What can we tell about the Austrian culture based on its textiles?

The Austrian culture is a very old culture, which was inspired by many different factors in the history of the nation. Austria, under the reign of the Habsburgs, was a country that had great influence on the happenings in history, such as the thirty years' war.

Austria was present throughout Europe, and so the cultures of the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Italy, Croatia, Bosnia, Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Moldova, Romania, Bulgaria, Ukraine and others are affected by Austria and also affected the Austrian culture. Further, Austria had colonies throughout Asia, including in modern day India and Indonesia, but also in Thailand. This resulted in a wide variety of different touches in the art of Austria, obviously including the textiles. However – the main influence comes from inside Austria itself, and is mainly influenced by the lower class population, such as peasants.

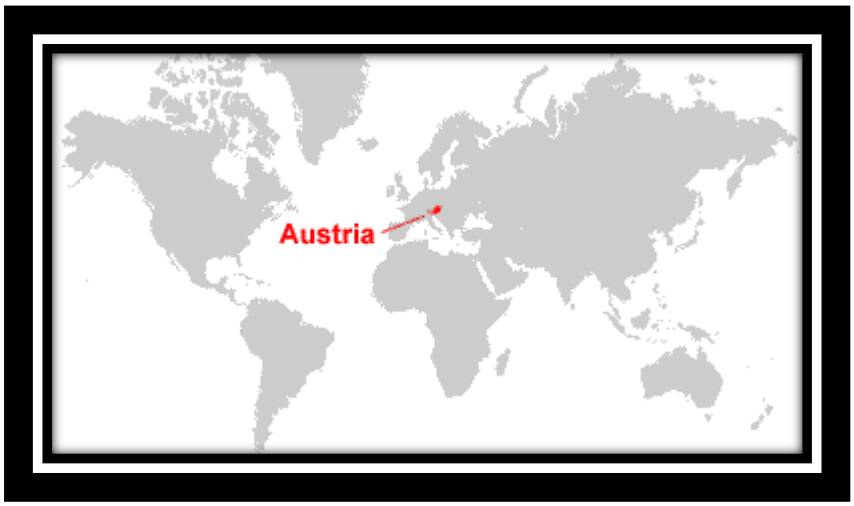
A motif that can be frequently seen in the textiles are flowers, and when you look at them a lot closer and try to find out the type of flowers that they are, you will usually find "Alpennelken" and "Edelweiß". Edelweiß is the national flower of Austria, and many people see it as a symbol for the Alps. And since about 70% of Austria is covered in mountains, it is fairly simple to see where the idea comes from. Edelweiß is a very popular flower in Austria. Before it was legally protected due to the diminishing amounts, Edelweiß was frequently picked as a present.

Also seen frequently are hearts, symbolizing the love that had a very important position in the lives of the lower class population of Austria. The farmers (and other people, such as hunters) are also often seen on the fabric. Most of the pieces of fabric have a frame which includes a repeated pattern, such as triangles. Generally, the fabric has a clearly understandable structure with different sections.



Image: Folk Art via Pinterest

As you can clearly see above, white, red and blue are typical colors for Austrian fabric.



A very depressing map.

Image: geology.com

The colors represent the national colors of Austria (red and white, which are directly related to the "landespatron" the holy Leopold). Most of the other colors represent colors commonly found in the nature – and are also mentioned in the (modern) national anthem of Austria: Land am Strome (Land by the river – Blue) /// Land der Äcker (Land of the fields – Green and Brown). The process used to create the fabric is usually embroidery.

Even though there were some mistakes in my project, mainly not drying the relief well enough, you can clearly see the motifs and colors of the Austrian culture in my piece of work /this is discussed in more detail on the paper reflection).

The colors I used were stronger than the ones used in the traditional Austrian fabric, which is quite a significant difference. Also, the two prints were not exactly aligned, leading to a kind of messay look to the print.



Works Cited

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MLA formatting by BibMe.org.