there is a widely perceived 'threat' of foreigners (who are regarded as either 'cheap workers undercutting wages' or 'parasitic recipients of welfare benefits'), it has also been shown to be strong during periods of tranquility and prosperous social and economic conditions. The Swiss People's Party under Christoph Blocher, peaking at almost 30 percent of the electorate in the lower house in the 2007 parliamentary election, is a good example of this. Here Pierre Bourdieu's concept of social class may be relevant, whereby class is determined not only by means of economic situation, but also as a consequence of cultural values, norms, habits, etc (See Bourdieu 1987).

Regarding the correlation between a penchant to vote for populist parties and social class, however, investigations often suggest a weak correlation. Populism can appeal to people who are educated as well as members of the working class, to those who are wealthy as well as those of modest income. Alternatively, some analysts have sought to capture the essence of the populist voter by portraying them as 'losers in the process of modernisation', implying that the electoral support of these parties is mainly constituted by those disenfranchised members of the populace at the bottom of the social ladder: the unemployed, immigrants and other marginalised groups. The 1995 figures for the Austrian Freedom Party show, for instance, a tendency along these lines (See Table 1).

Table 1		
Support of So-called 'Modernisation Losers' – FPÖ (Austrian Freedom Party) in Comparison 1995		
	FPÖ	Other Parties
Low income small business owners (a)	59%	19% (ÖVP)
Unemployed women	55%	21% (SPÖ)
Skilled workers performing unskilled labor	49%	27% (SPÖ)
Unemployed men under 30 years	46%	25% (SPÖ)
Low income employers (b)	42%	19% (SPÖ)

Notes: (a) net income of less than Austrian Schillings 12,000 per month (about USD 1,100); (b) incomes less than Austrian Schillings 10,000 (about USD 900)

Source: IFES 1995 in *Profil* 13 Nov 1995, p. 30, cited in Heinisch (2002, p. 129)

IFES (*International Foundation for Electoral Systems*) is a non-profit organisation seeking to foster a democratic society. See also *IFES – Election guide*, www.electionguide.org/about.php

FPÖ (Austrian Freedom Party)

ÖVP (Austrian People's Party)

SPÖ (Social Democratic Party of Austria)

What such people have in common is their support for populism's nationalist and racist inclinations. Populist supporters can come from the ranks of citizens who cherish their own nation and national heritage in a stereotypical manner. Populism appeals to those with a pessimistic view of society, who, as a consequence, demand 'law and order'. The populist voter is invariably critical of the passivity of the current

parliament and seeks salvation in 'the strong leader'. Such attitudes can be found in both educated/well-off groups and less educated/socially marginal groups.

In this section, a number of salient populist qualities have supported the close link between populism and right-wing populism. The idea of charisma has been seen to be associated with a sense of omnipotence and right-wing extremist ideas. Socializing with the common electorate – a typical populist activity – was deemed to be an attempt to persuade by means of emotions instead of a political programme. This picture of an emotive and irrational approach to politics was strengthened by the idea of an ongoing conspiracy. Another key populist quality is seen in the tactical expression of a lack of interest in political power, further supporting the impression of being on the side of the common electorate. Finally, populism is determined by a defence of the people and a critical stance against the elite, with each of these conflicting entities seen as a homogeneous and undivided whole.

The section ended with commentary on the question: who (which social or demographic groups) is likely to vote for populist parties? It was argued that populism thrives in times of social turmoil, but also under more peaceful conditions. It can appeal to those of higher income and also to those of modest earnings; to those with higher levels of education but also to members of the working class. Similarly, while the suggested correlation between populist voters and the apparent losers in the process of modernisation has an explanatory value, the populist vote also appears to be determined by other parameters, such as nationalism, social pessimism, and racist tendencies (See chapter 2 for a more elaborate study of structural and individual explanations for reasons for voting for right-wing extremist parties.).

In the previous discussion, populism was presented in a critical light. It was seen as authoritarian, manipulative, elitist, racist and invariably unstable. However, populism can also take other forms and be interpreted along quite different lines, according to which the people are empowered and achieve some kind of autonomy, independence and control over their lives. From this perspective, the purpose of populism is not to strengthen hierarchical tendencies, but to achieve a more egalitarian society. Seeking to encapsulate this chasm between a problematic and a more democratic and egalitarian notion of populism, Yves Mény regards the concept

in the same way as the Italian novelist Italo Calvino speaks of his *Barone dimezzato*. 'Like the baron split in two during a fight, populism has two faces: one positive and one negative' (Mény 1998, p. 9).⁸

This more favourable interpretation of populism will be discussed by re-evaluating the features of populism discussed above. As will be shown, this will offer material for a partial reinterpretation of the features of the Freedom Party and for explaining its rise between 1986 and 2000.

One criticism of populism has been that it is based on the leader's charisma rather than a substantial party platform. Yet charisma can be found across the political spectrum. The Swedish Social Democrat Olof Palme and his Austrian counterpart Bruno Kreisky were highly charismatic, and at the same time on the whole considered trustworthy players in the democratic arena. Trustworthy politicians are not necessarily anonymous. Populist behaviour, such as shaking hands with citizens, is not always a bad sign. These issues have been very important in Austria, with its tradition of anonymous politicians, and of agreements made behind closed doors, as the following Chapter on corporatism will elucidate in greater detail.

Real and existing flaws within any one political elite may lead us to reconsider another aspect of populist ideology, namely the predilection for conspiracy theories of overarching political control by secretive elites. The existence of conspiracy theories does not, of course, affect the status of critical theories based upon empirical observations. In fact, sound and reasoned allegations against an elite agenda may be justified. Lack of evidence *might* indicate a hollow conspiracy theory, but it may also point towards a more profound social malaise, namely the existence of a deeply embedded conspiracy within the political elite. If social pessimism and ultimately any form of social critique are simply dismissed as being populist conspiratorial thinking, the result is not only elitism, but also a society where social change is no longer possible. Social change requires dissatisfaction. The roots of social pessimism as such should be examined and not dismissed out of hand as some kind of paranoid delusion.

⁸ For an illuminating distinction between 'good' vs 'bad' populism, see Knoll (2000, p. 268).

A similar problem arises when we consider the idea that the so-called populists are reluctant politicians, and that this is a sign of shrewd political hypocrisy. Bruno Kreisky offers a good example of a democratic leader for whom obtaining political office was never a major concern. It would be strange if an anti-populist orthodoxy meant that no other politician could be trusted than those who openly pronounce their greed for power. The current, critical approach towards populism can easily be exploited by political cynics. When the Czech president and dramatist Vaclav Havel (1991) claimed that politics is a 'job for modest people' with no particular desire for worldly power, he was simply articulating this latter, brighter version of populism, hoping to increase the political impact of solidarity and egalitarianism. At this point, the comments in the previous section, regarding the fact that the governmental power of the reluctant populist politician may be short-lived due to his incongruent and ill-thought through programme, must be reconsidered. In brief, this outcome would occur *only* if his programme were haphazard and contradictory. If not, there is no reason why a populist-led government could not govern as long as any other party.

Populism generally relies on a homogeneous notion of the people. The framework for this unity is often constituted by the nation, and the nation is often seen as linked to exclusion, racism and reactionary attitudes. A homogeneous view of the people within a national setting may also run counter to the idea of individual freedom. However, this need not be the case. A populist platform 'provides legitimacy to the democratic system', 'the government of the people, by the people, for the people' (Mény 1998, p. 9). Populism 'articulates the surprise at the fact that "populus", "*das Volk*", "the people" enters into the official sphere' (Dubiel, 1986) (See also Gress 1994 p. 189). In this sense populism suddenly embodies a people hitherto excluded from power. It is egalitarian and empowering. The condemnatory critique of populism by elites can be just as harmful to the political system as simplified, irrational populism.

The elite is no less in need of misdirected idealisation than any people. History is replete with episodes in which a deeply compromised elite *actually* exploits the people in its entirety. Timothy Garton Ash's (1990) vivid description of the fall of the communist regimes in the late 1980's bears the title *We the People: The Revolution*

of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin and Prague. But rather than constituting an illusion which mobilised these massive 'populist' movements, the authoritarianism and oppression in Eastern Europe were actual features of these regimes (Ash 1990). Popular disgust with the communist elite was real and certainly justified. It would be mistaken to describe this particular relationship between the people and the elite purely as the product of a stereotypical, right-wing populist mind. Hence, the dichotomy between the elite and the people may under certain conditions be described as one between two fairly homogeneous units, oppressor and oppressed, without – notably – being marked by a problematic perception of the people. 'Many political science theories suggest both that elites rule and that there is a consistent pattern to the ways in which different sections of the elite participate in this system of rule.' Also, 'these positions characterise democratic elitist theorists (e.g. Mills 1956), as well as Marxist and class-based theories' (Miliband 1969). While recognising that right-wing populism constitutes one form of critique of the elite, it is still only one among many. A bland, comfortable – and somewhat populist – view of the idea of populism does not acknowledge this, and suffers therefore from a troublesome attitude towards one of the fundamental democratic principles, the principle of the majority.

After a long period when populism, through the writings of Seymour Martin Lipset and Richard Hofstadter, was equated with 'manipulation', populism can now be viewed as a 'critique of liberalism'; marshalled against elitist implications of political representation and for the benefit of a heightened social awareness and sense of solidarity. Whereas the general perception of populism, beneath a veneer of justified moral indignation, saw it as seeking to transform the people into the puppets of a nationalist, anti-egalitarian concentration of power, the empowering and egalitarian type of populism is precisely the opposite. According to this view, its aim is rather to enhance political awareness and influence among citizens by means of, for instance, an increasing number of public referenda: 'let the people decide!'. Also, once its 'malicious branches of racism and anti-intellectualism' have fallen off, the democratic features of a 'political protest movement' come into view (Gress 1994, p. 189). Even though this alternative interpretation of populism has not gained the attention it rightly deserves, it has its academic strongholds. For instance, it was thematised during 'Populism vs. the New Class' - The Second Elizabethtown Telos Conference of 1991

(5-7 April). Lawrence Goodwyn claims that populism 'offers the best hope for a critique of, and alternative to, the hegemony of liberalism', and suggests that local politics should be reinvigorated, 'thus seeing populism as a potentially liberating political project' (Goodwyn 1991, p. 38, cited in Gress 1994, p. 189). Links between populism, community, *Gemeinschaft* and racism, which are seen by certain anti-fascist intellectuals and activists as inherently tied to populism, are seen by Paul Taggart as being no more than a 'potential' danger (2000, p. 21).⁹ The term 'radical populism' has been suggested as a label for this more egalitarian style of populism, in order to distinguish it from the more exclusionary type (Husbands 2003).

Populism therefore should not be automatically assumed to be of the exclusionist, extremist or xenophobic variety. The fact that Jean Marie Le Pen, Ross Perot, Umberto Bossi, Silvio Berlusconi and others may speak on behalf of the people does not mean that populism cannot also be empowering and even emancipating for oppressed citizens. Populism belongs also to democrats and egalitarians, represented by people as diverse as the German, republican political thinker Hannah Arendt, Huey Long, leader of the American populist Union Party with its strong socialist tendencies, the Czech former dissident and former president Vaclav Havel, and also, in a sense, Karl Marx himself.¹⁰ The Austrian *Liste Dr Hans-Peter Martin* is a good example of an empowering and egalitarian populist force within the EU. Martin is a determined EU-skeptic who seeks to counter anti-democratic tendencies within the EU, and who sees globalization as an attack against the welfare state and democratic ideals. When representatives of the Swedish 'June List' (*Junilistan*) in the European Parliament cast their votes, their left-wing liberal anti-Brussels stance often results in their voting together with the British National Party (BNP). Both are critical of Brussels as a bureaucratic power which disempowers citizens. Yet, while the British National Party is a right-wing, even right-wing extremist, populist party, the June List seeks to increase the scope for public influence in politics and to democratise the European Union. This difference does not prevent established

⁹ For a discussion of 'the politics of protest', see Goodwyn (1991). See also Westlind (1996, p. 99). However, something needs to be added. To anyone whose preoccupation is political issues a persistent focus on linguistics might seem odd. What 'populism' really means is apparently hard to tell, but we should agree upon the fact that there is indeed a political phenomenon out there, consisting of a people being manipulated by an elite. Franz Gress' literal and benevolent interpretation of 'populism' as 'populus' meaning "the people" is surely appealing, but leaves an unfortunate conceptual void. Manipulation of the people still goes on, and we still need a word for it.

¹⁰ For a balanced account of Huey Long, see Harry Williams' *Huey Long* (1970).

politicians, such as Göran Persson – the then Swedish Prime Minister and Social Democrat – from insinuating that the June List followers are somehow anti-democratic because they advocate against giving more power to Brussels, which for him must imply that the two parties share certain extremist views. Persson, like so many critics of populism, refuses to recognise the important difference between the two types of populist party, between the exclusionary, nationalist populism of the BNP (and of its sister parties in various countries such as the French *Front National* (National Front) and the Belgian *Vlaams Belang* (Flemish interest)) and the empowering, left-wing liberal movements such as the June List. Leaving politics, one discovers numerous individuals within the populist tradition: Charlie Chaplin, the social critics Michael Moore and Morgan Spurlock (*Super Size me!*)¹¹, Woodie Guthrie, Walt Whitman, Bruce Springsteen, and Naomi Klein – to name but a few. They reflect a kind of cultural populism which sees virtue and authenticity in the common folk, and hypocrisy and opportunism among the elite. On the international scene, anti-globalisation movements, such as Attac, and indigeneous movements such as the one championed by the French farmer José Bové, leading protests against McDonalds, are all critics of the elite within this empowering and egalitarian tradition of populism.

Unless these two forms of populism – right-wing populism and egalitarian populism – are carefully distinguished, one is likely to present a hopelessly confused analysis. It is therefore important to distinguish between an ideological, doctrinaire anti-egalitarian critique of the elite and a critique of the elite that is based on empirical analysis. Analytically confusing the two types prevents us from understanding key issues in political development. This is especially true in Austria in relation to the roots of the Austrian Freedom Party's support. Mixing right-wing populism and egalitarian populism will in practice constitute a water-tight argument in the hands of any self-righteous elite, including, it is worth adding, a self-righteous elite with indisputably right-wing populist tendencies. This is the real, practical danger inherent in an excessive and stereotypical anti-populism.

Who would vote for a party with these kinds of populist qualities? Such a party would attract those who have a political interest, and who see a politically active electorate

¹¹ *Super Size Me* (2004) is a documentary in which the filmmaker and protagonist – Spurlock – eats only from McDonald's only over a period of a month.

as important. These voters have a strong belief in public referenda as a means of reaching political decisions, and as a means of egalitarian persuasion. Hence, in contrast to populists of the radical nationalist type, they are against hierarchies. An important segment of this persuasion is composed of the Euro-skeptics who contest the power of Brussels to decide national issues as diverse as the use of food additives or asylum law. These people are critics of international capitalism, the privatisation of the public sector (what they call 'neo-liberalism') and of globalisation. They place their faith in the nation-state and dismiss its links with the history of Fascism and Nazism. Instead, they see national sovereignty as a precondition for democracy, the rule of law, equality and other marks of modernity. Finally, they are against the agenda of multiculturalism; partly because they believe in the notion of solidarity across borders, be it across a 'multitude' of cultures, or transgressing ethnic, class-based, gender-based, and religious demarcation lines; and partly because multiculturalists generally criticise political charisma, the nation-state and other concepts that have historically been associated with right-wing extremism.

From this brief overview of some salient features of populist voters, it could be argued that such voters are neither traditionalists nor conservatives in the sense of wanting to protect some established hierarchies. These voters are modern and egalitarian. They are not conspicuously oriented towards unregulated market capitalism, because this system is hierarchical and fosters the existence of elites. They may not be liberals, as classic liberalism (of the European variety) relies on parliamentary democracy and political representatives. Instead, they are likely to be trade union socialists and social democrats for whom the nation state is associated with secure working conditions and social peace, and for whom solidarity and equality are crucial (while difference and inequality are not). These socialists and social democrats are opposed to multiculturalism, because it is inherently linked not only to difference, but also to inequality, to representation based on myth (that of a mutual ancestry) rather than political views, and ultimately to a hierarchical society. The voters for this form of populism are always anti-elitists and at times republicans.

As we have seen in this chapter, populism is notoriously hard to pin down. It can be seen as everything from emancipating to dictatorial. While some say it relies on a hidden, right-wing extremist agenda, others claim that populists often mean what

they say. Debates thrive over whether populist movements primarily attack the elite, or chiefly criticise immigrants and foreigners. Are populists underdogs or elitists? Furthermore, the accessible, hand-shaking nature of populist politicians raises the question: is it inherently beneficial to be anonymous? These issues are all closely linked to the Austrian Freedom Party. Scholars argue about whether the rise of the party was caused by its right-wing extremism or by its egalitarian populism and anti-elitism. Therefore, populism offers a suitable theoretical background to the thesis. Next, chapter 5 will give an outline of the elite dual rule between the Social Democratic Party of Austria and the Austrian People's Party. This discussion is rather thorough, as this dual elite rule was the target of intense critique from the Freedom Party and Jörg Haider.

Chapter 5

Austrian Corporatism – An Overview

The post-war shared rule between the Social Democratic Party of Austria and the conservative Austrian People's Party has above been referred to as the 'elite'. This kind of dual elite rule, practised in Austria, Sweden and other countries appears in many guises. 'Consociationalism' – emphasising the dual arrangements between the parties – is a well-established concept in the academic literature. Among more imaginative descriptions, 'sleaze democracy' – *Filzdemokratie* – highlights the Kafkaesque experience of the operation of secret rules in Austrian society, while 'sham democracy' and 'authoritarian'¹² are but two epithets of democratic critics. However, following the terminology used by Peter Gerlich and Anton Pelinka (and also noted in the introduction), the system will here be referred to using the more value-neutral term 'Austrian corporatism'.

Etymologically, 'corporatism' is derived from *corpus*, the Latin word for body. In the early stages, the concept did not have any specific political correspondence. Instead, it reflected 'holistic' medieval European ideas of an entire social community in which each of the various components fulfilled a function, in a manner similar to the role of the constituent elements in a living organism. A clear-cut notion of corporatism cannot, however, be constructed from this 'bottom line' of corporatism. Like populism, corporatism is an essentially fractured social concept, 'a handy label that will stick to almost any surface' (Williamson 1985, p. 3). As noted by some critics, 'the first thing that strikes one as one reads through the recent literature on modern corporatism is the profound lack of agreement on what the concept actually refers to' (Panitch 1980, p. 159).

Despite the vague aspects of the definition of corporatism, we can identify certain general characteristics. Essentially, corporatism is a system of formalised relations between three institutions: the unions, the employers, and the government. These three 'corporations' or 'bodies' have obtained a monopoly on bargaining on behalf of their respective interest groups. Hence, as opposed to individual action or complete

¹² As early as 1957 the Austrian political system was described as 'authoritarian', 'though retaining the trappings of democracy'. See Preston (1957, p. 346).

state control, corporatism is the institutionalisation of the middle person. Corporatism rests on a specific kind of associative action, namely the class organisation of both labour and capital (Pekkarinen *et al.* 1992, p. 2). Instead of class war, however, the agents of the corporatist institutions engage in orderly negotiations for mutual benefit. The fact that corporatism does not allow for individual negotiations on the labour market leads to one of the key components of corporatism: centralised wage bargaining, which is ostensibly associated with low unemployment and egalitarianism. The general set-up of the corporatist structures means that the state is involved, either formally or informally, in setting wages and working conditions.

The existence of corporatism, however, does not only depend upon the unions, employers and government as the three pillars of corporatist action. These bodies must also exhibit a number of features in their structure and interaction.¹³ Unions and employers are both characterised by the following internal traits:

1. Concentration of power; i.e. a high level of influence exercised by a peak council on the action of its affiliates. Widely acknowledged union membership fees as well as the collective organisation of employers are both examples of this.
2. Organisational unity; i.e. where the class of employers or the class of workers is characterised by internal concord as opposed to discord. A rough estimate of the degree of concord can be read by the number and size of confederations and subgroups that jointly constitute labour and capital – the class of workers and the class of employers. In Sweden, for example, the Swedish Trade and Industry [*Svenskt Näringsliv*], formerly Swedish association of employers [*SAF – Svenska Arbetsgivarföreningen*] and the Confederation of Trade Unions (*LO*) – [*Landsorganisationen*], are both good examples of a high level of organisational unity on the part of capital and labour.
3. High membership density. A high rate of union membership is vital for corporatist possibilities where labour is involved, as the alternative to a systematic formation of labour often lies in a complete disintegration to the level of separate individuals.

¹³ For a more elaborate discussion about these internal and in-between features that foster the rise of corporatism, see Archer (1998, p. 72).

The vague nature of corporatism has meant that, historically, it has been associated with a great variety of ideologies. Throughout the first four decades of the 20th century, corporatism was by and large a vehicle for Roman Catholic and fascist ideas, either separately or together. The end of the Second World War, however, brought about changes in the history of corporatism. The papal interest in corporatism faded, while the conservative or fascist version of corporatism had been brought into disrepute. This meant that the fundamental features of corporatism – political concord, centralised negotiations and collectivist bargaining – could now be tied to a different ideological discourse. Instead of being exploited by the rightist fringes who would draw on it in emphasising social harmony and cooperation between the classes, corporatist ideology could now serve the interests of the moderate left because, among other things, it not only accepted the collectivist organisation of labour, but endorsed it. As a result of this continuity in corporatist thinking, scholars have been at pains to differentiate between the pre-1945 and the post-1945 versions of corporatism. Gerhard Lehbruch (1979, p. 54) refers to 'authoritarian' and 'liberal' corporatism, Philippe Schmitter (1979, p. 20) talks about 'state' and 'societal' corporatism, and Colin Crouch (1979, p. 188) questions the possibility of a general concept of corporatism by differentiating between 'pure' and 'bargained' corporatism. Claus Offe (1981, p. 140) captures the distinction between fascist enforcement and liberation by contrasting corporatism based on 'restraint' with a corporatism based on 'delegation'.

The particular features of Austrian corporatism suggest that it constitutes a good example of this post-war, moderate leftist version of corporatism. In the eyes of Peter Gerlich, (1992a, p. 132) Austrian expert on these political arrangements, Austrian corporatism must not be interpreted as being of the Italian fascist style but should be understood 'in the broadest possible sense', as implying 'co-operative policy styles in various arenas of the political system'. As opposed to Italy, Spain, and Portugal, where 'corporatism' in the fascist tradition was set up to replace class war by class co-operation through the dictates of authoritarian rule, Anton Pelinka (1998a, p. 133) sees 'social partnership [as] the friendly Austrian version of this skeleton in the closet.'

'Social partnership' (*Sozialpartnerschaft*) is often defined as (the core of) the Austrian version of corporatism. The widespread popularity of social partnership goes back to the fact that many players on the political arena could find benefits with the system. For industrialists, social partnership prevented social tensions because unions were invited. For the unionists and Social Democrats, it contributed in democratising capitalism, while conservatives and Christian Democrats saw social partnership as a tempting middle way between collectivist and secular socialism, and consumerist and decadent capitalism (Pelinka 1998a, p. 91). In his classic definition, Gerhard Lehmbuch describes social partnership by means of four main aspects. First: Key interest groups are organised into 'Chambers'. Second: The institutionalisation of interest group cooperation by systematic agreements between labour and capital. Third: An Advisory Council for Economic and Social Problems (solely composed by experts from different groups according to parity quotas. Forth: Free and voluntary cooperation of various interest groups (Lehmbuch 1979, pp. 53-61).

The two central actors in Social Partnership are the Federal Chamber of Commerce and the Austrian Trade Union Federation. Membership of the Federal Chamber of Commerce is compulsory, whereas the Austrian Trade Union Federation, enjoying a monopoly, covered about 60 percent of the labour force in the early 1990s. Only Sweden seems to have had higher membership levels (See Lauber 1992, p. 148). Since 1957, discussions between the Federal Chamber of Commerce and the Austrian Trade Union Federation have taken place within the Joint Commission for Wages and Prices (*Die Paritätische Kommission für Lohn – und Preisfragen*), an institution frequently considered as constituting the core of post-war Austrian corporatism. Furthermore, the Executive Committee of the Joint Commission was regarded as the so-called 'Big Brain' of Austrian corporatism (See Marin 1982, p. 306).¹⁴

The second core element of Austrian corporatism is consociationalism – i.e. manifest in the political co-operation between the Social Democratic Party and the conservative Austrian Peoples Party. Peter Gerlich simply labels it "Party cooperation" (Gerlich 1992, p. 132). Alike Social Partnership above, consociationalism can also be summed up in four key components: A coalition

¹⁴ For an interesting discussion of the intricate relations between the different elements of the Austrian system of corporatism, see Knoll and Mayer (1976).

between major parties, the principle of mutual veto, political representation determined by proportionality, and finally autonomy for each group of the political system (Pelinka 1998a, p. 21; see also Luther 1998, p. 110).

Under what circumstances do consociationalism come about and parties cooperate? When societies are characterized by 'vertically encapsulated and mutually hostile political subcultures'. Under these conditions, consociational solutions – fostering cooperation instead of competition – may lead to a 'metaphorical bridge' stretching over the gulf separating various political subcultures or 'pillars' and thus political stability can be acquired (Luther 1999, p. 3). This leads to one of the paradoxical key feature of consociationalism; namely a co-existence of deeply fragmented political cultures and elitist unanimity and concord among political leaders. Gerhard Lehbruch refers to consociational options – or Concord democracy – as 'the response of political elites in certain countries to the challenge of strong sub-cultural segmentation' (Lehbruch 1974, p. 1; See also Lehbruch 1967, Lijphart 1968, and McRae 1974). Furthermore, this co-operative policy can be executed in two ways; either through engaging in negotiations and reaching agreements on every single issue, or by means of a 'simultaneous junction of different actions' (*Junktim*), whereby the power and responsibility for resolving key issues is equally divided between the two parties or coalitions. That is, while certain issues are decided according to the wishes of the Social Democrats, other issues are settled in favour of the Austrian People's Party.¹⁵ After these preliminary observations about corporatism in general and about Austrian corporatism, it is now time to undertake a critical investigation of this elite system.

¹⁵ For a discussion clarifying of *Junktim* see Lehbruch (1967, p. 45).

Austrian Corporatism – Elitist Oppression?

It is common knowledge in Austria that you do not have influence because you are a member of parliament, but you are a member of parliament because you have influence (Pelinka 1985, p. 19).

Situated in the midst of the liberal Western political ambience, the Austrian political system appears something of an oddity. Emerging from war-time and post-war occupation and then, from 1955, an apparently solid democracy it has enjoyed free elections, and politicians whose terms of office have depended on the will of the people. Shrinking voter turnouts and declining party membership, which have long haunted the West, have not been a phenomenon of Austrian politics. In the mid-1990s 17 percent of the Austrian population were members of a political party, more than three times the European average (See Sperl 1993, p. 70). Voter turnout has been consistently high, averaging 92.7 percent between 1953 and 1990 (Luther and Müller 1992, p. 29). During the period of this investigation 1986 to 2000 turnout was 84.4 percent, slightly lower but still high for Western Europe (Khol *et al.* 2001, p. 731ff).¹⁶ There are a great number of widely read newspapers, although the political party press faces a constantly diminishing readership. Strikes are virtually unknown (See Klose 1987, p. 118).

Even so, these facts do not present the whole picture. In fact, whether Austria is a liberal society or not is a matter of some dispute. Ever since the collapse of the Nazi regime, Austria has been characterised by rather questionable features, such as a weak parliament and secret negotiations among political actors. Austrian corporatist arrangements between the Social Democrats and the conservative People's Party, the first period of which lasted from 1945 to 1966 and the second from 1986 to 1999, suffered from corruption and a considerable amount of scandal, which allegedly affected Austria's economic performance. As the following discussion will show, these democratic defects and the way the Freedom Party has exploited them in their rhetoric are *the* most important explanation for why Jörg Haider and the Freedom

¹⁶ In later national elections, voter turnout was 83.0 percent (2002); 78.5 percent (2006) and 78.8 percent (2008). (www.bmi.gv.at/cms/BMI_wahlen/nationalrat/NRW_History.aspx)

Party have achieved such an impressive increase in popular support since 1986.¹⁷ Accusations of 'lack of democracy', 'secluded guilds', 'elite rule' of 'old dinosaurs', to name but a few of the allegations, struck a chord among the Austrian public, delivering for the Freedom Party a great increase in electoral support. Haider himself often declared that he would not be where he was were it not for the 'political grannies' on the park bench (Haider 1993a, p. 190).

Austrian corporatism is a highly complex phenomenon, and as such open to various forms of scholarly critique. For the sake of clarity we will divide such critique according to four main features, which may be represented by the headings: 'corruption in the political system'; 'political participation and opposition'; 'the scientific rationality of Austrian corporatism'; and finally 'Ideology strikes back'.

Corruption in the Political System

It is hard to imagine a political society where party membership reflects ideological conviction alone. Pressure from relatives and colleagues at work inevitably affect voter preferences in addition to party membership – possibly even more so. Furthermore, the recent change whereby people tend to vote for a particular 'issue' rather than a political idea is a frequently observed phenomenon. Personal and economic circumstances also play a part, as for example when someone joins an up-and-coming fringe party as a means of pursuing a political career. However, pursuing such objectives this way have drawbacks – it involves hard work, the competition is severe, and, importantly, such career opportunities are confined to the field of party politics. Therefore, becoming a party member for tactical reasons is, under these circumstances, likely to be uncommon.

Since the end of the Second World War the situation in Austria has been quite different. Situated within a state whose authority had been permanently called into question, the Austrian Social Democratic Party and the Austrian People's Party had divided between them vast domains of the country's administrative system – ranging from organisations with political objectives to associations for car owners, botanists,

¹⁷ For an overview of the Freedom Party, see Luther (1991, p. 247).

and dog and cat owners. Therefore, post-war party influence in Austria ranged over a much wider area of public life than is usual with European political parties. Especially important for this study are those areas where private interest was at stake, such as obtaining a job, being promoted or the allocation of publicly owned housing. According to a 1980 Austrian survey asking people their motives for becoming a party member, nearly eighty percent replied 'work-related advantages' (Deiser and Winkler 1980, p. 143).¹⁸ Without a Social Democrat or People's Party card it was for decades almost impossible to obtain any prominent position in Austria – in the media, in industry and in organisations, in politics and education.¹⁹ Party power was no less impressive within the housing sector. As a significant proportion of the Austrian housing stock was under the influence of one or other of the two major parties, it is not surprising that 71 percent when asked about their reasons for joining a party responded 'to receive a flat' (Deiser and Winkler 1980, p. 143). Nor were these implicit agreements restricted to obtaining apartments. An equivalent division along party lines was often present among construction companies (Kofler 1985, p. 43). This created a situation where the personal lives of citizens were almost entirely dependent on the goodwill of the party (Plasser, Ulram and Grausgruber 1992, p. 18).

Inevitably, these arrangements bred nepotism and corruption on a large scale. Anyone with contacts in the political sphere had an undisputed advantage under the shared rules of intimacy and anonymity. For those holding political office opportunities for personal gain were significantly more diverse and on a different level. For our purposes, it will suffice to remark that the 'list of politicians [...] accused of crimes, actually found guilty of serious offences by the courts – including for example tax evasion [...] – reads like an extract from the "Who's Who of Austrian politics"' (IMAS-report 1991, p. 119).

¹⁸ The exact figure is 78.1 percent. This study is also quoted in Luther and Pulzer (1998, p. 129). Luther and Pulzer refer to 79 percent for work enhancement and 72 percent for housing respectively. These high figures are now shrinking, even though recent events, such as the fact that the *Liberale Forum* failed to gain any seats in Parliament in the 1999 National election, questions the assumption that those illiberal corporatist structures will eventually disappear.

¹⁹ Already in 1957 when provisional arrangements were set up in order to stabilise the Austrian economy, which soon became established as the Joint Commission for Wages and Prices (*Die paritätische Kommission für Lohn und Preisfragen*), this criticism was widespread. It was almost impossible to achieve a post within prominent areas of the Austrian system except through party influence. (Preston 1957, p. 346)

Also, as opposed to the ordinary citizen, the public official had the power to benefit not only himself or herself but also to personally favour certain segments or groups in Austrian industry. This difference is important, since nepotism and undercover negotiations between, for instance, firms and companies arguably affected the efficiency of the Austrian economy. According to an investigation made by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Austrian legal protection against 'unfair competition' – as it was conveniently framed – quite successfully promoted financial agreements between powerful interest groups, excluding non-organised and possibly more financially sound companies and tenders. As a consequence of the duration and extensive use of these corporatist arrangements, about half of Austria's GDP, by the end of the 1980s, was produced in sectors sheltered from competition (OECD Economic Surveys 1989/90, cited in Lauber 1992, p. 162).²⁰

These protectionist tendencies were seen as a structural weakness of the Austrian economy which, arguably, hampered Austria's responsiveness to changing international conditions (Lauber 1992, p. 160). The early 1980s, characterised by a weak economy, heavy financial losses and numerous scandals such as unsuccessful oil speculation within the Austrian nationalised steel industry, saw critics increasingly point towards the connection between corruption and poor economic results (Gerlich 1989, p. 214).

Political Participation and Opposition

At first sight, political representation within Austrian corporatism does not differ from ordinary pluralistic representation. In both cases, political decisions are influenced by interest groups, all of which try to affect the decision-making process according to their specific objectives. But whereas pluralistic representation generally takes place from a position outside the sphere of power, corporatist representation usually takes place within powerful institutions. No interest group pressure can be exerted outside official channels or expressed without a formal position. These arrangements considerably limit the number of contending pressure groups and render their

²⁰ This OECD investigation would support a liberal and pluralist critique, arguing that the economy does not benefit from the orderly surveillance and 'transparency' of corporatist arrangements.

activities more institutionalised than those within pluralistic representation. Consequently, increased knowledge and horizontal intimacy between interest group members is obtained only at the price of the exclusion of any pressure group that, for whatever reason, is situated outside the sphere of power (Marin 1982, p. 43).

This leads to an important feature of the system – that due to a combination of secret negotiations and a rubber-stamp parliament, the vast majority of political decisions are made out of sight of the people. Ostensibly for the sake of mutual benefit, newspapers were rarely informed before decisions were taken. This contributed strongly to the fact that, during the two decades between 1966 and 1986, about 80 percent of all legislation was passed unanimously by the Austrian National Assembly.²¹ This corporatist process of political decision-making meant that meetings and negotiations between member of the Joint Commission for Wages and Prices (*Die Paritätische Kommission für Lohn- und Preisfragen*) – frequently regarded as the very core of Austrian corporatism – took on the air of gentlemen's agreements.²² Secluded, informal discussions created an informal atmosphere and a sense of mutual responsibility, where a spoken promise was trusted (Gerlich 1992, p. 136f).

Corresponding to these corporatist characteristics of horizontal intimacy, the system executed a faceless power. Politicians could not be confronted as members of the Joint Commission for Wages and Prices (Marin 1982, p. 16) for there were no formal lists of members, routines for membership, official offices, agendas, or procedures for exit (Luther and Müller 1992, p. 136). The impression of amorphousness was further strengthened by the fact that no firm duties existed; consequently, neither did expectations, surprises, or, ultimately, responsibilities (Marin 1982, p. 16). In short, these intimate negotiations were being executed from a position aloof from society, beyond the reach of the citizen and the law.

²¹ Despite recent changes in direction towards a less co-operative parliament, the latter is still predominantly regarded as the place where negotiations between government and opposition take place. (Luther and Müller 1992, p. 104)

²² I am referring to negotiations made within the aforementioned Joint Commission for Wages and Prices, (*Die Paritätische Kommission für Lohn – und Preisfragen*) frequently regarded as the very core of Austrian corporatism. See Marin (1985, p. 74) and Klose (1987, p. 90).

Just as hidden negotiations behind a rubber-stamp parliament of pre-fabricated consensus can be seen as *the* core feature of political behaviour under Austrian corporatism, so the behaviour of the citizen may be traced back to one – psychologically significant – element, and, indeed, one which appears to gainsay a fundamental correlation in political behaviour.

Generally, voting is regarded as an act of political conviction stemming from either 'party identification' – where voting constitutes an act of loyalty, or from the theory of 'rational choice' whereby one acts in pursuit of one's personal interests. In contrast, anyone who does not vote is assumed to be showing a lack of political engagement. Decreasing voting participation within Western nations has therefore been a cause for concern.

According to the definition of Barnes and Kaase (1979, p. 38), participation is defined as 'interaction between authorities and non-authorities' [author's translation]. This definition of participation, which emphasises free interaction within a given hierarchy, can be regarded as one variation between two extreme definitions, the one aiming for self-government, the other aiming for the preservation of the balance of a political system (Zimpel 1970, p. 72). Whereas the self-government perspective puts forward a rather narrow definition, and emphasises the citizen's knowledge and ability to improve his or her personal situation, the 'balance-seeking' approach is mainly concerned with the preservation and functioning of a given social system. The citizen should be engaged, but within limits; a subservient and enthusiastic supporter of decisions taken elsewhere (Almond and Verba 1963, p. 490).

The latter form of political action lacks what is required in order to achieve self-government, namely the aptitude for change through personal judgement. Therefore, as opposed to 'political participation', political acclamation might be a more appropriate label for the Austrian system. More specifically this suggested label illustrates one seemingly contradictory element in Austrian politics: the Austrian combination of high voting figures and political apathy (See Luther and Müller 1982, p. 60).²³ In elections from 1953 to 1990 figures show that average turnout was 92.7

²³ In any investigation concerning voting or membership of a political organisation, the case of Austria has for decades been noted for exhibiting strikingly high voting figures. However, the Kafkaesque, anonymous nature of Austrian political participation is revealed when we turn to face-to-face

percent (Luther and Müller 1982, p. 29). Taken at face value the Austrian figure is a cause for some envy. In reality, however, it comes with a widely held 'non-ideological conception of politics', shared by 81 percent of Austrians.²⁴ This acclamatory tendency can also be shown by research showing that whereas Austria has been a rather average European country in the category of 'conventional political participation' – ranging from political campaigning to political inactivity – it nevertheless displayed remarkably low figures in the positive category 'protest potential' – covering activities from the hesitant signing of petitions to illegal strikes (Barnes and Kaase 1979, p. 80).

What the system of Austrian corporatism requires is citizen support and legitimacy. What it does not need is active participation (Pelinka 1987, p. 72). It is all for the people, but nothing by the people. Judging from the Austrian experience, one might conclude that the greatest degree of political apathy is expressed by a citizen who is unable to refrain from voting.²⁵

The Scientific Rationality of Austrian Corporatism

Is politics as such an irrational and therefore politically dubious endeavour? The question might seem provocative, but since the end of the Second World War it has been quite central to the Austrian political scene.

In order to illustrate the Austrian corporatist view of politics, one should first, by way of comparison, briefly consider some features that have traditionally defined

encounters with local politicians; the unparalleled Austrian figures suddenly collapse to less than half the figure in the Netherlands, barely outnumbering India. (Verba 1978, p. 61).

²⁴ This figure is from the year 1979, which showed a turnout of 92.2 percent, fairly close to the average of the period under investigation. (Barnes and Kaase 1979, p. 224)

²⁵ To be fair, lack of active participation is not exclusively confined to corporatist societies. See, for instance, Butler and Stokes (1969) and Converse (1964) Converse argued that the level of political knowledge among the general American public was rather low. Central to his argument was the concept of 'constraint', meaning the degree to which a particular belief is predictive of another belief. While the American elites do display constraint, i.e. consciously seek to construct a cogent and consistent body of ideological thought, the majority of Americans rather tend to choose randomly, resulting in an inconsistent political view. According to Converse, Americans who defend the welfare state are also most likely to defend lower taxes; as if they, on a quite rudimentary level, select policies that 'are good for us'. The author believes these two ideas are mutually exclusive, and therefore demonstrate a lack of constraint. Hence, while corporatism may lower political participation among the electorate, political apathy is a problem throughout the Western community.

European democratic political action.²⁶ First and foremost, it is characterised by an explicit range of alternatives, defined by a trade-off between different sets of values.²⁷ Apart from basic issues, such as the common benefit of not declaring war, solutions presented generally favour certain groups and not others. Politically opposed views regarding, for instance, the tax system are natural and cannot, by means of their very nature, be overcome. These contesting alternatives imply, furthermore, that the citizen is compelled to choose.

