Conclusions

The late Gorbachev years marked the end of a distinct era in Soviet-Austrian relations, an era that had begun in 1955 with the final negotiations on the state treaty and its subsequent conclusion. It was one of the most intense and, for the most part, friendliest periods in bilateral relations between Vienna and Moscow. With the consolidation of blocs, the emergence of thermonuclear weapons, and the declining acceptability of a war between the superpowers, "peaceful coexistence" had been declared as a strategy to reduce tensions while continuing the international struggle in the areas of ideology, science, economy and society by nonviolent means. From 1955 on, after Austria had been chosen by the Kremlin as a model for this coexistence, the Soviet leadership had adopted a patronizing stance towards Austria, which, on its part, was relieved to be freed of the postwar quadripartite occupation. The price for the Soviet withdrawal was neutrality, which reflected the Kremlin's interests and, in fact, had been promoted by the USSR in the Austrian case as a means for keeping the country, which had hitherto been a "secret ally of the West," out of NATO, separating it from its traditional Western patrons, controlling and influencing its foreign policy, and for making it a promoter of neutrality and Soviet proposals in the West. In order to make neutrality attractive to the West, the Kremlin was determined to present Austria as an "example" for the benefits a Western state might reap from becoming neutral.

The communist approach towards peacetime neutrality was subject to Soviet interests in a double sense. First, the USSR advocated neutrality or neutralization when this was beneficial to the motherland of socialism, since under certain conditions neutrality can have "nonneutral" consequences. When these consequences favored the USSR, as in the case of Lithuania in 1920 or Austria in 1955, neutrality was welcomed. When they were displeasing to the Soviet leaders, pledges of neutrality were ignored by the Kremlin, as in the case of Finland during the Brezhnev era. It also seems possible to draw the conclusion that the neutralization of nonsocialist states was promoted by the Soviet government when chances for soon gaining preponderance in that country were low. Secondly, the communist interpretation of neutrality was also linked to Soviet interests. Neutralizing a country was seen as a means to draw it nearer the socialist bloc, not only keep it away from the opposing one. This aim was to be achieved through a special neutrality doctrine, which included responsibilities that, if fulfilled, were likely to foster the neutral's rapprochement with the East. This doctrine was comprised of a few rights for the neutral but also many duties, including the obligation not to join NATO or the EEC, as well as to promote Soviet diplomatic goals, to maintain friendly rela-

tions with the East, and to curb criticism of Soviet policy. Many of these concepts had been adopted by the nonaligned countries, and the Soviet government strove to make them binding for the European neutrals too, through tutelage, propaganda and the spreading of communist theories of international law. As their authors readily acknowledged, neutrality meant different things at different times, and the various Soviet interpretations of the neutrals' obligations were always formulated in accordance with the prevailing political agenda. While in the 1950s, the containment of NATO and other pro-Western alliances and blocs seems to have been the main function of neutrality from the Soviet point of view, through the 1960s the promotion of decolonization by the nonaligned states and of an all-European summit by the neutrals gained importance. Once détente was achieved, the role of the neutrals diminished, and it remained so except during the last peak of the Cold War, when their value for Soviet policy again rose rather briefly.

The Soviet aim to neutralize certain areas did not only apply to the neutral and nonaligned states. Indeed, some scholars argue that it was a Soviet strategy to gradually neutralize all of Western Europe, and that the Kremlin, "through a combination of blandishment, pressure, and looming military superiority, [sought] to promote a change of policy and outlook in Western Europe that would assure Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe and set the stage for effective political preeminence over Western Europe as well."[1] It seems quite evident that Moscow was interested in undermining the stability of the Western bloc, be it NATO, the EEC, or the European-American partnership. In fact, Soviet foreign policy encouraged the adoption of neutrality or at least of neutralist policies and postures in all of Western Europe. Since this Soviet fostering of neutrality and neutralism never included the promotion of a neutral group, one may draw the conclusion that neutrality, in Soviet eyes, was also a strategy for fragmenting the opposing bloc without creating a new one.

