

## ***Ibizagate: Capturing a Political Field in Flux***

In May 2019, Austria was engulfed in arguably the biggest scandal since the Waldheim-Affair<sup>1</sup> of 1986. Now known as “Ibiza”, this revolved around then Vice-Chancellor and head of Austria’s Far-Right *Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs* (FPÖ), Heinz-Christian Strache. Undercover video-recordings had been made available to, and reports published by, journalists writing for the German daily *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and the weekly newsmagazine *Der Spiegel*. The video-recording showed Strache and his FPÖ-colleague Johann Gudenus in a villa on the Spanish island of Ibiza nearly two years previously, in July 2017, in compromising conversations with a woman posing as a Russian oligarch’s niece. The secret recording revealed discussions about potential favors Strache was apparently willing to offer in exchange for possible, hidden financial support<sup>2</sup> and the pretend-oligarch’s niece’s possible (partial) “take-over” of Austria’s most widely-read newspaper. Unbeknownst to them, Strache and Gudenus had walked into a trap that revealed deep contradictions between the FPÖ’s self-styled image as an anti-corruption, anti-establishment party and the lengths to which Strache and Gudenus were seemingly prepared to go, or at least to entertain, in the pursuit of power.

The ensuing fallout has changed Austria’s political landscape. When the scandal broke, shortly before the European elections, Austria was governed by a coalition between the center-right People’s Party (ÖVP) and the FPÖ. In less than 18 months, this government had moved issues associated with the FPÖ’s nationalist agenda to the center of its policy remit. Such issues included asylum and its discursive tying to questions of security and criminality,<sup>3</sup> immigration and integration, and attempts to resist further European integration or undo some of its existing manifestations.<sup>4</sup> Concurrently, individual FPÖ-politicians had made news with xenophobic outbursts or their documented proximity to Far-Right civil-society associations.<sup>5</sup> Chancellor Sebastian Kurz (ÖVP) had, on several occasions, struggled to maintain his party’s

coalition with a partner that showed no qualms about such entanglements. In the wake of breaking news about Strache's secretly recorded conversations on Ibiza, this proved no longer possible. Within hours, Strache and Gudenus had resigned. Within days, the coalition was no more. Soon thereafter, Kurz's attempt to continue as Chancellor ended abruptly following the Second Republic's first successfully passed vote of no confidence in parliament, initiated by the Social Democrats (SPÖ) and, remarkably, supported by the FPÖ that had only just left the coalition. These most extraordinary days in recent Austrian history saw a new-found popularity enjoyed by Federal President Alexander Van der Bellen<sup>6</sup> who steered Austrian politics through these unprecedented circumstances. Van der Bellen credited the Constitution's for providing the necessary guidance and nominated a "care-taking" government comprised of experts and high-profile civil servants until snap-elections in late September 2019. With 37.46 percent of the vote, Sebastian Kurz emerged from those once again victorious, the SPÖ dropped to 21.18 percent, the FPÖ suffered massive losses (i.e. 16.17 percent, compared to 25.97 percent two years previously), whilst the Greens (13.9 percent) secured their return to parliament and the liberal, pro-European NEOS increased their share of the vote to 8.1 percent. In January 2020, the ÖVP and the (unambiguously left-leaning) Greens formed Austria's next coalition government.<sup>7</sup>

This sketches the contours of events in Austria after May 2019, but the fall-out of the Ibiza-Affair went further. Not only did it temporarily end two political careers, namely Strache's and Gudenus', it also triggered a series of subsequent, related revelations. Investigations into the people behind (*Hintermänner*) the recording continue at the time of writing. The electoral "hit" – on regional, national and European levels – taken by the FPÖ has been formidable, although not as large as some had predicted. In the months since the scandal broke, it has featured prominently in Austrian political discussion and media discourse. This article traces the fault-lines that emerged or deepened in the aftermath of the

scandal(s) and through the various argumentative positions adopted by a range of actors debating and pronouncing on the issue. What follows is *not* an attempt to establish a definitive verdict of what happened on Ibiza, its illegality and consequences. At the time of completing this article, the scandal is the object of a parliamentary enquiry, and the full facts of the matter are far from established. Instead, this analysis offers a Foucauldian reading of a still unfolding scandal and the discursive field of competing positions, to which it has given rise. Analysis of the various truth-claims formulated in this contested discursive field reveals dynamics that are partly (re)shaping Austria and the self-understandings of key-actors implicated.

The argument unfolds in successive steps. A summary of the theoretical genealogy, on which this article draws, is followed by historical contextualization and by outlines of the corpus of data underpinning this discussion and the analytical strategy driving it. The main sections document competing argumentative positions that have shaped, and continue to shape, the discursive field that has opened up in the aftermath of the Ibiza-scandal. By reading those positions as competing truth- and identity-claims in their wider contexts, a novel perspective on contemporary Austria, and more narrowly on the (shifting) discursive positions represented by prominent actors in her public domain becomes possible.

### **Contexts: theoretical, historical, methodological**

Conceptually, this discussion builds on *I, Pierre Rivière*, in which Michel Foucault and his colleagues examine the competing discourses and implicated truth claims – made by medical, psychiatric and legal actors – surrounding the 1835 trial of Pierre Rivière. The latter stood accused of murdering his mother and siblings, before taking flight and being apprehended near his village in Normandy. Drawing on a range of documents (e.g. court transcripts, police reports etc.), Foucault et al.<sup>8</sup> demonstrate how the establishment of “the facts” surrounding a

gruesome crime implicated diverse actors and institutions vying for hermeneutical hegemony in a contest over truth, responsibility, and the institutionalized authority to define both. *I, Pierre Rivière* is most relevant to criminologists and historians of the French criminal justice system, medical and psychiatric professions during the nineteenth century. At closer inspection, however, this book combines Foucault's earlier *archaeological* and later *genealogical* approaches<sup>9</sup> to trace "truth games" encountered in a specific institutional nexus shaped by broader political and discursive forces.

Paul Brass subsequently developed Foucault's approach further. In *Theft of an Idol*,<sup>10</sup> Brass subjects violent episodes recorded in Uttar Pradesh, India, to an analysis that takes its cue from *I, Pierre Rivière*. In each case examined (i.e. including rape and the theft of a religious idol), Brass demonstrates that "the facts at hand" were elusive. Adjusting the analytical vector, his intention is not to declare what happened or who the perpetrators of violence were; instead, Brass unpicks the political work performed through the claims made in the aftermath of violence. Brass analysis uncovers that the interpretative struggles over the alleged, competing "truths" surrounding the incidents in question reveal the intentions of the enunciating speakers rather than the actual chronology of, or responsibility for, what happened. Various local actors, including politicians, had stakes in pushing specific interpretations, in the absence of firm knowledge of the underlying facts. In a context of heightened communalism, the ensuing interpretative struggles allocated blame to a predefined "other", polarized populations along religious lines, and pursued electoral benefits from such boundary-entrenchments. Geographically closer to the present article's empirical focus, Pieter Judson<sup>11</sup> has made a similar argument. In relation to "village violence" in the late imperial period, Judson shows how nationalist preoccupations with drawing ethno-linguistic boundaries within heterogenous populations came to frame local conflicts along the Habsburg empire's "internal language frontiers" from the late nineteenth century onwards.

Turning to our narrower context, the darkest chapters in Austrian history, World War II and the Holocaust, are famously well-researched, as are post-war continuities of anti-Semitic sentiments and exclusionary politics.<sup>12</sup> Key-themes in the well-covered terrain of Austria in the post-1945 era include: the political opportunism of a quickly sedimented “victim myth”,<sup>13</sup> which would be challenged by wider acceptance of “co-responsibility”<sup>14</sup> for the events of 1938-1945 only decades later; coupled to the growing hegemony of a new identity narrative of “Austrian particularism” in juxtaposition to the pan-Germanic self-understandings that had dominated Austrian politics hitherto.<sup>15</sup> The country’s post-war challenges included the punishment of war criminals and the question as to how to deal with more than 500,000 former Nazi party-members. Following steps toward “de-Nazification” during the early post-war years, later amnesties were part of a for decades largely unproblematized re-absorption of former Nazis into the fabric of Austrian society.<sup>16</sup> The two major political parties, the Social Democrats (SPÖ) and the People’s Party (ÖVP), had a stake in speaking to all segments of society, as part of their post-war politics of *Proporz* and consensual democracy.<sup>17</sup> At the same time, parts of the “third camp”, often compromised through previously closer ideological and organizational entanglements with Nazism, were soon re-organized: initially through the *Verband der Unabhängigen* and, as of 1956, through the FPÖ as its successor.<sup>18</sup> Whilst the (earlier) history of the FPÖ saw the party fluctuate between liberal- and (pan-Germanic) nationalist fractions, Jörg Haider’s rise to the party’s apex in 1986 marked a definitive shift toward the (Far-)Right.<sup>19</sup> In the following decade-and-a-half, against a backdrop of far-reaching shifts and changes in and beyond Austria,<sup>20</sup> the FPÖ’s election returns improved steadily, particularly though not only at the SPÖ’s expense.<sup>21</sup> Combining anti-establishment rhetoric with nationalist protectionism that opposed migration and multiculturalism, Haider found ever-growing audiences throughout the 1990s. The FPÖ’s rise to power and international attention unfolded in the aftermath of the 1999 elections. The

party's inclusion in a coalition with the ÖVP, under Wolfgang Schüssel, led to temporary "sanctions" put on Austria by her then 14 EU partners and to vocal civil society opposition in Austria.<sup>22</sup> The compromises required by its new-found position of power led to tensions internal to the FPÖ, and eventually to its splitting, in 2005, into the Haider-led *Bündnis Zukunft Österreich*<sup>23</sup> and the "old" FPÖ, which was henceforth led by Heinz-Christian Strache. Whilst Austria returned to successive grand coalition governments between the SPÖ and ÖVP, Strache moved the FPÖ further to the right, (re-)mobilizing growing segments of the electorate through campaigns that spanned EU-skepticism and Islamophobia.<sup>24</sup> Against the backdrop of the "refugee crisis" of 2015/2016,<sup>25</sup> this strategy bore fruit at the 2017 national elections, leading to the ÖVP-FPÖ coalition-government mentioned earlier.