The underlying theoretical assumptions behind Austrian corporatism are different, the reason for which is connected to the concept of 'objectification' (The Austrian original term is *Versachlichung*, literally 'turning to the thing itself', or 'turning to the heart of the matter').²⁸ In a benevolent, relativistic interpretation that makes the concept true, if somewhat obvious, this would arguably suggest no more than the need for any contending party to steer away from irrelevant issues. In an Austrian setting, however, the meaning of 'objectification' is quite different. It entails the avoidance of ideological conflict.

In contrast to a pluralistic system, ideologically founded disputes were, in Austrian political culture, not recognised as core elements for negotiation, but as a sign of immature debate.²⁹ They did not, as it were, belong to the 'object' of any political issue. On the contrary, ideological differences should be 'played down', (Pelinka 1998a, p. 147) 'dismantled', (Klose 1970, p. 68) peeled off by the expertise of the corporatist politician.

²⁶ The difference between Austrian post-war politics and that of other European countries is not one of kind, but one of degree. A redefinition of politics towards 'the mutual interest' is an international phenomenon. Even so, it can be argued that in Austria this process is gaining ground not only because of the lack of a political defence, but actively, through the structure of the system itself.

²⁷ For an argument that political distinctions can be analysed in terms of equality versus inequality, see Bobbio. (1996, p. 99) For a discussion of the terms liberty and equality in terms of left and right, see Bobbio. (1996, p. 76)

²⁸ As early as in the 1950's, the Austrian political theorist Alfred Klose used 'Objectification' to describe the policy of Austrian corporatism. (Pelinka 1998, p. 147) It must not be confused with 'objectification' (*Vergegenständlichung*) in the Marxian sense, in which the worker in the era of capitalism becomes assimilated to the object he produces. (Giddens 1971, p. 11)

²⁹ Again, it is easy to overstate the differences. In a well-functioning democratic system opposing views must also be overcome. The one, but still significant difference concerns 'when', and under what circumstances these opposing views are finally moulded together, i.e. if these originally conflicting views are to be regarded as real or illusory in the first place.

Naturally, in Austria during the period we are examining, this grand 'objectification' had immediate repercussions, both for the scope of possible social alternatives and also for the definition of a rational decision. Once the illusions of political interest were overcome, the range of possible solutions narrowed considerably (Pelinka 1998a, p. 147). In fact, what ultimately remained was not even one option among many but one which 'eventually should be regarded as an unquestionable order of political rationality', the only alternative to which consisted in 'a complete politicisation of the economy, and degeneration into the inter-war atmosphere of class struggle.' *Wirtschaftspolitische Blätter 20* (Vol. 6. 1973, cited in Marin 1982, p. 309).

Only Austrian corporatism was rational, scientific, responsible, all else was unrealistic, dangerous, and utopian (Marin 1982, p. 75). A political point of view was no longer significant. In the words of the Austrian political historian Anton Pelinka, well-known dividing lines were replaced by new ones, the vacuity of which was revealed by their seemingly incontestable nature: 'The gap between socialism and capitalism, between interventionism and the free market, was seen as secondary compared with the difference between 'good' (consistent) and 'bad' (inconsistent) solutions' (Pelinka 1998a, p. 147). Politics had indeed ended up being an irrational and almost politically dubious endeavour.

Ideology Strikes Back

If the one crucial difference between ideological programmes is their amount of explicit honesty in relation to their equally subjective and partial endeavours then indeed Austrian corporatism has been a failure. It might seem tempting to cling to 'scientific solutions that go beyond interest', and jump on the bandwagon of 'good' and 'consistent' solutions (Pelinka 1998a, p. 147). But the question lingers: 'To whom?' To whom are those solutions favourable? Where do they take us? At what specific position on the scale of left and right are these proposed changes 'free from illusions', 'objective', 'non-political'? These questions have all been absent from the ideological debate within Austrian corporatism.

As the unspoken rule of Austrian corporatism is one of constant negotiation (and not constant strikes), it has often been argued that the system has a structural bias in favour of the employers. Historically, this more favourable attitude towards the employer might be explained by the fact that they favoured the system precisely *because* the system was non-transparent and secretive. The employees, on the contrary, approved of the system *in spite of* those very same corporatist features. The system of Austrian corporatism is a system more favourable to conservatives and moderate reformists than to revolutionaries or, indeed, reactionaries (Pelinka 1987, p. 68). A further explanation for this conservative impression is suggested by Arend Lijphart: broad agreements can be perceived as more democratic than majority rule; but practically, these agreements might, by means of the principle of veto, end up being a conservative rule by any minority (Lijphart 1977, p. 27).

The main explanation for Austrian corporatism's quite subjective nature can, however, be sought within various programmatic statements, where these seemingly objective concepts are further explained. 'Rational', for example, was everything which 'serves the objectives of the economic policy', such as economic growth (Kienzl, cited in Marin 1982, p. 307). 'Rationality' as manifest in economic growth, should have 'an educating and edifying impact' (Bischof 1966, p. 13). This clearly shows how ideological conflicts were 'played down' as a mere educational issue, assisting in overcoming political obstacles 'by means of spreading economic knowledge among the population [...]' (Schmitz 1973, p. 307). Conflicts were caused by confusion and were therefore ideological by nature. Knowledge was economic by nature and led to co-operation.³⁰

Under the veil of the common good, Austrian corporatist 'objectification' was the rationality of production, trade, and economic progress; an ideology of the times labelled as the 'end of ideologies', run by the technocratic elite: managers, experts, strategists, public-relations people (Marin 1982, p. 301). In denying their partial stance, they mystified the world. Furthermore, the adherents' innocence made this technocratic ideology yet more 'plausible and non-transparent, authentic and therefore more seductive than all other ideologies, past and present, because it alone

³⁰ Jörg Haider and the Freedom Party argue that Austrian corporatism is a predominantly socialist project. In light of the conservative or downright neo-liberal connections above, this might seem surprising.

aspired to express the conscience of post-ideological modernity' (Marin 1982, p. 301).

Austrian Corporatism – a Success Story

The elite system of Austrian corporatism was plagued by a wide range of problems as the previous discussion has shown. Whether or not the system was democratic was questioned. The system exhibited indisputable traits of corruption. The electorate had, so it seemed, entered into a psychological frame of thought where voting procedures no longer had any meaning. The very existence of social conflicts was programmatically denied. Instead, the view of any dissenting voice was declared to be false, while the view of the Austrian elite was seen as the truth. Under the surface of such proclamations, a subjective agenda in favour of progress and rationality was hidden.

However, this discussion of Austrian corporatism is still incomplete. A fuller picture will now be presented, stressing the system's historical background and the reasons why it initially came about. The economic development will be underscored.

Austrian Corporatism – Historical Legacy

Ever since 1618, when rebellious Czechs, in what could be regarded as the very epitome of a separatist outrage, hurled three Habsburg partisans out of the Hradcany Royal Palace window, the empire was threatened by factionist tendencies.³¹ Comprising vast areas of wilderness, the empire was characterised by a multitude of cultures, languages, religions, all of which contributed to a pronounced feature of Habsburg – namely that it was a fledging empire combining diverse and increasingly nationalistic regions. Not only did this seriously affect the sense of unity among the population but also, eventually, became an insurmountable difficulty for the government. The constitution of 1867 allowed for the development of a parliament and party competition. Initial hopes for debates according to ideological convictions

³¹ Since 1800 no other European country has shifted identity as many times as Austria. (See Pelinka 1998a, p. 9)

were soon dashed, resulting in a party system completely fragmented by ethnolinguistic differences (Pelinka 1998a, p. 10).

In addition to language barriers and rising 'inner' nationalism, the empire was fractured by religion and age. As opposed to the 'young Czechs', favouring a nationalism of a more popular nature, the 'old Czechs' were 'tactically allied with the feudalists' (Steiner 1972, p. 29). During one period of severe tension between 1879 and 1893, Prince Charles Schwarzenberg, an old Czech moderate, responded to calls for sovereignty: 'If you and yours hate this state – and it is unfortunately a fact that hatred of Austria is spreading in Bohemia through your teachings – what will you do with your country, which is too small to stand alone? Will you give it to Germany or to Russia, for you have no other choice if you abandon the Austrian union' (May 1951, p. 199). As a whole, Habsburg failed to excite the patriotism and enthusiasm that normally characterise state formations. All in all these features contributed to the drift of power from the state to political parties.

In the early 1900's central European societies were influenced by three distinct perspectives. An emphasis upon 'class' created the socialist camp, stress upon 'religion' formed the basis for political Catholicism, and 'ethnicity' found its political expression in various forms of radical nationalism, most importantly Pan-Germanism (Pelinka 1998a, p. 74; see also Steiner 1972, p. ix). For want of a pacifying sense of national belonging, citizens consequently fled into one or other of these competing camps – conservatism, socialist internationalism or anti-democratic ultra-nationalism. Further signs of the strength of these political camps – and the frailty of the Habsburg state – can be seen in their repeated attempts to forge links with like-minded foreign organisations (Luther and Müller 1993, p. 4). Any prospect of constructing a separate Austrian state was hampered by the fact that all its inhabitants from 1918 onwards spoke German (Pelinka 1998a, p. 12). Just as language had played a part in the lack of support for the Habsburg regime, so linguistic factors prevented emotional affiliation to the subsequent Austrian state; this time, however, it was not because there were too many languages, but because there was only one – German. In addition, hopes for Austrian separatism were, at least in parliament, shattered, as

most major parties advocated *Anschluss*; nationalists hoping for a shift rightwards, socialists expecting a revival of the German revolution (Steiner 1972, p. 16).³²

After the turmoil of the First World War, Austria – *der Rumpfstaat* – now a mere fraction of its former size, found itself equipped with an over-sized bureaucracy.³³ The inevitable dismissal in large numbers of those very civil servants upon whose shoulders state legitimacy normally rests seriously affected the self-esteem of the young nation (Luther and Müller 1992, p. 5). Worse still was the fact that the idea of an Austrian nation had been non-existent during the monarchy (Macartney 1926, p. 8). For the conservatives, the First Republic was the product of old Austria's defeat: for the left, it was just a temporary arrangement until unity with the Weimar Republic could be implemented; finally, for the extreme right, it was a nightmare phase between reality and the myth of a Greater German Empire. It was the state no one wanted (Pelinka 1998a, p. 11).

In the shaping of modern Austrian corporatism, the historical defeat of liberalism played a significant part. The bourgeois revolutions of 1848 failed to incite lasting changes within the Austrian state. In 1848, at the demand of reformists, the Vienna government made liberal reforms to the press, including allowing the printing of certain radical papers and publishing a constitution; only, however, to make a reactionary U-turn soon after and declare all liberal reforms null and void (May 1951, p. 25). Eventually, after considerable hesitation, modest liberal reforms were introduced in 1860, and in 1867, the same year as the progressive 'December Constitution', Austria started applying liberal principles more widely. However, the initial excitement turned sour with the major crash on the Vienna Stock Exchange in 1873 which partly explains the failure of the *laissez-faire* measures taken during in

³² In early August 1914, the editorial of the Austrian Arbeiter-Zeitung bore the title: 'Der Tag der deutschen Nation' (The day of the German nation), which indicates that the Austrian Social Democracy was dominated by the idea of *Anschluss*. (Kreisky, 1986, p. 151) Still, support for *Anschluss* was possibly stronger among leading socialists than among its rank-and-file. Otto Bauer wrote in *Die österreichische Revolution* in 1923 that the workers were 'somewhat cool' towards the *Anschluss* idea. (Cited in Steiner 1972, p. 16.) As noted by Bruno Kreisky (1986, pp. 181-2), *Anschluss*-fanaticism was by and large absent among the Austrian *Sozialistische Jugend* in the early 1930's. Indeed, Kreisky is amazed by the fact that younger socialists at the time did not express a clearer critique of the party's official enthusiasm for the idea.

³³ In 1918 Austria encompassed roughly one-sixth of the previous Habsburg territory, and the population had shrunk from fifty-two million to seven million inhabitants. (Steiner 1972, p. 3)

the inter-war period as well as the peripheral position of Austrian liberalism ever since (Luther and Müller 1992, p. 1).³⁴

These historical circumstances in the period leading up to 1918 – a lack of national support and permanent centrifugal tendencies, the failure of liberalism and a lost war – might all help to explain the emergence of the strong corporatist state. Economically, 1918 brought heavy war reparations, weighing heavily on a former empire which had suddenly lost most of its industrial structure. As a consequence Austria was the only European state with a negative inter-war GDP. In contrast to other countries, Austria never, after the Europe-wide state regulation of industry, regained a deregulated industrial structure, but plunged into a prolonged era of turmoil (Lehmbruch 1989, p. 60). Ideologically, what Anton Pelinka refers to as 'centrifugal democracy' subsequently led to political polarisation, civil war, Austrian fascism and eventually, in 1938, *Anschluss* and Nazi rule (1987, p. 71).³⁵ In 1945, owing to a shattered economy, a lost war and a lack of political consensus, the nation therefore again suffered an urgent crisis of legitimacy. Hence, the initial organisation of Austrian corporatism in the late 1950s was not born out of political optimism; rather, it evolved as a defensive reaction to potential disintegration and social upheaval.

Not long after Austria had been declared a sovereign state, it was put under an ostensibly democracy-fostering occupation by France, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and the United States. Even though Austrian politicians repeatedly made reassuring remarks concerning the political reliability of their country, the occupation was to last for those first ten years of Austria's post-Second World War existence, a period during which, generally, a national self-consciousness normally appears. This international arrangement further hampered the credibility of the nation, including national leaders, in the eyes of the Austrians. Instead, different party leaders and party elites started exercising unusually large levels of influence upon

³⁴ Even though these authors by no means overstate the consequences of the failure of pre-1939 Austrian liberalism for the Austrian political climate ever since, something should be added. Germany, for instance, also suffered from economic crises in the late 19th century and was equally hit by the Wall Street crisis. However, Germany eventually regained a firm belief in liberal principles.

³⁵ It is also worth noticing that far from the *Anschluss* being an act of aggression against a nation of 'victims', Hitler actually had the support of a considerable number of Austrians. However, the fact that a public referendum shortly before *Anschluss* showed that more than 99.72 per cent were in favour of it does not necessarily mean that they all supported Hitler. Austrians had many reasons to favour unification with Germany, and the Nazi ideology was only one of them.

the masses, at least within the context of modern Western Europe. As a consequence, the relative power of the political parties – most prominently that of the Social Democrats and the conservative People's Party, started to increase in proportion. Seen in this context, it is probably unjust to characterise the political parties' influence over Austria as determined only by greed for power and money.

An important consequence of this uncertain boundary between the Austrian state and its two major parties was that any state property was owned in practice by the Socialists and the Conservatives.³⁶ Therefore, the fact that in 1946, shortly after the war, the Austrian government agreed to create a law of state ownership of private corporations as a protective measure against Russian mass confiscation in Vienna and surrounding areas also, arguably, increased the power and influence of what was soon to evolve into Austrian corporatism (Gutkas 1985, p. 38).³⁷

Healing the Wounds and Bridging the Past

We have now reached the end of the international occupation in 1955, and move on to the peak period of Austrian corporatism. As indicated above and exemplified in the episode of the Russian expropriations, we now find that, in contrast to the general perception of 'corporatist measures', the cause for the initial establishment of Austrian corporatism was not as a means for great achievements but, on the contrary, intended as an explicit act of healing and protection against precisely those 'great achievements' which had recently dominated Europe.³⁸ Anton Pelinka observes that 'The parties had to fulfil functions which under normal circumstances would belong to the state' (1998a, p. 3), and refers to quite justifiable 'corporatist techniques for healing the wounds, and bridging the past' (1998a, p. 15). 'At the time', as noted by Hella Pick the 'country was deemed too fragile to sustain the rough-and-tumble of authentic parliamentary democracy' (2000a, p. 233). According to Bruno Kreisky, the reason why early tenant associations were unofficially Social

³⁶ As has previously been discussed, this is also exemplified by the fact that access to any state-owned apartment could only be achieved by membership in one of the two dominant political parties.

³⁷ According to Peter Gerlich (1989, p. 213), this precautionary strategy in the area under Russian occupation was unsuccessful.

³⁸ After the experience of the war, the Social Democrats and the People's Party agreed that any democratic measures would be allowed that could contribute to the prevention of another tragic political polarisation of the country.

Democratic was that 'it was felt that the Social Democratic Party could offer the best protection for the interests of the tenants' (1986, p. 20). The Austrian state was, Kreisky adds, 'conspicuously weak and were of little avail to the Austrian citizen' (1986, p. 20). The key word was, according to the Austrian political scientist Bernd Marin, modernisation, and the message was social peace and progress through an expanding economy and a dismantling of ideological tensions' [author's translation] (1982, p. 301). Kurt Richard Luther sees the 'main objectives of corporatism [as being] to avoid the crisis of the First Republic' (1992, p. 64). It was 'elite behaviour designed to stabilise a political system, the viability of which would otherwise be under threat' (Luther and Müller 1992, p. 205). In the eyes of Ronald Preston, commenting in 1956, Austrian corporatism maintained social peace in Austria and made possible an orderly social transformation of the country' (1956 p. 344f).³⁹ Indeed, negative descriptions of Austrian corporatism during this period are hard to find.

More generally, these various historical explanations depict Austrian corporatism as a benevolent political system arising out of an emergency created by the civil war of 1934 and the following fascist rule. None of those quoted above seeks to hide the fact that the corporatist measures had certain democratic flaws. Instead, they attempt to explain these measures by emphasising the critical historical situation of Austria in the late 1950s, as well as the democratic intentions of these measures.

From the corporatist arrangements the evolution of a mutual confidence would, later, enable a competitive market economy to function (1992b, p. 144). Thus, taking these historical features into consideration – a lost empire and a state without support, a persistent financial crisis and the weakness of liberal values, political polarisation, civil war, *Anschluss*, Nazi rule, followed by a ten-year denial of self-sufficiency – consociational theory 'may constitute something like a "missing link" between dictatorship and democracy, a stepping-stone on the way from a traditional to a modern form of politics and social life' (Gerlich 1992).

³⁹ In order to avoid being too critical of the 'elite rule' and taking on the 'lack of transparency' of Austrian corporatism – both stemming from the wisdom of hindsight – it is important not to overlook contemporaneous comments.

The fact that Austrian corporatism was intended as an explicit remedy for political and social disorder tempted the various interest groups to accept modest changes, which, under more favourable circumstances, might have been regarded as insufficient. The system was, for example, open to multiple political interpretations: for the socialists, corporatist measures made it possible to democratise capitalism. In the eyes of the capitalists the same measures prevented class warfare, whereas the unionists of Austrian corporatism saw a sudden opportunity to take part in decisions from which they had previously been excluded (Pelinka 1998a, p. 91).

Corporatism and the Austrian National Character

Before reconsidering the lack of transparency and 'objectification' of Austrian corporatism, which, as discussed above, revealed a somewhat questionable technocratic ideology of production and trade, Austrian national character will be discussed. In so doing, this consideration of the Austria's political development after 1945 will shift its focus away from specific measures of corporatist politics towards the underlying features of a people. Of course, in research on parties prone to ethnic simplifications it is of the utmost importance to avoid national stereotypes. But national characteristics and prejudiced stereotypes are two different things. Café discussions in Prague are generally quiet, and queues in the supermarket occur in Florence, but not in München.⁴⁰

In the earlier section on differences and similarities between academic and Freedom Party criticisms of Austrian corporatism, the observation was made that the system as such was not confined to the 'elite', but was an attribute of Austria as a whole; even, possibly, constituting a kind of national character. From an empirical point of view, Freedom Party criticisms were regarded not as distinct, but as merely a tactical selection within the wider area of academic criticism, with the aim of creating a

⁴⁰ Naturally, in the continual debate about structures and psychological characteristics, it is impossible to separate cause and effect. In order to find out if the effects of Austrian corporatism were alleviated by inherent national characteristics of the Austrian population, one would need to go back to the period prior to the late 1950's, i.e. the founding years of the system. The historical existence of national characteristics would, by including the entire Austrian population, also constitute an additional argument against the Freedom Party's populist presentation of a chasm between an exploitative elite and an exploited people. These historical discussions are, however, outside the scope of this thesis.

breach between a homogeneous and blameworthy 'elite', and an innocent and exploited 'people'.

Leaving aside direct participation in corporatism by the Austrian public, its citizens can be said to carry certain general features without which, one might argue, Austrian corporatism would not have been so successful. Austrians are industrious, cautious, and likely to keep private problems to themselves. 'Historically, Austrians dislike conflict and are even willing to suffer personal losses, as long as compensation can be expected at some later date' (Gerlich 1989, p. 219). They avoid risks, which creates a rather conservative society where political and social changes do not easily occur (Gerlich *et al.* 1988, p. 215). A telling example is the alleged existence of legal sanctions in the minds of the Austrians. They will ask themselves whether or not they are allowed to go on strike – and they are likely to answer this question in the negative (Gerlich *et al.* 1988, p. 217). The particular Austrian mind-set can also be illustrated by the degree of public satisfaction and private melancholia, as strikes have always been unusual in Austria at the same time as the nation historically has been plagued by high suicide rates.⁴¹

Returning to the previous discussion on acclamatory participation and the reluctance to engage in any kind of non-parliamentary action, the question needs to be raised whether, as was argued above, these features are mainly an outcome of the psychologically suffocating system of corporatism, or whether they rest upon deeper, historically founded elements within the Austrian population.

It has been argued that Austrians participated in the system of corporatism, and also displayed certain psychological features that fostered the scope and complexity of the structure. But what was their openly expressed opinion of it? Moreover, did this opinion change at any stage? In the early years and up until the 1980s, voter support for the two established parties indicates that the corporatist system rested on firm

⁴¹ In 1985, at the onset of this investigation, the suicide rate in Austria was, according to the WHO, 27.7 per 100,000 inhabitants. Among the 25 independent European states at the time, this was only surpassed by Hungary (44.4) and Denmark (27.9). The figure for the Czech Republic in 1986 is 20.9 and may be taken as a close approximation of the figure for Czechoslovakia in 1985. The figure for Germany in 1990 is 17.8.

(http://www.who.int/mental_health/prevention/suicide/country_reports/en/index.html)

public support (Kofler 1985, p. 92).⁴² Its popularity reached a peak in the 1970s (Pelinka 1998b, p. 112), and as late as the mid 1980s, there was hardly anyone who wished to reduce the influence of Austrian corporatism (Pelinka 1985, p. 195).

Austrian Corporatism – Ideological and yet Progressive

In the political arena, it is hard to avoid having a partial stance. To pose as an unbiased, unprejudiced observer reveals, at best, a lack of honesty. The one admissible distinction in this respect lies not between 'the critic and the neutral observer', but between those who do, and those who do not admit their political point of view. According to Max Weber, to 'cloak [...] value assertions in the field of politics with a spurious scientific neutrality is as illegitimate as to openly preach a partisan position within a university' (Cited in Giddens 1971, p. 144). The Austrian corporatist concept of 'objectification' allegedly implying a policy beyond political conflict also 'cloaks value assertions', which, as previously discussed, immediately raises concerns about the democratic validity of the system. However, if the important observation about the partial stance is allowed to mark the end of any political discussion one is bound to reach comfortable but simplistic conclusions, where any political proposal or programme is seen as an essentially interchangeable 'ideology'.

In his attempt to prevent 'ideology' from ending up as cheap, relativistic jargon, Kurt Lenk (1994, pp. 32-3), German expert on political philosophy, presents a typology in which he distinguishes between four main categories: *Ideology of justification* includes traditional 'High Ideologies', most prominently economic liberalism; *Complementary ideology* covers metaphysics, religion and nationalism; *Ideology of veiling* refers to anti-Semitism, racism and various elite ideologies; and *Ideology of expression* incorporates imperialism and National Socialism. Using this categorisation, we shall try to determine where the ideology of corporatist 'objectification' belongs.

⁴² Research carried out by Strourzh and Ulram (1988) found that, when asked about their feelings about Austrian corporatism, 63% of the Austrian population identified themselves as 'proud' and 28% identified as 'not proud'. In contrast, when asked about their attitude to Austria's 'Overcoming economic problems', only 23% said they were proud, while 69% identified as 'not proud'. (Cited in Luther and Pulzer, 1998, p. 99, Table 5.12)

Behind the general interest of objectification, Bernd Marin found nothing but technocrats and the rationality of production – and the ‘end of ideologies’ was instead the end of sincerity (Marin 1982, p. 301). But Marin also notably emphasises that: ‘Their interpretation is, on the other hand, closer to practical realities than most other ideologies. The technocratic ideology has access to all the knowledge and rationality of its time. Most importantly, however, it does not fight other ideologies in the name of another, better or more human ideology, but in the name of the end and abandoning of ideologies as such by means of a pure scientific rationality’ [Author’s translation] (Marin 1982, p. 301).⁴³

The underlying reason for the ideology of ‘objectification’ was by no means unbiased, but at least there were no new pretentious clouds of ‘ideology’, no promises of ‘great achievements’. In their demand for change, Austrians were not yet again asked to wait, not expected to succumb in bliss.⁴⁴ Austrian corporatism would inevitably have been a system of failure if the one crucial difference between ideological programmes is their level of explicit honesty in relation to their equally subjective and partial endeavours. On the other hand, if honesty in politics is not crucial, then Austrian corporatism was perhaps not a failure. The most important basis on which to judge it is its practical consequences, and the overall impression of Austrian corporatism may be milder when its turbulent history is taken into account. Calls for honesty and having all one’s cards on the table are meagre excuses for political miscarriage.⁴⁵

In returning to Kurt Lenk’s typology above, it seems that the ideology of Austrian corporatism, notwithstanding its uneasy relationship to liberalism, should belong to *the Ideology of justification*. Among its constituent features are ‘a relatively high degree of rationality in respect to the depiction of social relations’, and market competition as a regulating principle (Lenk 1994, p. 33). Furthermore, the core elements of Austrian corporatism cannot easily be reconciled either with an empirically thin *Complementary ideology*, or with a potentially violent *Ideology of*

⁴³ One might also argue that the very fact that their policy was ‘non-ideological’ and purely economic/scientific prevented it from developing utopian tendencies, as utopias are often political in nature, and rarely – if ever – rest upon an economic foundation.

⁴⁴ It was, in a Popperian sense, an ideology of ‘piecemeal social engineering’.

⁴⁵ In Robert Dahl’s (1998, pp. 124-127) discussion of various constitutional elements that foster a democratic development, ‘Transparency (and comprehensibility)’ constitutes one factor out of eleven.

veiling, even less with the irrational and dichotomous *Ideology of expression*. An ideology always lies behind any scientific approach in politics, Austrian corporatist 'objectification' included. But behind the ideology lies the distinction between rational, realistic ideologies, such as Austrian corporatism, and irrational, utopian ideologies, such as National Socialism. We have argued above that Austrian corporatism was not, at heart, simply a tool for the exploitation of the general population in the hands of the elite. Instead, based on the opinions and empirical analysis of experts in various fields, it was largely beneficial for the whole community.

Corporatism and Democratic Flaws

As with the argument about 'ideology', which proves to be an imprecise tool for analysing Austrian corporatism, concerns about 'secret negotiations' and 'lack of democracy' also easily overlook the complexities involved. It is of course true that, all other things being equal, a fully transparent system is better than a non-transparent one. But beyond the calm waters of abstraction, the question is, again: What is the practical outcome? How was Austria affected by these activities behind the scenes?

First we will consider the fact that eighty percent of all legislation, in what was referred to as 'pre-fabricated consensus', was passed unanimously by the Austrian National Assembly (Luther and Müller 1992, p. 104). The image of a complete and obscure consensus among the 'elite', and most importantly between the members of the Joint Commission for Wages and Prices, gives the impression that there is a division between the 'people' and the 'elite', similar to the one drawn in populist rhetoric. In reality, however, this horizontal division was a red herring. The fact that legislation was passed 'unanimously' by the National Assembly only meant that there was agreement at that stage. Any populist insinuation that there were no negotiations at all is unfounded. The defaming 'pre-fabricated consensus' meant in effect precisely that – negotiations had already taken place elsewhere, and the parliament was therefore inevitably transformed into a 'rubber stamp'. Behind what appeared to be an undivided power elite, Austrian political and economic rule was, as in any fundamentally democratic system, characterised by vertical divisions between

bargaining interest groups.⁴⁶ This shows a certain romanticism on the part of critics of Austrian corporatism. Of course, constantly aiming for peaceful negotiations might be a sign of deceitful actions on the part of the 'elite'. But it can also, simply, reveal a wish to solve an issue in a civilised and rational manner out of the reach of sensationalist populist media asking for an instant fix. The fact that newspapers, allegedly for the sake of mutual benefit, were normally informed only once decisions had already been taken need not always be problematic. Extra-parliamentary methods are not necessarily created by external circumstances. History is full of unfortunate examples, where promising economic and political conditions were ruined by ecstatic minds. A question that is being dealt with by means of sober negotiations need not be a less dramatic and fierce process than one where the result is a parliament on fire.

Finally, the question must be raised: Who precisely were the members of these interest groups? What were their positions? The argument that these groups belonged to an irresponsible 'elite' is not only made by the Freedom Party (Kofler 1985, p. 92). More widespread, however, is the opinion that these informal groups consisted of a diverse range of professionals and specialists, who had more responsibility and expertise than ordinary politicians: '[...] the majority of those who received prominent posts were, in reality, experts in their field' (Gutkas 1985, p. 88). Therefore 'until the seventies, one of the essential conditions for the predominant influence of interest groups on the policies of their respective parties was, to some extent, the fact that the former had, via their teams of experts, the economic know-how which the latter lacked' (Gerlich *et al.* 1988, p. 219).

Post-war Economic Realities

A brief comparative discussion of Austria's economic performance under Austrian corporatism will be included. As there is widespread agreement about the country's economic progress until 1966, i.e. the year classic post-war corporatist arrangements

⁴⁶ The evolution of Austrian politics since 1945 proves that the 'populist' critique of a horizontal division between 'us' and 'them' is incorrect, and should be exchanged for a pluralist, 'vertical' division. Anton Kofler, a former member of the Joint Commission for Wages and Prices, argues that 'the manner in which parties and organisations were interwoven have strongly contributed to a dynamic democracy, and increased possibilities for participation.' (Kofler 1985, p. 174)

between the ÖVP and the SPÖ came to an end, we will focus on the development from the late 1960s onwards (Luther and Müller 1992, p. 206). In relation to other European countries, the economic development of Austria during the 1970's was 'a success story', creating 'numerous admirers' (Gerlich *et al.* 1988, p. 21; Arndt 1982; Katzenstein 1984). Even during the late 1970s, Austria showed record rates of economic growth – in fact the highest in OECD Europe. What is more, contrary to the common negative correlation at the time, Austria had low inflation *and* exceptionally low levels of unemployment (Lauber 1992, p. 147). In the period between 1977 and 1986 the rate of inflation was less than half the OECD average, unemployment was not even 40% of the OECD average, and Austrian economic performance was about 20% higher than the OECD average (Pelinka 1987, p. 65).⁴⁷

Admittedly, Austria's economic performance was less outstanding in the 1990s, yet in the new millennium the economy remained strong with an estimated GDP per capita ratio of 20 percent above the EU25 average, only surpassed by Luxembourg and Ireland.⁴⁸

Ever since the late 1950s, these figures have enabled Austria to provide a highly developed welfare system, possibly unparalleled in non-Scandinavian mainland Europe. 'Social peace, defined as social stability, is the outcome of the Austrian model' (Pelinka 1987, p. 68). A similar conclusion is reached by Kurt Richard Luther, who observes that the system 'for over 50 years, has been predominantly characterised by domestic peace and levels of economic prosperity that compare very favourably not only with its own inter-war experience, but also with the post-war experience within most Western states' (Luther 1998, p. 121). Thus, it is evident that the economic outcome of Austrian corporatism has been a success. This has frustrated its neo-liberal critics, who have assumed that the corporatist policy would fail the economy.

Before closing this discussion of Austrian corporatism, a general comment must be made. It deals with the model of, on the one hand, a 'liberal' division along vertical lines between openly contending elites and between groups within the 'people', and,

⁴⁷ Notably, in 1980 the level of unemployment of 2 percent contrasted sharply with a European average of 7 percent. (Lauber 1992, p. 153)

⁴⁸ (<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/48/4/33727936.pdf>)

on the other hand, a right-wing populist division along horizontal lines, where a homogeneous 'elite' is confronted with an equally 'homogeneous' people. Many nations can be said to display horizontal divisions in the manner described by the Freedom Party, where all power remains in the hands of a corrupt self-righteous elite, leaving the country in tatters. But Austria after the Second World War does not fit this schema. If empirical evidence about economic and political development is the measure according to which 'corruption', 'manipulation', and 'lack of democracy' are to be assessed, then Austria is a poor example. In fact, Austrian economic and political performance since the war suggests that the allegations above are exaggerated. The features of Austrian corporatism as highlighted in the rhetoric of the Freedom Party were partly only surface phenomena. Beyond the appearance of democratic flaws, tendencies towards nepotism, scandals, some undercover affairs and a weak parliament, the political system referred to as Austrian corporatism must be regarded as one of the most successful in Europe.

In the second part of this chapter, the broader picture of the system of Austrian corporatism was presented. It started with a historical background, where the frailty of the post-war Austrian state was highlighted. The creation of the Social Democratic and Conservative 'party state' was described as an act of defence and protection, and not as one of aggression or elitism. The features of Austrian corporatism were partly explained by means of a particularly submissive and passive Austrian mindset. Even though the system was geared by a partial ideology, this ideology was by and large seen to be democratic, productive and progressive. Conclusively, widespread corruption and mismanagement result in poor economic figures and industrial stagnation. This scheme does not seem to fit Austria, because its post-war economic development was very strong.

Following on from the literature review and these two historical background chapters on populism and the system of Austrian corporatism, we will now present a historical account of the evolution of the Austrian Freedom Party prior to Jörg Haider's assumption of leadership. This will give an idea of the ideological tensions within the party – between German Nationalism and Austrian patriotism, between elitism and anti-elitism, between right-wing extremism or outright fascism and attempts at liberalism or even neo-liberalism. In the coming analysis, it will be shown that these

tensions continued to affect the rhetoric and ideology of the FPÖ during Jörg Haider's leadership, even if anti-elitism or populism stood out as a core feature of the party, both in terms of ideology and of vote-catching tactics.

Chapter 6

A Short History of the FPÖ from 1949 to 1986

Although the Austrian Freedom Party was only founded in 1956, and its predecessor, the *Verband der Unabhängigen* (VdU) only in 1949, it can be argued that the roots of the party stretch back at least to the mid-19th century and the wave of European Revolutions in 1848 (Livonius 2002, p. 17). At the time this so-called *Third Camp* (aside from the Catholic/Conservative Camp and the Socialist Camp) comprised a wide array of political convictions, ranging from bourgeois-liberal to German-nationalist views. In post-war Austria, German nationalism expressed a longing for a unity with Germany and the extermination of Austria as a sovereign state. Even though these ideas could be held by socialists, they were particularly strong among conservatives and right-wing extremists.

These inner ideological tensions continued to characterise the movement and later the VdU and the Freedom Party. In 1882, the most radical of these groupings coalesced under the banner of '*Alldeutschen Partei*', led by the virulent anti-Semite Georg Ritter von Schönerer (Livonius 2002, p. 18; Kräh 1996, p. 71). After the end of the First World War seventeen different factions within the Third Camp united to form the *Grossdeutschen Volkspartei* (1920) and the *Landbund* (1922) (Livonius 2002, p. 18). They found common ground in German nationalism, even though their electoral bases differed; the former had strong support among the bourgeoisie, and the latter attracted mainly farmers and peasants.

In 1945, at the end of the Second World War, rightist ideas had been severely discredited, and the Allies launched a massive programme of democratic 'education' for those who had supported the Nazi regime. After the war, around a quarter of the Austrian population were still linked to the NSDAP and its paramilitary organisations (Luther 1988, p. 20). In 1946 and 1947 a policy of 'denazification' was pursued to eliminate ex-Nazis from the bureaucracies and the economy. Also, those Austrians who had collaborated with the Nazis lost their right to vote. These 'small fish Nazis' constituted an important interest group, and as such started to put pressure on the Socialists and the Conservatives. It was eventually agreed to offer a 'general

amnesty', whereby almost 500,000 'small fish Nazis' – i.e. all but a handful – regained their full electoral rights (Pelinka 1985, p. 18; Ignazi 2003, p. 110).

A large number of former Nazis were allowed to enter the bureaucracy of the two parties, and many achieved prominent positions in the party organisations (Riedlsperger 1978, pp. 47-9). Until the present day, this legacy of fascism and Nazism runs as a troublesome undercurrent throughout the party's ideological development. What has been their role in post-war political life? What has been their impact on legislation? Most importantly, to what extent is the Freedom Party a continuation of the wartime League of Independents? While the 'continuity' view is promoted by the critics of the Freedom Party, described as a late-comer of fascist or Nazi ideas, others argue that the rise of the Freedom Party since 1986 should be seen as a reaction to modern political circumstances in Austria, particularly the rule of the Austrian elite and increased immigration.

Verband der Unabhängigen – the Failed Integration of FPÖ's Predecessor

The liberal journalists Herbert Kraus and Viktor Reimann, both active in the resistance during the war, created a new party, the League of Independents in order to seek to incorporate former National Socialists into the democratic process (Ignazi 2003, p. 110). The VdU was formally registered on 25 February 1949, and had an impressive start (Kräh 1996, p. 74). At the national elections in 1949, the party reached 11.7 percent, and 10.9 percent in the following national election in 1953. However, the inner tensions of the party between those with national-liberal views and those favouring more radical rightist strands of thought could no longer be suppressed. Eventually, the liberal wing, headed by Reimann and Kraus, was forced to step down. By 1954 the party spoke with a German nationalist or even National Socialist voice (Livonius 2002, p. 21). The VdU, as noted by Piero Ignazi, acted as 'a haven for the nostalgics' (Ignazi 2003, p. 109). While it was thought that the radical takeover would stop the downward slide in popularity of the party, the VdU started to disintegrate into rivaling factions.

The Early Years – Fledging Attempts at Liberalism

In early 1955 Anton Reinthaler, former General in the SS and member of the German *Reichstag* until 1945, launched the *Freiheitspartei* as a rival to VdU. Later the same year *Freiheitspartei* and the severely damaged VdU joined forces under the banner of *Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs* – The Austrian Freedom Party (Kräh 1996, p. 79). The party was formally established in April 1956 and Reinthaler was elected party leader. The fact that he received 117 out of 124 votes cast at this founding convention, whereas his opponent Herbert Kraus received 3 only votes, amply illustrates the weakness of the liberal camp within the party. ‘In contrast to the party Kraus sought to establish, the young Freedom Party was in its early stages’, notes Max Riedlsperger, ‘a grouping oriented towards the past [...]’ (Riedlsperger 1991, p. 87). Hence, the leading individuals behind the creation of the Freedom Party had, as opposed to the forces behind the establishment of the VdU, distinctly German Nationalist, or even National Socialist views. At the time, Kraus wrote in disappointment: ‘It was never my intention to establish a successor of the NSDAP’ (Kraus cited in Kräh, p. 81).⁴⁹

The optimism following the clear election of Reinthaler was not to last. German Nationalism had little attraction for Austrians and the number of ‘old comrades’ from the Nazi epoch dwindled for natural reasons. The party was faced with two alternatives: ‘ghettoization’ or systematic moderation (Sully 1990, p. 63). As can be seen in *Richtlinien freiheitlicher Politik* (Policies of the Freedom Party) of 1957, the leadership under Reinthaler took further steps in the direction of German Nationalism (Livonius 2002, p. 23). Reinthaler died in 1958 and was succeeded by Friedrich Peter. Alike Reinthaler, Peter was an old SS soldier, and so it was believed that he would continue in the German Nationalist tradition of his predecessor. But it soon became obvious that Peter sought to take the Freedom Party out of the political ‘ghetto’ towards the political mainstream and a position from which it would not instantly be ruled out as a potential coalition partner (Kräh 1996, p. 94). ‘Nationals and Liberals should both’, Peter explicitly stated, ‘feel at home within the Freedom Party’ (cited in Kräh 1996, p. 84). In 1959, the party received 7.7 percent of the vote, slightly above the 6.5 percent in the previous election in 1956. Then once again, it

⁴⁹ *Wiener Zeitung*, April 13, 1956, cited in Kräh, 81.

appeared as if the party's liberal wing almost had been wiped out (Livonius 2002, p. 23).