The neutrals were used as tools in this Soviet strategy – as role models and promoters of neutrality. In order to spread neutrality and neutralism in the West and to make it attractive to West European states, the USSR granted the neutrals special privileges. This included demonstratively friendly treatment of the neutrals and economic benefits, as well as praise for neutrality in general and the individual neutrals in particular. Applause for a neutral meant, first and foremost, praise for and the promotion of neutrality or neutralism. Moreover, treating the neutrals in a friendly manner was an easy way for improving the image of neutrality and, in fact, of the USSR abroad.

Since the USSR wanted the neutrals to embody and promote a specific Soviet approach to neutrality, it attempted to push the neutrals' understanding and practice of neutral policy in this direction. Neutrality provided the Kremlin a lever over the neu-

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[1] George Ginsburgs and Alvin Z. Rubinstein, "Finlandization: Soviet Strategy or Geopolitical Footnote?," in idem (eds.), *Soviet Foreign Policy Toward Western Europe* (New York: Praeger, 1978), 3–16, 4.

trals, and Soviet leaders and propaganda consistently claimed the right, by referring to the communist teachings of neutrality to tell the neutrals what to do and what not. Soviet praise, criticism and warnings were voiced in official and media statements, which created a sort of "verbal straitjacket" for the neutrals.[2] Since their neutrality was not as "total" as the Kremlin wished, they were from time to time criticized for this defect. As neutrality gave the USSR a measuring stick for evaluating their politics, any unwanted act was attacked as being at odds with neutrality. This included things such as Switzerland's refusal to ban nuclear weapons, Sweden's maintaining a strong army, and Austria's, Sweden's and Switzerland's striving to reach an association agreement with the European Economic Community. These policies were harshly condemned in Soviet statements. On the other hand, desired behavior was encouraged and praised, such as Finnish proposals for nuclear-weapons free zones, Swedish criticism of US policy, and efforts to call for an all-European summit. Even the "old familiar tune" of the ritualistic and seemingly redundant annual articles commemorating the Finnish-Soviet Friendship and Cooperation Treaty, the Austrian state treaty in May and declaration of neutrality in October, which were time and again invoked as sanctified and value-laden symbols, albeit amorphous ones, served a certain aim: They were written not for Soviet eyes but for those of the respective neutral's embassy, and meant to underline the say the USSR claimed to have in the respective country's matters and remind its government of the Soviet watchdog, thus promoting desired behavior and limiting undesired.

However, the practical use of Soviet published opinion was not only aimed at the neutral itself, but also its international environment: Whenever it seemed necessary to praise Soviet détente policy, set the tone for a friendly exchange of opinions, or promote neutrality, Austria and Finland were extolled as a models of "peaceful coexistence"; whenever it seemed necessary for Soviet policy to diminish their attraction for Eastern Europe or to communicate Soviet displeasure, warnings and fantastic accusations were published, such as during the Hungarian and Czechoslovakian crises when Austria was depicted as a playground of villains or enemies, or after the "Prague Spring," when the Soviet recognition of Finland's neutrality was withdrawn. It is therefore not entirely correct to say that the international environment did not affect Soviet relations to the neutrals. It is rather the case that the Soviet Union, in general, wanted to contain long-term effects of international crises on the usability of neutrality and the neutrals as a model.

This applied especially to Austria, which was chosen by the USSR as a showcase for the benefits of neutrality and "peaceful coexistence." The small country on the border between East Central and Western Europe was an unlikely partner for the Eurasian superpower. That Austria became the Soviet choice was most probably due to the fact that the USSR had been involved in the multilateral state treaty, and promoted and subsequently recognized Austria's neutralization. Both, the state

[2] Petersson, *The Soviet Union and Peacetime Neutrality*, 97, 48.