The contexts thus set, the corpus of data to be examined below needs to be outlined next. I draw on a main body of materials collected between the start of the Ibiza-Affair, marked by the publication of the video-clip on the websites of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *Der Spiegel* on 17 May 2019, and Strache's expulsion from the FPÖ on 13 December 2019. Whilst the latter event constituted an undeniable milestone – and one that, in narrative-structural terms, contained elements of a classical fall from grace, as seen from Strache's emic perspective<sup>26</sup> – it did not mark the scandal's endpoint. As mentioned, the issues unearthed and follow-on scandals triggered by the Ibiza-Affair are a long way from being resolved, the "facts" by no means fully clarified. Investigations continue, as do the debates they have triggered. However, in the spirit of the Foucault-inspired genealogy of research summarized above, the extensive materials collected between May and December 2019 offer insights into competing discursive-political positions that are (re)shaping Austrian political discussion today; some such positions long pre-existed the scandal; others have been reconfigured in the course of it; yet others amount to novel argumentative positions. Jointly, they reflect a shifting discursive-political field in a period of pronounced crises. The main data corpus was

complemented by additional materials collected between the scandal's one-year "anniversary" in May 2020 and the early stages of the parliamentary enquiry that commenced the following month. Such additional data reflect further, still unfolding shifts in public debate surrounding the issues raised by "Ibiza". While emerging discursive positions and trajectories are highlighted below, no end to the shifts triggered by the scandal is in sight. Instead, the events since May 2019 reveal, when viewed through the analytical framework applied here, the constitutive tensions of a political field in flux.

The sources systematically researched – for coverage of the "Ibiza-Affair" throughout the period(s) in question – spanned much of Austria's diverse field of media production. They included ideologically differently positioned quality dailies (*Der Standard*, *Die Presse*, *Kurier*); the weekly newsmagazine *Profil*; the Viennese, left-leaning weekly *Falter*; the tabloids *Österreich* and the country's most widely-read paper, and key-protagonist in the fall-out to the scandal, the *Kronen Zeitung* (or *Krone*); and coverage by Austria's public broadcasting network ORF. The rationale for casting my net widely was to capture diverse voices articulated across a range of media with diverse (intended) audiences and political leanings. Another key-source was the account, published in book-form<sup>27</sup> in August 2019, by the two journalists who had been given access to the undercover recordings of Strache and Gudenus on Ibiza<sup>28</sup> and who were the driving forces behind the revelations.

Before discussing these wide-ranging data,<sup>29</sup> my analytical strategy requires further commentary. In the spirit of the (post-)Foucauldian approaches outlined above, this discussion probes data not for "what happened" but for *what is being claimed and by whom*; for *which interpretations are being offered*, and for *the political trajectories and strategies enabled by the argumentative positions being adopted*. These questions demand contextualization: understanding competing claims and interpretations on offer since May 2019 requires us to read them against the backdrop of the longer (Austrian) histories summarized earlier. What

follows is structured thematically (rather than chronologically): the discussion unfolds around competing truth claims and argumentative positions that have shaped the discursive field that has opened up in Austria since May 2019. As in the (post-)Foucauldian lines of enquiry sketched earlier, the questions as to *who speaks* about an event *and how* take center-space.

### **Heinz-Christian Strache's shifting positions**

An analysis of the truth-claims formulated in the fall-out to the Ibiza-scandal must start with the shifting positions adopted by its central protagonist. Those can be contextualized in relation to Strache's EU election-campaign prior to news of "Ibiza" breaking on 17 May 2019. Some three weeks previously, Strache had lent his voice to the nationalist trope of a "population exchange" (*Bevölkerungsaustausch*), the conspiratorial claim that Austria is threatened by demographic shifts tied to migratory flows.<sup>30</sup> Concurrently, Strache's electoral posters were showing him in statesman-like posture, promising to "protect what we love: Austria."<sup>31</sup> This image and rhetoric were blatantly contradicted by the video-revelations published soon thereafter. Strache's initial reactions appeared to show embarrassment, as conveyed – in front of international TV-cameras – during his resignation from all political offices, and his apology to his supporters and wife.<sup>32</sup>

Partial regret soon gave way to outright counter-attack, as Strache's lawyers were reported to have filed complaints in Vienna, Munich and Hamburg against the producers of the video.<sup>33</sup> Declining to take up his seat in the European parliament, which 45,000 preference votes would have enabled him to do, Strache announced in mid-June that for the time being he would be an "ordinary party member", awaiting the results of the investigations into the "background to the Ibiza-video", determined to fight for rehabilitation, and certain that his political life – "always focused on Vienna and Austria" – was "not over".<sup>34</sup> Within

days of his resignation, Strache had attempted – via his enormously popular Facebook page, which still attracted some 800,000 fans *after* Ibiza – to shift attention toward the “initiators” of the video, who had “trapped” him in a purportedly “targeted attack against Austria’s sovereignty.”<sup>35</sup> As the scandal broadened, and investigations were extended to also address suspicions of a possibly corrupt quid-pro-quo between the FPÖ and a gaming corporation, this led to police raids and the temporary confiscation of Strache’s smartphone; Strache responded by calling this an “entirely arbitrary act” (*reine Willkür*) and “yet another political attack”, whilst his lawyer filed a complaint against the raid and called for a stop to the proceedings.<sup>36</sup> When soon thereafter German satirist Jan Böhmermann targeted, not for the first time, Strache in a televised political commentary, Strache’s response made it clear who he saw as the real danger: “Leftist hatred”, Strache claimed on his new, private Facebook account (after the FPÖ had taken control of Strache’s previous, much larger page), “goes to sickening lengths, this pseudo-satirist even wants to see me burn”.<sup>37</sup>

Overall, Strache’s recurring argumentative strategies have combined a belittling of what happened on Ibiza (in his words, this had been “merely”, though an admittedly embarrassing *b’soffene G’schicht*, or alcohol-induced episode) with denials of any responsibility, particularly through the claim – that soon circulated among his most ardent supporters – that Strache had “not been himself”, suggesting the conversations may have been brought about by drugs mixed into his drinks. The former strategy of (relative) trivialization appeared, for instance, in an interview with the editor of the daily tabloid *Österreich*: there, Strache said – in apparent self-contradiction – that while he was genuinely sorry for having witnessed the destruction of his political work, he also believed that “forgiving oneself and others” was important, and that he had a “clear conscience”.<sup>38</sup> The second strategy emerged in claims, by both Gudenus and Strache, that they could not remember parts of the evening, leading them to speculate that they may have been drugged.<sup>39</sup> In a joint interview with his

wife, Strache also spoke of a “trap” allegedly set for him, including the “mixing of a substance” into his drinks, with Philippa Strache declaring that “this was not my husband, this was not alcohol”.<sup>40</sup> This victimization-topos and denial of responsibility stand in contrast to medical experts’ assessments that found no evidence in Strache’s and Gudenus’ demeanor in Ibiza of any signs of “being drugged”.<sup>41</sup> Commenting, in another interview, on the fateful night and the subsequent police-raid mentioned above, Strache combined several argumentative positions: when the police arrived to raid his home, he said, he was “still naked”, and professed to be “appalled and stunned” at this “act of injustice”; wondering why he had not been granted access to the full seven-hour Ibiza video-recordings, Strache speculated that the journalists in question “might want to quote out of context”, in one-sided fashion; he again claimed to have seen himself “act in patterns I don’t recognize”, thus amplifying the drugging-speculation; finally, Strache suggested that if there was no interest in a “genuine investigation” of the Ibiza-video, he may consider a political comeback.<sup>42</sup>

The conspiratorial tone of Strache’s position culminated in his speech of 1 October, in which he announced that he would suspend his FPÖ-membership: portraying himself as a victim of “slander”, “cowardly” employed by “our party’s usual opponents”, and his family as the “object of hatred” from which he sought protection, Strache spoke of hostilities that “endanger our democracy” and that – in contradiction to the earlier claim about “the usual opponents” – “still unknown forces had cultivated in criminal fashion for years”. Strache appealed to party unity, lamenting that “such dirty methods for manipulating elections ... must not win out”.<sup>43</sup>

This statement had multiple intended audiences, including Strache’s supporters and FPÖ-colleagues. What the Foucauldian approach applied here enables is not a definitive pronouncing over the relative (in)accuracy of competing truth claims but a recording of the political positions they enable, of the shifting allegiances, oppositions and self-presentations

they transport, and the rhetorical-argumentative means they employ. The immediate question thus arises how effective Strache's calls for "party unity" were.

### **The FPÖ: from gradual detachment to (irrevocable?) rupture**

A month prior to the most recent European elections, and three weeks before the Ibiza-revelations, comparative research suggested that among Europe's (far-)rightwing populists the FPÖ could rely on the largest share of committed voters (as opposed to fickle "protest-voters"), namely some 14 percent of Austria's electorate.<sup>44</sup> With the FPÖ polling 17.2 percent of the Austrian vote a month later, compared to 19.72 at the previous elections to the European parliament in 2014, this relative strength arguably still endured despite Ibiza. Yet, subsequent months were to test the FPÖ profoundly.

