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Viennese Mélange: One Part Coffee, One Part Nationhood

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Abstract

Many years prior to beginning at the graduate level, the author of this work traveled to numerous coffeehouses in many different countries. It was here that he first began to understand the role that coffeehouses played in Europe. The investigation described in the pages that follow has allowed the author, finally, the opportunity to explore what is the Vienna fin-de-siècle coffeehouse's function and role in Austria's national identity.

Chapter One provides and introduction to why the coffeehouse at the end of the nineteenth century is so critical to Austria's contemporary national identity.

Chapter Two provides a historical overview of the Viennese coffeehouse since 1683. This section concentrates on the fin-de-siècle coffeehouse scene. Literary, musical, architectural, and philosophical circles all used the coffeehouse as a central meeting point. The time between 1895 and 1914 experienced extraordinary development in breaking away from traditional thought at the time.

Chapter Three identifies three scholars whose theories show how national identity can be constructed. Benedict Anderson, Bernhard Giesen, and Ruth Wodak et al. provide the framework for this thesis. These three scholars'

theories can then be used to define Austria's contemporary national identity.

Chapter Four explores three examples how the fin-de-siècle coffeehouse is portrayed as a myth in not only contemporary Austria, but also internationally. Stefan Zweig's *Die Welt von Gestern*, an Austrian Tourism Ministry advertisement, and an American magazine article depict the fin-de-siècle coffeehouse as a national symbol. The use of such a symbol exemplifies the need for Austria to reach into its past to identify itself today.

Chapter Five summarizes the study, identifies its major theses, and offers a conclusion based on the examples given.

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Chapter I

Introduction

> "Nichts hat vielleicht so viel zur intellektuellen Beweglichkeit und internationalen Orientierung des Österreichers beigetragen, als daß er im Kaffeehaus sich über alle Vorgänge der Welt so umfassend orientieren und sie zugleich im freundschaftlichen Kreise diskutieren konnte"
>
> Stefan Zweig, *Die Welt von Gestern*.

At the end of the nineteenth century, the Viennese coffeehouse served as a cultural meeting place for literati, politicians, and philosophers. Literary personalities such as Peter Altenberg, Karl Kraus, Stefan Zweig, and Arthur Schnitzler used the coffeehouse as their public meeting point. The coffeehouse was, however, not only used by those in literary circles. Architect Adolf Loos, psychologist Sigmund Freud, and such diverse politicians as, Leon Trotsky, Theodor Herzl, and Karl Lueger could also often be seen frequenting their favorite cafés. The 'Ringstraße' cafés became the hub for debates, discussions, and gossip. For some customers it even served as a second home. Some coffeehouses offered mail service for their more famous customers. One hundred years later,

the fin de siècle coffeehouse is considered a cornerstone for the construction of an Austrian national identity. The purpose of this thesis is to link the significance of the fin de siècle coffeehouse and its role in today's Austrian national identity. Coffeehouses and national identity have been studied as individual topics, yet very little has been done to examine how the two themes are related to each other.

The movements of literature, art, architecture, and philosophy between the years of 1895-1914 all possess one central theme: the Viennese Coffeehouse. The Café Griensteidl, Sperl, Herrenhof, Central, and Museum, were all focal points for both intellectuals and those admirers who also wanted to participate in this lifestyle. This circle represented a creative voice against the authority and oppressiveness of the waning Austro-Hungarian Empire. These intellectual, artistic, and musical circles were determined to end traditional ways of thought.

Carl E. Schorske's Fin de Siècle Vienna, Politics and Culture discusses Vienna from a literary, social, and political context. Schorske's work is the first to explore the fin de siècle in Vienna from different perspectives and to link them together. In his work, Schorske rationalizes

the need for Viennese authors to create new forms of expression through literature. He notes, "Their only common ground was rejection of the classical realist tradition of their fathers in search for modern man's true face" (214). While this approach based on rejection of tradition is applicable to the literary side of Vienna, Schorske observes a similarity in the visual arts. "This (new form of literature) involved a critical assault on the screen of historicism and inherited culture with which the bourgeois man concealed his modern, practical identity" (215). Artists who embraced new, bold features in art were Gustav Klimt, Oskar Kokoschka, and Egon Schiele, among others. These artists experimented with new themes, such as, human sexuality and the fascination with death to defy the older generation of artists. These experiments were often presented at '*Die Sezession*', a Jugendstil building designed to show specifically Viennese and Austrian art.

Unlike Schorske's work, Harold Segel's The Vienna Coffeehouse Wits 1890-1938 portrays only fin de siècle coffeehouses and coffeehouse authors. Segel outlines in detail how these authors and personalities were influential not only for the development of coffeehouse

literature but also for *Kleinkunst* forms.[1] In his overview, he differentiates between coffeehouse authors and the individual coffeehouses themselves. This way, one is able to see the distinctly different role that each coffeehouse plays. Although this source is a wonderful outline guiding the reader through the different personalities of the fin de siècle era, it does not touch political or national identity issues.

Bartel Sinhuber's Die Wiener Kaffeehausliteraten focuses strictly on the coffeehouse literary personalities. He presents not only famous coffeehouse authors and poets such as Peter Altenberg, Karl Kraus, Richard Hofmann, and Hugo von Hofmannsthal but also lesser-known authors. These lesser-known authors influenced and supported their more successful peers emotionally, critically, and even financially. The most useful feature of this work is the perspective of "literary patrons of the

[1] *Kleinkunst* is defined by Segel as "so-called art of small forms, 'little art' in other words. It is used most of the time to describe the kind of entertainment that first spread like wildfire across the European continent from 1881 to the First World War... By 'small forms' in literature, we generally understand various types of prose works of short length. These might include short stories, sketches, anecdotes, essays, reviews, feuilletons, and aphorisms" (29).

coffeehouse" (Sinhuber 19). Through exploring the lesser-known Viennese coffeehouse literati, one can observe the importance that the coffeehouse had in fueling literary discourse. In Vienna, literary groups could be regularly found at the established coffeehouses up until the outbreak of World War I.

For this thesis, these three above-mentioned texts provide material to illustrate the importance of the fin de siècle coffeehouse from around 1895 until the eruption of World War I. Next, this thesis will investigate current theories regarding Austrian identity and how contemporary Austrian national identity is constructed to a large extent around the image of the fin de siècle coffeehouse.

