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Peter Kleier

Austria

October 18, 2017

Interview with Philip Lanzerits

The person that I have chosen to interview for this report is one of my friends and semi-family members here in Austria. His name is Philip Lanzerits, and he is the son of my step-uncle's girlfriend. We say we are step-step-cousins and then, after a time, we decided it was easier to say we were just cousins, and now we feel like family. He has shown me many things in Austria that I love and has given me insight into how a 21-year-old man lives in this city. This is a friendship I hope to keep for my entire life and it looks as though it could happen. I chose to interview Philip because we have similar interests and I think if I were to live in Austria my life would be much like his.

One of the things that we both agree on is that a startling difference between Austria and America is the hygiene, physical health, and fashion sense of Austrians to Americans. People in Vienna simply look like they take better care of themselves, which is almost the same as saying they do. When I came from Linfield, I was constantly told I was always well dressed and maintained a clean-cut look and appearance, but here in Vienna I feel like I am on the lower side of normal with the minimal amount of clothing I brought and my general style of dress. That is not to say that everyone walks around in suits and ties, but people are just more interested in walking out of the house looking put together in whatever fashion sense they admire. The great public transportation along with the lack of space has led to few people owning cars. However, they still have to get around, so foot and bike traffic is heavy. This leads to people getting out of chairs (whether inside a car or

inside the house) and moving their legs. This is probably why you notice so few obese or even plump people on the streets.

The biggest difference I would say is the schooling system and political views. The most conservative Viennese person I have met is still a relatively moderate American. You would be hard-pressed to find anyone that disagrees with the idea of free college or gay rights in Austria, not to say they do not exist, but people with those views are more accessible in the United States. The welfare state system that is incorporated is one that makes people feel more secure regardless of their socio-economic status. Unlike the United States, unemployment benefits here are very livable and lenient. This does lead to some people taking advantage of the system, but just like the US they will find that if they do that then the limit of generosity will eventually be reached and they will be out of luck.

Philip lives with his 23-year-old girlfriend Jackie in a small pleasant apartment where he works and studies for his management degree and she works and studies for her master's. The living arrangements in some parts of Austria, where I live for instance, makes you feel the age of the country. My building is older than the USA. But, in other places, you see Austria catching up to the US in terms of technology. Philip talks about how everyone looks at the US and talks about how they have all of the newest gadgets and most advanced technology. I honestly prefer the much more clean and healthy life you can receive in Austria. But, the main thing I learned from this talk was that everyone wants what they can't have. I suppose "the grass is always greener on the other side" would be the most apt way of stating my findings.