The Salzburg Programme, Bruno Kreisky and *Attersee Circle* – Between Mainstream and Oblivion

Throughout the 1960s, the Freedom Party managed to build a more acceptable party image. The 1964 Salzburg Party Programme adapted a more liberal image. It took as its motto 'freedom and progress', and paid respect to the century-old (or longer) tradition of national-liberals fighting for freedom (Sully 1990, p. 66). But the move toward liberalism was also due to external factors, such as the end of the Great Coalition in 1966 and Bruno Kreisky's conciliatory tone towards the German Nationalists in the Third Camp (Livonius, 2002, p. 28). Moreover, the party's somewhat more respectable reputation was also linked to the fact that its rightist fringes left in 1966 and formed the *Nationaldemokratische Partei*, claiming to be the Austrian equivalent of the German *Nationaldemokratische Partei* (Kräh 1996, p. 85). The political impact of this party was very small, partly as a consequence of left-wing tendencies in the late 1960s. The end of the 1960s saw increasing rhetoric in favour of free market views and economic liberalism (Ignazi 2003, p. 111). Despite these measures and the rhetoric, the radical war generation was still dominant among politicians and members, who were entrenched in a German Nationalist world-view (Livonius 2002, p. 63).

After the 1970 national election, Friedrich Peter tacitly supported Bruno Kreisky's minority government, in return for electoral reform. As a result, Peter and the Freedom Party achieved more representation in the national assembly, even though their share of the vote remained constant at around 5.5 per cent (Sully 1990, p. 63). Another important force trying to gear the party towards the political mainstream was a group of young students, who in early 1971 founded the *Atterseekreis* (the Attersee circle). Originating from outside the Freedom Party, they quickly managed to gain a prominent position within the party (Kräh 1996, p. 87). As a response, *Laxenburger Kreis* (the circle of Laxenburg), another rightist splinter group was created, attacking the Freedom Party for selling out to Marxism, because both liberalism and Marxism rest on 'the unnatural idea of equality' (Kräh 1996, pp. 87-8).

However, as with the events of 1966, when the party's radical wing left and formed *Nationaldemokratische Partei*, a large section of German Nationalists active in so-called *Burschenschaften* ('fencing societies') refused to accept these liberal views, and turned their back on the party. Despite the fact that the Freedom Party under Friedrich Peter had managed to gain a degree of respect among its competitors, support amongst the electorate remained weak. Throughout Peter's 20-year leadership, the party had staggered on the brink of extinction, generally hovering between 5 and 6 percent of the vote. A more plausible explanation is, however, that the party's constant weakness at the polls did not occur despite its moderate tones, but because of them. Why vote for a radical party that is no longer radical, but merely a badly organised copy of other mainstream parties?

Table 2

NATIONAL ELECTIONS – RESULTS FOR FPÖ

YEAR	FPÖ		YEAR	FPÖ	
	percentage	seats		percentage	Seats
1945	-	-	1975	5.4	10
1949	11.7 (VdU)	16	1979	6.1	11
1953	10.9 (VdU)	14	1983	5.0	12
1956	6.5	6	1986	9.7	18
1959	7.7	8	1990	16.6	33
1962	7.0	8	1994	22.5	42
1966	5.4	6	1995	21.9	40
1970	5.6	6	1999	26.9	52
1971	5.4	10	2002	10.0	19

Source: www.bmi.gv.at

The struggle between the German Nationalist camp and the National-liberal camp continued to characterise the Freedom Party throughout the 1970s. The party leadership sought to establish good relations with the Social Democratic Party and liberal students strengthened their position. For example, the 1973 *Freiheitliche Manifest* gave voice to liberal or even libertarian sentiments, and the chasm between freedom and security (or modernisers and traditionalists) was once again revealed. During the final years of the decade, however, the political tide turned once again in

favour of more radical views, Eventually, in 1978, Friedrich Peter was pushed aside by the party's 'old forces', and he decided not to run in the next election.

The *Bad Ischl Programme* and the Libertarian Promise

Peter was succeeded by Alexander Götz, popular mayor of Graz, who never made a secret of his conservative views. Moreover, Götz quickly established better relations with the Austrian People's Party, a move that damaged the Freedom Party's previous good connections with Kreisky's socialists (Livonius 2002, p. 30). In 1979, during Götz's leadership, the party became a member of *Liberal International* – a worldwide organisation for the promotion of liberal views. In spite of Götz's initial popularity – he was also supported by the circle of Attersee (*Atterseekreis*) – he failed to live up to expectations. In the 1979 national election, the party had only a minor increase in its share of the vote: from 5.4 percent to a mediocre 6.1 percent, and hopes to form a coalition government with the People's Party came to naught. As a result, Götz, a successful local politician but an unpersuasive national figure, announced his resignation as party leader after only one year, in early December 1979 (Kräh 1996, pp. 89-90).

Even though right-wing extremists remained powerful throughout the 1960s, the moderates had by and large a stronger position in the 1970s than in 1960s. The difficult task of appeasing both camps is illustrated in the party's *Bad Ischl Programme* of 1968. As the party of the 'nationalist-libertarian middle and of social equality', the Freedom Party expressed, for the first time, a willingness to work with other parties. Along the lines of its libertarian efforts, it rejected compulsory membership in Austria's chamber systems, and pledged a depoliticisation of public bureaucracy; i.e. that it would seek to reduce the bureaucratic power of Social Democracy. Moreover, it sought to present a more modernised image by defending the Austrian Republic in very clear wording; i.e. seeking to cut the ties to a politically compromised German nationalism. On the other hand, concessions to the deeply conservative notion of *Volk*, an organic perception of society and a pledge for the 'maintaining the genetic health of the populace' (*Erbgesundheitspflege*) evoked right-wing extremist tendencies (Sully 1990, p. 66). According to Melanie Sully, the party explicitly defended an elitist understanding of society, in which an 'active'

section comprised of Austrians endowed with superior qualities in terms of entrepreneurial capacities, motivation and skills was to take the lead. In an attempt to draw a line between them and the Social Democrats, and to attract both liberals in favour of freedom as well as German-nationals opposed to equality, equality was seen as an enemy of freedom (Sully 2002, p. 66).

Behind the scenes during Götz's brief leadership in the late 1970s, a small number of party members – among them the liberal winger Norbert Steger, co-founder of *Atterseekreis*, Friedhelm Frischenschlager, who in 1993 was to leave the Freedom Party for *Liberal Forum*, and Jörg Haider – were dividing key posts between them, in the event that they should gain power in the future (Kräh 1996, p. 89). After Götz's early resignation, a new party leader had to be selected. The elections took place in March 1980, and developed into an open battle between Steger and the German-nationalist Harald Ofner. Eventually, Steger gained the upper hand. The new party leader had a good reputation and no links to the far right (Ignazi 2003, p. 112). Also, he enjoyed the support of the young Jörg Haider, partly because Steger aspired to enter into a government coalition in the event that the Social Democrats lost their absolute majority in the coming election in 1983 (Kräh 1996, p. 90). Steger set out on a course of political pragmatism and managed to push the party somewhat in a liberal direction. At the same time, however, he had to appease those party members of a German-nationalist persuasion. His decision to visit Walter Reder, a National Socialist and war criminal who was serving a life sentence in Italy, may be seen as a gesture in this direction.

Steger's pragmatism can also be explained from a different perspective. According to Erich Reiter (1982), the FPÖ of the early 1980s was still a party with an elaborate and coherent world-view. From then onwards, Kurt Richard Luther (2005, p. 16) claims, this ideological foundation was gradually marginalised in order to benefit from the evasive nature of a 'political protest'. Without denying the role of the 'National component', this was still, Luther continues, only a minor 'part in an elaborate populist protest based on Haider in person' (2005, p. 16). Put differently, there was a trade-off between the national aspect and populist protest, and the populist protest increasingly gained the upper hand.

The Fragile Coalition 1983-1986

In 1983 the Social Democrats lost their absolute majority, as Steger, Frischenschlager and Haider had predicted. Supported by only 47.6 percent of the Austrian electorate (as compared to 51 percent in 1979), they were forced to seek a coalition partner. The Freedom Party's close relations with the Social Democrats and in particular with Bruno Kreisky, in combination with Steger's pragmatism led to the formation of a new government coalition, in which the Freedom Party took part for the first time in history (Pelinka 1993, p. 27).

This was a time for modest optimism on the part of the Freedom Party leaders. In the late 1970s, the conservative and elitist Bad Ischl Programme was seen as outdated and had been replaced in the summer of 1985 by the Salzburg Party Programme, with the title 'Political Renewal of Austria'. This programme stressed formally liberal views such as 'freedom' at the expense of traditional, German-nationalist themes. Concessions to the old voters, however, were still evident. The party programme rested on an 'idealistic world view', whereby the individual had to 'fit into the community', and their responsibilities for the well-being 'the people, fatherland and state' were emphasised (*Salzburger Programm* 1985, ch. 1 para. 1) (For an analysis of the Salzburg Programme, see Chapter 7).

Steger's liberal wing was facing severe problems. The prospects for real political influence were very small, as support for the Freedom Party had reached an all-time low in the 1983 national election with only 5.3 percent of the votes (Kräh 1996, p. 91). This matter of fact, along with the suspicion that the party was no more than a tool in the hands of the mighty socialists, sparked deep resentment within the German-nationalist camp, among whose members were Otto Scirzi and Jörg Haider (Livonius 2002, p. 32). In addition to the declining credibility of the party in the eyes of its German-nationalist members, criticism was mounting against Steger's leadership from the other side of the political spectrum due to tactical errors, where the benefits of appealing to the party's rightist fringes were being outweighed by its costs. Particularly troublesome in this respect was the so-called 'Reder-affair' in early 1985, in which Friedhelm Frischenschläger, Minister of Defence and one of the party's liberal wingers, met and shook hands with the war criminal Walter Reder, when he

arrived at the airport in Graz after having been released from Italian prison (Kräh 1996, p. 94).

The Ascendancy of Jörg Haider

Born in 1950 in a family with pronounced National Socialist views, Haider joined *Ring Freiheitlicher Jugend*, the youth organisation of the Freedom Party, at the age of fifteen, and was elected *Landesjugendführer* three years later. He finished his university studies in Vienna in 1973, and became University assistant in *Staats- und Verwaltungsrecht*. In 1979, Haider was elected a member of parliament (*Nationalrat*) and in 1983 he became editor-in-chief of the *Kärntner Nachrichten*, the party newspaper for Carinthia.

In the new government coalition with the Social Democrats, Norbert Steger became Vice-Chancellor and Minister of Trade (Sully 1990, p. 64). Haider initially stood behind Steger, but Haider insisted on being assigned the post of Minister of Social Affairs, which Steger refused him. Then Steger offered Haider a post as State Secretary, which Haider declined. Instead, strengthened by increasing electoral support in his home region of Carinthia – in 1984 Haider's Freedom Party had obtained 16 percent of the vote and 5.5 percent above the local elections in the party's second stronghold this year, Vorarlberg – he distanced himself from the party leadership in Vienna and gradually started to form an internal opposition (Kräh 1996, p. 93). A similar scenario was to be repeated in the spring of 2000, after Jörg Haider resigned as party leader (See Chapter 10, 'Conclusion').

From his position as regional governor, Haider's critique of Steger's leadership steadily grew stronger. As early as August 1983 Haider announced that Steger was an 'incompetent, authoritarian player', and repeated the same attack shortly thereafter (Kräh 1996, p. 93). Numerous scandals within the coalition further undermined the FPÖ's reputation among the electorate. The one clear exception to the rule was the region of Carinthia, where the Freedom Party was able to increase its support by almost 40 percent between 1979 and 1984. This was most certainly due to the fact that the Freedom Party in Carinthia, headed by Jörg Haider and the

German-nationalists, was campaigning against, not in favour of Steger's national leadership in Vienna (Kräh 1996, p. 94). In other regions, the Haider effect did not surface until after September 1986. The two most badly hit regions were Lower Austria and Salzburg. In Lower Austria, support for the Freedom Party dwindled from 3.2 percent in 1979 to 1.7 percent in 1983, whereas the FPÖ in Salzburg suffered a downturn from 13.3 percent in 1979 to 8.7 percent in 1984. Detailed election results from Carinthia can be found in Chapter 7.

Haider's home region of Carinthia was often the base for successful inner-party opposition to the headquarters in Vienna. In 1986 the conflict between Carinthia and Vienna escalated even further. Haider threatened to cancel all co-operation with the national party leadership and began, despite persistent denials, to prepare his candidacy for the coming party leadership election. In *Die Presse*, one of Austria's most renowned newspapers, Norbert Gugenbauer, another key spokesperson for the party's radical wing and critic of Steger's leadership, argued in favour of a 'redefinition of the relations in the leadership' of the party (Kräh 1996, p. 95). Judging from an inter-election poll during the summer of 1986, the Freedom Party under Steger was supported by no more than between 1 and 2 percent (Birk and Traar 1986, p. 20).

At the party convention in Innsbruck in September 1986 Jörg Haider came storming in; fresh, young, vibrant, bold and radical. Steger was outmaneuvered by Haider and Gugenbauer, and finally, Jörg Haider was elected new national leader for the Austrian Freedom Party (Heinisch 2002, p. 53). Steger received 39.2 percent of the delegates' votes, whereas Haider received 57.7 percent, mainly as a consequence of his popularity among the party's grass roots (Sully 1990, p. 64; Morrow 2000, p. 47). Even though the figures did not represent a landslide, it was a clear win. Once again, the tide had turned in favour of the more right-wing nationalist wing.

The Early FPÖ – Battle between Extremists and Liberals

This brief account of the Austrian Freedom Party's evolution and its entry as an established player on the Austrian political scene has addressed a number of issues of key relevance for the present thesis. Until Haider's take-over in 1986 the party was

a weak and fairly insignificant force on the rightist fringes, having gone through some short episodes in which more liberal inclinations came to the fore. What does this tell us about the personal role of Jörg Haider? Would it be fair to say that the post-1986 Freedom Party was a different party altogether? Or are the events after 1986 determined by the previous period?

The role of the critique of the elite was noted above, even though this line of argument was not central during the period of this overview. This raises the question of the weight of populism in the pre-Haider era. Anti-communism and anti-socialism were always heavily criticised by the Freedom Party, but this does not necessarily amount to populism and anti-elitism. Rather, the early FPÖ appears to have voiced a radicalised form of elitist conservatism along with an explicit National Socialism, leaving little room for maneuver in terms of anti-elitism. It was noted that the 1968 Bad Ischl Programme displayed clear elitist traits, and that the 1985 Salzburg Programme sought to move towards more liberal views. Did this pave the way for Jörg Haider's populism, or was this instead an effect of Haider's rhetoric?

Then again, we should not exaggerate Haider's role. As was noted in the previous chapter, Austrian corporatism rested on rather firm support until the mid-1980s, and it would probably have been difficult to exploit it at that time. Rather, the rise of anti-elitism and populism from 1986 onwards may be seen as a combination of the effects of a fierce critic *and* a system in decay.

The party has experienced a number of splits, both on the German-nationalist side and on the liberal side. This supports the view of a party torn, possibly more than mainstream parties, by inner conflicts. These tensions are also an argument against a too simplified notion of the party, be it overly critical or too lenient. The few years in governmental power during the mid 1980s highlight the problems facing a radical party seeking wider acclaim. Surprisingly, the party seemed to fare less well when in government than as an opposition party. These questions of 'normality' versus radicalism lead to the major observation in this overview. The history of the Freedom Party is to a great extent a struggle between traditionalists and reformers. While its founders were liberal, the early years were dominated by right-wing extremism. During the 1960s and 1970s more liberal views became stronger. In the early 1980s,

the party entered governmental power led by the liberal candidate Norbert Steger, only to be followed by Jörg Haider from the German nationalist camp in 1986.

We have now presented the wider picture of the Freedom Party in the literature review, followed by a theoretical background of the concepts of populism and corporatism. Subsequently, an overview of the history of the Freedom Party was laid out. This lays the foundation and will provide the framework and context for the empirical analysis in the remaining chapters.

Chapter 7

Analysing the FPÖ's Electoral Appeal – Rhetoric, Party Programme and Reactions

It is often assumed by most journalists and academics in Austria and abroad that the Austria Freedom Party's popularity is largely due to its appeal to right-wing extremist ideas, racism, xenophobia and fascist tendencies. This chapter starts with a general analysis of the extent to which right-wing extremist ideas such as those associated with racism, dictatorship and fascism have featured in Jörg Haider's and the party's rhetoric, followed by an analysis of *Freiheit und Verantwortung*, the FPÖ's annual yearbooks, and an assessment of the FPÖ's political programmes.⁵⁰ It will also discuss the EU sanctions, imposed to curb the influence of what was perceived to be a right-wing extremist party.

Racism, Anti-Democratic Ideas and Fascism – Rhetoric and Provocation

Ever since Jörg Haider's seizing of power in 1986, the FPÖ has been blamed for overstepping the bounds of decency and democratic trustworthiness, trespassing into racism, fascism, anti-Semitism and even at times Nazism. These trespasses are seen as taking the forms of inappropriate comparisons, racist statements and a historically rooted racist ideology. Throughout his political career Haider made many controversial statements. Here we will first focus on four important speeches which illustrate Haider's rhetoric during three important phases of his leadership: one in 1985, during the final stages of the government coalition between Franz Vranitzky's SPÖ and the FPÖ under Norbert Steger; two in 1991, when the party had skyrocketed from virtual non-existence to almost 17 percent of votes cast in four years; and one four years later in 1995, when the party had stabilised at a level above 20 percent of votes cast.

⁵⁰ The yearbooks, as explained in Chapter 3, start in 1993.

In late 1985, shortly before he took over as chairman of the FPÖ, Haider was interviewed by *Profil*, an Austrian weekly newspaper. The journalist brought up the atrocities during the Second World War:

Profil: Did I hear that properly: 'Events'. What do you call events?

Haider: Well alright, it was activities and measures against ethnic groups, clearly violating the principles of human rights.

Profil: Do you find it difficult, to speak about the gas chambers and mass murder?

Haider: Well, it was mass murder, if you so wish.

(*Profil*, 8 (1985) cited in Schiedel and Neugebauer 2000, p. 19.)

The interview was characteristic for Jörg Haider's style at the time. In describing the Second World War, he uses a 'minimalist' terminology. Even under pressure, he tries to portray the war's atrocities in the least dramatic terms possible. The question is why he is doing this. One possibility is that he is concerned about retaining the right-wing extremist voters in the party. Another possibility is that he does it in an attempt to provoke his opponents, and later on gain votes as a result of an aggressive and polarized debate. Finally, it may be that he is simply expressing his personal views. If so, it is rather extreme to label probably the most systematic and biggest act of mass killing in history as mere 'events'.

In a speech on 13 June 1991, as the head of the governing coalition at the *Landtag* in Carinthia, Haider favourably compared the employment policy of Nazi Germany with that of present Austria: 'in the Third Reich there was a proper employment policy (*ordentliche Beschäftigungspolitik*), something your government in Vienna can't even manage' (Cited in Riedlsperger 1996a, p. 359).⁵¹ Not long thereafter the SPÖ asked for a vote of 'no confidence' against Haider, supported by a number of members of the People's Party. From then on, Haider's statement rapidly spread through the media, not only in Austria, but also abroad. Even though the effects on Haider and on the FPÖ were limited within Austria, it caused great harm to the party's reputation abroad. For many observers this speech confirmed the direct ideological link

⁵¹ The full quotation is: "Na, das hat's im Dritten Reich nicht gegeben, weil im Dritten Reich haben sie ordentliche Beschäftigungspolitik gemacht, was nicht einmal Ihre Regierung in Wien zusammenbringt. Das muss man auch einmal sagen." (Quoted in Czernin 2000, p. 31)

between the NSDAP and the present-day Freedom Party (Riedlsperger 1996a, p. 359-60).

However, to fully understand the implications of the statement it is important to contextualise Haider's defence of the employment policy under National Socialism, as Max Riedlsperger, Professor Emeritus in History at California Polytechnic, has pointed out. The discussion leading up to Haider's controversial statement had dealt with welfare policy issues. Jörg Haider, advocating welfare reform, had suggested that able citizens who were unwilling to work should be compelled to accept work or face a cut in their unemployment benefits. A member of the Social Democratic Party in Carinthia responded to this suggestion with 'That is forced labor [...]. We have already had what you are demanding – in the Third Reich!' Haider, in return, responded: 'No, that wasn't the case in the Third Reich, because in the Third Reich there was a decent employment policy (*ordentliche Beschäftigungspolitik*), which is more than can be said for what your government can manage in Vienna' (Cited in Riedlsperger 1996a, p. 359).

Considering the context, Max Riedlsperger fails to see Haider's suggestion as anything out of the ordinary. According to him, Haider proposed 'that in the case of someone who is capable, but is unwilling to accept employment in a similar or related area, he should be brought to reconsider accepting work by a sanction that would appropriately reduce his unemployment money.' Riedlsperger claims that Haider's statement seems 'less severe than the (social policy) proposal favoured by 91 percent of Americans according to a Los Angeles poll in 1993', and 'significantly less drastic' than a "workfare" programme put in practice in California by Republican Governor Pete Wilson, according to which "able-bodied welfare recipients either accept work assigned to them or be cut off from benefits" (Riedlsperger 1995a, p. 359).

Later, Haider expressed regret for the remark, and said that he did not mean to favour the employment policy of the Nazi regime over that of Austria in the 1990s. But the criticism kept growing stronger, not only among political opponents, but also internally. Heide Schmidt, future presidential candidate at the time, publically declared that she could not find anything 'proper' in the Nazi regime (Sperl 1993, p.

85). Haider, it was argued, sought to relativize the Holocaust, trivialize the atrocities committed by Hitler and the SS-regime and 'discuss good and bad aspects of National Socialism.'⁵² The Chancellor Franz Vranitzky threatened to take legal measures. As a consequence, Haider had to resign as Head of the Carinthian government shortly thereafter, on 21 June. Haider's utterance has also, however, been criticised from another perspective, namely arguing that Hitler's praised unemployment policy by and large is a myth. Already by 1936, as claimed by Albrecht Ritschl, the German economy had reached full recovery from the depression and was approaching full employment. Investments in autobahn, along with many other Keynesian projects, gained momentum only after 1936 (Albrecht Ritschl 2003).

Provocations seem to be part of Haider's tactics. Hans-Georg Betz describes Haider's strategies as 'fairly banal, yet effective, above all because Austria's political elite has dutifully played its part and fallen into the various traps Haider set for them – to the amusement of Austria's public' (2000, p. 268). According to Max Riedlsperger, it is 'important not to yield to simplified allegations and 'typical leftist hyperbole', because a part of Haider's intentions are precisely to provoke a moralistic over-reaction from the opposite camp' (1996a, p. 359). What happens is briefly this: the FPÖ finds moral values close to the heart of the general public which are initially presented to the public in a highly moralistic fashion aimed at splitting the audience. A certain appreciation arises. Then, as expected, the left responds with moral frenzy, signaling the start of the next phase. This consists of the second, triumphant speech to the Austrian audience, whereby they are told that they are seen as 'fascists', 'racists' or 'a disgrace' by the high-and-mighty. Only now, Haider's tactics will gain momentum by means of a second – and decisive – increase among votes cast. Indeed, as noted by Wolfgang Kowalsky, the far right often simply counts on this 'anti-fascist reflex', whereby the leftist critics fight against illusory enemies of the past (1992, p. 32). Max Riedlsperger refers to this mechanism as 'the back-fire effect of the charges of right-extremism' (1996a, p. 360).

On 30 September 1995, Jörg Haider attended the *Ulrichsberg* celebrations, a yearly right-wing summit north of Krumpendorf in southern Carinthia. Present were, among others, Gudrun Burwitz, daughter of Heinrich Himmler and fervent apologist of Nazi

⁵² <http://www.nationalsozialismus.at/Themen/Umgang/zitiert.htm>

Germany. Haider's speech at Ulrichsberg contained the following passage which provoked strong reactions in Austria and abroad: 'That even on these rainy days, when there are still honest people, people of character, who even when the wind blows hard, stick by their faith and stay loyal up to this very day. And this is the foundation, my dear friends, which has also been passed on to us, the younger generation. And a nation, which does not respect its fathers, is anyway doomed to perish.' (Anon. 'Jörg Haider's Antisemitism' n.d. *Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism*)

While this statement resonates with typical conservative and populist themes and rhetoric, Haider's call for a nation to respect its fathers was considered by many observers to contain an apologetic reference to the country's Nazi past, particularly considering the audience (Scharsach 2000a, p. 188). However, some observers have argued that the Ulrichsberg meeting in 1995 was not an exclusive gathering of right-wing extremists, but a meeting attended by Austrians from many different parties. According to Herbert Schui, German politician and Professor Emeritus in Economics, the criticism of the Ulrichsberg gathering levied by the two major parties was 'unconvincing', because the meeting was also attended by a number of SPÖ and ÖVP politicians (1997, p. 236).

This conclusion can be subject to question because what is often perceived as one meeting was in fact two meetings. The general *Ulrichsberg* meeting was traditionally frequented by politicians from all Carinthian parties, but it also included church representatives and delegates from various voluntary associations. On the eve of the *Ulrichsberg* meeting in 1995, a different gathering – often referred to as *Krumpendorf* meeting – took place. This was arranged by *Kameradschaften IV*, a group of veterans from the German *Waffen SS*. Alfred Jammeregg – spokesperson for *Kameradschaft IV Kärnten* – confirms that this was where Jörg Haider volunteered to give his speech (Interview in ZIB2 – Zeit im Bild, Austrian TV Programme, 19 Dec. 1995).

Who, then, attended this particular meeting? In their '*Schnell-Info*' regarding the *Waffen SS* Discussion', the FPÖ declared that around 40 percent of those attending were relatives of former *Waffen SS* soldiers, while the remaining 60 percent were relatives of soldiers who had served in other sections of the German Army (*Schnell-*

Info. No. 5, 1995). As for party preferences, one should distinguish between the common electorate and official representatives. Walter Fanta, who has written extensively about Ulrichsberg and these political gatherings, claims that the Kameradschaft IV meetings 'actually (hosted) SPÖ and ÖVP people, but not "politicians"'.⁵³

Given the fact that the Ulrichsberg meeting contained two separate gatherings, it seems as if the FPÖ sought to blur the distinction between the two events in order to relieve the pressure on Jörg Haider. Former FPÖ politician Peter Westenthaler (currently BZÖ) declared, for instance, that the media report on the matter was 'completely false'.⁵⁴ The above quoted *Schnell-Info*, however, does not hide the fact that Haider spoke at a meeting arranged by *Kameradschaft IV*.

On the day after the official Krumpendorf meeting, there was a celebration at the Concert Hall in Klagenfurt. Both the FPÖ and anti-racists declared that the entire political spectrum from the Ulrichsberg meeting – including the member of the *Kameradschaft IV* – were seen socializing with each other during this occasion. Commentators linked to the FPÖ naturally saw an opportunity to portray Haider's speech as less problematic by bringing mainstream politicians into the picture. The same group of people whose presence had led to the vehement criticism of Haider were now, it was argued, seen in the Concert Hall, Klagenfurt, 'celebrating' with 'leading functionaries from the SPÖ and the ÖVP' (Strutz: 'Auch hohe SPÖ- und ÖVP-Funktionäre feierten mit K IV'). The same passage was reprinted by *Arbeitskreis gegen den kärntner Konsens*, an Austrian anti-racist group who frequently sought to disrupt meetings of right-wing extremist groups, such as *Kameradschaft IV*.⁵⁵ The purpose of this leftist and anti-racist group, however, was not to defend Haider and his party, but to accuse the SPÖ and the ÖVP for being as extreme as the FPÖ. The fact that mainstream politicians appears to have socialised with individuals from the right-wing fringes somewhat weakens the allegations made by the two 'big parties' against Jörg Haider's appearance at Krumpendorf. Either Haider's speech is seen as extremist, which casts a shadow over those politicians from SPÖ and ÖVP present in the Concert Hall in this criticism; or in order to defend

⁵³ (Personal correspondence with Walter Fanta, 22 July 2010).

⁵⁴ 'FPD: ARD Berichts völlig falsch', 15 Dec. 1995, in personal correspondence with Michael Richter (BZÖ), 21 June 2010)

⁵⁵ See <http://u-berg.lnxnt.org/materialien/uebergbroschuere2005.pdf> (accessed 2 July 2010).

these politicians, Haider's speech must be described as within the bounds of the politically acceptable. Having said this, Haider's voluntary speech at the *Kameradschaft IV* gathering appears at best as an unabashed and truly right-wing populist attempt to retain the sympathizers and relatives of *Waffen SS* as voters for the FPÖ, and at worst, as a proclamation of what in fact were Haider's true ideological views.

A statement that echoed the 1991 interview in *Profil*, where Haider referred to the atrocities of the Second World War as 'events', occurred in 1995, when he labeled the Concentration camps '*Straflager*' (penal camps) in a speech delivered at the National council. As a result, the Jewish community in Austria and abroad reacted very powerfully against what they saw as a return of the acceptance of ideas of National Socialism.

Some observers strongly felt that these remarks were part of a plan to trivialise and thereby make gradually more acceptable views that had previously, even to those of a right-wing radical persuasion, been impossible to express publicly. On 1 May, 1999, in an interview on RAI, Italian TV, Anton Pelinka maintained that 'Haider has repeatedly made statements which amount to trivialising National Socialism. Once he described death camps as penal camps. On the whole, Haider is responsible for making certain National Socialist positions and certain National Socialist remarks more politically acceptable' (Pelinka 1999; see also Abram *et al.* 2000).

Hans-Henning Scharsach (2000a) draws attention to the fact that Jörg Haider compared 140,000 unemployed Austrians with 180,000 *Gastarbeiter*. Haider thereby insinuates that there is a direct correlation between the number of foreigners and the number of unemployed Austrians, ignoring the real causes of unemployment in Austria. Scharsach brings up another, and far more problematic comparison, namely the codified link between 180,000 *Gastarbeiter* of the present day, and 400,000 Jews during the Second World War (Scharsach 2000a, p. 202). Alfred Worm (2000, p. 185) highlights the manner in which the FPÖ, and Jörg Haider in particular, compares the suffering of the *Sudeten* Germans with the suffering of the Jews during the Holocaust. There is, in Haider's view, something absolute about violations against human rights, and 'you cannot treat identical matters as being different'

(Cited in Worm 2000, p. 185; see also Haider 1998). It is easy to assume that Haider, who has generally been quite dismissive of the liberal/universalist notion of human rights, was merely exploiting the concept for the sake of relativising the suffering of the Jews.

Although Haider dominated the party, supposedly right-wing extremist statements were not exclusively made by him. Other prominent party members and leaders have also been accused of making extremist claims. We shall here mention three of these – Andreas Mölzer, John Gudenus, and Reinhard Gaugg. Mölzer was a leading figure in the *Freiheitliche Bildungswerk*, the party's cultural section, in the early 1990s. He was editor-in-chief of the right-wing *Kärntner Nachrichten* from 1982 to 1990, a Member of *Bundesrat* from 1991 to 1994, and has served as FPÖ representative in the European Parliament since 2004. In 1991 he was nominated by Haider as advisor on ideological principles. He has published widely in right-wing extremist newspapers and journals, such as the German *Junge Freiheit*. Since 1997 he has also been editor-in-chief for *Zur Zeit*, a right-wing weekly closely associated with the rightist section of the FPÖ. Mölzer held a critical journalist, Karl Pfeifer, responsible for the death of a conservative German professor who killed himself in May 2000. Evoking right-wing extremist echoes of the Nazi era, Mölzer referred to Pfeifer as a 'jewish journalist' (Klenk 2002). Mölzer saw the European Union sanctions against Austria in 2000 as part of an 'anti-Austrian conspiracy of a liberal-socialist-communist-internationalist clique.' (Stephen Roth Institute 'Austria 1999-2000' n.d.⁵⁶ Christa Zöchling has highlighted Mölzer's distinction between '*Wirtsvölker*' and 'rootless Jews', and also pointed out that during his editorship of *Zur Zeit* Mölzer referred to the Holocaust as a 'dogma', and a 'myth', and named Hitler a 'Social revolutionary' (Zöchling 2000, p. 222). In 2005, John Gudenus, long standing member of the party and former member of Austria's upper house, publicly questioned the Holocaust: 'Gas chambers? Ich halte mich da raus. Ich glaube alles, was dogmatisch vorgeschrieben ist' (Schiedel n.d). As a result of this statement, Gudenus received a conditional prison sentence of one year. Reinhard Gaugg was a former prominent FPÖ politician both at the national level and in Carinthia. Like Jörg Haider, Gaugg had a problem with drinking and driving and as a consequence of repeated offences, he was forced to resign in 2002. In 1993, Gaugg was interviewed

⁵⁶ <http://www.tau.ac.il/Anti-Semitism/asw99-2000/austria.htm>

and asked about the meaning of the word 'Nazi'. –'Nazi?' Gaugg replied. 'Neu, attraktiv, zielstrebig and ideenreich' (new, attractive, goal oriented and rich in ideas) (*Kärntner Tageszeitung*, Sept. 11, 1993). Even though one might suspect that Gaugg's utterance was meant to provoke, it is still beyond the bounds of propriety to turn Nazism into a simple joke. If this was a tactic to gain voters, the question is: 'Who would be persuaded by such as response?'

The Party Yearbooks – The Party's Ideological Spectrum

The party's annual yearbooks *Freiheit und Verantwortung* ('Freedom and responsibility'), published between 1993 and 2000, provided a platform for intellectual debate covering the ideological spectrum of various party factions and views as well as those of sympathisers and observers from other parties and countries. However, its audience never spread to the main electoral base and remained rather small. Initially an ambitious project, comprehensiveness and readership seemed to wane until the final edition was published in 2000.⁵⁷

The first three editions (1993 to 1995) had an emphasis on conservative intellectual debate, history and philosophy. Even though these themes were also to be found in the editions from 1996 onwards, other themes gradually became more prominent, such as economic issues, applied science, and attempts to fuse a historical/defensive conservatism with a more enthusiastic and neo-liberal stance. The 1997 edition presents the American education system as a model for Austria, introducing views such as the idea that Universities could benefit from the application of market principles and the development of a highly competitive climate, which previously had been absent from the rhetoric of the party (Kanovsky-Wintermann FV97 1996).⁵⁸ The 1998 edition contains an interview with the Director of *the American Shooting Sports Council*, introducing a somewhat more untroubled rhetoric

⁵⁷ Whereas the 1993 edition had almost 600 pages and the 1994 edition 800 pages, editions between 1996 and 1999 were about 300 to 500 pages long and the last edition in 2000 had only about 100 pages.

⁵⁸ This and subsequent references to the yearbooks in this chapter are given in the form (FVxx yyyy), where FV represents a yearbook (*Freiheit und Verantwortung*), xx gives the last two digits of the corresponding year as it appears in the yearbook's title, and yyyy indicates the year of publication. Where the author of an article is identified, this information will be included in the usual manner.

compared to the more academic tone used in previous yearbooks.⁵⁹ Indications of a change in basic outlook can be found in the yearbook of 1998, where it is stated that of utmost 'strategic importance' is 'the task to bring culture to the audience; that is questions of marketing' (Gassner 1998, p. 208). The 1999 edition presents Alvin Rabuschka, and his suggestion to 'starve the government'; in particular, his ideas about a 'flat tax' are the subject of a lengthy analysis (FV99 1998, p. 110).⁶⁰ In the same volume, Jörg Haider refers to the US: 'The Americans simply call it 'leadership'. We are all leaders, executives of Carinthian business' (FV99 1998, p. 15). He also declares that politics, 'as we all know', 'does not create jobs' (FV99 1998, p. 15). This statement shows a plausible link between right-wing populist critique of the Austrian elite, and a more general neo-liberal critique of state interference. In a similar vein, the foundations of New Public Management are laid out and presented in a very positive light in the 2000 edition of the yearbooks (Zischg FV00 1999).

This shift in focus can partly be explained by the fact that the first three editions were edited by Lothar Höbelt, Professor of History, the philosopher Brigitte Sob, and the radical Andreas Mölzer, famous for the anti-Semitic remarks mentioned above; whereas the latter volumes were edited by Fritz Simhandl, lawyer and business consultant, and Johannes Berchtold, whose background was in the social sciences and psychology. The range of contributions in the journal was often wide. The 1995 edition, for example, contained material from internationally renowned personalities such as the late Marion Gräfin Dönhoff, editor of the German Weekly *Die Zeit*, as well as publishers from the rightist fringes of the Freedom Party, such as Otto Scirzni (See Pelinka 1998a, p. 196). In the 1997 edition, Kurt Waldheim contributes an article entitled 'Austria in the world' (FV97 1996). This yearbook was introduced by Thomas Klestil – at the time President of Austria, and his short essay on '40 years of the Freedom Party' (FV97 1996).

Several articles in the yearbooks deal with typical right-wing themes of immigration and the nation, with the majority of contributors arguing in favour of stopping or limiting the influx of foreigners. In the 1993 edition, articles of this type with the

⁵⁹ Cf. Berchtold and Simhandl (1998) – article entitled 'Jörg Haider is our friend because we share basic principles and basic ideas'.

⁶⁰ At the time, Jörg Haider showed great interest in Rabuschka's 'flat tax', and also asked Rabuschka to 'make a model for Austria'. (FV99 1998, p. 114).

following titles may be found : 'Territory, home and national identity – ecological necessity and social realities'; 'Identity and justice – remarks on contemporary Europe'; 'Rights of people and the protection of minorities in Europe'; 'Rights of ethnic groups in the "new Europe"'; 'Minority problems in the Baltic states' 'Expulsions from home, ethnic Germans and Old Austrians – the situation of German minorities in central- and eastern Europe and Austria's responsibility'; 'The dialectic of the border – human cultures cannot be imagined without borders'; 'Considerations regarding the foreigner question'; and 'The problematic nature of foreigners in Vienna' (FV93 1992).⁶¹

Articles dealing with similar themes in the 1994 yearbook include: 'Vienna must therefore remain our hometown!'; 'Multiculture – concerning the idea and critique of a thought experiment'; 'Patriots in all camps – Unite!'; 'Migration and political culture – concerning the power of media'; 'The question of the east within European integration'; 'The concept of minority against the background of problems of immigrations'; 'Help to help yourself'; 'School as a place of protection of cultural identity'; 'Is human being ready for paradise?'; and 'The "Barbarossa" enterprise – a new version of Katyn' (FV94 1993)?⁶²

In the 1995 edition, finally, the following articles are also situated in a political grey zone between conservative views and right-wing extremism: 'Notes on the compromise of asylum'; 'Protection of the homeland as integrated cultural and environmental protection'; 'Military service is a waste of time'; 'The concept of the nation, definition and current significance'; 'Internationalism versus nationalism – an eternal enmity'; 'The survival of Europe's state system in a period of global change';

⁶¹ The titles given here are the author's translations. The respective original German titles as they appeared in the yearbook (FV93 1992) are as follows: "Revier – Heimat – nationale Identität – Ökologische Notwendigkeit und gesellschaftliche Realitäten"; "Identität und Gerechtigkeit – Notizen zur europäischen Gegenwart"; "Volkgruppen – und Minderheitenschutz in Europa – Die Situation der deutschen Minderheiten in Mittel- und Osteuropa und die Verantwortung Österreichs"; "Volkgruppenrechts im 'neuen Europa'"; "Minderheitsprobleme der baltischen Staaten"; "Heimatvertriebungen"; "Die Dialektik der Grenze – Menschliche Kulturen sind ohne Grenzen nicht vorstellbar"; "Überlegungen zur Ausländerfrage"; "Ausländerproblematik in Wien".

