Austrian Neutrality: Burden of History in the Making or Moral Good Rediscovered?

MICHAL KOŘAN

Abstract: Since the late 1980s, when the importance of neutrality for Austrian politicians and officials significantly decreased, mainstream scholarship on Austrian foreign policy has condemned neutrality to oblivion. Today, these scholars feel considerable disappointment when they confront the return of the idea of neutrality even among previously neutrality-sceptical politicians. The aim of this essay is (1) to show that the inability to comprehend this development is caused primarily by posing the wrong questions and (2) to suggest a different orientation of future research.

Key words: Austria, critical social theory, discursive analysis, foreign policy, neutrality

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INTRODUCTION

Grounded firmly in the critical social theory platform of IR (for overview see George, 1994: 139–190; Burchill–Devetak et al, 2001: 155–180; Linklater, 2002; see also Ashley, 1987; Campbell, 1992) and siding with the Vienna School of Critical Discourse Analysis[1] (see Wodak, de Cillia, Reisigl, Liebhart, 2003), this essay point out some of the serious shortcomings of the prevailing way of addressing questions related to Austrian foreign policy and neutrality and to offer an alternative avenue for future research. The text will unfold in four thematic steps. Firstly a close kinship between the scholar narratives and specific political discourses will be revealed. It will be shown that Austrian scholars have been dealing with the issue of Austrian neutrality in three virtual waves ("paradigms") – international-law research orientation, rationalist orientation[2] and, most recently, by engaging in a mix of rationalist and constructivist orientation. It will be argued that no matter what research mode has prevailed at a given time, all of them followed the basic tenet of the given political discourse. Secondly, the often unspoken theoretical premises of the recent scholar narratives will be elucidated. The recent approach can be best characterised as rationalism enriched (mostly unconsciously) by some ontologically ideational features. The third step will be to subject this intellectual position (some prefer to call it "via media" (Wendt, 1999) or "middle ground" (Adler, 1997) constructivism to critical scrutiny. As a result of this step, it will be argued that this meta-theoretical and epistemological stance is due to its very nature bound to fail because it claims to achieve unattainable research fruits. The essay will then conclude by suggesting some possible alternative avenues for the research on Austrian neutrality and foreign policy.

Having said this, it is obvious this essay seeks to satisfy not only the empirical-analytical demand (i.e., laden by critical social theory, to provide some

clues on the issue of Austrian neutrality and on the scholarly ways of dealing with it) but also to touch some of the fundamental theoretical quarrels within IR in general (with the help of Austrian neutrality as a case study). However, it must be noted that the essence of this essay is to provide a critique of the prevailing scholarship on the issue of Austrian foreign policy and neutrality, while saving the alternative research for the future.

SETTING THE STAGE

It could be started from the premise, that – as will be shown below – the peculiar nature of the Austrian neutrality was invented where it had never existed before. It was invented in 1955 and from then on, through endless redefinitions, it was (and it is) a subject of constant (re)building. Particular meanings of the term "neutrality" have always been dependent on the particular social context in which they have materialised. This context has had an overwhelming discursive effect on the inquiries related to neutrality and foreign policy. It has to be stated beforehand that the approach, as suggested later in this paper, does not pretend to be able to escape the "discursive trap". On the contrary, the limits posed by the surrounding discourse are inevitable. However, with this inevitability in mind, questions asked can be adjusted accordingly. Before turning to the actual overview of the discursive effects it is necessary to clarify our apprehension of a concept of "discourse".

"Discourse" is herein understood in a Foucauldian vein that takes explains it as the "power that makes us understand certain problems in certain ways, and pose questions accordingly" (Adler, 2005: 103). Discourse is the "prevailing mode of subjectivity". (Burchill–Devetak, 2001: 199) It is "not a way of learning 'about' something out there in the 'real world'; it is rather (...) producing that something as real, as identifiable, classifiable, knowable, and therefore meaningful. Discourse creates the conditions of knowing". (George, 1994: 30) Critical discourse approach is supposed to contribute to our understanding of the "process by which the political figures, academics, journalists others (...) frame their reality". (Shapiro, 1998: 696)

Whilst it is in the very foundation of critical social theory to praise diversity and heterogeneousness, there is a minimal agreement among critical scholars that discourse is constructed by privileging certain types of "goods" over others. It is the privileged "good" that enables us to define a particular type of "other" and that of "same" and provides for adjusting human behaviour accordingly;[3] it is the superior moral "good" what lends to differentiate between outside and inside. Other is "regarded as something not occupying the same moral space as the self" (Burchill- Devetak, 2001: 199). This approach, close to Habermasian critical theory, stresses the importance of the shifts in the ways social bonds are constructed. In the world of IR, these bonds unite members of a given state and separate them from the outside world. In this case, state is not only a *bounded geographical* but also a *bounded political and moral* community. (Linklater, 2002)

The same holds true in the case of Austria and the following paragraphs will show how overwhelmingly have the discursive practices of "moral space" building affected the ways (mainstream) scholars have been pursuing their inquiries related to the issues of neutrality and foreign policy.

NEUTRALITY – A MATTER OF "NECESSITY" NOT "MORALITY"

The so called *Neutrality Act*[4] *was* adopted by the *Austrian National Assembly* on October 26th 1955 as a constitutional law and was proclaimed as a unilateral act albeit one with strong international consequences. The narrow wording of the Act did not suggest any particular significance for the foreign policy orientation (it is mostly defined in negative ways).[5] Neither did it carry any particular moral loading. On the other hand it invited endless opportunities for different interpretations.

The privileged discursive cleavage in the period of 1954–1957 was one of *freedom* and *independence* (as the superior "good") versus *dependence*. After a decade of the State treaty struggle – period of doubts, uncertainty and insecurity – freedom and sovereignty were the "goods" that were chosen over others. Spatial boundaries were being re-secured through the references to freedom and the ability to exercise an active foreign policy as a sovereign state. What was the neutrality position in this moral geography? Neutrality was seen as a tool to achieve Austrian independency and freedom but it was by no means seen as a constitutive element for it.

Throughout the first months following the declaration of the Neutrality Act, roughly till the end of 1956, it was clear that the Austrian government had no intention to broaden its neutrality to non-military, i.e. political, cultural and above all economic affairs. It was constantly stressed that Austria is "free state not subjected to any obligations; its neutrality is of purely military nature" (Leopold Figl's press announcement, October 23, 1956;6) Gehler, 2002b: 194). This reading of the Neutrality Act implied that Austria was free to make a choice for full membership in any given non-military alliance and organization. Thus, as opposed to the case of Switzerland, Austria opted for membership in the *UN* (December, 14 1955) and for that in *Council of Europe* (April 16, 1956).

However, the original commitment to neutrality as declared in the *Moscow Memorandum* signed on April 15, 1955 involved a provision that obliged Austria to execute much broader policy of perpetual neutrality: that *"of the type maintained by Switzerland"* (Verdross, 1956: 61). Since it was necessary for the Austrian government to maintain full credibility of its neutral standing, both the Neutrality Act itself and international law in general had to first be interpreted so that it could provide a legal and moral platform for foreign policy conduct in a manner substantially different from that of Switzerland. This uneasy task was accomplished above all by a pre-eminent international-law expert, then the Director of the Institute of International Law in Vienna, Alfred Verdross.

