

good overview of the literature on leadership, the author does an in-depth review of the decision-making in the policy subsystem of the defense ministry and its various initiatives.

But, in discussing the contribution of the book to the field, the author himself overlooks an aspect of the book and his research where he has certainly also made a contribution—to internal party debate and party politics on issues of policy. His interviews and exhaustive research into critical policy debates within the individual parties provides an insight into the maneuvering of the three major parties CDU and SPD particularly and the FDP as well as the Greens, but, to a lesser extent, the PDS and CSU, the latter unfortunately overlooked and the former only fleetingly discussed. The analysis allows the reader not only to follow the evolution of German security and defense policy more broadly from after the *Wende* through the Schröder administration, but it also permits a rare look into internal party politics in this area. The book in this way interestingly crosses the domestic/foreign policy lines of most authors whose expertise is one or the other without the background to present the analysis undertaken in this exhaustive, to be recommended, book.

Rolf Steininger, *Austria, Germany and the Cold War: From the Anschluss to the State Treaty, 1938–1955* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2008)

**Reviewed by Barbara Stelzl-Marx, Ludwig Boltzmann-Institut für Kriegsfolgen-Forschung, Graz, Austria**

In 2005, Austria celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of the end of World War II and the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the State Treaty, which signified the end of ten years of Allied occupation. During the “Year of Thought,” numerous events, exhibitions, television documentaries, “teaching aids,” and publications<sup>1</sup> (including documentary collections)<sup>2</sup> dealt with the question of the State Treaty and Austrian identity. Rolf Steininger’s *Der Staatsvertrag: Österreich im Schatten von deutscher Frage und Kaltem Krieg 1938–1955* also appeared in time for the anniversary.<sup>3</sup>

In light of the depth of research on this topic, Steininger, Head of the Department of Contemporary History at the University of Innsbruck, felt compelled in the introduction to pose the rhetorical, almost flirtatious question as to “why we needed yet another book on this topic” (ix). After all, there were already several publications devoted to this issue, first and foremost the monumental account—the quasi “Bible” of research on the

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State Treaty—by Gerald Stourzh. Steininger, however, wanted to tackle the story of the State Treaty from a multiple, distinctly non-Austrian point of view with a “new, broadened perspective,” (ix) a claim that already had aroused irritation with the appearance of the German edition.<sup>4</sup> The value of the study consists above all, however, in concentrating the wealth of existing research on postwar Austria into a compact textbook summary.

In the epilogue to the English edition, Steininger quotes a 2006 review of the German publication: “It is a shame that the book is not available in English,” and adds, “now I am grateful that it is” (144). It is indeed to be welcomed that this summary of research on Austria from the Nazi period to the end of the occupation has been made available to an international audience. The book offers an overview of key events in Austrian history from the *Anschluss* of 1938 to the State Treaty of 1955 and incorporates them into the broad context of the Cold War. The “shadow of the German question,” as the original edition of the book was called, is a recurrent theme. *Austria, Germany and the Cold War* is an unabridged translation published in 2008 by Berghahn Books, extended with several sources, though with regard to the results of new research published since 2005, in particular on the role of the Soviet Union as the main player in the early phase of the Cold War, only marginally updated.

The introductory chapters provide the background to Steininger’s study. Starting with Article 4 of the Austrian State Treaty of 1955, in which the victorious powers declared a “prohibition of *Anschluss*,” he traces “the road to the *Anschluss*’ from 1918 to 1938. It was not the first ban of this kind. In 1919, the Treaty of Versailles had already forced Germany to ‘respect strictly the independence of Austria’” (1). Yet, the Austrian population at that time did not believe in the viability of the new state: “And, for all those who refused to believe in this state, union with Germany—even if no longer socialist—seemed the only possible way out of the ever-increasing misery”, as the author summarizes the “*Anschluss*-craving” (3). Thus, Austrians’ cheers for the German invasion on the morning of 12 March 1938 exceeded all expectations on the German side. For many Austrians, however, rapid disillusionment set in—not least because of the National Socialist terror. During March and April alone about 21,000 Austrians found themselves in “protective custody;” many were transferred to the Dachau concentration camp. At the same time, Steininger stresses that the terrible antisemitic violence ultimately was possible only because anti-semitism had deep roots in Austria.

