

HHY 25 (1994)

Met Lieben Gans!

Super!

part of Rijeka, which, after the Croatian-Hungarian Compromise of 1868, became "a separate body attached to the Hungarian Crown" and developed as a major seaport and industrial city. Arguing that the experience of seventeen cities and Rijeka do not give a complete picture of urban development, Vranješ-Soljan analyzes the structure of one hundred northern Croatian settlements between 1890 and 1910. She concludes that the larger cities, such as Zagreb, Osijek, and Zemun, were the main forces behind urbanization, while the smaller ones developed more slowly.

In the second chapter, the author examines the economic structure of the northern Croatian territory according to eleven branches of economic activity and the structure of population in eighteen Croatian cities including Rijeka. She concludes that the formation of a capitalistic economy in Croatian cities proceeded slowly due to the lack of industry. The predominant industrial branches in Civil Croatia at the turn of the century were related to timber and food processing. As a result, many industrial enterprises were located outside cities. For example, more than half of the industrial workers were attached to the timber industry and lived in small settlements or villages.

The author divides the Croatian cities into three groups, based on their economic character. In the first group are Karlovac, Sisak, Senj, and Bakar, whose economic prosperity depended on trade and transportation. The second group consists of the industrial centers: Zagreb, Rijeka, Osijek, Brod, Koprivnica, and Petrinja. In the third group are the artisan cities, such as Varaždin, Križevci, Bjelovar, and Požega, which did not have the strength to develop industry.

In the last chapter Vranješ-Soljan analyzes the socioeconomic structure of the ruling elites in the eighteen cities, including Rijeka, and fourteen other settlements with more than 5,000 inhabi-

tants. Here she shows how regional and municipal assemblies were organized by analyzing 1,169 representatives of these assemblies. A total of 427 lived either in cities or larger settlements. While the representatives from the bureaucracy and nobility lived mostly in cities or larger settlements, the representatives from the clergy more often lived either in small settlements or in villages.

If the book has a major shortcoming, it is that the author can provide no analysis of the ethnic composition of the Croatian population at the turn of the century because the relevant data do not exist; there are only the statistics on religious denomination and native language. Vranješ-Soljan apparently chose not to speculate about the ethnic composition of the Croatian population from such limited data.

In spite of this and some other shortcomings, the work is in many ways pioneering and represents a worthy contribution to Croatian historiography. Because it relies so heavily on statistical data, it will be useful even for historians and students who know only a little Croatian. The book is enriched by graphs, maps, and reproductions of old postcards showing cityscapes.

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SINCE 1918

Gehler, Michael. *Studenten und Politik. Der Kampf um die Vorherrschaft an der Universität Innsbruck 1918-1938.* Innsbrucker Forschungen zur Zeitgeschichte, vol. 6. Innsbruck: Haymon-Verlag, 1990. Pp. 591, illus.

Zoitl, Helge. "Student kommt von Studieren!" *Zur Geschichte der Sozialdemokratischen Studentenbewegung in*

Wien. Materialien zur Arbeiterbewegung, vol. 62. Vienna and Zurich: Ludwig Boltzmann Institut für Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung/Europaverlag, 1992. Pp. 504, illus.

One of the most encouraging aspects of the historical profession in contemporary Austria, its energetic probing of the nature and origins of antidemocratic and anti-Semitic thoughts and actions, has produced a growing number of books and articles. In recent years a significant series of monographic studies, almost exclusively written by younger scholars, has provided us with detailed investigations of the First Republic and the era of Dollfuß-Schuschnigg Austrofascism that should serve in the near future to stimulate the writing of grand syntheses placing Austrian contemporary history in the context of post-1914 European and global developments. The books under review bring us closer to the point where microcosmic studies end and synthetic works should be possible, for in each case a detailed case study provides the reader with a massive amount of historical detail—a surfeit of riches that forces one to ask the question, “What larger problems do these facts point to?” In both volumes, the heart of the problem is Austria’s agonizingly difficult post-1918 adjustment to postimperial status, particularly for its most vulnerable social strata, the new state’s *Bürgertum*.