⁶² The titles given here are the author's translations. The respective original German titles as they appeared in the yearbook (FV94 1993) are as follows: "Damit uns Wien Heimatstadt bleiben"; "Multikultur – Zur Idee und Kritik eines Gedankenexperiments"; "Patrioten aller Lager vereinigt euch!"; "Umerziehung und politische Kultur – Zur Macht der Medien"; "Der Osten in der europäischen Integration"; "Zum Begriff der Minderheit vor dem Hintergrund der Einwanderungsproblematik"; "Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe – Das Beispiel Siebenbürgen"; "Die Schule als Bewahrungsstätte kultureller Identität"; "Ist der Mensch paradiesfähig?"; "Das Unternehmen "Barbarossa" – ein neuen Katyn?".

'National conflicts in a global neighbourhood'; 'Protecting ethnic groups in Europe without violating national borders'; 'Minority issues'; Minorities in present-day Slovenia'; "'Multa non multum" – cultural critical notes regarding multicultural society'; and 'Islam and Islamism in Europe'.⁶³

While it is difficult to apply a quantitative analysis to the yearbooks, an analysis of the titles and main content of the individual articles gives an indication of the spectrum of views amongst the party's leading intellectual sympathisers and the weight given to particular issues. In Table 3 (see below, p. 129), the articles have been classified according to the extent to which they promote typically right-wing and right-wing extremist ideas: articles containing strong and explicitly right-wing extremist views including racism, xenophobia and fascist reminiscences are categorised as 'articles with explicit right-wing extremist views'. Articles alluding to or addressing the nation or nationalism, tradition and values are categorised as 'articles with a right-wing tendency'. Articles debating sociobiology are defined as 'extreme'. The depiction of animals (and in particular carnivores) as role models for *human* behaviour must be seen as not only politically 'extreme', but as a theoretical excuse for political violence. As an example, in the 1993 edition, the fate of a crab in an alien colony is metaphorically used to justify the inhuman treatment of people from other cultures (Kohl FV93 1992, p. 73). In the 1994 edition, the lack of biological evolution over the last 10,000 years is emphasized, while a considerable social evolution is wiped aside (Iräneus Eibl-Eibesfeldt FV94 1993, p. 215). Again, the purpose here is to introduce a harsher political agenda by means of a (pseudo)scientific justification.

On the other hand, conservative cultural critique does not necessarily qualify as right-wing extremist. An article called 'Leftist culture mafia – rightist art' directs criticism against Austrian official culture supposedly out of touch with ordinary citizens (Marinovic FV94 1993). Hence, this article is populist in nature and not classified as right-wing extremist. 'Avant-garde art and totalitarian rule' debating among others

⁶³ The titles given here are the author's translations. The respective original German titles as they appeared in the yearbook (FV95 1994) are as follows: "Anmerkungen zur Asylkompromiss"; "Heimatschutz als integrierter Kultur- und Umweltschutz"; "Wehrpflicht ist Verschwendung"; "Der Begriff der Nation, Definition und aktuelle Bedeutung"; "Nur im Nationalen liegt Hoffnung"; "Internationalismus gegen Nationalismus – Eine unendliche Todfeindschaft"; "Die Zukunft der Nationalstaaten – Die Behauptung Europas Staatenwelt im globalen Wandel"; "Nationale Konflikte in einer globalen Nachbarschaft"; "Volksgruppenschutz in Europa ohne Antastung der Staatsgrenzen"; "Minderheitenfragen"; "Minderheiten im heutigen Slowenien"; "Multa non multum – Kulturkritische Anmerkungen zur multikulturellen Gesellschaft"; "Islam und Islamismus".

Marinetti and the Italian futurist movement seeks to draw a link between avant-garde art and culture and large-scale political oppression. The article expresses a clearly conservative form of criticism against progressive art and culture. But it would be a mistake to consider this critique as right-wing extremist or 'fascist'.

Table 3 Party Yearbooks 1993 to 2000 – Percentage of Right-wing Views					
Year	Total number of articles	Articles with a Right-Wing Tendency		Articles with Explicit Right-Wing Extremist Views	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1993	56	9	16	2	4
1994	76	9	12	1	1
1995	66	10	15	2	3
1996	29	2	7	1	3
1997	39	0	0	0	0
1998	29	0	0	0	0
1999	36	0	0	0	0
2000	7	0	0	0	0

Source: *Freiheit und Verantwortung* (Vienna: Freiheitliche Bildungswerk, Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs, 1993-2000)

Table 3 shows that the amount of articles with a right-wing tendency varied between 7 percent and 16 percent between 1993 and 1996; with the mean percentage of right-wing material amounting to 12.5 percent. To put this another way, the proportion of right-wing material was one out of eight articles during these four years. The last four editions of the annual journal contained no overtly right-wing material.

The Party Programmes of 1985 and 1997

While the yearbooks reflect mainly the internal intellectual debates amongst the party leadership or ideologues, it is important to identify more direct references to or indications of political and practical realities. We therefore now turn our attention to

two particular party programmes, that of 1985, the so-called 'Salzburger Programm',⁶⁴ and the 1997 party programme, the so-called '*Linzer Programm*.'⁶⁵

The 1985 Salzburg Programme is important for many reasons. References to a German *Volksgemeinschaft* have faded, and ideas about cultural enrichment of 'our common homeland' are being defended. As noted by Kurt Richard Luther, while the 'national component' was still there, liberalism was 'clearly the dominant ideology' at the time (Luther 2005, p. 18). The programme also shows to what extent the Freedom Party under the new leadership of Jörg Haider remained faithful to the party's prevailing ideology during the mid-1980s, and to what extent he distanced himself from these views. The 1997 party programme is of interest because it describes the FPÖ's programme at the height of Jörg Haider's power and influence.

In this context two themes are of particular interest – the party's views on 'liberalism' and on 'immigration'. As Chapter 6 has shown, throughout its history the party sought time and again to underline its liberal leanings, as also reflected also in its name. It was a member of the Liberal International until 1993 and also participated in government as a predominantly liberal party between 1983 and 1986. Examining the party programmes for clear references to liberalism also demonstrates the presence of mainstream views. The party's views on immigration and its association with their negative consequences for Austria are, on the other hand, often associated with racism and right-wing radical views.

In the Salzburg Programme, liberalism is clearly endorsed. In total, 41 references to liberalism were found (Table 4). 'Freedom on the part of the single individual' is a supreme goal (SP, p. 1, para. 2). The aims of the FPÖ are declared to be to awaken the creative potential in society, and to use a liberal policy to foster 'uniqueness' (SP, p. 1, para. 13). An educational system based on a 'liberal foundation' is endorsed (SP, p. 10, para. 155), 'liberal ideas' enable us to help ourselves (SP, p. 8, para. 123), 'the capital market should be based on liberal principles' (SP, p. 19, para. 279), and the idea of progress is linked to 'the enlightenment and to liberalism' (SP, p. 26

⁶⁴ The *Programm der Freiheitlichen Partei Österreichs* (1985) or 'Salzburger Programm' will be abbreviated to SP in references in the remainder of this chapter.

⁶⁵ *FPÖ Die Freiheitlichen 1997 (Programme of the Austrian Freedom Party 1997)* (1997) or the '*Linzer Programme*' will be abbreviated to LP in references in the remainder of this chapter.

para. 385). Still, this form of liberalism should not be mistaken for liberalism in the tradition of 1789, where the individual is the sole purpose and benefactor. In fact, despite the fact that this party programme appeared at a time when the FPÖ was portraying itself as distinctly mainstream and 'liberal', the liberal views expressed in the programme are in the tradition of 1848; in other words, this is a form of liberalism where the individual is situated firmly within a context in which the rights and freedoms of nations are of primary importance. The emphasis on the freedom of the individual above is limited by the context of a particular social order (SP, p. 1, para. 2). When a liberal policy fosters uniqueness, this is not primarily aimed at fostering unique individuals, but, in accordance with classic conservative views, at producing distinctive 'groups of people' (SP, p. 1, para. 13). The national collective is never out of sight when liberal ideas are expressed in the Salzburg Programme. Therefore, in a 'liberal order', 'rights and obligations' are of equal importance. Without a solid societal and political framework individual freedom is not possible (SP, p. 1, para. 4). This form of liberalism could be considered a smokescreen for more radical ideas. Either the individual is in focus, or the individual is being suppressed. Collective entities – whether conservative or Marxist – surrounding and 'protecting' the individual are often seen as suspicious.

Table 4 Salzburger Programm 1985 and Linzer Programm 1997 – references to liberalism, immigration, and Right-wing populism			
	Salzburger Programm	Linzer Programm	
	Absolute numbers	Absolute numbers	Equivalent size
Liberalism	41	1	2
Immigration	3	9	18
Right-wing populism	16	45	90

Source: *Programm der Freiheitlichen Partei Österreichs* (Vienna: Freiheitliche Bildungswerk, Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs, 1985; *Program of the Austrian Freedom Party – FPÖ, Die Freiheitlichen* (Vienna: Freiheitliche Bildungswerk, Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs, 1997)

Table 4 compares the political tendency in the 1985 FPÖ party programme – the Salzburg Programme – with the tendency in the 1997 party programme – the Linz

Programme. In the Salzburg Programme, 41 paragraphs included positive references to liberalism, while the equivalent of two articles (see explanations in the following paragraph) referred to liberalism in the Linzer Programme. Put differently, by 1997, references to liberalism were only 5 per cent of the figures of 1985. In the Salzburg Programme, 3 paragraphs contained references to immigration, while (the equivalent of) 18 items referred to immigration in the 1997 Linz Programme. The weight of themes referring to immigration had increased six-fold. Finally, the Salzburg Programme contained 16 paragraphs relating to right-wing populism, whereas the Linz Programme exhibited (the equivalent of) 90 references to right-wing populism. Hence, right-wing populism was also six times more common in 1997 as compared to in 1985. Although immigration and right-wing populism both increased by the same factor, their relative importance changed. Compared to immigration, right-wing populism rose to have major importance in the Linz Programme of 1997.

In comparing the two programmes, a few fundamental difficulties had to be taken into consideration in terms of classification and data coding. First, a word count showed that the Salzburg Programme had about 38,000 words, while the Linz Programme only had around 17,000. This means that a direct comparison with regards to the prevalence of various views ('Absolute numbers') would be misleading. The figures in the Linz Programme have therefore been doubled ('Equivalent size'). Their different respective length is reflected in the style. The Salzburg Programme is more scientific, reasoned, and 'dry' in style, while Linz Programme has a more 'populist' tone. The only chapter in the Linz Programme that could qualify as scientific is chapter XVII – 'Science and its teaching are free: "The promotion of science and research has priority"'. Chapter 8 – 'Economics and tax issues' and Chapter 9 – '*Sozialwesen*' are only two examples of chapters in the Salzburg Programme written in an academic, non-polemical tone.

In any classification of the prevalence of certain themes, the relative size of the theme had to be calculated. In comparing the Salzburg– and Linz Programmes – one paragraph counted as one theme, and thus one 'hit', regardless of whether the paragraph or article was long, and the theme recurred many times.

This classification must also take into consideration a number of borderline instances. This problem is particularly relevant concerning the prevalence of right-wing populist themes. An important question is: What is normal criticism against political opponents and what constitutes true right-wing populism? The Salzburg Programme states that 'Monopolies... should if possible be avoided' (SP, p. 17, para. 247). The Linz Programme seeks to reduce 'bureaucratic obstacles in conducting public questionnaires' (LP, p. 16, art. 4). It is hard to tell whether these statements are aimed at monopoly and bureaucracy in general, or if they have a populist edge against the dual rule of the SPÖ and the ÖVP (and hence, should be included in table 4 above). The context of the former quotation, however, would lead us to conclude that it should rather not be included above. The general discussion advocates 'liberal market principles', and the critical discussion about monopolies does not fall within the boundaries of right-wing populist, hard-hitting rhetoric. Regarding the latter quotation, the wider picture – seeking to increase the power of 'the public' as opposed to parliamentary power – suggests that the basic message is in fact a populist message criticizing the elite rule of 'SPÖVP'. This quotation, therefore, has been included in table 4.

While the Salzburg Programme defends 'cultural pluralism, where all constituent groups' can flourish (SP, p. 9, para. 141), the Linz Programme claims that 'Nobody should be persecuted because of their convictions, views or ideas' (LP, p. 5, art. 2). These statements could be interpreted as a mere quest for openness, but they can also easily target the supposed suppression of ideas by what is called the 'Austrian elite'. The former citation, however, includes ethnic minority groups within the concept of 'cultural pluralism', and it is unlikely that the embracing of ethnic minorities would go together with right-wing populism. Therefore, it is left out of table 4. The latter passage, on the other hand, is further explained by the following statement: Respect 'for the individual personality rules out ...oppression resulting from certain political values and attitudes.' This seems to be an implicit critical reference to the Austrian elite rule, and the citation is therefore included in table 4. Should anti-EU rhetoric be regarded as distinct (and possibly left-wing), or as merely an extended version of domestic anti-elitist and right-wing populist sentiment? As discussed in Chapter 4, both alternatives are possible. The quotation in the Linz Programme, however – where Austria's entry into the EU is criticized for having led to a 'massive'

standardization of the country's 'intellectual and cultural substance' – is an indicator of strongly nationalist and patriotic language (LP, p. 6 art. 4). This context suggests that the anti-EU rhetoric above expresses right-wing populist views. Hence, it has been included in table 4.

The Linz Programme advocates 'direct elections' (LP, p. 16, art. 5). This can be seen as either an alternative to representative democracy in general, or as a right-wing populist alternative to those 'anonymous functionaries' within the Austrian 'party state' in particular. The quotation has been included in table 4, This is because the context of the quote offers an alternative to secretive 'appointment(s)' of political representatives and because calls for 'direct elections' and 'direct democracy' always appear in right-wing populist language.

The Linz Programme strongly supports 'school autonomy' (LP, p. 32, art. 2). Would this be a tactical concession to neo-liberalism, or rather an implicit attack against a perceived socialist control in education? Or both? While 'independent schools' and 'autonomy' in the realm of education frequently overlap with right-wing populist rhetoric targeting the dual rule of SPÖ and ÖVP, this is not clearly indicated by the present passage. Therefore, it has not been included in table 4.

Finally, the Salzburg Programme contains the following passage regarding social care: 'Voluntary assistance within the circle of friends and family constitutes, in our eyes, a great opportunity for the future' (SP, p. 22; para. 315). Is this an expression of conservative (and possibly right-wing populist) language against the inhumane nature of modernist, social democratic social policy, or is it plain neo-liberal rhetoric about deregulation and the 'slimming of the state'? Or perhaps both? The wider discussion includes many references to conservative themes: money cannot replace human care and understanding, and personal assistance is strongly defended. The wider discussion also views assistance by friends and relatives as a remedy for escalating social costs. Still, judged by the wider picture, the citation does not seem to be right-wing populist. In addition, it seems to advocate general market principles, instead of more radical neo-liberal solutions. Hence, the quotation has not been included in table 4.

As a consequence of these borderline cases and uncertainties, table 4 above is best seen as an indication of the most plausible trends. Having said this, table 4 still suggests that the prevalence of the three themes under investigation indeed has changed, and that this change can be established with a modest level of certainty.

During the early 1990s, liberal values were being increasingly questioned within the party. This trend is also reflected in the 1997 party programme in which virtually all explicit references to liberalism have disappeared. The one exception is on page 9, where liberalism in the sense of 'anticlericism' is seen as 'outdated' (LP, p. 9, art. 2). In terms of views on immigration, the Salzburg Programme describes Austria as densely populated and hence not a country that can absorb immigrants (SP, p. 16, para. 240). Yet, there are only 3 explicit references to immigration in the 1985 programme. The 1997 Party Programme, on the other hand, presents a whole range of arguments in which immigration and immigrants are presented in an unfavourable light. In total 9 references can be found, which would amount to roughly 18 in case the Linz Programme was of the same size as the Salzburg Programme (Table 4). While acknowledging that Austria must give asylum to those who are persecuted for racist, religious or political reasons, it reiterates the statement from 1985: due to the density of the population and its limited resources, Austria is not a country for immigration (LP, p. 8, art. 4).⁶⁶ Yet it goes a step further in emphasising the negative implications of immigration and suggesting that 'full sovereignty in matters concerned with the rights of immigrants' is required to protect the interests of the Austrian population (LP, p. 8, art. 4). Further, 'unlimited immigration would demand too much of the resident population' and would endanger the cultural identity of Austrians. Multicultural 'experiments' lead to social conflicts, and are hence rejected (LP, p. 8, art. 4). Practically, uncontrolled immigration would cause serious distortions of the labour market, wage cuts, and rising prices on the housing market (LP, p. 23, art. 8). The programme speaks of a need to 'counter the flood of illegal immigrants and those engaged in smuggling refugees.' Illegal immigrants are furthermore, it is claimed, linked to 'an importation of crime', further undermining the urgency of precautionary measures (LP, p. 19-20, art. 3).

⁶⁶ Ch. IV 'The right to a cultural identity', Art. 4, Para. 4; Ch. IV 'The right to a cultural identity', Art. 4, Para. 1, *Programme of the Austrian Freedom Party – FPÖ Die Freiheitlichen 1997* (Vienna: Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs, 1997)

The reference to exerting full sovereignty concerning the rights of immigrants denies the basic idea of immigrant rights – which is precisely about having rights regardless of one’s background. As for the notion of cultural identity, it has been used repeatedly by European right-wing extremists, habitually in order to package a nationalist, racist and right-wing extremist message in the rhetoric of defensive and righteous self-determination. Calls for cultural identity are generally linked to a critical stance against multiculturalism. The conclusion that multiculturalism leads to social conflicts is, however, widely contested among researchers. Brigitte Bailer and Wolfgang Neugebauer claim that ‘the rejection of a multicultural society’ has ‘contributed greatly to a climate of latent or open violence against foreigners ...’ (Bailer and Neugebauer, ‘The FPÖ of Jörg Haider’, n.d.). Then again, this statement is only partly true. While a critique of multiculturalism may hide extreme right views, it may also be used simply to defend the nation state against disintegrating tendencies along the lines of minority rights, whereby citizens’ rights and solidarity across ethnic borders become increasingly difficult to defend.

As for the evidence of right-wing extremist ideas in the 1997 Party Programme, the programme can be categorised as right-wing extremist only in relation to its stance on immigration-related issues. Even though this Party Programme occasionally made use of rather harsh rhetoric (‘flooded by immigrants’) it is difficult to argue that this renders the entire 1997 Party Programme right-wing extremist. Instead both the Salzburg Programme and, more evidently still, the 1997 Party Programme, show clear signs of a typical right-wing populist tone. The earlier programme contains 16 references of a right-wing populist nature, while the latter programme (recounted to equivalent size) contains no less than 90 references to right-wing populism.

The party’s opposition to immigration was also part of the campaign for the 1997 national elections when the FPÖ announced: ‘The influx of strangers must be stopped!’ Heribert Schiedel (2000, p. 109) argues that the success of this political campaign was because the magic flute of racism had caught the attention of ‘the down-and-out proletariat and the small merchants’.

In the Salzburg Programme concerns are raised about an escalating cynicism and fatigue regarding politics and parties, ‘a consequence of years of political

depravation' (SP, p. 6, para. 90). In order to strengthen democratic rights, a 'dictatorship of the political apparatus' along with a sense of impotence and insignificance on the part of the individual must be countered (SP, p. 3, para. 54). The payment for political work must not 'deteriorate into a privilege among politicians' (SP, p. 6, para. 89). Instead, the Salzburg Programme advocates flexible and 'open elites', and a system free from nepotism and under-cover negotiations: 'We are against privileges' (SP, p. 3, para. 40). Therefore, politics is in need of independent personalities; experts free from financial alignments, and impeccable concerning corruption (SP, p. 6, para. 88). As for the realm of culture, political interference and censorship is ruled out (SP, p. 9, para. 143). More specifically, a cultural policy shall neither promote a particular artistic view nor enforce certain moralistic perceptions upon the individual artist (SP, p. 2, para. 25). With respect to the media the citizen must be protected from an abusive, personally offensive and false media broadcasting (SP, p. 12, para. 175). The 1985 Salzburg Programme, while adhering to representative democracy, advocates an increased use of direct democratic measures (SP, p. 5, para. 75). The above examples from the 1985 Salzburg Programme share a common feature: they are all directed against an assumed elitist oppression. These views are shared by Luther, who refers to the mid 1980s and Haider's pending seizure of political power as 'the early years of the phase of populist protest' (Luther 2005, p. 18). In other words, while the populist rhetoric was already present, it was not to become forceful until the 1990s and the Linz Programme.

The 1997 Party Programme shows similar anti-elitist, populist tendencies, and their weight is notable. Austria in 1997 is, according to the Party Programme, characterized by centralistic bureaucratic collective arrangements, where the single individual is powerless and anonymous (LP, p. 22, art. 4). Secret agreements between the Social Democrats and the People's Party have created an intransparent 'shadow parliament' cut off from public control (LP, p. 14 art. 1). The public sector is used as a 'self-service store and pension organization of the political parties and their auxiliary organisations' (LP, p. 22, art. 6). In this system, the dignity of human beings is lost. Instead, they are kept in bondage by ideological models and made 'subject to ... socialisation against their will'; and the individual is being discriminated against and oppressed by 'certain values and political attitudes' (LP, p. 5, art. 2). These tendencies are particularly detrimental in the cultural sphere which has been the

victim of an intellectual decline for many years, where 'artists are bound and politically instrumentalised by control mechanisms such as the granting of subsidies ...' (LP, p. 31, art. 4). As a consequence, a submissive and state-friendly art emerges (LP, p. 31, art. 4). Political control is, furthermore, being exercised over the media by means of subsidies, leading to political dependency, politically selected reporters, and, in general, 'massive distortion of political competition' (LP, p. 14).

However, the 1997 Party Programme proposes to address these detrimental conditions with a 'clear reduction of the omnipotence of political parties', thereby reducing their heavy hand over and influence on appointments in education, court committees, and supervisory and executive boards of directors. Curtailing political influence, it is claimed, will liberate the banking system, the federal postal service, the insurance companies and co-operative building societies from the shackles of the dual political monopoly of the SPÖ and the ÖVP (LP, p. 14, art. 1). If this 'bureaucratic, authoritarian government' can be brought to a standstill, Austria will not only limit the influence of political lobbies, but also, notably, acquire a multi-party system (LP, p. 14, art. 1).

As for the state's role in industrial and commercial activities, the 1997 programme argues that it has been unsuccessful, ineffective and costly. It has crowded out private and possibly more competitive companies and firms. Therefore, 'the state should abstain from any profitable or entrepreneurial activity' (LP, p. 15, art. 3). Similarly, education has to be disentangled from the ideological influence of the two big parties. Unless this is done, schools will continue to be 'abused for ideological and doctrinary purposes' (LP, p. 31, art. 1). As for the realm of art, the role of the state must be reversed. Instead of state patronage, the state must 'guarantee the freedom of art and its diversity' (LP, p. 30, art. 4). The 1997 Party Programme reiterates the call for an increased use of direct democratic measures (LP, p. 16, art. 4).

The above has shown that while the party programmes contain references to typical right-wing themes, typically populist themes are far more common. In our findings, three tendencies are discerned: (1) liberalism decreases from 41 to (the equivalent of) 2 (where liberalism is criticized); (2) immigration and (3) right-wing populism both

exhibit a six-fold increase – the previous from 3 to 18; and the latter from 16 to 90. Hence, from this empirical analysis, it seems reasonable to conclude that the FPÖ agenda evolved from a very strong liberal platform with certain traces of 'old' nationalism and right-wing extremism in 1985, to a platform in 1997 where immigration and nationalism had experienced only a moderate increase. The most noteworthy change, however, was a rather pronounced increase in values and themes related to right-wing populism.

The EU Sanctions against Austria

The EU Sanctions against Austria are important in the present discussion mainly because they had wide repercussions at the final stage of the period under investigation – not only in Austria but also internationally. Never before had the EU so quickly managed to unite and impose sanctions against an EU Member State. However, the sanctions are also important because they center upon the Austrian political landscape which is the topic of this thesis. The major motivation behind the sanctions was an expressed desire by the EU to bring about 'positive political changes' in Austria. However, numerous circumstances suggest that these changes never occurred. It will be argued that the sanctions were aimed at a presumed extremism in Austria, when in fact the political tendency was populist, that is, that the EU politicians had misinterpreted the political trends in Austria. Instead of leading to internal criticism against the ÖVP/FPÖ government, the sanctions sparked populist counter-reactions against the EU. These aspects – populism and counter-reactions – both play a central role in the present thesis, and this is why the EU Sanctions against Austria must be dealt with at some length, including a background discussion about the general theories of sanctions.

The EU sanctions against Austria were imposed as a response to the establishment of the FPÖ and ÖVP coalition government. In the Brussels rhetoric, the sanctions were referred to as 'the Measures of the EU 14 Governments against the Austrian government'. As noted by Peter Wallensteen, however, sanctions can take on many different labels, such as 'blockades', 'boycotts', 'embargoes', 'quarantines', or

'economic coercion' (Wallenstein 2000, p. 1) The sanctions against Austria and the Austrian government were at times labelled a 'quarantine', or, as above, 'measures'.

The sanctions against Austria were officially declared on 31 January 2000.⁶⁷ In the 'announcement of the "EU sanctions"' (Document 8 (but see also Document 7, Hummer and Pelinka 2002, p. 185)), the following statement was made:

- Governments of XIV Member States will not promote or accept any bilateral official contacts at political level with an Austrian Government integrating the FPÖ;
- There will be no support in favour of Austrian candidates seeking positions in international organisations.
- Austrian Ambassadors in EU capitals will only be received at a technical level.

On 1 February the European Commission announced that it shared the 'concern forming the basis of [the EU-14 Sanctions against Austria]' (Document 40, Hummer and Pelinka 2002, p. 283).

On 3 February under 'Critique against the creation of a government coalition between the ÖVP and the FPÖ in Austria' (Document 42, Hummer and Pelinka 2002, p. 284), a key objective of the sanctions was stated: 'The European Parliament supports the view that the inclusion of the Austrian Freedom Party in a coalition government brings legitimacy to the European extreme right' (Hummer and Pelinka 2002, p. 285).

On 14 February Benita Ferrero-Waldner, then ÖVP Foreign Minister, made a 'Declaration of belief in respect and common values and the inclusion of the Freedom Party in the responsibility of a government' (Document 13, Hummer and Pelinka 2002, p. 194): while showing respect for the concern expressed, she urged that the coalition government should be evaluated according to 'its concrete action' (Document 13, Hummer and Pelinka 2002, p. 194). On 16 February (Document 43, Hummer and Pelinka 2002, p. 287), the EU-14 'vigorously condemns any form of extremism', and 'condemns any insulting and anti-European remarks, as has been done by member and chairpersons of the Freedom Party.'

⁶⁷ Since the original EU documents on the sanctions are not readily available, these documents will be referenced as they appear in the authoritative text on the sanctions, Hummer and Pelinka (2002). The original enumeration of the documents is also given for clarity.

There were also repercussions outside Europe. Israel immediately recalled its ambassador and the Ambassador of the United States was called back 'for consultations' (Heinisch 2002, p. 243). Document 42, mentioned above – 'A critique against the formation of the government coalition ÖVP-FPÖ in Austria' – states that allowing the FPÖ to participate in a coalition government gives legitimacy to the European extreme right. Hence, the Freedom Party was seen as an 'extreme right' party. The EU-14 therefore feared that there was a direct positive correlation between its right-wing extremist propensity and its electoral appeal. The quotation also has wider implications. Seeking to persuade Wolfgang Schüssel (Chancellor during the government coalition with the FPÖ) to reconsider the coalition would not only prevent a large-scale spreading of right-wing extremist ideas in Austria, but would also, it was hoped, counter a surge of similar right-wing extremist parties throughout Europe.

Another explanation for the sanctions was to be found in 'Austrian peculiarities' as Waldemar Hummer and Anton Pelinka, authors of *Österreich unter 'EU-Quarantäne'* (2002) – the most authoritative volume on the matter, have noted. Among these peculiarities was the historical lack of interest in dealing with the country's war-time past. They stress that the largest percentage of SS soldiers was not, per capita, Germans, but Austrians. Frank discussions about war-time experiences, such as the *Historikerstreit* (battle of historians) in the mid-1980s in Germany, never occurred in Austria. The myth of having been the 'first victim of Germany's aggression' has been part of Austria's official self-image ever since the end of the Second World War. Another peculiarity was the failure on the part of the other parties to successfully isolate the Freedom Party (Hummer and Pelinka 2002, pp. 47-8). This leads on to what was to become an additional target of the sanctions – Austria in its entirety. Although the sanctions were officially directed against the coalition between the Freedom Party and the People's Party, they soon developed into a wider critique of Austria.

Pelinka and Hummer (2002, p. 44) argue that the sanctions were a clear success: by 2001 support for the FPÖ had plummeted drastically. From 26.9 percent in the 1999 national elections, the support of the Freedom Party declined to 10 percent in 2002. Pelinka and Hummer acknowledge that the decline experienced by the FPÖ between

February and December 2000 may have had a wide variety of causes, such as the fact that the FPÖ had entered government. It seems at least plausible, they conclude, 'that the "sanctions" against the FPÖ never triggered any martyr effect' (Hummer and Pelinka 2002, p. 44).

Others have remarked on the 'double standard' of the European Union. Why were no measures taken when, for instance, Gianfranco Fini's *Alleanza Nazionale* entered Berlusconi's government in 1994? The sanctions would likely not have been imposed, it was widely believed, 'if the target country had been a powerful player such as Italy or Germany' (Heinisch 2002, p. 246). While the EU had had many opportunities to take political and legal action against a whole number of other countries with, if anything, a more tarnished political record than Austria, it had failed to do so. *The Economist* pointed to the fact that the EU had made no move when bigger EU countries had welcomed communists and post-fascists with far closer links to past atrocities than the FPÖ (Anon. 'The perils of Austracism' 2000). Labeling the party as 'thoroughly xenophobic, if not racist' was, according to Hans-Georg Betz (2000, p. 266), 'a heavy charge', because 'major mainstream parties' throughout Europe, had gained popular support by means of 'xenophobic rhetoric' and 'anti-immigrant policies [...]'. Betz' criticism points to the fact that the sanctions were questioned not only from the right (arguing that the FPÖ is as good as any other party), but also from the left, by organisations such as the Socialist International, which claimed that the FPÖ was not worse than other European parties regarding asylum rights, etc (Schwarz 2000).

Comparing the EU's reaction to Austria with the silence of Brussels when Gianfranco Fini's *Alleanza Nazionale* joined the Berlusconi government in 1994 Hossay and Zolberg (2002, p. 309) argue, that 'the hypocrisy of the European response to Haider was thick.' However, Hummer and Pelinka (2002, p. 30) explain that we cannot easily compare 1994 and 2000, because the understanding of democracy was substantially altered during that period.⁶⁸ The self-perception of the EU at the turn of the millennium was radically different from that of the early 1990s. While there may be a kernel of truth in this, it still raises questions about the EU's current ability to deal with right-wing extremist tendencies. *Jobbik* (Movement for a better Hungary) – the

⁶⁸ Hummer and Pelinka, *Österreich unter "EU-Quarantäne"*, 30.

Hungarian right-wing extreme party, gained no less than 16.7 percent in the April 2010 election, almost winning out over the Socialists, who received 19.2 percent. *Magyar Gárda*, *Jobbik's* paramilitary wing, was founded in 2007, and despite being illegal, continues to be active. By any measures, *Jobbik* is more radical than the FPÖ ever was during the Haider years. Why, then, has the EU not considered united actions against *Jobbik*?

Officially, it was stated that the EU measures were only aimed at the newly-installed government of the ÖVP and the FPÖ. No two-party contacts were allowed, contacts at the highest diplomatic level were cancelled, and European politicians went out of their way not to be seen or depicted together with members of the Austrian government. However, numerous actions taken among the members of the EU-14 were not directed against the government, but clearly against the entire Austrian nation or Austrian citizens. Margareta Kopeinig and Christoph Kotanko (2000, p. 27) quote the Belgian Foreign Minister Louis Michel, who declared skiing in Austria to be 'immoral'. Some of the explicit reasons for the sanctions make it even more difficult to describe them as geared exclusively towards the fresh ÖVP/FPÖ government. Above, it was stated that no Austrian candidates seeking positions in international organisations would be supported. Clearly, these candidates are not necessarily linked to the Austrian government. As for the 'Austrian peculiarities' since the end of the Second World War, these also fail to single out the newly-installed ÖVP/FPÖ government. In fact, this line of criticism covers every single Austrian government since 1955. Moreover, in criticising the Austrian parties' inability to isolate the FPÖ, this party was, by definition, the one party excluded from this criticism. Other than that, it is unlikely to assume that sanctions against an elected government would not spill over to (at least) the voters who elected that government. Based on these observations, it is more than plausible to conclude that the sanctions, while ostensibly targeted against the ÖVP/FPÖ government, were easily perceived as aimed at the entire Austrian nation. This critique – sanctions against a government spill over and affect the entire citizenry – is common in other sanction regimes directed against various third world authoritarian states (Zimbabwe, Iran, etc.).

By early 2000, Europe had been caught up in strong anti-Austrian feelings. As noted by Reinhard Heinisch (2002 p. 245), a Belgian museum refused to loan paintings to a

Viennese art exhibition. The Vienna Philharmonic faced bomb threats and the Belgian taxi drivers' union urged their drivers not to pick up Austrian passengers. The episode that caught most attention relates, however, to the experience of a delegation of Austrian high school students sent to Strasbourg to represent their country at a Europe-wide youth event aimed at mutual understanding and discussion. As they mounted the stage, they were screamed at and castigated as 'Nazis' and 'racists'. Soon after, when the students recounted the event on TV, the programme was viewed by almost 1.4 million Austrians, generating, Heinisch notes, 'an enormous nationwide reaction' (2002, p. 245). In the eyes of the Austrian public, the measures were seen as 'sanctions against Austria' (Kopeinig and Kotanko 2000, p. 28).

Patrick Hossay and Aristide Zolberg (2002, p. 307) argue that the European Union 'punished Austria for allowing democracy to run its course.' In a similar vein, Hans-Georg Betz claimed that the EU's sanction against Austria constituted nothing short of 'an attempt to reverse the outcome of a democratic process', and represented 'a blatant interference in the internal affairs of a small country' (2000, pp. 265-71). Therefore, Heinisch (2002, p. 244) suggests, the sanctions 'could themselves be regarded a breach of legal obligation by the EU 14 with respect to a fellow member of an organisation.'⁶⁹

In the above discussion, it was argued that the European focus of the sanctions soon shifted from the Austrian government to the entire country; including, consequently, voters who were opposed to the Austrian Freedom Party and Jörg Haider. Ostracising Austria in this fashion was seen as grossly unfair by large sections of the populace. This leads to one of the most noteworthy outcomes of the EU sanctions. While it was hoped that the sanctions would thwart right-wing extremist tendencies among the Austrian electorate, evidence seems to support the view that they were not only inefficient, but in fact counter-productive. 'How', it has been asked, 'could 14 European nations impose sanctions with so little forethought that they achieved almost the opposite of what had been intended' (Heinisch 2002, p. XI (Preface)? The chasm between the new government and the general electorate never came about. Instead, the public quickly mobilized in support of the Schüssel-Haider coalition.

⁶⁹ See also Pernthaler and Hilpold (2000) for more information on the legal arguments relating to the sanctions.

According to a poll published by the Austrian *Sozialwissenschaftliche Studiengesellschaft* about 66 percent of the Austrian population claimed to be outraged by the sanctions. Even among voters of the Green Party, normally stern critics of anything relating to the FPÖ, 40 percent claimed to be outraged. The figures for the FPÖ voters and the ÖVP voters were almost identical – 84 percent and 82 percent respectively (Document 74, Hummer and Pelinka 2002, p. 350).

The EU report announcing the end of the EU sanctions also expressed concern about the possibility of counter-productivity. Acknowledging that the measures had already 'stirred up nationalist feelings in the country', it stated the opinion 'that the measures taken by the XIV Members States, if continued, would become counterproductive and should therefore be ended' (Ahtisaari *et al.* 2000, p.33).

Many questions are still, however, left unanswered. What are sanctions really about? Are they generally effective? Under what conditions are sanctions counter-productive, and why? In order to shed some light on these issues, we need to turn to the theoretical discussion of sanctions. It should be noted that in the debate about the EU-14 sanctions against Austria, the theoretical literature on sanctions has been virtually absent. Hence, the following overview will contribute to fill this surprising lacuna.

How are sanctions defined in the theoretical debate? A succinct definition is provided by Peter Wallensteen. Sanctions, he argues, are 'actions taken to preserve or acquire compliance to certain laws or norms' (Wallensteen 1971, p. 15). Johan Galtung defines sanctions as 'actions initiated by one or more international actors (the "senders") against one or more others (the "receivers") with either or both of two purposes: to punish the receivers by depriving them of some value and/or to make the receivers comply with certain norms the senders deem important' (Galtung 1967, p. 379). As these two key definitions show, sanctions are frequently seen in a relativistic light, while the moral component often raised by politicians is absent.

For the purpose of the present discussion, sanctions will be divided into four partly interrelated types. In case sanctions seek to solve a very specific problem, they are called 'instrumental sanctions' (Wallensteen 1971, p. 172). Another form of

sanctions, imposed exclusively against small countries, has a more condemnatory and punishing nature. These are referred to as 'expressive sanctions'; they are intended to protest and express a moral opinion. According to Galtung, an action is expressive, because its function is to 'release a latent intensity' (Wallensteen 1971, p. 63). In other words, the sender is charged with emotions, and the sanctions enable the release of these emotions. This type of sanction is rarely preceded by any attempt to solve the problem, and the protest itself often seems to be the purpose of the sanction. Frequently, diplomatic relations are interrupted (*ibid.*, p. 175). 'Smart sanctions' have appeared because it has been argued that 'ordinary' sanctions are too indiscriminate, treating the entire nation as one collective entity. Therefore, indiscriminate sanctions are at times referred to as 'dumb' sanctions. Smart sanctions, in turn, have been questioned on the grounds that they merely assume that the population will realize the distinction made between the government and the population (Wallensteen, 2000, p. 13; Wallensteen and Staibano 2005; Grebe 2010). Smart sanctions are also closely linked to 'targeted sanctions' (www.smartsanctions.se).

Galtung has presented various dimensions for classifying sanctions. Sanctions can be *negative* (i.e., a punishment for deviance), or *positive* (offering a reward for compliance). They can be aimed at *individuals* or *collective entities* (often entire nations.) Sanctions can come about due to *internal* changes in the receiving nation, or *external*, resulting from patterns of interaction with other nations. They can be *unilateral* (only one sanctioning nation), *multilateral* (several sanctioning nations), or *universal* (where all or almost all other nations take part in the sanction regime). Furthermore, in order to have an impact, sanctions are generally a political instrument used by great powers (Wallensteen 1971, p. 183). Sanctions can be *general* or *selective* (involving all possible measures or only some special measures.) They can be *total* or *partial* (including all or only a few special measures.) In his taxonomy, Galtung also distinguishes between types of sanctions. Diplomatic sanctions can entail non-recognition, rupture of diplomatic relations, no direct contact with political leaders or no cooperation by international organisations. Communication sanctions can affect tourism. Last but not least, economic sanctions may include internal destruction and economic boycotts (Galtung 1967, p. 381-383). Before continuing, it should be noted that sanctions generally follow similar patterns,

even though they use different methods. Focusing on economic sanctions, Johan Galtung still argues 'that very much of what we have said ... about economic sanctions would apply *a fortiori* to ... other types of sanctions' (ibid., p. 414).

Why are sanctions implemented? Often, either to punish, or to seek compliance, or both. Galtung, however, is skeptical towards the 'punishment' approach of sanctions. If, he argues, the politician 'insists that punishment is a sufficient condition for compliance, then he is simply naïve; if he insists that punishment is a necessary condition for compliance, then he is probably in addition highly punishment-oriented in the sense that punishment has become an automatic and probably also cherished goal in itself.' Galtung suggests that punishment-oriented sanctions are quite common, and argues that, 'if compliance is not obtained, there is at least the gratification that derives from knowing (or believing) that the sinner gets his due, that the criminal has been punished' (ibid., p. 380). Galtung's analysis suggests that punishment-oriented sanctions may be oriented toward the domestic population than the sanction-receiving nation; an idea shared by Wallensteen: it often seems as if the solution of a problem in the receiver country is less important than 'a need to appear "taking action", particularly in the domestic audience' (Wallensteen, 2000, p. 18).

