

Review

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

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restructure the industry after the allied victory of 1945, though the workers' leaders' clear preference for nationalization failed to convert Attlee's ministers. Singleton suggests that one alternative, import controls and huge state subsidies 'artificially' to preserve the post-war industry from overseas competition at consumers' and taxpayers' expense, was politically unfeasible, and reserves judgement on whether success will reward very recent attempts by surviving manufacturers to fight back against competitors through a radically reduced labour force and improved *per capita* production through harnessing new technology once again.

Three relatively novel chapters deserve special mention. Sarah Lovitt writes on the wide range of clothing produced from cotton, and also embraces cloth-manufacturers' diversification into cloth production, including shirts, overalls, slippers and one new line – pyjamas – meeting demand derived from rising working-class living standards in the early twentieth century. Mary Schoeser, representing that emergent subdiscipline, design history, emphasizes that the coloured printing which critically complemented cotton's economic advantages as *the* textile for a mass market in the early nineteenth century was never thereafter consistently exploited through maximizing designer input with products, a feature reflected in that enduring British disease, a failure of industrialists and the state to invest adequately in the appropriate educational facilities. Lancastrian local authorities were equally slow in starting to preserve the relics of what was both a pioneering and unique contribution to British industrialization, the subject of the last chapter by Chris Aspin on 'Cotton's legacy'. Some contemporary commemorations of the industry's technological and entrepreneurial gurus are of course preserved in statues and clock towers, and the very solidity of the products of the country's house-builders has ensured the survival of many handloom-weavers' cottages together with miles of robust terraced housing in the textile towns. But preservation of redundant machinery, however innovative in its often short-lived inventive heyday, proved unsurprisingly slight and haphazard. Only a few redundant factories escaped demolition to become potential museums; the best, by far, being Greg's Styal Mill (and rural industrial estate), experienced by the present reviewer when escorting successive cohorts of design history students, proving the educational utility of a working museum for the young in post-industrial Britain.

This volume originated among the staff of the County Library Headquarters, and many of the rich and numerous illustrations are reproduced from its substantial collection of original materials. The County Council is to be congratulated on publication of this book, at these prices; it will be of use to many categories of post-GCSE students, their teachers, and an infinitely wider audience who wish to consult a multi-faceted intellectual, rather than an esoterically academic, account of part of Britain's industrial past.

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ROGER WELLS

***Habsburgs and Ottomans between Vienna and Belgrade (1683–1739).* By Ivan Parrev. Columbia University Press. 1996. xviii + 345pp. \$45.00.**

While some aspects of military and diplomatic relations between the Habsburg monarchy and the Sublime Porte in the crucial era between the last siege of Vienna and the Ottoman recovery of the fortress of Belgrade have been

explored in recent years, larger issues, such as the changing perception of the role of the Ottoman empire in the European state system, and the vacillation in Habsburg Balkan policy after the initial successes of the Holy League in recovering the territories of Habsburg Hungary, have yet to be fully investigated. In many ways this survey fulfils its brief admirably: the military and diplomatic narrative is clear, comprehensive and well grounded in the relevant published and archival materials. Moreover, the author makes successful and striking use of the work of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century historians to demonstrate his contention that this period needs to be understood on its own terms and not as a mere interlude between the onset of Ottoman 'decline' and the emergence of the 'eastern question' in the second half of the eighteenth century. This avoidance of teleology bears substantial fruit, not least in a fascinating analysis of the strategic wisdom of the abandonment of Belgrade in 1739, which tends to confirm the view that Belgrade was just beyond the effective campaigning distance and defensive outreach of Vienna in the same way that Vienna would not have been sustainable by the Ottomans even if it had ever been captured. Among the other important results of this approach is a stress upon the continuing significance of a crusading ideology, not simply during the era of the Holy League, but well into the eighteenth century as a formative part of Viennese public opinion. The author is also surely right to point to the multiple distractions of Habsburg foreign policy in Germany and the Mediterranean (and in campaigning for the Pragmatic Sanction) as much as the factional incoherence of central institutions as the key explanation for a failure to pursue a decisive policy of annexations south of the Danube after 1718, when the best opportunities were probably available. Borders that were assumed to be temporary were later found to be inflexible. Finally, in his own contribution to the redefinition of the 'eastern question', Parvev draws attention to the abortive but none the less symbolically significant Congress of Nemirov (1737) in which the Russian agenda for expansion at the expense of the Ottoman empire was fully set out for the first time and the Ottomans began to appreciate the potential scope they now had for delaying Balkan withdrawal by playing Romanov and Habsburg aspirations off against one another. These very positive features of the book are unfortunately diminished by a bizarre prose style, inept or non-existent proof reading, and an unfortunate reductive attempt to express the military potential of the participating powers in the form of mathematical formulae.

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***Women and Work in Eighteenth-century Edinburgh.* By Elizabeth C. Sanderson.** (Studies in Gender History). Macmillan. 1996. xii + 236pp. £40.00.

Women's history is now a well-established discipline. The danger in this is that, while women are studied usefully in depth, they can also become isolated from their general context. This book reflects both of these aspects. It offers a detailed study of women in various – mainly clothing-related – trades in eighteenth-century Edinburgh, and argues convincingly that women did play a full and independent part, both in the household and in society in general. Few historians would now subscribe to the views of Alice Clark on the economic subjugation of women, and this study offers further confirmation of