Oliver Rathkolb / Agnes Meisinger (eds.)

# Controlled Freedom

## Allied Cultural Policy in Vienna, 1945–1955

Vienna University Press




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With 40 figures

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Oliver Rathkolb

# Introduction. Allied Cultural Policy in Vienna: Contemporary History Meets Archaeology

By presenting a case study of Austria as a small country amongst large international players, the present edited collection seeks to contribute to the international historiography of the New Cold War, which in recent years has begun to focus on transnational cultural exchange.[1] In the research on Austria, recent studies, particularly on literary history after 1945[2] but also on press photography[3] and sport,[4] have investigated the new groups that emerged in the immediate postwar era. This approach, focusing on the societal impact of the Cold War and Allied policy and using cultural networks, exchange, and ties as tools of analysis, generally remains heavily underrepresented in Austria.

The diverse positions in the arena of cultural policy and concrete initiatives taken by the four Allies between 1945 and 1955 had a strong influence on the art scene – an influence that has been suppressed, however. Now, eighty years later, it is returned to the memory via an archaeological approach to contemporary history. Never before had so many Viennese been confronted so intensively with international cultural influences as they were after liberation in April 1945.

Evidently, the strong emphasis on Austrian cultural tradition and strengths during the era of rebuilding was so dominant that there was no room for the international influences in cultural history. Even the National Socialists under Reichsstatthalter and Gauleiter Baldur von Schirach had stressed "Viennese culture", sometimes placing it above Berlin's.

1 Simo Mikkonen, Giles Scott-Smith, Jari Parkikinnen (eds.): Entangled East and West. Cultural Diplomacy and Artistic Interaction during the Cold War, Berlin 2018.

2 Stefan Maurer, Wolfgang Kraus und der österreichische Literaturbetrieb nach 1945, Vienna 2020 and https://kk-diskurse.univie.ac.at/das-team/index.htm (1 June 2024).

3 Marlies Dornig, Hans Petschar (eds.): Bild – Macht – Politik. Yoichi Okamoto. Ikone der Nachkriegsfotografie, Vienna 2023. Marion Krammer, Rasender Stillstand oder Stunde Null? Österreichische PressefotograInnen 1945–1955, Vienna 2021.

4 Maximilian Graf, Agnes Meisinger (eds.): Österreich im Kalten Krieg. Neue Forschungen im internationalen Kontext, Göttingen 2016.

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Whereas before 1938 many Austrians had considered themselves German but culturally superior to the "Prussians", after 1945 this superiority complex contributed to the development of an identity as a small country and helped suppress collaboration in the National Socialist war of aggression, the Shoah, and the other crimes of the National Socialist regime.

It remains important to show and analyse Austrian artists, writers, journalists, and their work, along with their own interests and strategies. The specific form of Allied cultural policy is certainly much stronger than the traditional cultural diplomacy during the Cold War, although in the era of Allied administration of Austria it represents merely soft power.

However, international historiography too lacks a critical media history of the early Cold War, with the exception of studies on international radio in Europe[5] and on journalists in the Cold War.[6]

Hence this volume will open up innovative fields of research and is based on a group of outstanding experts' long-term research on the cultural and media history of the early post-war era and of the Cold War in Austria.

The book seeks to shift the historiography of the Cold War away from political and economic analysis towards the impact on the cultural and political behaviour of people after seven years of racist and antisemitic totalitarianism and collaboration with the National Socialists in Austria, following five years of right-wing clerical and authoritarian politics under the Dollfuss–Schnuschnigg dictatorship.

All four Allies of the anti-Hitler coalition declared both (classically defined) culture and the media a key element of planning before 1945. The USA in particular (initially in collaboration with Britain) sought to develop concrete plans to use culture and the media as an important tool for the re-education of the Germans and Austrians after the war, concentrating on denazification and the replacement of the Nazi elites by placing democratic personalities as key players in the cultural and media spheres. By replacing the elites and providing new cultural offerings, including contemporary music, international theatre productions, and international literature, films, and exhibitions, they aimed to deepen the process of democratic transformation.

After the early months of 1946 and especially after 1947, the primary political aim shifted to geopolitical reorientation and integrating the Germans and Austrians into the Western, US-dominated anti-communist camp, including former members of the NSDAP, irrespective of how closely they had been involved in its propaganda institutions as artists, writers, or journalists.

5 Alexander Badenoch, Andreas Fickers, Christian Henrich-Franke (eds.): Airy Curtains in European Ether. Broadcasting and the Cold War, Baden-Baden 2013.

