

VIOLENCE AND RETALIATION: CIVILIAN AGENCY IN THURINGIA DURING
THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR

by

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(Under the Direction of Benjamin Ehlers)

ABSTRACT

By analyzing the “Chronicon Thuringiae,” recorded by Volkmar Happe, councilor to the Count of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen, this paper focuses upon the civilian response to and perception of the violence of the Thirty Years’ War. Happe’s work illuminates the repercussions of the conflict upon the civilian population and their attempt to comprehend it. This project seeks to assess the agency of civilians in response to the pervasive hostility which characterized much of the interactions between soldiers and civilians. Many civilians chose to resist with equally ferocious acts of violence, demonstrating a level of agency not often ascribed to non-combatants. The chronicle reveals a world turned upside down—violence extending through all levels of society, often irrespective of religious creed or ostensible political loyalties. This paper will seek to address these issues of war, society, and religion from the level of the civilians caught up in the Thirty Years’ War.

INDEX WORDS: Agency; Apocalypticism; Early Modern; Germany; Gustavus Adolphus; Holy Roman Empire; Religion; Schwarzburg-Sondershausen; Society; Thuringia; Thirty Year’s War; Violence; Volkmar Happe; War.

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DEDICATION

To my loving wife, without whose support this would not be.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The century and a half following the start of the Protestant Reformation in Europe was marked by political and religious upheaval and violence. Thirty-five years of French civil war, eighty years of Dutch revolt, and decades of intermittent fighting within the Holy Roman Empire resulted in the death and destruction of hundreds of thousands of soldiers and civilians from famine, disease, and the sword. The Thirty Years' War, which ran with varying intensity from 1618 to 1648, was profoundly disruptive for many of the civilians of Northern Europe. The interaction between numerous mercenary armies and the local non-combatants, who provided much of the supplies and plunder for the war effort, existed as a frequent point of conflict during the war. This project seeks to explore the nature of civilian response to the war by examining an account of the conflict from Thuringia, in central Germany. This chronicle suggests that the civilians of the region exerted more than passive acceptance of the new, brutal status quo that subjected them to theft, torture, rape, and murder. Rather, their actions reveal a determination to mitigate the suffering through strategies of flight, negotiation, and violent resistance.

While this project will deal with the civilian experience of the war in broad terms, the primary focal point will be the six-year period from 1630 to 1635 known today as the Swedish Intervention.¹ The beginning of this period was a high point for the Catholic

¹ The Swedes continued their involvement in the war until it ended in 1648, but their greatest influence and leadership was exerted during this briefer period, see Hans Medick and Benjamin Marschke, *Experiencing the Thirty Years War: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2013), 9-13.

Emperor Ferdinand II and his allies, thus an anxious time for a Lutheran like Volkmar Happe, the author of the *Chronicon Thuringiae*, the central source for this project. Ferdinand's 1629 Edict of Restitution, which sought to reset the confessional/political balance of the Empire in favor of the Catholics, was deeply troubling for many Protestants and heightened their despair. The arrival of a powerful Protestant champion in the form of Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden altered the balance of the war and the subsequent years saw a complete reversal of fortunes in the war, much to Happe's delight. With Gustavus' death at Lützen in 1632, the momentum began to swing back toward the Emperor. By selecting this phase of the conflict for special consideration we are better able to carefully consider Happe's perception of and reaction to these events in detail. Chronicle entries from elsewhere in the document will be utilized to establish major themes, particularly passages that deal with the months immediately preceding the Swedish arrival in Pomerania in June of 1630. However, this project is not an assessment of the entirety of the chronicle or of the author's experiences throughout the whole war. Thus, when assessing Happe's shifting perceptions of violence, this project can only make limited claims about the nature of his perspective beyond the parameters of the Swedish Intervention. The period in question was a particularly violent time for Thuringia as armies from all sides crisscrossed the region and thus presents us with a higher concentration of violent episodes and crises than some earlier periods of the conflict. It serves as a particularly suitable period for assessing perceptions of violence toward civilians and how those civilians chose to respond. Close study of this period allows us to witness the author's disillusionment with Swedish Protestant forces, but only offers us a snapshot of a longer process of shifting perception. Thus any conclusions

drawn from that period concerning shifting perception must be considered, at best, tentative. A comprehensive evaluation of the full chronicle could provide greater clarity on this issue.

In order to assess the relationship between civilians and the war, this project focuses primarily on the *Chronicon Thuringiae*, a several thousand page chronicle composed during the war by a lawyer and local official named Volkmar Happe.² In these pages, Happe detailed the experiences of his family and neighbors as they experienced, first-hand, the fear of plundering soldiers, the pain of disease and famine, and the sorrow of death. Happe provides both a litany of woes and an opportunity to examine the way he and his neighbors perceived and responded to violence. Happe's professional position as a councilor to the Count of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen provided him with access to information about the war's impact on the whole territory and also may help explain Happe's awareness of the war's progression in more distant regions. Thus this document is both a source of Happe's experiences and a register of the violence which afflicted the civilians of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen. This territory was situated in the center of the Holy Roman Empire in the region known as Thuringia which experienced a remarkable amount of military activity during the 1630s. As Thuringia was a largely Lutheran region, the actions of the Lutheran and ostensibly friendly Swedish forces within Thuringia carry particular import in this study. Altered perception and disillusionment are key factors in assessing the perceptions and behaviors of Happe and his neighbors. As the war