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the topic of national identity has resurfaced as a major political force and inspired new interest among scholars as well. Since joining the European Union in 1995, Austria has been forced to examine its own identity and to understand its new role as part of this political entity. This search for an identity can be exemplified in four major events in the last decade, which have defined not only Austrians' view of themselves, but also the international community's view of their country. The election of Austrian president Kurt

Waldhiem, the fall of the Berlin Wall, referendum to join the European Union, and finally the rise of right-wing political figures such as Jörg Haider all contribute to Austria's contemporary identity.

Until the inauguration of Austrian president Kurt Waldheim (1986-1992), Austria's Nazi past was officially a taboo topic. The revelation of Waldheim's activity in World War II as a German intelligence officer was a huge international and domestic scandal. The international community strongly denounced the Austrian acceptance of Waldheim as deplorable, while many Austrians rallied and supported their president as misrepresented. It was not until he left office in 1992 that this turmoil diminished. While he was in office, the opening in 1989 between East and West Germany placed Austria in a unique position.

In 1989, as a neutral nation, Austria acted as a transfer point for citizens of the German Democratic Republic attempting to cross into the Federal Republic of Germany. "In the summer of 1989, Hungary--under its new reformist leadership--began to dismantle the formidable boundary with Austria" (Fulbrook 241). The influx of Eastern-Bloc refugees fleeing their crumbling communist governments forced Austria to accept large numbers of

asylum seekers. Many stayed in Austria even after new governments were put into place. By choosing to remain in Austria, refugees began to change the demographics of Austria, which created xenophobic feelings and inspired demonstrations against former Eastern Bloc citizens. Austrians perceived the incorporation into the European Union as a monumental question of what Austria signifies. Many other member-nations saw Austria as an essential member because it linked the economic super-power Germany and Italy geographically. Through joining the European Union, Austria distanced itself from its former East-bloc neighbors, Hungary, and the Czech Republic.

In 1995, over two-thirds of the population voted in favor of joining the European Union (Wodak et al. 15). Despite this decisive vote, the federal government vowed to its citizens that no matter what, "Österreicher bleiben wir" (Wodak 536). Within the next two years, Austrians' enthusiasm for joining the European Union dwindled, as they cited lack of immediate benefits as one of the main reasons. This sparked opportunistic politicians, for example Jorg Haider, leader of the Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (Austrian Freedom Party), to capitalize on Austria's confusion over who and what it now represents.

This popularity was of particular interest in 1999, during the European Union Parliament elections.

Focusing on domestic, rather than European or even international issues, Haider represents growing Austrian conservatism. These conservative principles can be seen on the party's World Wide Web homepage. Some of Haider's political program focuses on bettering Austria from within by reestablishing Roman Catholic morals and traditions in everyday life. Although he presents this political image to Austrians, Haider is viewed differently on the international scene. The international media sketches an anti-Semitic picture of Haider and his policies. This media attention has actually helped Haider's popularity in Austria. It was then no surprise that Haider's party and the Òsterreichische Volkspartei (Austrian Peoples Party) joined forces after the recent election, building on the similarity of their domestic, religious, and family values. All of these values relate to the new political vision that not only Haider's political party wishes to portray but also approximately 27% the Austrian people. By using nostalgic examples from Austria's era of bygone greatness, Haider exploits uncertainty in Austrians' contemporary sense of their identity and legitimizes these values.

These uncertainties regarding Austrian's national identity can be explained to some degree through recent developments in the last ten years.

Benedict Anderson, Bernhard Giesen, and Ruth Wodak et al. represent some of the most recent comprehensive scholarship regarding the construction of national identity and nationhood. The works of these three scholars will provide the framework in this thesis for explaining how a nation is defined and is constructed.

"Nation, nationality, nationalism--all are notoriously difficult to define, let alone to analyze" (Anderson 3). Anderson's view is commonly shared among scholars who are used in this thesis. According to Anderson a nation "is an imagined political community--and imagined as both inherently and sovereign" (6). Anderson states that nations are invented where they do not exist (6). By inventing a nation, Anderson means that both myth and history become part of a narrative identity. Anderson calls this, "imagined communities" (6). Nations eventually become static, abstract communities with boundaries for what can and cannot be integrated. I will apply Anderson's broad and general concept to the contemporary identity of Austria. Anderson's "imagined community" is, among other things,

built upon the notion of exclusion, one can see this principle at work in Austria when some political groups try to deny Hitler's politics as part of their past. One example of this exclusion is the omission of Adolf Hitler, World War II, and anything else related to the Nazi period from the discussion of Austria today.

Whereas Anderson develops his theory of nationalism without historical specificity, Bernhard Giesen offers a historical explanation of how the German nation came into being in the late nineteenth century. Historical events, especially after the French Revolution, spawned the rapid growth of nationalism within Europe. After the Napolionic campaigns, authors, critics, and scholars, especially in Central Europe, wanted to shape a German-speaking nation. Instead of using "imagined communities," Giesen introduces the concept of "Trägergruppen." These help to build a collective identity that in turn leads to a national identity. Giesen states that during the early nineteenth century, a sense of "Nationalbewußtsein" was born and grew (Giesen 10). This new form of national awareness is what scholars today consider modern nationalism. Giesen's presentation of a German-speaking nation can also be used to define features in contemporary Austria. When touring

Austria, one can see how the bygone dynastic period of the Hapsburg Empire casts its shadow over the freely elected democratic government. Today, Austria's collective identity is formed by "Trägergruppen." One example of a "Tragergruppe" is the Austrian Tourism Ministry. Tourism is the largest industry in Austrians today.[2] Pamphlets and brochures attempt to project Austria still as nostalgic for their imperial past. One feels when digesting such images that the Austrian government has not come to grips with its contemporary self and is rather fastened securely in prior centuries.

Like Giesen, Ruth Wodak agrees that a 'German speaking nation' is perceived through its cultural artifacts, but also in other ways. Wodak et.al not only present two distinctly different models for how nations are created, but they deal specifically with the construction of contemporary Austrian identity. Defining Germany as a "Kulturnation," Wodak argues that a cultural nation exists before any political entity regulates it. Using Germany as an example, Wodak shows that in the early nineteenth century, German authors and scholars wrote of a German

[2] Austria, Facts and Figures. Vienna: Federal Press Service, 1992.

speaking-nation before its political existence. This was only realized in 1871 with Bismarck. This "Staatsnation," is based on ideology rather than culture or language, and it followed France, which formed the first modern nation. Wodak emphasizes that today Austria faces an identity crisis on two levels: as a "Staatsnation" since it joined the transnational organization of the European Union, and as a "Kulturnation," since it tries to distinguish itself as being different from Germany. These attempts to create a specific Austrian identity are the subject of this thesis.