The second chapter—a digression on the victim theory—is devoted to the stylization of Austria as a victim. In his declaration of independence

from 27 April 1945, Karl Renner is said to have assumed verbatim the first two paragraphs of the Moscow Declaration on the “first free country to have fallen victim to Hitler’s aggression” and the fact that the Allies regarded the *Anschluss* as “null and void.” This “victim doctrine,” building on the Moscow Declaration of 1943 and begotten by Renner in the first hour of the Second Republic, was to dominate the entire historical politics of the Second Republic up to and beyond the Waldheim Affair of 1986. Steininger contrasts this myth with the well-known facts: “Austrians were not only victims but also perpetrators” (14). In the German Wehrmacht, for example, Austrians were overrepresented vis-à-vis Germans in some areas. They were also disproportionately represented in the National Socialist terror apparatus. And in no city of the Reich were pogroms so brutal as in Vienna or Innsbruck.

The chapter “1943: Postwar Planning for Austria” also alludes to the Moscow Declaration. Here, the point is also made how closely the history of Austria is linked to that of Germany. For it was priority number one for the Allies that Austria be separated from Germany in order to weaken the latter. The key issue, therefore, was what to do with Germany, not what to do with Austria.

Here, some recent research results on Soviet policy towards Austria are incorporated—such as those of Alexei Filitov from the Russian Academy of Sciences<sup>5</sup>—unfortunately, only in a rudimentary manner. According to these findings, the German invasion of the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941 ultimately led to the Soviet leadership demonstrably defining its stance on the postwar status of Austria. In a telegram sent to the Soviet Ambassador in London, Ivan Maiskiy, on 21 November 1941, People’s Commissar for Foreign Affairs Vyacheslav Molotov explained Stalin’s position on this issue. According to Molotov, Stalin was of the opinion that Austria should be separated from Germany as an independent state, and Germany itself, including Prussia, should be cut up into several more or less independent states. The decisive factor in this respect is that the reestablishment of the Austrian state already constituted a declared aim of the Soviet supreme leadership very early on.

The fourth chapter, “1945/46: The First Year,” offers a brief summary of central events during the first postwar year, such as the establishment of occupation zones and the adoption of the Laws No. 1 and No. 2 from the Control Council for Germany. Steininger rightly emphasizes the shock among the Western Allies triggered by the news of the establishment of a provisional government under Karl Renner. With Stalin’s approval, the government met in Vienna’s city hall on 27 April, the day of the adoption

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of the declaration of independence, for their constitutive session. The news arrived in Washington and London like a bolt from the blue. It took until 20 October 1945 for the government to be recognized by all four occupying powers. In the first free elections on 25 November 1945, the Communist Party of Austria, with only five percent of the vote, suffered an unexpectedly heavy defeat. Here, the author once again emphasizes the connection between Soviet policy towards Germany and Austria. This “Austria syndrome” helps explain why the Soviets forced the merger of the German Social Democrats and the German Communist Party in the Socialist Unity Party of Germany in April 1946. On the basis of new Soviet sources it can also be argued, however, that Stalin had already determined this forced fusion at an earlier date, which excludes a closer link to the elections in Austria.<sup>6</sup>

Steininger also demonstrates how the Soviets subsequently concentrated on the economic exploitation of their occupation zone. During this phase, the emphasis shifted from the acquisition of booty to the exploitation of regular production. Simultaneously to the dismantling operations, the Soviet occupying force began to set up an ex-territorial economic corpus in eastern Austria. The Potsdam Agreement of August 1945—although it was never officially recognized in Austria—and Order No. 17 from High Commissar Vladimir Kurasov, retroactively dated 27 June 1946, served as the legal basis. The question of defining “German property” was important not only with regard to Austrian settlement but also for the Allies in determining the fate of Finns, Czechs, and others.

