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CULTURE IN AUSTRO-AZERBAIJAN BILATERAL CONTACTS

INTRODUCTION

The post-war Austrian diplomacy that operated independently during the Cold War, after 1955, had several clear strategic goals, the most important of which was to define and consolidate the principles of active neutrality, a crucial element of Austria's post-war national identity. After 1989, some of the previous paradigms regarding Austria's place in Europe changed. The new challenges brought about by the collapse of the bipolar world forced us to look at the position of the Danube republic from a different perspective. The foreign policy pursued by Vienna after the enlargement of the European Union (EU) in 2004 is on the one hand that of a political partner of the Central European countries and on the other hand that of a small country with a consolidated democracy that reacts very vividly to international crises, trying to draw the greatest benefits from them. Austria is a small country with great political ambitions, great economic potential and politically conscious citizens. International affairs are of great importance to the Austrian voters, and crises taking place abroad lead to considerable changes in the party system. After the enlargement of the EU in 2004, certain permanent elements emerged that came to dominate Austria's relations with European countries (Bischof, Karlhofer 2010: 5). The rapidly developing situation in the Middle East and Ukraine posed a number of challenges. Austria is trying to find its own solutions to the growing problems, solutions tailored to the needs of a neutral state located in the heart of the old continent and with the ambition of acting as an intermediary in international disputes and of fostering intercultural dialogue (Brix 2016: 244). The permanent elements of Austria's foreign policy, which have been slightly changed in the last dozen or so years, include the implementation of the principle of perpetual neutrality, integration within EU structures and establishment of relations with countries outside Europe (Kisztełińska-Węgrzyńska 2016a: 281-299). Changes in Viennese diplomacy have been seen in the use of soft power, provision of support for the Balkan states and cooperation with the Russian Federation during the conflict in Ukraine.

SOFT POWER AND TASKS OF AUSTRIAN PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Austrian diplomacy has made great progress in creating a brand recognised around the world characterised by cultural heritage. For foreign policy, it is important for Vienna to gradually create an image of a country with an enormous culture-forming potential and human resources capable of fostering dialogue and cooperation between various cultures (Pierzchała 2013: 74). In the world of dominant propaganda messages focused on nurturing divisions and keeping the concerned parties in a state of permanent dispute, the role of cultural diplomacy will increase (Ryniejska-Kiełdanowicz 2015: 159). Austria sees this as an opportunity for it to act as a mediator and promoter of changes, open to other cultures but fully convinced of the exceptional value of its own heritage (Parzymies 2012: 60–82; Puchowicz 2008: 457–472). Cultural exchange strengthened by positive actions by the government and not controlled from the top provides the basis for the development of a civil society internationally perceived as a trustworthy partner. Social and political development understood in this way provides a good basis for cooperation in the framework of bilateral relations, which are frequently and willingly returned to in international relations.

Cultural superpower is what Austria is known for in the contemporary international relations. The Danube republic worked systematically to obtain such a reputation throughout the entire post-war period (Burka 2012: 264). At that time, a system of disseminating the national heritage outside the country was created, called *Auslandskulturpolitik* in the literature on the subject (ibidem: 152). Austria was consistently promoted as a multicultural state with a rich tradition of cooperation with other nations (Kisztełińska-Węgrzyńska 2016a: 280). Austrian former politics wrote about a kind of national brand (i.e. culture) as Austria's main export product and significant cultural enhancement of Austria's image abroad (Umińska-Woroniecka 2010: 47-73). These messages boil down to the thesis that Austria had ambitions to initiate culture-forming processes and was looking for suitable grounds for putting them into practice (Brix 2013: 97).

After 1989, Central and Eastern Europe, and later also the Balkans, were areas where it was possible to implement the aforementioned tasks in a quite effective way. It should be emphasised that the fall of the Iron Curtain only facilitated the processes that had been undertaken since the 1960s thanks to Austrian institutions (reading rooms, libraries, institutes or embassies operating, among others, through cultural forums). The role and tasks of Austrian diplomacy changed after the fall of the Iron Curtain (Kisztełińska-Węgrzyńska 2016a: 283). Among the new tasks demanded by public diplomacy in the time of globalisation, Austrian experts mention the need to adapt to the rapidly progressing changes in the re-evaluation of historical heritage: cultural, geographical, linguistic, religious and ethnic (Plasser, Seeber 2011).

It was also important to create a common discourse on the policy of collective memory in the context of events related to totalitarianism. The goals established in relation to this were to inspire the organisation of grassroots culture-forming activities in the future and to encourage dialogue, exchange or the adoption of the solutions

proposed by Vienna. Experts on the subject emphasise that public diplomacy, understood mainly as the export of the Austrian culture to the Central European countries, was carried out in parallel with the integration activities within the EU structures, or in such a way as to use only institutional opportunities thanks to the EU enlargement. This two-track cooperation did not exclude but even strengthened Austria's ties with the East that were re-established after 1989. In the reports summarising the implementation of the Austrian foreign policy after 2011, particular attention was paid to the 'Austrian contribution' to the infrastructure of the European cultural policy. The work was about building a new identity and assessing the war-related past. Activity in the region and searching for collaborators to build a common memory was the main task of developing cultural institutions (Tomczak 1997: 117).

RELATIONS WITH AZERBAIJAN

Cultural cooperation was also important in the context of the situation in the South Caucasus (*Foreign and European Policy Report 2014...*: 96). Austria's increased interest in this area in 2011–2013 was based on the area's natural resources and ability to transport resources by water (Schocher 2014). Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia are included in the economic assistance plan under the activities of the Austrian Development Cooperation. Armenia's refusal to sign the EU accession agreement and joining of the Russian-controlled Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) due to the Ukraine conflict encouraged the other Caucasian countries to do the same. At the time that Sebastian Kurz visited Azerbaijan in September 2014, the country was considering joining the EEU.

Vienna's prioritisation of its relations with Moscow remains important for the development of Austria's relations with the Caucasian states. The reason that Vienna politically supports the actions of the Kremlin authorities is the economic exchanges between Austria and Russia based on the export of raw materials. Although the involvement of the Austrian banking sector in Ukraine and Austria's support for the integration ambitions of the Ukrainians were visible, Austria did not engage in initiatives that violated Russia's political interests before 2022. Even the recognition of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) was not treated in terms of creating a counterbalance to Russia but was explained by the desire for synergy with a similar alliance being formed in the Balkan region. Austria remains Russia's greatest political and economic ally among the EU countries, and that the Austrian political elite continue to regard the Kremlin's actions in a positive light (Astrov 2009: 180–181; *Russian-Austrian...* 2016). Viennese diplomacy presents itself as an intermediary and mediator in the ongoing conflict and draws attention in media reports to how much Austria can gain or lose from such conflict (*South Stream...* 2014).