Are sanctions in general effective? Sometimes this seems to be true. In his often-cited taxonomy, Baldwin (1985) concludes that 34 per cent of sanctions studied have been effective. While this constitutes a mere third of cases studied, the figures are still far from insignificant. Occasionally, it is also stated that sanctions has been effective in the past, and, 'if used thoughtfully, they can help to solve conflicts with a minimal amount of violence' (Smith 2004).⁷⁰ Besides, in a situation where military action is impossible and yet doing nothing would be seen as tantamount to complicity, then 'there is the value of at least doing something, of having the illusion of being instrumental, of being busy in time of crisis' (Galtung 1967, p. 411).

What are behind these 34 per cent of sanction cases? Under what specific conditions do sanctions appear to have the desired impact on the receiving nation? There appears to be a negative correlation between diversified economy and successful

⁷⁰ Smith 2004, <http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/sanctions>

sanctions. An oil embargo against a state exporting oil has reduced chances to be effective. Developing countries appear to be better targets for sanctions than developed countries (ibid., p. 386). A strong, internal opposition increases the likelihood of effective sanctions (Wallensteen 1971, p. 167). In other words, they are likely to have a stronger impact on dictatorships than on democracies. These inner divisions lead to another key factor making for effective sanctions, namely that the sanctions do not affect all relations between the receiving country and the sending country or countries. This lends supports to the observation that clearly defined, targeted sanctions (such as the freezing of particular individuals' bank accounts) and 'smart' sanctions (such as discreet and 'secret sanctions') are more successful than more common all-encompassing sanctions (Wallensteen 1971, p. 166; Wallensteen 1978; Baldwin 1985; Hadar 1998).

In general, there is agreement in the research literature that sanctions are by and large not effective. In his investigation, Wallensteen concludes that two of the ten sanctions studied were effective (1971). Comparing the effects of sanctions in eight different countries, the results in Galtung's table ranges from 0 per cent to 70 per cent. The average level of success was 25 per cent (Galtung 1967, p. 382). Baldwin has also been criticised for using an overly broad conceptualization of sanction success. In his more strict definition, Pape (1997) claims that no more than 5 per cent of cases studied brought about political compliance. In almost all of the other cases, the success was due to other factors, such as military intervention (Pape 1997, p. 93). This is related to the problem of co-variance versus correlation. How are we to know that the changes observed in the receiving countries were caused by the sanctions (Wallensteen 1971, p. 58)? In this misty landscape, it remains tempting for senders to exaggerate the true effects of sanctions for domestic political reasons.

Why, then, are sanctions mostly not effective? Scholars seem to agree that this is above all related to an increased feeling of national unity when confronted with external threats, and to the general problem of collective punishment. Sanctions operating against collectivities, Galtung argues, 'will always affect the just together with the unjust, since collective sanctions correspond to a philosophy of collective guilt.' This matter-of-fact weakens the morality of the sanctions, and boosts nationalist, and extremist internal forces. In case the sender perceives the receiving

nation as an 'undifferentiated whole', it is natural that this image will also be exploited by domestic right-wing radical groups. Feelings of national unity feed on precisely a sense of unjust treatment from the outside world (Galtung 1967, p. 409). By definition, of course, the effect of sanctions 'increases with the increasing participation of the senders.' This, however, says nothing about the moral effect. In fact, to 'feel that the rest of the world is "ganging up" on one may serve as a very effective and hardening stimulus, supporting paranoid and psychopathic tendencies' (ibid., p. 411). 'When hit and hurt [a nation] reacts - like most organisms - in such a way as to try to undo the damage' (ibid., p. 409). From this line of reasoning, sanctions are not only ineffective, but counter-productive (Wallensteen, 1971, p. 171). Successfully affecting the receiver in the expected direction, Wallensteen continues, is 'extremely rare'. The net result is often the opposite: 'the receiver starts drifting in the 'wrong' direction (ibid., p. 181). In fact, Galtung claims, 'modern penology does not seem to warrant much belief in punishment as a *general* method for making people comply' (Galtung 1967, p. 379).

The theoretical discussion of sanctions gives us a better insight into the 2000 EU sanctions against Austria. Regarding the type of sanctions, it is clear that the 'measures' against Austria and the Austrian government were diplomatic sanctions. As a consequence of the sanctions, Austrian politicians suffered from 'non-recognition'. Diplomatic relations were ruptured. Contact with political leaders was reduced to a minimum. Austrians seeking positions in international organisations were no longer supported. The sanctions also had a tendency towards communication sanction, in the sense that the EU appealed to its citizens not to go to Austria on their holiday.

Furthermore, the sanctions were not instrumental or targeted. Instead, they were 'ordinary sanctions', i.e. very general and indiscriminate, explicitly aimed not only against the ÖVP/FPÖ government coalition, but also against Austrians working for international organisations, and against Austria's inability to come to terms with its war-time past. Hence, they were not aimed at individuals but at a nation – a collective entity. The sanctions were negative, not positive. Austria was punished for including the FPÖ in government: not praised for complying with, for instance, International Declarations of Human Rights. The sender was an international big player – the EU –

and the receiver was a small country. Hence, they appear to be expressive sanctions, focussing more on the moral value of the punishment and on the domestic reaction than on the possibility for real and substantial changes in Austria. These sanctions were not bilateral but multilateral, involving several sending nations; and selective – not total – even though the range of measures against Austria and the Austrian government was rather wide.

The previous analysis lends support to the conclusion that sanctions by and large do not work. But let us still assume that the sanctions against Austria were effective. What observations would support this conclusion? First of all, the sanctions were powerful and had a large impact on Austria. In addition, the key reason behind these international protests – Jörg Haider – resigned on May 1st, and was succeeded by Susanne Riess-Passer, who was generally seen as a more moderate force in the party. From these perspectives, the sanctions were truly effective. However, the most important reason why the EU sanctions, in the eyes of many, were a success and had a 'bite' was linked to the electoral decline of the FPÖ. At the time of the national elections in 1999, the FPÖ, as noted earlier, was supported by no less 26.9 per cent of voters. By the 2002 election, voter support dwindled to a mere 10 per cent. More than 60 percent of the previous voters had abandoned the party. As for the trend during 2000, it experienced a modest decline from 4 February 2000 until the end of the year.

What, then, would support the conclusion – based on the theoretical background above – that the sanctions were not effective? First of all, the government coalition in Austria was installed in a free and fair election. Hence, there is an indisputable link between those in power and the citizen. Austria is no dictatorship but a fairly homogeneous society, without any strong, internal opposition that might have supported sanctions as a domestic political tactic. Austria is a developed, rich country. As noted above, the sanctions were 'ordinary sanctions' instead of the 'smart sanctions' that are often seen as more successful. Expressive, moral sanctions tend to be less effective than instrumental sanctions focused on a specific problem.

Further indication that the sanctions were ineffective is linked to the events that took place after they were installed. It is easy to impose powerful sanctions – in particular when the sender is strong and united and the receiving country is small and weak. This may also entail the shifting or removing of target individuals. But this says very little about the moral impact of the sanctions. First of all, the sanctions failed in its first objective – namely, to stop Schüssel from forming a coalition with the Freedom Party. Previously, it was shown that a vast majority of the Austrian electorate, including no less than 40 per cent of Green voters, were 'outraged' by the sanctions. The electorate rallied in support of the government. While the sanctions were powerful technically, they were weak morally. The main benefactor of the crisis was Wolfgang Schüssel and the People's Party. According to Max Riedlsperger (1996b), 'Schüssel [came out] of this the real star. The sanctions have helped his party more than any other domestically.' TV-programmes about Austrians who had suffered unjust treatment caused a remarkable nation-wide reaction. Even though the sanctions were meant for the coalition government only, Austrian citizens viewed it as anti-Austrian discrimination. These and other reactions in Austria seem to indicate the ineffectiveness of the sanctions. Austria reacted in the way described by Galtung: like an organism, a homogeneous entity. Austria started moving in what the EU viewed as the 'wrong' direction. The result was counter-productive.

In addition, a closer look at the downturn of the FPÖ electorate from 2000 onwards shows that the connection between the voter decline and the sanctions is questionable. This suspicion is strengthened by the previous literature discussion, according to which the united EU sanctions against Austria would clearly only serve to unite the Austrian population. Therefore, an alternative reason for the decline of the FPÖ electorate will be suggested.

In order to proceed, let us recall the social dynamics of right-wing populist parties as discussed in the previous chapters. They normally start to disintegrate once they must take political responsibility. This also happened to the FPÖ in 2000, after it had entered into a coalition with the ÖVP. The performance of the FPÖ representatives was initially marked by incompetence and confusion. After decades of opposition, they were unable to distinguish between economic and political realities of government and populist demands made from outside government. Instead, they had

become used to adopting virtually any position imaginable in order to attract the maximum possible number of supporters (Luther 2005, p. 21). The confusion intensified after the resignation of Jörg Haider, when he turned into the most fervent inner critic of the party line. In so doing, he not only further sharpened the inner tensions of the party. He also made use of precisely the same methods he himself, during his period in office, had repressed. Within 12 months, half the FPÖ ministers in the coalition government had been replaced, followed by the two party secretaries and two general managers. In September 2002, as a result of ensuing escalating inner-party tensions, the party leadership, including the newly elected party leader Susanne Riess-Passer, was forced to step down.

Let us review the two hypotheses regarding the effect of sanctions. According to one hypothesis, the FPÖ downturn was the result of the sanctions imposed on Austria. This hypothesis, which contradicts the theoretical insights about sanctions, fails to find empirical support in the actual Austrian reactions to the sanction pressures exerted by European countries. We postulate a different explanation for the FPÖ decline: that it was unable to adapt itself to the new responsibilities of having political power. This explanation not only has support in the literature on populist parties in power, but also reflects the political time line: As the FPÖ executed its new role as coalition partner, its voter support as a protest party declined. In combination, the theory of sanctions, the actual events in Austria, and evidence from the behavior of populist parties, as well as the specific evolution of the FPÖ all lead us to conclude that the sanctions were not a decisive factor in the decline of the FPÖ.

From a wider perspective, the theory of sanctions, and the conclusions that the sanctions against Austria were counterproductive, lends support to a key conclusion of this study: that the sudden rise of the FPÖ since 1986 lay not in its appeal to right-wing extremist ideas, but in its ability to tap into a populist, anti-elite undercurrent in Austrian society. Sentiments toward an inferior 'other' – Jews, foreigners, refugees, etc. – were of less importance in explaining the rise of the FPÖ than were the sentiments of people who felt oppressed or excluded by an arrogant and abusive elite, whether in the form of the coalition rule of the ÖVP and the SPÖ or, from 1994 onwards, of the European Union in Brussels. The European effort to punish Austria for electing Haider led to a hardening of Austrian popular attitudes toward the EU.

Seen from the vantage point of Brussels, the sanctions were counterproductive. As the literature on sanctions implies, the international critique against a particular party and its political views will only add fuel to the fire of extremist movements. Sanctions are nothing but a more systematic and coordinated continuation of a criticism against a nation for supporting what are regarded to be the 'wrong' political parties.

The sanctions were officially lifted on 14 September 2000 after the above-mentioned EU report had concluded that the situation in Austria concerning certain issues of particular concern to EU-14 on the whole was praiseworthy. Regarding the rights of refugees, the EU report had not 'discovered any indications that the new Austrian Government has deviated from the principles followed by its predecessors' (Ahtisaari *et al.* 2000, p. 14). With respect to immigrants, the EU report noted that the ÖVP/FPÖ government was restricting immigration 'to give priority to the integration of the foreigners residing legally in the country' (Ahtisaari *et al.* 2000, p. 16). However, this process was seen as a continuation of the policy of previous Austrian governments. It was added that 'the policy of the Austrian Government as to immigration shows a commitment to common European values' (Ahtisaari *et al.* 2000, pp. 16-17). The report 'concluded that the present Austrian Government is committed to continue the fight against racism, anti-Semitism, discrimination and xenophobia in Austria' (Ahtisaari *et al.* 2000, p. 20). Regarding the wider implications of the sanctions, the EU report stated that the 'measures taken by the XIV Member States of the EU have heightened awareness of the importance of common European values, not only in Austria but also in other Member States' (Ahtisaari *et al.* 2000, p. 33).

Haider and the FPÖ – Manipulation, Tactics and Hidden Agendas?

Some commentators maintain that a substantial part of the party's appeal and power has to do with the fact that it relies on hidden agendas and codified messages. As was noted in the chapter on populism, a hidden agenda is one of the core features of any right-wing populist party. Hence, these parties have one radical agenda for the insiders and another, considerably more presentable, for the outsiders, political opponents, journalists and so on. From this perspective, statements and articles

addressing 'the nation' and 'nationalism' are not associated with the rule of law, the welfare state or liberalism, but are intimately linked to 'exclusion', 'racism' and 'elitism'. 'Pluralism' is not meant to signal diversity and multiculturalism, but carries clear links to a collectivist nationalism, closed borders and *Völkish* sovereignty; 'tradition' and 'values' have links to imperialism and so on. This idea of a hidden agenda also relates to the use of 'codified language'. Like a hidden agenda, a codified language speaks with two tongues. For example, the term 'immigration', means to the outsider nothing more than a conservative concern for individuals, for Austrians who fear unemployment, and for immigrants who might face permanent exclusion. To the insiders, however, 'immigration' sends a racist, xenophobic and, clearly, a right-wing extremist message.

However, how can one with any level of confidence assume that the hidden political motive is racism and racial superiority, when *Freiheit und Verantwortung* discusses the validity of basic concepts such as the nation or nationalism? Many within the left, Wolfgang Kowalsky (1992, p. 137) argues, simply regard nationalism as the twin-brother of fascism. Why not instead make a slightly less extreme interpretation, and perceive any advocacy of the nation as an expression of a conservative critique of globalisation and consumerism, and in defence of the state of law, the welfare state, and democracy? Must 'immigration' and 'pluralism' be linked to xenophobia and organic *Völkish*-ness? Why not instead see them as expressions along the lines of Edmund Burke, British conservative and critic of the ideas of the French Revolution, for whom the Enlightenment was nothing but a set of French views of no interest to Britain? While certain of the articles in *Freiheit und Verantwortung* do express problematic views, it is an exaggeration to depict any questioning of a generous immigration policy as 'xenophobic', 'racist' or otherwise 'extreme'. Restrictions on immigration can be promoted by distinctly non-right-wing or non-xenophobic parties, as has been the case in several European countries.

Hans-Georg Betz (2000, p. 269) questions the automatic link and association of the FPÖ with racism, arguing that while voters of the FPÖ may be 'strongly opposed to further immigration and the development of a multicultural society, this hardly constitutes racism.' A critique of multiculturalism is not necessarily a sign of right-wing extremism. Multiculturalism can be criticized from a wide array of quite

justifiable perspectives; such as 'critical thinking' (as opposed to relativism), universalism (as opposed to group rights), political representation by means of ideas (as opposed to a mythical unity by means of 'ancestry'), egalitarianism (as opposed to the hierarchical implications of multiculturalism), solidarity (as opposed to the potentially disintegrating consequences of group rights), and also, despite multiculturalism's reputation for being 'liberal', from the standpoint of liberalism (as opposed to anti-individualist and collectivist entities).⁷¹

Hans-Georg Betz (2000, p. 52) also questions how Brigitte Bailer-Galanda with any certainty can describe Jörg Haider as a 'wolf in sheep's clothing', and his party as an 'important force in Austria's right-wing extremist spectrum' – when she 'never explains what exactly she means by "right-wing extremist".' Allegations of a hidden agenda are problematic as they are largely based on allegations. When a motive is 'hidden', the critic cannot base his or her analysis on factual statements, but must rely on assumptions and interpretation.

Probably the most controversial campaign during Haider's reign was the Freedom Party's 1993 nation-wide call for a public referendum regarding the 'Foreigner question' by the name of *Österreich zuerst* ('Austria First'). The end of communism in Eastern Europe had caused an increase in immigration into Austria, and Jörg Haider sought to capitalise on the issue. No less than 416,000 Austrians signed a petition calling for a referendum – equivalent to 7 percent of the electorate. Still, the campaign was widely seen as a failure, because Jörg Haider had hoped for one million signatures. In the analysis of Duncan Morrow (2000, p. 52), this 'anti-foreigner campaign' evoked reactionary 'pan-German thinking': by using 'highly emotive issues', Haider persuaded his audience to turn their backs on globalisation and the market, and to seek salvation in authoritarianism and reactionary views.

Critics of the FPÖ also argue that the racist nature of the party is incompatible with democracy. In other words, racism leads to the kind of dictatorship associated with the FPÖ's relentless charges against the Austrian political elite. According to such critics, Jörg Haider's vindictive tirades against the political establishment were essentially products of his imagination or a political tactic. Instead of demanding a

⁷¹ For a critical assessment of multiculturalism, see for example Webster (1997).

progressive political transformation with a transition of power to the general electorate, Haider implicitly favours an elite that is even more aloof, less democratic and less egalitarian than the one which is the object of his scorn. Instead of assigning real and lasting power to the people, the FPÖ has, in the eyes of Walter Laqueur (1979, p. 218), created 'the illusion of a "participatory democracy", a euphemism for the manipulation of people unhappy with the political parties' performance.' Hans-Henning Scharsach argues that 'Haider's populist proposals of plebiscitary democracy pervert the very nature of this democratic instrument' (2000b, p. 208). Thus, plebiscites cease to be a safety measure in the hands of the citizens against elitist tendencies within the political establishment. In contrast, the will of the people is being exploited for the benefit of disguised authoritarian agendas and a malevolent populist elite. From the perspective of Brigitte Bailer-Galanda (1995, p. 61), the FPÖ's allegations against the Austrian elite were not aimed at democratic *flaws* within a political system. Instead, and in stark contrast, they were described as a critique of democracy as such. It was not about liberating Austria, but about eliminating liberal democracy. Behind the veneer of democratic concern, it is not about opening up but about closing down. This is particularly reflected in one of the key chapters in her (1995) book – titled 'Kritik der Demokratie' ('a critique of democracy'). The electorate rushed to the Freedom Party believing that they would support democracy. But in fact, they contributed to its destruction. Similarly, Piero Ignazi, Italian expert on fascism, emphasises the importance of not getting Haider's critique against 'the establishment' wrong. At heart, his critique 'did not limit itself to the procedure and outcomes of the democratic government', but even addressed its fundamentals. Hence, Ignazi argues, his 'anti-establishment, anti-partyism, anti-politics' was not a plea for increased democracy but a call for its annihilation (1997, p. 59). Haider merely created tempting 'illusions' about democracy, whereby the electorate failed to recognise the true nature of his intentions. In fact, these critics argue, his perception of the electorate, if anything, was far more condescending than that of the bureaucrats and politicians who were the object of Haider's venom.

Rather than arguing that voters were manipulated, Paul Hainsworth has claimed that wide strata of the Austrian electorate who began to side with Jörg Haider and his party were fully aware of the party's scorn for democracy. Jörg Haider was not 'able to reach a sympathetic audience' by means of pretending to be mainstream. Instead,

his 'undisguised intention' was to 'restructure the political and party system and to move it more in the direction of' his own 'extreme right' ideas (Hainsworth 2000, p. 14). In Hainsworth's analysis, the voters of the FPÖ were not weak and manipulated victims of classic populist demagoguery, but fully-aware extremists longing for a dictatorship. Hainsworth's view is echoed by Wolfgang Purtscheller, who, in ironic terms, states: 'Today, like yesterday there are no Nazis, only "the seduced ones"' (2000, p. 71).

For Hermann L. Gremliza democracy, while still prevailing, has been taken over by the Nazi FPÖ and Jörg Haider: 'The Nazis', Gremliza claims, 'are saving democracy, only to the price of transforming the democrats into Nazis' (2000, p. 11). In other words, democracy no longer applies when democracy supports a Nazi movement such as the FPÖ. Gremliza's analysis evokes strong echoes from Hitler's seizure of power in 1933. Brigitte Bailer-Galanda declared that 'the echoes of the NSDAP kept growing stronger' when Jörg Haider assumed the leadership of the party in 1986 (1995, p. 18).

For Roger Griffin the FPÖ merely wears a mask of modernised phraseology. Behind it, the party's *bon mots* such as 'liberal', 'progressive', and, of course, 'freedom', are mere 'euphemisms for ultra-right thinking' (Griffin 1991, p. 167). In other words, the party successfully made use of a codified language. While attacking their political adversaries in the name of these benevolent phrases, their *anti-liberal* and *anti-progressive* content were still evident to the party's sympathisers. Therefore, as a consequence of this cunning behaviour, Griffin (1991, p. 167). proposes to define the FPÖ as *Crypto-fascist*. In 1989 Colette Ysmal, Director for Research at the National Foundation of Political Science in Paris, referred to the FPÖ rise in fame as part of 'the browning of Europe' (Ysmal 1989; see also Ignazi 2003, p. 145).

Richard J. Golsan (1998, p. 5) warns that while politicians within the Freedom Party did come to power supported by a majority of Austrians, 'they might not remain faithful to the democratic processes and practices that brought them there.' Golsan's warning is shared by Tony Judt: 'Haider and his like', Judt maintains, 'may not simply hark back to fascism's past, but 'stand for something far more serious: they are the ghosts of Europes yet to come' (1996, p. 25).

The party is seen by some observers as deeply embedded in the nation's fascist history. These far-rightist qualities, furthermore, meant that its voters also were attracted and inspired by fascist ideas. A reassessment of these views may start with a core aspect of the fascist explanation of the rise of the FPÖ, namely the line of continuity between the Nazi era and today. Critics who describe the FPÖ as fascist generally draw historical analogies and parallels with the pre-Second World War period, and their strategies for countering the party are often closely related to methods from the 1930s and 1940s. Wolfgang Wippermann, researcher in the field of fascism, claims, for instance, that the recent rise of the Freedom Party along with the German *Die Republikaner* and other neofascist movements is mainly caused by neo-fascist and pro-fascist sentiments among the population (Wippermann, cited in Kowalsky 1992, p. 23). Such critics see themes such as 'cultural identity' not as a new issue, but merely as a rephrased and updated form of racism from the period just before and during the Second World War (Kowalsky 1992, p. 31). Generally, this line of reasoning is not called into question. According to Wolfgang Kowalsky (1992, p. 22) the question is, however, whether the current appeal of parties such as the Austrian Freedom Party is the result of an unbroken fascist tradition, or whether instead this attraction among the electorate is caused by modern phenomena. Modern society, like any society, is replete with social issues and problems, and it might be a mistake to describe any concern with immigrants, the elite, social change and so on as psychological phenomena with no link to social and political realities (These questions will be dealt with extensively in the following chapters.) Researchers in the field of right-wing radicalism often, Kowalsky writes, seem to have forgotten about 'the pleasure of investigations (and) the excitement over trustworthy collection of material' (1992, p. 152).

According to Willibald Holzer, Austrian expert on Historical Fascism, one of the core appealing features of the FPÖ among the Austrian electorate was its critique of democracy and the parliamentary establishment (Holzer, cited in Scharsach and Kuch 2000, p. 287). Behind the scenes, the party's fierce rhetoric was not aimed at the flaws of the democratic system – i.e. against a lack of transparency and accountability, but against the very foundation of democracy. These conclusions are not, however, shared by all commentators. According to Hans-Georg Betz, the radical nature of the Freedom Party's rhetoric should not be exaggerated. Its

message was simple and easily grasped; it rested on appealing populist impulses aimed at the downtrodden ordinary people and against big government. From this perspective, the author concludes, 'rather than representing a danger to democracy, [the Freedom Party was] a promoter of greater democracy' (Betz 2000, p. 269). Parties such as the FPÖ no longer campaign against democracy, but in favour of it; more specifically in favour of increased plebiscites and of a general policy more closely linked to practical realities and the concerns of the citizen (Kowalsky 1992, p. 17). The aim of the party was, as maintained by the German and Austrian political theorists Claus Leggewie and Rudolf Burger, not to create a fascist state but merely 'to liberate the individual from the oppression of big government.' These modern international realities will not be understood by those who instantly bring up parallels with a conquered fascist past (Betz and Immerfall, 1998, p. 40. See also Riedlsperger 1995b, p. 40).

While it is true that right-wing extremist political propaganda attacks the political establishment and (often) argues for 'the will of the people', it does not necessarily follow that *all* critique along similar lines must have the same right-wing extremist content. Equating anti-elitism with right-wing extremism constitutes, as maintained in the chapter on populism, a very useful excuse for any elitist formation. Moreover, this knee-jerk reaction is particularly beneficial to elites that cannot justify their views other than by means of emotional rhetoric and allegations; that is, right-wing extremist elites.

For Richard Herzinger 'Haider is no second Hitler, and the vast majority of his supporters and voters are no Nazis' (2000, p. 254). This majority has also, as claimed by the journalist Hans Rauscher, voted for Jörg Haider and the FPÖ, not because of his Nazi slips of the tongue, but despite them. Moreover, the party's voters are more than anything else, Rauscher adds, protest voters, who rather not would have him as Chancellor (2000, p. 23). According to the journalist Hella Pick (Pick, 2000a, p. 277) at the British newspaper *The Independent*, this protest nature of the party's voters was common knowledge in Austria. Rather than being caused by any particularly Austrian penchant for fascism or xenophobia, Haider's steep increase in voter popularity had more in common with escalating protests against perceived failures by the two established parties. In this light, any explanation must

be sought in real contemporary European trends beginning to develop in the mid-1980s – such as the new levels of immigration of foreigners as labour migrants and refugees and the prominence of Brussels in making decisions about Austrian political and economic life.

The claimed historical analogy between the modern FPÖ and the Nazis of the 30s may also be questioned from another perspective. Above, Wolfgang Kowalsky observes that 'cultural identity' is not seen as new, but as thoroughly traditional. The legacy of the war, with its emphasis on Germanic superiority, remains inescapable. Still, no other reason for this fateful link is given other than the word or phrase itself – cultural identity. But is it not possible to charge 'cultural identity', like any phrase in the social sciences, with a different meaning? Allegations based on the implication that one user of a concept is identical to another user of the same concept are dangerously close to the (il)logic of guilt by association. As argued by the anthropologist Jonathan Friedman, we are here confronted with a leftist version of guilt by association: 'If x writes a theoretical critique of anti-racism and this is used by racists, then x is also a racist' (1999, p. 4). Or as above, if x uses 'cultural identity' – which has been used by fascists – then x is also a fascist. The logic of guilt by association underpins analogies between current right-wing ideas and historical fascism.

These remarks on using the label 'racist' can apply equally to denunciations of a party as 'fascist'. The question is: What does it mean to label the voters of the FPÖ as 'fascists'? According to Walter Laqueur the concept of fascism 'conjures up visions of hundreds of thousands of brown and black shirts marching in the streets of Europe, of civil violence and aggressive war, of terror and relentless propaganda, of millions of victims' (1996, p. 7). This common image of fascism is arguably not one that may easily be associated with the voters of the FPÖ. This lack of congruence may offer another argument against portraying the voters of the FPÖ as fascist (or right-wing extremist). In order to qualify as fascist, a contemporary voter of the FPÖ would have to share the actions and the mindset of historical fascists. But this certainly does not apply to the overwhelming majority of its electorate. In this sense,

they are not fascists, and their reasons for voting for the FPÖ must, it seems, lie elsewhere.⁷²

The previous analysis suggests that the allegations against the FPÖ and its voters for endorsing various forms of right-wing extremist views have all shown a certain lack of political nuance. However, unless clear distinctions are made it becomes difficult to discern the difference between a conservative and a fascist. While there is no denying that the party may contain racist and fascist elements, the task is to determine whether racism, fascism or authoritarianism is the dominant ideological platform or social base of this party. All the data we have indicate that it is not.

The analysis of the party's rhetoric and its party programme documents shows that, despite the party's right-wing extremist reputation, the main appeal seems to lie elsewhere, in its populist, anti-elite message as the following chapter will explain in greater detail. A more nuanced interpretation of *Freiheit und Verantwortung*, the party's yearbooks, suggests that the amount of right-wing extremist material is little more than 1 percent. The weight of right-wing extremism in the 1985 and 1997 party programmes was, moreover, less than initially assumed. Judging from the material, the 1997 programme did not replace liberal values with right-wing extremism, but with an elaborate populist agenda. Similarly, a more balanced understanding of the discussion of 'racism', 'dictatorship', and 'fascism' shows that the FPÖ's views can very rarely be labelled as such. Criticising multiculturalism or immigration is not necessarily an expression of racism. The party's attacks on the elite were not, as is often argued, a plea for dictatorship. Instead, it was primarily a populist defense of 'the people' against a perceived, distant elite.

This is not to say that radical sentiments of Haider and/or other members of the Freedom Party should not be taken seriously. In fact, regardless of their practical importance as a boosting factor behind the electoral support of parties, these sentiments must always constitute a cause for concern and a call for proper political reaction. In the present thesis, however, the key objective is to suggest the paramount reason for the rise of the Freedom Party during Jörg Haider's leadership

⁷² While it may be argued that refraining from labelling the FPÖ as a fascist party is to banalise the FPÖ, the truth is the other way around: depicting the FPÖ as fascist is to trivialise and banalise fascism.

between 1986 and 2000, and this reason is constituted by the party's right-wing populism and critique of the Austrian political elite. This will be further confirmed in Chapter 8, in which election results and exit polls showing people's main reasons for voting for the FPÖ are analysed.

Chapter 8

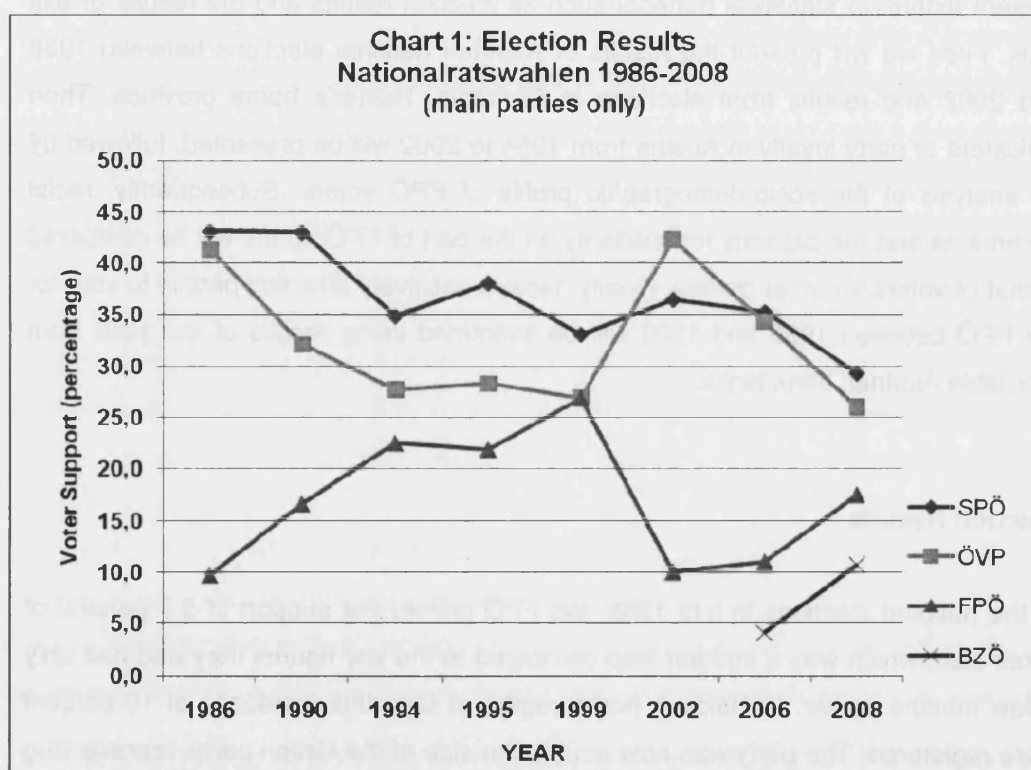
Analysing the Appeal of the FPÖ – the Electorate

The previous chapter concluded that the role of right-wing extremism in the FPÖ's rhetoric, publications and its programmes has commonly been overestimated and sometimes interpreted out of context. Instead, the analysis has shown that the party's populist and anti-elitist rhetoric has been far more pronounced. This chapter will now assess these findings based on a careful analysis of quantitative material. It will present extensive statistical material such as election results and the results of exit polls. First, we will present the results of Austrian national elections between 1986 and 2002 and results from elections in Carinthia, Haider's home province. Then indicators of party loyalty in Austria from 1954 to 2002 will be presented, followed by an analysis of the socio-demographic profile of FPÖ voters. Subsequently, racist sentiments and the capacity for solidarity on the part of FPÖ voters will be compared to that of voters for other parties. Finally, factors positively affecting people to vote for the FPÖ between 1986 and 1999 will be examined using results of exit polls from reputable Austrian think tanks.

Election Results

In the national elections in late 1986, the FPÖ gained the support of 9.7 percent of votes cast, which was a sudden leap compared to the low figures they had had only a few months earlier. In Haider's home region of Carinthia increases of 10 percent were registered. The party was now double the size of the Green party, representing the third largest grouping in Austria. The SPÖ and the ÖVP were each supported by more than 40 percent of voters. The FPÖ had taken votes from former SPÖ voters dissatisfied with what they perceived as an ossified political system, and from former ÖVP voters wishing to send a signal of protest. Another important reason for the rise in support in 1986 was the growing number of first-time voters. While the FPÖ previously had been associated with (the naturally shrinking electorate of) old German-nationals, it now appealed to the Austrian youth. Whereas a meager 5 percent of first-time voters had chosen the party in 1983, by 1986 the figure was 14 percent – almost three times higher (Heinisch 2002, p. 117) (See also Table 9,

Chapter 8, p. 173. 'Support for the FPÖ by gender and age 1986-1999'). The overwhelming reason for this rise was Haider's new leadership style and personality, while ideological factors were rather insignificant, as will be discussed later on (Luther 2005, p. 16). Even though the level of participation was still high – almost 91 percent, the percentage of party shifters had increased from 10 percent to 16 percent. During the same period, strong party attachment had decreased from 47 percent to 39 percent (See below: Table 7, Chapter 8, p. 171, 'Indicators of Party loyalty in Austria, 1954-2002').



The national elections of 1990 occurred in the shadow of the collapse of the Soviet Union. At the time, the FPÖ had almost doubled its electorate compared to the 1986 election, and was supported by 16.6 percent. In the regional election in Carinthia in 1985 the FPÖ had achieved no less than 29.0 percent, more than 8 percent above the support for the ÖVP. While the SPÖ remained strong on the national level, the ÖVP dropped by more than 9 percent to 32.1 percent of votes cast. Haider's leadership style continued to appeal to first-time voters, and now the party was supported by 20 percent of all first-timers (Heinisch 2002, p. 117). These election

results should, however, be seen against the background of a rather marked decline in election participation to 83.2 percent – partly, one may assume, an effect of Haider's agitation against the two big parties. During the same period strong party attachment went down from 39 percent to 34 percent, and party identification – historically one of Austria's peculiarities – dropped from 60 percent to 49 percent. Ideologically, the FPÖ was trying to fuse together different, possibly incompatible positions. While it sought to distance itself from the liberal position of the short-lived government coalition of 1983-1986, it was still trying to retain its liberal voters. Two years later, in 1992, Heide Schmidt, a charismatic, forceful member of the party's liberal wing, was even elected Presidential candidate. The late 1980s was also a time of public campaigning against the Austrian elite. Two important occasions should be mentioned. In 1987, the FPÖ launched a public referendum to challenge the political privileges (of the SPÖ and the ÖVP), and in 1989, a similar call in favour of free information in the media (and against the monopoly of Austrian State Radio) was conducted.

Table 5																
National Election Results (Nationalratswahlen) 1986 – 2008																
YEAR	Voter	SPÖ		ÖVP		FPÖ		BZÖ		Grüne		Liberal		KPO	Government	
	Participation											Forum				Composition
	%	%	Mandates	%	mandates	%	mandates	%	mandates	%	mandates	%	mandates	%	mandates	(Head of
		Total voters		Total voters		Total voters		Total voters		Total voters		Total voters		Total voters		Government)
1986	90.7	43.1	80	41.3	77	9.7	18			4.8	8	-	-	0.7	0	ÖVP/SPÖ
		2,092,024		2,003,663		472,205				234,028		-		35,104		Vranitsky, SPÖ
1990	83.2	43.0	80	32.1	60	16.6	33			4.8	10	-	-	0.5	0	ÖVP/SPÖ
		1,965,032		1,460,392		754,379				225,084		-		25,682		Vranitsky, SPÖ
1994	81.9	34.9	65	27.7	52	22.5	42			7.3	13	5.9	11	0.3	0	ÖVP/SPÖ
		1,617,804		1,281,846		1,042,332				338,538		276,580		11,919		Vranitsky, SPÖ
1995	86.0	38.1	71	28.3	53	21.9	40			4.8	9	5.5	10	0.3	0	ÖVP/SPÖ
		1,843,474		1,370,510		1,060,337				232,208		267,025		13,938		Vranitsky/Klima SPÖ
1999	80.4	33.1	65	26.9	52	26.9	52			7.4	14	3.7	0	-	-	ÖVP/FPÖ
		1,532,448		1,243,672		1,244,087				342,260		168,612		-		Schüssel, ÖVP
2002	83.0	36.5	69	42.3	79	10.0	18			9.5	17	1.0	-	0.6	-	ÖVP/FPÖ (2003)
		1,792,499		2,076,833		491,328				469,980		48,083		27,568		Schüssel, ÖVP
2006	78.5	35.3	68	34.3	66	11.0	21	4.1	7	11.0	21		-	1.0	-	SPÖ/ÖVP
		1,663,986		1,616,493		519,598		193,593		520,130				47,578		Gusenbauer, SPÖ

By the time of the next national elections in 1994, the FPÖ's support had increased to 22.5 percent, narrowing the gap between themselves and the ÖVP (which had 27.7 percent). Moreover, even the SPÖ, previously supported by a solid block of voters, was suffering losses, and was now only supported by little more than a third of votes cast. In fact, these were their worst election results since 1923. In Carinthia, with a total of 33.3 percent of voters, the FPÖ was almost 10 percent above the ÖVP (which had 23.8 percent), and only about 4 percent below the SPÖ figure (37.4 percent). These figures had been preceded by a quite turbulent period. In 1991, as a consequence of his infamous statement about the unemployment policy under National Socialism, mentioned in Chapter 7, Haider had been forced to resign as *Kärntner Landeshauptmann*. In 1992, Haider made a clear statement by selecting Andreas Mölzer – a pronounced German Nationalist – as the leader of the *Freiheitliches Bildungswerk* (the political academy) within the party. The following year, 1993, Heide Schmidt and other key members of the party's liberal wing left the party, and founded the short-lived *Liberale Forum*, an attempt to establish a liberal party in Austria. In terms of voter changes, blue-collar support was by 1994 as high as 29 percent nationwide, almost three times the 1986 figure, indicating a clear transformation of the Freedom Party's electorate profile (See Table 8, Ch. 8, p. 173).

