H-Net Reviews
in the Humanities & Social Sciences

Michael Gehler. *Vom Marshall-Plan bis zur EU: Ã?sterreich und die europÃ¤ische Integration von 1945 bis zur Gegenwart.* Innsbruck: StudienVerlag, 2006. 506 pp. EUR 53.00, cloth, ISBN 978-3-7065-1913-7.

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Published on H-German (February, 2007)

Basic knowledge of the European Economic Community (EEC), since 1995 the European Union (EU), was not part of any curriculum when I attended school and university in Austria in the 1960s and 1970s. Moscow ensured that neutral Austria maintained a safe distance from the expanding and economically and politically consolidating western European bloc. Instead, almost by default, Austria became a member of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) along with other neutrals and peripheral countries. Meanwhile, especially during the "Kreisky era," we were initiated into the cult of "permanent neutrality" and the promise of pacifist eternal bliss. Austrians were thus raised not on the regular fare of being Europeans but rather on a steady diet of neutrality unto eternity, an Austrian Cold War exceptionalism. Austria still struggles with the legacy of what some called "neutralism." When the Soviet Union and its eastern European empire imploded, Austria prepared her "Letter to Brussels" of July 1989, begging yet again for EEC membership. The country was prepared to end its sheltered Cold War existence and long political (though not economic and/or ideological!) isolation from western Europe.

Apart from some seasoned diplomats and politicians, a few journalists, international law scholars, political scientists and even fewer historians, however, no one in Austria knew much about the complex architecture, in today's diction, of "deepening" and "widening" western European intra-governmentalism and the EEC's arcane institutional framework. Austria only held observer status in the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and sought but did not achieve closer association with the EEC in the 1960s. For the bulk of Austrian neutralists, especially on the Left, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was a bugaboo, the handmaiden of American militarism and imperialism. In the early 1990s, when Austria's application for EEC/EU membership was being negotiated, Michael Gehler took notice of this changing environment. As the first Austrian historian to focus his research on the consistent study of the EEC/EU and Austria's role, or lack thereof, in European integration, he had to overcome the Cold War "neutralist mindset" of Austrians, their

ignorance and disinterest in the complex European institutional framework, and countless obstacles in the university environment to make "EUrope" a focus of Austrians' research agendas and curricula. He delved with reckless abandon into the subject matter of Austrian EU-membership like a one-man juggernaut, organizing the first Austrian "Working Group on European Integration" at Rolf Steininger's Institute of Contemporary History (Innsbruck), which organized notable conferences and produced some highly regarded scholarly volumes.[1] He tirelessly collected documents in the archives of Europe and in the National Archives in College Park, Maryland, and taped oral histories with politicians, officials and diplomats. All of this activity resulted in the steady production of essays and volumes on the history of Austria's struggle to join the European Union, most notably ***Der lange Weg nach Europa*** (2002), as well as more general textbooks on European integration.[2] While it is too early to call these studies "definitive," given that he is writing about very recent history, Gehler has defined both the parameters of this field and its research agenda. It is rare for a young scholar to leave such a dominant imprint on a field of scholarly research.

The present volume is a shortened, updated version of ***Der lange Weg nach Europa***. In his preface, Gehler cites a number of positive book reviews of this massive, two-volume work. He rightly notes that his Austrian colleagues in the field of contemporary history have "totally abandoned the field to the journalists and political scientists" and complains that they have ignored his oeuvre--nothing new in the Austrian ***Neidgenossenschaft***. Yet he asserts that "colleagues" encouraged him "repeatedly" to publish his study in abbreviated, more compact form (pp. 11-15); presumably these "colleagues" were not the petty historians.