Verdross (1956) argued for compatibility of neutrality (as it was defined by international law and by the envisaged Neutrality Act)[7] and the United Nations Charter. While Article 16 of the *Covenant of the League of Nations* postulated "the obligation for all Members to take immediate economic steps against the aggressor and to allow the transit of troops through their territories" and thus *a priori* excluded any possibility of neutrality, the *United Nations Charter* is according to Verdross "much adaptable, since ... Members of the United Nations are not bound to take action immediately against the aggressor, as was the duty of the Members of the League of Nations." More-

over, "...it is left to the Security Council whether a Member is to be invited to take measures; the Security Council is able to excuse individual Members from such measures" (Verdross, 1956: 65–67). Because the UN accepted Austria as a member without reservations and with full awareness of its neutral status it could be concluded that it also did not expect Austria to participate in any measures that were not compatible with Austrian neutrality. This part came to be known as *Verdross doctrine*. But Verdross' argument went much farther than this. He specifically stated that a neutral state "is bound to obey the international rules of neutrality during a war between other countries". The only case when neutrality has to be employed in peacetime is when particular obligations to another country could get a neutral state involved in war. Other than that the neutral country is "absolutely free in its domestic and foreign policy ... in particular it is not bound to observe an ideological neutrality" (Verdross, 1956: 63–64, 65).

An active foreign policy was largely synonymous with the moral good of "freedom" and "sovereignty". The Verdross' aim was, indeed, to protect an active foreign policy from neutrality. This is exactly the point that has been officially emphasized in 1955–1956. The Austrian government stressed that neutrality is aligned solely with the wartime circumstances and did not leave any doubt that it is unwilling to tie its hands by putting neutrality on the top of its foreign policy agenda. Instead, the Austrian debate whether to participate in the nascent European integration process occurred with considerable enthusiasm (see e. g. Gehler, 2002a: 119–167). For the first time, we could see the way that scientific enterprise – in this case international law expertise – willingly adapted so that it conformed to the political agenda of its days.

NEUTRALITY: AN ACTIVE AGENT IN AUSTRIAN MORAL SPACE BUILDING

The Hungarian uprising in October – November 1956 and subsequent events put the Austrian pro-western foreign-policy activism to the edge. The courageous Austrian response to the Soviet invasion to Hungary was in perfect accord with its moral status as an independent and free international actor. However, it also brought (at least for the time of being) an end to the rather benevolent attitude of Soviet representatives to the Austro-Western honeymoon. It became clear that Austria had to be much more careful in its pro-western expressions. It must also be stressed that there were important domestic developments, particularly the raising importance of the EC-sceptical current within the SPÖ that contributed to the abandonment of the extensively pro-European and openly pro-western course. The important point is, however, that it was not before the beginning of 1957 that the Austrian foreign-policy begun to be more closely related to the neutral status.

Obviously, the first victim of this shift was the previously discussed possibility of full membership in the EEC. To defend the decision *not* to take a part in the integration process the new Foreign Minister Bruno Kreisky (SPÖ) returned to the commitments made in the Moscow Memorandum and defined neutrality in broad "Swiss" terms. (Kreisky's speech at the SPÖ assembly, November 13, 1959; source, Gehler, 2002b: 236) Instead of the EEC, Austria opted for the creation of the *European Free Trade Association* (EFTA). Again, this decision had to be justified and, indeed, there emerged a consid-

erable amount of analysis arguing that EFTA membership – contrary to that of EEC – is fully compatible with neutrality.

One example: in an article for *Die Furche* newspaper (November 28, 1959) Alfred Verdross expressed his conviction that membership in the EEC would bring such deep economic commitment to other countries that the possibility of maintaining neutrality is *a priori* excluded in the case of an armed conflict. On the other hand, the argument went, that membership in EFTA threatens neither economic nor military neutrality[8] (source, Gehler, 2002b: 237).

The Austrian government also began to openly state that joining the EEC would violate Article IV of the *State treaty*. This Article forbade Austria from any political or economical unification with Germany. Since Germany is 'one of the most important states of the EEC', Austrian admission, "would oppose the State treaty"[9] (Kreisky's speech at the SPÖ assembly, November 13, 1959; source, Gehler, 2002b: 236). The desire for unification with Germany was for many reasons the only possible way of streaming foreign-policy activism during the First Austrian republic. After the Second World War this had to be altered – one of the first example of the detachment from Germany is the so called *victim myth (*see e. g. Frölich-Steffen, 2003: 115–123) asserting that Austria did not hold co-responsibility for the crimes of the war, and that it was a new state born in the aftermath of WWII.[10] It was not until 1957 and the events surrounding that year that Germany was officially declared as *the other* (however "friendly").

It has often been argued that it was this *otherness* from Germany that since 1945 been used as a tool for establishing the spiritual foundation of the new Austrian *Staatlichkeit* (see Stourzh, 1990; Pelinka, 2000; Fröhlich-Steffen, 2003; Wodak, de Cillia, Reisigl, Liebhart, 2003: 55–58). The issue is nonetheless much more complicated which, partly helps to explain the new-born overwhelming attractiveness of neutrality. The Austrian pro-German sentiment was something that could not be immediately abandoned. Even after the end of Second World War, it was possible to find a strong societal current within Austria rejecting the idea that Austria is a separate entity.

For this reason it was risky to attempt to erect Austrian statehood solely around the notion of otherness from Germany,[11] and there have been a lot of controversies over a distinct Austrian identity during the 60s and 70s that could prove this point. Thus, Austrians were unable to freely choose any form of *Staatlichkeit* myth without carefully observing whether *the* particular choice could not cause some kind emotional harm or political instability. The importance of this assertion is only accentuated by the fact that May 15th (a date when the *State treaty* was signed) was not chosen as an Austrian *National day*. Instead, in 1965, October 26 was chosen, i.e. the date when neutrality was declared, a date "much less susceptible to emotional loading" (Brückmüller, 1998: 85)

Edward Timms (1998) rightly pointed out that Austrian identity was built on rather schizophrenic foundations, those oscillating between Austrian and German components (see also Heer, 1981). There were no elites nor was there any unifying common past experience that could readily be relied on to define a distinct Austrian national character. One of the most easily accessible and emotionally neutral elements that could be transformed in to a distinct na-

tional consciousness was to be found in Austrian culture. Later, as the success of the second republic became clear, other examples of Austrian achievement were used: social stability, "social partnership" or federalism. Another, equally valuable and emotionally neutral feature was neutrality. It was here where neutrality lost its purely strategic and military meaning and gained a strong normative element. For the first time the otherness from Germany *along* with Austria as "Geisteskontinent, Kulturnation" (Busek, 1995: 17) also materialised in the normative aspect of neutrality, this could smoothly supply the required stuffing for the emerging Austrian state-/nationhood.

This helps to understand how the interpretation of the scope and purpose of neutrality underwent a radical change after 1957. From then on it was not *a priori* limited to the wartime circumstances. The new re-interpretation suggested that a neutral country is not only obliged to stay away from armed conflict and to pursue a policy that eschews any possibility of getting trapped into war but also that it has to *actively* seek policies that create conditions eventually leading to the abolishment of wars as such. This shift could not be more substantial. While the pre-1957 neutrality was described in largely negative terms and was kept apart from foreign policy conduct, the new neutrality was seen as standing in the very heart of the foreign policy agenda. The reach of neutrality was extended to the peace-time foreign policy orientation and thus broadened to also include non-military issues.