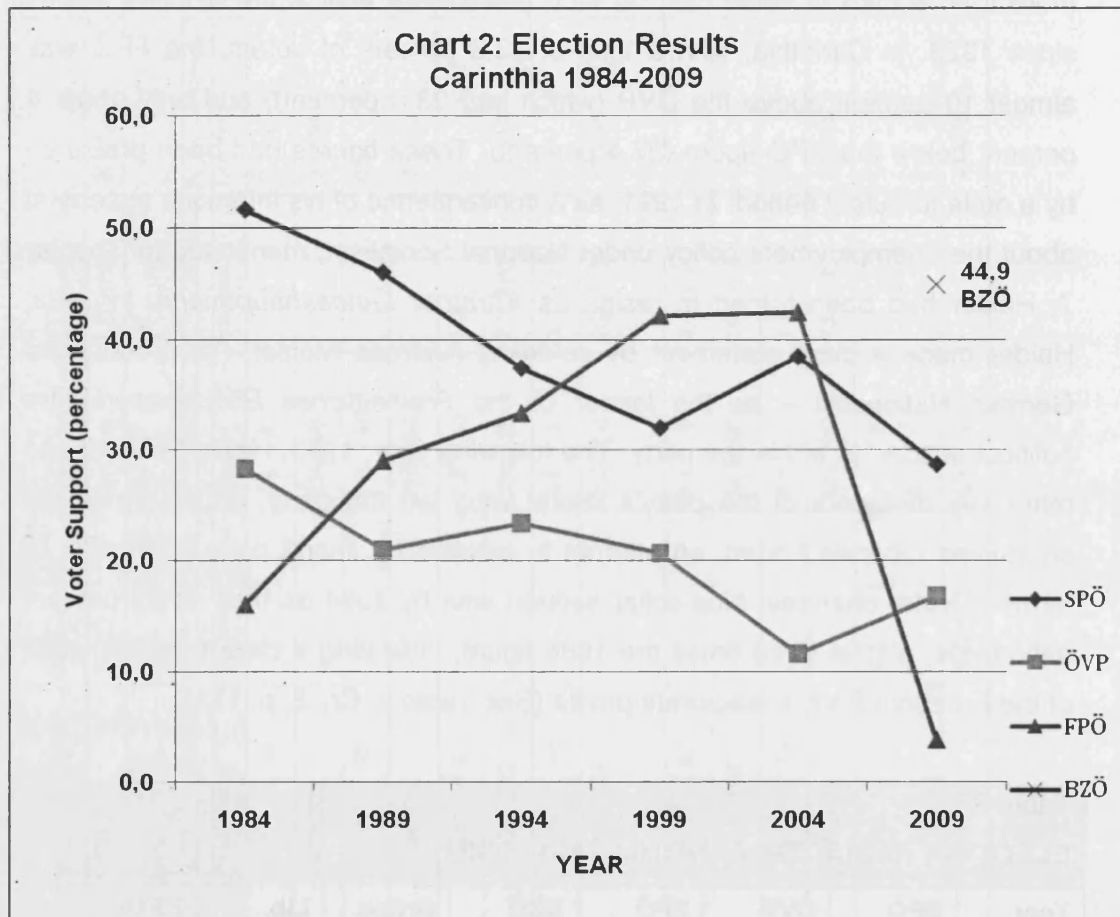
Table 6

ELECTION RESULTS CARINTHIA 1984 - 2009

Year	SPÖ	ÖVP	FPÖ	BZÖ	Grüne	Lib. Forum	KPÖ
1984	51.6	28.3	16.0		0.7	-	0.8
1989	46.0	21.0	29.0		1.6	-	0.6
1994	37.4	23.8	33.3		1.6	2.6	-
1999	32.9	20.7	42.1		-	-	0.4
2004	38.4	11.6	42.4		6.7	-	-
2009	28.7	16.8	3.8	44.9	5.1	-	-

Sources: Piringner (1998, p. 155 ff), and Khol et al (2001, p. 731 ff)

Results 2004 and 2009: SORA – Institute for Social Research and Analysis, Ogris and Hofinger, www.sora.at/de/start.asp?b=1.



As a consequence of the breakdown of communism in Eastern Europe, numerous immigrants and workers entered Austria, mainly from Hungary and the Czech Republic. Moreover, Austria received a great number of refugees from Bosnia as a result of the war in former Yugoslavia. According to a public poll carried out by the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (23 November, 1992), 76 percent of the Austrians were in favour of stopping immigration, and as many as 66 percent also thought that no exception should be made for political refugees (Anon.

Süddeutsche Zeitung, 23 Nov, 1992, cited in Kräh 1996, p. 225). This was part of the background for the 1993 *Österreich zuerst!* (Austria first!), a public call initiated by the FPÖ through the issuing of twelve key statements defending the cultural, historical and social views of Austrians and demanding a more restrictive immigration policy. In 1994 Austria joined the EU. The EU rhetoric of the FPÖ gradually changed from markedly positive to negative. This was because, Haider claimed, of the extent to which nation-states had been deprived of their sovereignty by the Maastricht Treaty. In 1993 Jörg Haider published *Die Freiheit, die ich meine*, in which he laid out numerous ideas that he soon set out to translate into concrete policies. In the book, Jörg Haider launched, among other things, the idea of the 'Third Republic' [*Dritte Republik*].⁷³ These as well as other ideas were further elaborated upon and presented in the run-up to the national elections the following year.

According to Table 13 in chapter 8, showing an exit poll concerned with the factors affecting people in voting for the FPÖ in 1994, 12 percent voted for the party because of its critical stance on immigration.⁷⁴

The elections in 1995 were preceded by the resignation of the cabinet, social unrest in Europe and a polarised public debate about budgetary retrenchments. The SPÖ which had campaigned on stability and social justice came out as the real winners – increasing their share of the vote to 38.1 percent, and leaving the ÖVP almost 10 percent behind. To Jörg Haider and the *Freedomites* (*Freiheitlichen* - as they labelled themselves during the mid-1990s), the election was seen as a relative failure as they lost 0.6 percent. In reality, however, the number of FPÖ voters had increased by some 18,000 voters, but this rise was overshadowed by an increasing level of political participation, and so support for the party 'went down'. While there had been talks about a coalition between the ÖVP and the FPÖ, these hopes were shattered; mainly due to deep cleavages

⁷³ The so-called 'Second Republic' has existed in Austria ever since 1945, and 'the First Republic' lasted between the end of the Habsburg Monarchy in 1918 and the beginning of Austrofascism in 1934.

⁷⁴ Fessel-GfK, Exit Poll cited in Plasser and Ulram (2000, p. 229)

between the two parties particularly regarding the EU. While the ÖVP was largely favourably inclined towards Austria's membership in the EU, the FPÖ had become increasingly against it. On top of this, there were fears within the ÖVP about an escalating extremist agenda within the FPÖ.

The elections of 1999 were to mark another year of success for the FPÖ. In Carinthia, the FPÖ gained 42.1 percent of the electorate, more than double that of the ÖVP, and almost 10 percent more than the SPÖ. More important were the results in the national elections. One of Jörg Haider's primary goals had always been to break the dual party rule of the SPÖ and the ÖVP, and transform Austria into a more 'normal' democracy. The fact that the FPÖ was now on a par with the ÖVP (which had 26.9 percent of the electorate) and only 6.2 percent behind the results for the SPÖ, showed that this goal had been achieved. The election results all pointed towards an erosion of old political structures. Overall participation in national elections was now not more than 80.4 percent, more than 10 percent down from the elections in 1986. This trend towards a less predictable electorate is echoed in Table 7 – 'Indicators of party loyalty in Austria, 1954-2002'.

Table 7

Indicators of Party Loyalty in Austria (all parties) 1954-2002

Year	Party identification (a)	Strong party attachment (b)	Core voters (c)	Floating voters (d)	Party shifters (e)	Party members (survey data)	Party members (membership)
1954	73	71					27
1969	75	65				24	27
1972		61	76	8		23	26
1974	65	61					26
1979	63	56	66	16	7	22	26
1983	61	47			10		24
1986	60	39			16	23	23
1990	49	34	58	26	17	18	20
1994	44	31			19	15	17
1995	49	28	44	44	22		
1996	46	31				13	16
1997	47	28	46	44			
1998	51	25	43	45			
1999	51	26	43	46	18		15
2000	52	29					
2001	55	25	44	42		15	
2002			41	53	24		15
Change	-18	-46	-32	+34	+15	-9	-12

Notes: (a) percentage of respondents with party identification; (b) percentage of respondents who say that they continue to vote for their party even if they are not entirely satisfied with the party; (c) percentage of respondents who say that they vote for the same party in every election; (d) percentage of respondents who say that they occasionally change their voting behaviour; and (e) percentage of exit poll respondents who changed their voting behaviour compared to the previous general election.

Source: FESSEL-GfK, Representative surveys (1954-2002), N=1,000-2,000; cited in Wolfgang Müller et al 2004, p. 148.

Compared to figures from only a few years earlier, 'strong party attachment' had been reduced by almost half since 1983 (dropping from 47 percent to 26 percent); 'core voters' now only accounted for 43 percent, as opposed to 66 percent in 1979 – a reduction by almost a third; and the number of 'floating

voters' was almost three times the number in 1979 – up from 16 percent to 46 percent. As for changes in voter preferences, two trends should be noted. Haider's youthful style was a stunning success; by 1990 every fifth first-time voter had chosen the FPÖ and by 1999 this figure had risen to an astonishing 38 percent (Heinisch 2002, p. 117) (See also 'Table 9, Ch. 8, p. 173. 'Support for the FPÖ by gender and age 1986-1999'). The other trend can be identified in the categories of blue-collar workers and marginalised citizens, the so-called 'modernisation losers'. In 1986, a mere 10 percent of blue-collar workers voted for the Freedom Party, and in 1999, the number was 47 percent (Plasser and Ulram 2000, p. 232). Hence, the SPÖ also had to come to terms with the fact that by 1999 the FPÖ had become the largest working class party in Austria. As for the category of 'modernisation losers', the FPÖ had already by 1995 a tendency to attract 'unemployed women' and 'skilled workers performing unskilled labor'. See 'Table 8. Social Demographic Profile of FPÖ Voters, 1986-1999' (below), and 'Modernisation Losers – the Freedom Party compared with Traditional Party Preference, 1995' (Table 1, Ch. 4, p. 66). Already by 1986 the FPÖ was attracting mainly male voters, and this did not significantly change between 1986 and 1999 (see below: Support for the FPÖ by gender and age 1986-1999.').

Table 8					
Socio-Demographic Profile of FPÖ Voters 1986 to 1999					
In percentages					
Election Year	1986	1990	1994	1995	1999
Education:					
Compulsory education	6	14	21	18	25
Trade/Vocational/Technical	11	19	26	27	31
Advanced-secondary/University	11	13	19	16	22
Occupation:					
Farmers	5	9	15	18	19
Self-employed, professionals	15	21	30	28	33
Blue-collar workers	10	21	29	34	47
White-collar workers	13	16	22	22	22
Civil servants	9	14	14	17	20
Housewives	8	11	17	14	25
Pensioners	11	22	29	23	28
In Training/School	9	8	18	15	23
Source: Fessel-GfK, Exit Poll, in Plasser and Ulram 2000, p. 232.					

Table 9					
Support for the Freedom Party by Gender and Age 1986-1999					
(percentage)					
	1986	1990	1994	1995	1999
Male	12	20	28	27	32
Female	7	12	17	16	21
19-29 years	12	18	25	29	35
30-44 years	11	15	22	24	29
45-59 years	6	15	22	19	21
60+ years	8	16	22	15	23
Source: Fessel-GfK, Exit Poll, in Plasser and Ulram, 2000), p. 232					

Haider's position regarding the Austrian nation gradually evolved as Haider became increasingly aware that Austria as a country, despite its oddities, still was cherished by its citizens. Portraying Austria as a 'political miscarriage' (*Ideologische Missgeburt*), as Haider had done in 1988, had not only offended the political elite, but had also caused significant protests among his own sympathisers ('ORF – Inlandsreport 1998). Therefore, the 1997 Linz Programme effectively put an end to the old and romantic ideas about a unity of Austria and Germany, and replaced the old German patriotism with Austrian nationalism, in the hope that this would resonate better with the electorate. Economically Haider favoured a fair market economy [*faire Marktwirtschaft*] – an attempt to establish a distinctly nationalist middle way between a socialist welfare state and a potentially disintegrating free market economy. According to this middle way, the state should merely make sure that laws were adhered to; in terms of the activities of the market, the state should be absent. These ideas were laid out in *Befreite Zukunft* – Haider's book published in 1997 but were also found in the Linz Programme (1997), where *Faire Marktwirtschaft* was the title of the proposed economic policy of the FPÖ. As a consequence of the ascendancy of the FPÖ under Haider the dual party state had, it seemed, ceased to exist. Negotiations between the SPÖ and the ÖVP over the formation of a government coalition came to a standstill, and Wolfgang Schüssel, the ÖVP leader, finally accepted the offer from Jörg Haider and the FPÖ to become chancellor of the new ÖVP and FPÖ government coalition.

Public Polls – How Different are FPÖ Voters?

In order for racism to be valid as a core explanatory factor for the FPÖ's spectacular rise, it ought to be proven that racist sentiments characterise voters of the FPÖ. If not, the force of racism as a central determining motive for the party's success is reduced. Earlier in this chapter a public poll was quoted which showed that no less than 76 percent of Austrian nationals were in favour of

stopping immigration in 1994 (Kräh 1996, p. 225). Christopher T. Husbands points out that FPÖ supporters 'are not noticeably more xenophobic than those of the other major Austrian parties' (2002, p. 48). Racist sentiments do not, in other words, distinguish the FPÖ from other parties, and the explanatory force of racism as a key explanation for the party's rise in popularity must be questioned. Piero Ignazi, Italian expert on European fascism, claims that 'the xenophobic attitudes of Freedom Party voters are not so removed from those shared by the average electorate ...' (2003, p. 121). Ignazi prefers to see this particular situation in the wider context of Austria in its entirety: 'The point is that Austrian society as a whole has quite a high level of 'anti-immigrant sentiment' (2003, p. 121). As for one of the more troublesome forms of xenophobia – anti-Semitism – it seems equally difficult to uphold a clear dividing line between the attitude of the FPÖ and that of the political mainstream. In an essay entitled 'Die FPÖ – ein Modell für Europa' (1989), Walter Oswalt claims that anti-Semitism is embraced by a majority of Austrians. Oswalt (1989, p. 78) quotes a 1987 analysis, according to which less than 10 percent of the population failed to exhibit any trace of anti-Semitism while about 25 percent stood out as strongly anti-Semitic. Even though there still may exist a certain difference between the FPÖ and other parties in terms of anti-Semitic sentiments, the figures are still noteworthy, and further question the notion that racism (in a broader context) is particular to voters of the FPÖ. It should also be added that observers often describe whole of Austria as racist; an idea that seems incompatible with an insistence on a deep chasm between a racist FPÖ and an innocent political mainstream. As pointed out by Anton Pelinka (2000), statistics also indicate that the 'capacity for solidarity' differs only marginally between voters of the FPÖ and the two major Austrian parties – the SPÖ and the ÖVP.

Table 10 'Capacity for Solidarity' among Voters			
	SPÖ	ÖVP	FPÖ
Solidarity with refugees	69%	72%	68%
Solidarity with foreigners	36%	37%	20%
Solidarity with foreigners as relatives	78%	81%	70%
Source: Pelinka 2000, p. 58			

While capacity for solidarity towards the category 'refugees' among the three parties was very similar, the capacity for solidarity among sympathisers with the FPÖ towards 'foreigners as relatives' was merely about 10 percent lower than that of the two other parties (Pelinka 2000, p. 58). An explanation for the rise of the FPÖ in which racism is viewed as paramount would require rather clear-cut differences between FPÖ voters and those voting for other parties with regard to their respective attitudes towards refugees and foreigners as relatives. However, the statistical differences are surprisingly small.⁷⁵ It seems that on a key index of racist/xenophobic sentiment, FPÖ voters do not differ much from voters from other parties.

We now turn our attention to an analysis of the electorate, assessing the results of exit polls conducted after the four national elections of 1986, 1990, 1994 and 1999. What motivated voters to support the FPÖ? What were the key messages that resonated with the general electorate?

Before seeking to answer this question, however, the coding of 'extreme right' and 'populist' must be explained. Motivations for voting on the FPÖ are divided into three categories; 'right-wing populism', 'right-wing extremism', and 'ideology'.

⁷⁵ Of course, it should be remembered that people interviewed may not as readily display racist sentiments as they would in private, so that the numbers of people with positive sentiments towards foreigners and related categories may well be somewhat lower in reality than they seem based on these face-to-face interviews. On the other hand, this would probably not affect voters of the FPÖ any more than voters of the SPÖ or the ÖVP.

'Ideology' as a category was being used in the exit polls studied. The word 'ideology', vague as it is, will be interpreted as negatively correlated with right-wing populism, because ideological tensions are precisely what right-wing populism pretends to have overcome. The existence of ideology is therefore a weakening of right-wing populism.

Factors for voting on the FPÖ are found in tables 11-14. The following factors are classified as indicators of 'right-wing populism':

- 'Person, image, ideas of Jörg Haider.' (tables 11-13) This complies with the idea of populist charisma (See Chapter 4 on 'Populism').
- 'Because of the personality of Jörg Haider.' Complies with populist charisma.
- 'Fighting corruption, privileges, uncovering scandals' (tables 11-13). Populism attacks the elite for being corrupt.
- 'Because the FPÖ mercilessly uncovers grievances and scandals' (table 14). Populism attacks the elite for engaging in serious mismanagement and scandals.
- 'To send a protest signal to the two great coalition partners' (table 14). The idea of protest against the ruling elite constitutes the very core of populist parties.

The following factors are classified as 'right-wing extremist':

- 'Foreigners in Austria' (table 13). This kind of statement is often seen as hiding right-wing extremist sentiments.
- 'Because the FPÖ is strongly against the influx of foreigners' (table 14). This statement may well hide right-wing extremist views.

This classification of voter motivations contains a few borderline cases. Despite the fact that 'Hope for change, breath of fresh air' (table 11), "Sticking it" to the "Major Parties" (Government) (table 12), and 'Because the FPÖ brings fresh air into politics and triggers changes' (table 14) also could be labelled as right-wing

populist factors, they have not been included in the tables. This is because 'change' and 'fresh air' do not clearly express right-wing populist views in the same way as the factors included in the discussion below.

Also, even though it may be doubted whether 'Foreigners in Austria' and 'Because the FPÖ is strongly against the influx of foreigners' should be labelled as right-wing *extremist*, they have been included in the tables. While this suggested link is not certain, it cannot be ruled out either.

Table 11 Factors for Voting for the FPÖ in 1986 National Elections	
Person, image, ideas of Jörg Haider	54%
Hope for change, breath of fresh air	10%
Fighting corruption, privileges, uncovering scandals	9%
Ideology of FPÖ	8%

Source: Fessel-GFK at <http://members.chello.at/zap-forschung/20200504.html>.
 In 1986, 1990 and 1994, the response 'Fighting corruption, privileges, uncovering scandals' is coded as 'anti-elitist'. In 1999, anti-elitism is indicated by the following response: 'Because the FPÖ mercilessly uncovers grievances and scandals'.

Table 11 shows four of the most widely held reasons given for voting for the Freedom Party during the national elections of 1986. At this point, the personal qualities of Jörg Haider, his 'person', 'image' and 'ideas', constitute overwhelmingly the most important reason – being twice as important as the other three reasons put together. 'Hope for change, breath of fresh air', 'fighting corruption, privileges, uncovering scandals', and 'ideology of FPÖ' were each reported to be the main reason for voting for the party by about 10 percent of voters. It should be noted that the questions did not include any right-wing extremist theme. The exclusion of right wing extremist themes in the questions asked may indicate that at the time, right-wing extremist ideas were not commonly seen as being associated with people's reasons for supporting the party.

Instead, the table indicates a different key factor. In Chapter 4 on populism, it was noted that qualities closely tied to a particular person, so-called charismatic qualities, constitute an important aspect of a populist ideology. It was also argued that a critique of what is perceived as a corrupt elite constitutes the lowest common denominator in a populist ideology. In the table above, the first and third key factors qualify as populist factors. Together, they suggest that more than 60 percent of the Freedom Party's sudden popularity at the end of 1986 – a time when the party had increased its share of the vote from a mere 2 percent during the summer of 1986 to almost 10 percent at the national elections – rested on classic populist views. A populist interpretation of the general electoral base of the FPÖ in 1986 is further supported by the fact that a mere 8 percent appear to have chosen the FPÖ because of its ideology. Ideological skirmishes, it is worth adding, are precisely what a populist politician purports to have overcome. According to Thilo von Livonius, the party's electorate rise from about 5 percent in 1983 to nearly 10 percent in late 1986 showed, furthermore, that Haider, in addition to retaining the German National camp (at the time accounting for around 5 percent of the electorate), had managed to attract new supporters such as protest voters (Livonius 2002, p. 47).

Table 12

Factors for Voting for the FPÖ in 1990 National Elections

Fighting corruption, privileges, uncovering scandals	27%
Person, image, ideas of Jörg Haider	23%
"Sticking it" to the "Major Parties" (Government)	11%
Ideology of FPÖ	9%
Source: Fessel-GFK at http://members.chello.at/zap-forschung/20200504.html .	

As indicated in Table 11, the personal and 'charismatic' qualities of Jörg Haider were seen as a key factor in choosing to vote for the Freedom Party by considerably fewer voters in 1990 (23 percent) than in 1986 (54 percent) (See Table 12 above). 'Fighting corruption, privileges, uncovering scandals', on the

other hand, had tripled its significance as a key factor from 9 percent in 1986 to 27 percent in 1990. A possible interpretation of this would be that a rather vague appreciation for Jörg Haider's 'ideas' earlier on had by the 1990 election being replaced by a clearer appreciation for these 'ideas' in more concrete form, namely as a determined critique of the Austrian elite. As for the question whether right-wing extremism was an influence on people voting for the party, this failed to qualify as among the four most important causes.

Those voting for the party because of its right-wing tendencies are likely to fall within the category of 'ideology of FPÖ', representing a relatively small number of voters. The two most commonly held reasons for voting for the FPÖ, 'fighting corruption, privileges, uncovering scandals' and 'person, image, ideas of Jörg Haider' are both, as was discussed in Chapter 4 typical populist themes. Hence, it can be argued that 50 percent of the FPÖ's voters in 1990 had a populist reason for their choice. This populist, unpolitical impression is further strengthened by the fact that only 9 percent had chosen 'ideology of FPÖ' as a key factor for voting on the party.⁷⁶

Table 13 Factors for Voting for the FPÖ in 1994 National Elections	
Fighting corruption, privileges, uncovering scandals	22%
Person, image, ideas of Jörg Haider	17%
Foreigners in Austria	12%
Opposition, Control of the Government	11%
Source: Fessel-GfK, Exit Poll, in Plasser and Ulram 2000, p. 229.	

Two observations can be made from the comparison between the voting patterns in 1990 and 1994. First, the previous two key factors, 'fighting corruption, privileges, uncovering scandals' and 'person, image, ideas of Jörg Haider' have shrunk by about five percent each. Second, 'foreigners in Austria', a theme that previously had been absent from the questions, now constituted a

⁷⁶ These four factors account for the answers of 71 percent of those polled.

key factor, being cited by 12 percent of the voters of the FPÖ. From this, two main trends will be suggested. On the one hand, the two main populist factors above – ‘fighting corruption, privileges, uncovering scandals’ and ‘person, image, ideas of Jörg Haider’ – now make up 39 percent together. This trend is, however, partly countered by the fact that ‘the ideology’ – a common counterweight to populism – no longer features among the categories. In other words, populist factors have shrunk in importance, but so, it seems, have ideological causes. In case ‘foreigners in Austria’ is counted as a right-wing extremist factor it can be concluded that this particular factor constitutes a factor among a clear section of the voters of the FPÖ even though this section is rather small. The four key factors above make together up 62 percent of the total of factors presented. The importance of these four key factors has gone down from 81 percent in 1986 to 71 percent in 1990, and to 62 percent in 1994. This trend suggests a diversification of motives for voting for the FPÖ from 1986 to 1994.

Table 14

Factors for Voting for the FPÖ in 1999 National Elections

Note: more than one answer possible

Because the FPÖ mercilessly uncovers grievances and scandals	65%
Because the FPÖ brings fresh air into politics and triggers changes	63%
Because the FPÖ represents my interests more than others or because of tradition	48%
Because the FPÖ is strongly against the influx of foreigners	47%
Because of the personality of Jörg Haider	40%
To send a protest signal to the two great coalition partners	36%

Source: Fessel-GFK, <http://members.chello.at/zap-forschung/20200504.html>.

Method: A country-wide random selection of N=2200 voters immediately after leaving polling station.

Question: How did you vote and what was the decisive reason for it?

160 polling stations are selected randomly.

Selection process determined by a quota in terms of gender and age.

Due to the fact that more than one answer was possible in the exit poll in 1999 (table 14 above), a direct comparison with the results of 1986, 1990 and 1994 cannot be made. The ranking of the different causes still gives an indication of key factors, in particular regarding the respective weight of populist versus right-wing extremist factors. The most common key factor in 1999 – ‘Because the FPÖ mercilessly uncovers grievances and scandals’ – is very close to the most common key factor in 1994 – ‘Fighting corruption, privileges, uncovering scandals’. As in 1994, it constitutes the most important cause in 1999. The second most frequently cited factor in 1994 related to Jörg Haider’s person. This factor constitutes the fifth most important multifactor-cause in 1999. The sixth factor in the above table – ‘To send a protest signal to the two great coalition partners’ – is similar to “‘Sticking it” to the “Major Parties” (Government)’ in table 12, ‘Factors for Voting for the FPÖ in 1990 National Elections’. As noted above, “‘Sticking it” to the “Major Parties” (Government)’ was not seen as exhibiting sufficiently clear references to right-wing populism to be included in this category. ‘To send a protest signal to the two great coalition partners’, on the other hand, explicitly refer to ‘a protest signal’. Right-wing populist parties are essentially protest parties with a predominantly ‘negative’ political agenda. Therefore, the sixth factor in the 1999 table above - ‘To send a protest signal to the two great coalition partners’ is included among right-wing populist factors.

These three topics are the clearest expressions of populist reasons for voting for the FPÖ. Together they constitute 47.2 percent of this multifactor-analysis.⁷⁷ If one takes ‘because the FPÖ pleads strongly against immigration’ to be a reason that is closely related to the topic of ‘foreigners in Austria’ from the 1994 polls, it can be argued that opposition to immigration and right-wing extremism as factors encouraging people to vote for the FPÖ, have increased in significance compared to previous years. Now, 47 percent of the voters of the FPÖ include

⁷⁷ 141/299.

this cause as one among their key factors. As above, this amounts to 15.7 percent of the multifactor-analysis.⁷⁸

The analysis of election polls during four national elections between 1986 and 1999 further questions the weight of right-wing extremism as a key factor behind the electoral appeal of the FPÖ. The analyses from 1986 and 1990 did not count right-wing extremism as one among four key factors for voting for the Freedom Party. In 1994, 12 percent claimed 'foreigners in Austria' – purportedly a right-wing extremist reason – as the key factor in their choice to vote for the Freedom Party. Conclusively, in a multifactor-analysis of 1999, 47 percent reported that the reason 'because the FPÖ pleads strongly against immigration' – supposedly a right-wing extremist sentiment – was one of the key reasons for their voting for the FPÖ. This was equivalent to 16 percent of the multifactor-analysis. While 'foreigners' and 'immigration' were absent from the poll questions as key factors for voting for the FPÖ in 1986 and 1990, they featured as having an impact in 1994 and in 1999. This impact was, however, rather weak in 1994, and moderate in 1999. In none of the elections did these themes manage to constitute a key factor encouraging voting for the FPÖ. Putting these four elections together, the data clearly show that the average propensity for voting for the FPÖ on the basis of its right-wing extremism (if 'immigration' and 'foreigners' qualify as such) was quite small. Instead, the data point in another direction. The analysis suggested that 63 percent of key factors in voting for the FPÖ in 1986 had a populist quality, 50 percent in 1990 and 39 percent in 1994. Finally, the material from 1999 shows that populism constituted the dominant key factor in voting for the FPÖ. While the first, the fifth and the sixth key factor in this multifactor analysis clearly had a populist anti-elitist tendency, that which had a supposedly right-wing extremist nature ranked only fourth. These four statistical investigations regarding attitudes among FPÖ voters suggest the following conclusions: the vast majority of those who supported the FPÖ in the national elections between 1986 and 1999 did so because of its populist appeal.

⁷⁸ 47/299.

The personal, 'charismatic' qualities of Jörg Haider remained an important factor in all four elections. Of similar importance was another basic populist feature: a critical stance against a perceived corrupt political elite.

The above analysis shows that to understand the appeal of the FPÖ we need to examine the real basis of support for the FPÖ in a specific historical conjuncture of the mid-1980s when two external forces, immigration and membership of the EU, coupled with a sense of alienation on the part of traditional working-class and small-town Austrians, from an urban, cosmopolitan elite who voiced support for multiculturalism and adherence to the Brussels agenda. The reaction to these various forces was a populist reaction, and the vehicle for this was the FPÖ, led by its charismatic leader, Jörg Haider. The majority of FPÖ's voters were not 'crypto-fascists' as Roger Griffin has labelled them, or right-wing extremists, but angry voters disillusioned by policies and forces beyond their control (Griffin 1991, p. 167).

Chapter 9

The FPÖ's Critique of the Elite

The reason why Austrian corporatism was such an excellent target for the FPÖ's attacks – and why it was so valuable in the party's gaining voter support – was that Austrian corporatism exhibited real and serious deficiencies as the discussion of the academic literature on Austrian corporatism in Chapter 5 has shown. In this chapter we will turn our attention to the FPÖ's perspective on the dual rule of the SPÖ and ÖVP. This will confirm the observations from Chapter 8 which showed how this critique has resonated with the party's electorate and contributed largely to the party's electoral success. An illustrative example of this populist critique is constituted by the FPÖ's 'Austrian declaration to the National election of 1994' [*Österreichserklärung zur Nationalratswahl 1994*]. In this declaration, almost every discussion among the twenty-three themes dealt with is dedicated to an explicit criticism of the failure of the dual political rule between the Social Democratic Party and the Conservative Party (Haider 1994).

As explained in the methodology chapter, this critique of the Austrian elite will, however, chiefly be considered through an examination of two books written by Jörg Haider – *Die Freiheit, die ich meine. Das Ende des Proporzstaates. Plädoyer für die Dritte Republik* (1993a); and *Befreite Zukunft jenseits von links und rechts – Menschliche Alternative für eine Brücke ins neue Jahrtausend* (2001).⁷⁹ As will be described in detail below, these two books are very useful in detecting populist themes within the Freedom Party. Haider's *Die Freiheit, die ich meine* offers, in the eyes of Livonius (2002, p. 135), perhaps the best and most detailed insight into Freedom Party rhetoric during the period of its opposition from 1991 to 1995. It is worth adding that they also represent another aspect of populism very well, namely the lack of a core and the ambition to cover all

⁷⁹ These two texts will be referred to by the shortened titles *Die Freiheit, die ich meine* and *Befreite Zukunft* throughout this chapter; in citations they will be represented by the abbreviations DF and BZ respectively.

political positions possible. As pointed out by Sonja Puntscher Riekmann (1999), in *Befreite Zukunft* (1997b) Haider dexterously navigates between contradictory positions avoiding all standpoints by which his critics could pin him down as a Nazi.

However, as this thesis is concerned with reasons for the rise of the party, it remains to be proven that these books actually had a practical impact on the Austrian electorate, and did not merely end up as party material for the select few. Two arguments support this view. First, both books caused debates, and were part of a general ideological discussion in Austria. Hence, they had a certain real impact on the general electorate. The second reason why these books are vital for an understanding of the reasons behind the rise in electoral support for the party between 1986 and 2000 is the fact that both books were used as a testing ground for Haider's ideas; i.e. as links between ideology and practical rhetoric and party campaigns. As was shown previously, the FPÖ's 1994 call for a total break with the post-war 'Second Republic' and the start of a 'Third Republic' had initially been outlined in *Die Freiheit, die ich meine*. One of the key innovations in the 1997 Linz Programme – the idea of a 'fair market economy', had also appeared in somewhat different form in *Befreite Zukunft*. Therefore, a more detailed study of these two background documents is of key importance for a proper understanding of the reasons behind the electoral appeal for the party. Moreover, this will contribute to broadening the understanding of the FPÖ as no similar study of these books has previously been made.

Haider's *Befreite Zukunft* does not contain a single chapter, paragraph or title explicitly dedicated to the issues of Austrian corporatism (BZ, p. 5). In fact, Haider never made use of the term or concept 'corporatism', instead describing his topics in more critical terms, as in chapter titles such as 'Do we deserve these newspapers?', 'How a party can get rich', 'It is impossible without a middle class', and 'The socialist century is coming to an end' (BZ, p. 5). Closer scrutiny reveals, however, that Haider and the FPÖ were obsessed with the corporatist nature of

Austrian politics. Critical discussions of newspapers, the wealth of parties, the middle class and the decay of socialism – all of these focus, more or less clearly, on various features of Austrian corporatism. *Die Freiheit, die ich meine* contains subtitles such as 'The struggle for cultural hegemony', 'The power for political renewal', and 'The welfare state in the balance' (DF, p. 7). Its all-pervasive character was, however, obvious in the full title of that book: 'The freedom that I mean. The end of the proportional state. A pledge for the third republic.'⁸⁰ The declaration is that proporz, the proportional power-sharing between the SPÖ and the ÖVP, must come to an end, and be replaced by 'the Third Republic'.

An investigation into this anti-elitist critique of Austrian corporatism in these two key books will now be conducted. What kind of arguments are these? How are they interconnected? Are they geared by some common conceptual underpinning – and, if so, does it have a name? Are some aspects of this anti-elitist critique more frequently visible than others? Would this, furthermore, reveal anything about what kinds of ideological critique this is concerned with? These are some of the questions that will be dealt with below.

Studies of this kind can be systematised in different ways. In this case, a classification was sought that would not only make the material easier to understand, but also would offer additional information about the nature of the critique raised in Haider's two books. The critique of corporatism has three aspects; a social and cultural critique, in the sense of a leftist value hegemony; an economic critique focusing on the socialist economic policy; and a political critique which is a critique of liberal democracy. While it is true that *Befreite Zukunft* was written in a somewhat less ominous tone and mainly criticised Austrian corporatism from an optimistic and market-oriented perspective instead of attacking from a defensive and sentimental point of view, the criticisms raised in the two books are still strikingly similar. Therefore, instead of presenting one

⁸⁰ For a critique of Haider's political ideas, see Purtscheller 1994.

book after the other, the thematic discussion below will bring in the two books in a simultaneous analysis.

Critics of the FPÖ often tend to describe Austria as outside the framework of normal Western democracies; the reasons being, among others, Austria's myth of being 'the first victim' of Adolf Hitler's aggression, and a systematic unwillingness to come to terms with its war-time past. Jörg Haider also finds it hard to describe Austria as a normal Western democracy (DF, p. 127). His reasons are, however, connected to a different aspect of Austria's past, namely the power of the ÖVP and the SPÖ; i.e. Austrian corporatism. According to Haider, the extent to which this dual elite rule has influenced the lives of ordinary citizens is unparalleled in Western democracies (DF, p. 126). In his view, Austria appears rather like a mixture of the Kremlin, the Vatican and Stalinist Albania (DF, p. 219).

In his attempt to portray Austrian corporatism as an absurdity within a European context, Haider also, in various ways, describes the system as outdated. Austrian corporatism reminds him of a suffocating '*Ständestaat-system*' (the Corporate state in Austria 1934-38) from the inter-war period (DF, p. 200). This is a version of 'political apartheid' belonging to the past, (DF, p. 129) a 'political apartheid' run by 'western mandarins' who also expect gratitude from the Austrian citizen (DF, p. 190). The 'Old-parties' are depicted as 'sickly giants' (DF, p. 143). 'Political-grannies' soon to be found on the park bench (DF, p. 190), or even 'Proporzsaurs', costly, corrupt, and inefficient political dinosaurs (DF, p. 236). Apart from images of autocratic regions and a system unfit for modern times, Haider occasionally depicts the politicians within Austrian corporatism in religious terms. He sees them as 'the high priest of a purified ideology', (DF, p. 58) and as 'apostles of neutrality within the ruling political class' (DF, p. 112). Austria's citizens can no longer 'breathe freely' under the might of these 'dilettantes and ignorants' (DF, p. 33 and p. 205). A mind-stifling consensus is reflected only in Orwellian new-thought and new-speak (DF, p. 198). 'Proud and autonomous

citizens with their heads held high' are simply not possible where dissenting views might lead to unemployment, or other forms of discrimination (DF, p. 29 and p. 71).

Social and Cultural Critique

Historically, the right is interested in issues of family and society and the left in the labour market. Jörg Haider's critique of Austrian corporatism in *Die Freiheit, die ich meine* is an illustrative example. His discussion of social and cultural matters is substantial, while economic matters receive considerably less attention. Haider's underlying theory for his critique of the system – the Gramscian concept of 'cultural hegemony' – whereby rule of the state is obtained by means of a hegemonic control over culture, also seems to support this rightist inclination for cultural factors.

In the eyes of Jörg Haider, the advocates of Austrian corporatism have always sought to obtain complete control over the minds of Austrians. In other words, they have aspired to cultural hegemony. All those leftist 'battle cries' are evidence of an undercurrent of cultural hegemony (DF, p. 11). Haider does not deny the impact of social and economic changes, but, again showing the importance of spiritual, cultural factors in his analysis, the true revolution has to be a revolution of the mind. Power is in the hands of anyone who manages to shape the conscience of the people. It is all about 'cultural hegemony in our society' (DF, p.73).

What, then, are the reasons for this '*Kulturkampf*' – this cultural battle and struggle for cultural hegemony? As maintained by Jörg Haider, it is partly the consequence of a void, namely the void left after the demise of socialism. For those 'in charge of a bankrupt socialism' this cultural battle for hegemony became a suitable instrument with which to retain power. With great skill and

determination, they managed to gain influence in the fields of education and information, and eventually transform it according to their own ideological views (DF, p. 56). Furthermore, once cultural hegemony has been achieved, in other words when a certain – decisive – level of general influence has been obtained, dissenting views are either no longer possible (or no longer even intelligible), or, again, easily countered with the arguments of hegemonic discourse. Therefore, by its very nature, cultural hegemony exerts power (DF, p. 196).

What, then, should be done? According to Haider, it is a matter of an 'ideological struggle' (DF, p. 73). This 'leftist cultural fascism' can only be successfully conquered by means of a 'cultural struggle' where basic values are at stake (DF, p. 230). Different areas of society require different strategies of action. In the field of education, a systematic replacement of all those bodies saturated with ideology will eventually mark the end of leftist hegemony (DF, p. 229). On the whole, Haider argues in favour of increased competition within the field of knowledge and information (DF, p. 69). The leftist monopoly must be broken. This is also, as Chapter 7 has shown, part of the 1997 Linz Programme.

We may start a discussion of the issue of a leftist cultural hegemony as expressed in *Befreite Zukunft* with the question: What characterises a fruitful and productive debate? It is characterised by an open attitude where nothing is sacred. However, Austria is, according to Jörg Haider, very far from this ideal. For instance, cultural organisations, often the backbone of unbiased public discourse, are either in the hands of the blacks or the reds – i.e. the ÖVP or the SPÖ (BZ, p. 69). The author goes even further, arguing that Austrian intellectual life has been ritualized by leftist hegemonic power. Anyone who fails to conform to these 'politically correct' views is guilty of 'treason'. Who qualifies as a 'Nazi' is wholly up to the discretion of leftist hegemony. This is not only a problem in Austria. The whole of Europe is taken hostage by political correctness, whose advocates punish all deviation as 'fascist'. This is all, he continues, a blow against the very spirit of the enlightenment (BZ, p. 11 and p. 243). Tax-payers'

money is being used to silence unpleasant voices, and people no longer seem to care (BZ, p. 39). 'Our time, Haider claims, is also familiar with various forms of political inquisition' (BZ, p. 231). This is partly caused by the fact that the intellectuals – in Austria and elsewhere – have been bought by hegemonic power (BZ, p. 68). The intellectuals and artists of yesterday, who saw culture and civilization as one, no longer exist. As a consequence, intellectuals today have lost their moral authority, and are utterly marginalised (BZ, p. 70).

How, then, in the eyes of Jörg Haider, does this cultural hegemony reveal itself? Through an alliance between the Ministry of Culture, Federal theatres, and State Radio, the entire spiritual world is in the hands of a 'leftist totalitarianism of culture'. Anyone who 'fails to howl with the wolves' does not stand a chance as actor, painter, or author. Artists, who side with the critics of the cultural situation in Austria, are automatically marginalized (DF, p. 226). In particular, Haider attacks the media production that, he argues, is firmly in the grip of the left (DF, p. 196). In this critique, the author regards the monopolies of the State Radio, State TV, and newspapers as particularly bothersome.

