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“We Love Our Heimat, but We Need Foreigners”

Tourism and the Reconstruction of Austria, 1945–55

Gundolf Graml

In the fall of 1945, President Karl Renner made what must have been a surprising plea amidst the ruins of World War II: “Wir lieben unsere Heimat, aber wir brauchen die Fremde! Wir brauchen den Fremdenverkehr und laden alle Welt zu uns zu Gaste. Wien und Salzburg werden als Stätten der Kunst, unsere Alpen als touristische Ziele ersten Ranges die Fremden mit Freude begrüßen.”¹

Renner’s statement features the very elements of economic self-colonization and tourist commodification that have formed a critical target throughout the postwar period for writers such as Ingeborg Bachmann, Franz Innerhofer, Thomas Bernhard, Felix Mitterer, Norbert Gstrein, and Nobel Laureate Elfriede Jelinek, to name only a few. By addressing the rapid social, cultural, economic, and environmental transformations caused by the stunning growth of the tourism sector in Austria after 1945, these literary works have also contributed to the long overdue dismantling of Austria’s conservative and patriarchal sociopolitical structures and have therefore become legitimate parts of the literary canon of post-1945 Austria. However, over time, the literary tourism critique has affirmed a notion of Austrian reality as hidden, covered up, concealed, camouflaged—the list could go on—by tourism. More specifically, in most critical texts about tourism and Austria, tourism appears as the main impediment for Austria’s coming to terms with its active role in the crimes of National Socialism. When Elfriede Jelinek was asked, “Are you referring to Alpine tourism as a perfect means to cover up history in Austria?” she replied, “Yes. Everything that has been done in this country since 1945 was the result of an intricate cover-up” (Brenner 30).²

Indeed, governments, corporations, politicians, academics, and teachers have used tourist stock images and narratives of Austria in order to reposition the country internationally, to sell goods, and, in general, to avoid responsibility for an inconvenient past. However, as I will argue throughout this essay, in doing so they have never been able to erase or cover up this inconvenient past, no matter how beautiful the images or how convincing the revisionist historiography. Instead of dismissing tourism as the “fake” surface covering up the “real” Austria, I will analyze tourism as a conglomeration of complex and often contradictory performances that also manage to display the not-so-beautiful aspects of Austria.

Historian Alon Confino has demonstrated how studying tourism can yield new results even in well-researched areas such as Germans’ selective remembrance of the Nazi past. Analyzing what he calls the “rhetoric of tourism,” Confino views tourism as a discursive space where historians might learn more about Germans’ attempts at addressing the Nazi past than in those documents, monuments, and events that explicitly deal with the memory of the Third Reich (“Traveling” 101–2). Confino’s observation that “tourism, like festivals, religious ritual, art, and cinema, is not a flight from reality but a symbolic practice and representation to understand and negotiate with it” emphasizes tourism’s double role as mirroring *and* shaping socioeconomic, political, and cultural practices (*Germany* 220). Applying this perspective to post–World War II Austria, I will analyze how tourism shaped the reconstruction of Austria between 1945 and 1955 both as a unified geographical entity and as a national community.

Owing to Austria’s prominent status as a tourist destination and to the sizable portion of Austria’s GDP generated by the tourism industry, many analyses of Austrian tourism after World War II have focused on quantifiable aspects (Brusatti). However, from a quantitative perspective, researching tourism in the immediate postwar period in Austria appears pointless, since, according to statistical data, tourism barely existed as an economic sector between 1945 and 1948.³ Since “crude consumption figures do not reveal very much of spatial practice,” as David Crouch formulates it (4), one must look beyond the number of overnight stays at other practices, narratives, and images in order to see to what degree tourism enabled the reemergence of Austria as a coherent place and as a national, cultural, and ethnic community.

The conceptualization of tourism as a *discourse* undermines conventional interpretations of tourism as inauthentic. Whether the place images of Austria distributed through tourism are real or false is of secondary importance

for my analysis. As cultural geographer Mike Crang writes, “It is not about the image of places as beheld by tourists, but rather the processes and practices of signification—where tourism takes up discourses and representations and uses them in ordering places, making meanings, making distinctions, and thus making places through actions” (Crang 48). According to Crang, interest in tourist places needs to focus on the “ontology of tourist places” instead of on the “epistemology of their representations” (Crang 53). Whether or not tourist places are authentic is less important than understanding how, by whom, and for what purposes they are being constructed.

This mobilization of the connections between place and identity in the fields of tourism studies and cultural geography has been influenced greatly by Judith Butler’s concept of *performativity*, “the reiterative and citational practice by which discourse produces the effects that it names” (Butler 2). While the term *performance* is all too easily confused with notions of conscious staging and of the intentional manipulation of an audience, the term *performativity* acknowledges that any process of identity construction is ultimately an enactment of already existing discourses that happens routinely and with varying degrees of reflection. Consequently, “the self is contingently and performatively produced,” as Coleman and Crang write, and places and spaces do not function anymore as the stabilizing elements in complex and fluid identity positions (“Grounded Tourists” 11). Political scientist Cynthia Weber has broadened this notion of performative identity construction to include the state. Weber argues that the allegedly “pre-discursive, natural” concept of the “state” is necessary as the “cultural referent [to which] sovereignty refers” but is in itself “performatively constituted by the very expressions that are said to be its result” (“Performative States” 91).

Based on this conceptual framework, I will not read postwar Austria as a stable entity that has used tourist images to construct a tendentious national and cultural identity. Rather, I will study postwar Austria as a performative enactment based on the repeated citation of tourist discourses. This is not to say that there has not been a “real” Austria but rather to accept that the best way to develop our understanding of reality is through an analysis of the “discursive performances” that construct it (Weber 80–81).

Where and What is Austria?

Visiting Austria a few months after the end of the war, the American author John Dos Passos was amazed “to find [him]self so deep in Russia so soon.”

