

dynamics which shaped their development.

While a wide readership of this book is deserved, it is likely to attract mainly the interest of Massachusetts' academics and higher education specialists. The prose is lucid but overly tame and at times plodding. Freeland's coverage of the turbulent student movement of the late '60s, for example, is distinctly understated. At Brandeis, he writes, "these were not calm times—they included a bank robbery and a murder involving radical Brandeis students—but [President] Schottland kept the university functioning and relatively stable" (p. 233). With raw material like that, any writer who does not enliven the text of his very large book might expect a small audience. Those readers who do persist will be rewarded for their labours.

Paul Axelrod
York University

Elmar Lechner, H. Rumpler, and H. Zdarzil, eds. *Zur Geschichte des oesterreichischen Bildungswesens: Probleme und Perspektiven der Forschung (On the History of Austria's Education System: Research Problems and Perspectives)*. Vienna: Verlag der oesterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1992. Pp. 532.

In late 1988, the Austrian Academy of Science convened a conference on the history of Austria's education

system, and the present volume contains most of the papers submitted for the symposium. Since scholars from neighbouring countries had also been invited to discuss their views on congruencies and interdependencies with Austrian educational history, the scope of the contributions is far-reaching, covering methodological problems of historical research, historiography, and historical periodization in Austria as well as several other countries. In addition, the history of certain educational institutions and personalities is dealt with extensively.

Of the twenty-one papers published in this book, six were written by scholars from the German Democratic Republic, the USSR, Yugoslavia, Italy, the Federal Republic of Germany, and Hungary. The first cluster of articles focuses on the methodology of educational historiography, whereas the second part comprises specific aspects of historical research. Here, issues of Austrian educational institutions form the essence of the presentations. The geographical range of topics is expanded in part three where the contributors from abroad discuss questions of inter-relationships between their own countries and Austria. In the final portion of the book, Austrian historians elaborate on selected and characteristic problems in education during particular periods of Austrian history. Most of the authors occupy university positions in departments of history of education.

Unless North American readers have a solid command of the German language, they will experience difficulties in working their way through the book despite the fact that the edi-

tors have provided an English table of contents and twelve pages of English abstracts of the individual papers. Very much unlike their North American colleagues, many European historians tend to use language, especially syntax, in almost ornamental ways, which, at times, obstructs easy access to meaning.

Of greatest interest to historians of education in general is probably the first part of the book. Here, conceptual problems in identifying universally acceptable periods of European educational history are explored. For instance, Engelbrecht (Vienna) introduces the term *Schwelldwert* (threshold value) for determining the point in time when a new historical period has clearly established itself. Goenner (Salzburg) argues that education as part of culture has always been a multifaceted phenomenon, and therefore historians of education can only grasp educational movements and institutions fully if they apply a "transdisciplinary methodology" and seek "interdisciplinary cooperation with other sciences." In this way, a greater horizontal perspective is reached in what might otherwise be a narrow vertical (or longitudinal) account.

The paper by Hofman (Halle) is of interest for a different reason. As one of the leading educational historians of the German Democratic Republic, his presentation is possibly one of the last international contributions given before the collapse of the GDR. Still reflecting the historical-materialist school of thought, his paper impresses by its scholarly tenor and is devoid of the ideological rhetoric which had in past decades been so characteristic of

East German historiography. This "new" style was perhaps foreshadowing the emerging change in the political climate of the late 1980s.

Schoeler (Klagenfurt) makes a case for extending the history of education beyond institutions and theories of education and for including the historical analysis of pedagogical and didactic school practices. He argues that historical events as well as socio-political tensions influence and shape what is happening in schools at times to a much greater extent than the mental constructs that are the hallmark of educational theory.

Most of the other papers are probably of interest to specialists in Austrian educational history only, covering topics such as the history of the Austrian *gymnasium*, of vocational and trade schools, of physical education, but also highlighting the intellectual contributions made by particular scholars. The papers written by authors from abroad mainly deal with the impact of Austrian education on their countries during the Hapsburg Empire.

One paper, however, deserves to be discussed more fully because of its potential significance for Canadian historiography. Heiss (Vienna) focuses in his exploration of *Education of Political Elites in Early Modern Times* on the tension between historians who consciously avoid involvement in political issues and the need to incorporate in historical studies the self-serving interests of political elites in order to develop a comprehensive understanding of historical trends and changes.

Heiss identifies three causal factors for the demand among social and political elites for more and better schooling: the *Verrechtlichung*, i.e. the increasing rule of law in social life; the *Verwissenschaftlichung*, i.e., the penetration of modern life by scientific thought; and *Professionalisierung*, i.e., the growing importance of professional training for positions in public or governmental bureaucracies. It was by pursuing these avenues that members of the Austrian nobility could escape the whims of their absolutist rulers who, in conjunction with the power of the Catholic church, could otherwise control their loyalties through the granting or withholding of favours, such as patronage appointments to public offices.

The link between Heiss' study and Canadian history is Lawrence Stone, who, in his research of the educational revolution in England (1560-1640), established the foundation for Heiss' arguments. Pursuing this line of research might shed new light on Canada's early social and political history when the English influence on Canadian education was particularly strong.

Within the European context, this book certainly has its place, especially in view of the search for a common basis for a new European education system. An examination of the educational histories of the member states of the European community might identify common elements and patterns on which new traditions can be built. Non-European readers, on the other hand, will find many of the papers to be of only marginal interest, given the comparatively narrow focus of the majority of its contributions.

Werner Stephan

The University of Saskatchewan

Nicole Laurin, Danielle Juteau, et Lorraine Duchesne. *À la recherche d'un monde oublié. Les communautés religieuses de femmes au Québec de 1900 à 1970.* Montréal, Le Jour, Editeur, 1991. 424 p.

Dès la page couverture, l'ouvrage plaît, agrémenté de la très belle illustration de Jean-Paul Lemieux. Puis, petit à petit, on s'imprègne de la démarche fort ambitieuse des auteures de cet ouvrage passionnant. Audacieuse, cette entreprise est presque démentuelle à première vue, soit reconstituer le travail des religieuses au Québec pour une période s'échelonnant sur près de trois-quart de siècle. Pour ce faire, il fallait constituer un fichier de plusieurs milliers de religieuses de différentes communautés, avec les difficultés d'échantillonnage que cela comporte, les données manquantes, sans compter l'art de se faire ouvrir les portes etc.

L'ouvrage se divise en treize chapitres. Les quatre premiers relatent les difficultés et les péripéties, les joies et les frustrations qu'ont connues les membres de l'équipe dans leur recherche de ce monde oublié des communautés religieuses. Les autres chapitres abordent la structure et l'évolution de la main-d'oeuvre religieuse, les entrées et les sorties, l'origine ethnique et familiale, l'origine de classe et l'origine socio-géographique des re-