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In many respects, the Habsburg Empire, with its unified economic area and legal system, could be seen as the forerunner of the European Union – eleven languages were officially recognized in the multi-ethnic state at the beginning of the 20th century; almost a quarter spoke German. Due to the inability to compromise, the empire disintegrated into nation states.

The 27 EU member states should do better! Let's strengthen the European Parliament in the 2024 election,
demands

Oliver Schuster

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Impressum



The Parliament Building of the Republic of Austria from the imperial era on Vienna's Ringstrasse was thoroughly renovated and reopened in 2023.

After registering online, visitors can enter free of charge and take part in guided tours in various languages or dine in the newly created »Kelsen« roof restaurant – not for free there, of course!

Fachism in Austria

90 years back
and more

Parliamentarism in Austria is less appreciated than the magnificent parliament building on the Ringstrasse inaugurated in 1883, which reopened in January 2023 after five years of renovation and transformation. Contempt for democracy and justice are booming. Militant opponents of vaccination, climate deniers, identitarians refuse the parliamentary form. Poland and Hungary are only apparently democracies; other states are

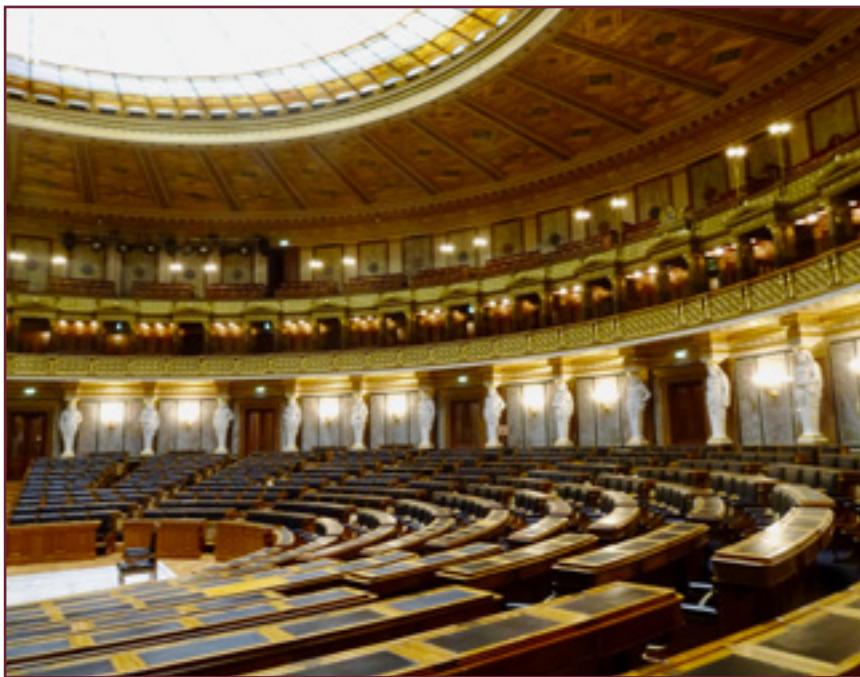
entered twice. The Habsburg monarch felt that it was an insult to his divine right to respond to the representation of the people as a sovereign.

Since the deputies in the multi-ethnic state were divided not only by language, but also by religion, ideology and party-political orientation, there was almost never a majority decision. Rather, necessary measures, such as taxes and reforms, were put into effect by imperial decrees.

A famous Reporter from America

Mark Twain, the American author, reported from Vienna for his readers in the United States in the years 1898/1899, including as a reporter from the Reichsrat meetings. He described how parliamentary work was torpedoed by trickery on the Rules of Procedure; Pub brawl-like scenes followed. In his meeting minutes, Mark Twain noted heckling such as Haderlump, domestic servant nature, brothel father, you Jew! When one deputy called Parliament President Dawid Ritter von Abrahamowicz a Polish dog, another shouted more foul language. Mark Twain, who has a good command of the German language, rendered the situation for his English-speaking readers as follows: »... if I should offer it even in the original it would probably not get by the editor's blue pencil; to offer a translation would be a waste of my ink of course. The remark was frankly printed in its entirety by one of the Vienna dailies, but the others disguised the toughest half of it with stars.«

Jacqueline Csuss and Werner Richter were commissioned by today's



Venue of the Austrian Reichsrat until 1918, historically restored. Now only used for the Federal Assembly to swear in the Federal President and on ceremonial occasions.