As observed in Austria's weekly newsmagazine *Profil*,<sup>45</sup> the FPÖ's immediate strategy for handling the breaking scandal was to employ its long-tested tactics of conspiratorial "perpetrator-victim reversals",<sup>46</sup> threatening legal steps against purportedly "dirty methods"; yet, the party soon realized that counter-attack would prove ineffective given the scale of the revelations, and that resignations would be unavoidable. Attempts to deflect still continued. The video-revelations had suggested that the FPÖ may have used a network of associations or think-tanks to channel undeclared funds toward the party. At the end of May, the FPÖ, though it disbanded two such associations, bemoaned what it called a "media witch-hunt" (*mediale Hetzjagd*) and declared that "no direct or indirect donations" had reached the party through those channels.<sup>47</sup> In an interview published in *Falter*, Norbert Hofer – Strache's successor at the FPÖ's helm – was then still ambivalently semi-protective of his predecessor, explaining why Strache had not (yet) been expelled from the FPÖ: Hofer argued that the potential quid-pro-quos discussed by Strache, as recorded in the Ibiza-video, had not taken

place; and although the party was “concerned”, Hofer repeated Strache’s defensive account that he was “not like this” and that “something may have been mixed into his drink”; further, Hofer argued that Strache had not been expelled since this would have “torn the party apart” and because of Strache’s “life-time achievements” for the FPÖ.<sup>48</sup> When, in late August, the scope of the investigations<sup>49</sup> was narrowed, as suspicions of bribery seemed not to have been substantiated at this point, FPÖ general secretary Harald Vilimsky considered Strache and Gudenus to be at least partly “exonerated”.<sup>50</sup>

Concurrently, the FPÖ’s tone about Strache was shifting. By July, Strache and the FPÖ were arguing over control of Strache’s Facebook-page, leading Hofer to claim that the importance of the latter was “completely over-estimated”.<sup>51</sup> The subsequent, already-mentioned suspicions over possible corruption implicating Strache, some of his colleagues and a high-profile appointment for the international gambling company Novomatic were recognized as posing yet more “explosive” questions for the FPÖ.<sup>52</sup> With Austria’s snap-elections approaching, the situation was exacerbated by allegations against Strache, involving a former secretary and bodyguard, of financial mis-spending.<sup>53</sup> Yet, on the eve of Austria’s parliamentary elections, Norbert Hofer posted a Facebook-video, in which he rhetorically tied the “Ibiza-trap” (set by “criminal organizations”) to the more recent timing of revelations of Strache’s alleged financial improprieties, postulating a “political attack against Austrian democracy”.<sup>54</sup> On 29 September, the political price of preceding events to the FPÖ became apparent, as the party’s share of the vote – at 16.17 percent – constituted a minus of almost 10 percent compared to the 2017 elections.

Eventually, a rupture between Strache and his former colleagues in the party he had led for fourteen years became inevitable. As the months following the initial publication of the Ibiza-reports unfolded, one scandal had become many. Henceforth, the FPÖ’s tactical focus would be to draw a clear boundary between itself and its former head. Therein lies one

of this article's central insights: its Foucauldian approach captures the (re)drawing of political boundaries – accomplished by publicly articulated and circulated claims and interpretations pertaining to the scandal in question – “in-action”, so-to-speak. In relation to the FPÖ's emerging repositioning vis-à-vis Strache, this was already apparent prior to the snap-elections: internal party-voices acknowledged that allegations of Strache invoicing the party for personal expenses contradicted the image the FPÖ had cultivated, making a “comeback” by Strache “well-nigh impossible”.<sup>55</sup> On 1 October 2019, the FPÖ suspended Strache's party membership. Two months, further allegations of possible financial improprieties by Strache,<sup>56</sup> the defection of three Viennese FPÖ-councillors (and Strache-supporters) and their founding of a new electoral platform (*Die Allianz für Österreich, DAÖ*) later, Strache was expelled from the FPÖ on 13 December 2019. Preceding weeks had seen growing acrimony between Strache and his former colleagues, some due to Strache's anger at the FPÖ's having taken control of “his” former Facebook-page.<sup>57</sup> Two weeks prior to Strache's expulsion, former Interior Minister (and now party whip) Herbert Kickl declared that “there was no room in the FPÖ anymore” for Strache.<sup>58</sup> With the party seeking to distance itself from all that had happened, the FPÖ's new leadership presented Strache's expulsion as a “liberation” and a “line drawn” (*Schlussstrich*) after the “Ibiza-Affair”.<sup>59</sup>

Subsequently, following Strache's appearance at a gathering of the newly-founded DAÖ, which was later renamed *Team HC Strache – Allianz für Österreich* and is now (under Strache's leadership) the FPÖ's direct competitor in Vienna, the FPÖ reacted with dismay. Dominik Nepp, head of the Viennese FPÖ-branch, criticized Strache for having “mocked” local functionaries' long-standing commitment; Nepp suggested that Strache was ego-centric, self-pitying, incapable of admitting mistakes, and perhaps constructing a “parallel world” detached from reality.<sup>60</sup> A similar, pseudo-psychiatric discourse of discrediting through the rhetorical use of diagnostic labels surfaced soon thereafter. The FPÖ's electoral trouncing in

Burgenland's regional elections led to a blame-game between Strache and his successor via twitter. After Strache had interpreted the Burgenland results as suggesting that Hofer was making the party "irrelevant", Hofer replied with a tweet showing an unflattering image of Strache, taken from the "Ibiza-video", and an ironic "thank you"; the following day, the regional head of the FPÖ's Tyrolean branch tweeted this "advice" for Strache: "Having partly caused a state crisis [and] lived at the party's expense ... [he] blames others. No sign of regret ... The only things that may help are a psychiatrist or an exorcist."<sup>61</sup>

The Ibiza-scandal has implicated a wide range of actors. Turning to another (set of) player(s) in the affair, the tabloid *Kronen Zeitung*, Paul Brass's<sup>62</sup> focus on "competing frameworks of meaning" in the struggle over politically charged episodes bears repeating: each (re)construction constitutes an "artifact" with a distinctive "life" and "[t]he most useful function the social scientist can perform ... is to identify the uses to which a construction is put and the power relations ... expressed through it."

### **The Kronen Zeitung: ideological realignment?**

Austria's most popular newspaper found itself a central topic in the undercover recordings of Strache's and Gudenus's conversations with the purported oligarch's niece on Ibiza. The book-length account by the investigative journalists from the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* whose reporting on the video was key to the revelations contains the following passages related to the *Kronen Zeitung*:

[T]he conversation moves to what Johann Gudenus calls the "main topic": the *Kronen Zeitung* ... The woman whom the two FPÖ-politicians know as Aljona Makarowa allegedly wants to buy half the tabloid ... and align it with the FPÖ ... Strache is

electrified: the *Krone* is Europe's "most powerful paper proportional to population size" ... "Importantly", Strache explains, "we have friendly access ... to the shares held by the Funke-group" ... Strache suggests that if the Russian bought the 50 percent held by [the heirs of the paper's founder] Dichand, *schwupp*, "then you have it all." ... The Russian's chaperon chimes in: the paper's journalists would be divided ... into those already in line, ... those who can be brought in line ... and others to be sidelined. Strache nods, "journalists are the planet's biggest prostitutes anyway" ... "Once she takes over the *Kronen Zeitung* ... we must sit down [*zusammenhocken*] and talk ... *Zack, zack, zack*", he would "push" three or four people, bring in five new ones, three or four others "would go" [*abserviert werden*].<sup>63</sup>

This requires context. The partial ideological overlaps between the *Krone* and Austria's New Right have frequently been commented upon. Ruth Wodak<sup>64</sup> argues that the paper had already "celebrated" the FPÖ's electoral performance four days before the controversial elections of 1999, which would see the party's share of the vote increase to 26.9 percent. Pointing at areas of convergence (i.e. an anti-immigration stance; the neoliberal paradigm; critique of political elites), Michael Rittberger<sup>65</sup> has argued that Jörg Haider's success would have been "hard to imagine" without the *Kronen Zeitung*'s (implicit) endorsements. Yet, notwithstanding the paper's consistent leanings toward a populism skeptical of European integration and dismissive of the benefits of migratory flows or of the likelihood of a mutually enriching multi-culture, it is misleading to reduce the *Krone* to an unflinching or singular ideological position: its pages, positions and much-discussed readers' letters also contain occasional shifts or examples of "counter-discourse".<sup>66</sup>

This raises the question as to how the *Kronen Zeitung*, a core-focus of Strache's attention in his will to power, responded to such phantasies of a "take-over". While a full

exploration, including of readers' responses to Ibiza on the "letters-to-the-editor" pages, exceeds the scope of this article, an indication of the *Krone's* responses to the scandal can be gleaned from its acting editor-in-chief's daily commentary on current affairs. Arguably, (growing) ambivalence toward the FPÖ was already discernible on 24 April 2019, when Klaus Herrmann questioned – in light of a xenophobic outburst by an FPÖ deputy mayor from Upper Austria – whether the party was a suitable coalition-partner. The day after the scandal broke, the paper's headline declared that the FPÖ was "finished" (*FPÖ am Ende!*), expressing outrage at the reported plans to "buy" the paper and calling for Strache's and Gudenus' resignations.<sup>67</sup> The day after, Herrmann described Strache's "political suicide" and the scandal as Austria's "topic of the decade".<sup>68</sup> One week on, the paper's frontpage declared that those were "fateful days for Austria", with the editor-in-chief reflecting on how Strache had wanted to "Orbanize" Austria's media; in ironic, intertextual reference to Strache's most infamous Ibiza-statement, this – so Herrmann – had "*zack, zack, zack* led to Strache's demise".<sup>69</sup> Neither have critical comments been restricted to Strache. Instead, several episodes saw the editor's criticisms extended to the FPÖ, thereby refusing the party's splitting-strategy (i.e. Strache's expulsion) documented above: thus, Herrmann variously amplified calls for the FPÖ to disclose its financing-strategies,<sup>70</sup> suspicions of connections between the FPÖ and the Far-Right, radical *Identitären*,<sup>71</sup> and expressed incredulity after FPÖ-politician Ursula Stenzel had spoken at a rally organized by the *Identitären*, only for the party to claim that Stenzel had not been "fully aware" whom she had addressed;<sup>72</sup> similarly, Herrmann supported those expressing grave concern at the second reported scandal – in less than two years – triggered by an FPÖ-functionary's membership in a fraternity shown to possess song-books with anti-Semitic contents.<sup>73</sup>

The *Kronen Zeitung's* unsurprising offence at Strache's ideas recorded in the Ibiza-video need not necessarily lead to an enduring ideological realignment on part of the paper.