Regarding Austrian State Radio, Haider cites public polls in which just roughly one in three considered it to be politically independent overall. Furthermore, 53 percent regarded it as under the control of the SPÖ, whereas merely 11 percent replied ÖVP to the same question (BZ, p. 64). This clear ideological tendency is also, according to the author, supported by the fact that numerous Social Democratic politicians found a safe haven in Austrian State Radio (DF, p. 59). Party politics dominates decision-making in Austrian Radio entirely, says Haider, partly as a consequence of a radio monopoly, one of the last in Europe (DF, p. 62, p. 68 and p. 300). However, the cultural hegemony within the State Radio was not only aimed at retaining or widening leftist influence in Austrian society, but also more defensively to dissuade internal critique by means of creating and sustaining an atmosphere of anxiety and insecurity (DF, p. 201). Consequently,

Haider claims, a State Radio journalist who revealed the manipulation of facts taking place was accused of irresponsible behavior (DF, p. 134).

Austrian TV and newspapers were no less affected by this ideological tendency. Anyone who controls the TV-media has a tremendously efficient instrument of manipulation at their disposal, and in Haider's view, the TV-media was safely in the hands of the leftist elite (DF, p. 67). When the Chancellor answers a few embarrassingly humble questions by journalists you know that the system of stick and carrot works (DF, p. 143). Every year the government spends between two hundred and three hundred million Schilling on subsidising newspapers (about €15 million); and anyone who wishes to continue to receive financial support has to comply with the officially sanctioned ideology. 'And they all do. Almost without exception' (DF, p. 143). According to Haider's figures, three newspapers cover sixty percent of the total market; supposedly the highest percentage of press concentration in Europe (DF, p. 60). The author is particularly upset by the fact that *Arbeiterzeitung* – a leftist newspaper closely aligned with the SPÖ – for many years received financial support from the state. In Haider's view, this was but another example of a leftist hegemony within the field of culture and the media (DF, p. 60).

Haider also argues that other key Austrian institutions have been monopolised by the cultural hegemonic power of the left. In particular, he stresses the situation in the field of education: 'What we need are well-educated children and teenagers, not pre-politicised ones. What we need are people open to the world, and not a generation who has been released into the world with their heads behind ideological blinkers' (DF, p. 229). As an example of the way the students of today are being 'brainwashed' at school, Haider mentions a course held in 1993, entitled 'The positive consequences of the employment policy in the Third Reich' – an ironic comment considering the strong reactions to Haider's own statement in 1991, when he said that the Nazi Regime had a better employment policy than the Austrian labour policy at the beginning of the 1990s (DF, p. 199).

The Viennese Documentation Archive for the Austrian Resistance, mentioned earlier in this thesis, is the target of another of Haider's critiques along similar lines. Founded by communists, and run by the most dedicated Socialists, this 'so-called Documentation Archive' has been one of the master-minds in the 'political inquisition of the left'. According to leftist black-and-white thinking, the institute has effortlessly promoted a dual world-view; either you comply wholeheartedly with leftist thinking, or you are a rightist radical (DF, p. 244). These leftist institutions, in Haider's view, not only produce heavily biased information, and contribute to a highly unfortunate political polarisation; they also have a tendency to finance political projects of a distinctly leftist-activist character. Rudolf Scholten, for instance, received millions of Schillings for his critical movie about the FPÖ entitled *Der Wahlkämpfer* (DF, p. 224).

To sum up the above elements of Haider's discussion of various forms of 'leftist monopoly' and 'cultural hegemony', the Austrian media does not fulfill its obligation to present information in an objective, reasonably unbiased manner, leaving the value-judgments to the citizen. In Haider's view, the derogatory manner in which Austrian radio presented 'Austria First' ('*Österreich zuerst*'), the campaign by the FPÖ about 'the immigration problem', is a good example of its 'massive manipulation' (DF, p. 64).

Jörg Haider stresses the power of stipends as a way of reinforcing hegemonic power over cultural life. Unless graduates from the Film University in Vienna make ideologically proper decisions regarding what and what not to cover, he states, they will fail to gain financial support (BZ, p. 69). Therefore, they are forced into submission and compliance: 'At the feet of the fundraiser the artists gather, licking their shoes' (BZ, p. 74). If stipends and scholarships were to be replaced with 'tax-payers' money' – which is often the financial source behind forms of support for cultural and artistic efforts – then Haider's critique appears to be more of a general tax-reducing nature. A similar combination of cultural critique and tax-reduction may be recognized in the following passage: 'By using

targeted financial support, the state not only obtains a political instrument, but also a cultural monopoly, in relation to which free competition does not stand a chance' (BZ, p. 74). These days, everything appears to be funded by tax money: 'action artists, brass bands, artists who paint and those who don't, mountaineers, writers who write and those who don't' (BZ, p. 95). However, at the same time as a politically correct culture enjoys generous support, hospitals struggle to make ends meet (BZ, p. 68).

As for the artists, the current generation has deteriorated into submissive court-painters, more familiar with the corridors of state funding than with their own studios (BZ, p. 69). Supposedly world-famous sculptors make careers by means of commissions from Social Democratic politicians (BZ, p. 69). As for the art as such, Haider advocates the ideal of the ancient Greek artist, who sought to idealize nature (BZ, p. 72). Be it in the form of programmatic anti-racism or aesthetic sanctions of sexual child abuse, current artistic 'provocations' utterly fail to excite us, as they have long since been institutionalised and, in effect, become part of a leftist 'bourgeois' establishment (BZ, p. 73, p. 229 and p. 70).

It was previously observed how these two books by Jörg Haider were being used as test-balloons for ideas later to be presented to the electorate. At this point, the passage above clearly resonates with *Kapitel XV: Weite Kultur – Freie Kunst* from the 1997 Linz Programme, where 'Artists are being bullied and instrumentalised.' The result has been a particular Austrian form of artistic production surveilled by the state [Staatskünstlertum], whereby 'artistic freedom is severely restricted' (Linz Programme 1997).

The situation in the media, Haider continues, is no less alarming. Generally, journalism is saturated with leftist moralism, and the authors fail to acknowledge that independent material requires a distance from those in power (BZ, p. 79). Moreover, 'independent' voices are being repressed (BZ, p. 80). In private, Jörg Haider claims, journalists even confess that any deviation from the party line

would brand them as 'sympathisers' with the FPÖ (BZ, p. 80). In particular, the author deplores what he calls 'the hysterical anti-Freedom Party cannibalism in the State and in the Media' (BZ, p. 252). Austrians who desire objective information about their country read the foreign press, due to this leftist 'terror of opinion' (BZ, p. 81). Still, the overwhelming majority of this critique is quite primitive and unpersuasive (BZ, p. 81). Haider's view on the principles by which the media operate is encapsulated in the following phrase: 'more important than information is manipulation' (BZ, p. 78). Unlike the broadcast media of other Western democracies, Austrian TV and radio are characterised by a peculiar kind of 'court presentation', programmatically uncritical and submissive towards those in power; and as for newspapers, they are all either in the hands of the blacks or the reds (BZ, pp. 79-80). Furthermore, the majority of print media is run by this red-and-black 'machinery of stupidity' (BZ, p. 80). What, then, to do? Open up Austrian media for a plurality of independent projects. Put an end to this monopoly of opinion (BZ, p. 227).

Historically, the left has fought on behalf of those outside the sphere of power, whereas the right and the conservatives have sided with the ruling strata and with 'the elite'. In Haider's presentation of the situation as detailed above, however, this scheme is being reversed; the elite is left-wing and powerful, and the critics of the elite are right-wing and of the people. Hence, instead of harboring distinctly elitist traits along the lines of conservative ideology, the FPÖ portrays itself as the guardian of the common people. In other words, the party highlights the chasm between conservative elitism and populist anti-elitism. *Die Freiheit, die ich meine* contains a number of passages where this conflict between a downtrodden electorate and an abusive leftist elite is brought to the fore.⁸¹ Austrian mass media, literature, film and theatre are seen by Haider to be in the hands of 'self-elected holy apostles', who manufacture their own audience and dictate their views (DF, p. 22). At present, a *classe politique* suffers from a

⁸¹ Whereas leftist critique against those in power has often been economic by nature, the critique made by Jörg Haider under consideration here is almost exclusively cultural and psychological.

'pathological lack of realism', and fails entirely to take into account the views and the concerns expressed by citizens. In fact, these 'apostles' hold 'the wider audience in contempt'. And stronger still: 'The sickly giants' 'keep the threatened dwarfs, i.e. the citizens, under control by means of psychological terror' (DF, p. 143). In Haider's world-view, this 'elitism within the left' even suggests that an enthusiastic audience, if anything, is a cause for disappointment, as if appreciation is inevitably a sign of banality or 'populism'. They would rather in their 'elitist contempt', stage a play without any audience whatsoever than show any understanding for popular desires (DF, p. 23).

An important aspect of Jörg Haider's critique of the elitist system of Austrian corporatism is the various ways in which he portrays this elite as having lost contact with the Austrian public. In fact, this type of criticism of the supposed abyss between the elite and the people constitutes, as we saw in the chapter on populism above, one of the fundamental aspects in any populist ideology.

Generally, Jörg Haider finds evidence of this leftist elitism in a certain lack of self-reflection seen during times when the electorate is dwindling (BZ, p. 88). This was also, many argue, a characteristic of the SPÖ and the ÖVP during the late 1990s. Instead of reconsidering some of their views, these parties started criticising their former voters for being uninformed or having the 'wrong' mentalities. And even at times when the relation between the elite and the people is less tense, the electorate, Haider claims, gives the impression of being an obstacle to the elite's own project (BZ, p. 91).

What were these former SPÖ voters that switched to the FPÖ called? They were, according to Haider, labelled the 'losers in the process of modernisation', 'a proletariat of education', 'illiterates', 'reactionary church folk', or part of a *Lumpenproletariat* (BZ, p. 88 and p. 252).

Overall Jörg Haider presents a grim picture of the social and cultural situation in Austria. Freedom of speech no longer exists, artists are being either silenced or brainwashed. Students and teenagers are forced into ideological straight-jackets. The entire media world is under the influence of socialist hegemony, and the official public sphere in Austria is more or less in the grip of a socialist monopoly. No aesthetic or ideological deviation is allowed, empty provocations are the norm, and the common person is no longer idealised but seen as a narrow-minded right-wing voter.

Political Critique

In the coming presentation, I have separated Haider's political critique of Austrian corporatism into four aspects. The first aspect – 'a nihilistic liberalism and a distorted perception of nationalism' – deals with what he perceives as too thin a version of liberalism along with an overly critical notion of the idea of nationalism. 'Power-greedy socialism' argues that the elite system of Austrian corporatism by nature is populist, as it combines a romantic perception of communism with an uncritical view of capitalism and consumerism. 'Daily encounters with the Austrian elite' will bring a few more practical issues into focus; namely 'corruption', 'anonymity', 'uniformity', 'the marginalisation of dissent', 'omnipotence', and 'incompetence'. All of these clearly express a populist critique against an abusive elite cut off from the people.

According to Haider, the current liberalism in Austria as advocated by the elite is haunted by a great number of problems; such as egotism, individuals' exaggerated preoccupation with their own fortunes and their lack of connections with other people (DF, p. 10). A sense of *Gemeinschaft* is lacking. Contemporary political liberalism is 'too instable, tolerant and cynical' (DF, p. 28). When God is dead, everything is allowed, and anarchy and nihilism will follow. A society void of values in which all is allowed and nothing is seen as illegal is enabled by a

'pseudoliberalism' (DF, p. 28). In the end, this 'hedonism' – 'this illusory world' of 'fashion, photography and advertising, TV and travels' – will lead to spiritual bankruptcy (DF, p. 10). Furthermore, politicians who complain about social disintegration and shrinking solidarity have no reason to do so, because they are to blame for the fact that we are at present surrounded by a 'nihilistic liberalism' (DF, p. 13). At this point, Jörg Haider shows some skepticism towards the ideas of the Enlightenment. Although the Enlightenment indeed has its benefits, which 'must be saved', we must distance ourselves from a reckless and irresponsible form of liberalism. And as one of the two major ideologies of the Enlightenment, liberalism is outdated, at least in its current form (DF, p. 9).

Jörg Haider's own version of liberalism stresses the idea that no freedom is possible without responsibility. He denies that this view is anything out of the ordinary by citing John Stuart Mill, the famous English liberal, for whom the concept of liberty was balanced by an idea of responsibility (DF, p. 17). As a whole, under the current administration, Austrian society lacks an orientation towards the 'common good', as well as a spontaneous willingness to make sacrifices for it (DF, p. 21).

The idea of the common good leads to the next central aspect in Haider's critique of the political perspective within Austrian Corporatism, namely what he perceives to be a distorted – and far too critical – perception of the idea of nationalism. Haider deplores the fact that, in his eyes, 'nationalism' is held responsible for any major social problem in Western society. In trying to discern the origins of nationalism's conspicuously bad reputation, the author does not, along the lines of mainstream analysis, trace it to the early 20th century, but rather to a mistaken interpretation of a political concept. In his eyes, the current fate of the term nationalism does not depend on the nationalistic cataclysms during the First World War and Second World War but on the fact that the word nation for more than forty years had 'been banned' from the vocabulary of the left

(DF, p. 83). Why, then, does Jörg Haider appreciate the idea of nationalism? Three explanations can be suggested.

The first has to do with, for want of more appropriate terms, what we may call 'the nature of human beings'. Everywhere, people crave a place to belong. They need protection and identification. Therefore, Haider denies the idea that nationalism and democracy are incompatible. Rather, democracy has always operated together with the idea of the nation as a defined geographical area aimed at inclusion and exclusion. In addition, the idea of national sovereignty expresses and recognises a pluralist world (DF, p. 80). In other words, Haider does not primarily see the nation and nationalism as tools in the hands of aggressive forces, but as defensive constructions aimed at enabling and preserving democracy. Therefore, (an essentially peaceful) nationalism is not to blame for aggressive nationalistic conflicts, which are caused by the very oppression of nationalism; by denying people the right to self-determination, down-playing the significance of a national heritage and so on (DF, p. 81). Hence, if the nation-state is dismantled, a common dimension of freedom will be lost (DF, p. 276).

The second explanation for Haider's high esteem for the nation builds on the first. At this point, too, the thrust of Haider's argument is directed against the Austrian ruling elite. The question is: who benefits most from a strong nation-state? While many would argue that the main beneficiaries are oppressive rulers, in Haider's eyes the very purpose of a strong state is, on the contrary, to protect the freedom of those of lesser means (DF, p. 24). Haider here quotes the German radical political thinker Hannah Arendt. In her eyes, universalism and human rights were badly suited to providing citizens with any form of security and protection. Outside the solid boundaries of the nation-state, she argued, nothing is able to give the citizen proper shelter (DF, p. 258).

The third explanation further elaborates on one of the main issues above, namely the idea of national sovereignty. At this point, Haider quotes Vaclav Havel, then President of the Czech Republic, as having stated that the idea of national sovereignty merely expresses cultural borders, and not ideas of dominance and subordination. In fact, Haider seems to argue that nationalistic forces were never responsible for conflicts. In his view, the war in former Yugoslavia was caused by 'imperialistic' attempts by Yugoslavia to 'abuse human nature' (which needs protection within a territory) by suppressing national differences and cultural richness and variety (DF, p. 80).

Nationalism and liberalism were treated jointly here because the Austrian Freedom Party was constructed as an explicit combination of the two. Initially, in 1955 when the party was founded, it was 'fully agreed that neither "national" nor "liberal" would suffice as a conceptual definition for the future.' Instead, rather than being mutually exclusive, it was argued that these two concepts complemented each other (Peter 1986, p. 28, cited in Livonius 2002, p. 22). This, in turn, goes back to the fact that the conception of liberty within the FPÖ was not based on the ideas of 1789. Instead, it was founded on the ideas generated during the national revolutions of 1848. Hence, the idea of freedom within the party was always closely tied to a national component, and invariably critical of the universalist ideas of the Enlightenment. The latter was a case of an emotionally-founded national-liberal ideology concerning the freedom of the German people (Kräh 1996, p. 178 and p. 184). In Haider's own words: 'Fundamentally, it is about the completion of the development initiated by liberals and national-liberals in the middle of (the 19th century)' (DF, p. 298).

In *Befreite Zukunft*, Jörg Haider's critique of what might be perceived as a 'nihilistic liberalism' is mainly directed against a social policy that he sees as too permissive. While recognising the importance of assisting those in need – the unemployed, the weak and the handicapped – Haider still opposes 'the subsidising of vandalism', and 'declaring criminals as mentally instable' (BZ, p

91). In his view, this is not a liberal perspective, because liberal values centre around the individual, both in terms of rights and in terms of responsibilities. On the other hand, he adds, freedom and self-realisation do not require a liberal and overly permissive drug policy (BZ, p. 91). Those who fail to acknowledge the importance of borders cannot make use of their freedom (BZ, p. 113). What is more, our entire political existence rests upon a state governed by law (BZ, p. 105). From this angle, we reach an interpretation of the nation-state and of nationalism that is in direct opposition to that of his critics. For Haider the nation-state is not a tool in the hands of the strong but is aimed precisely at protecting those whose position is weak (BZ, p. 172). The FPÖ endeavours, in Haider's words, to achieve not the power of the strong, but the strength of the (legal) power (BZ, p. 173). On the international scene, where the balance of power between the two superpowers has disappeared, the defence of the nation-state as a frame of security and democracy seems an even more urgent task (BZ, p. 213). From Haider's perspective, all power comes from the people, seen as citizens within a given territory. 'The ruling political caste', in contrast, has decided to rule by means of a power cartel, in sheer opposition to any democratic legitimacy (BZ, p. 233). Democratic legitimacy – and a democratic community – are obtained by means of 'Law – Freedom – Order'; including the right to take measures against disruptive anarchy as well as liberalistic discretion. For Haider, these three 'wonderful pillars' have been vital for us ever since the start of the Second Republic after the Second World War. In fact, they all go back further to the revolutions of 1848, when the idea of national identity challenged repression and the denial of self-determination (BZ, p. 100). Hence, far from being diametrically opposed, the ideas of nationalism and liberalism are, for Haider, two sides of the same coin. Still, he continues, our opponents have responded as expected, by insinuating that we do not cherish democracy and national sovereignty, but a far stronger and more vicious notion of nationalism; in fact being opponents to democracy rather than its champions (BZ, p. 86.). The emphasis on *Gemeinschaft* and the denial of a nihilistic liberalism discussed above recur in the 1997 Linz Programme. In 'Kapitel III: Österreich zuerst!', the

programme advocates 'not only citizens rights', but also duties, in particular in order to uphold a sense of community under the auspices of the state; and the concept of solidarity, analysed above, is taken up at great length in 'Kapitel XI: Solidarisch und gerecht' (Showing solidarity and justice), in the Linz Programme. (1997b, p. 6).

Power-greedy Socialism

What are the flaws of socialism in the eyes of the author? First, a discussion follows concerning the ways in which Haider accuses socialism of being more extreme than it purports to be, and for having failed to adapt to the requirements of a modern post-communist Europe. Then, an entirely different kind of critique will follow, whereby Haider suggests a link between socialism and consumerism.

In Haider's eyes, the policy of Austrian corporatism is a 'metaphysical antique store', unable to offer anything but greed for power. It is nothing but 'the ideological leftovers' of an 'outdated "new left"' (DF, p. 56). Advocates of Austrian corporatism believe they have managed to erase inequality, privileges and nepotism. In Haider's view, however, this is wholly false. 'Instead of wiping out class society, socialism has paved the way for it' (DF, p. 70). Either you are inside the boundaries of the system, and enjoy all the benefits, or you are excluded. Again, Austrian corporatism repeats the traditional mistakes of leftist egalitarianism. In theory, it is all about equality. In practice, it is all about inequality. Therefore, Austrian socialism is not full-blown democracy, as argued in a party programme by the SPÖ of Austria, but full-blown demagoguery (DF, p. 52).

These allegations of being outdated and more radical than 'socialism' constitute only one form of critique by Jörg Haider. In another critique, he argues that the

'socialism' of Austrian corporatism is not obsolete and too leftist, but far too lenient and submissive to the forces of capitalism.

Socialism, he says, has reduced us to mere factors of production and consumption (DF, p. 214). As a consequence, we are losing our independence and capacity for individual judgements. Haider wants his reader to acknowledge that we cannot avoid the question: 'How thin or how thick is the protective shield in society against tendencies to anarchy or the dangers inherent in passive consumption' (DF, p. 21)? Still, Haider does not believe that these two forms of supposed flaws within socialism – firstly that it is too inflexible and outdated, secondly that it has surrendered to market forces – are incompatible. Instead, he sees them – totalitarian oppression and blind materialism – as two facets of a deceitful socialism. Earlier, Haider claimed that any nationalist violence initially is caused by attacks against nationalism – seen, notably as essentially natural and civilised. At this point Haider argues along similar lines. Vibrant and aggressive religion and nationalism are defensive reactions, and not malicious forces in their own right. After the joint attack discussed above, from 'totalitarian suppression and consumerism devoid of meaning', 'religion, beliefs, history and the nation will announce their return. At this point we must seek to prevent an extreme swinging of the pendulum in the other direction' (DF, p. 12). Socialism, in other words, may actually provoke a right-wing radicalisation, and this can only be countered by recognising people's natural and peaceful desire for belonging, history and so on.

Certain groups within rightist thinking, conservatives and right-wing populists among them, occasionally criticise the left for an ostensible lack of core values. Such criticism is not entirely absent in Jörg Haider's *Befreite Zukunft*. Hence, Austrian youth, Haider argues, and Austrian workers, are particularly unimpressed by leftist 'hate-and-fear-campaigns'. 'The opportunistic shifting between Schröder's Neoliberalism and old-Marxist slogans of class-struggle from yesterday' have failed to convince the electorate. The voters seek honest and

solid politicians and as a consequence the FPÖ has become the largest working-class party in the country (BZ, p. 251).

Daily encounters with the Austrian elite

How, in the eyes of Jörg Haider, did the system, as it were, manifest itself on a daily basis? At this point, six such manifestations will be mentioned, each exemplifying a different general target area of Haider's critique: corruption, anonymity, uniformity, the marginalisation of dissent, omnipotence, and incompetence.

Austrian youth holds party politics in contempt. Why is that? Because the 'old parties' and the 'ruling classes' are incapable of adapting to changing domestic and global conditions, and, above all, because the rule of the old parties is characterised by corruption, in the form of 'greed, privileges, and a general sleaziness' (DF, p. 205). Moreover, corruption is intimately linked to anonymity. 'What kind of society,' Haider asks, 'assigns all responsibility to the hands of anonymous state authorities while ignoring the freedom and respect of the individual' (DF, p. 19)? Corruption and lack of transparency both require a political structure organised around one single voice governing from above. At this point, Haider announces that the FPÖ is not, as opposed to Austrian corporatism, characterised by uniformity but by pluralism. This 'endearing harmony' inside the 'pastorate' of the SPÖ and the ÖVP is not even in jeopardy when offices are being traded. Instead, in order to preserve the political balance, a solemn row of castling between SPÖ and the members of the ÖVP is being executed. It is worth noting, Haider concludes, that this is always a very quiet affair (DF, p. 189). In the eyes of Jörg Haider, this intimacy and sense of harmony within the borders of the system is only balanced by a fierce attitude towards dissenting voices. This means that the system never appreciates 'brave citizens', who stand up against the corruption of the system. Instead, they are

'cursed as traitors' (DF, p. 134), and 'persecuted as heretics' (DF, p. 52). In fact, the left is ruthless against its opponents (DF, p. 59). What is more, the left is also ruthless in its relationship with the entire electorate, should they express other views than those of Austrian corporatism. Jörg Haider refers to a political statement in relation to Maastricht, where a declaration from the two Government parties stated that, in case of a 'regrettably' necessary EU referendum, it was important 'not to repeat the Danish mistake.' 'That is, consequently, the way democratic awareness looks within the ruling class!' (DF, p. 224). Again, in the eyes of the FPÖ leader, we are confronted with a scandalous case of political corruption; when a referendum is termed 'regrettable', democracy has been overthrown. To sum up the observations above, Haider accuses the whole political system for being incompetent, made up by 'dilettantes and ignoramuses' (DF, p. 198).

Haider's critique of the corrupt 'Austrian elite' reiterates an important aspect mentioned in the chapter on populism. One of the pillars of populism is, as will be remembered, the promotion of a fairly clean division between an innocent and homogeneous 'people', and a consolidated, malevolent elite. In his eyes, the socialist self-perception of their being in opposition to the upper echelons of Austria no longer applies. In fact, the real situation is the exact opposite: 'At the parties of High Society, you can find the Gentlemen of Social Democracy, evidently in good spirits among former class enemies' (BZ, p. 34). Today, the essential social dividing lines are no more of a socialist brand – i.e. running between classes – but between a 'people' and an elite comprised by a unity of industrial leaders and so-called workers' representatives. Along this line of reasoning, one would conclude that workers' representatives are corrupt.⁸²

Corruption often leads to incompetence, and *Befreite Zukunft* contains a number of examples in which the administrators, bureaucrats and politicians within

⁸² From a populist perspective, Jörg Haider's cynicism is reminiscent in this respect of Marxist description of a corporatist set-up of society, where workers representatives gradually will succumb to the temptations from the side of the employers, and eventually abandon the workers.

Austrian corporatism are portrayed as unfit for the task of governing. For a populist, it is natural not only to side with 'the small people' but also to defend 'small business' – corner grocers, small enterprises and others – against the power and cunningness of 'big business.' Who pays for the incompetence and chaos among those state-subsidised giants? This is, according to the author, done by private entrepreneurs of small and modest size (BZ, p. 132). Austria, in comparison to other countries within the EU, has the lowest proportion of 'high-tech' companies, and the highest proportion of 'low-tech' ones (BZ, p.131). At this point, one should not forget the power of the financial institutions and the banks. The problem, Haider claims, is that the banks are also sheltered from competition, much like the low-tech companies they are financing. Hence, there is no independent assessment of financial proposals (BZ, p. 138). On top of this, a general incompetence leads to ossified regulations for conducting business, a bureaucratic class in sheer disarray and 'endless delays of judicial proceedings' (BZ, p. 38). The legacy of 'close to thirty years of socialism' is not encouraging (BZ, p. 138). Therefore we should stop making fun of the bureaucracy of Eastern Europe (BZ, p. 158). Taken all together – an all-pervasive corruption, workers' representatives who have deserted their own people, a wasteful and useless big business weighing heavily on the shoulders of the small merchants and private entrepreneurs, an ossified industrial structure and a banking system in tatters – all of these features of the political system have not gone unnoticed by Austrians. In fact, 'optimism is hard to find. The future is dominated by a sense of uncertainty. Some even fear that the end is coming' (BZ, p. 139).

Economic Critique

This overview of Jörg Haider's critical examination of Austrian corporatism during the mid-1990s will end with his – considerably less elaborate – economic critique. Haider starts with the situation of ordinary people, which he depicts as quite desperate. Unemployment figures presented by the government are only meant

to deceive the electorate (DF, p. 206). In fact, the level of unemployment has not been higher for forty years (DF, p. 241). In addition, state industry is crumbling, and poverty is returning to Austria (DF, p. 240). Still, these harsh circumstances fail to have an impact on the upper echelon of society, where managers who have brought state-owned industries and banks to the brink of bankruptcy can still keep their jobs (DF, p. 134). Meanwhile those who have to go are generously remunerated. One bank manager was allowed an early retirement plus almost ten million Schillings (DF, p. 154). This is all due, in Haider's eyes, partly to the fact that an ossified, state-owned industrial sector has been kept alive through a structural policy of massive subsidies (DF, p. 207). Haider claims, for example, that 97 percent of Austria's gas, water and electricity was produced by state-owned companies protected from normal competition (DF, p. 209).

According to Haider, social policy constitutes the most important cause for the failings of the system of Austrian corporatism. The power of the system over the citizen is nowhere as strong, Haider argues, as within the field of 'social bureaucracy' (DF, p. 161). 'The moral decadence of the systems of social insurance' (DF, p. 153) has degraded the citizens, making them the passive recipients of state charity (DF, p. 182). At such a time, it is particularly important to fight against the abuse of the social insurance system (DF, p. 159). Still, the financial situation of this generous social system is hopeless. It cannot be saved (DF, p. 240).

The final point of Haider's economic critique of Austrian corporatism leads back to the moral rhetoric of populism, resting on an opposition between a righteous people and an exploitative elite. Haider does not portray Austria as an all-out economic failure after the Second World War – since 'hard working' citizens have been compensating for the corrupt system. Haider stresses a populist dichotomy between a diligent and honest people and an incompetent elite: 'That citizens staggering under the burden of corruption, mismanagement, and squandering of resources is, regrettably, intimately linked to the Austrian system' (DF, p. 183).

In *Befreite Zukunft* Haider notes a few problematic circumstances. First, during the last few years of the 20th century, Austria's economic performance has plummeted from twelfth to number twenty-seventh strongest world-wide (BZ, p. 120). Trade deficit is around one hundred billion Schilling, and the number of entrepreneurs in Switzerland is almost two hundred thousand more than the number in Austria (BZ, p. 204 and p. 201). Unemployment, in particular among the young, has reached dramatic proportions, and the quick-fix measures taken by the authorities are utterly futile (BZ, p. 129). On top of this, lack of demand for trainees reveals that there is something seriously wrong with the basic foundation of economic prosperity, namely the middle class (BZ, p. 159). Moreover, the Austrian tax quota is, he says, way above that of the OECD average (BZ, p. 171). Moving from general observations to more practical cases, Haider returns to so-called 'public housing'. Instead of benefitting the poor, or plainly adding to Austrian finances, taxpayers' money disappears into the accounts of the ÖVP and the SPÖ. If we estimate the market value of these 'public housing companies', the reds and the blacks enjoy, he claims, the respectable sum of some five hundred billion Schilling (BZ, p. 96). A reminder of the shady dealings within the Austrian elite, a pension fund of no less than twenty four billion Schilling has been placed in the hands of a mere thirteen hundred staff at the Austrian National Bank, wholly out of reach of the public (BZ, p. 84). Without being able to offer a sufficient number of apprenticeships in the booming technological sector, some seventeen thousand functionaries tumble around and manage to spend close to nine billion Schillings in the playground of the Chambers of Commerce (BZ, p. 21).

In the present chapter, we have presented the critique against the Austrian elite as expressed in Jörg Haider's *Die Freiheit, die ich meine* and in *Befreite Zukunft*. Both books argue at great length that Austrian corporatism was characterised by serious flaws. The FPÖ and Jörg Haider sought to liberate the electorate from an oppressive elite. Within the realm of culture, the left, in disarray after the collapse of communism, had held onto its hegemonic power by means of a cultural

monopoly, discouraging and preventing constructive criticism, financing left-wing extremist newspapers and ideological theatre productions. A leftist elitism had supported empty provocations and held the common electorate in contempt. Citing liberals and republicans such as John Stuart Mill and Hannah Arendt, the common 'thin' perception of liberalism and the 'negative stereotype' of nationalism were questioned from a populist view, with the supposed aim of increasing political participation among the electorate. Subsequently, Jörg Haider depicts an opportunistic, leftist elite with the sole aim of retaining its power at all costs while simultaneously supporting communism and consumerism. The members of an ossified, greedy elite inept at dealing with the challenges of a modern society hide themselves behind closed doors. Political contesters, dissuading voices and a dissenting electorate are, however, being treated ruthlessly. '*Proporz*' described the extent to which Austrian society had been divided between the interests of the SPÖ and those of the ÖVP. Haider's economic critique addressed the hardships and unemployment experienced by ordinary men and women while corrupt functionaries were retiring with generous pension packages. State industry was disintegrating and poverty was returning.

Die Freiheit, die ich meine and *Befreite Zukunft* should not merely be seen as examples of party material of limited importance to political practicalities and to the core questions in the present thesis. Instead, both books constituted a testing ground for political proposals later to be presented to the electorate. The 1994 call for a 'Third Republic' had originally been laid out in *Die Freiheit, die ich meine*. The idea of a 'fair market economy' – the title of the economic policy in the 1997 Linz Programme had previously been thoroughly discussed in *Befreite Zukunft*. Elaborate discussions in *Befreite Zukunft* on the lack of artistic freedom in Austria later re-emerged in the Linz Programme. Similarly, the Linz Programme contains discussions about the need for solidarity, ideas which were dealt with at some length in *Die Freiheit, die ich meine*. Due to these parallels between Jörg Haider's two books and the Freedom Party's election campaigning, *Die Freiheit, die ich meine* and *Befreite Zukunft* are therefore vital for a wider

understanding of the electoral appeal of the Freedom Party between 1986 and 2000.

To what degree is Haider's critique an accurate picture of the Austrian political system? It would be easy to dismiss Haider's attack as simply a radical polemic, without any basis in empirical reality. In fact, as was described in Chapter 5, many elements of Haider's critique resemble a less ideological academic analysis of some of the peculiarities and weaknesses of post-war Austrian politics. Haider's attack to some extent overlaps with the critical scholarly picture previously presented. The elitist system of Austrian corporatism exhibited numerous defects, and Jörg Haider brought these issues to public attention, exaggerated them and used them to capture the attention of potential voters.

This chapter has shown that the dominant rhetoric in two of Haider's most well-known books was made of an unswerving attack against the rule of the SPÖ and the ÖVP. In the field of culture, in politics, and in the economy, Austria was according to this critique seen to be under siege by 'the big parties'. Therefore these two books further reinforce the main argument in the present thesis – i.e. that anti-elitist rhetoric is the key reason for the rise of the FPÖ between 1986 and 2000.

Chapter 10

Conclusion

In the introduction various newspapers commenting on Jörg Haider's death and his legacy were quoted. While the majority of the clippings from Europe highlighted Haider's right-wing extremist views and controversial statements, two major American newspapers, the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, also stressed his and his party's critique of the Austrian political elite as key factors contributing to his popularity. 'People are fed up with the old parties that never live up to their promises', he was quoted as saying in the *Washington Post* (Schudel 2008); and the *New York Times* maintained that Haider 'helped (to) put an end to the dominance of the two biggest parties, the left-leaning Social Democratic Party and the conservative People's Party' (Kulich and Freund 2008). In a similar vein, while presenting his right-wing extremist tendencies at some length, *The Economist* recognised that Austria had been 'corruptly dominated since the war by "black" (conservative) and "red" (socialist) parties, allocating by the entrenched *Proporz* system all seats and posts of any consequence ...' Against this, the paper continued, 'the blue-flagged FPÖ (and Jörg Haider) offered an eruption of difference' to the Austrian electorate (Anon. 'Obituary: Jörg Haider' 2008).

This thesis has assessed the factors behind the rise of the FPÖ during Jörg Haider's leadership between 1986 and 2000. A thorough analysis has shown that the main cause for his and his party's popularity was right-wing populism. Right-wing populism has often been regarded as a mere subsection within right-wing extremism. The paramount weight of right-wing populism in explaining the electoral appeal of the party is not only important as a statistical observation, but also because different explanations for the party's rise call for different political responses.

The conclusion will start with a synthesis of the main findings of the thesis. Subsequently, we will ask whether or not the events after 2000 support the main findings. The chapter will conclude with a brief discussion of the wider implications of the FPÖ in the European context.

Synthesis of Main Findings

Chapter 2 presented an overview of the main literature on the subject. While the majority of the literature on the rise of the FPÖ attributes the success of the party to its right-wing extremist tendencies, others have also stressed the importance of Haider's anti-elitist rhetoric and populist appeal. While this division is a conscious simplification, it clearly illustrates two key lines of reasoning regarding the party. Those who claim that the party's rise was caused by right-wing extremism rely on a variety of arguments. One is found in the origins of the FPÖ, when the party was supported by many ex-Nazis and occasionally drifted back into German national or even National Socialist ideas and rhetoric. Another line of argument scrutinises the right-wing extremist statements, campaigns, and actions of the party, presenting these as a central reason for the party's rising electoral support. Jörg Haider's ruthless behaviour, both within the party and in dealing with external critics, has further underscored a right-wing extremist understanding of the party's rise. Last but not least, after 1986, the FPÖ gradually moved away from the liberal views of the early 1980s, and this development was interpreted as a trend towards right-wing extremism. In 2000, the EU sanctions against the Austrian government provided a good example of this international concern.

Far fewer observers have emphasised Haider's populist tactics and appeal as the key to understanding the rise of the FPÖ. Those who have explored this dimension have explained the rise of the FPÖ after 1986 on the basis of, firstly, a conservative and/or right-wing populist response to modern social phenomena,

such as globalisation, immigration, and (later on) Austria's EU-membership; and secondly, and most importantly, Haider's success in rallying the support of voters alienated by the dual elite role of the ÖVP and the SPÖ. The FPÖ's isolationist and nationalist ideas, and their calls to put a halt to immigration, are not seen by these observers as right-wing extremist but rather as largely conservative or populist views. Finally, those stressing the importance of populism as cause argue that the systematic expulsion of liberal views and key spokespersons from the party from 1986 onwards revealed the increasingly populist nature of the party rather than mounting right-wing extremism within the party's ranks.

Chapter 2 also showed that to date there has been no systematic analysis of the factors for the FPÖ's electoral success looking at both quantitative material such as election results, exit polls and voter surveys and the party's main documents, programmes and statements. All this material was presented in its socio-economic and political context.

The present investigation offers an original and elaborate comparison between the two different explanations above. Key material in support of a right-wing extremist understanding of the rise of the FPÖ is brought out, and compared with a populist explanation for the party's rise. The investigation has drawn on exit polls and other quantitative material as outlined in the previous paragraph. It has shown that, even though a 'national component' was always part of the agenda and the successful public rhetoric during Haider's leadership, this was still, as maintained by Kurt Richard Luther, 'only an aspect within a populist protest chiefly based on Haider as a person' (Luther, 2005).

Chapter 3 elaborated upon the methodology used to assess the factors behind the rise of the party. The analysis relied on primary material in the form of party documents, party programmes and the party yearbooks and two key books of Jörg Haider – the 1993 *Die Freiheit- die ich meine. Das Ende des Proporzstaates. Plädoyer für die Dritte Republik* ('The Freedom I mean. The end

of the Proportional State. A Pledge for the Third Republic') (1993a); and the 1997 *Befreite Zukunft jenseits von links und rechts – Menschliche Alternative für eine Brücke ins neue Jahrtausend*, ('Liberated future beyond left and right: A human alternative proposing a bridge into the new millennium'). These two books often provided the background to subsequent policy proposals, rhetoric and themes in party programmes in close contact with the voter. Further, controversial statements of Haider and senior party members were analysed and contextualised. The FPÖ's annual yearbooks offered a wider picture of political and historical discussions among a wide spectrum of party members and sympathisers. In order to move closer to political practicalities the thesis also analysed two party programmes (from 1985 and 1997). While the 1985 Salzburg Programme offered an account of the party's views at the onset of Haider's leadership, the 1997 Linz Programme displayed the views of the party at the height of its power.

Chapter 4 – Populism – provided the theoretical background discussion. Populism, being a very loose concept, is useful in analysing right-wing parties because it covers a wide range of ideas and views. If the rise of a right-wing party can be linked to its right-wing extremism, populism can be associated with nationalism and exclusion, xenophobia and racism. If this party is seen as less extreme, populism stands for a concern of the nation state, which contributes to secure working conditions and the rule of law. Populism can include wholesale attacks on democracy and the open society, but also, more modestly, may involve taking a critical stance against a particular regime and its purported lack of openness and participation. Populism may lead to elitism, but it may also be anti-elitist and counter the rule of a perceived unjust minority. Also, it can be seen as anything from trying to lure the electorate into supporting authoritarian rule or tendencies, to merely trying to create a more egalitarian and participatory society. The concept of populism is therefore particularly well-suited to gaining a better understanding of the rise of parties on the right-wing fringes, regardless of

whether populism is seen as a cover-up for right-wing extremism or fascism, or as an egalitarian political idea.