Suggestion: Hear and See - CD of Mark Twain's text, read by Hermann Beil, played to the groups of visitors at the authentic location.

experiencing a significant shift to the right. Austria is just a piece of the jigsaw puzzle in this political world, which is described through a magnifying glass after visiting the Austrofachism exhibition.

The Danish architect Theophil Hansen built the parliament building in the Greek classicist style with the idea of giving the nobles of Athenian democracy a dignified place. The client, Emperor Franz Joseph I, did not like this idea or the new parliament building, which he only

parliament to produce a German translation*) of Mark Twain's text for the first time.

Street riots in Vienna and other cities in the Austrian part of the Habsburg Empire followed. As a result, Emperor Franz Joseph suspended the House of Representatives for an indefinite period. As a result, parliamentarians were spared the approval of entering the war in 1914. After the death of Emperor Franz Joseph in 1916, his grandnephew Karl I succeeded him in the line of succession. On July 24, 1917, the young monarch convened the Reichsrat in the hope of reducing the centrifugal forces of the conflicting parts of the empire in parliament. The War Economic Enabling Act, which the late Kaiser had already enacted in 1914, was subsequently passed by the representatives of the people at this meeting.

In vain – the Danube monarchy was divided into six national states in 1918 after the lost World War. In what was left of German Austria, the true representative body of German Austria in Vienna was established in the parliament building from the monarchy with a modern, republican constitution.

**Current Exhibition:
Upheaval of 1933 - 1934**

In memory of the beginning of the destruction of democracy in Austria 90 years ago, an exhibition for a whole year was set up in the Vienna City

*) Mark Twain, *Reportagen aus dem Reichsrat*, Hrsg. Parlamentsdirektion, Residenz Verlag GmbH Salzburg – Wien 2017.

Hall. A narrow corridor was lined with text and images on both sides, as well as a couple of screens.

The presentation began with the resignation of the Social Democratic



Karl I.
the last Habsburg Emperor
reigned from 1916 to 1918.
Painting by Tom von Dreger,
1917 (detail).

National Council President of the first republic, Karl Renner, on March 4, 1933 and ended with the outbreak of civil war after his party was banned on February 15, 1934. Karl Renner, the first Federal President of the Second Republic after 1945, justified the resignation with irregularities in the vote on a railway workers' strike. His two deputies then also resigned.

What was actually a procedural crisis, a kind of parliamentary slip-up, could easily have been put right again, but was evaluated by Federal Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss as *Parliament's Self-Elimination*.

The War Economy Enabling Act from the time of the Kaiser had unintentionally slipped into the constitution of the first republic, where Dollfuss now used it to legally bypass parliament. The authoritarian corporate state took its course with the ban on elections, strikes and

demonstrations, the elimination of the constitutional court, the revocation of

state of Austria on a corporate basis, under strong, authoritarian leadership!‘ declared Dollfuss. From then on, he was referred to as Federal Chancellor and Dictator in the exhibition caption.

The Dollfuss dictatorship invented the Kruckenkreuz as its symbol and party insignia, which was supposed to be a counterpoint to the Nazi swastika. At the same time, an allusion to the Crusaders was interpreted and viewed as an expression of a combative, Christian-German identity.

Dollfuß con Duce

In addition to short biographies of supporters and victims in the first year of the emerging estate dictatorship, also referred to as Austrofachism by the opposition, a small section was dedicated to the relationship between the Federal Chancellor and dictator Engelbert Dollfuss and the Italian Prime Minister and fascist leader Benito Mussolini, the so-called Duce. A photograph of a walk on the beach on August 24, 1933 in Riccione showed the short Dollfuss with a white, long-sleeved shirt and dotted tie, jacket over his arm, hat in hand and shoes next to the stately, barefoot Duce, who, like Vladimir Putin today, is wearing his displayed a bare torso.

At that time, Dollfuss had held the office of Federal Chancellor for just 15 months. He sought political support for the weakened Austria, which Hitler threatened to take over, from the Duce, who had ruled with authoritarian power for more than ten years. In return, Mussolini demanded an even more ruthless fight against the Social Democrats, especially in the traditionally socialist *Red Vienna*.



Plakat der

Vaterländischen Front:
mit dem Porträt von
Engelbert Dollfuß, 1933,
P-13334, Wienbibliothek im
Rathaus.

civil marriages and the reintroduction of the death penalty.