In this shorter version, Gehler skips chapters on pre-World War II ideas and plans for European integration and starts in 1945 with the resurrection of Austria. As the title of the book suggests, he sees the European Recovery Program as the beginning of the postwar European integration process. Austria not only profited immensely from its postwar reconstruction effort, with some of the highest per capita allotments of Marshall Plan aid, but also embarked on a process of "western Europeanization." Unlike Bonn, in the postwar decade Vienna did not choose between neutrality and "westernization," but pursued both. Austria was not divided; neutrality preserved Austrian national unity and helped Austria regain state sovereignty. During the Cold War, Austria "oriented" itself ideologically and economically "toward the West, yet never became fully 'integrated' like the FRG (p. 44). As a result of its inclusion in the Marshall Plan, Austria became a member of the Organization of European Economic Cooperation and the European Payments Union but not of the ECSC, the EEC, NATO or the Western European Union. West German CDU leader Jakob Kaiser complimented his Austrian friends in the "People's Party" in a speech at their March 1951 party convention for "finding your spiritual balance [***seelisches Gleichgewicht***] more quickly than we" (p. 44).

Austria regained her independence with the 1955 "state treaty" and ended the decade-long four-power occupation. The price Moscow demanded for withdrawal of its troops was Austria's "permanent neutrality" and ***Blockfreiheit***. After 1955, when Austrian politicians tested Moscow by trying to define their neutrality too creatively, moving toward European integration by testing membership in the fledgling ECSC and EEC, Moscow regularly and rudely reigned them in; NATO membership was not an option even after 1955. Moscow, and to a lesser extent Charles de Gaulle's France, considered the western European deepening of EEC intra-governmentalism incompatible with neutrality, considering any attempt at closer Austrian EEC association as a clandestine ***Anschluß*** strategy vis-à-vis the FRG, which was the EEC economic powerhouse and Austria's principal

trading partner (p. 82 and passim). Moscow's vetoes of Austrian attempts at closer association with the EEC run through the first half of this book like a red thread. Gehler considers the frightening Hungarian crisis of 1956 on Austria's eastern border as turning point in Vienna's stricter adherence to neutrality (p. 73). Strangely, Gehler pays much closer attention to Moscow's negative policies vis-à-vis EU integration than Washington's positive ones.[3] He praises the crucial role the Marshall Plan played in the genesis of European integration and is caustic about the "questionable" part NATO played in the Kosovo conflict and in the world today (p. 303), hinting at the disaffection of European intellectuals with American foreign policy.

Not being able to join the "core Europe" of the "EEC six," Austria joined the smaller, peripheral free trade zone of the "non six" in 1959-60. For a while, Austrians fooled themselves thinking that they could mediate a closer association between the EEC and EFTA. But Bonn did not want to abandon the deepening intra-governmental EEC association with France (p. 85). At the same time, partisan divisions over the pace of European integration deepened within the "grand coalition" in Austria between the conservative ÖVP and the Socialists, a coalition that lasted until 1966. While the industrial and economic lobbies behind the ÖVP pushed for Austrian leadership to achieve closer integration between the two trading blocs, the Socialists were more skeptical about closer integration and guarded in preserving Austrian neutrality. The ideologue Socialist Vice Chancellor Bruno Pittermann denounced the EEC as a "bourgeois bloc of reactionaries" and "a tool of international cartel capitalism" (cited on p. 86), statements that presaged today's anti-globalist critiques of neo-liberalism. Gehler seems a late admirer of Ekhart Kehr's notion of the "primacy of domestic politics" and is consistently very good at putting the changing Austrian positions on European integration into the context of the highly partisan struggles of Austrian domestic politics.

The Soviet Zone of Austria was the only Soviet-occupied area of Europe to benefit from Marshall Plan aid. Austrian politicians were keenly aware of this exceptionalism and were forced to tread lightly in their critical negotiations with both the western powers and the Soviet Union. Gehler treats the fascinating "special case" scenario more extensively in ***Der lange Weg nach Europa***.[4] Both the Marshall Plan-induced miracle of Austrian economic reconstruction and the lucky coup of the state treaty and independence induced the notion that they would get their way in the founding generation of postwar Austrian political elites. This good luck led ÖVP leaders in the 1960s to lead the neutrals in the attempt of an ***Alleingang*** to Brussels; in other words, to lead the way for EFTA nations towards EEC association single-handedly--they did so again, with more success, in 1989-94. However, both the single-minded De Gaulle and Italy, because of the diplomatic struggle with Austria over autonomy for the embattled South Tyrol region, turned down all Austrian attempts at rapprochement with the EEC (pp. 123-27).