We can see a major discursive change. Freedom, sovereignty and the spatial dimension of Austria were deemed to be largely secured and the following steps can be seen as a progress towards securing the moral and genuinely Austrian political and moral space. In contrast to the early post-war period, the "good" of being different from Germany prevailed. This otherness could be only promoted in "moral" not "national" terms. This "good" made it possible to differentiate Austria from Germany and, indeed, from any country that would not hesitate to take part in a possible armed conflict. This Austrian uniqueness as a presumed active peace builder supplied the necessary boundaries for its moral space by its abstention from the earthly struggles of other countries. That this role was above all subjectively construed by Austrians themselves and not really appreciated by others is apparent from the rather sceptical or at least hesitant attitudes towards this Austrian task as expressed by the superpowers and certain other European countries (Rathkolb, 1998; Schröck, 2002; Maschke, 2002).

Until 1990s neutrality was consciously used as a tool (*national buzzword*) "which had helped in the construction of a single common national self-portrayal" (Wodak, de Cillia, Reisigl, Liebhart, 2003: 104). From the preceding paragraphs we can see that there was *nothing* natural or determinate in neutrality for it to become one of Austria's defining features. Instead, it was a blend of intersecting events, framed by an identity building discourse process. As a consequence, neutrality as part of the Austrian identity has to be seen as a result of this discursive process.

MORAL ARGUMENTS WRAPPED INTO LANGUAGE OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

Again, this line of argumentation had to be anchored in an "objective" expertise, for the time being still based on an international law reasoning. One of the

best examples is Karl Zemanek's (1961) contribution to the original Verdross doctrine. Zemanek argued that "although a permanently neutral state has rights and duties under the laws of neutrality only during a war between other states (...) the state must adopt a 'policy of neutrality' (...). Nothing prevents it from participating in universal activities for peaceful purposes (...) contemporary permanent neutrality must be active. It is only justifiable if it serves, besides its own immediate purpose, the superior aim of international peace. (...) It would thus signify a complete failure of the policy of neutrality should the status of permanent neutrality appear to be an expression of narrow egoism or should the impartiality (...) seem to be indifference." (Zemanek, 1961: 415–418)

This assertion is identical with the governmental line adopted and executed above all by Bruno Kreisky (SPÖ). The message is clear: (1) Austrian foreign policy lost nothing of its post-war activism (as an attribute of "sovereignty"); (2) while until 1957 this activism was presented as opposed to neutrality, since 1957 it was one of neutrality's defining features (an attribute of "uniqueness").

BOUNDED NEUTRALITY IN A RATIONALIST SKIN

This situation was not been principally altered until roughly 1983–1984 when the new coalition government (SPÖ/FPÖ) took over and broke with the active all encompassing global foreign policy of the Kreisky-era. This break was signified by asserting "a regional rather than global line of vision" and by changing "emphasis towards [Austrian] immediate environment" (Kramer, 1996: 169).

The era of foreign minister Leopold Gratz (SPÖ) and, even more importantly, since January 1987 that of Alois Mock (ÖVP) was later to be known as a period of "realistic foreign and neutrality policy". Foreign policy was to be designed for nothing more but to respond to the "actual needs" and "interests", aiming at "defending the status quo" by a policy of "natural self-restraint". (Kramer, 1996: 170)

Moral imperative of this period was: to be "normal", and to be "rational". The scholar response to this shift was very much in harmony with the prevalent intellectual fashion of the IR-mainstream in the 1980s emphasizing the rational discourse in inquiries And building on various theoretical sources of "small-states literature" (for an overview see Vogel, 1983; Skuhra, 1983; Knudsen, 1996; Hey, 2003) Austrian scholars now tried to find the best possible ways for a "rational" foreign policy conduct, looking at various "variables" and "levels of analysis", and turning away from universally minded goals and global commitments. Another point that can illustrate this "rationalising" move is the way in which, the *Active Neutrality* phase was now presented. With a growing tendency it was depicted as if the active global policy *was* above all a rational "realist" foreign policy enabled by a unique international setting. According to the argument, only due to its activism during the previous phase was Austria able to safeguard its immediate goals: sovereignty and independency. Moreover, through the global foreign policy and UN-activism it was easier for Austria to solve some of its less fundamental issues: i. e. the dispute over South Tyrol or some of its economical objectives (Höll-Kramer, 1983: 198). The morality of neutrality was turned on its head once more.

Thus, the basic scholar assumption, as it emerged in the late 1980s, was that there is a rational foreign policy "out there" and it is literally waiting to be discovered. What role could neutrality play in this enterprise? It was for example seen as a tool for preventing Austria, given its status as a small industrialized and developed country, from being forced into an external dependency (see in general Höll /ed./ 1983; in particular Mouritzen, 1983; Rotter, 1983; Höll and Kramer, 1983). Austrian active armed neutrality was also grasped as a strategic security tool in the case of an all-out conventional war on European soil: the principal task was "to persuade a potential aggressor that an attack is too risky, costly, and time consuming" (Luif, 1992: 26).[12] Interestingly enough, even the "old fashioned" international-law orientation, previously calling for a global peace policy, was suddenly able to alter itself and to carry out this more modest and reserved position (see Zemanek, 1984).

The question of EC membership as it grew relevant in the second half of the 1980s shed yet another light on the neutrality issue. With the support for EC accession increasing, firstly and above all inside the ÖVP and among the large industrialists attached to this party, one could encounter a fresh analysis arguing for the compatibility of EC membership with the permanent neutral status. In a ground-breaking article, eloquently written for (and paid by) the *Federation of Austrian Industrialists* (VÖI),[13] international law specialists Waldemar Hummer and Michael Schweitzer (1987; see also Luif, 1992; Falkner, 2001) built-up their analysis around an argumentation strongly evoking the mood of 1955–1957.

Once more attempts were made to align neutrality solely with wartime circumstances as only these would require an EC member to retain absolute freedom to act as a requisite for maintaining its neutrality. In contrast to the previously prevalent assessments (1960s–early 1980s) trade autonomy was not regarded as an indispensable feature of permanent neutrality.[14] On the contrary – "international interdependence had made autarky an impossible goal" (Luif, 1992: 80). Thus, to pursue a broadly defined neutrality regardless of its previous standing could be portrayed as an "irrational" enterprise which would in turn only harm the "real" Austrian interests.[15]

HOLY MANTLE OF NEUTRALITY

Finally, since the end of 1980s, it became common to think of Austrian neutrality as a concept completely apart from the conduct of foreign policy. It was Franz Vranitzky, then the Austrian Federal Chancellor, who in the midst of events (that were conceived as going far beyond anyone's comprehension) asserted the conviction that "[n]eutrality and neutral policy are parts of a dynamic and fluid process that has to be adapted and developed in and according to a changing international environment" (Vranitzky, 1992: xix). Vranitzky went on: "as politicians of neutral countries, they must strive to define and maintain neutrality in these changing circumstances – at least as long as neutrality has not become wholly obsolete by a total transformation of the international order" (ibid.: xx).[16]

The latter point – neutrality as being obsolete – throughout the 1990s, has been vigorously asserted by the FPÖ closely followed by the ÖVP in its more moderate approach. As the then ÖVP Foreign Affairs speaker Andreas Kohl

put it: "The political bridge-building function of Austrian neutrality has died out (...) other concepts have their future. As far as the European peace-order has been achieved (...) the Austrian neutrality is definitely surpassed" (quoted in Fröhlich-Steffen, 2003: 169). On the contrary, the question of abolishing neutrality was (generally) ruled out among SPÖ's politicians. The issue of neutrality has gradually become one of the leading political agendas and a subject of endless struggle within the government led by SPÖ/ÖVP coalition. The clash over neutrality was after all one of the reasons for the final break-up of the "grand" coalition in 1999. With ÖVP-FPÖ coalition coming into power in February 2000 the neutrality-sceptical position made it into the government, even with the ever-constraining SPÖ's influence. It became a truism that classical all-around neutrality must be superseded by "solidarity" within EU.