Some commentators have observed that the *Krone* has recently turned toward environmental issues and that, through a satirical tweet in the aftermath of the FPÖ's trouncing in September, the paper seemingly claimed some influence on the election results.<sup>74</sup> Others have doubted the *Krone*'s claims not to be the kind of tabloid Strache had planned to instrumentalize for electoral gain but an "independent family newspaper".<sup>75</sup> It was thus stressed that shortly before "Ibiza" the *Krone* had still endorsed the FPÖ's calls for a scrapping of public broadcasting fees.<sup>76</sup> Others, most notably the *Falter*'s editor, have been more skeptical, arguing that Strache's view of the *Krone* as key to power was worryingly accurate; and predicting that "reactionary resentments" would continue to feature in the *Kronen Zeitung*.<sup>77</sup>

As with much of "Ibiza", a final word on the scandal's long-term impact on the *Krone*'s positioning cannot yet be spoken. While it is too soon to assess the extent or durability of any potential distancing from positions the paper has historically shared with the FPÖ, it is the case that prominent voices in the latter have bemoaned what they have presented as a shift in the paper's editorial steer since "Ibiza". In November 2019, the FPÖ's general secretary Christian Hafenecker published an open letter, in which he announced that he had cancelled his subscription to the *Kronen Zeitung*: this, Hafenecker argued, was due to the paper's "unparalleled campaign" against the FPÖ, despite his party's alleged accomplishments in "17 months of government responsibility"; the *Krone*'s new editorial tone, Hafenecker continued, departed from the "objectivity", "independence" and "balance" that had underpinned the paper's success over the preceding 60 years.<sup>78</sup>

Elaborating on *I, Pierre Rivière*, Paul Brass<sup>79</sup> postulates that the examination of uneasily co-existing but mutually "interpenetrating" interpretations can enable a sharper view of "competing discourses, systems of thought, and relations of domination". This becomes clear as we turn to interpretations of Ibiza offered by the FPÖ's former coalition-partner and now again political competitor.

### **The ÖVP: controlled (and contested) distancing**

Turning to the next group of protagonists' voices in this drawn-out (set of) scandal(s), we encounter more evidence of how various "frameworks of meaning" have been employed in a context that has provided different actors with "opportunities to make use of [select] incidents for wider political purposes".<sup>80</sup> For the ÖVP, the dominant partner in a coalition-government with the FPÖ at the time the Ibiza-scandal broke, the affair has provided a similar need – and simultaneously possibilities – to redefine itself and its positions vis-à-vis political competitors. The range of the ÖVP's argumentative stances, especially when faced with speculations that its potential entanglements<sup>81</sup> might have gone beyond those of being a coalition-partner to the FPÖ, constitute discursive terrain that exceeds the scope of the present article; a comprehensive discussion will have to await future analyses and require more clarity than we have at present as to the details behind the affair. All that can be offered here is a schematic tracing of key-positions adopted by the ÖVP in the aftermath of the revelations.

A day after the initial publications, on 18 May 2019, Chancellor Sebastian Kurz's statement and call for snap-elections were noteworthy for being simultaneously back- and forward-looking:

"Two years ago I stepped up to accomplish change in our country. I also promised to articulate uncomfortable truths." He says in recent months he had to put up with a lot [i.e. scandalous statements by individual FPÖ politicians], yet he pushed through. "But after yesterday's video, I have to say ...: enough is enough." Hence, new elections were needed now, and he would like to ask Austrians for their support. Because "only

if the ÖVP is dominant after the elections, can we continue and complete those changes”.<sup>82</sup>

This contained several *topoi* – an argument’s implicit premises – and patterns of “positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation”<sup>83</sup> that have been part of the ÖVP’s positions since Ibiza. The party’s central argument has included a justificatory strategy with regard to its initial decision to enter into a coalition with the FPÖ, coupled to the ÖVP’s self-portrayal as a party of integrity in the current crisis. This was the argumentative logic behind Sebastian Kurz’s decision to ask for Interior Minister Herbert Kickl’s resignation very soon after the scandal broke; for Kickl had been the FPÖ’s general secretary at the time of the undercover recordings, an entanglement at odds with responsibility for overseeing investigations into potentially undeclared party-financing for the FPÖ; emphasizing that he was still “100 percent behind” the coalition’s political foci, Chancellor Kurz also insisted that the FPÖ had not realized “the full scale” of the scandal.<sup>84</sup> After the parliament’s vote of no confidence on 27 May, Kurz<sup>85</sup> again expressed his satisfaction with the now-collapsed coalition’s previous accomplishments, coupled to doubt as to whether a renewed collaboration with the FPÖ would be possible (i.e. Kurz contrasted Hofer to Kickl, suggesting that they represented different reactions to Ibiza within the FPÖ, and arguing that “time would tell” which strand would shape the FPÖ going forward); concurrently, reflecting the ÖVP’s general strategic (re)positioning, Kurz saw barely any productive connections (*kaum Anknüpfungspunkte*) with the Social Democrats, thus making a return to Austria’s long-tradition of grand coalitions seem highly unlikely.<sup>86</sup> A binary logic contrasting other parties’ reactions to Ibiza to the ÖVP’s featured in the latter’s general response to the vote of no confidence: ÖVP whip August Wöginger described his party as conscious of its responsibilities, whereas the SPÖ had acted “against the people and the Federal President’s

will” by throwing the country – in collaboration with the FPÖ – “into chaos”,<sup>87</sup> similarly, Kurz detected “vengefulness” in other parties, describing the no-confidence-vote against his short-lived, post-Ibiza cabinet as “incomprehensible to everyone in the country”, whilst reasserting the ÖVP’s commitment to stability and that all financial donations to it had been entirely legal<sup>88</sup>.

Other positions adopted by Kurz and the ÖVP have included: advice directed at Strache “not to return” to politics;<sup>89</sup> closer to the elections, an ever-clearer distancing from the former coalition-partner, with the ÖVP’s Gernot Blümel declaring that Strache and Kickl were claiming a “victim-role” instead of aiding the Ibiza-investigations;<sup>90</sup> and criticism of purported connections between individual FPÖ-functionaries and the Far-Right extremist *Identitären*.<sup>91</sup> Putting clear blue water between oneself and the FPÖ had become even more important for the ÖVP in light of a widening of the investigations into potentially hidden financial donations, with the question being posed if not only the FPÖ but also ÖVP and SPÖ may have indirectly benefitted from some such undeclared financial flows.<sup>92</sup> Meanwhile, reports that a previous employee of the Chancellor’s office had secretly had five hard-drives disposed of shortly after the start of the Ibiza-Affair<sup>93</sup> led to speculations that the ÖVP may have known about the Ibiza-video already before its publication in *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *Der Spiegel*;<sup>94</sup> this was categorically denied by the ÖVP, with Sebastian Kurz stressing that disposing of data was part of any government hand-over.<sup>95</sup> Finally, ÖVP allegations, first made in June, that someone had illegally accessed the party’s computer-frame and fabricated fake internal emails making false claims about the genesis of the Ibiza-video were seemingly substantiated when a suspect was identified and prosecuted in relation to this.<sup>96</sup> Less than a month before the snap-elections, the ÖVP also reported a major hacking of its internal communications, accompanied by theft and subsequent manipulation of the stolen data,

presumably intended to enable the circulation of false, discrediting information about the party.<sup>97</sup>

The ÖVP's attempts to distance itself from what the Ibiza-revelations had brought to light about its former coalition-partner have been countered by political and journalistic voices suspecting that compromising entanglements (e.g. in relation to the Novomatic-issue) may have cut across the FPÖ-ÖVP divide. This has become pronounced in the context of the current (June 2020) parliamentary enquiry. Prior to its start, SPÖ-politician Jörg Leichtfried had called it an elucidation of – staggeringly in this order – an “ÖVP-FPÖ scandal” (*türkis-blauer Skandal*).<sup>98</sup> The FPÖ, meanwhile, now approaches the issue through a relativizing- and deflecting *topos*, the implicit, connotative sub-text of which claims that others (i.e. the ÖVP) are getting away with matters, for which allegedly only the FPÖ is being (wrongly) victimized. Before the enquiry's start, Herbert Kickl predicted that this would reveal nepotistic networks and financial channels far beyond the FPÖ.<sup>99</sup> Since then, the FPÖ's attempts to white-wash itself and to shift attention toward what is portrayed as a system skewed by its former coalition-partner have centered on accusations that the ÖVP may obstruct parts of the Ibiza-investigations and was even – the FPÖ here uses the conspiratorial “deep-state” trope – creating a “state within the state”.<sup>100</sup>

Concurrently, other suggestions that the ripple-effects of “Ibiza” go beyond the FPÖ also feature elsewhere. Commenting from a very different position and taking stock of months of investigations into the full range of suspicions and allegations, *Falter*'s Florian Klenk has notably spoken of a political “morass” that implicates not only the FPÖ but also the ÖVP (*türkise Sümpfe*).<sup>101</sup> In short, Ibiza-related attention has been partly (re)directed toward the ÖVP. This and the latter's responses again underscore conflicting forms of political boundary-work brought about by the scandal. The ÖVP has consistently claimed clear distance from its former coalition-partner. The FPÖ and, in less apparently self-interested fashion, the rest of

the current parliamentary opposition and parts of Austria's broadsheet press, meanwhile, have asked questions that blur or reject such purportedly clear distinctions and that are tantamount to a possible extension of responsibility beyond the FPÖ for the wider issues unearthed through *Ibizagate*.<sup>102</sup>

In the cacophony of voices, statements and speculations about Ibiza and its aftermath, important space has thus also been claimed by diverse positions critical of the political status-quo and of the contradictions and structural issues that have surfaced through the scandal.