'The people' (and its opposing force, 'the elite') were described as representing the core of populism in Chapter 4. Therefore, the concept of populism is a valuable tool for assessing a party whose political rhetoric revolves around attacking the elite and idealising 'the people' – the downtrodden common electorate, the common person, the man and woman on the street, etc. The chapter presented two main expressions of populism. Populism as a right-wing phenomenon exhibiting a wide variety of general populist features, such as political charisma and the reluctant politician that needs to save the nation, is often seen as closely associated with right-wing extremism, fascism and racism. However, neither political charisma nor being reluctant to assume political power have to be seen as inherently dangerous or right-wing extremist.

Chapter 5 turned the attention to the other side of the populist scheme: the elite. The chapter began with a theoretical discussion of the concept of corporatism and then described the evolution and salient features of Austrian corporatism. The elite system of the dual rule of the SPÖ and ÖVP as manifested in Austrian corporatism is as controversial as the FPÖ's critique of it. Many of the observers of the FPÖ pay little attention to the importance of the reaction of the voters to the shortcomings in the Austrian corporatist system highlighted by the FPÖ. Chapter 5 therefore presented a critical overview of this system underscoring its corruption, nepotism and exclusionary tendencies. The evolution of the system was facilitated by the relative weakness of the Austrian state in the aftermath of the Second World War, and by the respective strength of the ÖVP and the SPÖ.

Yet behind these problematic traits, the Austrian system was very successful in maintaining cohesion and stability as well as in achieving economic prosperity. Austria's post-war economic development was among the strongest in Europe.

Chapter 6 presented an overview of the history of the FPÖ between 1949 and 1986. In this chapter, the following points were stressed. Prior to 1986 support for the FPÖ, with the exception of a few years immediately following its initial set-up in 1949 (under the name *Verein des Unabhängigen*), was always hovering around the level of 6 percent of votes cast. This was, it is worth adding, not the result of passivity or a lack of political initiatives. Rather, the history of the FPÖ during these decades was marked by a constant ideological battle between right-wing extremism and reform; between, on the one hand, German nationalist, anti-communist, elitist, fascist and outright National Socialist ideas, and, on the other hand, (National) liberalism, market orientation, and even attempts at 'neo-liberalism'. One should also note that anti-elitism or populism did not seem to constitute an elaborate and dominating ideological theme prior to 1986.

Although the FPÖ barely managed to stay in parliament before the 1980s, it should be recognised that probably the weakest years in its history occurred between 1983 and 1986, i.e. the coalition years with the SPÖ. This negative correlation between governmental power and electoral appeal recurred following the onset of the governmental coalition between the FPÖ and the ÖVP in 2000. As was discussed in the chapter on populism, one of the salient qualities of populist parties is the fact that electoral support tends to diminish once governmental power is achieved.

As a final observation, the FPÖ prior to 1986 appeared to be a different party to Haider's FPÖ. Whereas the FPÖ prior to Haider's leadership had tried to develop a coherent world-view while oscillating between more liberal views and more right-wing extremist views, Haider's party gradually shed ideological consistency for the benefit of a more instrumental approach, whereby maximising voter support and breaking the dual elite rule of the ÖVP and SPÖ became the key objective. Another main difference simply had to do with political strength. Prior to 1986, the party was very weak, and after 1986 it rapidly became very strong.

Jörg Haider through his personal style, charisma and populist rhetoric had discovered a new formula for electoral success.

Chapter 7 then took a close look at a wide variety of party material: yearbooks, party programmes, and famous speeches and statements by Jörg Haider and other prominent party members. These were analysed in order to determine the respective weight given to right-wing extremist and populist themes. To broaden the picture, the EU sanctions against the Austrian government and the concluding 'Report' were also analysed.

There are plenty of statements by Haider and prominent party members that can be taken as clear evidence of right-wing extremist views. Once contextualised and scrutinised more closely, however, some of these statements seemed less extreme. While the shift from the 1985 Salzburg Programme to the 1997 Linz Programme did exhibit an increase in the rhetoric against immigration, which is typical of right-wing extremist parties, the majority of the material in the 1997 party programme indicated a clear shift from (National) liberalism to anti-elitism and populism. Chapter 7 concluded with a discussion of the EU sanctions, which offered a good example of an international and well-coordinated response to what was feared to be escalating voter support for a right-wing extremist party in the middle of Europe.

While the public speeches and the rhetoric of the FPÖ may reveal right-wing extremist sentiments, many of these could also be seen to express conservative or populist views. There are innumerable shades on the scale from left to right, and these nuances should not be forgotten. A thorough analysis of the amount and weight of right-wing extremist material in the two party programmes as well as in the yearbooks showed that it was very small, and in the yearbook editions from 1996 onwards it appeared entirely absent.

Chapter 8 presented a wide array of quantitative data, election results, exit polls and voter surveys conducted by well-established research institutes. The data clearly confirmed the findings of the previous chapters. Surveys demonstrated that FPÖ voters are only marginally more susceptible to right-wing extremist rhetoric, anti-Semitic views and capacity for solidarity with foreigners, than voters of other parties. Moreover, a number of consecutive exit poll surveys showed that reasons that may be classed as associated with right-wing extremism remained of moderate importance to the rise of the FPÖ during Jörg Haider's leadership. This is not to say that right-wing extremist views should be underestimated and neglected. The FPÖ was always a safe haven for racists, fascists, ultra-nationalists and National Socialists, and their presence must always be taken seriously. Yet right-wing extremism on its own fails to explain the phenomenal rise of the FPÖ. The data clearly shows that the most important reason for the strong increase in voter support for the FPÖ under Haider was his appeal to typically anti-elitist themes – such as fighting corruption and uncovering scandals.

Jörg Haider's two books, *Die Freiheit, die ich meine* and *Befreite Zukunft* focus on anti-elitist themes as Chapter 9 expounded in some detail. The themes of these two books, their cultural, political and economic critiques of Austrian corporatism feature prominently in the party rhetoric, programmes and political statements and campaigns. *Die Freiheit, die ich meine*, published in 1993, offers a good insight into the political platform of the FPÖ at a time when liberal views and sympathisers were on their way out. *Befreite Zukunft* was published in 1997 at the height of FPÖ power and influence. This was also the year when the 'liberal' Salzburg Programme from 1985 was replaced by the Linz Programme, from which references to liberalism had disappeared. Judging from the 1997 *Befreite Zukunft*, however, the perspective from which liberalism is criticised is not that of right-wing extremism, but that of a systematic and thorough anti-elitism and populism, spiced up with repeated references to neo-liberalism and calls for deregulation. Save for the lack of themes in defence of deregulation and

the weak state, *Die Freiheit, die ich meine* displays a very similar outlook. The main message of *Die Freiheit, die ich meine* and *Befreite Zukunft* takes the form of a rather stereotypical and emotional critique of the failure of the 'big parties', and a strong statement of the urgent need for political change.

What About the Events since 2000?

The introduction discussed the reasons why the period of Jörg Haider's leadership between 1986 and 2000 made this an interesting period to study in the history of a controversial European political party. A decade has now passed since the ÖVP, in late 1999, entered into a government coalition with the FPÖ. What has happened to the FPÖ since then? Do the developments since 2000 support the findings of this thesis?

Chapter 4 demonstrated that populist parties, once in power and part of the governmental elite, typically face the dilemma of either having to shed their populist and anti-elitist rhetoric or to join the opposition again in order to remain faithful to their populist stance. In this context it is notable that the rise of the party started once the coalition with the SPÖ had come to a sudden halt in late 1986: this further supports the paradoxical link between being in opposition and having electoral appeal for parties with a populist stance.

The initial period of the government coalition between the FPÖ and the ÖVP corresponded with the EU-sanctions. On 1 May 2000, not long after the sanctions were imposed, the FPÖ responded to the pressure with a substantial move: Jörg Haider resigned as a leader of the party and was replaced by Susanne Riess-Passer. The subsequent disarray characterizing the performance of the FPÖ as a coalition partner offers a good illustration of what generally happens to a right-wing populist party that achieves voter success. This incompetence was chiefly caused by long periods of comfortable opposition,

whereby the party gradually had forgotten how to discern between vote catching tactics and political and economic realities. As a rule, this inner confusion in political power leads to escalating tensions, followed by a complete disintegration. Within a year, half the FPÖ ministers had been forced to step down; only to be followed by the party secretaries and two general managers. Shortly thereafter, in September 2002, as a consequence of accelerating conflicts within the FPÖ, the party leadership along with the newly elected party leader Susanne Riess-Passer were forced to resign.

From its peak in the 1999 national elections, when the FPÖ was on a par with the ÖVP with 26.9 percent of the vote, its support plummeted to 10 percent during the next election in 2002, a loss of more than 3 out of 5 voters.

The tensions within the FPÖ finally resulted in a sudden rift when Jörg Haider unexpectedly launched a political competitor by the name of *Bündnis Zukunft Österreich* (Union for the future of Austria) (BZÖ) on 4 April 2005. The split had drastic repercussions, as suddenly the FPÖ was left without its most prominent leader and had also lost other leading figures at the national and provincial level.

Apart from Haider's personal ambitions, the ideological motives for the split remain unclear. The respective party programmes are very similar. The Party Programme of BZÖ – 'Goals, ideas and visions' contains, for instance, a populist, all-embracing agenda that is reminiscent of the FPÖ. While the party programme attacks 'the destructive power of globalisation', it also sees 'the introduction of a (neo-liberal and regressive) flat tax' as 'a goal and an answer', and demands that the tax system be remade along the lines of a 'slender, but strong state.' The 'social market economy' proposed by the BZÖ appears identical to the 'fair market economy' of the FPÖ, while the BZÖ's call for 'strong control over immigration' also mirrors the stance of the FPÖ (BZÖ n.d., 'Programm: Ziele, Ideen und Visionen').

Subsequent to 2000 the FPÖ faced consequences that are predicted to happen to right-wing populist parties once in power. In fact, the fate of the FPÖ, from the moment of governmental co-rule onwards, is a text-book case of the destiny awaiting successful right-wing populist parties.

In addition to these examples dealing with what seems to be the inevitable 'fate' of right-wing populist parties, the FPÖ also exhibited other traits that clearly point in the direction of right-wing populism. Right-wing populist parties are likely to respond to criticism in a heavy-handed manner – often by making extensive use of the law. They are also prone to going to some lengths to boost their chances during an election and, if possible, to taint the reputation of political rivals. On 29 February, 2000, Dieter Böhmdörfer was elected as FPÖ Minister of Justice. In his previous role as Haider's personal attorney, Böhmdörfer had made extensive use of the defamation clause as a means of silencing critics of Jörg Haider and the FPÖ. Böhmdörfer was personally responsible during the so-called *Spitzelaffäre* or the 'police informant scandal', in which numerous FPÖ politicians including Jörg Haider were involved in illegally retrieving police data about Social Democrats and other critics. Even though the investigation was called off for lack of evidence, Böhmdörfer was left under a cloud of suspicion for stating that his friend Haider was 'above all suspicion' even before the investigation had started (Gordon 2001, p. 399).

The results of the 2008 national elections were even more startling than those of 1999. While in 1999 the FPÖ under Jörg Haider gained 26.9 percent, with more votes than the ÖVP (also on 26.9 percent) but coming a clear second to the SPÖ (with 33.1 percent), in 2008 the FPÖ and the BZÖ together achieved a stunning 28.2 percent. The FPÖ reached 17.5 percent and the BZÖ, participating in a national election for the first time, a remarkable 10.7 percent. Support for the ÖVP had plummeted to a mere 26 percent, beneath its previous record low from 1999 (26.9 percent), and had by now clearly been overtaken by support for the two right-wing parties. The Social Democrats' share of the vote had dropped by 6

percent to 29.3 percent, significantly lower than its previous low in 1999. Hence, the right-wing force in Austria, seen as an (imagined) united force of the FPÖ and the BZÖ was, at the time of Haider's death, only a modest 1.1 percent away from becoming the largest political force in Austria.

Shortly after the death of Jörg Haider, there were doubts about the future of BZÖ. In the 2009 local elections in Carinthia, however, the party was supported by no less than 44.9 per cent of votes cast, practically the sum total of the shares of the SPÖ (28.7 per cent), and the ÖVP (16.8 per cent). There has also been speculation about a pending merger between FPÖ and BZÖ. Already before the National elections in October 2008 and Haider's sudden demise, Ewald Stadler, who had moved from the FPÖ to the BZÖ, announced: 'We, including Jörg Haider, want a cooperation or union between the FPÖ and the BZÖ ...' (Stadler 2008). It is, however, too early to tell whether the lasting vigour of the BZÖ will increase the chances of unity between the two parties, or whether the BZÖ will remain a right-wing populist force in its own right.

Right-wing Extremism and Populism and Its Wider Implications

In the recent EU election, a number of right-wing, nationalist parties managed to gain seats in the parliament. The above mentioned Hungarian *Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom*, (Movement for a Better Hungary), or *Jobbik* for short, went from non-existence to 14.7 percent and became the third largest party in parliament. According to its party programme, *Jobbik* wants to nationalise foreign banks, cancel all payments to the IMF and fight 'gypsy criminality'. In Bulgaria, *ATAKA* (meaning 'attack' in Bulgarian) – widely seen as EU-hostile, racist and anti-Semitic – gained 11.3 per cent.⁸³ In Slovakia, *Slovenská národná strana* (SNS), (Slovak National Party) labeled racist, entered the European parliament, and the Rumanian *Partidul România Mare* (PRM) (The

⁸³ ATAKA stands for a parliamentary community of Bulgarian nationalist organisations.

Greater Romania Party), advocating a greater Rumania, achieved 7.2 percent. In the Netherlands, Geerd Wilders' Freedom Party – accused of Islamophobia – became the second largest party with 17 percent. The British National Party running on a clearly racist and ultra-nationalist platform gained two seats in the European Parliament.⁸⁴

The success of these right-wing fringe parties is a reason for concern. The programmes of many of these parties is often much more racist, anti-establishment, anti-Brussels, anti-IMF, etc. than the FPÖ ever was. Some observers have called for decisive action to counter this menace (Traynor 2009). As the present thesis has shown, it is important to understand the real motivations and factors behind the voters' attraction to these parties. Are they attracted by the right-wing extremist and vibrant ultra-nationalist views, or are they predominantly protest voters, lured by anti-elitist rhetoric? Of course, no general answer is possible. As for the BNP or the Hungarian *Jobbik*, the voters are probably predominantly right-wing extremists fuelled by the current economic crisis and massive job losses. To counter these political forces and to combat this menace it is important to be clear about why voters flock to support them in such large and worrying proportions.

A Final Note

This thesis has presented an explanation for the rise of the FPÖ during Jörg Haider's leadership. The most common explanation, right-wing extremism, failed to qualify as the main reason. A variety of quantitative data from different voter surveys and election polls pointed in another direction. The party's increasing support among voters was mainly caused by its critique of the Austrian elite. This conclusion was underscored by different qualitative material. The system of Austrian corporatism started to crumble in the mid-1980s, virtually at the same

⁸⁴ (www.bnp.org/uk/policies/immigration)

moment as Jörg Haider was elected party leader of the FPÖ, and ended when the FPÖ rose above the ÖVP and became the second largest political party at the national level. Contrary to the expectations of its critics, the FPÖ, once in power, did not seize the opportunity and create an authoritarian rule, but immediately started to disintegrate, resulting in a sharp decline in voter support and an eventual split between the FPÖ and the BZÖ. This vigour in opposition and haplessness when in power is typical populist party behavior. From the mid-1980s, it is increasingly hard to measure the FPÖ with any ideological yardstick. Instead, in classic populist fashion, it kept moving from one position to another, trying to appeal to the entire electorate.

The reason why Haider's FPÖ became such a central political player in Austria was that his anti-elitism struck a chord among the common electorate. From the distance, this looks like nothing but a political change among voters. Instead of simply criticising Haider and labelling his voters as right-wing extremists, his political opponents should perhaps have tried to understand and investigate why he was so successful in attracting such a large share of protest voters, and why their own efforts in countering the FPÖ only seemed to bring fuel to Haider's fire. Haider exposed many shortcomings of the preceding system and managed to break the dual monopoly of the ÖVP and SPÖ. Even though Haider's motives were always somewhat murky, his efforts were still technically liberating, because he contributed to Austria becoming a more pluralistic, mature democracy.

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Annex 1. National and Local Election Results since 1945

2. EU-elections in Austria 1996-2009

1.

Table A1								
Election Results – Nationalratswahlen since 1945								
Percentage of total number of voters. Number of mandates in Nationalrat in brackets (...)								
Year	SPÖ	ÖVP	FPÖ	BZÖ	Grüne	LIF	KPÖ	Government (Head of Government)
1945	44.6 (76)	49.8 (85)	-	-	-	-	5.4 (4)	ÖVP/SPÖ/KPÖ (Figl, ÖVP)
1949	38.7 (67)	44.0 (77)	11.7 (16) (VdU)	-	-	-	5.1 (5)	ÖVP/SPÖ (Figl, ÖVP)
1953	42.1 (73)	41.3 (74)	10.9 (14) (VdU)	-	-	-	5.3 (4)	ÖVP/SPÖ (Raab, ÖVP)
1956	43.0 (74)	46.0 (82)	6.5 (6)	-	-	-	4.4 (3)	ÖVP/SPÖ (Raab, ÖVP)
1959	44.8 (78)	44.2 (79)	7.7 (8)	-	-	-	3.3 (0)	ÖVP/SPÖ (Raab, (Gorbach, ÖVP)
1962	44.0 (76)	45.4 (81)	7.0 (8)	-	-	-	3.0 (0)	ÖVP/SPÖ (Gorbach, (Klaus, ÖVP)
1966	42.6 (74)	48.3 (85)	5.4 (6)	-	-	-	0.4 (0)	ÖVP (Klaus)
1970	48.4 (81)	44.7 (78)	5.6 (6)	-	-	-	1.0 (0)	SPÖ (Min.gov.) (Kreisky, SPÖ)
1971	50.0 (93)	43.1 (80)	5.4 (10)	-	-	-	0.4 (0)	SPÖ (Kreisky, SPÖ)
1975	51.0 (93)	43.0 (80)	5.4 (10)	-	-	-	1.2 (0)	SPÖ (Kreisky, SPÖ)
1979	51.0 (95)	42.0 (77)	6.1 (11)	-	-	-	1.0 (0)	SPÖ (Kreisky, SPÖ)
1983	47.6 (90)	43.2 (81)	5.0 (12)	-	-	-	0.7 (0)	SPÖ/FPÖ (Kreisky, SPÖ)
1986	43.1 (80)	41.3 (77)	9.7 (18)	-	4.8 (8)	-	0.7 (0)	ÖVP/SPÖ (Vranitsky, SPÖ)
1990	43.0	32.1	16.6	-	4.8	-	0.5	ÖVP/SPÖ

	(80)	(60)	(33)		(10)		(0)	(Vranitsky, SPÖ)
1994	34.9 (65)	27.7 (52)	22.5 (42)	-	7.3 (13)	5.9 (11)	0.3 (0)	ÖVP/SPÖ (Vranitsky, SPÖ)
1995	38.1 (71)	28.3 (53)	21.9 (40)	-	4.8 (9)	5.5 (10)	0.3 (0)	ÖVP/SPÖ (Vranitsky, Klima, SPÖ)
1999	33.1 (65)	26.9 (52)	26.9 (52)	-	7.4 (14)	3.7 (0)	-	ÖVP/FPÖ (Schüssel, ÖVP)
2002	36.5 (69)	42.3 (79)	10.0 (18)	-	9.5 (17)	1.0 (0)	0.7 (Others)	ÖVP/FPÖ (2003) (Schüssel, ÖVP)
2006	35.3 (68)	34.3 (66)	11.0 (21)	4.1 (7)	11.0 (21)	-	-	SPÖ/ÖVP (Gusenbauer, SPÖ)
2008	29.7 (57)	26.0 (51)	17.5 (34)	10.7 (21)	10.4 (20)	-	-	SPÖ/ÖVP (Faymann, SPÖ)

Source: Piringer 1998, p. 174, and Khol et al 2001, p. 731ff.

Information about election results 2002-2008: Bundesministerium für Inneres, www.bmi.gv.at/cms/bmi_wahlen

Table A2								
Election Results – Nationalratswahlen since 1945 – Number of Votes								
Year	SPÖ	ÖVP	FPÖ	BZÖ	Grüne	LIF	KPÖ	Election Participation (%)
1945	1 434 898	1 602 227	-	-	-	-	174 257	94.3
1949	1 623 524	1 846 581	489 273	-	-	-	213 066	96.8
1953	1 818 517	1 781 777	472 866	-	-	-	228 159	95.8
1956	1 873 295	1 999 986	283 749	-	-	-	192 483	96.0
1959	1 953 935	1 928 043	336 110	-	-	-	142 578	94.2
1962	1 960 685	2 024 501	313 895	-	-	-	135 520	93.8
1966	1 928 985	2 191 109	242 570	-	-	-	18 636	93.8
1970	2 221 981	2 051 012	253 425	-	-	-	44 750	92.7
1971	2 280 268	1 964 935	248 473	-	-	-	61 762	92.4
1975	2 324 309	1 980 379	249 317	-	-	-	54 971	92.9
1979	2 412 778	1 981 286	286 644	-	-	-	45 270	92.2
1983	2 312 529	2 098 808	241 789	-	-	-	31 912	92.6
1986	2 092 024	2 003 663	472 205	-	234 028	-	35 104	90.7
1990	1 965 032	1 460 392	754 379	-	225 084	-	25 682	83.2
1994	1 617 804	1 281 846	1 042 332	-	338 538	276 580	11 919	81.9
1995	1 843 474	1 370 510	1 060 337	-	232 208	267 025	13 938	86.0
1999	1 532 448	1 243 672	1 244 087	-	342 260	168 612	-	80.4
2006	1 663 986	1 616 493	519 598	193 539	520 130	-	-	78.5
2008	1 430 206	1 269 656	857 029	522 933	509 936	-	-	78.8
Information about election results 1999: Bundesministerium für Inneres, www.bmi.gv.at/cms/BMI_wahlen/nationalrat/NRW_1999.aspx								
Information about election results 2006: www.bmi.gv.at/cms/BMI_wahlen/nationalrat/NRW_2006.aspx								
Information about election results 2008: www.bmi.gv.at/cms/BMI_wahlen/nationalrat/NRW_2008.aspx								

Table A3

Local Election Results since 1945 – Burgenland

Percentage of votes. Distribution of mandates in brackets (..)

Year	SPÖ	ÖVP	FPÖ	Grüne	LIF	KPÖ
1945	44.9 (14)	51.8 (17)	-	-	-	3.3 (1)
1949	40.4 (13)	52.6 (18)	3.9 (1) (VdU)	-	-	2.9 (0)
1953	44.8 (14)	48.4 (16)	3.6 (1) (VdU)	-	-	3.2 (1)
1956	46.0 (15)	49.2 (16)	2.9 (1)	-	-	1.9 (0)
1960	46.2 (15)	48.1 (15)	4.6 (1)	-	-	1.1 (0)
1964	48.2 (16)	47.3 (15)	3.6 (1)	-	-	0.9 (0)
1968	50.0 (17)	46.6 (15)	2.2 (0)	-	-	0.5 (0)
1972	50.5 (16)	45.9 (16)	3.0 (1)	-	-	0.5 (0)
1977	51.9 (20)	45.1 (16)	2.3 (0)	-	-	0.4 (0)
1982	53.2 (20)	43.0 (16)	3.0 (0)	-	-	0.5 (0)
1987	47.3 (17)	41.5 (16)	7.3 (3)	-	-	0.5 (0)
1991	48.2 (17)	38.2 (15)	9.7 (4)	-	-	-
1996	44.5 (17)	36.0 (14)	14.6 (5)	2.5 (0)	1.4 (0)	-
2000	46.6 (17)	35.3 (13)	12.7 (4)	5.5 (2)	(0)	-
2005	52.2 (19)	36.4 (13)	5.8 (2)	5.2 (2)	(0)	-
2010	48.3 (18)	34.6 (13)	9.0 (3)	4.2 (1)	(0)	-

Piringer 1998, p. 155, and Khol et al., 2001, p. 731ff.

Information about election results 2000: SORA – Institute for social research and analysis,
www.sora.at/de/start.asp?b=25Information about election results 2005 and 2010: Landtagswahl 2005 und 2010, Land Burgenland,
Bundesministerium für Inneres,
wahlen.bgld.gv.at/wahlen/landtag/Wahlergebnisse/WahlenAuswahl.asp Date of access: July 12, 2010

Table A4							
Local Election Results since 1945 – Carinthia							
Percentage of votes. Distribution of mandates in brackets (..)							
Year	SPÖ	ÖVP	FPÖ	BZÖ	Grüne	LIF	KPÖ
1945	48.8 (18)	39.8 (14)	-		-	-	8.1 (1)
1949	40.7 (15)	31.9 (12)	20.5 (8) (VdU)		-	-	4.0 (1)
1953	48.2 (18)	28.5 (11)	16.9 (6) (VdU)		-	-	4.1 (1)
1956	48.1 (18)	32.7 (12)	15.7 (5)		-	-	3.1 (0)
1960	48.5 (18)	33.3 (12)	14.9 (5)		-	-	3.0 (1)
1965	49.3 (18)	32.9 (12)	13.4 (5)		-	-	2.8 (1)
1970	53.1 (20)	32.5 (12)	12.1 (4)		-	-	2.3 (0)
1975	51.4 (20)	32.4 (12)	11.8 (4)		-	-	2.0 (0)
1979	54.0 (20)	31.9 (12)	11.7 (4)		-	-	1.0 (0)
1984	51.6 (20)	28.3 (12)	16.0 (5)		0.7 (0)	-	0.8 (0)
1989	46.0 (17)	21.0 (11)	29.0 (11)		1.6 (0)	-	0.6 (0)
1994	37.4 (14)	23.8 (13)	33.3 (13)		1.6 (0)	2.6 (0)	-
1999	32.9 (12)	20.7 (16)	42.1 (16)		(0)	(0)	0.4 (0)
2004	38.4 (14)	11.6 (4)	42.4 (16)		6.7 (2)	-	0.6
2009	28.7 (11)	16.8 (6)	3.8 (0)	44.9 (17)	5.1 (2)	-	0.5

In 1945 the 'Democratic Party' achieved three mandates.
Piringer 1998, p. 155, and Khol et al. 2001, p. 731ff.
Information about election results 2004: SORA – Institute for social research and analysis,
www.sora.at/de/start.asp?b=62
Information about election results 2009: www.sora.at/de/start.asp?b=517

Table A5

Local Election Results since 1945 – Lower Austria

Percentage of votes. Distribution of mandates in brackets (..)

Year	SPÖ	ÖVP	FPÖ	BZÖ	Grüne	LIF	KPÖ
1945	40.4 (22)	54.5 (32)	-		-	-	5.1 (2)
1949	37.3 (22)	52.5 (31)	4.4 (0) (VdU)		-	-	5.5 (3)
1954	40.9 (23)	50.7 (30)	2.6 (0) (VdU)		-	-	5.8 (3)
1959	42.3 (25)	50.9 (31)	3.9 (0)		-	-	2.9 (0)
1964	42.8 (25)	51.7 (31)	3.0 (0)		-	-	2.4 (0)
1969	44.6 (26)	50.4 (30)	3.2 (0)		-	-	1.0 (0)
1974	43.9 (25)	52.1 (31)	3.0 (0)		-	-	1.0 (0)
1979	45.4 (27)	49.6 (29)	3.2 (0)		-	-	0.8 (0)
1983	41.3 (24)	54.5 (32)	1.7 (0)		-	-	0.8 (0)
1988	37.4 (22)	47.5 (29)	9.4 (5)		2.4 (0)	-	0.8 (0)
1993	34.0 (20)	44.2 (26)	12.1 (7)		3.2 (0)	5.1 (3)	0.2 (0)
1998	30.5 (18)	44.8 (27)	16.1 (9)		4.5 (2)	2.1 (0)	0.6 (0)
2003	33.6 (19)	53.3 (31)	4.5 (2)		7.2 (4)	(0)	0.8 (0)
2008	25.5 (15)	54.4 (31)	10.5 (6)	0.72	6.9 (4)	(0)	0.9 (0)

Piringer 1998, p. 155, and Khol et al 2001, p. 731ff.

Information for 2003 and 2008: www.bmi.gv.at/cms/bmi_wahlen

Table A6						
Local Election Results since 1945 – Upper Austria						
Percentage of votes. Distribution of mandates in brackets (..)						
Year	SPÖ	ÖVP	FPÖ	Grüne	LIF	KPÖ
1945	28.3 (18)	59.1 (30)	-	-	-	2.6 (0)
1949	30.8 (15)	45.0 (23)	20.8 (10) (VdU)	-	-	3.1 (0)
1955	39.4 (19)	48.1 (25)	9.6 (4) (VdU)	-	-	2.9 (0)
1961	39.6 (19)	48.8 (25)	9.7 (4)	-	-	1.9 (0)
1967	46.0 (23)	45.2 (23)	7.5 (2)	-	-	0.8 (0)
1973	43.4 (24)	47.7 (28)	7.7 (4)	-	-	0.9 (0)
1979	41.4 (23)	51.6 (30)	6.4 (4)	-	-	0.6 (0)
1985	38.0 (23)	52.1 (30)	5.0 (3)	1.7 (0)	-	0.6 (0)
1991	31.4 (19)	45.2 (26)	17.7 (11)	3.1 (0)	-	-
1997	27.0 (16)	42.7 (25)	20.6 (12)	5.8 (3)	2.1 (0)	-
2003	38.3 (22)	43.4 (25)	8.4 (4)	9.1 (5)	(0)	0.8 (0)
2009	24.9 (14)	46.8 (28)	15.3 (9)	9.2 (5)	(0)	0.6 (0)
Piringer 1998, p. 155, and Khol et al 2001, p. 731ff.						
Information for 2003: www.bmi.gv.at/cms/bmi_wahlen						

Table A7							
Local Election Results since 1945 – Salzburg							
Percentage of votes. Distribution of mandates in brackets (..)							
Year	SPÖ	ÖVP	FPÖ	BZÖ	Grüne	LIF	KPÖ
1945	39.5 (10)	56.7 (15)	-	-	-	-	3.8 (1)
1949	33.6 (9)	43.6 (12)	18.5 (5) (VdU)	-	-	-	3.4 (0)
1954	38.2 (13)	45.9 (15)	13.2 (4) (VdU)	-	-	-	2.3 (0)
1959	38.6 (13)	43.3 (14)	16.1 (5)	-	-	-	1.8 (0)
1964	40.9 (13)	44.9 (15)	11.8 (4)	-	-	-	1.2 (0)
1969	40.4 (13)	40.7 (13)	18.0 (6)	-	-	-	0.7 (0)
1974	36.2 (13)	47.2 (18)	15.5 (5)	-	-	-	1.2 (0)
1979	39.1 (14)	45.4 (17)	13.3 (5)	-	-	-	0.4 (0)
1984	35.2 (13)	50.1 (19)	8.7 (4)	-	-	-	0.5 (0)
1989	31.9 (12)	43.9 (16)	16.4 (6)	-	-	-	0.5 (0)
1994	27.1 (11)	38.6 (14)	19.5 (8)	-	-	(0)	-
1999	32.5 (12)	38.8 (15)	19.6 (7)	-	-	3.7 (0)	-
2004	45.4 (17)	37.9 (14)	8.7 (3)	-	8 (2)	(0)	-
2009	39.4 (15)	36.6 (14)	13.0 (5)	3.7 (0)	7.4 (2)	(0)	-

Piringer 1998, p. 155 and Khol et al. 2001, p. 731ff.

Information about elections 2004: www.sora.at/de/start.asp?b=63

Information about elections 2009: www.sora.at/de/start.asp?b=518

Table A8

Local Election Results since 1945 – Styria

Percentage of votes. Distribution of mandates in brackets (..)

Year	SPÖ	ÖVP	FPÖ	BZÖ	Grüne	LIF	KPÖ
1945	41.6 (20)	53.0 (26)	-		-	-	5.4 (2)
1949	37.4 (18)	42.9 (22)	14.6 (7) (VdU)		-	-	4.5 (1)
1953	41.1 (20)	40.7 (21)	13.6 (6) (VdU)		-	-	4.4 (1)
1957	43.6 (21)	46.4 (24)	6.8 (3)		-	-	2.6 (0)
1961	41.7 (20)	47.1 (24)	7.3 (3)		-	-	3.8 (1)
1965	42.2 (24)	48.4 (29)	5.8 (2)		-	-	3.2 (1)
1970	44.7 (26)	48.6 (28)	5.3 (2)		-	-	1.3 (0)
1974	41.2 (23)	53.3 (31)	4.2 (2)		-	-	1.3 (0)
1978	40.3 (23)	52.0 (30)	6.4 (3)		-	-	1.3 (0)
1981	42.7 (24)	50.9 (30)	5.0 (2)		-	-	1.0 (0)
1986	37.6 (22)	51.7 (30)	4.6 (2)		3.7 (2)	-	1.2 (0)
1991	35.0 (21)	44.2 (26)	15.4 (9)		2.8 (0)	-	0.6 (0)
1995	36.0 (21)	36.3 (21)	17.2 (10)		4.2 (2)	3.8 (2)	0.5 (0)
2000	32.3 (19)	47.3 (27)	12.4 (7)		5.6 (3)	1.1 (0)	1.0 (0)
2005	41.6 (25)	38.7 (24)	4.6 (0)	1.7 (0)	4.7 (3)	-	6.3 (4)

Piringer 1998, p. 155, and Khol et al. 2001, p. 731ff.

Information about election results 2000: www.sora.at/de/start.asp?b=109Information about election results 2005: www.sora.at/de/start.asp?b=246

Table A9

Local Election Results since 1945 – Tyrol

Percentage of votes. Distribution of mandates in brackets (..)

Year	SPÖ	ÖVP	FPÖ	Grüne	LIF	KPÖ
1945	28.0 (10)	69.8 (26)	-	-	-	2.2 (0)
1949	24.0 (8)	56.4 (24)	17.4 (4) (VDU)	-	-	1.6 (0)
1953	27.4 (9)	57.5 (23)	9.9 (3) (VdU)	-	-	1.6 (0)
1957	31.0 (11)	59.2 (23)	8.5 (2)	-	-	0.8 (0)
1961	30.1 (11)	59.6 (23)	9.1 (2)	-	-	1.1 (0)
1965	30.4 (10)	63.6 (25)	6.0 (1)	-	-	No particip.
1970	33.5 (12)	60.4 (23)	5.7 (1)	-	-	0.2 (0)
1975	32.4 (11)	61.1 (24)	5.9 (1)	-	-	0.6 (0)
1979	29.0 (10)	63.0 (24)	7.0 (2)	-	-	0.4 (0)
1984	26.0 (9)	65.0 (25)	6.0 (2)	0.8 (0)	-	0.4 (0)
1989	22.9 (9)	48.9 (19)	15.6 (5)	8.1 (3)	-	0.6 (0)
1994	19.9 (7)	47.3 (19)	16.2 (6)	10.6 (4)	3.3 (0)	-
1999	21.8 (8)	47.2 (18)	19.7 (7)	8.0 (3)	3.2 (0)	0.1 (0)
2003	25.8 (9)	49.9 (20)	8.0 (2)	15.6 (5)		0.7 (0)
2008	15.6 (5)	40.4 (16)	12.7 (4)	10.4 (4)	-	1.2 (0)

Piringer 1998, p. 155, and Khol et al 2001, p. 731f.

Information about election results 2003 and 2008:
wahlen.tirol.gv.at/wahlen/init.do?cmd=list&cid=1

Table A10						
Local Election Results since 1945 – Vorarlberg						
Percentage of votes. Distribution of mandates in brackets (..)						
Year	SPÖ	ÖVP	FPÖ	Grüne	LIF	KPÖ
1945	27.3 (7)	70.2 (19)	-	-	-	2.5 (0)
1949	19.1 (4)	56.4 (16)	22.1 (6) (VdU)	-	-	2.4 (0)
1954	26.0 (7)	58.0 (16)	13.7 (3) (VdU)	-	-	2.3 (0)
1959	29.3 (10)	54.7 (21)	14.9 (5)	-	-	1.1 (0)
1964	29.5 (10)	53.5 (20)	15.8 (6)	-	-	1.2 (0)
1969	27.7 (9)	50.0 (20)	21.0 (7)	-	-	1.3 (0)
1974	27.0 (10)	56.9 (22)	13.9 (4)	-	-	0.9 (0)
1979	29.0 (10)	57.5 (22)	12.5 (4)	-	-	1.0 (0)
1984	24.0 (9)	51.6 (20)	10.5 (3)	13.0 (4)	-	0.9 (0)
1989	21.3 (8)	51.0 (20)	16.1 (6)	5.2 (2)	-	0.7 (0)
1994	16.2 (6)	49.9 (20)	18.4 (7)	7.8 (3)	3.5 (0)	-
1999	13.0 (5)	45.7 (18)	27.5 (11)	6.0 (2)	3.4 (0)	-
2004	16.9 (6)	54.9 (21)	13.0 (5)	10.1 (4)	-	-
2009	10.0 (3)	50.8 (20)	25.1 (9)	10.6 (4)	-	-

Piringer 1998, p. 155, and Khol et al 2001, p. 731f

Information about election 2004: www.sora.at/de/start.asp?b=32

Information about election 2009: <http://www.sora.at/themen/wahlverhalten/wahlanalysen/ltw-vbg09.html>

Table A11

Local Election Results since 1945 – Vienna (Gemeinderatswahl)

Percentage of votes. Distribution of mandates in brackets (..)

Year	SPÖ	ÖVP	FPÖ	BZÖ	Grüne	LIF	KPÖ
1945	57.5 (58)	34.5 (36)	-		-	-	8.0 (6)
1949	49.9 (52)	34.9 (35)	6.8 (6) (VdU)		-	-	7.9 (7)
1954	52.7 (59)	33.2 (35)	4.6 (0) (VdU)		-	-	8.2 (6)
1959	54.4 (60)	32.4 (33)	8.0 (4)		-	-	5.2 (3)
1964	54.7 (60)	33.9 (35)	5.7 (3)		-	-	5.0 (2)
1969	56.9 (63)	27,8 (30)	7.2 (4)		-	-	2.9 (0)
1973	60.2 (66)	29.3 (31)	7.7 (3)		-	-	2.3 (0)
1978	57.2 (62)	33.8 (35)	6.5 (3)		-	-	1.8 (0)
1983	55.5 (61)	34.8 (37)	5.4 (2)		-	-	1.1 (0)
1987	54.9 (62)	28.4 (30)	9.7 (8)		4.4 (0)	-	1.7 (0)
1991	47.8 (52)	18.1 (18)	22.5 (23)		9.1 (7)	-	-
1996	39.1 (43)	15.2 (15)	27.9 (29)		7.9 (7)	7.9 (6)	0.5 (0)
2001	46.9 (52)	16.4 (16)	20.2 (21)		12.5 (11)	3.4	-
2005	49.1 (55)	18.8 (18)	14.8 (13)	1.2 (0)	14.6 (14)		

Piringer 1998, p. 155, and Khol et al 2001, p. 731ff

Information about election results 2001: www.sora.at/de/start.asp?b=108Information about election results 2005: www.sora.at/de/start.asp?b=245

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Table A 12									
EU- PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS- AUSTRIA									
Percentage of voters									
	SPÖ	ÖVP	FPÖ	BZÖ	LIF	Grüne	KPÖ (a) (b)	Liste Dr. Martin	Parti- cipation
1996	29.12	29.6	27.53	-	4.3	6.8	0.5	-	67.7
1999	30.7	31.71	23.40	-	2.7	9.3	0.7	-	49.4
2004	33.3	32.70	6.3	-	-	12.9	0.8	14.0	42.4
2009	23.7	30.0	12.7	4.6	-	9.9	0.7	17.7	46.0

Notes: (a) In 2004 KPÖ campaigned along with *Opposition für ein solidarisches Europa - Europäische Linke* and *Unabhängige* (b) In 2009 KPÖ campaigned along with *Europäische Linke*
Liste Dr. Martin is founded by the Austrian EU-critic Hans-Peter Martin. See also Martin and Schumann 1996.

Source: *Bundesministerium für Inneres, Wahlen, Europawahlen, www.bmi.gv/cms/BMI_wahlen/europawahl/start.aspx.*