This position found its clearest expression in the new *Security and Defence Doctrine* (January 2001). The debate over a new security perspective was ignited by the ÖVP-FPÖ coalition soon after resuming power in 2000 and the doctrine passed only with the support of the coalition parties as the opposition voted against the resolution of the Doctrine (December, 2001). The Doctrine's wording and implications have had far reaching implication. The Austrian government changed its perception of threats (*Comprehensive National Defense Program*) and changed its defence and security perspective accordingly. It also presented its own view on the history and function of neutrality. The most eloquent part of the Doctrine is as follows: "Austria (...) has radically changed its status of permanent neutrality in international law... (its) status in international law corresponds to that of a non-allied state rather than a neutral state. Austria is sovereign to decide on the future development of its security policy. However, the better Austria is integrated into the international security architecture, the more efficiently will it be able to safeguard its security interests and peace policy objectives and to contribute to shaping a stable and peaceful environment. (...) Austria will continuously assess the value of NATO membership for its security and defence policy and the option of joining NATO will be kept open." (National and Security Doctrine, 2001)

The ÖVP-FPÖ government took full advantage of the opportunity to "construct" the national defence interest (see in general Buzan and Waever and de Wilde, 1998; Campbell, 1996) and thus to reshape the official position on neutrality. It even put neutrality in direct opposition to the efficiency in safeguarding its security *and* the possibility to contribute to a stable and peaceful environment. Thus, neutrality found itself directly in opposition to every meaning it has assumed throughout its history. Additionally, in a speech given at the occasion of the Austrian National Day in October 2001 Chancellor Schüssel ridiculed neutrality and compared it to a cliché similar to Lipizzaner and Mozartkugeln (quoted in Neuhold, 2005). How was this radical shift explained in the mainstream scholar literature? It was not. In principal, it only followed the official government position.

RATIONALITY IN A SCIENTIFIC CLOAK

The mainstream scholar narrative unfolded as follows: in spite of all the attempts to "rationalise" and "de-normativise" the Austrian foreign policy in the 1980s, the changing international environment of 1988–1990 found Aus-

tria totally aimless and helpless.[17] No antecedent concept seemed to make any sense *vis-à-vis* the processes in the Soviet-bloc and in world affairs in general. The Austrian foreign policy was nothing more then an incremental "muddling through".[18] Neutrality, bridge-building, *Ostpolitik* – nothing was taken as a relevant and meaningful guidance through the uncertainty of this fevered interlude (for an overview see, Neuhold /ed./, 1992). Helmut Kramer (1998: 169–172) coined this situation with the term "crisis of normalisation". The discursive background of this particular reading of Austrian foreign policy of the late 1980s and the early 1990s is more than apparent: while the period of global foreign policy is seen as something "abnormal", the moderate and limited foreign policy is seen as "normal", regardless of the painful experiences the process of "normalisation" can bring about. There is even some undeniable teleological feeling to it: Austria is *bound* to move from a utopist (active-neutral) to a realist ("real-interest" based) foreign policy behaviour. The path of "normalisation" is henceforth open, there is a clear end in sight and the pains are only caused by the residual "ab-normal" elements, not by the illusion of the entire concept of "rationality" in foreign policy altogether.

The already contested concept of neutrality was subsequently assaulted with even more scathing force. This assault did not circumscribe itself on the question of joining the EC. Neutral states were suddenly seen as "too weak and not sufficiently recognized ... and are not indispensable" in any new initiative of the peace-building process (Gärtner, 1992: 30).[19] From the "confession" that neutrality is not indispensable while at the same time it is not fully rational there is only a single step to the argument that neutrality is nothing more than a "comfortable position" (Lehne, 1992: 207) thus it is not needed and, consequently, is indeed a "burden of history" (Luif, 2003). The burden that has (for some time before had been dumped) to be carried on the road to normalisation.

NEUTRALITY – A BURDEN OF HISTORY IN THE MAKING?

According to the majority of scholar literature dealing with this subject matter neutrality is seen as obsolete and, indeed, a menace to the rational orientation of foreign and security policy (see e. g. Gärtner, 1992; Lehne, 1992; Neuhold and Luif, 1992; Zemanek, 1995; Neuhold, 1995; 1998; 2003; 2005; Kramer, 1996; 1998; Luif, 1995; 2003; Hummer, 2000; Höll, 2002; Phinnemore, 1995).[20] That the above depicted attitude stands at odds with next to everything commonly associated with neutrality until the very last days of the 1980's (see e. g. Höll, 1982; Neuhold and Thalberg, 1984; Däniker, 1992; Visuri, 1992) is not surprising. What is striking, though, is that the mainstream explanations did not bring up anything that would differ from the explanations presented by the politicians.

Routine explanation of this principal shift thus focuses its attention to systemic-level developments and its impact on the foreign policy behaviour: the once celebrated neutral stance has lost its substantial meaning due the abrupt dusk of the cold-war international system. With the bipolar dynamics faded away, the neutrality stance was no more tenable as an active "bridge-building" or "peace-promoting" international factor. Neither of these offer neutrality a meaningful position for security and foreign policy making in the

face of new security challenges (peculiar to post-cold war period, see in particular Enos-Attali, 2005). Thus, neutrality is not rational *vis-à-vis* the overwhelming structural changes of 1988–1990 and the subsequently changed security environment.

The most important element for both academic and political reasons for the "irrationality of neutrality" was the manner in which the meaning of the Cold war's end was secured: the end of the East-West tension was supposed to be *the* reason for giving up on neutrality. However, when taking a closer look, this reasoning will reveal itself as considerably false. First of all, it is necessary to point out that the single fact that the tension between East and West has ceased to exist does not logically lead to the necessity of abandoning neutrality. Given the enormous tasks loaded on the shoulders of neutrality in the 60s and 70s, given the overwhelming global reach of the active-neutral foreign policy (i. e. the Middle East conflict), one has to conclude that in the view of Kreisky's foreign policy the East-West conflict was but one of the world's enmities, though the most pressing one. The termination of one conflict would not make any harm to the (supposedly) transcendental value of neutrality as understood in the 1970s.

Therefore, it was above all the restriction to the scope of neutrality in the 1980s that allowed for the later calls for its ultimate abandonment and not the changes in the international environment. And, as we could see above, this redefinition (limitation) of neutrality was of an endogenous nature (e. g. the rise of the pro-EC movement). To support the argument against neutrality on the ground of an exogenous (systemic) development is thus largely irrelevant. This will be even more apparent when looking at the latest development of neutrality-related discussions. In spite of all neutrality sceptical scientific accounts, neutrality has recently enjoys a resurgence, even among those politicians who ridiculed neutrality only a few years ago.