I will use three examples of how Austrian national identity is constructed. Using Stefan Zweig's *Die Welt von Gestern*, an autobiography with reminisces of fin de siècle Vienna, I will describe why this text is important to Austria's narrative identity. After fleeing Austria prior to the Second World War, Zweig told of his upbringing, education, literary accomplishments, and the hardships brought on to him by the Nazi regime. Written shortly before he committed suicide, the book constructed an Austria which no longer existed. His work represents what Wodak refers to as 'narrative identity.'

Next, I will analyze how Austrians depict themselves to an international audience through an advertisement that makes coffeehouses a national symbol. This advertisement is, like Zweig's autobiography, nostalgic and evokes reminisces of Austria's imperial past. Through presenting the coffeehouse as an important part of Austria's identity, the ad attempts to enhance tourism through history. This type of portrait has a direct effect on how the international community forms its conception of Austria.

As my last example, I will discuss a magazine article detailing Viennese coffeehouses as an integral part of life today. Written by an American free-lance journalist, the article "The Cafes of Old Vienna" in *Coffee Journal* presents Vienna's better-known coffeehouses. The article is directed at readers with little awareness of Vienna or Austria and fosters an association between Austria and coffeehouses.

These three different examples will demonstrate how Austrian national identity is not characterized as modern, but instead is linked to its pre-World War II image and, more specifically, to fin de siècle Austria rather than its contemporary self. Before discussing these examples, I will provide a historical overview of the Viennese coffeehouse.

Second, I will examine in greater detail crucial aspects how national identity is constructed.

Chapter II

The Viennese Coffeehouse: The Creation of a Myth

The Foundation

Vienna's coffeehouses have long set a standard for legend and "mystique" (Segel 2). If one is to mention the history of the coffee scene in Vienna, one must first look to its roots to understand its immense popular reception.

During the Turkish siege of 1683, Georg Franz Koltschitzky, slipped through Turkish army lines to deliver important messages to the Duke of Lorraine. As his reward for saving Vienna and Christianity in central Europe, he received sacks of coffee beans and a house and he founded the first coffeehouse near Stephansplatz. As Koltschitzky refined his brewing and serving techniques, the popularity of coffee widely increased:

> If Koltschitzky's adventures during and after the siege of Vienna were the stuff of legend, his historical role in the establishment of the first coffeehouse in Vienna has at long last been stripped of the legendary, undoubtedly with some regret among the many who have savored its romantic flavor. (Segel 8)

Although many believed Koltschitzky to have originally introduced coffee to Vienna, scholar Karl Teply refutes these claims. Known as a link between east and west, an ethnic minority of Armenians also inhabited Vienna in the late seventeenth century. Teply's extensive research on the early history of the Viennese coffeehouse reveals that two Armenians, Johannes Diodato and Isaak de Luca, were actually responsible for increasing awareness and acceptance of coffee in Vienna.[3] Diodato, of Turkish and Armenian decent, was a keen businessman who traveled extensively. He petitioned the emperor for the sole privilege to acquire, prepare, and sell coffee in Vienna for a fixed time of twenty years. Upon his death, de Luca, seeing the demand for coffee, seized the opportunity to expand on what Diodato had created. On September 10, 1697, Emperor Leopold I granted de Luca permission to further enhance the coffee market. In addition to de Luca, three fellow Christianized Armenians began setting up locations to sell this 'exotic' drink. When de Luca died in 1729, "there were already at least eleven concessionaires in

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[3] Karl Teply, Die Einführung des Kaffees in Wien: Georg Franz Koltschitzky, Johannnes Diodato, Isaak de Luca. Vienna: Kommissionsverlag Jugend und Volk Wien, 1980.

Vienna" (Segel 9). Through this venture, the need for coffee was realized. It was not until the nineteenth century though, that the modern coffeehouses, was introduced to Vienna. This brought a new dimension to a simple drink.

The Expansion

Only during the early nineteenth century did coffeehouses begin to take the form and shape we know today. Ignaz Wagner was one of the first to design extravagant coffeehouses. Oberzill quotes one critic during that time was quoted as saying, "Not seldom have foreigners told us that coffeehouses of other lands, Paris, St. Petersburg or London can't match the level of ours, but Wagner's coffeehouse has raised the standard higher." (Oberzill 4) By 1881, over 300 coffeehouses were scattered throughout the city of Vienna. It is not known what triggered the vast growth and popularity during the later part of the nineteenth century.

The immense popularity of the Viennese coffeehouse is not coincidental. It has a number of important and defining characteristics. Unlike Paris and Berlin, where there was a tier system of coffeehouses, i.e., those specifically for working class bourgeois, for avant-garde authors and

artists, or for aristocrats, Vienna had coffeehouses which were less defined for specific social classes. Patrons who could afford a cup of coffee were able to frequent any coffeehouse. Another feature that differentiated the Viennese coffeehouse from that of its continental cousins was the lack of a natural geographical separation. For example, the Left Bank of the Seine in Paris was specifically an avant-garde and aristocratic coffeehouse setting. On the Right Bank in Paris, one would mostly find the working class and bourgeois. Vienna's coffeehouses, in contrast, were centered on the perimeter of the central district and the 'Ringstraße.' The location and close proximity of Vienna's coffeehouses was the defining difference which separated Vienna from coffeehouses of other major European cities. Within the central district of Vienna, one can find the major coffeehouses that were significant for fin de siècle Vienna.

The Explosion

The popularity of the fin de siècle coffeehouse exploded at the end of the nineteenth century. The people who frequented the coffeehouses were as different as the number of coffee combinations one could order. One group

in particular frequented and contributed immensely to Vienna's coffeehouse popularity, mystique, and history: the Eastern European immigrants of Jewish background.