When the charismatic Socialist Bruno Kreisky became chancellor, he prioritized maintaining Austrian neutrality and working for détente in Europe (via his own ***Ostpolitik*** and the Conference of Security and Cooperation in Europe, and in the Near East, via recognition of the Palestinians) over closer association with the EEC. Simultaneously, the EEC lost its internal energy, becoming mired in "Eurosclerosis" (pp. 151 ff). Waldheim's election as president in 1986 precipitated a searing domestic debate about Austria's national World War II amnesia. This debate and the changing international context produced the "Letter to Brussels." A revived "grand" SPÖ /ÖVP coalition responded to the dramatic changes of the late 1980s and asked to be admitted to the EEC, yet at the same time maintaining the cherished Austrian

insistence on neutrality. One of the strengths of this book is the way it traces the tergiversations and changes in Austrian domestic policy as well as the new dynamics of the deepening political union in the EEC unleashed by the Maastricht summit of 1992, in the context of which Austria negotiated the its entry into the EEC via the anticipation and implementation of the ***acquis communitaire***. Finally, in early March 1994, the marathon negotiations were completed. Parliamentary ratification and a contested June 1994 plebiscite completed the process. Gehler makes much of the government propaganda campaign, which sold EU membership to the Austrian public with too many promises. In hindsight, the 66.6 percent Austrian vote to join seems to have been the high point of Austrian "EUphoria."

Once Austria was a full member, new treaties accelerated the process of constructing a common foreign and security policy, which speeded up the "thinning out" and "watering down" of Austria's neutral status. Some of the best writing in this book is about Austria's tightrope walk in adapting its "permanent neutrality" after 1955 to changing international contexts. Even though Austrian neutrality was modeled upon the Swiss, Vienna never pursued neutrality as doggedly and clear-headedly as the staid Bern politicians. Austria joined the United Nations in 1955 and the repeated approaches to Brussels were clear indications that the "watering down" of neutrality began long before its EU-entry in 1995. Even now, however, the Socialists preserve a semblance of it.

The final 100-plus pages of the book are dedicated to decade of Austrian cohabitation with the EU. I say "cohabitation" because the "EUphoria" of 1994 quickly dissipated; the initial love match quickly became a marriage of convenience. During these ten years Austria witnessed two successful presidencies. "Europe" was never more visible for ordinary Austrians than when they became part of "Schengen Europe" and joined the "Eurozone"; I, too, remember crossing the Austro-German border unchecked in the spring of 1998 and spending my first Euros in 2002. Gehler also covers the extended recent debates about the "constitutional convention" and its rejection in French and Dutch plebiscites as well as Austria's further distancing of itself from NATO during the Kosovo and Iraq conflicts. Even Turkey's struggle to join the EU and Wolfgang Schüssel's "deal" for Croatia get a fair shake late in the book.

The most significant turning point in the cooling off of Austrian enthusiasm with regard to the EU came with the sanctions of the "EU-14" against Austria in late January 2000 after the formation of Schüssel's coalition government with Jörg Haider's FPÖ. Although the populist Haider remained governor of Carinthia and did not become a cabinet member, his frequent teasing about the National Socialist past and the heavy-handed xenophobia he had been stirring up in Austria were reason enough for the other member states to fire off a warning shot in the direction of Vienna and all right-wing movements in the EU member states. Austria's isolation ended after six months, but left many Austrians with a permanent pique towards Brussels. Gehler sees no merit in the EU-14s' legal position with regard to Austria and is highly critical of the entire drama. He considers the retraction of the sanctions "a defeat of Haider's enemies," first and foremost French President Jacques Chirac and German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer (p. 281). Haider's FPÖ and the CDU gloated, considering the sanctions a "foreign policy Waterloo" of the FRG's Gerhard Schröder government (p. 279). Yet, with hindsight, were they not a "Waterloo" for Haider's own party? And did Fischer not have a point when he argued that no apologies were required to an Austrian government that included a coalition partner that located xenophobia to the heart of its program? Does the European Union not have a point in demanding from its members that they sensitively address what Tony Judt calls "the long shadow cast by the dictators" throughout the *postwar* era, including the legacies of the Holocaust?[5] From

such a perspective, Gehler's intemperate dismissal of the EU-14 sanctions as "nonsensical" seems overdrawn (p. 286). These and other events are clearly still too close for a balanced assessment *sine ira et studio* for any contemporary historian.