The combination of destruction and destitution led him to describe Vienna as a city “dying by the inches” (Dos Passos 279). But it was not just the Russian-occupied area around Austria’s capital that illustrated the destruction caused by World War II. The partition into different occupation zones in general underscored the impression that only fragments were left of the country formerly known as Austria.⁴ The military demarcation lines resembled borders between “hostile nations,” and the increasing animosities between the Western Allies and the Soviet Union produced anxiety about the country’s future (Rauchensteiner 454).⁵

Against this background, a counter-image of Austria as unified, whole, and innocent began to emerge in the discourse of tourism, complementing political efforts at presenting Austria as Hitler’s first victim. In 1948, the Austrian Federal Press Service, under the guidance of its director Ernst Marboe, published *The Book of Austria*, a hybrid of popular history, visitor’s guide, and museum in pocket format and distributed it as an official gift for diplomats and foreign visitors. Despite the editor’s claim that the book “does not set out to be [...] a Baedeker [...] nor an encyclopedia,” the sequence of chapters, the stylistic blend of journalistic, literary, and scholarly writing, and the extensive use of pictures and maps firmly embed the book in the discourse of tourism (Marboe x).⁶

Unsurprisingly, the volume provides a highly nostalgic perspective on Austria’s Habsburg past and delivers a general overview of Austria’s history up to the beginning of the twentieth century, followed by a chapter-by-chapter description of the provinces that formed the Second Austrian Republic. Of particular interest is a section at the beginning, titled “Unborn Austria.” Although the section heading pertains to Austria’s stone-age origins, the intended analogies to the rebirth of Austria in 1945 are hard to ignore, especially because the subsequent first paragraph connects the prehistoric beginnings with the twentieth century in a paradoxical act of describing a not-yet-existing place with a historically overdetermined name:

He who would find Austria on the globe must turn the round ball of the earth slowly on its slanting axis, otherwise he might easily overlook the Austria of the 20th century. Where is this much-talked-of Austria? What is her place in space and time, in history and culture? (Marboe 3)

In 1945, Austria was more than a geographical marker, yet the reader is presented with an attempt to create a *tabula rasa*. These two questions evoke a

“place-panic,” which, as philosopher Edward Casey writes in his seminal work *The Fate of Place*, is an element of creation myths in general. Despite their foregrounding of chaos and disorder, such myths also always include signs “of [an] emerging order” (Casey 8–9; emphasis removed), and *The Book of Austria* is no exception. Embedded in the center of the page and framed by the above paragraph is a photograph of the Venus von Willendorf, a small statuette of an antique goddess of fertility dating back to 25,000 years B.C. that was found in Lower Austria in 1908. The statuette, considered to be one of the most significant archeological finds in Austria, symbolizes the historic time that links the postwar period with prehistorical epochs and, in so doing, also lays the foundation for the place of the “new” post-1945 Austria. Simultaneously, the Venus von Willendorf can be read as illustrative of the “emerging order” of contemporary Austria in 1945. The statuette’s presentation by *The Book of Austria* exemplifies a traditional, patriarchal gaze that renders the female body passive. If one takes, as *The Book of Austria* does, the Venus von Willendorf as a *pars pro toto* for Austria, it is Austria as a place that is rendered feminine. The subsequent historical overview elaborates on the chain of gendered logic in which femininity equals passivity equals innocence when it presents Austria as a space that had to endure continuous traffic, beginning with the “primitive tribes of Illyrans, Celts, [. . .] Teutons, [. . .] Huns, Goths, [. . .] Slavs,” for whom the land “became a bridge,” continuing with the Romans, and ending with the contemporary, desired stream of tourists (Marboe 5). This gendered perspective is common for the Western world, where “time [. . .] is typically coded masculine and space [. . .] feminine,” as geographer Doreen Massey notes (Massey 6). It is no surprise, therefore, that post-1945 Austrian governments embraced depictions of a passive Austria as welcome “evidence” that Austria bore no responsibility for National Socialist crimes. The annexation was, from this perspective, simply a repeat of earlier Teutonic utilization of Austria’s bridge function.⁷

It is not so much the feminized spatialization of Austria that was novel but the deployment of an imagined tourist whose presence would alleviate the “place-panic” and whose objective gaze would confirm the positive Austrian self-image. The phrase “He who would find Austria on the globe must turn the round ball of the earth slowly on its slanting axis” evokes the image of an explorer, a traveler, or a tourist turning the globe. This imaginary figure, deemed to be objective because he is outside the globe and, by extension, outside of Austria’s compromised recent history, vouches for Austria’s exist-

tence. By way of searching for the “much-talked-about” Austria, he not only acknowledges the existence of this place but he also simultaneously invokes the already existing matrix of facts, narratives, and images that form the basis for a reconstruction of Austria and for a reanchoring of the country in “space and time.” That post-1945 Austria presented itself through the supposedly objective and uncompromised eyes of an imaginary tourist indicates a perhaps unconscious awareness that the victim status was not so self-evident after all. The appeal to the tourist-as-witness can be interpreted as an appeal for absolution from the outside. This is, of course, a far cry from the acceptance of responsibility that should have occurred, but it undermines the suggestion that tourism was used only to repress the negative past. As I will show below, the discerning gaze of an imaginary tourist continued to play an important role in the reinvention of Austria, either as a legitimizing and scrutinizing outside authority or as a role for Austrians, who, as imaginary visitors to their own country, were able to participate in the performative reconstruction of a “new” Austrian national identity.

Tourism as Governmentality

Practically simultaneous to the editing and publishing of *The Book of Austria*, politicians, civil servants, and tourism associations pondered ways to jump-start the tourism economy. Often, these deliberations emphasized the importance of tourism for the nation’s wellbeing:

Der Fremdenverkehr ist Angelegenheit des ganzen Staates, des gesamten [*sic*] Volkes. Jeder Missgriff schädigt nicht nur den einzelnen der sie verschuldete, sondern den ganzen Staat, das Ansehen Österreichs im In-und Ausland und kann dadurch schwer wieder-gutzumachenden Schaden anrichten.⁸

This and other statements, which emphasized that the population at large must be educated to be more accommodating to tourists, underscore that the discourse of tourism functioned as a kind of “governmentality” in postwar Austria.⁹ Foucault’s term, coined in order to describe how the idea of governing changed from a Machiavellian system of direct coercion to the development of disciplinary systems that were internalized as “necessary” by the governed subjects, proves helpful in analyzing the role of tourism in postwar Austria (Foucault 204–6). Especially the Stelle für den Wiederaufbau

der Fremdenverkehrsindustrie (Office for the Reconstruction of the Tourism Industry) exemplifies how tourism served as the realm for the organization and control of spaces and places, mental attitudes, and everyday bodily practices of those who govern and those who are being governed (Foucault 205). Founded in 1946 as part of the Ministry for Trade and Reconstruction, it became the designated clearinghouse for all tourism-related activities in Austria. While the office in this form and under this name existed only until 1948, it nonetheless defined Austrianness spatially, culturally, and ideologically by way of shaping the emerging tourism infrastructure and economy.¹⁰ Created in the face of initial resistance by the various Austrian provinces, this office began to exercise control over Austrian territory in ways that further highlight the political importance of the tourism discourse.¹¹