² This source has recently been digitized, transcribed into more modern German, and published online by the University of Jena and several historians and archivists including Hans Medick. It is searchable, indexed, and includes a wealth of editorial explanations of important persons and terms. See Volkmar Happe, *Chronicon Thuringiae (Thuringian Chronicle)*, ed. Hans Medick, Norbert Winnige, and Andreas Bähr (electronic publication: Thüringer Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Jena, 2008), www.mdsz.thulb.uni-jena.de/happe/quelle.php.

progresses, confessional, political, and personal priorities conflict as Happe seeks to process the violent behavior of his co-religionists and the death of the Protestant hero, Gustavus Adolphus. Apocalyptic preoccupations, violent realities, and the determination to survive all converge in Happe's chronicle providing historians a glimpse into the complexities of perception and survival during a time of profound violence and social disruption.

Due to the size of the war and the abundance of source material available to historians of the period, many scholars have chosen to focus on the influential decision makers like Emperor Ferdinand or General Wallenstein and the grand strategy of the war. Conversely, other historians have sought to address issues of impact—environmental, social, economic, demographic—and greatly enhanced the understanding of the destruction caused by the war. However, these big-vision studies can often overlook the local responses to the violence and extortion. As Otto Ulbricht notes, so much space is dedicated to the experience of the soldiers, we are left with little appreciation for the impact of the conflict on the civilian side, except in those larger demographic studies. He pointedly decries this oversight, claiming that by focusing upon the soldier we gain a lopsided understanding of the war and inhibit our ability to assess its full impact.³ In the past fifteen to twenty years, we have witnessed an increasing interest in the experience of the civilian in the English-language historiography, but this is still a relatively recent movement.⁴ By focusing on texts like Happe's, historians can gain a greater appreciation

³ Otto Ulbricht, "The Experience of Violence During the Thirty Years War: A Look at the Civilian Victims," in *Power, Violence, and Mass Death in Pre-Modern and Modern Times*, ed. Joseph Canning, Hartmut Lehmann, and Jay Winter (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2004), 97-127.

⁴ Indeed, much of the work in this vein has been exclusively in German and therefore fails to impact much of the Anglo-American scholarly community.

for what the war was like, how it was perceived and experienced.⁵ These sources, known as ego-documents, are broadly defined as “any source ‘in which a person gives information about himself or herself’” (which could include involuntary communication of information about the author as with tax returns and court records) or, more narrowly, as texts which were “self-composed and as a rule also self-written (or at least dictated) as well as self-motivated.”⁶ This latter definition limits, I believe correctly, the term to those documents in which the author is concerned with his or her own situation, as in the case of the *Chronicon Thuringiae*. The value and limitations of these sources are discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four, at this point it is sufficient to simply say that such documents, despite their potential for bias and distortion, provide historians with a unique glimpse of life at the individual level.⁷ For that reason, careful assessment of an ego-document like Happe’s should offer a perspective on the conflict which may broaden our understanding of how the war affected the many of the civilians in Thuringia and how they tried to cope with the violence around them.

⁵ Geoff Mortimer, *Eyewitness Accounts of the Thirty Years War, 1618-1648* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 198.

⁶ Quoted in Mortimer, *Eyewitness*, 191.

⁷ They can also have bearing on larger questions about the “all-destructive” nature of the war, the policies and practices of military and civilian authorities, and so forth.

CHAPTER 2

THE CHRONICLER AND HIS WORLD

“These are certainly signs that our redemption through the second coming of Jesus Christ is near. In Schernberg in the evening around 8 o’clock on the first of December a terrible fiery beacon was seen so people were certain that the entire village was in flames and so the schoolmaster rang the bells and everybody, greatly shaking and quaking, was of the opinion that Judgment Day was at hand.”⁸ -Volkmar Happe, *Chronicon Thuringiae*, 1634.

Volkmar Happe, the author of the meticulously detailed *Chronicon Thuringiae*, told this story during the middle of the Thirty Years’ War as troubling meteorological events increased in frequency, as soldiers threatened his family and neighbors, and as thousands died of hunger and disease. This was a time of war and crisis and men like Happe believed the Apocalypse was nigh. Though certainly not a universal conviction, eschatological fears profoundly shaped popular perception of the conflict and form a useful backdrop for assessing civilian experience during the war, particularly among Lutherans like Happe. His actions and perceptions were shaped by a personal, geographic, and religious context. Understanding how these contextual factors influenced individuals is essential to properly understanding the war, its impact on civilians, and the way they responded to the violence around them. The apocalyptic concerns of Happe’s contemporaries were a result of a confluence of natural and man-made factors—disease, famine, climatic and demographic pressures, and of course war. This was not just a time

⁸Happe, I: 349r-349v, as quoted and translated in Hans Medick, “The Thirty Years’ War as Experience and Memory: Contemporary Perceptions of a Macro-Historical Event,” in *Studies in Central European histories, Vol. 50: Enduring Loss in Early Modern Germany: Cross Disciplinary Perspectives* (Brill Academic Publishers), 72.

of trouble; the suffering of thousands had far greater significance—the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse rode across Europe and the End of Days had arrived.