Steininger introduces the fifth chapter on South Tyrol with the rhetorical question: “what has South Tyrol, a small place in the heart of the Alps about half the size of Connecticut with (in 1945/1946) only about 180,000 German-speaking people, to do with the Cold War? At first glance nothing” (55). But, the answer is that “South Tyrol was actually the first victim of the Cold War.” This short case study provides an example of how deeply the Cold War mentality affected even small issues in small states.

The last section of the book concentrates on the extent to which the Cold War shaped the protracted negotiations on the Austrian State Treaty. Chapter 6 (“1946–1949: Austria in the Shadow of Containment and Germany”) is devoted to the question as to how external developments directly affected Allied policies in and towards Austria. It was long puzzled over why Stalin had not finalized the treaty in 1949. A letter from the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko to Stalin on 22 October 1949 demonstrates the importance of the Soviet occupation of Austria for the consolidation of the Eastern Bloc:

he ambition of the western powers to accelerate the conclusion of the treaty with Austria is obviously linked with their plans to abolish the basis for the further stationing of Soviet troops in Austria, but also in Hungary and Rumania on whose territory the Soviet Union according to the peace treaties has the right to maintain troops necessary for the maintenance of the lines of communication with the Soviet zone of occupation in Austria (90).

In chapter 7 (“1950–1954: Stalin Note, Short Treaty and Rollback”), an issue is addressed that remains controversial in contemporary history research. On 10 March 1952, Stalin offered reputed reunification of Germany with military neutrality. Here, the author extracts the link between this note and Austria, and argues that it was the Western Powers who were determined to make Austria a “test case” in the Cold War. Steininger is known for his critical stance towards the policies of Konrad Adenauer and rightly gives him and the Western powers considerable blame for the lack of response to the “offer” and for Stalin being forced to the negotiating table in order to sound out the sincerity of his supposed intentions towards Germany. Steininger was unable to take into account the results of relevant recent research<sup>7</sup> based on hitherto unknown Soviet documents, in particular with regard to the connection between Soviet policy towards Germany and towards Austria.

The title of the final chapter, “1955: State Treaty as ‘Austrian Scandal’” again stresses the link between Austria and German policies. Steininger sums up his stance as follows: “everybody knew that Adenauer’s Western policy had made the State Treaty possible. In short: no State Treaty without Germany” (131). In this context, Stourzh has criticized this book insofar that it is precisely this chapter that is absolutely “overshadowed” by the “German question.”<sup>8</sup> Stourzh, as well as the international literature, have always emphasized the change in Soviet policy. Initial signs of the “thaw” already had appeared under Stalin. Indeed, the first tentative attempts at contact with Vienna for a long time took place in 1952, i.e., while Stalin was still alive.

On 15 May 1955, the Austrian State Treaty was signed by representatives of the four occupying powers and Austrian Foreign Minister Leopold Figl in Vienna. In his speech of thanks in the Hall of Mirrors in the Upper Belvedere Palace, Figl uttered the now famous words: “Austria is free!” On 27 July the treaty came into force, on 25 October the last occupying troops left Austria, and the next day parliament passed the neutrality law. Yet, as the author emphasizes, Germany was still divided. Chancellor Adenauer was disgusted and called the Austrian State Treaty “the whole Austrian scandal” (131).

Overall, with *Austria, Germany and the Cold War* Steininger has produced a compact summary of research on the Austrian State Treaty. The

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chronology of important events, the bibliography, and, above all, the index constitute useful tools for the reader. It is particularly welcome that this short and handy textbook summary has now been made available to a wider audience via the English-language edition.