The demographic representation of the Jewish minority in Vienna of 250,000 was not proportional to their presence in the Viennese coffeehouse. The assimilated middle-class, male Jew, though a minority in the city, was a majority in the coffeehouse. This is evident with the Viennese aphorism, "The Jew belongs in the coffeehouses" (Hoffman 46). Jewish coffeehouse patrons included literary personalities, musicians, architects, philosophers, and politicians. The coffeehouse was one of the few locations where Jews were treated as equals or close to it. Because of the city's lack of adequate housing, "'the-home-away-from-home value' of Viennese coffeehouses took on special significance at the turn-of-the-century, and its practical as well as recreational value was more urgent than the institution elsewhere in Europe at the time" (Leahy 20). Within the Jewish community, a dynamic literary group gathered, yearning to break away from traditional thought and style.

In 1895, the literary group "Young Vienna" formed in the Café Griensteidl and often met there until around 1897.

Hermann Bahr led this group, which included other prominent authors such as Arthur Schnitzler, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Felix Salten, and Richard Beer-Hofmann. In addition to these members, critic Karl Kraus and bohemian poet Peter Altenberg also met with these authors until the café burned down in 1897. Another important figure who frequented "Vienna's true literary coffeehouse" was Stefan Zweig, whose autobiography, *Die Welt von Gestern*, portrays a nostalgic view of Vienna's coffeehouses and their importance to the literati during the fin de siècle(Segel 18). Zweig recounts the day he was summoned to meet Hermann Bahr:

> Bahr schrieb sofort dem Unbekannten und verabredete eine Besprechung in einem Kaffeehaus--dem berühmten Café Griensteidl, dem Hauptquartier der jungen Literatur. (45)

For some, the coffeehouse was a birthplace of creativeness. With over three hundred coffeehouses around Vienna, there were a number of other cafés that housed the literary scene. Each coffeehouse had at least one major personality. From coffeehouse to coffeehouse, one could find a poet, politician, author, or someone aspiring to be famous.

Altenberg and Kraus migrated from Café Griensteidl, to another coffeehouse where they felt much more at ease, Café Central. Café Central was also where Altenberg's *Kleinkunst* forms of short prose and poetry were written and recited. Altenberg's reputation is still famous there, and one can see a full-size statue of him sitting at the first table on the right when one enters the coffeehouse. Hermann Kesten points out:

> Das *Café Central* war das Lokal von Peter Altenberg, dem 'Sokrates' von Wien, einem Feuilletonisten, dessen beste Feuilletons seine Person und sein Leben waren, seine ungeschriebenen Feuilletons. Er ging von Tisch zu Tisch, trank häufig 'Reste' und war berühmt für seine Wutanfälle und Skizzen. (379)

Another coffeehouse that played an important role in the literary scene was the Café Imperial. It is the location where Rainer Maria Rilke and Karl Kraus came to know each other. This is where the staff of the *Neue Wiener Journal* and of Kraus' *"Die Fackel"* often gathered to discuss their plans for the magazines. The purpose of this journal was to fight against politicians' corruption and

greed. Unlike most literati, Kraus hopped from coffeehouse to coffeehouse.

Café Museum, designed and built by Adolf Loos, was a popular coffeehouse for artists and musicians. Artists such as Gustav Klimt, Egon Schiele, and Oskar Kokoschka were all frequenters of the café and formed one of the two prominent tables. The other table was formed by the musicians Franz Lehar, Alban Berg, and Erich Korngold. Café Museum's importance dwindled after World War I, when according to Segel, Hungarian immigrants flocked to the area and overcrowding by this new clientele drove away loyal customers (28). During World War I, the Café Herrenhof took over the role of Café Museum.[4] The diversity of different coffeehouses led to a dynamic clientele. Even politicians engaged in this lifestyle.

The Austrian government censored the media, and ideas needed all the more to be expressed and welcomed. The coffeehouse was a location where opinions that did not coincide with 'official' government sentiments were

[4] Café Herrenhof was one of the most popular coffeehouses among Vienna's literary circles during World War II. Since my paper does not cover the period after 1914, it is noteworthy to mention "after German annexation, on March 1938, the Café Herrenhof was ordered under 'Aryan management'" (Segel 28).

discussed. Politicians Karl Lueger, a well known anti-Semite, and Zionist Theodor Herzl regularly "abused each other in the news and in the parliament, but...the self-same representatives sat down together in friendship with a glass of beer or a cup of coffee and called each other 'du'" (Leahy 23).

The coffeehouse was the workplace and residence of architects, artists, critics, poets, politicians, eccentrics, and bourgeois citizens. The fin de siècle coffeehouse brought a melange of people together who otherwise would have not been able to meet efficiently and so publicly (See Appendix, Fig. I). The years between 1895 and 1914 saw an extraordinary movement in the development of ideas and a breaking away from traditional thought. This precedent is a fundamental part not only of Viennese identity but also, to an even greater extent, the "nationales Bewußtsein" of Austria today.

Chapter III

National Identity: Three Contemporary Approaches

Since 1989, the topic of nationhood has been not only of general political interest, but of scholarly interest as well. Although the scholarly work shows a breadth of diverse theories, this section will concentrate only on Anderson, Giesen, and Wodak et. al., who represent some of the most recent scholarship concerning a nation's construction.

Benedict Anderson: *Imagined Communities*

Using an anthropological approach to how a nation is conceived and constructed, Anderson presents three main points in his work: nations are difficult to define; nations are abstract concepts, which he refers to as "imagined communities," and finally nations set parameters for the inclusion and exclusion of what they consider acceptable or unacceptable, be it people, attitudes, or mental concepts. The use of exclusion will be of particular interest to how contemporary Austria defines itself today.

Anderson begins by asserting that "the need to define 'nation' has always been problematic, even since the 'founding fathers' of national identity scholarship, Hans

Kohn and Carleton Hayes" (5). Anderson summarizes three reasons why such a problem exists:

> (1) The objective modernity of nations to the historian's eye vs. their subjective antiquity in the eyes of the nationalists. (2) The formal universality of nationality as a socio-cultural concept--in the modern world everyone can, should, will "have" a nationality, as he or she "has" a gender--vs. the irremediable particularity of its concrete manifestations, such that, by definition, "Greek" nationality is sui generis. (3) The political power of nationalisms vs. their philosophical poverty and even incoherence. In other words, unlike most other isms, nationalism has never produced its own grand thinkers: no Hobbeses, Tocquevilles, Marxes, or Webers. (Anderson 5)

However, these paradoxes present a problem in that they are based on western European ideals, which not every nation uses as its basis for defining itself. These three paradoxes form the basis of why Anderson believes the classification of a nation is so difficult:

> Part of the difficulty is that one tends unconsciously to hypostasize the existence of Nationalism-with-a-big-N (rather as one might Age-with-a-capital-A) and then to classify "it" as *an* ideology. (Note that if everyone has an age, Age is merely an analytical expression.) It would, I think, make things easier if one treated it as if it belonged with "kinship" and "religion", rather than with "liberalism" or "fascism". (Anderson 5)

Since World War II, the term "Nationalism" has been categorized as belonging to far right-wing politics. Anderson demonstrates that a nation is not a tangible object, easily categorized into a particular ideology or philosophy. Through explicating his difficulty in defining nation, Anderson states his model for how a nation is constructed.