6 Dina Fainberg: Cold War Correspondents. Soviet and American Reporters on the Ideological Frontlines, Baltimore 2021.

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In Austria, the Soviets pursued a policy completely different to that of the USA and Britain, since their main aim, especially in Austria, was to weaken Germany and destroy the traditional enthusiasm for annexation and the Austrians' strong German cultural consciousness. To this end, they ordered cultural institutions such as the State Opera, the Vienna Philharmonic, and all theatres to reopen just weeks after the liberation of Vienna on 13 April 1945. The music of Johann Strauss in particular was celebrated, and thousands of photos were taken of Soviet soldiers and officers in front of his grave and monuments to him.

Immediately after liberation in 1945, by insisting on cultural separation from Germany, the Soviets in particular also promoted the doctrine of Austrian victimhood, but with it the construction of an independent, non-German identity, taking up earlier narratives based on claims of cultural superiority over militaristic Prussia à la Frederick the Great that had existed since the days of Maria Theresa. Here, the views of the Communist cultural ideologue Ernst Fischer (*Der österreichische Volkscharakter* [The Austrian National Character]) and the Christian Social Dollfuss–Schuschnigg dictatorship, which had defined itself as a second German state, collide.

In contrast, in the Western zones of occupation, all media and theatres remained closed and under strict military control, only US-licensed newspapers and cultural activities being permitted.

The authors of this volume concentrate on the short- and long-term impact of these political aims in the fields of music, theatre, and the media (newspapers, publishing houses, and radio) in Vienna, where the Western Allies were not active before September 1945: how did the cultural elites and the public respond to these political aims, and how did this affect the aim of eradicating National Socialism and German-ness in Austria?

The main purpose of the various chapters in this volume, however, is not only to describe to analyse the political aims and describe activities, as earlier publications have done, but to reconstruct the short- and long-term impacts of Austrian's cultural and media consumption and their influence on cultural and political attitudes. Further, the volume discusses the educational effects on artists and journalists who worked for the Allied media both in the print arena and for the four radio stations (the RAVAG's *Die Russische Stunde*, US-controlled Rot-Weiss-Rot, the British sector's Radio Alpenland, and the French authorities' Sendergruppe West).

These aspects, which had an impact on both the cultural attitudes and the professionalization of Austrian artists, writers, and journalists, remain underresearched to this day; usually, they are simply overlooked.

An important element analysed in these pages is connected to the fact that this internationally intensive cultural period from 1945 to 1955 has not become part of Austria's cultural history. Quite on the contrary: many authors, such as the

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prominent writer Ingeborg Bachmann, who spent more than two years working for the US broadcaster Rot-Weiss-Rot, suppressed this fact in their autobiographical testimonies. It would seem that this could have been interpreted by the Austrians as "cultural collaboration". This tendency to ostracize artists, writers, and journalists active in Allied cultural institutions is particularly striking with respect to communists.

An important role was played by another aspect of everyday emotional culture: sport – both in Allied policy and in the Austrian political setting. Here too, the significance of the Allies' attempts to cultivate a tradition has often been suppressed and has been neglected by official sporting history.

A third, general question pertaining to all cultural spheres and media concerns how cultural policy contributed to the development of Austrian identity as a small country and as decidedly non-German: both the Soviets and the Communists pursued a very conservative cultural doctrine, reinventing the age of Maria Theresa, Grillparzer, and Nestroy as a counterpoint to the Prussian king and German authors – thereby reproducing political frameworks from the Dollfuss–Schuschnigg dictatorship and earlier. It was not until 1947 that Socialist Realism was introduced to Austrian audiences, with little success.

The French, the British, and the Americans, on the other hand, promoted modern art in order to counter Stalinist communism, which attacked modern international painting as "daubing" ("Kleckserei" – which is not far from the National Socialist term "degenerate art"). This influence of international art, literature, and music on young Austrian artists and writers is of particular interest to many authors of this volume. French literature and philosophy formed an important foundation for contemporary literature.

US films and comics were a very popular element of youth culture, and in response, the Soviets and Communists, supported by Austrian conservatives, attempted to counter this development via censorship in order to protect Austrian youth from "filth and trash".

In general, the secondary literature to date has concentrated only on the political aspect of the funding of culture in Austria and Germany by the CIA and others, primarily as a means of strengthening the anti-communist camp and preventing communist authors such as Bert Brecht from being performed at Austrian theatres into the 1960s.

A more thorough analysis will show that these "operations" had important side effects, such as funding the journal *FORVM*, founded by the writer Friedrich Torberg after he had returned from exile; *FORVM* went some way to overcoming Austrian culture's deep-rooted patriarchal, nationalistic, and German framework, including the racist and antisemitic political impact of the National Socialist regime, which had been able to build on Austrian traditions.