This ambitious work treats a complex matter. Gehler's chapters on events up to the late 1960s are based on archival evidence and include sound, seasoned judgments. In contrast, in its chapters on more recent history, which are largely based on newspaper reports, the book becomes increasingly disparate and tends not to see the forest for all of the trees. The book is also well illustrated with pictures, telling cartoons and graphs, such as one of 2004 that visualizes the new structure of the EU as written down in an unratified constitutional draft (p. 321). The almost 400 pages of dense text and analysis are definitely not a "compact" analysis for a broad readership, but then the arcane business of EU institutional and constitutional change, the business of "deepening" intra-governmentalism and movement towards political union, the politics of expansion and the negotiations for adoption of the *acquis communitaire* will not necessarily arouse the interest of a broad public. Much of it is a story of legalese and faceless bureaucrats and technocratic ministers moving business forward. Apart from Austrian Foreign Minister Alois Mock, who negotiated to complete the treaty almost without interruption for 103 hours between February 25 and March 3, 2004 (p. 217), memorable heroes are absent. For better or worse, the stuff of great history for a broad readership is made of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s speeches at the Lincoln Memorial and D-Day landings at Normandy, not agricultural pricing and the weighing of votes in EU institutions. Napoleon is a more captivating character than Commission President Jacques Delors, Archduke Francis Ferdinand a more intriguing figure than minister of trade Fritz Bock, peace activist Bertha von Suttner an inherently more interesting heroine than Schüssel's Foreign Minister Bettina Ferrero-Waldner with her big smile. Gehler cannot be blamed for the lack of drama in European integration history, even if "the European project" has brought peace to a previously belligerent continent.

Notes

[1]. Michael Gehler and Rolf Steininger, eds., *Österreich und die europäische Integration* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1993); Michael Gehler and Rolf Steininger, eds., *Die Neutralen und die europäische Integration/The Neutrals and European Integration 1945-1995* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2000); Günter Bischof, Anton Pelinka and Michael Gehler, eds., *The EU and Austria* (New Brunswick: Transaction, 2002); Michael Gehler, Anton Pelinka and Günter Bischof, eds., *Österreich in der EU. Bilanz einer Mitgliedschaft* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2003); Michael Gehler, Günter Bischof, Volker Kühnhardt and Rolf Steininger, eds., *Towards a European Constitution: A Historical and Political Comparison with the United States* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2005).

[2]. Michael Gehler, *Europa. Von der Utopie zum Euro* (Frankfurt a.M.: S. Fischer, 2002); Michael Gehler, *Europa. Ideen, Institutionen, Vereinigung* (Munich: Olzog, 2005).

[3]. On the United States' generally positive role, see Geir Lundestad, *"Empire" by Integration: The United States and European Integration, 1945-1997* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998). On the Marshall Plan's role and the genesis of Austria's western European integration, see the masterly new work by Hans Seidel, *Österreichs Wirtschaft und Wirtschaftspolitik nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Vienna: Manz, 2005), which Gehler, apart from two brief references, generally neglects; see also Günter Bischof, "Marshall-Plan und Westintegration," in *Menschen--Regionen--Unternehmen. Festschrift für Franz Mathis zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Helmut Alexander, Elisabeth Dietrich-Daum a nd Wolfgang Meixner (Innsbruck: Innsbruck University Press, 2006), pp. 31-48.

[4]. Michael Gehler, *Der lange Weg nach Europa. Österreich vom Ende der Monarchie bis zur*

EU, 2 vols. (Innsbruck: StudienVerlag, 2002), vol. 1, pp. 126-36.

[5]. Tony Judt, ***Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945*** (New York: Penguin, 2005), p. 6. Interestingly, as he says in his introduction, Judt's inspiration to write this masterly survey of postwar European history came to him in 1989 in Vienna.