Anderson expands his definition of an "imagined community" as encompassing "all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact" (6). In short, Anderson finds it interesting that the population within an "imagined community" will not establish contact with all its members. "It is *imagined* because the members of even

the smallest nation will never encounter the majority of their fellow-members" (Anderson 6). For Anderson, it is this point that causes difficulty in understanding how members of a nation can identify with one another. One way of constructing a nation is the inclusion and exclusion of pertinent artifacts.

Through inclusion and, more importantly, exclusion, the "imagined community" becomes a static and boundary-ridden entity. This development, according to Anderson, occurs within all nations. The nation is imagined as *limited* because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite boundaries, beyond which lie other nations. (Anderson 7)

This limiting of what can be included leads Anderson to postulate that nations are based on exclusive traits:

> No nation imagines itself coterminous with mankind. The most messianic nationalists do not dream of a day when all the members of the human race will join their nation in the way that it was possible, in certain epochs, for, say, Christians to dream of a wholly Christian planet. (7)

What Anderson defines as the means of exclusion can also be applied to how contemporary Austria "imagines" itself.

The exclusion of unwanted characteristics in Austria today can be seen in two contrasting instances. The exclusion of negative figures or events such as Hitler and World War II shows that Austria is unwilling to cope with its Nazi past. Austria is keen on including positive figures and events, mainly drawn from its cultural and imperial past.

The Hitler issue exemplifies the central theme of Anderson's work. The Austrian government portrays itself as a 'victim' of the Hitler regime and World War II and thus escaping the international criticism following Germany even today. This historical amnesia vis-à-vis particular parts of its national history exemplifies one of Anderson's theories. The inclusion of positive historical events or people becomes a mirror image of exclusion, as exemplified by the case of one of the most preeminent composers.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) is used by both Germany and Austria to incorporate a significant musical figure into their national identity. Beethoven, who was born in Bonn, Germany, but lived most of his adult life, in Austria, is claimed by both nations as their own. Germany

and Austria tried to incorporate Beethoven into their cultural national identity. One official Austrian source, *"Austria: Facts and Figures,"* portrays the composer exclusively as Viennese, but mentions that Beethoven was born in Germany. However, this sources fails to elaborate on his upbringing in Germany. It is simply assumed that he is a part of Austria. Beethoven's incorporation into the cultural framework of Austria serves as an example of how a community "imagines" itself. As useful as Anderson's thesis is, it does not address specific issues of European or Austrian national identity.

Bernhard Giesen: *Die Intellektuellen und die Nation*

Since the French Revolution, and particularly since the defeat of Napoleon in 1806, German national identity became a driving force in the nineteenth century, as intellectuals began to write of a "German speaking nation."

> Im 19. Jahrhundert endeckte Europa die Nation als Grundlage politischer Souveränität, gesellschaftlicher Organisation und geschichtlicher Orientierung. Nicht nur für den Entwurf künftiger Geschichte, sondern auch für die Rekonstrucktion der historischen Vergangenheit galt die Nation als das alles

> andere uberragende 'kollektive Subjekt' der Geschichte; andere Kräfte--dynastische Interessen, individueller Ehrgeiz und der Streit der Konfessionen--konnten aus dieser Sicht zwar noch über lange Zeit die Entdeckung der Nation und ihr Selbstbewußtsein verhindern, aber der Übergang von einer gleichsam schlafenden Existenz zum selbstbewußten Handeln der Nation schien ververmeidbar. (Giesen 10)

This specific development is the underlying theme of Giesen's book. He stresses that intellectuals were central to building a German speaking "imagined community." Unlike Anderson, Giesen concentrates on tracing German national identity in the nineteenth century. In order to construct his definition of collective identity, Giesen introduces the concept of "Trägergruppen."

"Trägergruppen" are, for example, intellectuals, politicians, authors, musicians, or any other group that fosters construction of a collective identity. Of these, intellectuals and authors are some of the most influential. The Grimm brothers and their childrens' literature come easily to mind. They collected oral narratives, put them into writing, and thus instilled a cultural heritage by

documenting its stories and tales. It is, in this case, the intellectuals who then helped form a collective identity.

Giesen states that a collective identity cannot be extracted or studied separately from its natural environment. "Diskurse über kollektive Identität und die Konstruktion neuer Codes der Identität geschehen freilich nicht in einem kulturellen Vakuum" (Giesen 85). Thus, "Tragergruppen" are part of a larger social context that can help build a collective identity that leads to a national identity. Although his book is intended for the study of German national identity, Giesen's arguments are in some aspects easily transferable to contemporary Austria.

The Austrian political parties, as one type of "Trägergruppe," played a crucial role campaigning for entry into the European Union. In doing so, they modified Austria's collective identity. This becomes evident in a pro-European Union poster, in which Austria's federal government projects an image of stability through a coffeehouse (Wodak et al. 537).

Café Hawelka, a Viennese icon for over fifty years, is projected as the representation of Austria's stability. The

poster explains that although the political orientation of the country will change, the language, culture, practices, habits, i.e., collective identity will not suffer. "Die österreichische Identität bleibt uns erhalten, auch in der EU" (Wodak et al. 537). While Giesen concentrates on a German-speaking nation, Wodak deals specifically with how the Austrian nation is constructed.