The social group long noted for its extreme susceptibility to right-radical tendencies, students, only began to be studied from a critical perspective in the 1970s, largely as a result of Erika Weinzierl’s 1968 University of Salzburg inaugural lecture, which called for serious investigation of the virulently antidemocratic traditions of Austrian institutions of higher learning (*Hochschulen*). By the late 1980s, a number of scholars, including Gernot Heiß, Brigitte Licht-

enberger-Fenz, Sebastian Meissl, Oliver Rathkolb, Willi Weinert, and Helge Zoitl, had written insightful articles and a few books tracing the growth of the militantly antidemocratic spirit that dominated Austrian higher education for the better part of a century. Thus it was hardly a surprise for morally sensitive Austrians when, largely due to the Waldheim affair of 1986 and the Anschluss commemorations of 1988, the long-suppressed issue of their nation’s complicity in the crimes of the National Socialist era burst in their midst. A steady stream of studies of the twists and turns of academic politics now serves to provide us with keys to understanding the culture of intolerance that made Nazism palatable among significant numbers of the educated elite of post-Habsburg republican Austria.

Begun as a massive dissertation two decades ago at the University of Salzburg, the Zoitl book is a study of the Social Democratic student movement in Vienna from its foundation in the early 1890s to the mid-1920s, when it had become an established part of the student landscape, particularly at the University of Vienna. Of particular interest in the author’s detailed study of the early years of Social Democratic student organizations are the instances of often intense faculty hostility toward the numerically insignificant groupings of idealistic young men and women. The fact that a significant percentage—very likely the majority at any one time—of “red” students were of Jewish origins only strengthened the resolve of some senior faculty members and their *Burschenschaft* allies to destroy such an “un-German” body on Viennese academic soil. Socialist students at the University of Vienna, whose organization was born in 1889 with the name *Österreichischer Studentenverein* (changed in 1893 to *Freie Vereinigung*), remained a tiny minority numbering at most a few dozen militants supported by several hundred

sympathizers. Their weakness was revealed by the Badeni crisis of 1897, when they attempted to both preach and practice national conciliation but found themselves utterly swamped by a brutal eruption of *deutschnational* chauvinism. Not only were they ignored by the great majority of students, the *Rektor* of the University banned their posters and prohibited their meetings.

The fact that in these, its cradle years, the *Freie Vereinigung* included among its leadership cadre such intellectual luminaries as the future Austro-Marxist theorists Max Adler and Rudolf Hilferding did little to make it popular with the great majority of Viennese students. While many students were indifferent to politics, concentrating their energies on earning their degrees and thus gaining qualifications for entrance into the professions or the bureaucracy, a violence-prone Pan-German minority, almost invariably supported by the *Rektor* and the bulk of the faculty, totally dominated the university and all of the other *Hochschulen* in Vienna. Consequently, socialist and liberal students found themselves isolated and ostracized, a situation that did not begin to improve until November 1918, when the proclamation of the Republic appeared to signal the birth of a new and progressive age.

Zoitl's book shows in painstaking detail how these dreams were only partially realized in the first half of the 1920s, a traumatic period for the independent Austrian state and a tumultuous time for students whose socialist ideals continued to be rejected by their academic peers. On many occasions Social Democratic student gatherings were banned on the flimsiest of pretexts, while at the same time *deutschnational* rowdies were rarely if ever punished for organizing bloody riots directed against their Jewish and "Marxist" fellow-students. A burden added to the unrelenting discrimination against leftist stu-

dents was the lukewarm support they usually received from the leadership of the Social Democratic party. Austrian socialism had a long tradition of anti-intellectualism, which in practice meant that the embattled academics could count on little support from their party's power elite, some of whom remained suspicious of young idealistic men and women from wealthy bourgeois Jewish homes who had never worked with their hands. Superbly researched and clearly organized, this monograph still reads too much like the dissertation it was based on, so that its rather flat style tends to drain the blood from the inherent drama and human interest of the tragic events it has dissected in such minute detail. Perhaps an imaginative novelist, playwright, or film director will one day use these data to present a stirring dramatization showing how the spirit of youthful idealism was unable to halt the flood tide of fascism in interwar Austria. Until that time, this book will serve as a warning of how easily rational and humane ideals can fail in a society deeply rooted in fear and hatred.