Happe came from a prosperous Lutheran family in Thuringia, and his apocalypticism was intimately connected to the impact of the war on his home and family. The available biographical information for Volkmar Happe is remarkably detailed, albeit incomplete.⁹ Fortunately for historians, though Happe wrote his chronicle as the war progressed, he went back and added an extensive introduction some time later, primarily to include a history of his family. This provides a great deal of background for the author, his relatives, and his circumstances. Happe recounts his origins in this way: “I, Volkmar Happe the younger or the second, son of Volkmar Happe the first, citizen and alderman of Greußen, grandson of Nicholas Happe and great-grandson of Andreas Happe resident of Rohnstedt, was born by God’s grace in Greußen on the 15th of November, anno 1587 afternoon, between 2 and 3 o’clock.”¹⁰ He was the fourth of six sons, and one of thirteen children, several of whom died young.¹¹ From the extended description of his family, it is clear that Happe came from a prosperous agricultural lineage. The tradition of finding employment in civil service began with Happe’s father’s generation and continued to his own. Volkmar senior was an alderman, burgermeister, farmer, and a cloth and dye merchant based in the small city of Greussen.¹² Volkmar the younger

⁹ Beyond the information which Happe himself provides, some biographical material is cited from two works by twentieth century scholars in Andreas Bähr, “Inhaltliche Erläuterungen zu Volkmar Happs Chronik aus dem Dreißigjährigen Krieg,” http://www.mdsz.thulb.uni-jena.de/happe/erlaeuterungen.php#_ftn5.

¹⁰ Happe, I: 7r.

¹¹ Ibid., 2v. He also had four half-siblings, children of his father’s first marriage; only one survived to adulthood.

¹² A woad merchant or *Waidhändler* was responsible for the “production and distribution of the dye produced from the leaves of the woad plant. The space between Erfurt, Langensalza, Gotha, Arnstadt and Weimar was, from the 14th to the 16th century, a preferred growing region due to the special coloring power of the local Woids and the connection of the Thuringian basin to the important trade routes in the

joined his father's dye business after completing his education as a lawyer. This was only a side business, however, as Happe also worked as a lawyer and eventually entered into the service of the counts of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen as the *Amtsschösser* of the districts of Keula and Ebeleben.¹³ He served in this capacity for four years until he was promoted, in 1623, to the post of *Hofrat*, a high-level councilor to Count Christian Günther I.¹⁴ Happe held this post for twenty years until he was again promoted, following the death of his employer in 1642. The new count, Anton Günther I, appointed Happe Director of the *Konsistorium* and chief *Hofrat* which gave him authority over both religious and secular functions for the state of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen.¹⁵

Happe's roles in government gave him a good deal of authority but the stresses of the war placed him in a very difficult position as he would have been responsible for negotiating and collecting the war contributions which each passing army levied on the region.¹⁶ His position thus gave him an unusual vantage point for witnessing the burdens of war. It also left him with great sadness. He had to collect taxes and contributions which he knew his neighbors could not afford and he was witness to atrocities he was

East-West and North-South direction. The decline of the *Waidhandels* at the beginning of the 17th century was due to the growing competition of the indigo produced overseas and the impairment of long-distance trade by the Thirty Years' War." Medick's editorial note, Happe, I: 1v.

¹³ Ibid., I: 10r. The *Amtsschösser* was a tax official, administrative figure, and frequently functioned as a sort of bailiff who enforced laws and regulations at the local level; see Medick's editorial note.

¹⁴ Ibid., I: 10v; a *Hofrat* was a member of the count's Privy Council, was responsible for all internal administration as well as for military and foreign affairs, and was one of the top three civil posts in the region, see Medick's editorial note.

¹⁵ The *Konsistorium* was a committee which exercised the "highest authority for church administration and school management, marriage court, judgment of clergy and teachers, and was the supervisory authority for the poor relief." Essentially, as director of the *Konsistorium*, Happe "headed the external and internal Church affairs of the state church" in the region. It was not uncommon during the seventeenth century for this powerful position to be blended with that of *Hofrat*, thus streamlining the civil and religious administration of the territory; see Medick's editorial notes, Happe, I:14v.

¹⁶ See Medick, "Ein Analysebeispiel: Sondershausen als „Schindershausen". Selbstverortungen und Wahrnehmungshorizonte der Gewalt in Volkmar Happes Chronicon Thuringiae aus der Zeit des Dreißigjährigen Krieges" <http://www.mdsz.thulb.uni-jena.de/happe/analysebeispiel.php>.

unable to prevent.¹⁷ The language Happe employed to describe the plight of the people is thus informed by this dual responsibility to tax and to defend. As the war drew to a close, Happe left the count's service and was able to settle down as a prosperous farmer and landowner, dying around 1659.¹⁸ Happe was a civilian and a commoner, but he was a successful civil administrator and appears to have prospered professionally and financially in spite of the chaos of war.¹⁹ His positions of authority and responsibility, his potential agenda in writing his chronicle, and other influences on the way he represented himself in the chronicle will be assessed in Chapter Four. At this stage, it is important to simply understand that he occupied an in-between social position which enabled him to bridge a gap between villager and nobleman. Thus his perspective is both broadly concerned with economic and political events, and considerate of the plight of his neighbors and extensive family network.

