The Treaties of Carlowitz (1699): Antecedents, Course and Consequences.
Colin Heywood and Ivan Parvev, eds.

The Treaties of Carlowitz is the product of a workshop held at the University of Sofia in 2014, which brought together an international group of scholars doing research related to the history of the war between the Ottoman Empire and the Holy League, and the Karlowitz settlement (1699) that brought it to an end. The editors have arranged the essays into four sections: the first section offers an analysis of the war through the eyes of those not part of the military conflict (English and Dutch contemporary observers and nineteenth-century historiography); the second section covers the perspective of the Ottoman court; the third explores the military efforts and policies of the Christian allies (with essays covering Austria, Russia, and Poland); and the final section covers broader demographic (Hungarian) and financial (Venetian) contexts of the wars.

The fifteen essays gathered represent a wide range of geographies, methodologies, and academic traditions. Some contributions can be categorized as part of the new diplomatic history, such as the essay by John Paul Ghobrial on the secretary of the English embassy and Arno Strohmeyer’s essay on the symbolic meaning of ceremonial border crossings. Other contributions seek to define grand strategies at different moments in the conflict on the side of the Habsburgs (Höbelt, Ingrao), Ottomans (Güllüoğlu), and Russians (Kochegarov). Hans Georg Majer’s chapter examines contemporary Ottoman chronicles to ask if the Ottomans could tell the imperial commanders apart and shows that their knowledge came from prisoners of war. The contribution of Maurits H. van den Boogert explores the meager rewards bestowed upon the Dutch ambassador Colijer and his household for their mediation efforts while also seeking the origins of uti possidetis (in which parties agree that each state keeps the territories it acquired by force during the conflict).

Taken collectively, the volume shows that Karlowitz marked a new departure for many of the practices that would later come to inform international relations, thereby largely confirming the assessments of Rifa’at Abou-El-Haj in his seminal articles on the treaties. The focus on the Karlowitz moment also adds perspective to the longer-term developments of these practices and helps to understand how the celebrated firsts of Karlowitz relate to more persistent patterns, as recently explored by the late Maria Pia Pedani in her important work on Ottoman borders with Venice.

The strength of this volume is that it brings together many academic traditions often written about separately. Thus, Dariusz Kołodziejczyk’s overview of recent Polish-language historiography, Dzheni Ivanova’s intervention on adjusting the perspectives of Bulgarian historians on the Catholic revolt in the Chiprovtsi region by using Ottoman archival sources, and Tatiana Bazarova’s useful overview of Russia’s diplomatic activity in the Ottoman Empire following Karlowitz have much to offer.
The volume should be read as a record of a stimulating series of discussions aimed at encouraging further research into the topic.

Robyn Dora Radway, *Central European University*  
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The twenty-five essays in this volume edited by Shanti Graheli, part of a series edited by Andrew Pettegree, excavate the practices by which early modern people printed, marketed, and sold books. Pettegree and Graheli’s introduction tasks the volume with investigating printers’ and booksellers’ strategies for survival: “innovation or caution; individuality or collaboration; specialism or diversity” (11). By demonstrating that the development of print was driven by the economic and practical interests of those doing the printing, selling, and buying, this volume offers an alternative to scholarship that reads the history of print primarily through the lenses of the history of ideas, religion, or humanism. The volume’s strength lies in its geographic and methodological breadth. Individual essays constitute case studies, opening micro-historical windows into the worlds in which books were made and used across Europe between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The challenge of including twenty-five strong individual essays is that of collecting them into a cohesive volume. In part 1, “Debt Economies and Bookselling Risks,” the first two essays, Lucas Burkart’s study of the fifteenth-century Basel printer Michel Wenssler and Lorenz Böninger’s essay on Venetian incunabula in Florentine bookshops, underscore the centrality of commercial and social networks to early print production. The following two essays, Jeremiah Dittmar’s quantitative analysis of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century book prices and Marius Buning’s examination of the factors motivating seventeenth-century Dutch printers to seek state privileges, are illuminating in their own right, but they sit uneasily alongside the previous two.

Each essay in part 2, “The Day-to-Day Practices of Book Buying and Selling,” illustrates a selling strategy. Philip Tromans asserts that English book buyers were able to flip through books before purchasing them. Justyna Kiliańczyk-Zięba shows that printers in seventeenth-century Kraków imitated Roman models to sell guidebooks to pilgrims in 1603. And Daniel Bellingradt demonstrates that late eighteenth-century Dutch booksellers took advantage of a lottery craze to move slow-selling stock.

The essays in part three, “Selling Strategies,” further explore how printers and booksellers capitalized on known entities—books, scholars, even cities—to market their wares. Jamie Cumby examines the career of Luxembourg de Gabiano, a successful publisher with little real interest in books, to depict the merchant-monopolized world of legal printing in