treaty and neutrality, were more directly connected to the USSR than, for instance, Swiss or Swedish neutrality. Nonetheless, Austria was linked less tightly to the Soviet Union than was Finland, another Soviet "showcase of sorts,"[3] through the Finnish-Soviet Friendship Treaty. In 1955, Austria declared its intention to follow the Swiss rather than the Finnish model. In order to reinforce the Soviet claim of authority, communist voices covered up the fact that Austrian neutrality was *not* stipulated in the state treaty. They also chose to ignore that even earlier, the Western allies had agreed on Austria's neutrality if self-chosen and that all sides consented to the declaration of neutrality. Instead, Soviet politicians and media stressed the importance of the bilateral Soviet-Austrian Moscow memorandum as a basis for the state treaty and neutrality. There was some historic truth in this interpretation: After the USSR had obstructed negotiations for years, the actual breakthrough on the state treaty and neutrality was achieved by Austrian and Soviet delegations, outlined in a bilateral *quid-pro-quo*, and only then reported to the West. Such interpretations aimed at sustaining the tacit claim of a "special" Soviet-Austrian relationship and the Soviet right to interpret Austria's neutrality – either because of the Soviet participation in the forming of the state treaty or the Moscow memorandum. However, from the point of view of international law, this claim was clearly rejected by Austrian experts. A similar struggle over the authority to interpret the state treaty and neutrality concerned the role of the USSR, on one hand, and that of the Western powers, on the other, in the treaty negotiations: When Austrian statements did not adopt the official Soviet version that the treaty had been concluded largely thanks to Soviet efforts, the Soviet side voiced displeasure through official channels as well as the media. While this kind of feud about historical truth might seem insignificant, it characterized the constant, albeit low-key, Cold War about who held the final authority to interpret the world. This was a struggle that affected Soviet-Austrian relations as well. Since historical facts are often used to strengthen legal claims, these discussions were anything but irrelevant.

The struggle for the right to define Austria's obligations as a neutral was fought in the media and in public statements. Experts of international law, both Soviet and Austrian, joined this debate. On both sides, their interpretations reflected the shifts in high level policy. Soviet lawyers sought to theoretically substantiate an ever-growing list of alleged neutrality obligations. While in general, Austrian experts rejected such demands, many of them, including the most influential, tended towards increasing the neutrals' obligations. Only after Gorbachev had brought a change to the world's image of the Soviet Union did those experts who advised a limited definition of the "secondary obligations" of the neutrals gain predominance in Austria.

Although this was often claimed by Soviet leaders and experts, the successful development of Soviet-Austrian relations was *not* just because of parallel interests. In general, the two partners followed rather divergent aims. Keeping the neutral

[3] Hanhimäki, "The Lure of Neutrality: Finland and the Cold War," 262.

country out of the Western blocs such as NATO and the EEC and detaching it as far as possible from the West, particularly from West Germany (the Anschluss trauma) and the United States, Austria's postwar patron, was a paramount goal of the Kremlin. This implied that the Kremlin aimed at making the country "as neutral as possible" (following the Finnish rather than the Swiss example). Making Austria more neutral in the Soviet sense, i.e. separating it from the US, making it protest Western overflights, ruling out its membership in NATO, the ECSC or the EEC, and even seeing it possibly fighting Western blocs, was the leitmotiv of Soviet policy towards Austria. Among the Soviet aims was also to keep Austria militarily weak – a reflection not only of the Soviet teachings of neutrality, but also of a certain distrust vis-à-vis the neutral. At least in this regard, the role of neutralization had not changed since the times of Machiavelli.[4] Periodic Soviet demands that Austria's neutrality be "total," comprising not only abstention from NATO but also complete symmetry or equidistance in political and economic relations and even in public opinion, were to serve this aim. In the words of a leading Austrian diplomat and ambassador to Moscow, over the years the USSR "took regular steps to influence Austria's decision-making."[5] It attempted to mold Austria's interpretation of neutral policy, as well as to shift that interpretation from a permanent to a positive one and thus, to "Finlandize" it.

To Austria this seemed neither possible nor desirable. The neutral was interested in retaining its independence from the Eastern bloc; it did not want to be Finlandized.[6] While the Kremlin wanted Austria's neutrality to be "total," Austria

[4] Kreisky repeatedly referred to Machiavelli's neutrality thesis. See, e.g., Bruno Kreisky, *Die Herausforderung: Politik an der Schwelle des Atomzeitalters* (Düsseldorf: Econ, 1963), 116. Cf. Gerald Stourzh, "Some Reflections on Permanent Neutrality," in August Schou and Arne Olav Brundtland (eds.), *Small States in International Relations*, Nobel Symposium 7 (Stockholm: Almquist & Wiksell, 1971), 93–98, 96. For the "Orvellian dimensions" of "total" neutrality, see ibid.