Like Happe's family, the central German region of Thuringia was a prosperous place that suffered the effects of turmoil during the first half of the seventeenth century. Happe and his family lived in the Thuringian County of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen. During the seventeenth century, the counts of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen ruled a series of small, non-contiguous territories predominantly situated in the fertile Thuringian Basin just south of the Harz Mountains and north of a nearly impassable forest, the *Thüringer Wald*.²⁰ Thuringia was a geographic expression rather than an actual polity, and was

¹⁷ Happe, I:182v-183r; the system of contribution and negotiation will be explored in greater depth in Chapters Three and Five.

¹⁸ The exact date is not known; Bähr, "Inhaltliche" .

¹⁹ It is unclear whether Happe's financial successes were a result of remarkable business skills, good luck, or the perks of public office. Graft was a common-enough practice in the seventeenth century that it is not unreasonable to suspect Happe of feathering his own nest a bit over his lengthy career, but this cannot be proven.

²⁰ Medick, "Analysebeispiel." Additionally an "inaccessible and sparsely populated forest region" called the Hainleite divided Schwarzburg-Sondershausen and provided a refuge for civilians in times of trouble.

comprised of dozens of counties and duchies. The counts of Schwarzburg, whose dynasty included Christian Günther I, Happe's employer, ruled as direct subjects of the Emperor as "Imperial Counts" which gave them some political autonomy.²¹ The family divided their lands between three brothers near the end of the sixteenth century, apportioning several districts, including Sondershausen, to the eldest, Johann Günther I, who passed it on to his son Christian Günther I in 1586.²² The complex dynastic and political realities of the house of Schwarzburg resulted in land disputes and complicated loyalties.²³ Christian Günther's position as an Imperial Count meant he was answerable to the Emperor, his sovereign, but some of the Schwarzburg lands were fiefs of fellow Lutheran, John George of Saxony; this divided loyalty proved problematic during the Thirty Years' War.²⁴

Given its political fragmentation, Thuringia was a region of little political influence but unfortunate geographic importance during the war. Situated in the center of

²¹ Karl von Helmrich, *Schwarzburgische Landeskunde : Bilder aus der Geschichte und Geographie des Fürstenthums Schwarzburg-Sondershausen für Schule und Haus* (Sondershausen, 1871), 66. The dynasty gained this distinction from Emperor Maximilian I in 1518. As Imperial Counts, and despite many of their lands' technical classification as fiefs of various larger powers (Bohemia, the elector of Mainz, the elector of Saxony, etc...), "the counts of Schwarzburg were themselves immediate subjects of the Emperor, and sovereign lords (Landesherrn) in their territories." See Velde, Francois R. "House Laws of Schwarzburg," last modified 2003, <http://www.heraldica.org/topics/royalty/HGSchwarzburg.htm#1433>.

²² For a family tree, see Kamill von Behr and Abraham Vischer, *Genealogie der in Europa regierenden Fürstenthümer nebst der Reihenfolge sämtlicher Päpste*, (Leipzig, 1854), 140. For a more extensive treatment of the history of the house of Schwarzburg, see "House Laws". The dynasty's practice of co-rule between brothers continued following the 16th century division of territory. Christian Günther's brothers died without male heirs so the entire territory of Johann Günther I descended to Christian's three sons. Anton Günther I, Christian Günther's second son would become Happe's employer in 1642.

²³ A long-standing land dispute between the houses of Schwarzburg and Stolberg and the duke of Brunswick over the lands of the defunct house of Hohenstein. Happe first records the 1632 settlement of this dispute in Happe, I:227r, with half the Hohenstein lands being apportioned to Brunswick and half to Schwarzburg and Stolberg. This arrangement was fouled by the on-going war and the peace of Westphalia settled the whole territory on the Elector of Brandenburg to compensate for territory lost in Pomerania to Sweden. The implications of this dispute on the political perspective of the counts of Schwarzburg and, by extension, Happe, are difficult to measure. See Medick's editorial note, "Vergleich über die Grafschaft Hohnstein". See also "House Laws".

²⁴ Happe's chronicle appears to indicate that Schwarzburg-Sondershausen operated predominantly within the political gravity of Saxony. As will be demonstrated below, there is little mention in the chronicle of the ostensible loyalty toward the Emperor; religious differences and the proximity of Saxony probably made this an easy choice.

the Holy Roman Empire and along several key trade routes, Thuringia was well positioned for prosperity in times of peace, but vulnerable to outside forces in times of war. While the region's topography provided some imposition to armies seeking to travel north and south, its agricultural output made it a useful territory to quarter troops and extract resources. The Thuringian Basin was a very fertile territory and, in addition to food crops, served as the "preferred growing region" for the woad plant during the three centuries before the Thirty Years' War due to the quality dye the soil produced and the region's strategic location on north-south and east-west trade routes.²⁵ With high agricultural yields and no powerful prince to protect them, the peoples of Thuringia experienced successive waves of occupation by the forces of Catholic and Protestant powers. While the broader region was religiously divided, Schwarzburg-Sondershausen was officially Lutheran and many of its inhabitants viewed the Lutheran Swedes as their liberators and allies. This impression was shattered during the 1630s as the Swedish forces extracted resources and committed atrocities across Thuringia.²⁶ This phase of the war, known today as the Swedish Intervention, was one of the most horrific periods for central Germany and filled Happe's chronicle with a litany of woes. Thuringia's topographical strong points—the Harz Mountains, the *Thüringer Wald*, and the Hainleite—all offered temporary refuge for fleeing civilians and armed partisans, but ultimately the political and geographic realities of Thuringia made the Thirty Years' War