### **Critical voices**

Full analysis of the entire range of voices critical of the former ÖVP-FPÖ coalition throughout the unfolding of the scandals triggered by the Ibiza-revelations exceeds the present article's scope. Anticipating more work on this facet of the discursive-argumentative fault lines that have deepened since May 2019, all that can be offered here is a sketch of prominent positions and "genres" of criticism. Those have spanned journalistic insistence on investigating the structural and cultural conditions of possibility underpinning everything that has come to light since the Ibiza-revelations; calls, for instance by parts of the political opposition, for legislative changes pertaining to party-finances; and, at least temporarily, a wider – though certainly not uncontested<sup>103</sup> – registering that Ibiza had discredited the politics claimed by Heinz-Christian Strache.

The arguably most obvious, and a much-repeated, criticism in the aftermath of the initial Ibiza-revelations was that Strache's video-taped intentions flagrantly contradicted some of his long-professed positions. Given long-standing anxieties about the possible commodification of Austrian water, and the FPÖ's opposition to any such developments,<sup>104</sup> Strache's suddenly diverging thoughts recorded on Ibiza are worth quoting:

Strache returns to the water-issue: “The water business can only be managed in such a way that we, as the state, take our white gold into the state-owned domain, and then hire someone who manages this in the private-sector.” And there the Russian could enter the equation.<sup>105</sup>

*Der Standard*,<sup>106</sup> for one, was quick to show that whatever the details of Strache’s contemplations, they flew in the face of the FPÖ’s programmatic stance against any privatization of water, which Strache had asserted consistently since 2007.

As the scandal unfolded into a succession of interconnected scandals, critical journalistic voices had much to comment on: some questioned the parliament’s vote-of-no-confidence at the very moment Sebastian Kurz had apparently learnt that a coalition with the Far-Right was impossible;<sup>107</sup> others – rejecting Strache’s and the FPÖ’s attempts to deflect and portray themselves as “victims of an intrigue” – thanked the investigative journalists at *Der Spiegel* and *Süddeutsche Zeitung* for revealing an “attack on democracy” and a “betrayal of Austrian citizens”.<sup>108</sup> Obermaier and Obermayer themselves, when interviewed in *Profil*,<sup>109</sup> amplified voices rejecting Strache’s belittling-attempts by reasserting that he and Gudenus had repeatedly brought up the topic of the *Kronen Zeitung*; that Strache had needed no prompting to discuss possible government-contracts for the purported oligarch’s niece; and that the latter’s assumed wealth had been the main topic of discussion. Some cautioned voters against falling for the FPÖ’s later strategy (à la René Girard) of reclaiming the party’s self-ascribed integrity by scapegoating Strache only.<sup>110</sup> Yet others warned against any splitting strategies – following the Federal President’s declaration that Austrians were not as depicted by two of the country’s politicians in the Ibiza-video – that effectively projected deep-seated issues exclusively onto Strache and Gudenus: chauvinistic machismo, it was argued, recurred

across the spectrum, as did a susceptibility to potential corruption; further, Strache had been recorded describing undeclared financial flows benefitting political parties, against which Austria's transparency activists had warned for years.<sup>111</sup> In the immediate aftermath of *Ibizagate*, the country's smaller parties Jetzt, NEOS and the Greens had already asked for a strengthening of the audit office's ability to check parties' finances and organizational networks.<sup>112</sup> In due course, there were further calls that Ibiza had revealed the need for more stringent legislation pertaining to the financing of political parties.<sup>113</sup>

Also noteworthy was a commentary by two lawyers defending the alleged mastermind behind the video-recordings:<sup>114</sup> concerned by the fact that some media had shifted attention away from what had been said on Ibiza and toward the question of the legality of its publication, the lawyers argued that their client had shown civil disobedience in the public interest by uncovering plans or at least a willingness to alter Austria's media-landscape and encourage hidden party-financing that threatened democracy.<sup>115</sup> As this discussion has shown, the ripple-effects of the initial revelations had spread far and wide, including, for instance, the *Falter*'s investigations into how the ÖVP, especially though not only, had exceeded its 2017 campaign-spending.<sup>116</sup> By the end of the year, there were indications that the effects of Ibiza were manifesting beyond the predictable circle of political actors and journalistic commentators. When the country's "word", "infamous word" and "infamous phrase of the year" were decided by a sample of 7,500 participating Austrians, the wider resonance of *Ibizagate* crystallized: "Ibiza" emerged as "word of the year", Strache's belittling description of what had happened as a fairly harmless "piss-up" (*b'soffene G'schicht*) as the year's most infamous word, and the above-mentioned "zack, zack, zack" as 2019's infamous phrase.<sup>117</sup>

Few critical voices have commanded as prominent a place as Florian Klenk, chief-editor of *Falter* and the first Austrian journalist to see the full Ibiza-recordings already prior to the revelations in *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *Der Spiegel*. When called as the first witness to

the parliamentary enquiry in June 2020, Klenk dispelled Strache's defense while also placing the scandal in its wider context: Klenk thus declared that the published extracts had, contrary to Strache's oft-repeated claims, not been taken out of context; and that the video showed Strache not intoxicated but engaging in a "corruption-dance" that painted a disconcerting picture of the abuse of power in Austria.<sup>118</sup> Elsewhere, Klenk reflected on what had become fragmented, politically polarizing Ibiza-investigations involving two ministries, two departments of public prosecution, and – in the early stages – an investigator who was a member of the ÖVP *and* a documented Strache-sympathizer; the result, Klenk argued, were sometimes incoherent investigations, in which questions about the making of the video threatened to overshadow the larger corruption-related issues, and which called for political reforms.<sup>119</sup> Armin Thurnher, Klenk's colleague at *Falter*, went so far as to argue that "Ibiza" had not been an "embarrassing slip-up" but revealed deep-seated structural problems in Austria.<sup>120</sup>

### **Concluding comments**

*Profil* described "Ibiza" as a "scandal that has changed Austria". Opposing Strache's relativizing strategy and self-ascribed martyr-status, the newsmagazine continued thus:

This video was no fiction, and certainly not the *b'soffene G'schicht*, into which Strache keeps trying to remould it ... Much would have remained hidden without the video's publication: Strache's plans for the betting industry, for the Kronen Zeitung, or the FPÖ's network of associations. The video revealed the deep chasm between portraits of the FPÖ as a clean party fighting for ordinary people against the establishment and Strache's real ambitions, his unscrupulous privileging of personal

over national interests ... His vision for Austria's media-landscape oriented itself toward the Hungarian model.<sup>121</sup>

The run-up to, and the early stages of, the parliamentary enquiry have seen significant further developments. Strache's dual-strategy of admitting to embarrassing behavior whilst denying any wrong-doing and claiming a victim-status for himself has continued. The FPÖ's estrangement from its former head has reached new extremes, with Herbert Kickl declaring that Strache was now "even more stupid than a year ago".<sup>122</sup> Concurrently, the FPÖ especially but the current opposition more generally have sought to enlarge the circle of culprits for the structural problems unearthed to implicate the ÖVP. The now unfolding parliamentary enquiry has indeed seen growing animosities between the current government of ÖVP and Greens on one hand, and the opposition comprising SPÖ, FPÖ and NEOS on the other.<sup>123</sup> The variously drawn, contested or blurred boundaries, and hence the narrow attribution or expansive deflection of responsibility respectively, are the quintessential issues at stake in the discursive-political field that has opened up since the start of *Ibizagate*. At the same, the number of voices calling for far-reaching institutional reforms now required, in light of what has been discovered since May 2019, are growing steadily.<sup>124</sup>

This discussion has built upon Foucault and his colleagues' *I, Pierre Rivière*: there, as in the Ibiza-scandal, different subject positions, individual and collective, map onto competing regimes of truth.<sup>125</sup> Of course, the respective foci and units of analyses lie far apart: Foucault et al. revealed the contested inter-relationship between psychiatry and criminal justice in the mid-nineteenth century; the present case-study, conversely, has unearthed a multiplicity of "discordant", yet mutually astutely aware and competing voices and "narrative frameworks"<sup>126</sup> articulated in the aftermath of Austria's biggest recent political scandal. In both cases, a cacophony of competing truth claims makes seemingly straightforward

questions as to what is “true or false undecidable”.<sup>127</sup> Approaching the issues and materials in hand through such a binary lens would miss the point. Instead, settings such as the one examined above allow a different form of examination: one focused on the “construction and flow” of competing knowledges; read in their respective contexts, and nowadays profoundly shaped by the echo-chambers of our digital age, such competing knowledges acquire yet greater methodological relevance as a means for “decipher[ing] the relations of power, domination and contest”, in which discourses materialize.<sup>128</sup>

On the level of post-fact interpretative struggles, events in Austria since May 2019 have resonated with the (post-)Foucauldian insights summarized earlier. Foucault traced “a case, an affair, an event” that came to be (re)constructed multiple times, in the “intersection[s] of discourses” of various “origin[s], form[s], organization and function”; this revealed “a confrontation ... through discourses ... used as weapons of attack and defense in the relations of power and knowledge.”<sup>129</sup> Similarly, though closer to the context at hand, Pieter Judson has revealed how – in the late-imperial period – “messy events” along the Habsburg empire’s internal language-frontiers were seized upon by nationalist activists and the press; “disputed chains of events” were thereby given a nationalist gloss, “endowed with propagandistic value by linking them to ... larger narrative frameworks”.<sup>130</sup> The point is not that nothing had happened, it had; but its alleged meanings were constructed, claimed, contested and disseminated after the fact.

When applied to the Austrian contests examined above, such an approach can capture a political field in flux, and trace its constitutive and shifting fault lines and divisions. Once again, nationalist frameworks of meaning have played key-roles, but certainly not the only ones, as this discussion has shown. In some ways, the fall-out of the Ibiza-Affair can be read as at least a temporary shift away from the nationalist hegemony that was in the process of crystallizing before the scandal broke.

