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Annemarie Steidl. *Auf nach Wien! Die Mobilität des mitteleuropäischen Handwerks im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert am Beispiel der Haupt- und Residenzstadt.* München: Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag, 2003. 333 S.

Hannes Stekl. *Adel und Bürgertum in der Habsburgermonarchie 18. bis 20. Jahrhundert: Hannes Stekl zum 60. Geburtstag gewidmet von Ernst Bruckmüller, Franz Eder und Andrea Schnöller.* München: Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag, 2004. 312 S. EUR 49.80 (broschiert), ISBN 978-3-7028-0403-9; EUR 49.80 (gebunden), ISBN 978-3-486-56738-0.



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Auf nach Wien! is a fascinating study about the migration of silk workers, tailors, shirt-makers, chimney sweeps, carpenters and butchers to Vienna over a period of two centuries. In short, it is a detailed analysis of the stages from apprenticeship to journeyman to master during the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Seidl's work is partly rooted in her doctoral dissertation with Josef Ehmer in Vienna, as well as her more recent research at the Max-Planck Institute at Göttingen and in Berlin. Much of her information is based on her research at the Viennese Stadt- und Landesarchiv including various secondary archives in Bohemia, Moravia, Galicia, Poland and Switzerland. With these findings, Seidl makes a serious contribution to recent Habsburg labor history, as well as to research on the social and economic conditions of the day. Her investigations are based on the available data found in guild books, documents, dissertations, journals and other sources. Her study is thorough and far-reaching and can be viewed as the standard work of a migrational study of specialized workers to Vienna.

The main thrust of the book is focused on Habsburg Vienna, the political, economical and ecclesiastical cen-

ter of the Habsburg monarchy. It is an oft-mentioned fact that a highly mobile but inexpensive labor force migrated from northern Italy, southern Germany, Bohemia, Moravia and Poland to Vienna. This movement in turn spurred the growth of the city from a relatively small town to an imperial metropolis. In 1710, Vienna's population was around 113,000, whereas by 1910, the city had grown tenfold to over one million inhabitants (p. 53). One of the primary engines for economic growth was the *Kleingewerbe*: small manual labor shops and manufacturers trying to compete, survive and prosper. Seidl traces the history of silk workers, tailors, shirt-makers, chimney-sweeps, butchers and handbag-makers admirably well with the exception of where data is incomplete or altogether unavailable.

Indeed, the records of the various Viennese guilds (*Zuelfte*) permit a detailed account for such a study. The importance of such findings for both the generalist and labor historian is fundamental in understanding the important socio-economic relationship of master and apprentice. More precisely, this study analyzes Vienna's economic history from the perspective of migrating la-

bor. It thus enables the reader to understand the importance of small labor shops within the greater context of the process of industrialization around the mid-nineteenth century. By 1869, some 57 percent of all workers, that is, apprentices and journeymen were part of this vibrant *Kleingewerbe* (p. 90). In comparison, the industrial working class represented a mere 16.3 percent of the entire labor force of Vienna. Indeed, the city of Vienna remains an amalgamation of *Zuagraste*, that is, people who migrated from all parts of Europe and settled. In fact, Seidl suggests that by the mid-nineteenth century, more than half of Vienna's population made this city its home and place of employment (p. 59).[1]

It is also generally known that the great majority of Viennese *Lehrlinge* (apprentices) faced a long and harsh training period. The time varied and depended upon the master, the general economic situation, the apprentice, and other unknown factors. In general, an apprentice could advance in three to five, and sometimes seven or more years, to journeyman. Advancement was not inevitable. Not everyone became a *Geselle*, and fewer yet achieved the sought-after rank of *Meister*. Seidl offers the silk trade as a central example of this state of affairs. The members of this pre-industrial guild were largely immigrant Italian silk weavers, who had migrated to Vienna in the late seventeenth century. During the years 1791-1903, only 1,289 workers ever became journeymen (p. 24). While many silk workers remained in their original workshops, some desired better employment and migrated to other parts of the monarchy. The Viennese silk-trade employed some 33,000 workers in 191 factories by 1811. Only in the 1840s did Vienna begin to lose out to Silesia, Bohemia and Moravia. Lower labor costs encouraged a transfer to these regions from the once vibrant Viennese silk industry (p. 134).

What is not generally known is that by the mid-eighteenth century, young women were also employed in the Viennese silk sector. Rigid guild rules, social, political, and religious justifications prohibited the advancement of women workers to anything more than menial labor. Seidl for her part fails to explain the role of women in the silk workshops in any detail. Yet she does mention widows, who (for instance) ran shops successfully after the death of their husbands, but she stops short of any meaningful analysis. It is reasonable to assume that the economic effect of employing cheap female labor for generations, if not longer, warrants a more detailed investigation of the causes for this economic abuse. After all, Seidl notes that by 1830 there were more than 1,700 women employed in Vienna as trainees or *Lehrmädchen*

(p. 215).

Occasionally, the proofreading in Seidl's work leaves something to be desired. But there is a second, more serious drawback to her book. The exclusive focus on economic affairs prevents the satisfactory explanation of their context in historical events. Unfortunately Seidl does not see fit to discuss the economic impact of the Napoleonic Wars and the crucial 1848 Revolution on Viennese economy in any meaningful way. These two pivotal events deserve a more detailed discussion depicting their effect on the general economy, and hence, the silk sector, and not a mere one sentence analysis. Seidl apparently does not fully recognize the catastrophic effects of devaluation, rampant inflation, unemployment and the collapse of the economy by 1811. [2]

Nonetheless, Seidl's work remains without a doubt a masterful contribution to recent Viennese labor history. Her work is superbly researched and filled with numerous statistics and graphs. Because it is not an easy read, non-specialists should be directed to the introduction and the conclusion, which are its most succinct sections. I highly recommend this book for anyone interested in Viennese labor history with the caveat that it is a work suited primarily for a specialist audience and not for non-specialists or undergraduates.

Notes:

[1]. Seidl, p. 58-59. For a more precise analysis of the Habsburg economy, see John Komlos, *The Habsburg Monarchy as a Customs Union: Economic Development in Austria-Hungary in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton University Press, 1983); or David F. Good, *The Economic Rise of the Habsburg Empire, 1750-1914* (Berkeley-Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983); and Roman Sandgruber, *Ökonomie und Politik: Österreichische Wirtschaftsgeschichte vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart* (Vienna: Überreiter, 1995).

[2]. See Wolfgang Rohrbach, "Technischer Fortschritt und Versicherung in Österreich. Historische Betrachtung einer bedeutungsvollen Wechselbeziehung bis zum Ende der Ersten Republik," Erster Teil, *MIOEG* 94 (1986), pp. 112-114.

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