After Austria's application for a ten-million-dollar credit with the American Economics division failed due to internal disagreements in the Austrian government, the *Stelle für den Wiederaufbau* devised the first of several "Ausländer-Hotelaktionen."¹² Under this somewhat unfortunate label, which evokes wartime campaigns rather than leisure pastimes, tourists from the United Kingdom, France, and the Netherlands, among others, were shepherded into select Austrian hotels. The foreign participants had to pay for lodging and food vouchers in advance in their respective currencies so that the Austrian government could buy food for the hotels involved in the project.¹³ Since almost all European states had imposed travel restrictions on their citizens for fear of losing much-needed currency to foreign markets, organized international travel sometimes required intergovernmental bartering. In 1948, for instance, the Netherlands granted 2,500 Dutch residents a travel permit to Austria only after Austria committed to buy tulip seeds and vegetables from the Netherlands ("Neue Wege des Fremdenverkehrs" 5). For this same year, the director of the office reported that these organized tours had resulted in more than seven million Schillings of net profit for Austria.¹⁴

Initially, the various tourism organizations in Austria's provinces had vehemently argued against these tours, mainly because they were afraid of unfavorable comparisons of Austria's tourism infrastructure with those of other important tourist destinations, especially Switzerland. The Carinthian tourism office stated:

Unserer Ansicht nach, würde der Eindruck den die englischen Reisenden von unserer Hotellerie gewinnen würden ein derart schlech-

ter sein, sodass vom fremdenverkehrsmässigen Standpunkt aus ein viel grösserer Schaden entstehen würde, weil die Reisenden dann wahrscheinlich nicht mehr in unser Land kommen würden.¹⁵

The Upper Austrian tourism office voiced similar concerns: “Es ist besser nichts zu unternehmen, als durch eine verfrühte Werbung und die Schwierigkeiten der Unterkunft und der Versorgung uns den guten Ruf für später zu verscherzen.”¹⁶ These statements show that the imagined gaze of the (foreign) tourist appeared not just in the form of a desired affirmation of the nation’s existence from the outside but sometimes also in the form of a scrutinizing authority whose critical perspective might find fault not only with an inferior tourism infrastructure but, on a deeper level, with Austrian complicity in the Nazi crimes as well.

At first glance, it seemed that the strong but ultimately futile resistance against these early organized tours was sparked mostly by economic concerns. Yet the *Stelle für den Wiederaufbau* also became one of the more visible representations of the central government in Vienna; viewed in this context, it was transformed into a governmental tool for implementing and controlling national standards and thereby reestablishing a sense of Austrianness.¹⁷

On one level, the various reports from the provinces under Western Allied control form a picture of the state of destruction, the everyday politics of occupation, and the challenges of reconstruction affecting the tourism industry.¹⁸ Hotel owners and innkeepers had to provide detailed information about the status of their properties and the progress of their renovations. Local tourism officials reported instances of noncompliance with regulations regarding the quality of food and lodging to the supervising organizations.¹⁹ For an Austria divided into different occupation zones, the “Hotelaktionen” amounted to a performative reconstruction of a unified Austrian space through the discourse of tourism, notwithstanding that the Eastern provinces under Soviet control were excluded from these activities.²⁰

On another level, reports, interdepartmental correspondence, and articles in local and regional newspapers reflect the role of the tourism discourse as a realm in which some core elements of Austrian national identity could be put to the test. In an article in the regional newspaper *Oberösterreichische Nachrichten*, for instance, a prominent local alpinist used the discussion about the shape and function of tourism to promote mountaineering as an almost spiritual activity for rediscovering beauty and true values in life (“Der Alpinismus”). Other articles in the same newspaper either bemoaned

the degradation of former resorts due to destruction and the presence of foreigners (“Viele Fremde”) or criticized a prevailing sense of xenophobia as the most pertinent obstacles against a quick resurrection of the tourism industry (“Wieder Fremdenverkehr?”).

In some instances, the discourse of tourism facilitated addressing the otherwise silenced collaboration with National Socialism. In 1946, Dr. Hans Becker, a consultant for tourism affairs in the Ministry for Trade and Reconstruction and a founding member of the *Stelle für den Wiederaufbau*, sent out informal inquiries about the situation of the tourism industry. In one of the response letters preserved in the Austrian State Archive, a correspondent from Carinthia complains that former Nazis continue to work in key positions in politics and business and protect each other from prosecution. Implicitly, the correspondent revealed the limited power of the central government in Vienna by pointing out that “if Carinthia were to follow the orders from Vienna, [these former Nazis] would already have been replaced by a public administrator.”²¹

These examples illustrate to what degree the discourse of tourism turned into a discourse of governmentality in which Austria’s national and cultural identity constructions were negotiated. The double role of the *Stelle für den Wiederaufbau* as both economic jump-starter and political and administrative authority illustrates Michel Foucault’s observation that the creation of a state-level economy “also means exercising towards its inhabitants [. . .] a form of surveillance and control” (Foucault 207) and undermines the frequently voiced claim that tourism’s central role in the postwar years was the result of economic concerns only. As Erica Carter writes, economic processes “always express themselves simultaneously in symbolic (textual) forms: there is no separate economic ‘sphere’ or ‘level’ external to [. . .] cultural forms and relations” (Carter 13). In the following sections I will focus on a series of such symbolic forms that further illustrate the various ways in which tourism enabled the performative reconstruction of Austria’s national and cultural identity not in the form of a coverup but by reiterating and appropriating already existing discourses about Austria.

Education for Tourism is Education for Austria

One of the biggest challenges for the reconstruction of an Austrian national identity after 1945 was the complex centuries-old debate about what connect-

ed (or separated, depending on one's position in the debate) the German-speaking territories of the Austro-Hungarian empire with Germany proper. For the governments of the Allied nations, this debate was crucial insofar as they wanted to prevent the two countries from joining forces yet again. For Austrian politics, the debate was directly linked with the question of to what degree the country would or would not bear co-responsibility for the crimes committed during World War II. Yet how would it be possible to forge a new *Austrian* national and cultural identity without renouncing most of the "older" discourses about Austria, many of which centered on Austria's *Germanic* identity in opposition to Eastern regions and peoples deemed to be inferior?

