



Günter Bischof, Anton Pelinka, Hermann Denz, eds. *Religion in Austria*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2005. 297 pp. \$40.00 (paper), ISBN 978-0-7658-0823-3.



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Secularization, History, and Religion

Secularization theory argued that a decline in religious belief would follow modernization. *Religion in Austria* brings together topical essays, a roundtable discussion, fora from the 2003 German Studies Association, review essays and book reviews which all tend to dispute the secularization theory. These materials address not only historically predominant Roman Catholicism, but the position of Judaism and Islam in Austrian society throughout various historical time periods as well.

Part 1 of the volume, "Topical Essays," contains a particularly useful set of articles. John W. Boyer's essay addresses the role of political Catholicism in Austrian state-building, taking the long view over the tumultuous 1880s-1960s. Taking an even longer view, Paul M. Zulehner begins his essay with the dramatic Counter-Reformation decree of 1527, the "Law to Stamp Out and Punish Heresy" (p. 37). Zulehner argues that Austria became, once again, a re-Catholicized country, replete with Catholic culture. He asserts that with the modernization of the Austrian nation, however, the social position of the Church began to change gradually, bringing about a withdrawal from political life until a sur-

vey taken in 2000 revealed that 80 percent of Austrians believed that "church leaders should not try to influence the government in its decision-making" (p. 39). Zulehner uses statistical data and surveys to reveal the modern Austrian as someone who generally believes in some higher presence, and he links this belief to behavior at elections, gender, morality, and lifestyle choices. He demonstrates that despite the withdrawal of the Church from State relations, secularization has had only a limited impact and that religion still plays a role in both private and public life choices. Building on this theme, Sieglinde K. Rosenberger's essay addresses the significant role religion still plays in both creating tensions in society as well as providing religiously inspired policies. Using statistical data, Rosenberger examines various political parties in modern-day Austria and their position (if any) on religion. Rosenberger identifies an upsurge in the use of religious rhetoric and warns of an increased tension based on differences in culture and religious identity as the European Union ponders admission for predominantly non-Christian countries such as Turkey. Susanne Heine's essay addresses just this issue when she examines the real tensions between Christians and Muslims in

Austria. She traces the presence of Muslims in Austria up to the present day, examines the self-understanding of Muslims, and looks at integration policies. Particularly useful is her analysis of Austrian textbooks that tend to perpetuate myths and stereotypes about Muslims. In her estimation, if nothing changes with regards to images of Islam, problems will continue to mount as the opportunity for common understanding between Christianity and Islam becomes inexorably smaller. Offering hopefulness regarding understanding and civility, Regina Polak's interview with Bishop Helmut KrÃ¶tzel comes to a close with the following observation: "[W]e must look at this pluralistic society not as a threat, but as a challenge, and then form a consciousness that views what the Church has to offer * as a service to society—not in a servile way, but for our living together as something necessary in part for the survival of society" (p. 98).

Part 2 of the volume is a roundtable discussion featuring the remarks of Cardinal Christoph SchÃ¶nborn, Michael BÃ¼nker, Anas Schakfeh, and Rabbi Paul Chaim Eisenberg. Each essay addresses the position of the specific religious group in Austria—Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, and Jews. A common theme running through each essay is the need for understanding and what BÃ¼nker refers to as a "self-taming" of religious groups in order to promote the existence of a peaceful society (p. 148). Cardinal SchÃ¶nborn quotes Viktor Frankl's insight: "Since Auschwitz we know what man is capable of and since Hiroshima we know what is at stake" (p. 136). Rabbi Eisenberg adds to this mood with his statement that Austria, in order to be more accepting of its culturally diverse groups, must also move forward in its acceptance of its past.

Forum 1 and Forum 2 work to address just that past to which Rabbi Eisenberg was speaking. In Forum I, the position of Austrian officials both in the past and in the present is examined regarding art theft and looting during World War II. As Austria served as a model for the "Aryanization" of Jewish property, it still serves as an example of art restitution. Each essay (originally presented at the German Studies Association) analyzes Nazi policies, Austrian complicity with many of these policies, and the current debates about restitution. Jonathan

Petropoulos argues that Austria is coming closer to dealing with its past in that it has pressured local, state, and private institutions to make amends for the theft of Jewish-owned art (p. 213). He also mentions that, although progress has been made, much work remains to be done.

Forum 2 also seeks to address the issue of acceptance of Austria's past. This fascinating series of essays examines the difference between family memories of National Socialism and the national construction of memory (p. 215). Margit Reiter's essay looks at the "victim myth" (i.e., that Austrians were Hitler's "first victims") and its relationship to second-generation Austrians. Reiter has found that children of former Nazi parents are entangled in a conflict between emotional connections with their parents, the desire to defend their parents' reputations, and ambivalent feelings about the "real" facts of the Austrian Nazi past. Helga Embacher's work on philosemitism in the second generation echoes Reiter's research by showing how silences about family members' potentially guilty pasts can lead some individuals to a crisis in their own identity. Daniela Ellmauer's work goes beyond the second generation to the grandchildren of the World-War-II family members. Her work in the reconstruction of family memory and its functions in the family has revealed that third generation children tend to be more willing to accept their grandparents' guilt because most of them tend to see their grandparents' actions as "necessary to their survival" (p. 245). Like Reiter, Ellmauer argues that many grandchildren feel a fierce need to protect "Grandpa" when atrocity stories are circulating. Ellmauer ends with a call to historians to fill in the absences regarding the role of perpetrators so "Grandpa's" actions can be seen within a larger context.

The final portion of the volume contains review essays, book reviews, and the annual review of Austrian political elections.

This is an extremely useful volume, particularly for anyone interested in secularization theory, church-state interaction, or the role that religion can still play in informing modern citizens' choices and attitudes towards state policy.

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