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In other chapters, the authors will critically discuss the long-term institutional impact of a century of intensive cultural interventions and intertwining – such as the foundation of the independent press agencies APA (Austria Presse Agentur) by the USA and Britain or the newspapers established by the US press officers: *Tiroler Tageszeitung*, *Salzburger Nachrichten*, *Oberösterreichische Nachrichten*, and *Wiener Kurier*. The Lycée Français de Vienne, an international school for boys and girls also open to Austrians, was opened by the French in 1946 and offers progressive all-day teaching seldom found in the traditional, backward-looking Austrian education system.

In the everyday topography of the city, the Allies are actually present only in 1945, during the liberation of Vienna, and in 1955, when the State Treaty was concluded – the fact that in 1948 over 8,000 buildings, shops, hotels, and villas were still confiscated by the four Allies is also reconstructed by a chapter drawing on an extensive database.

The authors have succeeded in reconstructing the suppression of the intensive surge in internationalization from liberation to the State Treaty and the withdrawal of the Big Four in 1955, providing many illustrative, specific examples and analysis of the four Allies' internal political planning and aims, and placing them in their context with respect to cultural policy. In doing so, however, they demonstrate with the same clarity how these awakenings merged or clashed with conservative trends and continuities (from local Modernism to the Dollfuss–Schuschnigg era and the National Socialist cultural terror).

This publication fills a lacuna in cultural history, since young artists came into contact with the critical Modernism banned under National Socialism and revolted against the dominant cultural restoration.

The present volume is based on the scholarly publication accompanying the exhibition *Controlled Freedom: The Allied Forces in Vienna* at the Wien Museum (10 April – 7 September 2025). We extend our thanks to John Heath for his English translations of the contributions and to Hans Petschar and Peter Prokop (Austrian National Library) and Maximilian Zauner (Vienna City Library) for providing historical photographic material. Thanks are also due to Liane Popa for her support with archival research, and to our colleagues at the Wien Museum, Sonja Maria Gruber and Andrea Ruscher.

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Thomas Angerer

# A Dazzling New Beginning. French Cultural Policy in Occupied Vienna, 1945–1955

Newspaper articles and press services; magazines; radio broadcasts; film screenings, festivals, and distribution; a bookshop with an exhibition room and a reading room with newspapers, magazines, books, and reference works, both venues soon in the city centre like the Cultural Institute with its language courses, lectures, film and record evenings, talks, exhibitions, library, and its contacts; concerts; exhibitions; visiting theatre, opera, ballet, and folklore performances; a French school; a language offensive in the education sector; visiting professors at universities; visiting lecturers; documentation centres, free subscriptions, donations of books, and language assistants for diverse education establishments; prizes, scholarships to go to France, and summer and ski camps for pupils and students; grants for artists; and much more: culture was a main concern of the French occupation authorities and diplomacy in Vienna. It met with great expectations, provided important impetus, and left strong memories and sustained institutions.

Why did the French occupation authorities rely so heavily on culture? It was for at least four reasons. Firstly, it was where its strengths lay. Materially, the country had been weakened so much by occupation and war that food rationing in Paris was at times worse than in Vienna. For supplying their sector (Mariahilf, Penzing, Rudolfsheim-Fünfhaus, and Ottakring), the French occupation authorities were thus as reliant on US help as they were in their own country.[1] Culturally, France was incomparably better off: Paris was a Mecca for art; the country continued to set benchmarks in theatre and philosophy, in architecture, and also in film; and French remained a global language. Culture was France's last ace, and cultural foreign policy was more important than ever for its great power politics.[2] Although

1 Stefan Vogel: Frankreich und die Alliierte Besetzung Wiens von 1945 bis 1955. Motive und Grenzen der französischen Vermittlungspolitik, in: Jahrbuch des Vereins für die Geschichte der Stadt Wien 55 (1999), 173–210; idem: Der französische Sektor in Wien 1945–1955, in: ibid., 61 (2005), 293–331.