Ruth Wodak et al.: *Zur diskursiven Konstruktion nationaler Identität*

Wodak et al. outline the controversy over the many definitions of "nation" in *Zur diskursiven Konstruktion nationaler Identität*. Before doing so, the authors refer to two concepts that play a major role in the discussion on German/Austrian national identity:

> In der wissenschaftlichen Disskussion finden sich zwei Nationskonzepte und mit diesen verknüpfte Argumentationslinien: das der politischen 'Willensnation' nach französischen Vorbild und das der häufig qua Sprache definierten (oder mitunter auch ethnisch begründeten) 'Kulturnation'. Beide Definitionen werfen die Frage auf, worin sich 'Nation' als Willens- oder

> aber als Kulturgemeinschaft von anderen Großkollektiven unterscheidet. (20)

Wodak et al. insist that "nation" and "nationalities" are used to define an underlying political ideology as she writes:

> Analog zur Diskussion um den Nationsbegriff wird auch der Begriff "Nationalismus" in sehr heterogener Weise als Bezeichnung für eine politische Ideologie, eine politische Bewegung, den Prozeß der Entstehung von Nationen oder auch für eine bestimmte individuelle politische Orientierung verwendet. (Wodak et al. 20)

The creation of nations and the use of those nations to fuel political principles are a modern phenomenon.

Like Anderson and Giesen, Wodak et al. argue that a "nation" is a dynamic, difficult-to-define, and modern entity. These qualities are key in constructing any "nation." Wodak et al. also assert that 'nation' can only be created through a sense of need. In psychosocial terms, humans feel a desire to belong to a group.

> Nationen werden als (von jenseits der Grenzen existierenden anderen Nationen) begrenzt vorgestellt, weil sich keine Nation mit der

> Menschheit gleichsetzt. Sie werden als kameradschaftliche Gemeinschaft von Gleichen und als souverän imaginiert. (33)

Like Anderson and Giesen, Wodak et al. agree on man's psychological need for acceptance in a community. This human quality fuels, among others, a nation's discourse.

Wodak et al. differ from Anderson and Giesen in that she uses discourse analysis to construct a "nation." She defines: "Die Kritische Diskursanalyse versteht 'Diskurs', sei er gesprochen oder geschrieben, als eine Form sozialer Praxis" (42). Wodak et al. focus on the discourse of Austria's membership in the European Union. Austria faced some form of crisis since the EU would impose a transnational identity. Wodak et al. see in that crisis a revival of the old dichotomy of a "Kulturnation" vs. a "Staatsnation" at work (22).

This dichotomy is seen again in the poster eliciting support for the European Union (537). The Austrian government wishes to be seen as a "Kulturnation" through using a Café Hawelka. By doing so, the Austrian government is campaigning to join a "Staatsnation" which is based on economic rather than cultural principles. Advertisements such as this one suggest that a nation can co-exist as both

a "Kulturnation" and as a "Staatsnation." This attempt to co-exist as two types of nations plagues Austrians, who see themselves as a member of a transnational community, but view their country based on cultural artifacts.

Chapter IV

The Inclusion of the Fin de Siècle Coffeehouse in Austria's Contemporary Identity

Does Austria Really Exist in the Present?

Since the establishment of the Second Republic in 1945 by the four allied powers, Austrians have identified themselves as a neutral people. Austria served as a setting for negotiation between East and West on many occasions. This status was seriously brought into question after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The identity was further brought into question with Austria's integration into the European Union in 1995. Austria's new European and international role forced the nation to contemplate a new question: Is there an Austria?

Wolfgang Skwara's article "Österreich: gab es dieses Land?" written one year after the fall of the Berlin Wall, addresses this question of nationality. Like Giesen, Skwara proposes that historical events and figures are particularly crucial to asserting Austria's contemporary identity. This contemporary identity is a narrative identity, taken from literature, oral narratives, and the arts. "Österreich: gab es dieses Land? Wer ins Museum

geht, wer ins Theater stromt, wer Bücher liest, der antwortet mit Ja" (Skwara 117-18). According to Skwara, in order for Austria to exist, it must use historical artifacts in order to construct a national identity.

Ruth Wodak et al. also share this opinion when discussing the founding of the Second Republic. Wodak et al. feel that the last fifty years of Austrian history is still a new concept for most:

> Das Millennium wird in den von uns untersuchten Politikrreden nicht erwähnt. In den Gruppendiskussion spielt es ebenfalls keine wichtige Rolle. In den Interviews zeigt sich dagegen zwar, daß die Botschaft vom 1000 jährigen Österreich in das Alltagsbewußtsein eingedrungen ist, dieser 'junge' Mythos erfüllt zum Zeitpunkt der Erhebung unserer Daten aber (noch) keine wesentliche identitätsstiftende Funktion.(494)

Both Skwara and Wodak et al. refer to pre-World War II as "the" Austria. This Austria is what the majority of Austrians, Europeans, and tourists characterize as being Austria. The creation of the Jahrhunderts myth stems from a variety of sources during this era.

According to Skwara, the Jahrhundertswende myth involves "Der Begriff der guten alten Zeit" (Skwara, 111). Groups who criticize and glorify it create this myth. These include authors, scholars, tourists, and students. These groups build upon the existing myth through their writings. This is seen today in works revolving around the coffeehouse, fin-de-siècle, die Sezession, and Junges Wien.

Books that were used to research this paper are exactly those that enhance this myth. Books such as *Vienna, The World of Yesterday, 1889-1914,* by Stephen Bronner and F. Peter Wagner, *The Vienna Coffeehouse Wits, 1890-1930,* by Harold Segel, and *Fin de Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture*, by Carl E. Schorske analyze and depict this time period. All of these works not only analyze the period, but also at the same time shape the myth surrounding fin de siècle Austria.

It was also at the turn of the century that Austrian authors really began to create their own identity, distancing themselves from German literature. As Monika Ritzer suggests, the Austrian author has only surfaced in the last two hundred years, though continually overshadowed by German authors:

> Denn vor dem 18. Jahrhundert bezeichnet sich als 'osterreichischer' Dichter bekanntlich nur Walther von der Vogelweide, der sich den Kategorien schon mühsam fügt. Erst gegen Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts finden wir im Josephinismus überhaupt so etwas wie ein literarisches Selbstbewußtsein. Erst mit Grillparzer aber beginnt eine dem Selbstverständnis nach österreichische Literatur. Zusammen mit dem knapp eine Generation jüngeren Stifter prägt dieser Autor der Jahrhundertwende und des frühen 20. Jahrhunderts. (107)

The enthusiasm to create a national literature, especially surrounding the coffeehouse, is understandable. Authors pride themselves not only on their works but also on their surroundings. Without the fin de siècle coffeehouse as a central meeting point, the creation and construction of a literary national identity could not have evolved so quickly.