NEUTRALITY – MORAL SPACE REDISCOVERED

In the 2004 presidential elections, no less than 52,4 % of Austrians balloted for Heinz Fischer, SPÖ candidate who is ardently dedicated to neutrality.[21] In October 2004 ÖVP pledged for the inclusion of permanent neutrality to an annex to the new "European constitution" and the call for NATO membership was abandoned. What is more, on the occasion of a military-parade held on the *Austrian National Day* in 2005 the air was replete with unreserved panegyric statements stressing the importance of a continuous neutrality. Federal Chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel (ÖVP) avowed that "a core of our neutrality remains". (*Die Presse*, 26. 10. 2005) Even the chairman of the FPÖ (formerly the most anti-neutral attuned party) Heinz-Christian Strache changed his position[22] and warned against "abolishing neutrality" (*Die Presse*, 26. 10. 2005). All of this fits well under what Hanspeter Neuhold (2003: 17) terms a "re-discovered" neutrality.[23]

How to explain the re-discovered neutrality, this perspicuous sense of unity between the pro-neutral socialist-green opposition and somewhat neutrality-sceptical black-orange (ÖVP-BZÖ)[24] coalition? Mainstream scholars offer two conventional answers to this puzzle and together they form one comprehensive whole. According to the first, neutrality is seen as an extremely elas-

tic and fluid concept (for general considerations see Koppelman, 2004) allowing it to be formulated and reformulated with respect to actual needs. It implies that no matter what the actual foreign policy orientation might be it always can be portrayed as neutral (e. g. Cox and Ginty, 1996: 123–126; Ojanen and Herolf and Lindahl, 2000: 10–33). Thus, Austria could become an active figure within the framework of ESDP development,[25] an institution formerly seen as a major obstacle of the Austrian pro-integration policy, and yet remain in the neutral "camp" (see Rezac, 2003; Neuhold, 2003; 2005).[26]

The other answer pictures neutrality as one of the pillars of the Austrian national identity (Kramer, 1996; Reiterer and Wittich, 1998; Bischof, 2002: 41; Fröhlich-Steffen, 2003; Luif, 2003). This line of arguments is echoed in the way David Phinnemore (1995: 369) puts it: "(neutrality) distinguishes German-speaking Austria from Germany. For most, however, it is more closely associated with independence, peaceful coexistence, prosperity and international standing". As far as neutrality is an indispensable feature of Austrian national identity it is also an indispensable feature of Austrian foreign and security policy. Combining what has been said above with these two explanations one can get a very convincing picture of the current development: neutrality has lost much of its original power and *raison d'ètre* due to the system-level post-cold war developments. Nonetheless, since it is an important feature of the Austrian identity, the content and nature of neutrality has to be (and can be) adapted so that it can survive without it hurting a "rational" foreign policy conduct.[27] As such it can easily become a largely political matter and a tool for public mobilisation, with both camps (pro- and anti-neutral) have to be extremely careful and cautious when playing the neutrality card.

However, neutrality has actually undergone a process of "rediscovery". How can this be related to the mere "caution" caused by the fear of the public reaction to any anti-neutral move? If mere "caution" was the case, neutrality would not be "rediscovered", instead, it is possible, that it would be swept out of the public stage until more favourable conditions for its abolition occur.

This is in accordance with the findings of Ruth Wodak and her colleagues (Wodak, de Cillia, Reisigl, Liebhart, 2003: 104), who by a careful examination of commemorative speeches in the public arena (one of the most influential discourse-building instrument) in 1995. They decided that: "[t]he attempt was made, more or less cautiously, to prepare the Austrian population for the impending renunciation of neutrality". Yet, this did not happen. Instead, what we are facing is an actual change in the attitude towards neutrality, one that once again sees it as increasingly moral imperative. As the following examination reveals, this change can not be grasped when seeking an explanation and asking *why* questions.

DISCURSIVE GAMES OF RECENT TIMES

In this regard, it is worthy to point out some of the spins that the relationship between foreign policy, neutrality and the other concepts involved (rationality, identity) has undergone since the 1990s. It was argued that the main discursive structure framing the possible inquiries in the 1980s and 1990s was

a question of rationality/irrationality of Austrian foreign policy. This cleavage dominated the academic debate that rendered Austria as unmistakably set on its path to "normalisation". Yet, another discursive change emerged through the second half of the 1990s. The dualism "rationality" versus "irrationality" was replaced by a dualism "solidarity" versus "neutrality".

While prior to this shift neutrality was seen as something not exactly "bad" but certainly "irrational", after this shift the emerging moral good has epitomized itself in "solidarity", "responsibility" and "burden-sharing". Anyone arguing in favour of neutrality could expect an accusation of "isolationism" and "egoism". Both of these dichotomies are expressed in the *Defense and Security Doctrine* and it seemed it was only a matter of time till neutrality would be condemned in these moral terms. The road to "normalization" was (for a brief moment) replaced by a road to "solidarity".

Quite recently, though, the "neutrality sceptical" camp made an interesting move. In a position avowed in late December, 2003 by tandem Wolfgang Schüssel and the then ministry of foreign affairs Benita Ferrero-Waldner both (spatial and moral) dimensions of discursivity merged together. In what they called the "solidarity outside – neutrality inside" doctrine they tied "solidarity" to European soil and neutrality was to be applied to the space outside Europe. Thus, the fight against terrorism in Europe or the UN-administrated safeguarding campaign in Kosovo was a matter of solidarity. Anything else could be in an *à la carte* manner chosen and subjected to the "neutrality-outside" part of the doctrine (this happened, for example, in the case of abstention from the 1999 NATO-led air-strike campaign in Kosovo or in 2003 US-led Iraq operations).

The pro-neutral camp response to this move was no less interesting. The solidarity-neutrality position was held as "irrational" since it is not possible to maintain neutrality while at the same time following the principle of solidarity. The SPÖ argument is as follows – because the ESDP does not represent a clear-cut solution to all security risks and that NATO membership is ruled out, there is only one "rational" way – to remain neutral. Thus, surprisingly, "neutrality" could, in moral terms, be merged with "rationality" but, what is more important, neutrality was again linked to genuine security issues.

FPÖ came up with yet another proposition of moral goodness – neutrality as a safeguard for freedom and the distinct Austrian character. In fact, by reviewing the speeches, party programmes and newspaper of the last year, it seems that it is this notion of "freedom" against "solidarity" that emerges as the privileged discursive cleavage with regard to neutrality.

What do these spins and games have to do with the pre-existing notion of identity, rationality or goodness? Crudely to say: nothing. They are only pieces and bread-crumbs of the previously shared meanings tossed into a different context. It is a process that cannot be explained in causal terms, because of the fact alone that any evidence at hand is made possible by the very process itself.

Despite this, the mainstream academic debate pretends to have a clear path through this maze and claims that it is capable of finding the Archimedes' point. Exactly this type of reasoning continues to shape the mainstream academic debate on foreign policy and neutrality.

As a result, inherently ambiguous meanings are attached to previously empty and shapeless concepts, these are subsequently taken for being solidly grounded and the scientific enterprise is erected on them. Or, as Richard Rorty puts it, this type of epistemic stance picks and chooses "among the contents of our minds or our language and say that this or that item 'corresponds to' or 'represents' the environment in a way that some other item does not" (Rorty, 1991: 5). In the following section, I will try to develop an argument that this is a result of "epistemological realism" which is by and large the epistemological platform of the recent Austrian scholarship.