»The time of party rule is over! We reject egalitarianism and terror, we want the social, Christian, German

A painting by Oskar Laske showed the Karl-Marx-Hof, the internationally recognized workers' housing complex of the Viennese Social Democracy, damaged by bullets on the facade from the fighting. A book from a destroyed worker's apartment, riddled with bullets, showed the power of the attack. The Austrofascists then erased the hated name »Karl Marx« on the facade and replaced it with the Heiligenstädter Hof, named by the adjacent street.

Art and Agitation

Benito Mussolini not only wanted to be a charismatic leader but wanted to be recognized as a musician. He wrote several historical dramas with the collaboration of the renowned screenwriter and director Giovacchino Forzano. Mussolini's play *Hundred Days* about Napoleon's return from exile in Elba was performed in German translation with Werner Krauss in the title role at the Burgtheater in Vienna.

The Austrian premiere on April 22, 1933, Easter Saturday, was broadcast directly on the Austrian radio and Mussolini was informed by telegraph. The heads of the *Ständestaat* and high society ennobled the creator of the botch by their presence and applauded stormily.

Did they imagine the Duce listening in Rome?

The theatrical version of Benito Mussolini's *Hundred Days* was filmed in 1935 at the Italian film studio Forzanos, directed by Franz Wenzler and based on the screenplay by Karl



**Poster – Apollo Cinema
in Vienna** *Hundred Days* [1935], P-41948,
Wienbibliothek im Rathaus.

Vollmoeller. The main roles were played by Werner Kraus (Napoleon), Gustaf Gründgens (Fouché) and Peter Voss (Wellington).

At the same time, the Italian version entitled »Campo di Maggio« was shot with Italian actors under the direction of co-author Giovacchino Forzano. □

Freibäder

Fin-de-Siècle bis Sozialistentraum

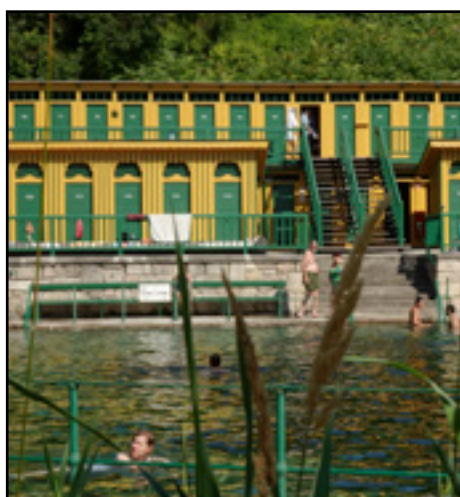


Kabane: inside Spa Fischau's cabin and the outside view in traditional Habsburg colours (right). »Gänsehäufel« bathing area in the Old Danube offers many Viennese a refuge with its simple cabins (left).

Only cool water helps escape the heat in the city. In and around Vienna you can swim in the Danube, even wild in nature.

There's a type of part-time camping at the area's outdoor pools, called *cabaning*. This means the seasonal use of a tiny cabin, the cabin, in which you can keep your bathing suit, sun bed, table and other things locked away. However, only long-established residents benefit from this convenience, because the waiting time for a cabin is several years.

The thermal spa in Bad Vöslau, about half an hour's drive from Vienna,



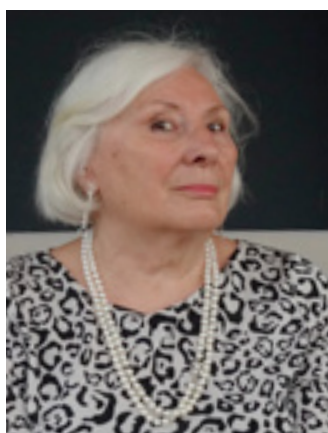
which claims to go back to Theopil Hansen, the builder of Parliament as mentioned earlier, has luxury cabins for overnight stays. The lucky tenants can even use the swimming pool with Bad Vöslauer thermal water at night at their own risk.

In Vienna, the reigning Socialists erected a worker's pool in brittle concrete chic for 30,000 visitors on the island »Gänsehäufel«.

Bad Fischau's spa, formerly owned by the Habsburgs, was once intended for aristocratic male hunting parties. Now the men's pool is accessible from the sauna even in winter, for ladies, too. □



Impressum



Chris Schuth

qualitalk published by
Chris Schuth | Max-Planck-Straße 46
55124 Mainz | Germany
Phone (+49) 175 5 58 63 61

chris-schuth.de
mail (schnabel-a) chris-schuth.de
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