²⁵ Medick's editorial note, "Weithandels," Happe, I:1v. The woad trade diminished during the seventeenth century due to indigo competition and disruption during the war.

²⁶ The impact of this violence on perception of friend and foe is explored in greater detail in Chapter Four.

a particularly dark time for the people of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen—Volkmar Happe’s neighbors, friends, and family.²⁷

The world of Volkmar Happe was one of war, pestilence, famine, and calamity. Numerous historians have described this as an age of crisis. Climatic, demographic, economic, political, and religious forces crashed like waves upon European society. The opening quote by Happe illustrates the profound sense of apocalyptic doom which settled over many during the Thirty Years’ War. Decades of war, famine, and plague suggested that the end of the world was fast approaching.²⁸ As Andrew Cunningham and Ole Peter Grell described it, this period was “characterized by apocalyptic expectations, eschatological speculations and millenarian dreams.”²⁹ This was “the last great explosion of eschatological excitement in Germany” and was particularly prominent among Lutheran communities like Schwarzburg-Sondershausen.³⁰ In the deeply religious

²⁷ Political decentralization was not always an indicator for great violence and destabilization during the war, as demonstrated by the comparatively light suffering in parts of the politically fragmented northwest and the dire situation in a more centralized region like Brandenburg, but the lack of a central authority who could protect or petition left the region, already vulnerably positioned within the empire, susceptible to mistreatment. Neighboring Saxony was avoided by Imperial armies in 1630 as Tilly hoped to sway John George to join with the Emperor. The Elector’s political decisions (or lack thereof) eventually brought Tilly’s armies upon the region, but the delay demonstrates the potential protection a powerful prince could provide. For details concerning the delayed invasion of Saxony, see Wilson, *Tragedy*, 471. Ultimately no powerful prince was able to exert the necessary influence to completely or always protect his territory from enemy or friendly troops, but the lack of such an advocate, coupled with their geographic placement, left Thuringia more vulnerable than more powerful regions.

²⁸ A longer view of the chronicle than the six years of the Swedish Intervention would be required to determine if Happe demonstrates a trajectory of increasing apocalypticism; Cunningham and Grell argue that by 1618, the apocalyptic climate was in place for dire interpretations of the conflict which erupted in the Empire, see Andrew Cunningham and Ole Peter Grell, *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse: Religion, War, Famine, and Death in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

²⁹ Cunningham and Grell, 1. Robin B. Barnes correctly notes that “not all references to divine wrath or punishment for sin reflect apocalyptic convictions,” but even Barnes acknowledges that seventeenth century Germany was particularly apocalyptic. This eschatological streak in conjunction with a deeply religious population was a potent combination; see Robin B. Barnes, “Varieties of Apocalyptic Experience in Reformation Europe,” in *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 33, no. 2 (Autumn, 2002): 261-274.

³⁰ Robin Bruce Barnes, *Prophesy and Gnosis: Apocalypticism In the Wake of the Lutheran Reformation* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988), 249. Barnes’ study contends that Lutheranism was the dominant, though not sole, promoter of the intense apocalyptic preoccupations of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Pope as the Antichrist, the enemies of the true Church clamoring to destroy her,

atmosphere of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, enhanced by the rise of Protestantism and its emphasis on scriptural literacy for the general population, the crises which afflicted Europe naturally took on heightened religious import.³¹ It was not a coincidence that the afflictions they repeatedly witnessed paralleled the Biblical signs of the End of Days. Cunningham and Grell argue that this perspective was encapsulated in the popular image of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse from the Book of Revelation.³² For many of the civilians of central Europe, the Thirty Years' War and all the death and destruction that came with it were signs of divine wrath and the coming Last Judgment.³³ A great battle between good and evil, massive wars, famine and flood, and plague—the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse were on the minds of many during this age of crisis.

These apocalyptic fears reflected emerging changes which gave rise to the historical debates over the crisis of the seventeenth century.³⁴ While historians debate the causes of crisis—economic, political, or more recently climatic (or even whether it is appropriate to speak of this period as a crisis)—few contest that many early moderns believed themselves to be in a time of crisis.³⁵ The term “crisis” may never be fully

and the proliferation of break-away sects within the Church all pointed to eminent divine wrath and the Last Judgment, see Barnes 3-5.

³¹ Cunningham and Grell, 2-3. This was also around the time of an explosion in printing with the advent of the printing press; dire prognostications were accessible by more people than ever.

³² There were numerous artistic renderings of these figures during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, most famously the 1498 woodcut by Albrecht Durer, see Cunningham and Grell, 5.