For historian Peter Thaler, the answer lies in the successful reorientation of the Austrian educational system, whose centralized structure allowed for a relatively quick rewriting of history textbooks and curricula, which in turn resulted in the surprisingly rapid acceptance of the concept of an Austrian nation (Thaler 125). That by the end of the 1980s a clear majority of Austrians accepted the Austrian state also as their nation is no small feat when considering that only decades earlier most Austrians had viewed themselves as being part of the German "imagined community."²² Thaler's analysis of the changes in higher education, in school curricula, and in textbook publishing is compelling, but in its focus on national identity as a mostly intellectual project it leaves out other, equally important elements of national identifications such as everyday actions, popular images, and performances by individuals and groups that "strengthen affective and cognitive links, consolidate a sense of shared action and doxa to constitute a habitus" (Edensor 90).

An example for how the performance of Austrian space and identity through the tourism discourse connected processes of national identity formation with education can be found in a 1950 brochure titled "Fremdenverkehrsaufklärung der österreichischen Schuljugend verbunden mit einem Preisausschreiben."²³ Collaboratively published by the Ministry for Education, the Ministry for Trade and Reconstruction, and the Österreichische Fremdenverkehrswerbung (successor of the Stelle für den Wiederaufbau), the document was presented to all Austrian teachers with an urgent plea to implement the topic of tourism at all levels of instruction. The brochure consists of sixteen pages, half of which feature black and white photographs illustrating key points in the text. The brochure's author, one Karl Melchard, provides several pages of introduction in which he emphasizes the economic importance of tourism for Austria. After citing statistics that show the steady

increase in income from tourism before World War II, Melchard regretfully states that “die bekannten Ereignisse der Jahre nach 1938” prevented “de[n] letzte[n] große[n] Erfolg, de[n] dauernde[n] Begriff: Österreich—ein Fremdenverkehrsland,” and brought it with them that “Österreich 1945 wieder am Anfang seiner Bemühungen stand” (Melchard 3). The phrase “Austria—a tourism country” underlines how the discourse of tourism serves the reconstruction of Austrian national identity. Additional passages in the text describe support for tourism as “Werk an der Heimat” (Melchard 3) and refer to Austrians as naturally qualified hosts: “Läuft doch jedem Bewohner [Österreichs] gleichsam als Herold die Vorstellung voraus, daß er liebenswürdig und zuvorkommend ist. Diesen Vorteil durch Anpassung und Erziehung auszubauen ist angesichts der vorerwähnten Umstände selbstverständliche Pflicht” (Melchard 3). At the core of Austrian citizenship, of the habitus as Austrian, lies proper behavior in the context of tourism. Like *The Book of Austria*, this educational brochure demonstrates the performative process through which the discourse of tourism produces an Austria that is simultaneously new *and* old. By selectively citing and reiterating pre-1938 tourist images and narratives that once celebrated Austria’s Germanic identity within the Habsburg monarchy, the brochure contributes to the performative construction of an Austria that, as it seems, has always been content to offer the international traveler its mountains and lakes, its cuisine, and its aristocratic legacy in the form of “Schlösser und Burgen, alte Städtchen und Kunstsammlungen, Zeugen hoher Kultur und Fundgruben für den Kunstkenner und Kunstliebhaber” (Melchard 2). Witnesses for this performance are a series of historical VIPs who, not so long ago, might have been called upon to attest to Austria’s Germanic identity: “Es ist deshalb kein Wunder, daß dieses Land und dieses Volk manchen Großen in Bande schlug und ihn für immer hier seine Heimat finden ließ, wie: Prinz Eugen, Ludwig van Beethoven, Brahms, Liszt, Lehár und viele andere, Träger hoher Kulturleistungen, die weltgerüst und mit geweitem Blick hier Anmut und Schönheit, hier gleichsam den Altar der Schöpfung fanden, der sie zu schönsten und besten Leistungen beflügelte” (Melchard 2). Once again Austria is presented as a passive entity, a place without agency waiting to be discovered by those with distinguished taste and proper education. The performative element of this post-1945 identity construction becomes visible also in the cause-and-effect reversal between the historical personae and the presumed *genius loci* of Austria: While the brochure suggests that Austria’s “Anmut und Schönheit” not only convinced

the likes of Beethoven to settle here but also enabled them to their “schönsten und besten Leistungen,” one could argue that the brochure’s author taps into the cultural and political aura of these historical VIPs to support his claim of Austria’s unique cultural identity. In other words, if these “tourists”-turned-locals have found Austria on the globe, so can the contemporaries after 1945.

That Austria’s existence and its status as tourism destination were not givens becomes even more visible in the brochure’s subsequent section. After re-narrating Austrian history according to a tourism matrix, the author deploys teachers to take stock of the *Heimat* in a very hands-on fashion: A one-page questionnaire attached to the brochure asks teachers to provide brief reports about their towns and regions. Appealing to their status as local learned men and women, the brochure encouraged teachers to report on tourist attractions and sites in their neighborhood so that, as the author put it, new tourist attractions can be promoted and older ones can be saved from being forgotten. The text summons teachers to be brief but comprehensive in their reporting, such that a “lückenlos[e] und übersichtlich[e] Sammeltätigkeit” of all attractions could be created. Attractions should be listed and categorized under the following rubrics: “Natursehenswürdigkeiten; Kunstsehenswürdigkeiten; Geschichtliche Ereignisse; Besondere Fremdenverkehrseinrichtungen; Wirtschaftliche Einrichtungen und Veranstaltungen; Sonstige Seltensamkeiten.” The information should be reported via abbreviations, so that on the resulting imaginary “map” of Austria a town with two doctors, one veterinarian, four hotels, two garages, and one car repair shop would be marked by the following “coordinates”: “2A, 1 T, 4 Ho, 2 Gg, 1 Rep” (Melchard 8).

