

The Habsburg Empire under Siege: Ottoman Expansion and Hungarian Revolt in the Age of Grand Vizier Ahmed Köprülü (1661–76)

By Georg B. Michels. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2021. Pp. 608. Hardback C\$85.00. ISBN: 978-0228005759.

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This book pieces together the complex story of two popular revolts against the Habsburgs in Upper Hungary in response to the Habsburg-led Counterreformation. Georg Michels uses an impressive range of archival and printed sources in German, Hungarian, Latin, Italian, and Dutch to reconstruct how noblemen, ordinary townsfolk, and peasants rejected the agents of Emperor Leopold I and placed their hopes in the Ottoman Sultan Mehmed IV. Michels uncovers how the thirteen counties which bordered on Ottoman territories and the tributary state of Transylvania were the epicenters of trans-imperial networks of rebels, who took advantage of the increasing fragmentation of Habsburg power in Hungary to orchestrate a large-scale and bloody rebellion.

Chapter one narrates the broader chronology, imperial grand strategies, and logics of survival that put the Habsburgs in a defensive position against expanding Ottoman power. Chapter two explains the effects of these developments on the Hungarian borderlands. After unanswered appeals to their king for protection, many ordinary people turned to local Ottoman administrators to address their concerns. Instead of sending support, the Habsburgs began a crackdown on Protestantism in the frontier garrisons. These two contextual chapters set the scene for the remainder of the book, which examines the details of the anti-Habsburg rebellions in 1670 and 1672 and their aftermaths.

Chapters three, four, and five focus in on the rebellion of 1670, in which a Protestant noble conspiracy developed into a massive popular uprising that quickly led to the collapse of Habsburg power. The dramatic success of the rebels was due to the flight of Upper Hungary's top military officials, mutinies of border fortresses, and the collapse of local administration. Yet while there was a widespread understanding that the rebels' pledges of allegiance qualified them as Ottoman subjects, Sultan Mehmed IV never came to their rescue. Instead, the Habsburg court began a bloody extermination of the rebels and doubled down on re-Catholicization efforts, further consolidating popular alienation.

Chapter six examines the trans-imperial communication networks that connected the rebels to exile communities in the aftermath of 1670, which paved the way for the 1672 revolt. In chapter seven, Michels recounts how a rebel army, assisted by Ottoman troops, defeated the Habsburg army in 1672, which ushered in a bloody retaliation against Habsburg loyalists and agents of the Catholic Church. This temporary presence of troops fighting together did not amount to full Ottoman support of the rebels and, again, the Habsburgs restored a semblance of control within a few months through massacres and executions.

Finally, chapter eight surveys the uneasy aftermath of the revolts, with the exiled rebels continuing to gather support and the threat of an Ottoman invasion looming. The unexpected death of the Ottoman grand vizier Ahmed Köprülü, described in the final paragraphs, led to the sudden end of large-scale altercations and bought the Habsburgs time to prepare for the well-studied Habsburg offensive that dominated the final decades of the seventeenth century.

The extensive endnotes are impressive in their depth and reveal the meticulous work of a scholar who has spent years immersed in the archives. The events reconstructed from these materials were shrouded in secrecy and deliberately obscured by the agents involved, which created a major analytical challenge. This makes the work Michels undertook all the more impressive. The book is at its strongest when the narrative pauses to address these issues and assess the nature and contents of several contradictory sources. Some may find the selected phrases and words frequently reproduced in their original languages a distraction. Though experts in the field will welcome Michels' precision, students without a working knowledge of German, Latin, Italian, and Hungarian might be intimidated by these insertions.

This deep archival work lays the foundation for future studies, many of which are suggested by Michels in the conclusion. That ordinary Hungarians sought their fortunes with the Ottoman sultan rather than the Habsburg emperor may come as a surprise to those unfamiliar with the complicated positions taken by the residents of the former Kingdom of Hungary in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The romanticized popular rebels described by Michels are known in Hungarian historiography as the legendary *kuruc* freedom fighters. They were a staple of twentieth-century nationalist children's literature and textbooks. In subsequent studies, an important task will be to disentangle the complicated positions occupied by these and other similar rebels in the collective memory of the region. A related task that remains for future scholars is the reconstruction of popular attempts to become subjects of the sultan before and after these revolts. Indeed, archival sources reveal the willingness of Hungarian and Transylvanian noblemen and commoners to shift their allegiance to the sultan throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Another important topic for further research is the Ottoman perspective on these events, highlighted by Michels himself as a necessary complement to his own outstanding piece of scholarship.

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Protestantischer König im Heiligen Reich. Brandenburg-preussische Reichs- und Konfessionspolitik im frühen 18. Jahrhundert

By Renate Wieland. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2020. Pp. 570. Paperback €119.00. ISBN: 978-3428152674.

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Three hundred years ago, in the early 1720s, the Holy Roman Empire stood on the verge of a civil war. Originating from confessional disputes within the Rhenish Palatinate, the Catholic emperor and his allies faced a more or less united Protestant front with Brandenburg-Prussia and Hanover-England at its head. While the war could eventually be avoided, the political strife before and after this major confessional crisis laid important foundations for the rise of the Hohenzollern state as first and foremost an opponent of the Habsburgs in the empire.

This important book derives from a doctoral dissertation at the University of Freiburg. It analyses the pre-history of the well-known Prussian-Austrian dualism of the eighteenth