Such a constructivist take does not mean that the facts behind the affair cannot or will not be discovered, let alone that they should not be revealed. The Austrian public deserves nothing less than full disclosure of what happened in Ibiza in 2017, as well as in and beyond the FPÖ's innermost circles before and since. What this analysis reveals, however, is what Georg Simmel<sup>131</sup> called in a different context an *Außerdem*: aside from what did or did not occur on and since Ibiza, the discussions analyzed above reveal old and new fault-lines, dynamics, antagonisms, boundaries (re)drawn and contested that both reflect and shape Austria today. My analysis has traced uneasily co-existing, at times outrightly competing, and themselves shifting discursive positions focused on Ibiza, the investigations and discussions triggered by the scandal. By following argumentative positions over a year, this article illuminates the competing performances that have been rewriting Austria's political landscape since May 2019. The most prominent rhetorical performances have included Strache's initial regret that soon turned into a self-ascribed "victim-cum-martyr-role"; the FPÖ's gradual distancing and eventually seemingly irrevocable rupture from its former head; the *Kronen Zeitung's* publicly performed – and in some quarters publicly doubted – ideological reorientation; the ÖVP's boundary-drawing strategies vis-à-vis FPÖ (and SPÖ); and the recognition among critical commentators and parts of the opposition<sup>132</sup> that Ibiza presented opportunities to shift dominant discourses (i.e. away from the renationalization represented by the former ÖVP-FPÖ coalition) and to call for structural changes.

With the fall-out to the Ibiza-scandal far from settled, this may be the only thing we can say with certainty at the time of writing in June 2020: the events Ibiza triggered cast – when viewed through the Foucauldian lens applied in this article – new light on how political fields change in moments of crisis;<sup>133</sup> this analysis has followed the competing voices, shifting concerns and rhetorical-argumentative positions adopted by multiple actors with stakes in the currently unfolding reconfiguration of the political field in question.

## Notes:

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<sup>1</sup> Mitten, Richard, *The Politics of Antisemitic Prejudice* (Boulder, 1992).

<sup>2</sup> There was talk about non-declared donations - not to the party but to ideologically aligned associations, which Strache euphemistically described as *gemeinnützige Vereine*: see *Der Spiegel* “Die Videofalle,” 17 May 2019, available at:

<https://www.spiegel.de/video/fpoe-chef-heinz-christian-strache-die-videofalle-video-99027174.html>,

accessed 1 March 2020. Recent reports suggested that there were indeed indications that such donations had taken place, see ORF News “Bericht: Großspenden von Industriellen an FPÖ-nahe Vereine,” <https://www.orf.at/stories/3154929/> accessed 20 February 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Krzyżanowski, Michał and Wodak, Ruth, *The Politics of Exclusion* (New Brunswick, 2009), 6.

<sup>4</sup> Karner, Christian, *Nationalism Revisited: Austrian Social Closure from Romanticism to the Digital Age* (New York, 2020), 210.

<sup>5</sup> Bruns, Julian, Glösel, Kathrin and Strobl, Natasha, *Die Identitären* (Münster, 2017).

<sup>6</sup> Former Green politician Alexander Van der Bellen had won the presidential campaign in 2016, following an antagonistic run-off against the FPÖ’s Norbert Hofer who in 2019 became Strache’s successor at the FPÖ’s helm.

<sup>7</sup> Sebastian Kurz has thus formed successive coalitions, at first with the Far-Right FPÖ, and now with a partner on the opposite end of the spectrum.

<sup>8</sup> Foucault, Michel, ed., *Der Fall Rivière* [I, Pierre Rivière] (Frankfurt, 1973).

<sup>9</sup> Macey, David, *The Lives of Michel Foucault* (New York, 1995).

<sup>10</sup> Brass, Paul, *Theft of an Idol* (Princeton, 1997).

<sup>11</sup> Judson, Pieter, *Guardians of the Nation: Activists on the Language Frontiers of Imperial Austria* (Cambridge, MA, 2006), 177ff.

<sup>12</sup> See, for example, Serloth, Barbara, *Von Opfern, Tätern und jenen dazwischen* (Vienna, 2016).

- <sup>13</sup> Wodak, Ruth and De Cillia, Rudolf, “Commemorating the past: the discursive construction of official narratives about the ‘Rebirth of the Second Austrian Republic’,” *Discourse & Communication* 1: 3 (2007): 315-341.
- <sup>14</sup> Uhl, Heidemarie, “From victim myth to co-responsibility thesis,” in *The Politics of Memory in Postwar Europe*, Richard Ned Lebow, Wulf Kansteiner and Claudio Fogu, eds. (Durham, 2006), 40-72.
- <sup>15</sup> Thaler, Peter, *The Ambivalence of Identity* (West Lafayette, 2001).
- <sup>16</sup> Beller, Steven, *A Concise History of Austria* (Cambridge, 2006), 258-259.
- <sup>17</sup> Rathkolb, Oliver, *Die paradoxe Republik* (Vienna, 2005), 365-404.
- <sup>18</sup> Reiter, Margit, *Die Ehemaligen* (Göttingen, 2019).
- <sup>19</sup> See, for example, Sickinger, Hubert, “Jörg Haider,” in *Kreisky-Haider: Bruchlinien österreichischer Identitäten*, Anton Pelinka, Hubert Sickinger and Karin Stögner, eds. (Vienna, 2008), 111-220.
- <sup>20</sup> Karner, Christian, “National *doxa*, crises and ideological contestation in contemporary Austria,” *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 11: 2 (2005), 221-263.
- <sup>21</sup> See Gärtner, Reinhold, “The FPÖ, foreigners, and racism in the Haider era,” in *The Haider Phenomenon in Austria*, Ruth Wodak and Anton Pelinka, eds. (New Brunswick, 2002), 28; Pelinka, Anton, “The FPÖ in the European context,” in *The Haider Phenomenon in Austria*, Ruth Wodak and Anton Pelinka, eds. (New Brunswick, 2002), 218.
- <sup>22</sup> Fiddler, Allyson, *The Art of Resistance* (New York, 2018).
- <sup>23</sup> Haider died in a car-crash in the outskirts of Klagenfurt in October 2008.
- <sup>24</sup> See Bunzl, John and Hafez, Farid, eds., *Islamophobie in Österreich* (Innsbruck, 2009).
- <sup>25</sup> Karner, Christian, “‘Der Balkan’ in der *Krone*: Austria between ‘frontier Orientalism’ and amnesiac nationalism,” *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, online first (2020), DOI: 10.1080/1369801X.2020.1718541.

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<sup>26</sup> Hager, Johanna, “Heinz-Christian Strache: Aufstieg und Fall des HC-Man,” *Kurier* 18 May 2019, <https://kurier.at/politik/inland/heinz-christian-strache-aufstieg-und-fall-des-hc-man/400498807>, accessed 21/05/2019.

<sup>27</sup> Obermaier, Frederik and Obermayer, Bastian, *Die Ibiza-Affäre* (Cologne, 2019).

<sup>28</sup> The two investigative journalists were *not* the people behind and hence responsible for the recordings. On the contrary, Obermaier and Obermayer have consistently sought to protect their sources. Yet, this did not prevent the eventual arrests and investigations of several people presumed to be the organizers (*Drahtzieher*) of the 2017 recordings.

<sup>29</sup> All translations of sources in German are the author’s.

<sup>30</sup> *Die Presse*, 28 April 2019, <https://www.diepresse.com/5619506/strache-spricht-von-bevolkerungsaustausch>, accessed 16 March 2020.

<sup>31</sup> Karner, Christian, “National mythologies: theoretical reflections, empirical applications,” *Contemporary Austrian Studies* 29 (forthcoming/2020).

<sup>32</sup> Hager, *op. cit.*; *Falter* 22 May 2019, p.10; Obermaier and Obermayer describe Strache’s resignation as characterized by a double-strategy: Strache presented himself as regretful, but also as a victim of “criminal networks” staging a “political assassination-attempt” (*politisches Attentat*), *op. cit.*, p.211.

<sup>33</sup> Goldenberg, Anna, “Straches deutsche Strafanzeigen,” *Falter*, 12 June 2019, p.23.

<sup>34</sup> ORF News, “Strache nimmt EU-Mandat nicht an,” 17 June 2019 <https://orf.at/stories/3127064/>, accessed 17 June 2019.

<sup>35</sup> Matzinger, Lukas, “Von Ibiza zum Influencer,” *Falter*, 5 June 2019, pp.24-25. As Matzinger argues, this counter-attack utilized a “now-more-than-ever-topos” (*Jetzt erst recht*). This trope references events of 1986, when it was employed by Kurt Waldheim’s supporters in defiance of international calls for scrutiny of the then-presidential candidate’s – and subsequently elected Federal President’s – wartime past (Mitten, *op. cit.*, 4).

<sup>36</sup> ORF News, “Strache bestätigt Hausdurchsuchung,” 13 August 2019, <https://orf.at/stories/3133621/>, accessed 10 September 2019; Möchel, Kid and Schreiber, Dominik, “Knalleffekt nach Razzia: Strache

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beantragt Einstellung des Verfahrens,” *Kurier* 27 August 2019, <https://kurier.at/politik/inland/nach-handy-razzia-strache-beantragt-die-einstellung-des-verfahrens/400588943>, accessed 3 September 2019.

<sup>37</sup> *Heute*, “Jan Böhmermann will HC Strache ‘brennen sehen’,” 1 September 2019, <https://www.heute.at/s/jan-bohmermann-will-hc-strache-brennen-sehen--40475457>, accessed 16 March 2020.

<sup>38</sup> Rosa Schmidt-Vierthaler, “Hochpeinliche Fragen an Strache: Das muss Ihnen doch wehtun,” *Die Presse* 23 August 2019, <https://www.diepresse.com/5678202/hochpeinliche-fragen-an-strache-das-muss-ihnen-doch-wehtun>, accessed 10 September 2019.

<sup>39</sup> Thalhammer, Anna, “Heinz-Christian Strache will Ibiza-Video erwerben,” *Die Presse* 4 November 2019, <https://www.diepresse.com/5716507/heinz-christian-strache-will-ibiza-video-erwerben>, accessed 6 November 2019.