This seemingly banal act of establishing a list of the country’s infrastructure transcends tourism marketing efforts. Mimicking the opening chapter of *The Book of Austria*, the questionnaire produces a virtual map that addresses the fear of nonexistence already discussed. Additionally, by asking the teachers to affirm Austria’s status as a tourism country—a status that is, as the author reminds his readers, synonymous with Austrianness—the questionnaire illustrates the performative construction of Austria: The very Austria that supposedly attracts its visitors so much that they become locals—as Beethoven, Brahms, and others were said to have done—is retroactively performed by collecting and charting pieces of evidence that in themselves have become meaningful only because they have been looked at through the prism of tourism in the first place. It is important to note that this performative process is not a performance in the sense of a staged and artificial presentation

of Austria for the outside world. By mixing tourist attractions with mundane and everyday “sites” such as veterinarian clinics, the map also depicts Austria to Austrians and illustrates how tourist discourses facilitated the development of an Austrian normality after 1945. At the same time, the questionnaire exemplifies to what degree the economic element of tourism supported the disciplining of the nation. The questionnaire’s request to report even mundane changes illustrates the permeable boundary between survey and surveillance, an issue I will explore further in the next section, in which I will trace how the discourse of tourism fostered a continuity of gender norms and racist/ethnacist hierarchies from both the Austrofascist and National Socialist period by justifying such attitudes with the demands of the tourism economy.

Shaping and Cleansing Austrian Bodies and Spaces through Tourism

As several instances in the curricular brochure indicate, a rather traditional, patriarchal ideal of femininity survived the alleged “zero hour” in 1945 and reemerged as an important part of Austrian national identity. Among the pictures that accompany the brochure, a contrasting pair of images shows first a house in dire need of repair and then the same house after it has been renovated and decorated according to the standards promoted by the discourse of tourism: The facade looks painted, flowers frame the windows, and a smiling young woman sitting on a bench completes the arrangement. The use of a young woman as a prop for the second picture illustrates how the discourse of tourism constructed and disseminated patriarchal gender codes as part of the reconstruction of Austria as a nation. At first, the woman’s posture with her legs modestly crossed and with her back straight looks fairly innocuous. However, connecting it to other images of the tourism discourse that represent women reveals prevalent male anxieties over an increased mobility of young women in postwar Austria.

For instance, in a flyer issued by the tourism office of Styria in 1953 that advertises a round trip for women, one can read the story of Margit, a fictitious character who sets out on her own to explore an unknown country, Styria (Landesfremdenverkehrsamt für Steiermark). Margit soon realizes that she lacks basic geographical and cultural knowledge as well as the travel experience needed to complete the trip successfully. Luckily, an elderly man in native costume (*Trachtenanzug*) and a white beard reminiscent of Emperor Franz Josef, offers herself as a travel companion. This “Opa,” as Margit calls

him, functions as a knowledgeable chaperone who prevents her from getting lost and who makes her trip meaningful. “Opa” knows what is best for her in all areas, and he helps her to not have to think about the logistics of traveling. In the end, “Opa” drops his disguise and transforms himself back into Egon, a young, handsome Styrian man with whom Margit will fall in love.

The brochure shows that young women had become a market for the tourism industry, yet the patronizing language and the fairy tale–like story in which the woman discovers her “prince” indicate how disconcerting the idea of an independently traveling woman must have been. Although Margit is encouraged to get to know her country better, she is constantly called “klein,” “kleines Mädchen,” or “liebes Kind,” and her mobility is reigned in by her male companion who decides when and where they go (Landesfremdenverkehrsamt für Steiermark).

In both cases, young women exemplify the ideologically undergirded “habitual performances,” which, according to Tim Edensor, contribute to the weaving of the nation’s fabric by constituting “practical, embodied codes which guide what to do in particular settings. Where these are communally shared, they help to achieve a working consensus about what are appropriate and inappropriate enactions” (Edensor 90). These young women’s bodies must be remolded and repackaged to fit the patriarchal idea of Austrianness.

With regard to the first picture, in which the young woman is shown sitting in front of a cleaned-up house, additional associations between cleaning up and women’s work in the house were probably highly welcome, and the ideological element connecting clean bodies and clean landscapes in this particular tourist framework is linked with the leisure and tourism discourses of the pre-1945 era. The before-and-after photos in the curricular brochure resonate with the emphasis on cleanliness in the National Socialist leisure and tourism organization Kraft durch Freude (KdF). According to Shelley Baranowski, among the most successful projects of the KdF were its campaigns to “clean up” work and private spaces in order to recreate those “typical” German factories and villages that modernization supposedly had destroyed: “Detailed guidelines for the ‘Beautiful Village’ project specified ‘cleanliness and order’ even in work buildings, and consistency in architectural style, landscape and furnishings so as to reify villages as ‘typically’ German” (Baranowski 101). The photo collages in the curricular brochure signal a continuing connection among politics, ideology, and tourist/leisure discourses from the period of 1938–1945 and the specific remembrance thereof by post-



Fig. 1. Disciplining the traveling female body: Disguised as elderly authority, Egon makes sure that Margit finds her way around Styria and, eventually, a husband. Reprinted with permission of the Österreichische Staatsarchiv.

war Austrians. The “passion for cleanliness” promoted by the KdF was, as Baranowski comments, the aesthetic complement to the “arrests, emergency decrees, and concentration camps that destroyed the Socialist and Communist movements” (91). The disciplining of workers’ bodies, the enforcement of cleanliness—these were acts of racial “decontamination” (92).

Although a clear distinction must be made between cleanliness, “racial hygiene,” and mass murder under National Socialism and the emphasis on