Contemporary Use of the Jahrhundertswende Coffeehouse Myth

During the last decade, a new interest in the coffeehouse has emerged. Reinvestment in old Viennese cafés as well as new ones has created a renewed sense of identity

for twentieth-century Viennese. However, the contemporary Viennese coffeehouse occupies a different place in society. With modern communication, the need for a central location to meet is now obsolete. Although the mystique of the coffeehouse remains, it is seen now just as a place for social interaction and relaxation. In essence, what defined the coffeehouse in fin de siècle Vienna is lost.

There is currently a rediscovery of the fin de siècle coffeehouse in narratives, advertisements, and magazines inside and outside of Austria. These means of depicting the Viennese coffeehouse as a cornerstone for Austrian national identity further establish the coffeehouse as an Austrian symbol. As Russell Berman notes in his article "The Vienna Fascination," "As the end of the century approaches, the fin-de-siècle is rediscovered" (Berman 204).

One example of this myth-making is seen in Stefan Zweig's autobiography, *Die Welt von Gestern*. Throughout his work, Zweig recounts without notes, interviews, or other material, his war-torn existence. As elegantly as Zweig portrays his place of birth, it no longer exists. Zweig attempts to exemplify Vienna's positive events. Zweig propagates his memories of fin-de-siècle Vienna, thus creating myth in the chapter, "Die Schule im vorigen

Jahrhundert," through glorification of a vivacious literary scene, which often met in coffeehouses.

Zweig stresses the importance of the coffeehouse to his adolescence and education:

> Um dies zu verstehen, muß man wissen, daß das Wiener Kaffeehaus eine Institution besonderer Art darstellt, die mit keiner ähnlichen der Welt zu vergleichen ist. Es ist eigentlich eine Art demokratischer, jedem für eine billige Schale Kaffee zugänglicher Klub, wo jeder Gast für diesen kleinen Obolus studentlang sitzen, diskutieren, schreiben, Karten spielen, seine Post empfangen und vor allem eine unbegrenzte Zahl von Zeitungen und Zeitschriften konsumieren kann. In einem besseren Wiener Kaffeehaus lagen alle Wiener Zeitungen auf und nicht nur die Wiener, sondern die des ganzen Deutschen Reiches und die französischen und englischen und italienischen und amerikanischen, dazu sämtliche wichtigen literarischen und künstlicherischen Revuen der Welt .... So wußten wir alles, was in der Welt vorging, aus erster Hand, wir erfuhren von jedem Buch, das erschien, von jeder

> Aufführung, wo immer sie stattfand, und verglichen in allen Zeitungen....(40)

This sense of pride is even more evident when Zweig, an aspiring author of the time, describes his environment and the new Austrian literary modernism that is being born:

> In unserer eigenen Stadt enstand über Nacht die Gruppe des 'jungen Wien' mit Arthur Schnitzler, Hermann Bahr, Richard Beer-Hofmann, Peter Altenberg, in denen die spezifisch österreichische Kultur durch eine Verfeinerung aller Kunstmittel zum erstenmal europäischen Ausdruck fand. (44)

Here, for the first time, Zweig points to the existence of Austrian literature.

Books such as Zweig's are crucial for defining how Austrian literature was born. The nostalgic depiction of fin de siècle Vienna only contributes to a mystique that drives many to glorify, study and at the same time manipulate Austrian national identity. The atmosphere created by the new Austrian literati of the Jahrhundertswende represents both a narrative and collective identity that is present in contemporary Austria's political, social, and economic scenes. Works

such as Zweig's enable Austria to represent itself through history. Narratives, though, are not the only way that the fin-de-siècle coffeehouse myth is created.

The identity projected of this 'Austrian' coffeehouse is also portrayed in advertisements for tourism. In an advertisement produced by the Austrian Tourism Ministry, the Ministry uses an Austrian national symbol, the coffeehouse, to promote collective identity. In this advertisement (see Appendix, Fig. II), a man sits sipping a 'kleiner Brauner' and reading a newspaper. This harkens back to scenes typical of coffeehouses in the fin de siècle through the stylization of the photograph. Use of a 'sepia' process results in a rustic finish on the photograph. In addition to this finish, the wording in the advertisement suggests Austria is not a progressive country. The use of the words "imperial" and "Fresh Roasted Daily. Since 1683", represents a Vienna that relishes its past. This is elaborated on further in the advertisement's script:

> When the Turks were driven from Vienna in 1683, they left behind sacks of precious coffee beans. Over the centuries, coffeehouses became centers of social and intellectual life in *Austria's Imperial Cities*. (Appendix, Fig. II)

This type of self-representation by a 'Trägergruppe', such as the Austrian Tourism Ministry and the inclusion of the coffeehouse as representative of the nation have direct implications on how the international community forms its impression of Austria.

Narratives, magazines, advertisements, and other media sources outside of Austria depict the Austrian coffeehouse as being "an institution in this Austrian capital...." (Hochwald 31). Hochwald's article, "The Café of Old Vienna" in *Coffee Journal*, presents an external, non-Austrian perspective of the coffeehouses and their personalities in a magazine designed for the coffee and coffeehouse enthusiast in the United States.

Photographs, although recent, are, like the previous example, modified to depict Vienna as still bearing this age-old tradition of coffee as integral to its collective identity. The article touches on every major coffeehouse and café found at the fin de siècle. Hochwald illustrates how national identity is created externally: "Time stands still in the coffeehouse from adolescence on, so chances are, they'll know at least one other patron sipping an *einspänner*" (31). This statement regarding "time" contradicts the atmosphere of fin-de-siècle Vienna

coffeehouse. Patrons, who wanted to hear the latest news and gossip, as well as meet progressive authors and critics flocked to the city's cafés. The image of the fin de siècle is specifically used to represent what typifies the Vienna coffeehouse. "Fin de siècle decadence suits the [Café] Savoy's bohemian devotés" (Hochwald 35). The article then specifies to whom the coffeehouse was important:

> The intellectuals had to relocate--en masse--to Central when Griensteidl was demolished in 1897. Located directly across from the Hofburg Palace, this café had been the meeting ground for Vienna's thinkers in the early 1890s and was a favorite of Gustav Klimt, Gustav Mahler and Sigmund Freud. At Griensteidl, composers, writers and painters had regular tables reserved for their meetings and social gatherings. (36)

Through the construction of an identity for tourists and other visitors of Vienna to digest, the coffeehouse takes on particular significance for non-Austrians. Articles such as these expose the coffeehouse as a nostalgic tool. The publication of this article constructs an external identity; thus Hochwald participates in transforming the coffeehouse into a myth. As a result, the

coffeehouse adds to the international community's understanding that Austria yearns to be understood as a "Kulturnation."