According to the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) annual report, ENP applies to the six neighbouring Eastern European countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) and to the ten EU neighbouring countries in the

Eastern and Southern Mediterranean regions (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine/PNA, Syria and Tunisia), and although Belarus, Libya and Syria are included in the ENP, they do not fully participate in it (*Foreign and European Policy Report 2014...: 24*). As a successful twinning partner in Southeast Europe, Austria is also interested in becoming more closely involved in the European neighbourhood. Following its successful completion of a twinning project with the local energy control authority in Georgia, an E-Control follow-up project was established. In the context of TAIEX, the Austrian authorities sent experts to Algeria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Israel, Moldova and Ukraine in 2015 to share their relevant specialised know-how in the fields of justice, home affairs, finances, health care, labour law and digitalisation.

According to Report, ‘although Azerbaijan takes part in the EU’s Eastern Partnership, it does not seek to conclude an Association Agreement but rather a “Strategic Modernisation Partnership” agreement that is to build on the principles of sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity’. The same report claims that Azerbaijan is important for the EU and Austria because of its rich oil and gas resources, among others. Azerbaijan’s relations with the EU countries suffered a setback, however, when Brussels criticised the deteriorating human rights situation and lack of democracy in Azerbaijan, which was denounced by the latter as tantamount to interference in its internal affairs. In addition, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on September 10, 2015 calling on Azerbaijan to release the foreign journalists and human rights activists it had held captive and to take measures to combat corruption.

The inter-parliamentary cooperation between the two countries is carried out by the Working Group on Azerbaijan-Austria inter-parliamentary relations. Milli Majlis established the Working Group on Azerbaijan-Austria inter-parliamentary relations on 5 December 2000. According to the decision of Milli Majlis dated 4 March 2016, the head of the Working Group on Azerbaijan-Austria inter-parliamentary relations is Javid Gurbanov. The head of the working group from the Austrian side is Carl Ollinger.

The Karabakh area has a special place in Austria’s relations with Azerbaijan. Over the centuries, the hostile attitude of the Armenian to Azerbaijani people in the Caucasus was fuelled by the Russian administrations. The beginnings of disputes over Nagorno-Karabakh arose from the emerging Armenian and Azerbaijani struggle for statehood after the fall of Tsarist Russia (Adamczewski 2012: 67). Even then, they were part of a wider conflict between the great powers and the need to seek alliances, either in agreement with Russia or Turkey. Polish research on this topic is developing. It is enough to mention the works of Paweł Adamczewski (2012), Paweł Olszewski (2010) and Tadeusz Świątochowski (2006). The administrative division established by the Bolsheviks in the Caucasus at the beginning of the 20th century has survived with minor changes to the present day. The next changes concerned only the independence of the previously existing administrative units formed during the USSR times. Next level of this conflict was created as a result of the 1980s Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, with the territory of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast and seven adjacent Azerbaijani provinces (Legieć 2021; Rokita 2010: 135–147).

Looking at the region in a broader context, the so-called independence proclaimed by Nagorno-Karabakh in 1991 was proclaimed without the Azerbaijani people living in the area. Armenia claims that Nagorno-Karabakh had the same right to declare independence in 1991 as Armenia and Azerbaijan. It should be noted that Soviet law allowed for the secession of the republics, not the autonomous regions, and that was the status of Nagorno-Karabakh. The independence of Armenia and Azerbaijan was confirmed on the basis of the *uti possidetis* principle, which means recognition within the existing borders. Armenia wanted a guarantee that Azerbaijan would not attack the Armenians from Nagorno-Karabakh and that peacekeepers could be deployed there. Azerbaijan's main argument was territorial integrity. Nagorno-Karabakh was part of Azerbaijan during the Soviet era, so it should remain so, according to diplomats from Baku (Potocki 2020: 1). Armenia replies that these territories have belonged to Armenians for centuries and opposes the principle of self-determination to territorial integrity. In reference to Adamczewski's research, censuses of the population of Nagorno-Karabakh from 1810-1897 indicate the domination of Tatars – 76% over Armenians – 21% (Adamczewski 2012: 66). The demography of this region in historical terms is a separate issue, often raised by both sides of the conflict.

The armed conflict of 1991 ended with the signing of a ceasefire in 1994 by representatives of Azerbaijan, the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic and Armenia. In 1998, OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) proposed its own idea of resolving the conflict: creating a combined Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh state. Here, Nagorno-Karabakh would be freely associated with Azerbaijan, although the Armenians would have the right to have their own armed forces and land connections with Armenia, and the right to self-determination. The OSCE proposal, however, was rejected by both parties in the conflict. During the negotiations, the Azerbaijani authorities invoked the principle of territorial integrity and agreed only to the grant of broad autonomy for Nagorno-Karabakh within Azerbaijan. The Armenians, on the other hand, demanded recognition of the complete independence of the area from Azerbaijan because they had won the war and because they believed that the power in Yerevan belonged to the people from Nagorno-Karabakh (Olszewski 2012: 180–185).

During past years, the Minsk Group formed in OSCE to lead the negotiation process met every two or three months and made small and gradual progress. In 2001, the leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan met with US Secretary of State Colin Powell in the US. At that time, a new peace plan was discussed, consisting in the creation of a political structure from Nagorno-Karabakh governed by the Armenians but under the authority of the US, France and Russia (Khalid 2008). The remaining lands occupied by the Armenians and the Meghr region were to be returned to Azerbaijan (Olszewski 2012: 185–186). The failure of the subsequent negotiations resulted in an attempt by Azerbaijan to end the dispute by deploying armed forces. The difficult socio-economic situation in Azerbaijan then (falling oil prices, mounting social frustration and protests) may have been Azerbaijan's motivation to escalate the conflict. That is, the Azerbaijani government wanted to divert the people's attention from the country's social problems then through the war (Jarosiewicz, Falkowski 2016).