cleanliness in postwar Austria, the promotion of clean and healthy bodies in the discourse of tourism after 1945 remains connected with racial and ethnic identity categories. At first, the curricular brochure's mention of cleanliness occurs in the context of the focus on "der gute Ton," a behavioral code that promotes topics such as "der liebe Gruß," "die freundliche Auskunft," "die gute Tat," and "die Pflege des eigenen Körpers und der Kleidung" (Melchard 3–4). The brochure initially states that this focus on cleanliness is simply dictated by the standards of tourism: "Ein reiner Körper, eine nette Frisur, eine ordentliche Kleidung sind demnach auch vom Gesichtspunkt des Fremdenverkehrs beachtenswerte Leistungen" (Melchard 4). Yet in a subsequent passage the author connects the theme of cleanliness with the idea of *Heimat*, with morality, and, thus, with an identity discourse that does not seem very far removed from the most recent past, the very era the new Austria was striving to disown. Children, according to Melchard, should impress foreigners with the "Reinheit des Körpers" (Melchard 4); by declaring cleanliness the "beste Tat für die Heimat, in der gleichzeitig hohe sittliche, soziale und staatsbürgerliche Werte heranreifen" (4), the author connects bodily hygiene with morality and, by extension, with politics and invokes the troubling past of such connections. Like the recommendations for landscape beautification, these behavioral prescriptions are accompanied by photographs of pairs modeling proper attitudes. On several of these photo pages, young women are shown performing what was considered impolite behavior at older, male tourists. The representation of women as both the embodiment of traditional ideas of aesthetics and beauty *and* as the "weak link" in the connection between proper bodily behavior, tourism, and *Heimat* underscores how the post-1945 performative construction of Austrian national identity reiterated older identity discourses in which women played a similar pivotal role as embodiment of the *Volkskörper*, adored but simultaneously mistrusted.

To what degree the concern about hygiene and health was taken seriously by government officials can be seen in the government's reaction to a small polio epidemic in 1948 in Upper Austria. The Stelle für den Wiederaufbau immediately urged the Ministry for Social Administration "Einvernehmen herzustellen, damit die ihm unterstehenden Gesundheitsämter Zusammenstellungen über Epidemien und sonstige ansteckende Krankheiten nach Tunlichkeit nicht während der Hauptfremdenverkehrsmonate Juli, August erscheinen lassen."²⁴ In Vienna, journalists who planned on writing about

Austria's health system had to have their interviews cleared by the deputy mayor.²⁵ The cleaning up of the actual tourism landscape thus found its parallel in this cleansing of the imagined Austrian community.

The racist implications of these concerns about unhealthy bodies became visible when illness was connected with foreigners, and especially with Displaced Persons, of whom about 520,000 were still housed in Austria in 1947 (Zahra 191). That same year in April, the daily newspaper *Oberösterreichische Nachrichten* reported that the population of Spital am Pyhrn protested against the plan to move 150 DPS suffering from tuberculosis to barracks near the town. Fear of contagion is only one reason for the protest, as the newspaper writes. But more important is “daß sich diese herrliche Sommerfrische in gesündester Lage nach jahrelangem Stillstand nun wieder zur Beherbergung von Gästen gerüstet hat und bei Durchführung jener Absicht das Fernbleiben alter Freunde Spitals befürchten muß” (“Gefahr für eine Sommerfrische” 3). In this example, the rejection of a certain group of foreigners is folded into economic and marketing concerns that for many appeared (and appear) legitimate. The differentiated use of the terms “Gäste” and “alte Freunde” not only highlights the preference for paying visitors. Among the DPS were many Eastern Europeans, including Jewish and non-Jewish concentration camp survivors, and their rhetorical exclusion from the terms “Gäste” and “alte Freunde” can be read as the post-1945 version of Alpine anti-Semitism.²⁶

Other examples show that the discourse of tourism offered rhetorical wiggle room for the rejection of ethnic and racial non-belongers without running afoul of post-1945 sensibilities for National Socialism's racist legacies. Already in 1946, an editorial in the Socialist *Arbeiter Zeitung* newspaper criticized conditions at an unnamed spa in the province of Salzburg, where the American military had commandeered some of the better hotels as housing for displaced persons (DPS), who were made up of refugees from various European battlegrounds as well as of Jewish concentration camp survivors:

Auch dort ein peinliches Bild armer Menschen, die den ganzen Tag nichts zu tun haben, als wartend herumzulungern. Viele von ihnen treiben Schleichhandel [...] und in letzter Zeit kommen auch Überfälle vor. Es sind genug unsympathische Österreicher dort, heimische und aus Wien “verlagerte” Nazi, Schieber und Fresser. Aber die heilsame Ablehnung dieser heimischen Parasiten wird völlig zurückgedrängt durch die Abneigung gegen die vielen und viel stärker

ker sichtbaren Fremden. [...] [W]ir wollen von allen Verschleppten
[sic] Personen, mehr noch: wir wollen von allen herumlungern-
den Ausländern befreit sein! [...] Fort mit all dem!²⁷

This editorial illustrates how even an apparently peripheral connection to the discourse of tourism can play a crucial role in the performance of an Austrian identity. The writer first criticizes the presence of three “foreign” groups, namely the DPs, regional Nazis, and Nazis from Vienna. The latter two, however, quickly disappear as separate entities. Presumably, the two different groups of Austrian Nazis merge with the writer’s “we,” the imagined community of Austrians, whose attempts at denazification are purportedly being prevented by the presence of these other foreigners, the DPs. Dividing the Austrian “we” from a foreign “them” is, as it seems, based on an awareness of appropriate bodily behavior in a tourist resort: The DPs are so highly visible because they are “loitering” in the Alpine towns, whereas the Austrian Nazis, the implication goes, at least know how to behave properly in a tourist location. These remarks about proper and improper behavior are meaningful only when read in the implied context of tourism as arbiter of what was considered normal. This specific example shows how the discourse of tourism contributed to the legitimization of a post-1945 Austrian politics of memory, in which “almost everyone was explicitly mentioned as a victim, except those who bore the brunt of Nazi persecution” (Bischof, *Austria in the First Cold War* 58).²⁸

The discourse of tourism also enabled the reaffirmation of a white, Christian Austrianness against racial and ethnic others serving with the Western Allies. In July of 1952, the *Salzburger Nachrichten* reported that two African-American GIs had beaten up Swedish tourists in Salzburg. The article describes in great detail how the two “negroes” beat the male tourist and then fled when his two female companions screamed for help. The newspaper uses the incident as yet another reason to continue its ongoing campaign against black troops in the city of Salzburg: “Was wir seit Wochen befürchtet und dem amerikanischen Hauptquartier mit aller Deutlichkeit vorausgesagt haben, nämlich den Rufmord an Salzburgs Fremdenverkehrsprestige durch die Disziplinlosigkeit vor allem schwarzer Besatzungstruppen, ist nun tatsächlich eingetroffen: Die Verprügelung ausländischer Gäste hat begonnen” (“Schwarzer Saisongruß” 5).²⁹ The article enshrouds Austrians’ prejudices against the black occupation troops into concerns about foreigners’ safety, using the opportunity to include a jab at the American liberators: “It is