Michael Gehler's study of the political climate at the University of Innsbruck during the First Austrian Republic is a model of how a study of provincial history should be written. Never losing sight of the larger picture, Gehler remains master of his exhaustively researched sources (including fraternity archives), using them to make a strong case for the phenomenon of "anti-Semitism without Jews" that dominated the political culture of the University of Innsbruck after 1918. Among the many violent protests mounted by reactionary Innsbruck students during the interwar decades, one of the first and in many ways most significant was the one that took place in February 1920 to protest the visit of Vienna's acerbic literary dictator, Karl Kraus. Stylistically superior to the Zoitl study, the Gehler book makes a powerful case for the thesis that Inns-

bruck's situation as a borderland after 1918 greatly contributed to the irrational spirit that permeated all aspects of academic life, and facilitated the growth of the most extreme ideology of racial exclusivity and national revenge, Hitlerism. We are thus not surprised at a certain point in his study when it is revealed that one of the Nazi student leaders of the early 1930s, Irmfried Eberl, went on in the Third Reich to become the first commandant of the horrific Treblinka extermination camp.

Gehler's clear account of Karl Kraus's visit and other similar incidents provides tangible evidence of the intensity of academic anti-Semitism in an environment where Jews were hated not as real, living individuals, but rather as symbols of all that was destructive and threatening in the contemporary world. He shows in convincing detail how these raw prejudices evolved in the 1920s toward an aggressive National Socialism that made the University of Innsbruck a veritable fortress of fascism by the early 1930s. One looks forward to a study of similar quality that examines another notoriously Nazified borderland institution, the University of Graz. This book marks an auspicious debut for a young Austrian historian who should have important things to say in the future on the theme of how an all-pervasive antidemocratic Weltanschauung dominated the academic bourgeoisie of Central Europe from the 1870s to 1945. Both the Gehler and Zoitl studies are one more sign that contemporary history in Austria has finally come of age.

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Goldinger, Walter, and Dieter Binder. *Geschichte der Republik Österreich 1918–1938*. Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1992. Pp. 333. öS 480.

When Walter Goldinger produced the original version of this work in 1962, it

constituted a significant contribution to our understanding of the history of the First Austrian Republic. While Dieter A. Binder's recent reworking of this text will not revolutionize the field owing to the very nature of the project, it is nevertheless an important and valuable work that will be of broad interest to students, scholars, teachers, and others interested in a concise account of one of the most troubled periods in Austrian history. It offers an informed reader, as well as one new to the subject, a coherent interpretation of the continuities and discontinuities of Austrian history in the interwar era.

Binder, a scholar at the Institute for History at the Karl-Franzens University in Graz, has painstakingly brought Goldinger's text up to date by carefully integrating into it new scholarship and new interpretations of major developments. In doing so, Binder has preserved Goldinger's straightforward, matter-of-fact tone, well-metered pace, and carefully balanced treatment of the subject matter. Although only slightly longer than the 1962 edition (304 pages of text versus 296 pages in the original), Binder's reworked version includes more detailed information throughout and strongly reflects new research on the strengths and shortcomings of the Social Democratic party, the role of Engelbert Dollfuß, the Heimwehr, and the Civil War. Whereas the original version extends past the Anschluss to include treatment of the period 1938 to 1945 and the first years of the Second Republic, Binder has excised these sections in an effort to provide greater cohesion to the book—a judgment call that makes sense in light of the growing body of literature on those eras. Regrettably, however, Binder has also done away with a dense and well-presented section on intellectual developments in interwar Austria that served as a neat introduction to some of the major figures of the time and that could have been further developed