REALISM – AND ITS EPISTOMOLOGICAL AKIN

Firstly, it has to be made clear why it is important to add the adjective "epistemological" to the noun "realism" when in philosophy and the philosophy of science the term "realism" has acquired an outspoken meaning. Philosophical realism (explained roughly) rests upon two presuppositions: one of existence and the other of independence. An ideal-type realist has no suspicion about the existence of the outside world *and* about the fact that the outside world exists independently of what humans say or think about it. As such, this belief can be quite benign and harmless. However, when the belief in existence and independence of the outside world encounters a conviction that a certain privileged group of people (such as scientists or priests) is capable of having a direct access to the knowledge of this world, we are facing a wholly different shift altogether. It is an epistemological presupposition that the external world is knowable in its authenticity; therefore, "epistemological" realism. "Reality" is taken as an independent, inevitable, objective and unalterable entity that is to be (and can be) revealed if using the correct method of inquiry (George, 1994: 11).[28]

It should be stressed that it is not the philosophical realism in general that this section aims to debunk, it is the other step – the epistemological confidence that the outside world can be transmitted through various forms of knowledge-seeking to human beings.[29] The critique of this epistemological stance builds on a longstanding current within philosophy and the philosophy of science that argues against the idea of the possibility of maintaining a clear--cut division between the knower and what is to be known.

This specially applies to the realm of social inquiries. For this approach, "social" is by no means susceptible to the naturalist-like scientific inquiry *exactly* because there is no way of maintaining the epistemological distinction between the mind and social phenomena. As Peter Winch puts it: "social relations are expressions of ideas about reality" (Winch, 1977: 23). If this statement is correct, than we have only ideas that the society is permeated with which allow us to decide what we think really exists. Under these circumstances there is no way of maintaining the distinction between the scientist and the object (society). In Friedrich Kratochwil words: "descriptions are not neutral and somehow objective but embrace all types of social practices and interests that then make the things into what they are called or referred to". (Kratochwil, 2006: 42)

OPENING THE AVENUE

Despite the above criticism, the epistemologically realist line of thought is – with some exceptions (see Fröhlich-Steffen, 2003; Wodak, de Cillia, Reisigl,

Liebhart, 2003)[30] – still largely prevalent in the academic writings on the Austrian foreign policy and neutrality. While materialist ontology (which has dominated the "rationalist" academics in the 1980s and in the beginning of the 1990s) had gradually yielded to idealist ontology, the naturalist "realist" epistemology still firmly reigns over academics. Through the observation that neutrality became one of the pillars of Austrian national identity and as such it affects and influences its foreign policy, identity and that ideational ontology has made its way into the reasoning about Austrian foreign policy. Identity is treated as an intersubjectively shared element and it is considerably present in the way foreign policy is created. This confession fulfils the basic requirement of ontological idealism. Yet, as far as these intersubjectively shared ideational elements are treated as "relatively stable" intervening independent variables or as factors that causally explain selected features of the foreign policy conduct, this approach remains firmly embedded in the naturalist, epistemologically realist camp.

This approach is consistent with that of Katzenstein (1996) or Wendt (1999, 2000), who principally treat identities as immaterial basis for interests. Katzenstein and his colleagues argued that when a state faces a security choice it does not react only in the context of their material capabilities of physical conditions but also on the basis of normative self-understanding. He argues that "security interests are defined by actors who respond to cultural factors". (Katzenstein, 1996: 2) In the case of Alexander Wendt, the principal argument goes that the relatively stable identity of the state informs its interest and, in turn, its actors.

Neither this approach permits to comprehend the "social" in world politics. This type of inquiry tends to ignore the contingency and indeterminacy of social reality, the inevitable and ubiquitous intentionality of the (scientist's) consciousness (for the latter, see Berger–Luckmann, 1966: 34) and our inability to detach our selves from the discourse, from the social world, that is, from the world of our making (e. g. Onuf, 1989).

We could see that with respect to the Austrian identity and neutrality, there is a continual on-going fight over the right to constitute the ultimate moral good and to define what, on the other hand, will be excluded as a moral good. "Identities are continuously articulated, re-articulated and contested, which makes them hard to pin down as explanatory categories. The stories we tell about ourselves are not necessarily coherent [identities] ... are defined in discourse" (Zehfuss, 2002: 92). If the social scientific inquiry expects some "explanation" by mere including identity as an ontologically ideational explanatory variable, such an expectation is bound to be disappointed, over and over.

The proposition here is to drop the rather naïve Cartesian notion of social reality that is independent of our thoughts about it and that is at the same time more or less directly accessible to the "scientific mind". Critical social theory (which serves as a basic platform for this critique) takes every concept and every meaning attached to it as firmly embedded in a particular discourse. Such concept can give the semblance of objectivity, but remaining altogether subjective. According to Richard Ashley, this is exactly the function of discourse since it tends to: "neutralize or conceal ... arbitrariness by projecting an image of normalcy, naturalness, or necessity. [A] dominant mode of subjectiv-

ity is normalized by utilizing the concept of hegemony [which is] an ensemble of knowledgeable practices, identified with a particular state and domestic society, ... [h]egemony refers to the projection and circulation of an 'exemplary' model, which functions as a regulative ideal. Of course the distinguishing characteristics of the exemplary model are not fixed but are historically and politically conditioned" (quoted in Burchill–Devetak, 2001: 199).

No interpretations are primary, all are arbitrary. Instead of explaining selected features of "reality" by using a discursively objectivised matter, a critical approach suggests to focus at the relationship between discursive practices, knowledge and political and institutional structures (Wodak, de Cillia, Reisigl, Liebhart, 2003: 9). The main question might be thus posed this way: "how, by way of what strategies, displacements, and shifting emphases, are fields of practice pried open, bounded, and secured? How, by way of what manoeuvres and in opposition to what resistances, are regions of silence established?" (Ashley 1987: 410)

Such conceived inquiry might help us to "identify and contrast competing configurations of national identity as well as divergent narratives of identity" (Wodak, de Cillia, Reisigl, Liebhart, 2003: 9). In our case, this approach allows to understand the process of aligning neutrality with the Austrian national identity which, in turn can contribute to opening the largely black-boxed area of understanding the interdependent process of foreign policy making and national identity structuring.

As we could see above, the emerging discursive cleavage in the recent games is one between "freedom" and "solidarity". Both are of extensive normative consequences to the way Austrians conceptualize themselves and the "outside" world. Neutrality as "freedom" points at the self-conception that ultimately contradicts the Austrian moral space and dissociates it from the rest of the world. It is aligned with the "small state" and the "non-value" foreign policy, national uniqueness and so forth. Neutrality as "solidarity" puts Austrians on an equal footing with Western civilisation, with everything that it goes along with it, including the common "radical-Islamist" threat perception, enforcement of particular values throughout the world and so on.

As any other human agency, these games are expressions of needs largely irrespective of the values claimed, and are used as a tool of more or less conscious attempts to align and identify Austrian society to historically particular social relations and a political order. By carefully examining these discursive games we can see the considerable indeterminacy and irrelevance of both.