[5] Haymerle, "Die Beziehungen zur Großmacht im Osten," 175.

[6] The term "Finlandization" emerged in West Germany during the 1960s to describe the process of gradual implementation of self-censorship and submission to Soviet wishes in a Western democracy. A volume published in the late 1970s listed the following features of Finlandization: "1) responsiveness in foreign policy to Soviet preferences; 2) avoidance of alliance with countries deemed by the Soviet Union to be competitors or rivals; 3) acceptance of neutrality in peace or war; 4) abstention from membership in regional and international groupings considered unfriendly by Moscow; 5) restraint over the media in one's country to muffle or minimize criticism of the USSR, so as to avoid possible provocation; 6) compensatory gestures in commercial and cultural contacts with the USSR, extending to treaties and diplomatic consultations, to offset disparities in the relationship with the USSR, on the one hand, and West European countries, on the other; and 7) openness to penetration by Soviet ideas and media. In other words, the term Finlandization describes the behavior of a country whose foreign policy and domestic politics are strongly conditioned by a conscious desire to mollify and maintain friendly relations with Moscow, at the expense if need be of close ties with formal allies and traditional friends or of its own sovereignty." George Ginsburgs and Alvin Z. Rubinstein, "Finlandization," 5.

was and remained a Western-minded parliamentarian democracy. It did not give up its principles of free speech, but, in general and despite increasing self-censorship, rather defended their implementation, even under Soviet criticism. There was, until 1967–68, an Austrian political aim running directly counter to Soviet interests: Austria's rapprochement with the EEC. For a number of reasons, the USSR tried to block this – and, at least until 1987, did so successfully.

Other aims of the two countries, however, proved better reconcilable. One was the Soviet aim of making its relations with Austria a model of "peaceful coexistence" and of demonstrating that these friendly relations were possible mainly due to neutrality. The Soviet attitude towards Austria was, thus, to a large extent defined by the Soviet view of neutrality in general and "by the utility and value of Austria as a showcase" and promoter of the benefits of neutrality.[7] Soviet propaganda presented Soviet-Austrian relations as proof not only of the possibility of "peaceful and mutually beneficial relations and cooperation between countries of different political systems," but also of the correctness of Soviet policy and of the successes of neutrality. The Soviet interest in promoting such coexistence and neutrality in the West was compatible with the Austrian interest in lowering the Cold War's intensity and fostering détente. While both sides followed different aims in promoting détente and while the Soviet strategy of "peaceful coexistence" had more goals than just relaxing international tensions, it was clear to most Austrian governments that it was easier to maintain neutrality and independence in times of détente. Austria was also intent on normalizing its relationship to the superpower in the East, the signatory of the state treaty that had made it particularly hard to conclude the same. Together with the state treaty and normalization of bilateral relations came the chance of developing contacts and economic cooperation, and Austria proved eager to do so in order to increase the country's wealth and security.

Furthermore, both sides were interested in Austria conducting an "active" policy of neutrality, including international mediation and contributions to détente: the Kremlin because it was interested in fostering the international attraction of neutrality by entrusting neutrals with honorable tasks, such as being "diplomatic postmen"[8] in the Berlin crisis or the Vietnam War. Given the confrontation between the two global blocs, the Soviet Union was moreover determined to use Austria for promoting Soviet political initiatives in the West, particularly with regard to disarmament, détente, and the convocation of the CSCE. The Austrian government was willing to fulfill some of these wishes, because it was keen on gaining international

7 Report Haymerle, 22 June 1963, in ÖStA, AdR, BMAA, II-Pol, GZ. 67129–6/64, Z. 75215–6/64. See also Haymerle to Kreisky, 12 December 1961, ibid., Pol. Berichte Moskau; Karasek to Kreisky, 9 April 1963, ibid.; and "Die Beziehungen Österreichs zur Sowjetunion: Vortrag Gesandten Haymerles vor dem vom Herrn Bundesminister ins Leben gerufenen vertraulichen außenpolitischen Kreis," 6 July 1964, in ÖIZG, NL 72: Fuchs, DO 834, File 45. These reports provide a comprehensive interpretation of Soviet-Austrian relations.