Azerbaijan also expected the EU to intensify its efforts to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict as hardly any progress had been achieved then on such matter despite the international mediation efforts and the activities carried out by the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group (*Report of the OSCE...* 2011: 1). In the second half of the year, military escalation occurred along the contested Line of Contact between Nagorno-Karabakh and Azerbaijan after the Azerbaijani armed forces used heavy weapons for the first time since the 1994 ceasefire (artillery) declaration. This led to the death of numerous soldiers and to the wounding of many others (Khalid 2008). In June, the 2015 European Games were held in Baku, and the opening ceremony was attended by Karlheinz Kopf, the second president of the National Council, who represented Austria (*Foreign and European Policy Report 2014...*: 105). Meanwhile, in 2016, there were four-day clashes around the occupied cities of Cabrayıl and Füzula. Azerbaijan has moved several kilometres forward and stopped to force talks. This should also be seen in the context of Armenia's domestic policy. The government that was formed in 2018 declared Karabakh to be Armenian.

In the context of the development of the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, Prime Minister Nikola Pashinyan called for the inclusion of a Nagorno-Karabakh representation in Austria's negotiations with Azerbaijan. After several informal meetings held in Vienna at the end of March, the three co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group were able to provide mediation, Pashinyan had an official talk with Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev, several meetings at the level of foreign ministers were held and another informal meeting took place between Pashinyan and Aliyev (*Außen- und Europapolitischer...* 2020: 45).

Despite the foregoing, however, the human rights situation in Nagorno-Karabakh remained problematic. In October and November 2019, the demonstrations by the opposition and women's rights defenders were brutally suppressed. Soon after, resignations and reshuffles in the power apparatus occurred, including the appointment of Ali Asadov as prime minister, which initiated a rejuvenation of power. At the end of November, a decision was made to dissolve the parliament and to hold elections in early 2020. Confidence-building measures have since been implemented. Nevertheless, Austria has expressed a growing frustration over the armaments in Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan follows a moderate course in its relations with the EU. Negotiations on a comprehensive strategic agreement started in 2017. Azerbaijan, however, remains Austria's most important trading partner in the South Caucasus. SOCAR (State Oil Company of the Azerbaijan Republic), an Azerbaijani oil company, has opened its first gas station in Austria. President Ilham Aliyev met with Federal President Alexander Van der Bellen and Federal Chancellor Sebastian Kurz in March 2019. In October, Federal Minister Andreas Reichhardt visited Azerbaijan, met with a business delegation there and signed an agreement with Azerbaijan's economy and sustainable-development minister Natia Turnava (Report 2019: 46).

In 2020, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict was revived. After two months of fighting, both sides announced a ceasefire on the night of November 9-10. The war turned out to be a major victory for Azerbaijan. The truce assumed the detention of the

captured territories; in addition, by December 1, the Armenians were to hand over to Azerbaijan the Azerbaijani territories adjacent to Nagorno-Karabakh that the Armenians had occupied since 1994. The Armenians were left with only the northern part and with Stepanakert (the capital of the region) and the land corridor leading to it. Russian peacekeepers were sent to the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh (Górecki 2020a). For Azerbaijan, the result of this conflict was a great victory that strengthened the position of President Ilham Aliyev and resolved the problem of the Azerbaijani refugees from Nagorno-Karabakh who may return to their abandoned homes (*ibidem*). Armenia, on the other hand, perceived the result of the war as a great defeat on its part. There were many protests in Yerevan on the night of the announcement of the truce (Górecki 2020b).

According to the Austrians, it was Russia that settled the last dispute over the conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh. 'In Nagorno-Karabakh, where, on 10 November, Russia had, for the time being, succeeded in ending military clashes between Armenia and Azerbaijan that had lasted over several weeks, and deploying peacekeepers, the role played by Turkey in the conflict reconfigured the regional balance of power in the South Caucasus' (*Foreign and European Policy Report 2019...: 42*). The Minsk Group was limited in its activities. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, a large number of the planned meetings were either not held, had to be postponed or were held only as video conferences. The repression of the protest movement, which had flared up in Belarus in the wake of the electoral fraud, and the armed conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh also had a negative impact on the work of the EaP. Austria has provided two million euros from the Foreign Disaster Fund to counter the impact of COVID-19 in the South Caucasus and one million euros managed by the Red Cross as humanitarian aid in the wake of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (*ibidem: 42*).

In the South Caucasus Austria is trying to balance the influence of Russia and Turkey (Özertem 2020). In the long term, however, Vienna supports Russia's goals in the modern times. Russia continues to exert efforts to convince Azerbaijan, which is important to it due to its strategic geographic location and rich natural resources, to join the EEU, but Azerbaijan has to date shown little interest in doing so. In addition, the hostile relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia, an EEU member, due to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict may constitute an insurmountable obstacle to the foregoing (Rahimov 2020). Turkey, on the other hand, is seen in Azerbaijan as a 'fraternal country'. The motto 'One nation, two states' is still valid, and Turkey is historically seen by the Azerbaijanis as a 'geopolitical reinsurance' considering that it is in Azerbaijan's immediate neighbourhood (*Foreign and European Policy Report 2018...*).

According to Austria by the end of the year 2020, the legal status of Nagorno-Karabakh remained unresolved. Both Russia and Turkey were able to massively expand their presence in the South Caucasus. The existing format for conflict resolution around Nagorno-Karabakh, namely the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group (USA, Russia and France) as such and the European Union were unable to exercise any tangible influence on events (*Foreign and European Policy Report 2019...: 47*). Austria's Multilateral Engagement was visible in 2020 due to activity in the OSCE's meetings.

Crisis settlement formats were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and were thus not able to contribute significantly to improving the situation.

In one year after the conflict on November 10, 2021 Azerbaijan marked the victory and called for regional cooperation. In the same time Armenia appealed to its Russian ally for military support under the Collective security Treaty Organization pact, which obliges Moscow to protect it in the event of a foreign invasion. The reason was the report of the killing of 6 Armenian soldiers in clashes with Azerbaijan. Russian President Vladimir Putin discussed the situation with a Prime Minister Nikola Pashinyan and agreed to “continue the contacts” on the matter (Compass 2021: 9). Since the war in 2020, both Armenia and Azerbaijan have reported occasional cross-border firing.

At present, the most important task in the bilateral relations in the area of culture is cooperation for the preservation and protection of cultural objects. Austria has been dealing with a common question about the fate of cultural heritage in an area of recurrent conflict, and has been providing aid in the field of monument protection for years. Bilateral humanitarian aid provided by Austria is funded and overseen by the MFA (Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration, and Foreign Affairs) and other federal ministries, including the Federal Ministry of the Interior, the Federal Ministry for Sustainability and Tourism, the Federal Ministry of Defence, and the federal provinces and municipalities as well as other public bodies and institutions (*Foreign and European Policy Report 2019...: 186*). Support of 1 million euros from the FDF (Foreign Disaster Fund) channelled through the ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) was also provided to alleviate the plight of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh in the wake of the renewed fighting. Austria also seeks to contribute to visibly shaping UNESCO’s work including through concrete projects on the protection of World Heritage.