³³ John Theibault, “The Rhetoric of Death and Destruction in the Thirty Years' War,” in *Journal of Social History* 27, no. 2 (Winter, 1993): 271.

³⁴ There is a robust historiography on the subject of early modern crisis, Geoffrey Parker being one of the most prominent voices. His numerous publications on the crises which afflicted both early modern Europe and the broader early modern world have significantly increased historical understanding of the importance of structural influences on human action and perception, see Parker, *Global Crisis: War, Climate Change and Catastrophe in the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013).

³⁵ Geoffrey Parker and Lesley M. Smith, “Introduction,” in *The General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century*, 2nd edition, ed. Parker and Smith (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 1-31. Those in opposition to the term crisis have many reasons, Theodore K. Rabb sums the opposition up by noting that of the three

accepted but the concept has value when assessing the perceptual context for civilian action during the Thirty Years' War because so many people perceived the conflict in an apocalyptic light.³⁶ In order to effectively assess the actions of the civilian population during the war, historians must understand the contexts of those actions.³⁷ The ways in which many early modern Europeans perceived their world were shaped by a myriad of factors, including war, plague, famine, and cosmic phenomena.³⁸ All four have troubled man-kind throughout history, but the convergence of these events, with great ferocity, during an era of heightened apocalypticism only deepened religious conviction that the world was nearing its end. Religious and political strife fanned the flames of decades of intermittent warfare across Europe.³⁹ Crop failure, hailstorms, comets and disease

criteria for "crisis" (short-lived, distinct, and worse than other times) the "General Crisis" only succeeds in the last point, thus making the term misleading; Rabb, *The Struggle for Stability in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), 29-31.

³⁶ It is interesting that the various theories of general crisis put forth by historians since the 1950s failed to account for the Thirty Years' War and the German-speaking peoples of Europe. Sheilagh Ogilvie has sought to rectify this weakness, arguing that existing economic and political theories for crisis fail to accurately apply to the German context, but historians who dismiss the General Crisis theory cannot account for Germany either. Ogilvie argues for a hybrid explanation which places the Thirty Years' War at the center of a confluence of political and economic issues that subsequently cascaded across Europe, deepening a General Crisis; Sheilagh Ogilvie, "Germany and the Seventeenth Century Crisis," in *The General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century*, 2nd edition, ed. Parker and Smith (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 57-86.

³⁷ For the purposes of this project it is neither essential to determine the precise causes of the war, nor to whole-heartedly endorse the General Crisis theory; rather it is simply important to recognize the multitude of factors which influenced the perceptions and actions of men like Volkmar Happe.

³⁸ Additionally, the religious, political, and even geographic structures that had dominated Europe for centuries were shaking. The Reformation, peasant rebellions and gradual development of centralized states, and the discovery of the New World all occurred during this 150-200 year period; Cunningham and Grell, 1-2.

³⁹ Events which occurred around the European world had an uneven impact in the mind of the individual civilians for a number of reasons. Most simply, many people in Thuringia would probably not have been aware of events transpiring in France or the Low Countries. Happe was more informed about world events than the average villager, but there is no evidence that his knowledge extended beyond the borders of the Empire. Although news of individual events may not have reached across Europe to the ears of the ordinary villager in Schwarzburg-Sondershausen, a shared feeling of apocalypticism could grow as individuals who experienced moments of severe violence, pestilence, or famine shared their perspective on the world with others through letters, broadsheets, engravings, sermons, and pamphlets. See Cunningham and Grell, 137-145, 158.

wracked Europe and the deeply religious population of Europe sought to understand these events in a scriptural context.

One of the most recent explanations for the General Crisis is climatic—the Little Ice Age.⁴⁰ While historians have traditionally been averse to the idea of climatic influences on human action, the possibility of such influence is increasingly being acknowledged by scholars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁴¹ Essentially, the Little Ice Age was a cooling period which significantly damaged crop production and affected weather patterns. Global population levels were relatively high during the sixteenth century, stretching the depleted food supply and leading to food shortages. Decades of war also damaged agricultural output and, taken together, these factors resulted in incredible strains on local resources. Cold temperatures, little food, and destruction of property by marauding soldiers created a weakened populace ripe for the inevitable plagues which accompanied early modern warfare.⁴² Contemporary writers complained that the winters were colder and crops were failing as a result of the climate. Renward Cysat, a Swiss Botanist writing in 1614, wondered at the “strange and wondrous succession of changes in the weather” which has accompanied the “deterioration amongst living things, not only among mankind and the animal world but

⁴⁰ While it may seem strange that a project which argues for the importance of individual agency and contingency would place such an emphasis on structural influences, I contend that the actions of individuals can only be rightly understood if seen in light of the appropriate structural context. Crop failures as a result of temperature changes may not *cause* certain human actions, but they most certainly influence decisions and constrict options. This project can thus be viewed as a balancing act between structure and agency.

⁴¹ Given the current scientific and political debates surrounding climate change, interest in this topic by historians should not be surprising. The leading figure in this investigation is Geoffrey Parker who has a series of publications with ever-increasing scope. Most recently he has published *Crisis* (cited above) in which attempts to synthesize a massive amount of scientific and historical data to demonstrate a global response to climate conditions during the Little Ice Age without becoming “climatic determinists”, Parker, *Global*, xix.