8 Wodak to Bielka, 14 February 1966, in ÖStA, AVA, E/1785 Wodak, File 99/2.

recognition and, thus, security. Consequently, both sides were interested in raising the country's international prestige. This seems to have been at the core of the oft-invoked parallelism of Soviet and Austrian interests. Since the United States shared this interest, Austria was able to perform this role on the international stage.

In particular, Raab's *Ostpolitik* and Kreisky's ambitions to foster détente and dialog dovetailed with Soviet wishes to rely on Austria as an icebreaker for ending the Eastern bloc's political and economic isolation. Austrian diplomacy was well aware of this fact, stating that "from Moscow's point of view, Austrian neutral policy is to foster a relaxation of tensions and the international dialog."[9] This obviously included Austria serving, on many occasions after various international crises from 1956 until 1983, as a door-opener and helping Soviet and East European regimes to escape the isolation into which they had fallen by virtue of their own policy. While Austria's *Ostpolitik* was highly appreciated by the United States as well, albeit for different reasons, the neutral's circumventing of the Western embargo against the East was less to their liking.

From the Soviet perspective, Austria was also to act (and did act) as a scout for developing East-West trade. It was to provide the Soviet Union with goods that could not be purchased in other Western countries because of the lack of economic agreements or Western restrictions, including machinery, consumer goods, or pipes for pipelines. In particular, until East-West trade intensified in the 1960s, Austria was, very much like Finland, "the best [Western] shopping center in the neighborhood" for the Soviets.[10] While Austrian hopes were ultimately disappointed that it might be chosen as a hub for USSR trade with Western Europe or natural gas exports, for the Soviet Union, the small, stable, and increasingly wealthy country with its *Osthandel* ambitions also served as a surrogate for Switzerland (to which the Soviet Union developed close relations only in the 1970s) and as a case study for Western economy. During their visits to Austria, Soviet leaders not only examined steel plants, power stations and farms, but also the kitchen and wine cellar of the Imperial Hotel in Vienna.[11]

Soviet policy towards Austria not only endorsed Austria as an international actor and had a generally friendly tone of communication, but it also sponsored numerous high-ranking visits. An Austrian internal report of 1968 stated: "Austria, since the conclusion of the state treaty, enjoys a privileged position in Moscow. This was not even changed by Austria's clear democratic policy during the Hungarian crisis 1956. Symptomatic for the good shape of Austrian-Soviet relations are the numerous exchanges of visits."[12] A special characteristic of travel diplomacy was that whenever East-West relations cooled off, and particularly after international crises,

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[9] File Staatsbesuch Kirchschläger, May 1982, in SBKA, Länderboxen, UdSSR 6.

[10] Jacobson, *Finland*, 72.

[11] Haymerle, "Die Beziehungen zur Großmacht im Osten," 185–186.

[12] Information Sowjetunion, March 1968, in ÖStA, AdR, BMAA, II-Pol, GZ. 17042–6/67, Z. 31717–6/67.

Soviet leaders granted Austria the ostensible honor of being the first Western destination of official trips (Mikoian after the Hungarian crisis of 1957, Khrushchev after the failed Paris summit of 1960, Patolichev after the Czechoslovakian crisis of 1968, Tikhonov in 1981), or of being the first Western guest received in the Kremlin (Raab after Hungary in 1958, Maleta after Prague in 1969). In contrast, whenever détente was imminent Soviet leaders went to other Western countries first, mostly to France (Kosygin in 1966, Brezhnev in 1971, Gorbachev in 1985). With regard to Austria's international position, it seems remarkable that the frequency of Austrian visits to Moscow was much higher than to the Western signatories of the state treaty, with whom the neutral's social, political and economic values and goals had more in common. In order to raise the propagandistic value of such bilateral meetings, the Soviet side insisted on publishing lengthy communiqués. These hailed the state treaty, neutrality and the friendly bilateral relations between the USSR and Austria, and stressed Austrian concord with Soviet policies. While Soviet diplomats and leaders repeatedly attempted to talk their Austrian colleagues into making statements that were designed to support Soviet initiatives or condemn US or Israeli policy, conflicting views between the two sides were usually not reflected in this type of official documents. Moreover, Soviet leaders regularly (ab)used their meetings with Austrian politicians for excessive lecturing in anti-American propaganda.