2 Guillaume Frantzwa: L'image de la puissance. Un siècle de diplomatie culturelle, Paris 2023, 97–101.

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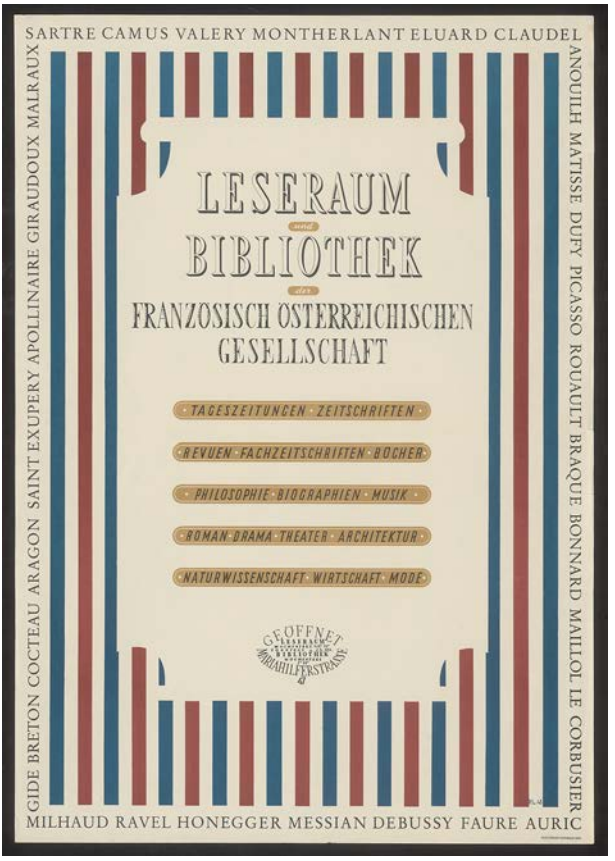



Fig. 1: The reading room and library of the Französisch-Österreichische Gesellschaft (Franco-Austrian Society) in the documentation centre of the French Information Service, Mariahilfer Strasse 47 (Wienbibliothek im Rathaus, P-246997)

defeat, occupation, and collaboration had damaged its reputation and self-confidence, France's sense of mission remained unbroken, with deep historical roots, and bolstered even by victory over the Greater German Reich. Hence it sent to restored Austria the last head of its Cultural Institute that had been established in Vienna in 1931, Eugène Susini (1900–1982), in order to reopen it and renew the cultural agreement signed with the country in 1936. It also saw in Vienna a bridgehead to Central Europe, where it sought to regain a foothold.[3]

3 Michel Cullin: Eugène Susini, in: Thomas Angerer, Jacques Le Rider (eds.): "Ein Frühling, dem kein Sommer folgte"? Französisch-österreichische Kulturtransfers seit 1945, Vienna/Cologne/Weimar 1999; 41–50; Barbara Porpaczy: Frankreich – Österreich 1945–1960. Kulturpolitik und Identität (Innsbrucker Forschungen zur Zeitgeschichte, Vol. 18), Innsbruck 2002, 80–84 and 12 respectively (with older literature).

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Another reason for banking on culture in Vienna was the city's then extraordinarily high receptiveness to French culture. The war had barely ended, and it would be months before the Soviets let the French in, but there was already an Association Artistique Franco-Autrichienne holding its first high-profile events, and when the French occupation authorities took over its sectors, in the Fédération France–Autriche it already had on site a partner organization with interim manager of the Burgtheater Raoul Aslan as president, over 1,500 applicants for membership, and a host of initiatives.[4] Not only in Paris, whence old friends of Austria and exiles soon put out feelers, but also in Vienna there was a desire to restore cultural ties. "Finally […], finally […]"[5]: many newspaper articles on the first French concerts, exhibitions, and theatre performances spoke of gratitude at regaining what people had been missing after spending seven years barred from international cultural life.

Culture from France, a melting pot of international cultural figures, had the advantage of being more than just French culture. Pablo Picasso, Juan Gris, Amedeo Modigliani, Jules Pascin, Chaim Soutine, Marc Chagall, Giorgio de Chirico, …: the artists of the École de Paris who had been on display in Vienna in 1926 and 1938 and returned in 1947 as "classics of modern French painting"[6] came from all over Europe. The Cinémathèque française, with which the Gesellschaft der Filmfreunde Österreichs (Austrian Society for Friends of Film) reached an exchange agreement brokered by the French Information Service in 1946, documented filmmaking from around the world and thus offered, as the *Wiener Zeitung* wrote, a "glimpse of freedom".[7] For a country seeking to catch up and reorient itself in the early post-war years, French cultural policy in Vienna often opened the first windows on Europe and the world – or, as the painter Georg Eisler put it, "a window, not so much on Paris, but on modern art". In post-war Vienna, it was not necessary to be a Francophile to see in French cultural mediators "cultural rescuers", to cite Eisler once more.[8]

4 Unpublished research by the author, on which the rest of this chapter is based too (!) unless indicated otherwise. On the dissolution of the Fédération at the instigation of the French, cf. Lydia Lettner: Die französische Österreichpolitik von 1943 bis 1946, doctoral thesis, University of Salzburg 1980, 320f.

