

and does provide an alternative to the narrative of success so often found in the literature on the Counter Reformation in Austria.

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

**Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2021. Pp. 608.**

William D. Godsey

Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, Austria

Email: [William.Godsey@oeaw.ac.at](mailto:William.Godsey@oeaw.ac.at)

This splendid study effectively rewrites the history of Habsburg-Ottoman, Habsburg-Hungarian, and Ottoman-Hungarian relations at a crucial time. It does so through a transimperial perspective that exposes the porosity and fluidity of the Upper Hungarian borderlands and through a microhistorical approach that keeps ordinary people firmly in focus. A map of Tripartite Hungary in the opening pages helpfully evokes the deeply entangled borderlands in which Georg Michels's story takes place. Rather than the impassably bastioned frontier that representations of the area often suggest, this map employs shaded dots and other strategies to indicate the extent to which Ottoman power and influence extended far into Royal Hungary, in places nearly reaching the Moravian, Silesian, and Polish borders—and Vienna. The chosen time frame also provides a new angle. Most of Ahmed Köprülü's grand vizierate fell between the Ottoman-Habsburg war of 1663/4 and the Ottoman siege of Vienna in 1683, events that historians have usually seen as evidence of progressive Turkish decline. Hence there seemed little need to look more closely at the Köprülü years, a serious deficit that this work vigorously helps to correct.

In other ways this study positions itself over against prevailing national historiographies that have hardly allowed for the interaction of Turks and Hungarians and emphasized the narrative of Hungarian liberation from purportedly oppressive Ottoman rule. On key issues, such as popular discontent and Ottoman power, Michels has excavated works of older scholarship that notably “have not entered the dominant historiographical discourse” (39). While inspired by these works, his account rests firmly on the original testimony of more than 1,500 witnesses to the unrest in Hungary, which was subject to extensive official investigation. To corroborate the veracity of this inquisitorial record, the author drew on a wide array of other sources, including undercover and military reports, diplomatic dispatches (papal, Venetian, Dutch, etc.), and correspondence and further material pertaining to Ottoman and Transylvanian actors. Perhaps needless to say, the command of languages required to digest these sources is formidable.

On this impressive theoretical and empirical basis, this study opens up four major new historical perspectives. The first concerns the radical shift of power relations toward the Ottomans. Where a historical consensus has obtained that the sultan's power receded after the Treaty of Vasvár (1664), Michels shows that the “Habsburgs found themselves confronted with dangers not experienced since the mid-sixteenth century” (40). Large parts of the border defense system lay in ruins; key fortresses such as Varad and Uyvar had passed into Ottoman hands; and the treaty left borders between the two empires mostly undefined. By the later 1660s a growing sense of uncertainty and panic dominated the councils of Vienna. Second, the author reinterprets the nature of Habsburg government in Hungary. It was not a desire to smash Hungarian autonomy and impose absolutism, but rather the acute Ottoman threat that proved decisive in shaping the relations between Leopold I and his Hungarian subjects. Vienna saw the kingdom's many Protestants as an Ottoman fifth column. The

government's "virulent animosity against the Ottomans" (169) in turn drove a vicious policy of Counter Reformation within Royal Hungary. A devastating picture of Habsburg misrule emerges from the pages of this book, one even more astounding given the fact that "the vast majority of soldiers manning Hungary's fortresses [and hence defending the Habsburg empire] were either Lutherans or Calvinists" (199). One is reminded of certain twentieth-century regimes that wasted precious resources in wartime on the persecution and destruction of segments of their own populations.

Third, the history of Hungarian revolt acquires both a new scope and chronology. The growing Hungarian rage at the relentless religious oppression and the reign of "Habsburg army terror" (84) in Upper Hungary finally exploded for the first time in April 1670. It was this uprising, characterized by mass mutinies and the dissolution of the Habsburg military in Upper Hungary, that "ushered in more than four decades of active resistance and revolt in the Hungarian lands of the Habsburg monarchy" (102). It appears to have led to the total, if temporary, collapse of Habsburg power in the area. Where the rebellion of 1670 has drawn almost no attention from later commentators, the much better known revolt of 1672 has famously gone down in history as the "Wesselényi Conspiracy," implying a relatively narrow affair orchestrated by a few magnates. As described in some of this study's most compelling passages, the revolt in fact constituted "one of the great unwritten dramas of European history: a mass revolt of huge proportions" directed against the Habsburg occupation regime (252). It was the other side of a brutal religious war. Most of the perpetrators were soldiers and peasants, but the author shows that the representatives of many other social groups partook of what was essentially mass anti-Catholic violence.

Fourth, widespread hopes of salvation by the Ottomans triggered the revolts of both 1670 and 1672. The Hungarians were not the only ones who lived in expectation: the Habsburg authorities subsisted in the same years in dread fear of an Ottoman attack. The hopes on the Hungarian side were nurtured by intense "trans-imperial networks" (210) that connected Hungarian malcontents to both Turks and Transylvanians. With some reason, many Hungarians regarded the sultan as a better protector of religious and other freedoms than the Habsburgs; there were aspirations of a tributary state along Transylvanian lines. The view advanced by Michels that pro-Ottoman sentiment was common in Hungary is thoroughly convincing, even as the Hungarian tragedy might also be cast as the story of a people with the misfortune to have been caught between two ruthless imperial powers. If the Ottomans deservedly come away in a much more positive light than was the case in previous accounts, their policy seems no more to have been guided by Hungarian hopes than the Habsburg one was. One of this study's great strengths is indeed the attention given to wild rumor and wishful thinking in galvanizing pro-Ottoman sentiment in Hungary. The ambitious, engagingly written combination of popular and imperial history on the fault lines of one of the early modern world's great rivalries qualifies this book at all events as an exciting contribution to knowledge.

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## Kendrick, Robert L. *Fruits of the Cross: Passiontide Music Theater in Habsburg Vienna*

Oakland: University of California Press, 2019. Pp. 220.

Erin Lambert

University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia, USA  
Email: [eml7f@virginia.edu](mailto:eml7f@virginia.edu)

Robert Kendrick's book reveals the many meanings of the *sepolcro*, a genre of musical drama that was the innovation of the Habsburg court in Vienna in the second half of the seventeenth century. Performed on