Since public praise and public criticism were among the most effective Soviet means of promoting neutrality in the West, and also of shaping the neutral's politics, Austria was given more attention in the Soviet press than comparable Western states.[13] This can be attributed to the above-mentioned use of the Soviet media as a semi-official mouthpiece for issuing warnings against undesirable actions such as rapprochement with the Common Market, for identifying alleged "foes of neutrality" within Austria and without, such as neo-Nazism, the FRG, the United States, NATO and the EEC, and for communicating encouragement regarding the convocation of the CSCE. Most of the Soviet attacks were, as Deputy Foreign Minister Semenov confessed, published "prophylactically"[14] – apparently without concern whether they entailed interference in the neutral's domestic affairs. In some of these articles on Austria, its Communist Party, due to a political custom in the Soviet bloc, received more attention than it might have deserved if considering its actual share of the Austrian vote. In return, the KPÖ played the role of a tool of Soviet propaganda and watchdog of Austria's neutrality and pro-Soviet orientation. Fabricated KPÖ charges against the Viennese government, which were meant to intimidate as well as provide evidence for Soviet accusations, were repeated by the Soviet media without being verified. Also due to the Soviet practice of using the

[13] In the years 1956–85, the average annual numbers of articles concerning the neutral states in the main Soviet daily newspapers were: Finland 18; Austria 13; Sweden 4; and Switzerland 2. Petersson, *The Soviet Union and Peacetime Neutrality*, 8.

[14] Austrian embassy Moscow to Austrian MFA, 14 November 1969, in ÖStA, AdR, BMAA, Pol. Berichte Moskau.

Western world as a dark backdrop against which life under the communist regime shone more brightly, Soviet media depictions of the Austrian political, social and economic system were distorted. But despite these systemic drawbacks, the Soviet media coverage of Austria was usually, as the Austrian embassy noted, "markedly friendly and inspired by the effort to depict it [=Austria] as a peaceful, open-minded country, which is capitalist but nevertheless relatively progressive and not malevolent."[15] Not the same can be said with regard to the Austrian media coverage of the USSR and its general image, which seems to have suffered particularly from the Soviet bloodshed in Hungary, the armed intervention in Czechoslovakia, and the oppression of Soviet dissidents. While the Kremlin was never shy in handing out criticism, the communist regime was sensitive if criticized itself and repeatedly demanded that the Austrian government suppress such statements. Nonetheless, it might be of interest to the analyst of international relations that the frank Austrian words about Soviet behavior in 1956 and the Soviet warnings against Austrian neo-Nazis or joining the EEC do not seem to have lastingly affected the friendly official relations between the two sides as long as they were interested in maintaining them.

The result of the various interests and policies of both sides, some parallel or complementary and others conflicting, was a special relationship between the two countries that, for the most part, was demonstratively friendly, even when it was disrupted by the Soviet interventions in Hungary and Czechoslovakia or overcast by Austria's ambitions to associate with the EEC. A certain role in the development of Soviet-Austrian relations seems to have been played by the personal relationship and empathy that appeared to develop particularly between Khrushchev and Mikoian (the latter being, on the occasion of bilateral meetings, frequently referred to as "the Austrian" by his Politburo colleagues) on one hand and Raab on the other. Due to the USSR's central role in creating and shaping Austria's neutrality and to the equally important role neutrality played in defining Soviet policy towards Austria, it has been suggested that the Soviet-Austrian relationship might be regarded as a "neutrality partnership."[16] Indeed, this would be an appropriate description, only if the concept of "partnership" did not imply voluntariness, equal rights, or a shared *Weltanschauung*.