CULTURAL HERITAGE IN AZERBAIJAN AND NAGORNO-KARABAKH AND ITS PRESERVATION

Considering the complicated political situation in the Caucasus (mutual claims, interference by third-party countries and loss accounts), it is necessary to remember that the centuries-old cultural heritage of this area constitutes the common good of all people. Wealthy countries have the responsibility to provide support for the efforts to protect cultural heritage, especially where it is being threatened by conflicts. This support can vary in size and should be adapted to both the local conditions and the needs of the communities concerned. The 21st century offers many opportunities for the dissemination and protection of cultural heritage in both the broader dimensions (state, country, region) and the narrower dimensions (individuals, people, participants in culture-forming processes). It seems that one of the most important tasks nowadays is to foster an awareness of the need to secure everything that concerns our common past as humans.

The most difficult issue to solve in the context of the protection of common heritage is the area of Nagorno-Karabakh. The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is a complicated conflict that is difficult to end peacefully through compromise. The hostility and distrust between the Azerbaijanis and the Armenians preclude the settlement of the dispute on the basis of mutual renunciation and forgiveness. Gaining allies on the international forum was a visible sign of Azerbaijani diplomacy since the beginning of the 1990s. To this end, the topics of the harm suffered as a result of the Karabakh conflict have been raised. They have repeatedly called on the EU, the Council of Europe and the OSCE to intervene or help. An example may be the stoppage of logging of plane trees in the Zangilian region (Adamczewski 2012: 287). Unfortunately, the destruction of cultural goods is often used objectively by both sides of the conflict. An example is the proposal to renovate the mosque in Shusha, commissioned by the Armenians to Iranians, and protested by Azerbaijan. Protests are also taking place during the presentation of Nagorno-Karabakh's cultural heritage in the capitals of third countries (European Parliament 2006). Accused of destroying the achievements of the Armenians cemetery at Djulfa or the Dadiwank monastery, Azerbaijan also tried to show its own losses. According to Adamczewski, the international community, reluctant to Azerbaijan, began to change its attitude after the Armenians moved the conflict beyond the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh and the multitude of refugees presented Azerbaijan with the prospect of a humanitarian catastrophe. In the following years, the development of raw material extraction was to further warm this image.

The UN entrusted the task of leading the peace process, including the protection of the cultural property of Nagorno-Karabakh, to a special team of negotiators operating within the framework of the OSCE. This team proved useless, which resulted mainly from the lack of a common position on the international forum regarding the conflict. Mediators operating in the Minsk Group will not work out a common position until there are agreements on the division of spheres of influence in the Caucasus between the US and Russia.

The problem of Nagorno-Karabakh and attempts to resolve it after 1991 directed Azerbaijan towards cooperation with the international community. An important aspect was drawing the attention of international opinion to issues related to human rights or the protection of cultural heritage. It was also a stage of defining common and different elements of the culture of this region and using some of them in political or propaganda activities. The possibility of using aid programs under the UN, the EU or the Eastern Partnership was to sanction the influence and power of individual political groups.

In 2005, Azerbaijan signed the instrument resulting from the UNESCO convention 'Diversity of Culture Expressions' (*Convention...* 2005). Thirteen years later, a report was prepared in relation to it. This document contains the main goals in relation to the mentioned elements, the challenges posed by them and the legislative acts that were made, measures that were taken and cooperation that was undertaken in relation to such elements (*Azerbaijan 2018 Report*). This report was the result of the multi-stakeholder consultation process initiated by the Ministry of Culture.

On January 30, 2018, the ministry organised the first meeting of all the government stakeholders involved in the preparation of the report, that is the government stakeholders, a number of civil-society organisations and representatives of local authorities. Experts were also asked to prepare the relevant documents for the meetings of the working group. The experts undertook consultations in March–April 2018 with representatives of civil-society organisations, such as Yarat Contemporary Art Space, Arts Council Azerbaijan and ASmart Creative Hub, and coordinated the second meeting of the working group on April 26, 2018.

The Ministry of Culture is currently drawing from the results of the aforementioned process and of the partnerships that were established to build synergies with the mechanisms and activities under other international programmes (e.g. Creative Europe) directly related to the implementation of the 2005 convention in Azerbaijan (*Azerbaijan 2018 Report; The Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan...*). When we asked how much has been changed in the Azerbaijani cultural-policy report, the response was as follows. The direct impact of the convention resulted in a number of external assistance partnerships, based on the methodologies and tools developed by UNESCO. The revised ‘Law on Culture’ of 2012 and the ‘Culture Concept’ of 2014 are clear examples of such impact policies in Azerbaijan. The new Law on Culture directly articulates that ‘the national cultural policy is based on the principles of equal opportunities to create and use cultural values in Azerbaijan, in line with Article 40 of the Constitution on cultural rights, underlines the right of every person to create, use and disseminate cultural values irrespective of her or his social and material status, nationality, race, religion and gender. Based on [the] principles of equality, democracy, humanism, integration, balance, quality, efficiency and talent, the Culture Concept of 2014 in its turn puts emphasis on actions to support and enhance the development of creative activity [and] promotion of participation in cultural life, [and] promotes better balance between culture industries and markets of cultural products and services’ (*Azerbaijan 2018 Report*).

On April 13th 2021 the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group: Igor Popov of the Russian Federation, Stephane Visconti of France, and Andrew Schofer of the United States of America released the statement connected with the future of Nagorno-Karabakh. The Co-Chairs welcome the significant achievements with regard to the return of the remains of the deceased, and the ongoing progress with regard to the resettlement of those displaced by the conflict, provision of humanitarian assistance and adequate living conditions, as well as constructive discussions aimed at unblocking transportation and communication lines throughout the region. The Co-Chairs reminded that additional efforts are required to resolve remaining areas of concern and to create an atmosphere of mutual trust conducive to long-lasting peace. These include issues related to the preservation and protection of religious and cultural heritage; and the fostering of direct contacts and cooperation between communities affected by the conflict as well as other people-to-people confidence-building measures. The Co-Chairs also expressed their strong support for the continuing activities and possible expansion of the mission of the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chair-in-Office

(PRCiO) and call on both sides to provide full access and support to its efforts. They underscored their readiness to resume working visits to the region, including Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding areas, to carry out their assessment and mediation roles (OSCE 2021).

