

Review

Reviewed Work(s): Habsburgs and Ottomans between Vienna and Belgrade (1683-1739). by
Ivan Parvev

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Habsburgs and Ottomans between Vienna and Belgrade (1683–1739). By Ivan Parvev. East European Monographs, no. 431. Boulder, Colo.: East European Monographs, 1995. Dist. Columbia University Press. xviii, 345 pp. Bibliography. Index. Hard bound.

This volume is both remarkable and disappointing. What makes it remarkable is that it was presented and accepted as a doctoral dissertation in communist-ruled Bulgaria in spite of being free of any ideological and national bias. Based on thorough research using a wide selection of primary and secondary sources in languages ranging from Latin and German to Turkish and Russian, *Habsburgs and Ottomans between Vienna and Belgrade* is a successful attempt at objective historical scholarship.

What makes the study disappointing is the translation into English, which is grammatically and syntactically below even a minimal acceptable standard. The translator's name is not given, but the editor assigned by the publisher is as much to blame as the unknown creator of this version of English is. The absence of a truly useful index and the problem of geographic names that are clearly incorrect add to the technical shortcomings.

According to Parvev, Habsburg-Ottoman relations can be grouped into three distinctive periods: 1526–1683, during which the Ottoman military dominated; 1683–1739, when the forces were about equal in strength; 1739–1791, when the Habsburgs gained the advantage. The study deals with the second of these periods, and its major aim is to show how the three major wars of these years affected the people of the Balkans. Not only are the military aspects of the Habsburg-Ottoman conflict presented, this work also deals with diplomacy and does not neglect the two empires' problems with other powers.

To the English-language reader the description of the military and diplomatic events adds nothing that is not already well known from other studies, but the material dealing with the contributions and reactions of the Balkan people offers much that was neglected or only mentioned in passing in earlier works. This information makes it worth reading this study. For the Bulgarian reader, this work reveals what went on in the minds of the policymakers in Vienna and Istanbul without embellishing their decisions with conjectures concerning the fate of the people of the Balkans.

A short introduction is followed by three distinct parts. The first, consisting of three chapters, deals with the period from the second Ottoman attack on Vienna to the peace treaty of Sremski Karlovci. The four chapters of the second section take the story from 1700 to the Peace of Belgrade. In the three chapters of the third part, Parvev attempts to place the events he has discussed into a theoretical framework. This is the least successful segment of the volume, which ends with a short conclusion.

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Jugoslawien und Österreich 1918–1938: Bilaterale Aussenpolitik im europäischen Umfeld. By Arnold Suppan. Veröffentlichungen des Österreichischen Ost- und Südosteuropainstituts, vol. 14. Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik; Munich: Verlag Oldenbourg, 1996. 1,346 pp. Bibliography. Index. Plates. Maps. Hard bound.

This work is a monumental study of an often overlooked dimension of central and east central European international relations between the world wars. Historians have given much attention to German and Italian foreign policy, the Little Entente, and the relations of the various east central European states with the west European powers, but this is the first major book on Yugoslav-Austrian relations. The Viennese historian Arnold Suppan has conducted extensive archival research in Austria, the former Yugoslavia, the Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, and Britain and has consulted a large body of printed sources in German, Serbo-Croatian, Czech, French, Italian,