This reflexive enterprise is, according to critical social theory, more valuable than the reification of the discursive practices by designing them as an objective scientific knowledge. It can open up space for communicating other modes of "goodness", modes that have been neutralized by the prevalent discourse.

CHALLENGES TO CRITICAL STANCE

A significant problem is posed by those more radical critical theorists (with whom the author of this essay more or less identifies) who assert that even this interpretative and reflexive approach to social reality tends to reify the object of study (e. g. Campbell, 1996). Moreover, it presupposes that there are

some "closed spaces" prior to the analysis that can be "opened up", which to a certain respect undermines the anti-realist stance. The only possible way out for the moderate critical camp is simply to commit to the emancipatory and reflexive task of knowledge[31] (Dryzek, 1987: 657; Linklater, 2002), while acknowledging the risk of "reifying by understanding" (which is, in a way, unavoidable). It seems worthy of the attempt. By analyzing the discursive process, and by focusing at its context, contents, strategies, means and forms of realisation[32] one should be able to point at those modes of thought and knowledge and find the ones that the authors of the discourse are attempting to marginalise. At least in some respects this approach can be understood as the inversion of the realist stance that *a priori* takes social reality as given and knowledge of it as independent.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In the first part I have showed that the mainstream scholarship – no matter of which vein – has either unquestionably adopted the political line of argumentation or stood helpless *vis-à-vis* any substantial change to it. In the second part I have argued that the reason for this failure principally stems from false epistemological presuppositions which are followed by unattainable demands. Recently, mainstream scholarship has accepted some ontologically ideational elements but it displays no signs of moving towards an interpretative epistemology. In other words, it seeks casual explanation of the relationship between foreign policy – identity – neutrality.

For this causal relationship to work, it is necessary to take the nature of the meanings attached to a given social phenomenon as fixed. If not, the belief that one can arrive at a successful explanation by employing "ideas" (as an objective causal factor) is entirely groundless. Different meaning attached to the same phenomenon will result in a different manner of behaviour (note that this logic is one of the defining functionary principles for those committed to ontological idealism in the social science). As a result, the entire causal explanatory construction will blow-up.

What is even more important for this construction is the epistemological realism. A scientist using the above depicted research strategy *must* believe that the concepts he/she is employing in order to explain certain phenomenon have their tangible counterpart somewhere in reality. He/she must believe that there are tangible "kinds" in the world and that he/she has direct access to them. In other words, he/she must be convinced that his/her concepts and their nature are not only (inter)subjectively developed ideas about a certain (inter)subjectively selected object, nor that they are only linguistic instruments springing from the specific (inter)subjectively shared social context (discourse). If this epistemologically realist conviction does not hold, the scientist can never hope to arrive at nothing even remotely resembling an objective causal explanation.

Instead of claiming to provide an "objective account" and an explanation of reality it is suggested to start from the assumption that knowledge is always socially constructed. Thus, observers would do better to attempt to reflect upon the construction and effect of knowledge (Linklater, 2002: 276) and through it to reflect the discursive context related to it. It seems that after

roughly fifteen years we are facing another major change in the realm of the Austrian conception of neutrality (a move toward neutrality "re-discovered"). An attempt to understand the process of change by pointing at the various ways in which, the ultimate moral imperatives are constructed and their oppositions neutralised. This seems to be acute and, above all, an extremely tempting and challenging task, particularly with regard to the important role different conceptions of "goodness" play in shaping world politics.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BZÖ – *(Bündnis Zukunft Österreich)* –
   Alliance for the Future of Austria
EC – European Communities
EEC – European Economic Community
EFTA – European Free Trade Association
ESDP – European Security and Defense Policy
FPÖ – *(Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs)* –
   Freedom Party of Austria
ÖVP – *(Österreichische Volkspartei)* –
   Austrian People's Party
SPÖ – *(Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs)* –
   Social Democratic Party of Austria
UN – United Nations
VÖI – *(Vereinigung Österreichischer Industrieller)* –
   Federation of Austrian Industrialists

ENDNOTES

[1] Instead of studying the linguistic system and its functional semantic potential *per se*, Vienna School of Critical Discourse Analysis focuses at establishing "the linguistic relations between specific linguistic subsystems and social structures" (Wodak, de Cillia, Reisigl, Liebhart, 2003).

[2] Since there is a great many accounts of "rationalism" within IR it is necessary to clarify the meaning this term bears throughout this essay. It can be started by stating, what *is not* meant by rationalism herein: it is neither rationalism in the pure philosophical and epistemological sense neither is it its offspring within the IR theories, that is rationalism as envisaged by the English school (which holds that states can agree on certain common interests and values as a way to support more peaceful international relations). Rationalism as understood here refers to various formal and informal applications of rational choice theory to IR questions, or, broadly speaking, to any scientific exercise in explaining foreign policy by reference to goal-seeking behavior (Fearon and Wendt, 2005: 54, see also Snidal, 2005 and George, 1994: 98–107).

[3] In the realm of IR it is mostly argued that, as of states, the "good" is fabricated around the spatial elements (Walker, 1995). According to Simon Dalby, "geopolitical discourse constructs worlds in terms of Self and Others, in terms of cartographically specifiable sections of political space, and in terms of military threats" (quoted in Burchill–Devetak, 2001: 198). It was this "spatial" discourse that has for many years been subjected to a fierce criticism on the part of critical IR scholars (Ashley, 1987; 2002; Linklater, 2002).
   However, there exists very different account of discursively, ones which involves constructing "good" as a "moral space". People inhabit moral spaces – "domains within which the ethical consequences of actions achieve a place within familiar public discourses" and these discourses can be identified "within a nation-state geopolitical imaginary" (Shapiro, 1998: 696). Spatial exclusion is in this case coded in moral terms (Campbell, 1996: 81) leading to "moral geographies" (Shapiro,

1998). The question that bridges both practices could be, according to Richard Devetak, posed this way: "how (...) cartographic boundaries serve to represent, limit and legitimate a political identity (...) how, through which political practices and representations are boundaries inscribed?" (Burchill and Devetak, 2001: 197).

[4] The full title of the Act is: *"Constitutional Law on the Permanent Neutrality of the Republic of Austria"*.

[5] The relevant parts of the Act is as follows:
   a) "For the purpose of the permanent maintenance of its external independence and for the purpose of the inviolability of its territory Austria, on its own free will, declares herewith its permanent neutrality. Austria will maintain and defend it with all means at its disposal.
   b) In order to secure these purposes Austria will never in the future accede to any military alliances nor permit the establishment of military bases of foreign States on its territory" (Cit. from Zemanek, 1961).

[6] This particular statement was made in context of debate over full Austrian membership in the *European Coal and Steel Community* (ECSC).

[7] The article was finished just weeks before the *Neutrality Act* was adopted and declared.

[8] It is well known that throughout the sixties there has been an extensive debate about strengthening the relationship between EFTA and EEC. This debate was even more accelerated after Great Britain made her voice for the EEC membership. The most promising way how to solve this was an *Association treaty*. The Soviets strongly rejected the idea, however, for a long time, most of the international law professionals and politicians kept arguing that "association" is compatible with the broad status of neutrality. (See Gehler, 2002a: 208–253; for important and illustrative documents see Gehler, 2002b: 213–425).