⁴² Parker, *Global*, 3-77.

also the earth's crops and produce."⁴³ Happe complained of "a heavy frost" in late August 1625.⁴⁴ "Very cruel strong thunderstorms" and hail the size of "hen's eggs" destroyed crops that year, threatening famine.⁴⁵ In June 1629 a major hail and thunderstorm destroyed trees and "knocked over nine houses and placed them in a pile," smashing crops and people in the fields.⁴⁶ "The weather was so awful one could not but suppose that the Judgment Day would come."⁴⁷ The adverse effects of the Little Ice Age, both in nature and population, contributed to an apocalyptic gloom among many.⁴⁸

Considering the damage that war, plague, famine, and the weather inflicted upon Happe's society, it is no wonder these kinds of events resonated with the religious population of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Popular images of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse illustrate the profound connection between eschatological prophesy and contemporary events.⁴⁹ Cunningham and Grell argue that two types of events fit with the first horseman predicted in the book of Revelation—religious upheaval and cosmic irregularities. The White Horseman was prophesied to conquer and was believed to be the returning Christ, bringing the Day of Judgment.⁵⁰ In this way, all events which seemed to point to the end of days simply confirmed the coming White Horseman.⁵¹ The Reformation increased the popularly held belief that these were the Last

⁴³ Quoted in Parker, *Global*, 3. Parker records dozens of examples of seventeenth century writers from around the world commenting on the change in the weather, see *Global*, 3-25.

⁴⁴ Happe, I: 59v. Also see I: 392v.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, I: 57v.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, I: 163r

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, I: 163r. These dire prognostications were promptly followed by an update on the burdens of quartering newly arrived Imperial forces. The combination of bad weather and heavy contributions placed a severe strain on local resources.

⁴⁸ Peter Wilson, *Tragedy*, 262.

⁴⁹ Cunningham and Grell, 1-18. The four horsemen in the book of Revelation are white (crowned conqueror), red (bringer of war), black (bringer of famine), and pale (Death and Hell).

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁵¹ Cunningham and Grell argue that Martin Luther's status as a latter-day prophet in the eyes of many Protestants and the break-up of the Catholic Church in response to reformers like Luther fundamentally

Days. Martin Luther's conviction concerning this point profoundly shaped Lutheran perceptions of political and celestial events. Over the course of the sixteenth century, the long-standing tradition of interpreting the stars joined with an increased scriptural literacy to produce a potent apocalyptic strain of astronomy.⁵² With the upheaval of the Reformation as a backdrop, cosmic events like the conjunction of planets or the passing of comets struck observers with foreboding. In the late 1500s, astronomer Tycho Brahe declared such events to be portents of coming wars and disease—a common enough interpretation. However, Brahe believed the size of the comet of 1577 and the number of planetary conjunctions in recent years were sure indications of the Second Coming.⁵³ Thus, by the start of the Thirty Years' War, the comet of 1618 signaled the culmination of decades of professional, apocalyptic interpretation of these celestial portents.⁵⁴

It was not just astronomers and astrologers (the distinction was vague at best) who found these events troubling. Many people noted the connection between the comet of 1618 and the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War. Happe declared, "On the 3rd of November, 1618, a terrible comet appeared in the heavens, and was seen for several months and all the way into the following year; because of it, war, sedition, bloodshed, pestilence, and famine and unspeakable misfortune occurred around the world."⁵⁵ Here the comet is seen as an omen and cause of the horrors to come. Dyer Hans Heberle perceived it was more generally as a sign of coming judgment, "a great and terrible rod

framed the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as precursors to Christ's return. Reformation and the White Horseman were intimately connected in the minds of many, see Chapter Three.

⁵² For more on the history of apocalyptic astrology, see Barnes, *Prophesy*, 141-181.

⁵³ Cunningham and Grell, 71-72. C&G also note that this was the era of Copernicus whose work revealed a sun-centered universe, profoundly destabilizing the assumed order of the heavens and mankind's place in it.

⁵⁴ Barnes, *Prophesy*, 172-174.

⁵⁵ Happe, I: 24v. Happe's chronicle appears to have been edited by him following the war and thus his comments reflect the benefit of hindsight.

through and by which God threatened us mightily because of our sinful lives, which we fully deserved and continue to deserve daily.”⁵⁶ In fact, the 1618 comet inspired him to begin his chronicle, fully expecting the coming years to be worthy of remembrance.

The second horseman, astride a red horse, was the bringer of war. Military conflict was an ever-present reality in early modern Europe. No more than three years of peace existed for Europe during the seventeenth century and only around ten years of peace in the sixteenth century.⁵⁷ While this persistent warfare is startling, it is important to realize that no single seventeenth-century community experienced ninety-seven years of unremitting bloodshed. This statistic encompasses all of Europe and thus numerous peasants were relatively untouched by war for many years, only to be abruptly caught up in a major conflict like the Thirty Years’ War.⁵⁸ Nevertheless, the inhabitants of the more peaceful provinces were undoubtedly aware of conflicts which did not directly impact them.⁵⁹ “Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars,” so wrote the author of the book of Matthew in a passage concerning the “beginning of sorrows” which will culminate in the end of days.⁶⁰ This warning, and the remainder of the passage, with its images of war, pestilence, famine, and celestial events could not but sound familiar to the people of

⁵⁶ Hans Heberle, *Zeytregister*, quoted in Medick and Marschke, 39-41.