After the second Nagorno-Karabakh war ended, the Azerbaijani parliament set discussions on the restoration of the destroyed cultural monuments. There is now a roadmap for the conservation and restoration of the destroyed historical monuments in the liberated regions. Undoubtedly, both local and foreign experts can make a valuable contribution in this effort (İsmayılov 2016). Historically, the caravan trade routes connecting Asia with Europe, including the Silk Road, passed through Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh. At the end of the 19th century, there were 17 mosques, 6 caravanserais, 8 cultural houses, 31 libraries and 10 museums there. After the Armenian seizure of the city of Shush, Azerbaijani diplomats intervened in the United Nations. The Security Council called for the restoration of communication in the region. It was not treated much as interstate, but merely ethnic. The political steps taken by Azerbaijan were justified by the need to protect their identity and culture.

THE ROLE OF CULTURE

Austria's contemporary public diplomacy, however, is facing new challenges. In the introduction to the report published by the Austrian foreign affairs minister Michael Spindelegger in 2011, we read that Austria wanted to focus its efforts on initiatives to foster dialogue between religions and cultures. The role of culture as an 'image transmitter', however, was definitely not enough at a time when this dialogue became a difficult everyday reality (*Speech...* 2011). In the era of the migration crisis and reports of terrorist attacks in European countries, the decisions to ban the wearing of the burqa and to close the Muslim kindergartens in Vienna were met with severe criticism (Treichler 2016). At the same time, Austrian politicians were not afraid to distance themselves from EU policies when the latter were bringing about losses (Gusenbauer 2008: 172–173).

For decades, Austria has worked to ensure that the international environment perceives and describes it as a culture-forming power (Kisztelińska-Węgrzyńska 2016b: 286). This became a reality not only because Vienna strengthened such an image in the international discourse but also because it actively responded to the social and cultural needs of contemporary world. The Danube republic was able to offer other nations what it grew up on: its identity and sense of value, or the belief that what comes from Austria is valuable and worth knowing. It should be emphasized that it was doing it for the sake of achieving its own long-term political goals, strengthening its position in the region and building economic independence.

Austrian activity related to the promotion of Azerbaijan's cultural heritage may prove to be of great support. Cultural heritage is the national cultural and historical wealth of the people, and it is unacceptable for one nation to destroy or vandalise the

cultural heritage of another nation. Such actions are also prohibited by international law and conventions. The Hague Convention of 1954 on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Conflict states that in times of military conflict involving its members, the participating states must protect both the cultural values located in each state's territory and those located in the territory of the opposing party, including both movable and immovable cultural values such as architecture, art, historical monuments and archaeological excavations. In addition, all the state parties to the convention should enact a law penalising both those who will violate the aforementioned provision and those who will instruct them to do so. The Republic of Azerbaijan's Law on the Protection of Historical and Cultural Monuments adopted by the Azerbaijani parliament Milli Majlis on April 10, 1998 mandates the registration, study, protection, restoration, reconstruction, use and protection of monuments throughout the country so that independent and centralised measures can be taken by state bodies and non-governmental organisations to prevent or address the loss of such cultural goods.

The Azerbaijani-Austrian Inter-parliamentary Working Group is functioning in the Milli Majlis (Parliament) of the Republic of Azerbaijan and Austrian-South Caucasus Bilateral Parliamentary Group is functioning in the Austrian Parliament. Both groups play an important role in expanding inter-parliamentary relations. The signing of the 'Joint Declaration on Friendship and Partnership between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Austria' on May 13, 2013 during the official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan H. E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev to Austria was an important event in bilateral relations. The opening ceremony of the Azerbaijani Cultural Center was also held during the visit (President 2013). In 2018, the Austrian-Azerbaijani Cooperation Council was established in Vienna. Within the framework of the visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan H. E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev to Austria on March 28-30, 2019, the first meeting of Council's Advisory Board consisting of government members of both countries was held in Vienna. During the pandemic, the Center significantly reduced its activity.

Good practices implemented by Austria in the field of promotion of cultural goods are adopted and could be adopted by Azerbaijan mainly through international institutions. Azerbaijan is listed by UNESCO on Intangible Cultural Heritage lists and distribution over the five domains of the 2003 Convention. Among the 15 elements distinguished from the group of 577 world monuments, Azerbaijan is described as the seat of: art of creating and playing Kamantcheh/ Kamaanča a bowed string musical instrument; craftsmanship and performance art of the Tar, a long-necked string musical instrument; Dolma making and sharing tradition, a marker of cultural identity; art of miniature; Yalli (Kochari, Tenzere), traditional group dances of Nakhchivan; heritage of Dede Qorqud / Korkyt Ata / Dede Korkut, epic culture, folk tales and music; art of Azerbaijani Ashiq; flatbread making and sharing culture: Lavash, Katyrma, Jupka, Yufka; traditional art of Azerbaijani carpet weaving in the Republic of Azerbaijan; traditional art and symbolism of Kelaghayi; making and wearing women's silk headscarves; Nar Bayrami, traditional pomegranate festivity and culture; Novruz, Chovqan, a traditional Karabakh horse-riding game in the Republic of Azerbaijan;

Azerbaijani Mugham (UNESCO 2022). Proper, interesting, modern and adapted to different types of audiences presentation of cultural achievements is a very important element of modern diplomacy. In this respect, the use of global information channels and the use of selected elements in bilateral relations has become indispensable.

There were a number of policy initiatives, such as the state programme ‘The Theatre of Azerbaijan in 2009–2019’ and ‘State Programme on Development of Children’s Music, Art and Painting Schools in the Republic of Azerbaijan 2014–2018’ (*State Program...*). There was also the ‘Law on Culture’ adopted in 2012. Signed by the Azerbaijani president in 2012, it replaced the old ‘Law on Culture’ of 1998. The ‘Law on Culture’ was the result of the large-scale consultation process undertaken by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Azerbaijan from January 2010 to September 2012. The law made it clear that the national cultural policy is based on the principle of equal opportunities to create and use cultural values and to preserve the heritage (both tangible and intangible) in Azerbaijan. The law also included the ambitious objective of creating an enabling environment that would support the development of cultural industries through investments in these areas. This means that the government aims to explore opportunities to reduce the barriers to investments in the creative industries, such as architecture, arts, crafts, design, fashion, film making, music, performing arts and publishing, and to use all opportunities to attract internal and external investments in the development of these areas (Nichol 2012; *Adoption of the Law...*).