[9] This (re)invention of such a broad interpretation of the *State treaty* was very much conformable with the Soviet line of argumentation (Hakovirta, 1983) yet, it is not entirely clear whether the Soviet position was so unalterable and resolute as it used to be depicted (see Kux, 1990). Some recent works (probably in order to evoke a semblance of pro-European orientation's continuity in Austrian politics) asserts that "Austria have never accepted Soviet argumentation regarding incompatibility of the State treaty and ... membership in the EEC" (Pelinka, 2000: 77). These assertions stand in stark opposition to the evidence of the period in question and can serve as another example of discursive nature of treating the neutrality/identity issues.

[10] In fact, those who first came with the idea of Austria as a first victim of Nazi terror were not to be found among Austrians themselves. Instead, it was firstly explicitly and publicly expressed on behalf of Allies in the *Moscow Declaration* of 1943. It has been lately argued that the reason for this declaration was to awake and provoke an anti-Nazi movement among Austrians. However, E. Timms was probably right when asking who or what was to be awoken in order to restore the independence of Austria? (Timms, 1998: 48; see also Burr-Bukey, 2000).

[11] According to findings of Ernst Brückmüller, it was the SPÖ (aside from the traditional *pan-German* moods as they were expressed among the adherents of the German-liberal *Lager*) that was only reluctantly to accept the idea of a distinct Austrian nationhood. Eloquently, Karl Renner (SPÖ), the first post-war Chancellor, was well known for his pan-German and pro-Anschluss attitude. He expressed himself very clearly in *Die Gründung der Republik Österreich*, a pamphlet from the summer 1938 justifying the Anschluss. It is no coincidence that this work was not published until 1990. (For more see e. g. Stourzh, 1995: 301–310.)

[12] This view was held earlier than in 1980's and flowed from an *Abhaltstrategie* (deterring or dissuading strategy) that was in fact also common to other European neutrals like Switzerland, Sweden or Finland (see Dänikar, 1992). This strategy its clearest expression in the Austrian *National Defense Plan* of 1985 found.

[13] The VÖI, The most important Austrian private-sector organization representing the interests of the majority of large-scale private industries, deeply adhered to the idea of EC-accession. As an actor of the Austrian *Sozialpartnerschaft* and thus of the entire *Proporz* (connected mostly to the ÖVP) it was able to considerably influence the governmental orientation in favor of EC-membership. (See Gehler, 2002a: 280–292.)

[14] Hummer and Schweitzer (1987: 286) supported their claim by pointing at the 1966 *Luxembourg Compromise* which *de facto* stipulated a possibility of veto when 'important national interest' is at stake. It was argued that neutrality could be proclaimed as a matter of "national interest", therefore the EC-membership would not endanger Austria's neutrality commitments.

[15] Note that this argumentation took place before the Cold war was over despite the fact that it is usually the end of the Cold war what is held mostly responsible for the waning relevance of neutrality.

[16] During the first half of 1990s', however, Vranitzky changed his position quite remarkably. As opposed to the above statement of the end of 1989, in the mid-1990s' Vranitzky argued for maintaining the neutral status even in the "active" Kreisky fashion. (See for example his answer to parliamentary interpellation delivered on the July 7th 1996/file No. 989/J, on-line: **www.parlament.gv.at/portal/**.)

[17] This state of affairs is manifest even in the official Austrian foreign policy yearbooks of 1988–1990 as they could not hide the extremely incremental nature of dealing with the most pressing issues (*Aussenpolitisches Jahrbuch 1988–1990*, see also Vranitzky, 1992).

[18] In a telling remark Hanspeter Neuhold (1998: 206) asserted that Austrian foreign policy towards the Soviet bloc countries could be described as "drilling small holes to the Iron Curtain".

[19] This was an extremely biting remark (made in relation to the arms control process) since the struggle to present neutrality as an internationally recognized and, indeed, chanted feature of the Austrian republic was one of the cornerstones of its identity.

[20] It is certainly not that this attitude was peculiar to Austria. On the contrary, a rather reserved and dispassionate sentiment towards neutrality has emerged in the beginning of 1990s both in the broadest theoretical and analytical reflection of foreign and security policy issues (see Neuhold, 1992; Cox–Mac Ginty, 1996) and in assessments and analyses of particular policies of various neutral countries throughout Europe (see e. g. Huldt, 1992; Fanning, 1996; Ojanen–Herolf–Lindahl, 2000).

[21] Despite verbal efforts of both prime candidates (Benita Ferrero-Waldner /FPÖ/ and H. Fischer) the question of neutrality developed itself into one of the principal issues of the 2004 presidential elections.

[22] The quest for NATO membership was for a long time one of the FPÖ's defining features. (Kořan, 2003: 106) However, in the hands of the very recent "echte" FPÖ, neutrality is treated as an indispensable guarantee of freedom which is – according to the party's program and legacy "the highest good". As the October parliamentary elections get nearer neutrality and freedom is with an ever increasing force presented as standing in dichotomical opposition to the Austrian dependence on the EU. This point that was also largely emphasized in the FPÖ's campaign "Österreich bleibt frei".

[23] H. Neuhold (2003: 17) linked "re-discovery" of neutrality to the NATO air-strikes against Yugoslavia in 1999 and to "Operation Iraqi Freedom" in 2003. Popularity of NATO among Austrians has substantially suffered after these events. Therefore and the governing parties "which considered neutrality obsolete and called for NATO membership in the past, are refraining at present from proposals to abandon Austria's neutral status for the fear of playing into the hands of the SPÖ".

[24] *BZÖ* is a junior coalition party founded as a result of secession from FPÖ by some of FPÖ's most prominent members (among others by Jörg Haider, Ursula Haubner, and Hubert Gorbach) in early April 2005.

[25] From the very beginning in 2003 Austria participated in the ESDP missions as these were not conceived as posing any problem for the question of neutrality. However, it should be also noted that Austria took a very active part in efforts of other non-aligned EU-members to make ESDP at least minimally compatible with their neutral status (see Enos-Attali, 2005).

[26] This is exactly the official position of the ÖVP and, subsequently, that of the Austrian government (see e. g. Andreas Kohl (ÖVP's Foreign Affairs speaker) position as of 1994 in Gehler, 2002: 682; or recently see Hajnoczi, 2005).

[27] Upon joining the EU, for example, the *Austrian National Assembly* added (among others) a special constitutional provision (Art. 23f) that stipulates its readiness to fully participate in the CFSP policy as stated in the Treaty on EU. This amendment is classified as altering the nature of Austrian neutrality in a rather extensive way.

[28] Which, ironically, is a position that turns up-side-down the message conveyed by classical realists, such as Hans Morgenthau (Morgenthau, 1965; 1978).

[29] In this regard, my approach follows the pragmatist stance as expressed among others by Richard Rorty (see e. g. Rorty, 1991)

[30] It has to be noted that these scholars are not IR professionals; they *primarily* deal with the critical deconstruction (especially in the case of Wodak et. al) of the Austrian identity.

[31] It has to be noted that author of this essay does not consent to the enlightenment-like task of science pursued by moderate habermasian critical theorist. This claim pushes this text more toward the post-modern camp of IR. However, this is a normative and not epistemological struggle, while it was the latter this essay was primarily concerned with.

[32] These are the most important elements of discourse construction, according to methodology suggested by Wodak, de Cillia, Reisigl, Liebhart, 2003: 30–47).

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CRITICAL SOCIAL THEORY AND AUSTRIAN NEUTRALITY

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