Narratives depicting the coffeehouse, advertisements employing the coffeehouse as a national symbol and the depiction of coffeehouses as cultural cornerstones of a nation all employ an image of the fin de siècle to represent Austrian national identity today.

Chapter V

Conclusion

The coffeehouse performed a special role in Vienna during the years of 1895 to 1914. Literary, architectural, musical, and philosophical circles used the coffeehouse as a central location in which to converge. Milan Dubrovic, best summarizes how the coffeehouse played an important role during the fin-de-siècle:

> Back then, we *lived* in the café. You have to imagine it a bit like the academies of ancient Greece, where they tried to solve all the problems of philosophy. That was the kind of thing we did in the cafés. We discussed everything--religion, sexuality, politics, and the gossip of the city. (93-94)

Throughout this thesis, the fin-de-siècle coffeehouse has been shown crucial not only during the Jahrhundertswende but also for the construction contemporary Austrian national identity.

Three recent scholars have been used to illustrate different theories on how a nation is fabricated. Benedict Anderson categorizes "nation" as an "imagined community" that is constructed from both myth and history. Anderson's

"imagined communities" are then used to include or exclude material based on what the nation judges acceptable. Anderson, however, does not address specific European or Austrian issues. Bernhard Giesen proposes that it was in the early nineteenth century that modern nationalism was conceived. According to Giesen, intellectuals are of special significance in helping construct a German-speaking nation. Groups such as "Trägergruppen," to whom Giesen refers encourage a collective identity. His claims 'collective identity,' constructed through "Trägergruppen," leads to a national identity. Giesen's arguments are intended for German national identity, whereas Ruth Wodak concentrates on contemporary Austria. Like Anderson and Giesen, Wodak et al. stress that nations are modern "imagined" entities. They can only be constructed through a sense of need. Wodak et al. postulate "Kritische Diskursanylyse" in order to show the construction of Austria's identity. Among others, the authors focus on how Austrians are eager to reach into their pre-World War II history to define themselves.

The fin-de-siècle coffeehouse is used extensively as a means for Austrians to define their nation not only as a "Kulturnation," but also as autonomous and from a larger

transnational entity, the European Union. Through relinking today's nation back to the Jahrhundertwende, narratives such as Stefan Zweig's produce nostalgia and create a myth through the account of his childhood in fin-de-siècle Vienna. The use of the turn-of-the-century Viennese coffeehouse is also used as a national image internationally. The Austrian Ministry of Tourism attempts, through the use of coffeehouses, to project an image of a bygone era. The style and phrases in the advertisement (Appendix II) promote an Austria that is firmly locked in its "imperial" past. The depiction of such nostalgic images have a direct impact on what other nations associate with Austria. This can be seen in Lambeth Hochwald's article, which is written for an American audience. Fostering ideas that Vienna coffeehouses are still as important today as they were during the fin-de-siècle only helps Austria's effort to be defined through myth-making. Furthermore, this enhances Austria's endeavors to be seen as a "Kulturnation."

In conclusion, this paper demonstrates that the fin-de-siècle coffeehouse is a cornerstone of Austrian national identity and is used to conceal Austria's present identity crisis and to promote Austria as a "Kulturstaat." Friedrich

Torberg best summarizes the fin-de-siècle coffeehouse scene with the title of his compilation of letters and other correspondences: "Das Kaffeehaus war uberall." This statement still holds true today in Austria.

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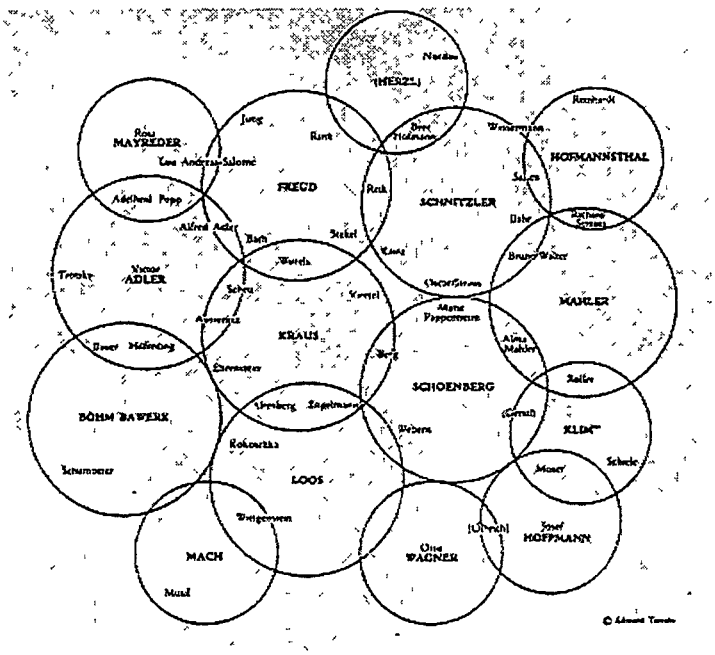
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Appendix

Appendix I



"Figure I," Timms Edward. Karl Kraus: Apocalyptic Satirist. Avon: Bath Press, 1986.

Appendix II



Pg. 7. Coffee Journal. Seattle: Tiger Oak Publications, Vol. 3, 1997.

Vita

Daniel C. Hubbard was born in Silver Spring, Maryland on June 10, 1975. He attended schools in the public system of Gaithersburg, Maryland, the Montgomery County School System, until his family moved to Oak Ridge, Tennessee. He graduated Oak Ridge High School in June 1993. After graduation, Hubbard participated in a Rotary International Scholarship in Dornbirn, Austria. Upon his return, he entered the University of Tennessee at Knoxville in 1994 where in August, 1998 he received the Bachelor of Arts in German. Following graduation, he entered the Master's program with a Teaching Assistantship. The Master of Arts degree was received August, 2000.

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