5 [Leopold W.] Rochowanski: Begegnung mit französischer Graphik. Zur Ausstellung in der Akademie der bildenden Künste, in: Wiener Kurier, 13 December 1945, 4.

6 Porpaczy, Frankreich, 48 and 243; Christian Huemer: Paris—Vienna: Modern Art Markets and the Transmission of Culture, 1873–1937, PhD thesis, City University of New York 2013, 106–203.

7 Französisch-österreichisches Filmabkommen, in: Wiener Zeitung, 5 April 1946, 3.

8 Georg Eisler: [Erinnerung] in: Institut français de Vienne (ed.): Österreichisch-französisches Jahrbuch/Annales franco-autrichiennes, Vienna/Cologne/Graz 1984, 70; idem, Lokalaugenschein, in: Liesbeth Waechter-Böhm (ed.): Wien 1945, davor – danach, Vienna 1985, 139.

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This brings us to the third reason why cultural policy was so important to the French occupation authorities: it was essential for overcoming National Socialist values and spreading democratic ones. French cultural policy, with its broad programme of publications, courses, talks, and exhibitions, represented humaneness, openness, and a critical outlook, humanist, Enlightenment traditions, and new approaches both Christian and secular (above all *Renouveau catholique* and existentialism).[9] A large graphic art exhibition from the Salon d'Automne at Vienna's Museum of Arts and Crafts at the turn of 1945 and 1946 also showed works by artists who had been taboo under National Socialism (such as Raoul Dufy, André Lhote, Jean Lurçat, Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso, or Georges Rouault) and seventeen drawings by Léon Delabre from his time in a concentration camp.[10] With a sense for controversial topics, Susini, a Germanist, gave lectures at the University of Vienna open to all faculties on Richard Wagner, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Stefan George.

To open minds, the French occupation authorities relied from the outset on personal encounter and exchange. To this end, in the Tyrol, part of the French Zone, it did a lot to support the Tyrolian–Viennese initiative for International University Weeks hosted by the Austrian College in Alpbach, Louis Aragon and Elsa Triolet featuring among the first French guests.[11] Great emphasis was placed on youth work: as early as December 1945, a delegation of Austrian youth organizations (including Hugo Potyka, later to become a renowned architect) was sent to Paris to prepare an exchange with French organizations, and from 1946 onwards hundreds of Viennese pupils and students were sent to the French Zone for international summer and skiing camps or university weeks, with André Gide as the highest-profile guest in Pertisau. The French also initiated a school exchange for the holidays, opened the Lycée français de Vienne to Austrian pupils, awarded scholarships for the Lycée in Fulpmes (near Innsbruck), including to pupils from Vienna, rewarded the best pupils in French with language weeks in France, and gave students scholarships at French universities. (Early exchange pupils and scholarship holders included the later diplomat Heinrich Blechner and the later historian Gerald Stourzh.)[12] Grants for art were particularly coveted:

9 Juliane Werner: Existentialismus in Österreich. Kultureller Transfer und literarische Resonanz, Berlin/Boston 2021. A comparable study on Reform Catholicism is lacking. For the entire cultural program, see the passages concerning Vienna in Porpaczy: Frankreich, chapters IV and V.

10 Exposition d'œuvres de la gravure française contemporaine. Académie des Beaux-Arts, Vienne, du 11 décembre 1945 au 13 janvier 1946. Vienne 1945, 10, 13f., 18 (no. 75–91).

11 Dinah Lepuschitz: Ein österreichisches Pontigny?, in: Angerer, Le Rider, "Frühling", 281–302; Maria Wirth: Ein Fenster zur Welt. Das Europäische Forum Alpbach 1945–2015, Innsbruck/Bozen/Vienna 2015, 25–39.

12 Porpaczy, Frankreich, 103; Michaela Feurstein-Prasser: Die französische Jugendpolitik in Tirol, in: Christian Fornwagner, Richard Schober (eds.): Freiheit und Wiederaufbau, Inns-

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# Der berühmte Salon d'Automne

## Heute Eröffnung im Wiener Kunstgewerbemuseum

*Das Wertvollste für jeden Menschen sind die geistigen Zurufe, sie vermögen versunkene Kräfte zu wecken. Der Salon d' Automne ist aber nicht eine einzelne Stimme, die zu uns eilt, er ist die stärkste und lebendigste Energiequelle, die sich denken läßt, eine wahre Einsammlung von Strömen und Flüssen. Und sie kommt aus einer Stadt zu uns, deren beglückendste Eigenschaft es immer war, eine geistige Atmosphäre zu besitzen wie eine klimatische Besonderheit, in der alles Schöpferische unbehindert aufsprießen, ohne Mißgunst nach eigenem Willen gedeihen kann unter der fördernden Teilnahme aller Kreise und unter einem weiten Horizont. Und in Wien? Hier wurden die alten konservativen Familien der Gesellschaft unter Denkmalschutz gestellt, inzwischen aber riß man ruhig die kostbarsten Gebäude nieder und kämpfte bei jeder Gelegenheit versteckt gegen neue Regungen, verhängte den engen Himmel mit abgenützten Sprüchen.*