According to the 2018 report, Culture Concept of the Republic of Azerbaijan was developed to refine the European cultural-policy principles and aims to ensure the development of the Azerbaijani culture, the enhancement of Azerbaijan’s cultural policies, the strengthening of the country’s resilience against internal and external threats, the successful integration of the country into the world culture and the protection of human and civil rights and freedoms in the field of culture. The details are shown below.

‘The Culture Concept attempts to develop the mechanisms of guaranteeing [the] development of all aspects of culture, including cultural policies, such as governance, legal, financial, information, human resources, material and technical infrastructure and international cooperation, [a] high level of cultural awareness and reform of cultural heritage management mechanisms. The main policy objectives comprise the adjustment of culture policy mechanisms to [the] actual requirements and reality of this area: 1) protection of cultural heritage, 2) support and development of creative activity, with the focus on the integrity of the people, 3) promotion of identity and diversity, and participation in cultural life. [The] cultural policy objectives of the concept are implemented using the following mechanisms: 1) development of legal guarantees, 2) implementation of modern methods in culture and arts administration, 3) diversification of financing sources, 4) enhancement of information provision, 5) human resources development, 6) modernization of the material and technical bases, and 6) development of international cooperation’. (*Culture Concept...*)

The listed goals are consistent with those pursued by Austrian diplomacy in the Caucasus. Part of the bilateral cooperation for culture is carried out thanks to in-

ternational programs such as Multilaterale Auslandskulturpolitik. The most fruitful initiatives include the establishment of the UNESCO research team + UNESCOUNA archaeological team and the establishment of the Azerbaijani-Armenian archaeological team operating in the area of Nagorno-Karabakh. Under UNESCO supervision, several historical sites and a part of the cultural heritage have been distinguished (15 elements in all). A list of the intangible cultural heritage in need of urgent protection has been prepared (Österreichische UNESCO-Kommission n.d.). This list was supported by a UNESCO report (UNESCO 2022). Included in the said list are miniature art, the Chovqan game, the traditional Mugam ensembles and Shusha Historical and Architectural Reserve (*Craftsmanship and performance...*). Most of these have initiatives contributed to the development of safe tourism and the increased awareness of the region's potential (Anders, Hereźniak 2008: 69–79).

Austria awards various types of grants and scholarships. One of the most important patrons is the Austrian Agency for International Mobility and Cooperation in Education, Science and Research. For talented youth, there is also the Executive Training Program for Junior Diplomats and Civil Service Officials from the Black Sea Region and South Caucasus. In addition, funds are granted by the Nationale Kulturinstitute der Europäischen Union and the OeAD based in Baku. OeAD-GmbH has established an information office at the Azerbaijan University of Languages in Baku, Azerbaijan. The interest in cooperation, mobility and exchange between Austria and Azerbaijan is increasing; thus, the Information Office aims to advertise the study options in Austria and to explain these onsite, and to support delegations in their cooperation efforts in both directions (OeAD Website n.d.).

The main part of the Azerbaijani diplomatic activity in the field of culture involves the establishment of Azerbaijani cultural centres abroad. The overall objective of such centres is to support the bilateral and multilateral foreign cultural policy of Azerbaijan by promoting the culture and language of Azerbaijan in the host countries and creating an atmosphere of mutual understanding and cooperation among the peoples of Azerbaijan and the host states. To date, such centres have been established within the embassies of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Tashkent (Uzbekistan), Paris (France) and Vienna (Austria).

The specific objectives of the Azerbaijani cultural centres are the following: (1) to raise the awareness of the general public in the host state about the internal and external policies, culture, history, socioeconomic development and scientific/technical and tourism potentials of the Republic of Azerbaijan; (2) to provide access to books, newspapers, magazines and multimedia and cultural, scientific and technical documents of Azerbaijan to the general public in the host country; (3) to initiate and reinforce the teaching and promotion of the Azerbaijani language in the host state; (4) to participate in establishing and maintaining contacts with the citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan studying in the host state and with the citizens of the host state studying in the Republic of Azerbaijan and (5) to establish relationships with the Azerbaijanis living in the host state and to strengthen, within the limits of its authority, the development of bilateral cooperation with the host state (*Azerbaijan 2018 Report*).

The Center in Vienna is supported Azerbaijani diplomacy in promotion activity dedicated to the territories liberated in 2021. The website of the Centre is informing about funds earmarked for the restoration of infrastructure (electricity, gas, water, communications, roads, education, health, etc.), as well as cultural and historical monuments. The Centre is also trying to draw international funds for the reconstruction of the region. Declaring 2022 as the 'Year of Shusha', Azerbaijan clearly designated its priority for the upcoming year. The government of Azerbaijan is determined to rebuild and make Shusha the cultural centre of the Caucasus and uses the institutions to inform public opinion about this task (Honorary Consulate n.d.).

The Austrian Embassy in Baku promotes two programmes in the field of education and science. One of these is the Azerbaijan-Austrian Tourism Programme (AATP 2021). Since 2007, there has been cooperation between IMC FH Krems and the Azerbaijan University of Tourism and Management University. According to the curriculum of FH Krems' Executive Training Programme for Junior Diplomats and Civil Service Officials from the Black Sea Region and South Caucasus, students in Azerbaijan can obtain bachelor's or master's degrees in business in the fields of tourism and leisure management through such programme. Tourism as a recreation form and as a heritage revitalisation tool includes controversial areas such as the country's industrial or socialist past (Hall 2011).

The Diplomatic Academy of Vienna offers a 4-week special course on European and international affairs every summer. Representatives of selected countries from the Black Sea and South Caucasus are invited (Programme 2021). The cooperation is implemented through state programs on cultural activities, which are presented for endorsement by the president of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The implementation of the Culture Concept implies the involvement of local authorities, cultural institutions and civil-society organisations in the related process, and the activities of the state bodies in this area and of the foreign and local investors. The main ideas are implemented through state budget allocations and alternative financing mechanisms, and their implementation has been coordinated by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Azerbaijan (*Azərbaycan Respublikasının...* 2014).