<sup>40</sup> *Der Standard*, “Ibiza: Strache sieht sich weiter als Opfer,” 18 September 2019, <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000108809792/ibiza-strache-sieht-sich-weiter-als-opfer?ref=nl>, accessed 25 September 2019.

<sup>41</sup> *Der Standard*, “Gutachten: Strache stand auf Ibiza nicht unter Einfluss von K.-o.-Tropfen,” 26 September 2019, <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000109116016/gutachten-strache-stand-auf-ibiza-nicht-unter-reinfluss-von-k>, accessed 27 September 2019.

<sup>42</sup> *Österreich*, “Strache: ‘Man will mich politisch beschädigen’,” 18 August 2019, pp.4-5.

<sup>43</sup> Quoted in *Der Standard*, 1 October 2019, <https://derstandard.at/jetzt/livebericht/2000109290856/liveticker-strache-gibt-um-1030-uhr-persoentliche-erklaerung-ab>, accessed 1 October 2019.

<sup>44</sup> Andreas Puschautz, “EU-Wahl: FPÖ kann auf größte Stammwählerschaft setzen,” *Kurier* 27 April 2019, <https://kurier.at/politik/eu-wahl/eu-wahl-fpoe-kann-auf-groesste-stammwaehlerschaft-setzen/400477609>, accessed 7 May 2019.

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<sup>45</sup> Bauer, Gernot, Linsinger, Eva, Neuhold, Clemens, Nikbaksh, Michael, Pausackl, Christina, Rainer, Christian, Treichler, Robert, Winter, Jakob and Zöchling, Christa, “Russische Eier,” *Profil*, 19 May 2019, pp.12-16.

<sup>46</sup> Wodak, Ruth, *Politik mit der Angst* (Vienna, 2016), 20; also see ORF News, “Die FPÖ und die Macht der Bilder,” 22 May 2019, <https://orf.at/stories/3124078/>, accessed 29 May 2019.

<sup>47</sup> ORF News, “FPÖ wehrt sich gegen Vorwürfe zu Vereinen,” 25 May 2019, <https://orf.at/stories/3124316/> accessed 29 May 2019. Subsequent, still ongoing investigations suggested otherwise, reporting that hundreds of thousands of Euros may indeed have been donated by industrialists to associations with ideological and personal connections to the FPÖ: see ORF News “Bericht: Großspenden von Industriellen an FPÖ-nahe Vereine,” <https://www.orf.at/stories/3154929/> accessed 20 February 2020; also Graber, Renate, “Wieder Razzien bei Novomatic, FPÖ-nahe Vereine im Visier,” *Der Standard* 11 March 2020, <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000115614258/wieder-razzien-bei-novomatic-weg...>, accessed 12 March 2020.

<sup>48</sup> *Falter*, “‘Ein Ausschluss Straches hätte die FPÖ zerrissen’,” 26 June 2019, pp.16-17.

<sup>49</sup> The Public Prosecutor’s Office against Corruption has investigated a range of suspicions – focused on Strache, Gudenus and FPÖ MP Markus Tschank – arising from the conversations recorded in the Ibiza-video: see Gepp, Joseph and Winter, Jakob, “Die dreisten Drei,” *Profil* 16 June 2019, pp.14-16.

<sup>50</sup> ORF News, “Justiz verzichtet auf einzelne Ermittlungen,” 29 August 2019, <https://orf.at/stories/3135365/> accessed 3 September 2019.

<sup>51</sup> *Der Standard*, “Hofer zu Straches Facebook-Seite: ‘Völlig überschätzt’,” 1 July 2019, <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000105613266/hofer-zu-straches-facebook-seite-oh...>, accessed 10 July 2019.

<sup>52</sup> Schnauder, Andreas, “Die Casinos-Affäre hat für die FPÖ noch mehr Sprengkraft als Ibiza,” *Der Standard* 14 August 2019, <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000107402613/die-casinos-affäre-hat-fuer-die-fpoe-noch-mehr-sprengkraft?ref=nl>, accessed 10 September 2019.

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- <sup>53</sup> *Der Standard*, “Staatsanwaltschaft ermittelt wegen Untreueverdachts,” 26 September 2019, <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000109111660/staatsanwaltschaft-ermittelt-wegen-untreueverdacht-gegen-strache>, accessed 27 September 2019; ORF News, “FPÖ schließt Straches Ex-Bodyguard aus,” <https://orf.at/stories/3138369>, accessed 25 September 2019.
- <sup>54</sup> OE24, “Hofer: ‘Ein Anschlag auf die Demokratie’,” 26 September 2019, <https://www.oe24.at/wahl2019/fpoe/Hofer-ueber-Straches-Leibwaechter-Ein-Anschlag-auf-die-Demokratie/398875575>, accessed 21 February 2020.
- <sup>55</sup> ORF News, “Spenenaffäre sorgt für Brodeln in FPÖ,” <https://orf.at/stories/3138589/>, accessed 27 September 2019.
- <sup>56</sup> *Der Standard*, “Fotos von Tasche mit Bargeld in Straches Ermittlungsakt,” 4 December 2019, <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000111861009/fotos-von-tasche-mit-bargeld-in-str>., accessed 6 December 2019.
- <sup>57</sup> *Der Standard*, “Streit um Facebook-Seite: Strache wütet gegen die FPÖ,” 17 October 2019, <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000110003767/strache-wuetet-gegen-die-fpoe-1848er-freiheit-statt-ddr-zensur>, accessed 18 October 2019.
- <sup>58</sup> *Der Standard*, “Kickl will Strache lieber heute als morgen loswerden,” 30 November 2019, <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000111712612/kickl-will-strache-lieber-heute-als>\_, accessed 6 December 2019.
- <sup>59</sup> ORF News, “Strache aus FPÖ ausgeschlossen,” <https://orf.at/stories/3147497/>, accessed 13 December 2019.
- <sup>60</sup> ORF Wien. “FPÖ sieht ‘Verhöhnung’ durch Strache,” <https://wien.orf.at/stories/3031376/>, accessed 27 January 2020.
- <sup>61</sup> ORF Tirol, “Abwerzger geht mit Strache hart ins Gericht,” <https://tirol.orf.at/stories/3031922>, accessed 27 January 2020.
- <sup>62</sup> Brass, *op.cit.*, 61.
- <sup>63</sup> Obermaier and Obermayer, *op.cit.*, 57-64.

<sup>64</sup> Wodak, *op.cit.*, 198.

<sup>65</sup> Rittberger, Michael, “Wie kommt die Ausländerfeindlichkeit in die Kronen Zeitung?” in *Dazugehören oder nicht?* Sevgi Bardakçi et al., eds. (Innsbruck, 2009), 50-52.

<sup>66</sup> Karner, Christian, “The uses of the past and European integration,” *Identities* 17: 4 (2010), 402.

<sup>67</sup> *Kronen Zeitung* 18 May 2019, p.1.

<sup>68</sup> *Kronen Zeitung* 19 May 2019, p.6.

<sup>69</sup> *Kronen Zeitung* 26 May 2019, pp.1; 6.

<sup>70</sup> *Kronen Zeitung* 5 June 2019, p.6.

<sup>71</sup> *Kronen Zeitung* 2 August 2019, p.6.

<sup>72</sup> *Kronen Zeitung* 9 September 2019, pp.1, 6.

<sup>73</sup> *Kronen Zeitung* 31 October 2019, p.6.

<sup>74</sup> *Der Standard*, “Krone twitterte Erinnerung an Straches Ibiza-Wahlprognose: ‘Sorry’ an FPÖ,” <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000109268183/krone-twitterte-erinnerung-an-strac...>, accessed 30 September 2019.

<sup>75</sup> quoted in Tóth, Barbara, “Im Blindflug,” *Falter*, 3 July 2019, p.24.

<sup>76</sup> Hoisl, Thomas and Neuhold, Clemens, “Die neue Krone und das alte Österreich,” *Profil* 22 September 2019, pp.35-36.

<sup>77</sup> Thurnher, Armin, “Alte Krone/ Neue Krone – aus 60 Jahren Finsternis durch Ibiza ans Licht,” *Falter*, 3 July 2019, p.5; Thurnher, Armin, “Die neue Krone ist die alte Krone, oder sie ist es nicht mehr,” *Falter*, 17 September 2019, p.5.

<sup>78</sup> Quoted in *Der Standard*, “Ibiza-Nachwehen: FPÖ beklagt in offenem Brief den Kurs der ‘Krone’,” <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000110701839/ibiza-nachwehen-fpoe-beklagt-in-offenem-brief-den-kurs-der?ref=nl>, accessed 5 November 2019.

<sup>79</sup> Brass, *op.cit.*, 59.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 96.

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<sup>81</sup> A suspected entanglement revolved around the *Casino-Affäre*, the alleged quid-pro-quo between – primarily – the FPÖ and the gaming corporation Novomatic: Hiptmayr, Christina, Melichar, Stefan and Nikbakhsh, Michael, “‘Gibt es für die FPÖ einen Job in der Casag’,” *Profil* 19 January 2020, pp.28-33.

<sup>82</sup> Quoted in Horaczek, Nina and Tóth, Barbara “Ein Kanzler macht Schluss,” *Falter* 22 May 2019, p.16.

<sup>83</sup> Krzyżanowski and Wodak, *op.cit.*, 22-23

<sup>84</sup> ORF News, “Damoklesschwert über Kurz,” <https://orf.at/stories/3123490/>, accessed 21 May 2019.

<sup>85</sup> ORF News, “Kurz verteidigt Vorgehen erneut,” <https://orf.at/stories/3124940/>, accessed 29 May 2019.