It can be said that this relationship, particularly in the second half of the 1950s, differed fundamentally from Soviet relations to any other Western or neutral country. While the Soviet attitude towards neutralism and the neutrals was merely a sideshow (albeit from time to time an important one) of Soviet policy towards Western Europe and the Third World, as a group the neutrals were so heterogeneous and the Soviet relations with them differed to such a degree "that it is hardly valid to speak of a Soviet design for dealing with them as a group."[17] There were significant

[15] Austrian embassy Moscow to Austrian MFA, 16 January 1967, ibid., II-Pol, GZ. 13844–6/67, Z. 15037–6/67.

[16] Ermacora, *20 Jahre österreichische Neutralität*, 118.

[17] Hakovirta, "The Soviet Union and the Varieties of Neutrality," 569.

differences between the neutrals, such as the legal basis of their neutrality, their geo-strategic locations, the level of their international activities, their economic interdependence with the Eastern bloc, and their ability to defend themselves. The USSR had a much greater leverage over Austria and Finland, whose neutrality was, as a result of the Soviet role in the postwar settlement with these two countries and in the genesis of their postwar status, linked to the Soviet Union. They were located at the Soviet (bloc's) border, militarily weak, and exposed to Soviet pressure. It is also clear that the Austrian and Finnish cases were similar in having a relatively fresh experience of neutrality, which proved susceptible to external influences, particularly from the Soviet side. Of all the neutral states in Europe, Finland had by far the highest rate of economic and political exchanges with the Soviet Union and was, by virtue of these factors as well as its geographic proximity, the most vulnerable to Soviet interference. Within most parameters, Soviet-Austrian relations can be compared rather to the Soviet-Finnish than to Soviet-Swedish or Soviet-Swiss relations, which barely existed. Indeed, Soviet officials referred not only to Austria as a model for other Western states, but also to Finland as a model for Austria. Nonetheless, it would be incorrect to ignore the fact that the Kremlin's leverage and interference in Austrian affairs were significantly lower than in the case of Finland, and Austria's maneuvering space was much wider; no Soviet "night frost" or "note crisis" was staged against Austria, and Austrian self-censorship never reached the degree found in Finland.

Austria thus avoided being Finlandized, as did Western Europe, and, according to some accounts, even Finland.[18] For the most part, Austria's trade patterns remained firmly oriented towards OECD countries, and the CMEA's share in Austria's trade was as low as 8–15 percent. Austria reserved the right of interpreting its neutrality and, in general, did not yield to Soviet demands, although over time it is clear that it did adopt certain Soviet features of neutralism. But the Soviet hopes of Finlandizing Austria or "neutralizing" all of Western Europe turned out to be in vain.

It should be noted that, at least in part due to Soviet "stick and carrot" policy, the Austrian interpretation of neutrality changed over the years. It is clear that Austria's neutral policy was never determined exclusively by its governments and lawyers but also by the surrounding world, and the Soviet Union played a paramount role in this regard. It seems understandable that a small neutral country, with no allies backing it, is more susceptible to pressure of this type from great powers than would be a member of an alliance. Gradual tugging by a large power may, over time, lead to new interpretations and understandings in a small country, and persistent pressure erodes the autonomy of a small state's decision-making. Since Austria had never officially or legally defined its "neutrality doctrine," the interpretation

[18] George Maude, "Has Finland been Finlandized?," in George Ginsburgs and Alvin Z. Rubinstein (eds.), *Soviet Foreign Policy Toward Western Europe* (New York: Praeger, 1978), 43–65, 62.

thereof fluctuated. In contrast to its original interpretation of neutrality, Austria drifted in the direction of the Soviet understanding and even adopted a few characteristics of Finnish neutrality.[19] These included taking initiatives that were expected to please the USSR as well as self-censorship – although these were implemented to a much less pronounced extent than in Finland. Austria also had much stronger economic ties with the East than had, for example, Switzerland. In addition, Austria lacked the Swiss or Swedish determination to create a strong deterrent and neglected armed defense, relying rather, as did Finland, on notions of "active" neutrality as a tool for achieving security. Whether neutrality would have indeed protected the small country located on the battle line between the blocs if a general war between the Warsaw Pact and NATO had broken out is, however, highly doubtful.