our right to ask the guarantors of our freedom to protect at least our foreign guests" ("Schwarzer Saisongruß" 5). Conveniently, the foreign guests under attack are Swedish and, thus, presumably embody the ideal of whiteness that also informs constructions of Austrian nationality and ethnicity. Proper behavior at a tourist location is also invoked as the ultimate criterion for belonging in the article's last paragraph in which the writer demands that the U.S. command, if it is unable to conduct its business without "negro troops," use such troops anywhere between the two poles, just not in "old Europe": "Unsere Fremden kommen nämlich nach Salzburg im guten Glauben, hier nicht Neu-Afrika vorzufinden" ("Schwarzer Saisongruß" 5). Similar to the editorial writer of the *Arbeiter Zeitung*, who initially takes pains to dissociate him/herself from "the Nazis" but then eventually integrates them against the much more "visible" (mostly Jewish) DPs, the article in the *Salzburger Nachrichten* moves from a distinction between Austrians and foreigners to a constellation that groups Austrians with "their" foreigners—white Swedish tourists—in one group and unwanted foreigners—African-American GIs—in the other. The connection to tourism is apparent not just in the form of concern about the expected profit from foreign guests but, more importantly, also in the way the tourism discourse provides an allegedly logical (and, for the time, politically correct) framework for integrating Austria into an ethnically and racially defined international community without resorting to the racist language of National Socialism.

Thus, what we can observe is a process of selective memory qua tourism. The nation is being "re-membered" in a process whereby older tourist narratives and images serve as evidence for an Austrian space and identity separate from Germany. Somewhat in contrast to Germany, where, as Confino has shown, the tourism discourse was important in defining a normality based on positive, supposedly apolitical memories of the Nazi past, the normality remembered in Austria mixes the memories of the Nazi-period with pre-1938 memories, claiming that there supposedly was nothing Austrian to remember between 1938 and 1945. Wherever troubling patriarchal and racist attitudes indicate continuity from the Nazi period to the Second Austrian Republic (for instance, the demand to remove all unwanted foreigners), the discursive context of tourism with its pointers toward a pre-1938 memory endowed them with a validity that stifled potential outrage.

Conclusion

Lest I create the impression that the concept of tourism resulted mainly in governmental initiatives such as the curricular model discussed above, I conclude with a brief discussion of some of the prize-winning essays that students submitted in response to the 1950 essay competition included in the curricular project on tourism. Not surprisingly, all of these essays try very hard to satisfy the criteria set forth in the competition's guidelines, among them the requirement to demonstrate how Austria's survival hinges on a successful tourism economy and therefore needs citizens to identify with this goal. Yet several students also used these essays to voice their frustration about the desolate living conditions and their desire to experience life beyond the limited mobility and the constraints on self-development, which they perceived as dominating Austria's postwar society. They recounted (or, sometimes, invented) stories about encounters with foreign tourists that were in desperate need for information, had a problem with a car, or were injured.³⁰ Other students considered the possibility of being picked as tour guides or assistants by wealthy foreigners so that they could accompany these families on their trips. One student even imagined himself as the skipper of a wealthy tourist's yacht. All of these potential roles are embedded in longer narratives in which the students usually regurgitate the stereotypical information about tourism's importance for Austria's economy, provided to them by their teachers, who in turn had probably taken that information from the curricular brochure.

These short vignettes demonstrate both the inherent imaginative power of the tourist discourse as well as the potential insights one might gain from employing tourism as a serious analytical framework. By presenting themselves as powerful when encountering foreigners or by imagining themselves as appreciated assistants to a wealthy family, these students created imaginary niches for themselves and, in so doing, narratives that countered the dominant discourse of victimization and deprivation. For the historian, these narratives complement the understanding of how people at that time and in these circumstances constructed their everyday normality and they allow a glimpse at their desires. On a more general level, these students were engaging in a performance of Austrianness not unlike *The Book of Austria*: They use the discourse of tourism to create the very places that will enable their respective performances as Austrians under the imagined gaze of the foreign tourist. Finally, these essays illustrate how tourist discourses were involved in the

formation of Austrian national identity not just on a peripheral level but in essential ways. For, as I have shown through the analyses of a diverse array of cultural texts, the depiction of tourism as coverup is too limited to explain the identity discourse of postwar Austria. It is *through*, not under, the discourse of tourism that we can trace the processes that formed an Austrian national identity after 1945, and it is the discourse of tourism that also provides the tools for the analysis and critique of the performance of Austrianness.

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Notes

1. *Wiener Zeitung*, Sept. 23, 1945, no page, quoted in Brusatti 143.

2. Georg Schmid and Sigrid Schmid-Bortenschlager argue that even literary works critical of tourism contribute, eventually, to the “Fremdenverkehrszirkus” in Austria (113). For insightful discussions of the relationship between Austrian literature and tourism, see Wolfgang Hackl’s *Eingeborene im Paradies* (2004), Wolfgang Straub’s *Willkommen: Literatur und Fremdenverkehr in Österreich* (2001), and Nikhil Sathe’s dissertation “Authenticity and the Critique of the Tourism Industry in Postwar Austrian Literature” (2003).

3. According to Bischof, no numbers of overnight stays are available for 1946–47 (“Conquering” 366). At the same time, daily newspapers, magazines, and government documents show that the topic of tourism was debated with great fervor.

4. Although I use the terms *fragments* and *ruins* to illustrate a feeling of destruction, it is important to point out that these terms were painfully real for hundreds of thousands of people in 1945. In Vienna alone, more than 270,000 people had lost their apartments and homes, and an area the size of the entire inner city of Vienna had been completely destroyed by bombing raids and artillery (Vocelka 11).

5. For a detailed description of how difficult it was for the Austrian administration in Vienna to communicate with the western provinces, see Bischof, *Austria in the First Cold War*.

6. The list of contributors includes the renowned historian Friedrich Heer and the ethnologist and representative to the Austrian parliament Hanns Koren. Among the translators who worked on the English version to which I refer in this essay, one can find British journalist and former intelligence officer Gordon (Brook-)Shepherd. More about the political and cultural spirit in which the book appeared can be found Wolfgang Müller-Funk’s short essay “Soviel Österreich.”