*Fast dreihundert Vertreter aus allen Gebieten der schönen Künste sind im Wiener Kunstgewerbemuseum auf dem Stubenring eingezogen und sprechen uns Mut zu, geben uns die Lebensfreude zurück. Alle Prinzipien des Schaffens sind darin zu finden, und wer allein nur die Geschichte dieser Vereinigung verfolgt, wird wachsen an ihrer unbeirrbaren Entschlossenheit, die sie seit ihrer Gründung nach der Jahrhundertwende bis heute bewiesen hat. Es sind Revolutionäre aus verschiedenen Jahren unsere Gäste, aus verschiedenen Altersstufen, alle voll hoher Leidenschaft, unversöhnliche Gegner der Konvention, Spötter der Müdigkeit und Langeweile.*

*Es wird das wochenlange Vergnügen der Besucher sein, den Weg zu den Pariser Künstlern zu suchen und sich ihre Seele aufzuschließen. Um sie zu beleuchten und mit Worten vorzustellen, wäre eine Reihe von Berichten nötig. Man könnte dafür auch ein eigenes Handlexikon anlegen und etwa auf diese Weise beginnen:*

*BRAQUE: „Die Sinne entstellen, der Geist formt." Worte des Künstlers.*

*DERAIN: ein Afrikaner, aber französisch harmonisiert.*

*DUFY: eine neue Zeichensprache für alle Dinge der Natur. „Die Wirklichkeit ist eine Hypothese." Worte des Künstlers.*

*LAURENCIN: Fauvette, also anmutig und friedvoll.*

*LEGER: alles ist Maschine, auch der Mensch. Jeder Teil ist klar, seine Funktionen im Leben und ebenso im Bilde.*

*MANGUIN: ein Leuchtender, der sich seine Farben entzündet.*

*MATISSE: die Fanfare der Fauvisten, in jedem Bilde ein genießerisches Sichstrecken, eine sanfte Suggestion für den Kopf, Meer, mildes Licht, weiches Kanapee, ein Stilleben mit ewig kindlichen Dingen.*

*METZINGER: Gesetzgeber des Kubismus und doch von Realität immer wieder angezogen.*

*PICASSO: „Picassos Werke sind messianische Weissagungen, denen das Volk fehlt. Gesetzgebung, der die Vollstrecker fehlen. Tröstungen über ewig Versunkenes." Worte eines deutschen Philosophen von 1920.*

*ROUAULT: der Gründer der „Ateliers d'Art sacré." Hauptthemen: das Laster und das Leid.*

*VILLON: ein ewig Junger mit der geistigen Reife des hohen Alters.*

L. W. Rochowanski



„Madonna mit Kind" von Marthe Delacroix Photo: Agathon

Fig. 2: The exhibition "Salon d'Automne" at the Kunstgewerbemuseum (Museum of Arts and Crafts) was opened in 1946. *Wiener Kurier*, 11 July 1946 (ANNO, Austrian National Library, ANL/ Vienna)

in Vienna at the turn of the 1940s and 1950s, they went to artists such as the weavers Johanna Schidlo, Louise Autzinger, and Fritz Riedl, the set designer Elisabeth Urbancic, and the graphic artists and painters Florian Jakowitsch, Josef Pillhofer, Maria Lassnig (with Arnulf Rainer riding on her coat tails), Oswald

bruck 2007, 9–20; eadem: Von der Besatzungspolitik zur Kulturmission. Französische Schul- und Bildungspolitik in Österreich 1945–1955, doctoral thesis, University of Vienna 2002, 199–201; Monika Platzer: Kalter Krieg und Architektur. Beiträge zur Demokratisierung Österreichs nach 1945, Zurich/Vienna 2019, 97; the contributions by Carolyn Oliva and Jean-Michel Casset in: Angerer, Le Rider, "Frühling", 262–264 and 110–116 respectively; Béthouart, Note pour Monsieur Susini, 12 March 1946, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Archives diplomatiques (henceforth: MAE) 5AUT/194/1a; Kurzmeldungen, Das kleine Volksblatt, 6 July 1946, 6.