## Notes

1. See above all Manfred Rauchensteiner and Robert Kriechbaumer, eds., *Die Gunst des Augenblicks. Neuere Forschungen zu Staatsvertrag und Neutralität* (Cologne, 2005); Stefan Karner and Barbara Stelzl-Marx, eds., *Die Rote Armee in Österreich. Sowjetische Besatzung 1945-1955. Beiträge* (Graz, 2005); Stefan Karner and Gottfried Stangler, eds., *‘Österreich ist frei!’ Der Österreichische Staatsvertrag 1955. Beitragsband zur Ausstellung auf Schloss Schallaburg 2005*, with the assistance of Peter Fritz and Walter M. Iber (Horn, 2005); Wolfgang Mueller, *Die sowjetische Besatzung in Österreich 1945-1955 und ihre politische Mission* (Vienna, 2005); Walter Blasi, *B-Gendarmerie, Waffenlager und Nachrichtendienste. Der militärische Weg zum Staatsvertrag* (Cologne, 2004); William Bader Braumüller, *Österreich im Spannungsfeld zwischen Ost und West 1945 bis 1955. Eine Nachlese zum Jubiläumsjahr 2005* (Munich, 2005); Ernst Trost, *Österreich ist frei! Leopold Figl und der Weg zum Staatsvertrag* (Vienna, 2005). I should like to thank Alex Kay for translating this text into English.
2. Stefan Karner, Barbara Stelzl-Marx and Alexander Tschubarjan, eds., *Die Rote Armee in Österreich. Sowjetische Besatzung 1945–1955. Dokumente. Krasnaya Armija v Avstrii. Sovetskaya okkupaciya 1945–1955. Dokumenty* (Graz, 2005); Wolfgang Mueller, Arnold Suppan, Norman M. Naimark and Gennadij Bordjugov, eds., *Sowjetische Politik in Österreich 1945–1955. Dokumente aus russischen Archiven. Sovetskaya politika v Avstrii 1945–1955gg. Dokumenty iz Rossijskich archivov* (Vienna, 2005).
3. Rolf Steininger, *Der Staatsvertrag. Österreich im Schatten von deutscher Frage und Kaltem Krieg* (Innsbruck, 2005).
4. In this context, Steininger removes the “noteworthy expectations” of Günter Bischof, Erwin A. Schmidl, Audrey Kurth Cronin, James Jay Carafano, and Michael Gehler, who repeatedly had stressed the context of the Cold War or the significance of the German question. Gerald Stourzh rightly defends himself vehemently against the allegation that authors on the State Treaty have hitherto not looked “beyond the Austrian horizon” and stresses: “An allegation of this sort is to be rejected by me as well as by other Austrian authors.” See Gerald Stourzh, *Um Einheit und Freiheit. Staatsvertrag, Neutralität und das Ende der Ost-West-Besetzung Österreichs 1945–1955*, Studien zu Politik und Verwaltung, vol. 62, 5th revised edition 2005 with a bibliographical afterword (Vienna, 2005), 830.
5. Alexei Filitov, “Sowjetische Planungen zur Wiedererrichtung Österreichs 1941-1945,” in Karner and Stelzl-Marx (see note 1), 27–39.
6. Alexei M. Filitov, “SSSR i germanskii vopros. Povorotnye punkty (1941–1946),” in *Cholodnaya vojna. 1945–1963 gg. Istoricheskaya Retrospektiva*, eds., N. I. Egorova and A. O. Chubar’yan (Moscow, 2003), 223–256, here 231f.; Peter Ruggenthaler, “Warum Österreich nicht sowjetisiert wurde. Sowjetische Österreich-Politik 1945–1953/55,” in Karner and Stelzl-Marx (see note 1), 649–728, here 656.
7. Peter Ruggenthaler, ed., *Stalins großer Bluff. Die Geschichte der Stalin-Note in Dokumenten der sowjetischen Führung*, Schriftenreihe der Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte, vol. 95 (Munich, 2007).
8. Stourzh (see note 4), 830.