7. For an excellent discussion of the political implications of this gendered representation of space in *The Book of Austria*, see Siegfried Mattl’s essay “Geschlecht und Volkscha-

rakter.” Interestingly, representatives of the occupying powers used this misogynist image of Austria as a feminized space to describe the nature of Austria’s complicitous agency in the country’s annexation by Hitler Germany: “It should be remembered that Austria yielded with so little opposition and afterwards accepted her violator with such enthusiasm that it was legitimate to wonder whether it was a case of rape or seduction” (Caccia to Eden, Nov. 16, 1951, Foreign Office 371/93597, Public Record Office; cited in Bischof, *Austria in the First Cold War* 10).

8. “Exposé Szinovacz”, 160.373/46, *BM für Handel und Wiederaufbau*, Box *Fremdenverkehr Varia* 1946/48, Archiv der Republik (henceforth cited as AdR).

9. Exemplary is the draft of an article titled “Was geht mich der Fremdenverkehr an?” prepared by Sektionschef Dr. Langer-Hansel for publication in the journal *Gesellschaft zur Pflege des Fremdenverkehrs* (88.653/48, *BM für Handel und Wiederaufbau*, Box 711c, AdR).

10. The office was founded in 1946; Hofrat Dr. Anton Krogner was named interim director (104.890-23/1946, *BM für Handel und Wiederaufbau*, Box *Fremdenverkehr Varia* 1946/48, AdR).

11. See letter from Hoffmann-Montanus to Dr. Eugen Lanske in the Ministry for Trade and Reconstruction, Oct. 17, 1946 (104.890-23/1946, Box *Fremdenverkehr Varia* 1946/48, AdR).

12. For details about the eventually unsuccessful application for a credit worth 10 million dollars, see letter of Sept. 19, 1946 (104.890/46, Box *Fremdenverkehr Varia* 1946/48, AdR); and Bischof, “Conquering” 364–65.

13. Protocol of a meeting in the *BM für Handel und Wiederaufbau* on Sept. 4, 1946 (192.741/23/46, AdR).

14. Letter from Dr. Anton Krogner, interim director of the Office for the Reconstruction of the Austrian Tourism Industry to Dr. Kolb, minister for trade and reconstruction (85.614/48, Box 711d, AdR). Krogner also reported about the success of the *Ausländeraktionen* in venues such as the *Österreichische Reisezeitung*, where he pointed out that some tourist destinations had either matched or exceeded the pre-war level of visitors.

15. 106.303/1946, Box *Fremdenverkehr Varia*, AdR.

16. 106.303/1946, Box *Fremdenverkehr Varia*, AdR.

17. Günther Bischof has aptly characterized this struggle over competencies as a “classical case study of unresolved conflicts in Austrian federalism” (“Conquering” 359).

18. 106.303/1946, Box *Fremdenverkehr Varia*, AdR. See especially the letter from the “Landesverkehrsamt Tirol” from July 13, 1946, which mentions the lack of food for its local citizens, the requisition of hotels by French occupation troops, and the severe destruction of the tourism infrastructure.

19. See letter by *Verkehrsverein St. Gilgen*, 85.614/48, Box 711c, *BM für Handel und Wiederaufbau*, AdR.

20. Official Soviet progaganda denounced the “Hotelaktion” as organized corruption that undermined the food supply for Austrians (“Eine Ausplünderung Oesterreichs” [sic]).

21. 160.261/46, Box *Fremdenverkehr Varia*. Letter from Oct. 30, 1946, by Ludwig Farniok.

22. Thaler points to a 1988 survey in which 58 percent of those asked disagreed with the statement “Austrian national consciousness was produced somewhat artificially. In reality

we are part of the German nation” (Reiterer, Filla, and Flaschberger 61, quoted in Thaler 172). It is important to point out such widespread acceptance did not prevent right-wing groups such as Austria’s Freedom Party (FPÖ) under Jörg Haider and, later on, also the BZÖ, to question the validity of Austrian national identity in order to garner media attention. It is fair to say, however, that these provocations did not undermine Austrian national identity in any lasting way.

23. The brochure was authored by Dr. Karl Melchard and published as “Beilage zum Verordnungsblatt für den Dienstbereich des Bundesministeriums für Unterricht, Jahrgang 1950, 5. Stück” (13.443/50, Box 105, *Fremdenverkehr, Präsidialakten, AdR*), hereafter cited as Melchard. For more on the role of *Verordnungsblätter* in the development of an Austrian national identity, see Utgaard.

24. Letter from Dr. Kohl, Stelle für den Wiederaufbau der österreichischen Fremdenverkehrswirtschaft, to the BM für Handel und Wiederaufbau, May 21, 1948, 88.653/48, *BM für Handel und Wiederaufbau*, Box 711c, AdR.

25. Letter from Dr. Fischer, office of the deputy mayor, to Dr. Langer-Hansel, *BM für Handel und Wiederaufbau*, May 31, 1948, 88653 V/48, *BM für Handel und Wiederaufbau*, Box 711c, AdR.

26. For more on the history of anti-Semitism in the *Deutsch-Österreichischer Alpenverein*, see Tschofen; Lichtblau.

27. In the years after World War II, the province of Salzburg was home to the highest concentration of DPs—and refugee camps on the territory of the former Third Reich, many of them Jewish Holocaust survivors or members of other ethnic groups persecuted by the Nazis (Bauer 200). The excerpt comes from *Arbeiter Zeitung*, August 21, 1946, editorial, quoted in Kerschbaumer 129. The image of the loitering foreigner became code for Jewish Holocaust survivors and DPs but also a marker of differentiation between the allegedly industrious and orderly German expellees hailing from regions close to the Austrian border and those *Volksdeutsche* or *Alt-Österreicher* who were perceived as having lost their connection to Germanness and Austrianness (Zahra 199–200).

28. A prominent spokesperson for the widely held view of Austria as a victim was Renner, a Socialist who nonetheless had promoted annexation to Germany after 1918. In this context it is not very surprising that the official party organ, *Arbeiter Zeitung*, not only published the editorial discussed in this essay but even “pleaded for not giving Jewish victims ‘keine Sonderbehandlung’ [special status] in the hierarchy of victims” (Bischof, *Austria in the First Cold War* 62–63).

29. For a discussion of this newspaper article in the context of relationships between Austrian women and GIs, see Bauer.

30. All mentionings of and quotations from these essays refer to the collected prize-winning essays in 10.007/50, Box 105, AdR.

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