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Oberhuber, and Kurt Moldovan, or to art scholars such as Werner Hofmann, who would later found the Museum of the Twentieth Century.[13]

Fourthly, and no less importantly, French cultural policy sought to help emancipate Austrians' cultural self-awareness from that of Germany and strengthen their desire for independence. Keeping Austria apart from Germany, politically, militarily, and above all as a state, had been an axiom of France's Germany and European policy since the nineteenth century; it was now combined with a targeted policy of nation building.[14] The French-led media promoted features on Austrian identity,[15] the French reading room contained Austrian literature banned by the Nazis, access to which had to be restored in Vienna's libraries, and Susini gave lectures on Rainer Maria Rilke, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, and Franz Kafka at the University of Vienna. Along with the (re)discovery of Austrian traditions, not least over two centuries of vibrant cultural ties with France, which had been suppressed by German nationalism, the French authorities also promoted new approaches. For instance, the French bookshop Kosmos in the Wollzeile held an exhibition of works by the twenty-year-old Ernst Fuchs, who was already spending most of his time in Paris, and the first solo exhibitions in Vienna of works by Florian Jakowitsch and Maria Lassnig, before their fellowships in Paris even.[16]

France also attempted to raise Austrian self-awareness by helping the country present itself culturally in France. For instance, French cultural diplomacy enabled the Philharmonic and the State Opera to undertake their first tour abroad after the war (Paul Paray and Josef Krips alternating as conductors from both countries as a further symbol of bilateral cooperation). Incidentally, the French authorities continued to organize and fund appearances by Austrian ensembles in France, both directly and indirectly, for many years even though the Austrians did not do the same for French artists,[17] and even though France was particularly keen to show to Vienna as the city of music that it possessed world-class musicians and ensembles. The Philharmonic Concerts with the violinist Ginette Neveu

13 Only few made it to Paris on their own, such as Ernst Fuchs, Erich [later: Arik] Brauer, Friedensreich Hundertwasser, or Marc Adrian. There is not sufficient space here for full references; my thanks to Natalie Lettner for her bibliographical assistance.

14 Thomas Angerer: Kontinuitäten und Kontraste der französischen Österreichpolitik 1919–1955, in: Klaus Koch, Walter Rauscher, Arnold Suppan, Elisabeth Vyslonzil (eds.): Von Saint-Germain zum Belvedere. Österreich und Europa 1919–1955, Vienna 2007, 129–157; idem: Französische Freundschaftspolitik in Österreich nach 1945, in: Manfried Rauchensteiner, Robert Kriechbaumer (eds.): Die Gunst des Augenblicks. Neuere Forschungen zu Staatsvertrag und Neutralität, Vienna/Cologne/Weimar 2005, 113–138, here 115–122.

15 Georges Dumaine: Österreichertum, in: Welt am Montag, 18 February 1946, 3.

16 nic, Ausstellung Florian Jakowitsch, in: Weltpresse, 2 June 1949, 6. Natalie Lettner: Maria Lassnig. Die Biografie, Vienna, third edition 2022, 107.

17 Éric Dussault: La dénazification de l'Autriche par la France. La politique culturelle de la France dans la zone d'occupation, 1945–1955, Sainte-Foy, QC 2005, 41–43.

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between 1946 and 1948 became legendary.[18] In the visual arts, the French authorities liaised with venues in Paris such as the Petit Palais, the National Library, and the Musée National d'Art Moderne to host travelling exhibitions of the Kunsthistorisches Museum in 1947, the Albertina in 1950, or a solo exhibition of works by Fritz Wotruba in 1948.[19] A member of the French Information Service in Vienna, the Germanist Armand Jacob, moved in Viennese avant-garde circles, wrote about new Austrian art in French newspapers, and before Jean Cocteau's appearance in Oedipus Rex at Vienna's Konzerthaus in 1952 he took him to the avant-garde rendezvous Strohkoffer before the rolling cameras of the *Österreichische Wochenschau* newsreel, to the lasting pride of the Art Club.[20]

Most significantly, in 1947 France concluded a new, much more extensive cultural agreement with Austria, enabling cultural institutes in each other's countries, with firmer guarantees than in the agreement of 1936, and set up a Mixed Commission with stronger powers in order to set in motion exchange and collaboration in all areas of culture. It was Austria's first international agreement after the war and allowed the country, although then only partly sovereign, to restore cultural ties with France on an equal footing – an expression of a French policy of friendship that was cause for much satisfaction in political and cultural circles and was intended to show the Austrians once again that it was well worth being independent from Germany. The agreement contained a clause providing a kind of most-favoured status to French lessons at Austrian schools: the language (only an optional subject during the National Socialist era) was not to receive worse treatment than other living foreign languages – that is, English. While this article was unable to arrest the triumph of English, an additional agreement in 1952 helped greatly increase the popularity of the Lycée: as a modern all-day school with neither confessional nor political ties, over the decades it guided thousands of Viennese from pre-school to a dual Franco-Austrian school-leaving certificate, among them renowned creative artists (Timna Brauer, Claudia Messner, Elisabeth Schweeger et al.), journalists (Roland Barazon, Ben Segenreich et al.), and academics (Otto Pfersmann, Walter Schachermayer et al.).[21]