From Austrian perspective the human rights situation in Azerbaijan remains problematic. In October and November 2020, demonstrations by the opposition and women's rights groups were dispersed by use of violence. Shortly afterwards, a rejuvenation of the apparatus was launched, initiated by resignations and reshuffles among senior officials, culminating in the appointment of Ali Asadov to the office of Prime Minister. In late November 2019, the dissolution of parliament and early elections scheduled for the beginning of 2020 were adopted (*Foreign and European Policy Report 2019...*: 44). From the point of view of economic development, the regulations on the use of Azerbaijan's economic resources should be considered in such a way that they could target state programs and strategies for regulating and organizing the use of human resources. In this regard, good practices and world experience should be developed and implemented taking into account Caucasian conditions (Namazova 2021).

The latest document on the protection of culture in an endangered region is the Resolution of the European Parliament of 10 March 2022 on the destruction of cultural heritage in Nagorno-Karabakh (European Parliament 2022). The European Parliament regarded the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group co-chairs' statement of 11 November 2021 reiterating the importance of protecting historic and cultural sites in the region. In this area, 1 456 monuments, mainly Armenian, came under Azerbaijan's control after the ceasefire of 9th November, 2020. It was mentioned in the document that a deliberate damage was caused by Azerbaijan to Armenian cultural heritage during the 2020 war, particularly during the shelling of the Gazanchi Church, the Holy Saviour/Ghazanchetsots Cathedral in Shusha/Shushi, as well as the destruction, changing of the function of, or damage to other churches and cemeteries during and after the conflict, such as Zoravor Surb Astvatsatsin Church near the town of Mekhakavan and St Yeghishe in Mataghis village in Nagorno-Karabakh were also enumerated. In this document, there were noticed that safeguarding cultural heritage has a key role in promoting lasting peace by fostering tolerance, intercultural and inter-faith dialogue and mutual understanding, as well as democracy and sustainable development. Public opinion welcomed UNESCO's proposal to send an independent expert mission and calls for it to be sent without delay. Stressed that Azerbaijan must grant unhindered access to all cultural heritage sites in order for the mission to draw up an inventory on the ground and to see what has happened to the sites. European Parliament in its resolution strongly insisted that Azerbaijan enable UNESCO to have access to the heritage sites in the territories under its control, in order to be able to proceed with their inventory and for Azerbaijan to ensure their protection. UE urged Azerbaijan to ensure that no interventions on Armenian heritage sites occur prior to a UNESCO assessment mission, and that Armenian and international cultural heritage experts are consulted prior to and closely involved during interventions on Armenian cultural heritage sites. The resolution called for the full restoration of demolished sites and for greater involvement of the international community, particularly UNESCO, in protecting the world heritage sites located in the region.

Austria may be an important political and economic partner for Azerbaijan, strengthening the tasks performed by that state in the context of international obligations. Support for the peace process in the Nagorno-Karabakh area and support for activities aimed at protecting the common heritage may visibly strengthen President Aliyev's diplomacy. As Austria's modern foreign ministry officials are more communication-focused mediators than the old-fashioned diplomats, they are using the new media in addition to the traditional media to reinforce the positive messages about Austria and its partners. It should be emphasised that it is not intended to influence only the media and political actors, but also international community.

In May 2022 the 10th meeting of the Joint Commission on Economic, Agricultural, Industrial, Technical and Technological Cooperation between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Austria was held in Baku. There was an exchange of views on the prospects for cooperation in trade, tourism and culture. Austria

was represented by Franz Wessig, co-chairman of the Joint Commission and head of the Foreign Economic Relations Group of the Federal Ministry of Digital and Economic Affairs of the Republic of Austria (Ministry of Digital Development and Transport 2022). While speaking of cooperation issues between Azerbaijan and Austria, Rashad Nabiyeu, the co-chairman of the Commission from the Azerbaijani side and Minister of Digital Development and Transport informed the Austrian delegation of the reconstruction and restoration work carried out on the territories in Nagorno-Karabakh. He said that further support for bilateral cooperation would be possible due to the document 'Azerbaijan 2030: National Priorities for Socio-Economic Development', approved by the Order of President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev in February 2021. This document highlighted the development of small and medium enterprises, export growth and the promotion of private investment as drivers of economic growth. These regulations could be important to regularly exchange information on Azerbaijani and Austrian exporters and their products and establish direct contacts between business circles. The Joint Commission serves as an effective platform to facilitate this exchange of information and establish new business relations. Furthermore the meeting discussed the current state of scientific and technical cooperation between the two countries.

SUMMARY

Austria is an example of a country that endeavours to create a positive image of itself in the world and to strengthen such image through historical politics. An effective tool for such is cultural policy, without which it is difficult to imagine a political culture today. This field requires a new self-definition corresponding to the requirements of the present day, defining the directions and methods of action by adopting appropriate legal and organisational regulations. In promoting individual countries' cultures abroad, learning the mother tongue is treated as a necessary supplement or source of income rather than as a *sine qua non*.

Austria's role in the international environment is systematically growing thanks to the country's ability to use difficult and crisis situations to achieve its own political goals. Austria's political activities since the end of the 20th century have focused on integration with the EU, cooperation with Central and Eastern Europe and participation in OSCE missions, and it has come to be known as the 'grey matter' of a neutral EU state. A definite change took place with the development of public diplomacy, the export of Austrian culture and the work on historical policy. Austria's search for new ways of development, tightening of its relations with Russia and the Balkan and Caucasian states and hostile attitude towards Turkey are not only acts of political defiance but are the results of cold calculation that will bring material benefits to the country. The generation of Austrian politicians who were particularly active in the EU forums at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries developed principles that work well in political practice and influence the development of the republic.

From Austrian perspective Azerbaijan was seen as a central transport hub on the international north-south and east-west axes of the new Silk Road. As part of the related efforts, an agreement between the port of Baku, ÖBB (Austrian Federal Railways) Rail Cargo and a Dutch group was signed in November 2019 (*Foreign and European Policy Report 2019...*: 44). The current priorities visible in Austrian-Azerbaijani relations are clustered into a few programmes: ‘Stronger Economy’, ‘Stronger Governance’, ‘Stronger Connectivity’ and ‘Stronger Society’ as well as on engagement with civil society, women empowerment and gender balance, and strategic communication. A space of political and economic stability, governmental and societal resilience against internal and external threats, and economic growth and increased prosperity close to the EU’s external borders is also in the interest of the EU as well as of Austria. Following a policy of diversification and ‘more-for-more’, the EU deals with each partner country individually and concludes agreements and work programmes based on the wishes of the country and the possibilities of the EU.