<sup>86</sup> There were acrimonious exchanges between ÖVP and SPÖ following Kurz’s speculation that the SPÖ – or its former international consultant Tal Silberstein, who had fabricated misinformation and used “dirty campaigning” against Kurz in 2017 – may have been behind the “Ibiza-video” (*ibid.*). A Viennese court subsequently issued an injunction against such speculation (*Kleine Zeitung* 28 August 2019, [https://www.kleinezeitung.at/politik/innenpolitik/5680833/IbizaVideo\\_OLG-bestaetigte-einstweilige-Verfuegung-gegen-Kurz](https://www.kleinezeitung.at/politik/innenpolitik/5680833/IbizaVideo_OLG-bestaetigte-einstweilige-Verfuegung-gegen-Kurz), accessed 3 September 2019).

<sup>87</sup> ORF News, “Aus für Regierung Kurz,” <https://orf.at/stories/3124711/>, accessed 29 May 2019.

<sup>88</sup> In the Ibiza-recordings, Strache appeared to suggest that undeclared financial donations were a strategy from which other parties, including the ÖVP, were also benefitting.

<sup>89</sup> *Kronen Zeitung*, “Kurz: ‘Ich würde ihm nicht raten zurückzukehren’,” <https://www.krone.at/1946391>, accessed 23 June 2019.

<sup>90</sup> ORF Wien, “Blümel geht auf Distanz zu Türkis-Blau,” <https://wien.orf.at/stories/3009961/>, accessed 10 September 2019.

<sup>91</sup> ORF News, “ÖVP-FPÖ-Zwist um Kickls Kabinettschef,” <https://orf.at/stories/3138108>, accessed 25 September 2019.

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- <sup>92</sup> *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, “Österreichs Ibiza-Affäre weitet sich aus,” 9 July 2019, <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/strache-ibiza-video-parteispenden-ermittlungen-1.4518076>, accessed 17 March 2020.
- <sup>93</sup> *Falter* 24 July 2019, pp.1, 16f.
- <sup>94</sup> E.g. *Heute*, “Hat ÖVP Ibiza-Video schreddern lassen?” 15 August 2019 <https://www.heute.at/s/hat-ovp-ibiza-video-schreddern-lassen--50778356>, accessed 2 March 2020.
- <sup>95</sup> ORF News, “Fünf Festplatten wurden geschreddert,” <https://orf.at/stories/3131233/>, accessed 24 July 2019.
- <sup>96</sup> ORF News, “Ominöse ‘Ibiza-Mails’,” <https://orf.at/stories/3139546/>, accessed 4 October 2019.
- <sup>97</sup> ORF News, “Nächste Datenaffäre mit offenen Fragen,” <https://orf.at/stories/3136215/>, accessed 9 September 2019.
- <sup>98</sup> ORF News, “‘Ibiza’-Ausschuss: SPÖ legt bei Kritik an Austragungsort nach,” <https://orf.at/stories/3166578/>, accessed 21 May 2020.
- <sup>99</sup> ORF News, “SPÖ and NEOS stellten Ladungsliste vor,” <https://orf.at/stories/3165365/>, accessed 12 May 2020.
- <sup>100</sup> ORF News, “‘Ibiza’-Ermittlungen: FPÖ empört über ‘Schattenaffäre’,” <https://orf.at/stories/3169063>, accessed 11 June 2020; ORF News, “‘Ibiza-Video’: Gudenus-Fotos bei mutmaßlichem Drogenkonsum,” <https://orf.at/stories/3169814/>, accessed 20 June 2020.
- <sup>101</sup> Klenk, Florian, “Die Sümpfe von Ibiza,” *Falter* 15 May 2020, pp.20-22.
- <sup>102</sup> The parliamentary enquiry’s questioning of Chancellor Kurz on 24 June 2020 reflected this: the opposition queried potential ÖVP-entanglements in the Novomatic issue and party-financing; Kurz again sought to clearly separate his and the ÖVP’s doings from the FPÖ’s. See ORF News, “Viel Ärger und zähe Geplänkel,” <https://orf.at/stories/3170858/>, accessed 25 June 2020. Marking the endpoint of my data-collection only, it is clear that Kurz’s responses to the enquiry will not end discussion of the issues in question.

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<sup>103</sup> Public debate since Ibiza has certainly *not* adopted a homogeneous line on the scandal. This corroborates that crises-periods transform taken-for-granted domains of cultural commonsense (*doxa*) into internally contested fields of competing political positions: Bourdieu, Pierre, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge, 1977), 167ff.

<sup>104</sup> Karner, Christian (2008) “The market and the nation: Austrian (dis)agreements,” *Social Identities* 14 (2), 161-187.

<sup>105</sup> Obermaier and Obermayer, *op.cit.*, 88.

<sup>106</sup> Der Standard, “‘Kein Spekulationsobjekt’: Strache wollte Trinkwasser 2013 noch schützen,” 20 May 2019, <https://derstandard.at/2000103489586/Kein-Spekulationsobjekt-Strache-wollte-Trink...>, accessed 21 May 2019.

<sup>107</sup> Lingens, Michael, “Es braucht Schutz vor Rechtsextremen,” *Falter*, 29 May 2019, p.8.

<sup>108</sup> Narval, Philippe, “Die FPÖ, ein Opfer? Es reicht!” *Der Standard* 28 May 2019, <https://mobil.derstandard.at/2000103916749/Die-FPOe-ein-Opfer-Es-reicht>, accessed 29 May 2019.

<sup>109</sup> *Profil* 18 August 2019, p.17.

<sup>110</sup> Charim, Isolde, “Straches neue Rolle: der Sündenbock,” *Falter* 3 December 2019, p.9.

<sup>111</sup> Brnada, Nina, “Der Strache in dir,” *Falter* 5 June 2019, p.6.

<sup>112</sup> ORF News, “‘Ibiza-Skandal’ erhöht Reformdruck,” <https://orf.at/stories/3123878/>, accessed 29 May 2019.

<sup>113</sup> E.g. Nikbakhsh, Michael, “Zahlen heißt nicht kaufen,” *Profil* 1 September 2019, p.11.

<sup>114</sup> The charge brought against their client concerns the “misuse of recording devices”.

<sup>115</sup> Soyer, Richard and Marsch, Philip, “Ibiza, das war ziviler Ungehorsam,” *Der Standard* 15 Oktober 2019, <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000109883909/ibiza-das-war-ziviler-ungehorsam?ref=nl>, accessed 16 October 2019.

<sup>116</sup> Thurnher, Armin, “Die ÖVP-Files und die Kunsts der politischen Umdeutung,” *Falter* 10 September 2019, p.5.

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<sup>117</sup> ORF Steiermark, “‘Ibiza’ ist das Wort des Jahres,” <https://steiermark.orf.at/stories/3024766/>, accessed 5 December 2019.

<sup>118</sup> ORF News, “Strache bedingt auskunftsfreudig,” <https://orf.at/stories/3168353/>, accessed 9 June 2020.

<sup>119</sup> Klenk, Florian, “Geheimsache Ibiza,” *Falter* 5 June 2020, pp.12-14.

<sup>120</sup> Thurnher, Armin, “Wir sind es! Erinnerung an Ibiza,” *Falter* 15 May 2020, p.5.

<sup>121</sup> Hiptmayr, Christina, Nikbakhsh, Michael, Pausackl, Christina, “Urknalleffekte,” *Profil* 22 December 2019, pp.27-28. In addition to Strache’s apparent preference for Orbánesque media-control, the FPÖ’s long-standing pro-Russian positions are worth mentioning: see Auinger, Herbert, *Die FPÖ: Blaupause der Neuen Rechten in Europa* (Vienna, 2017), 127-130; *Kurier*, “FPÖ-Spitze zu Arbeitsgesprächen in Moskau,” 18 December 2016, <https://kurier.at/politik/inland/fpoe-spitze-zu-arbeitsgespraechen-in-moskau/236.473.244>, accessed 17 June 2020.

<sup>122</sup> Reibenwein, Michaela, “Kickl über Strache: ‘Noch blöder als vor einem Jahr’,” *Kurier* 19 May 2020, <https://kurier.at/amp/politik/inland/kickl-ueber-strache-noch-bloeder-als-vor-einem-ja...>, accessed 23 May 2020.

<sup>123</sup> ORF News, “Politgerangel vor nächster Befragung,” <https://orf.at/stories/3170475/>, accessed 22 June 2020.

<sup>124</sup> ORF News, “Zadic kündigt Gesetzespaket an,” <https://orf.at/stories/3166024/>, accessed 17 May 2020; ORF News, “‘Ibiza-Affäre’: Transparency fordert weitere Verschärfungen,” <https://orf.at/stories/3166233/>, accessed 20 May 2020; Klenk, Florian, “Ibiza für Einsteiger,” *Falter* 17 June 2020, pp.18-20; ORF News, “Tanner lässt Kooperationen mit Vereinen prüfen,” <https://orf.at/stories/3170561>, accessed 22 June 2020.

<sup>125</sup> Castel, Robert, “Die Ärzte und die Richter,” in *Der Fall Rivière*, Michel Foucault ed., (Frankfurt, 1973), 279-296.

<sup>126</sup> Brass, *op.cit.*, 59.

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<sup>127</sup> Fontana, Alexandre, “Die Intermittenz der Vernunft,” in *Der Fall Rivièrè*, Michel Foucault, ed., (Frankfurt, 1973), 306.

<sup>128</sup> Foucault, Michel, “Einführung,” in *Der Fall Rivièrè*, Michel Foucault, ed., (Frankfurt: 1973), 11.

<sup>129</sup> Brass, *op.cit.*, 3.

<sup>130</sup> Judson, *op.cit.*, 177-179.

<sup>131</sup> Simmel, Georg, *Soziologie* (Frankfurt, 1992 [1908]), 52.

<sup>132</sup> After the constitutional court declared that a parliamentary enquiry committee on Ibiza would be given a broadened scope, an SPÖ-politician declared that particular attention would be paid to aspects “uncomfortable” to the ÖVP; see ORF News, “SPÖ und Neos drängen auf raschen Start,”

<https://orf.at/stories/3156582>, accessed 4 March 2020.

<sup>133</sup> Bourdieu, *op.cit.*, 167ff; Karner, *Nationalism Revisited*, 140ff.