In late 1947, a French Cultural Institute much larger and more representative than had existed before the war opened in Palais Lobkowitz, which had housed

18 Online-Konzertarchiv der Wiener Philharmoniker. Alexander Golovlev: French and Soviet Musical Diplomacies in Post-War Austria, 1945–1955, London/New York 2023.

19 Paul Rachler, Matthias Boeckl: Das Medium als Botschaft. Ausstellungen als Verbreitungsmotor von Ideen der Moderne, in: Agnes Husslein-Arco (eds.), Wien – Paris. Van Gogh, Cézanne und Österreichs Moderne 1880–1960, Vienna 2007, 19 f.

20 Eisler, [Erinnerung], 69 f; Maria Fialik: "Strohkoffer"-Gespräche, Vienna 1998, 87; Werner, Existenzialismus, 109 f.

21 Porpaczy, Frankreich, 89–100; the texts by Michaela Feurstein and Jean-Michel Casset in: Angerer, Le Rider, "Frühling", 83–98 and 99–118 respectively.

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the French Embassy at the turn of the century. Eugène Susini enjoyed the baroque-ified setting and hosting large receptions, gaining the nickname "Prince Eugène". He integrated the Culture Department of the High Commission into the building. Since the Culture Department was responsible for Austria as a whole and under his own direction, Susini could ask the head of the Cultural Institute in Innsbruck, Maurice Besset (1921–2008), a young, outstanding connoisseur of art, for help with programming exhibitions in Vienna too.[22] Just as importantly, there was also the Information Department of the High Commission in Mariahilferstrasse (the Delkahaus) headed by an old connoisseur and friend of Austria, the Germanist, translator, journalist, and diplomat Marcel Ray (1878–1951).[23]

The remits of the Culture and the Information Departments were not as clearly demarcated as their British counterparts, which led to friction but also to synergy. With the Apollokino, the Culture Department had in its sector the "most beautiful and largest Viennese cinema", organized film festivals, and provided a high-quality selection of French filmmaking, also making it available to other cinemas in Vienna, although the use of subtitles did not quite overcome the language barrier; it was not until 1948 that it reluctantly accepted the need for dubbing, a reticence born out of an aversion to dependence on the German market and to German accents.[24] The Information Department's main business, however, was media work, ranging from reporting on culture in its own publications (principally *Welt am Montag* [*mit Sport*] and *Welt am Abend*, 1945/1946–1948) to press conferences and press material for other local media.[25] Along with the culture magazines *Wort und Tat* (1946–1948) and *Europäische Rundschau* (1946–1949), both of which quickly became important in Germany too but

22 Porpaczy, Frankreich, S. 85–87.

23 Cécile Poulot, Marcel Ray: "traducteur et passeur" d'Adolf Loos en France, ou la construction d'un classique international en histoire de l'architecture, in: Revue germanique internationale 32 (2020), 77–92.

24 Hermann Schreiber: Eine Chance für Frankreich, in: Literatur und Kritik 40 (2005) 30 (quotation); Barbara Porpaczy: Kultur- und Propagandapolitik der französischen Besatzungsmacht, in: Karin Moser (ed.): Besetzte Bilder. Film, Kultur und Propaganda in Österreich 1945–1955, Vienna 2005, 133–154; Myriam Gourlet: Die französische Medienpolitik in Österreich während der Besatzungszeit 1945–1949, Mémoire pour la maîtrise. Université Catholique de l'Ouest, Angers, 2002, 98.

25 French-controlled radio from the French Zone was difficult to receive in Vienna; after the Second Control Agreement, the French left it to the federal provinces. The weekly newsreels for the cinemas and the wall newspaper *Hallo Hallo … hier spricht Paris!* contained hardly any reporting on culture. Karin Moser: Les actualités françaises. Die Exotik der französischen Besatzungswochenschau, in: eadem (ed.): Besetzte Bilder, 547–561; eadem: Propaganda und Gegenpropaganda. Das "kalte" Wechselspiel während der alliierten Besatzung in Österreich, in: medien & zeit 17 (2002/1), 27–42; Barbara Semper: "Hallo Hallo … hier spricht Paris!" 1945–1947, Diplomarbeit, University of Vienna 2013.

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