The results of the Austro-Azerbaijani cooperation in the field of culture can be observed in many areas, primarily in the protection of cultural goods and in the multilateral cooperation on the reconstruction of destroyed cultural goods. Research teams from neighbouring Caucasian countries, supported by good practices in this area coming from Europe, are of particular importance in this regard. Creation of the cultural brand of the region and promotion of the Azerbaijani cultural heritage can also be observed. Thus, not only the interest in this region is increasing, but also the interest in its centuries-old achievements. Cultural tourism and support in building infrastructure and management (especially OeAd programs) and the rise of a financing culture have also become elements of the regional identity (Ivy, Copp 1999). Observing negotiations on a comprehensive Strategic Agreement, Austria confirms that the EU-Azerbaijani relations are pursuing a moderate course of rapprochement.

In this regard, a number of priorities have been formulated in bilateral and multilateral activities. The most important ones include identifying centres that can obtain the status of a city of culture, focusing the international attention on and raising awareness of the cultural values of Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh, co-organising holidays and cultural festivals, cooperating with non-governmental and international organisations such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), using technology for the renovation of devastated objects (3D modelling, geographic information system) and helping construct information panels/boards with translations to support the development of international tourism.

The different contexts of functioning of cultural centres have already been proven to be valuable tools for promoting knowledge about the Azerbaijani culture and creativity. The numbers of tourist arrivals from the countries hosting the cultural centres have tripled since 2010, and the tourist arrivals from France, Uzbekistan and Austria totalled 27,500 in 2016 (*Azerbaijan 2018 Report*). The implementation of cooperation programs in the fields of culture, science, education, tourism and information and communication is expected to continue, and exchange of information and promotional materials in these fields is expected to be carried out. The cultural centres are

now offering Azerbaijani language courses for the locals, the diaspora and foreigners. Apart from the results obtained so far, the cultural centres are expected to further contribute to exchanges among the Azerbaijani and the host countries' artists, policy-makers and cultural workers that can potentially enhance and reinforce intercultural links and investments in the field of culture, further boost tourism and promote respect for cultural diversity (ibidem).

Austria has an enormous track record in emphasising the role of culture in the development of international relations and in creating the state's image among foreign partners, paying attention to various sources of financing and the possibility of obtaining funds during the implementation of international projects. The use of the project method can increase the number of foreign partners that can permanently cooperate in the protection and development of culture, but these activities are also perceived as creating a structure of goals and linking them with the state policy. In addition, poor economic and environmental conditions require continuous infrastructure development, which in turn requires the support of external partners. For the formation of the future political elite and the management of cultural development, an orientation towards innovation and exchange of experiences seems to be of key importance. Thus, some institutions have been organising and offering training courses and workshops for this purpose for years. Indeed, supporting culture in bilateral relations and promoting the achievements of a developing country are important for the development of civil society.

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ABSTRACT

The paper characterizes bilateral relations between Austria and Azerbaijan, with particular emphasis on culture as a field of cooperation of the two countries. Azerbaijan is an important power in the South Caucasus due to its strategic geographic location and ample energy resources, but it faces challenges to its stability, the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh included. Austrian diplomacy has long been developing relations with the Caucasus states, adopting a clear stance on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The main research problem tackled in the paper concerns the role of culture in bilateral relations between Austria and Azerbaijan.

The adopted research hypothesis focuses on the scope of support that can be extended by a country with considerable experience in the growth and promotion of its culture to a country which is in the course of developing its legal and political spheres and wishes to safeguard the role of culture in this process. The paper comprises four parts. Part one describes the tasks of Austria's public diplomacy, part two discusses the foundations of present day relations between Austria and Azerbaijan, part three highlights activities undertaken jointly by the two countries to safeguard the cultural heritage of Nagorno-Karabakh, and finally part four recaps the cultural component in bilateral relations as well as presents the currently implemented cultural and scientific projects.

The conclusions focus on the evaluation of programs, projects and legal regulations signed in the last dozen years, aimed at fostering cooperation between democratic states and a country involved in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. An additional element was the assessment of the cooperation for the protection of the cultural heritage in the conflict area. Support for cultural institutions, scholarship programs, material-heritage protection and education is the best investment in the development of the civil society in developing countries, but is also a tourism incentive and stimulates investment. The bilateral relations between Austria and Azerbaijan aim to develop democratic institutions and the civil society in Azerbaijan, support the growth of the non-oil sectors of its economy and bolster its ability to combat terrorism, trafficking and other transnational crimes.



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Kilkunastu autorów skupia uwagę na zjawiskach i procesach niezwykle istotnych dla formowania się współczesnego społeczeństwa w Polsce XX wieku, mających znaczący wpływ na jego obraz także w pierwszych dekadach XXI wieku. Procesy migracyjne na tzw. Ziemie Zachodnie i Północne po II wojnie światowej rozpoczęły zupełnie nowy etap w formowaniu się więzi i relacji w społeczeństwie polskim. Przy tym zachodziły w bardzo zróżnicowanych warunkach, które ograniczają możliwości dokonywania większych generalizacji wniosków płynących z analiz zjawisk, będących ich efektem. Już sama specyfika kulturowa poszczególnych regionów Ziem Zachodnich i Północnych stwarzała odmienne warunki bytowe dla przybywających osób. Odmienny był kontekst społeczno-kulturowy tych migracji, przykładowo bardzo specyficzny na Górnym Śląsku i Opolszczyźnie, gdzie migranci spotykali liczną ludność rodzimą, poddawaną upolitycznionej weryfikacji narodowościowej. Silnie zróżnicowani byli sami migranci ze względu na posiadany bagaż kulturowy oraz przyczyny podejmowanej wędrówki (migracje przymusowe ludności z ziem polskich przyłączonych po wojnie do ZSRR, osadnictwo wojskowe, migracje „sąsiedzkie” z terenów przygranicznych polsko-niemieckiej granicy z okresu przedwojennego). Warto wspomnieć także o konsekwencjach dywersyfikacji czasowej kolejnych fal migracyjnych.

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Książka stanowi cenny wkład do naukowej wiedzy dotyczącej procesów zachodzących na Ziemach Zachodnich i Północnych w perspektywie diachronicznej. Większość artykułów zawiera istotne dane empiryczne, uzupełniające naszą wiedzę w tym zakresie. W szczególności odnosi się to do wielu analiz w formie studiów przypadku, poświęconych społecznościom lokalnym i regionalnym. Opracowanie niewątpliwie powinno się stać lekturą obowiązkową wszystkich zainteresowanych problematyką społecznych, kulturowych i politycznych zjawisk i procesów, które zaszły i nadal zachodzą na terenach przyłączonych do Polski po II wojnie światowej.”

Dariusz Niedźwiedzki