The progressive adoption of Soviet interpretations (and Finnish characteristics) of neutrality by Austrian politicians is demonstrated in their ideas concerning economic integration, public opinion and "active" neutrality, the downgrading of armed neutrality and self-defense, as well as the reluctance to express Austrian interpretations. It seems questionable that Austria's neutral policy would have developed the way it did, i.e. that the country protested US overflights or abandoned Western integration, without the presence of the Soviet watchdog. Furthermore, Austria's readiness to speak out openly for freedom, human rights, and democracy in Eastern states became increasingly "neutralized" after the country's courageous declarations against the Soviet bloodshed in Hungary in 1956. This growing "neutralization," which paralleled repeated Soviet protests against foreign criticism, can be seen in the rather cautious Austrian reactions to the Soviet crackdown on Czechoslovakia in 1968, to the invasion in Afghanistan in 1979, to the introduction of martial law in Poland in 1981, to the Soviet downing of a Korean passenger aircraft in 1983, and even to the abortive communist putsch in the Soviet Union in 1991. While in 1956 the Austrian army had been ordered to defend the country's borders, in 1968 it was instructed to stay away from the same. In contrast to earlier promises to the West and in contrast its own declaration of neutrality, the Austrian government consistently neglected the country's defense, choosing instead to rely on an "active" foreign policy – thus reflecting Soviet notions about the futility of the Western neutrals' self-defense and their mission to foster détente. It seems likely that this "neutralization" was a result of, among other factors, repeated Soviet calls for a more pro-Soviet version of neutrality, Soviet warnings as well as encouragement. These constant reprimands led to self-censorship, self-restriction, and retreat into the *Schrebergarten* of virtual security. Today Austria's "mental neutralization" might be seen in the country's reluctance to join the Western alliance and/or step up self-defense, a lack of solidarity with the victims of aggression, human rights viola-

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[19] Cf. Bengt Sundelius, "Introduction," in idem (ed.), *The Neutral Democracies in the New Cold War* (Boulder: Westview, 1987), 1–10, 7: "Inspired by the example of Swiss neutrality, the Austrian version has over time developed in the direction of the […] Finnish type."

tions, or political pressure, and a general unwillingness to get involved in foreign affairs.[20]

Since Soviet relations to Austria were designed to fulfill a distinct function in the international environment, they were subject to changes in this environment. In the late 1950s and early 60s, Austria was not only praised by the Soviet Union as a model of "peaceful coexistence," but was also repeatedly asked by the USSR to offer its services, as for example in the German question, the Berlin crisis, the Vietnam War, and the convocation of the CSCE. Some fifteen years later, détente had materialized, the Berlin crisis and the Vietnam War had been settled, and the CSCE was on its way. Willy Brandt and, later, Richard Nixon became trusted partners of the Kremlin, and Austrian mediatory services were no longer needed. Similarly, Austria's pioneering position in trade with the USSR was lost during détente, as the Soviet Union began to develop its economic ties to other, larger Western states such as Italy, France and West Germany. While in the 1950s and 60s, the Kremlin had used Austria as a tool for neutralizing Western Europe, these efforts were scaled back after 1968. This is not to say that Austria immediately became irrelevant once détente started. The neutral country's services and support were still needed at the CSCE, in the United Nations, and during the last phase of the Cold War. However, while the number of bilateral exchanges of opinion rose, their political significance fell. Gorbachev's new policies and the sea change in East-West relations in the late 1980s made the special relationship between the USSR and Austria obsolete. Once the Cold War was over, there was no longer any need for this "good example of peaceful coexistence."

[20] Neuhold, "The Permanent Neutrality," 59, speaks of an "alarming degree of ignorance" with regard to security issues. The Cold War was seen by the Austrian public as a conflict that did not affect Austria. Manfred Rotter, "Unter Wahrung der Neutralität," in *Zukunft*, no. 1 (1990), 5–11, 10; Oliver Rathkolb, *Die paradoxe Republik: Österreich 1945 bis 2005* (Vienna: Zsolnay, 2005), 42–46. Rathkolb argues that Austrians tend to equate their country's small size and neutrality with security and wealth and not to exhibit solidarity in security issues. In a 2004 survey, 15 percent of questioned Austrians responded that their country should not come to the help of another EU member state if it were attacked. Ibid., 423.