⁵⁷ Parker, *Global*, 26; Cunningham and Grell, 95.

⁵⁸ Thuringia experienced military conflict during the German Peasants’ War of 1524-1525; one of the major figures in that conflict, Thomas Müntzer, hailed from neighboring Stolberg. The Schmalkaldic War of 1547-1548 also took place partially in Thuringia.

⁵⁹ For more about the spread of news, see Chapter Four.

⁶⁰ Matthew, ch. 24, *1599 Geneva Bible Translation*. This passage goes on to say: “For nation shall rise against nation, and realm against realm, and there shall be famine, and pestilence, and earthquakes in divers places. All these are but the beginning of sorrows [. . .] And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall be increased, the love of many shall be cold [. . .] woe shall be to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days. But pray that your flight be not in winter, neither on the Sabbath day. For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, nor shall be [. . .] And immediately after the tribulations of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the kindreds of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”

Europe. Given the parallels, it is unsurprising that a century so marked by warfare might also be filled with apocalyptic preoccupations.⁶¹ Furthermore, this was an era of military expansion with larger armies, bigger ships, and more expensive fortifications. While historians debate the term “military revolution,” it is generally accepted that the fiscal burden of armies had a detrimental effect on civilian populations during the seventeenth century.⁶² These expenses, and direct contact with the massive armies which crisscrossed the Empire during the Thirty Years’ War, greatly damaged local communities.⁶³ Civilians like Happe were deeply affected by the horrors of war and many viewed their plight through an apocalyptic prism; these were the tribulations of God’s people in preparation for Christ’s return.

The Black Horseman, bringer of hunger and famine, followed upon the heels of the armies of the seventeenth century. Famine was popularly perceived as a divine punishment for sin.⁶⁴ Happe articulated this perspective on several occasions when he lamented that his region “was sorely vexed with the three primary forms of [divine] punishment, war, famine, and pestilence.”⁶⁵ Famine was a great threat to the people of seventeenth century Europe. Happe’s chronicle includes dozens of references to hunger and famine resulting from weather and war. In autumn 1632 the armies of Wallenstein

⁶¹ Here again, awareness of international events is difficult to quantify for the average resident of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen. It is evident that warfare affected the people who directly experienced it. The ripple effects of those experiences, during a time of increasing print media, produced a broader impact upon popular perception of the world. For more on this subject, see Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*, 2nd edition (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005) and Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1978), especially 261-263.

⁶² The military revolution debate has been waged for several decades with no end in sight. For more on this topic, see *The Military Revolution Debate*, edited by Clifford J. Rogers (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995); Jeremy Black, *European Warfare 1660-1815* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994); Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500-1800*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

⁶³ See Chapter Three.

⁶⁴ Cunningham and Grell offer an extensive assessment of this paradigm, 222-227.

⁶⁵ Happe, I: 87r. Also see I: 78v

and Gustavus Adolphus maneuvered around each other near Nuremberg, engaging in violent skirmishes and devouring the resources of the civilian population, claiming the lives of “many thousands of people [who] died of famine and pestilence.”⁶⁶ Two years later, a famine in Franconia became so bad that neighboring Thuringia was inundated with “thousands of poor people, women and children, Catholics and Lutherans” seeking bread for survival.⁶⁷ Happe described this particular famine in great detail claiming that “many people died of hunger [. . .] with grass in their mouths” some allegedly going so far as to have “dug the dead from the earth and devoured [them] in hunger.”⁶⁸ This tale of cannibalism, like all such reports from this conflict, was second-hand.⁶⁹ Happe was not actually a witness to such horrible acts, but the nature of the report suggests, at the very least, that the famine was severe enough on the inhabitants of the region that Happe could believe such shocking reports.⁷⁰

This particular crisis appears to have been more a result of human action than the weather, but Happe frequently links the two factors when considering famines. In his review of the events of May, 1635, Happe complained:

This entire month has been very cold [with] violently angry weather, and has almost every night frozen hard, even on the 30th of May, a hard frost. There has not been a single beautiful May day. At several places the wine is completely frozen. Also, there has not been a single rain the entire month. Therefore, due to the great drought, the fruits are very sad and there is absolutely no grass in front of the poor livestock. This has again been a terrible month, with stealing, robbing, looting and tyrannizing the poor people.⁷¹

⁶⁶ Ibid., I: 244v.

⁶⁷ Ibid., I: 316r.

⁶⁸ Ibid., I: 321v-322r. Also see Happe’s report of the siege of Breisach in 1638, II: 228v-229r.

⁶⁹ Mortimer, *Eyewitness*, 173-174; Wilson, *Tragedy*, 610-611, the latter argues that these hearsay accounts were “mostly written by south-west German Protestants to rally sympathy, or as a metaphor for moral breakdown caused by the war.”

⁷⁰ For more on the subject of cannibalism see Medick’s editorial note in Happe, I: 322r.

⁷¹ Happe, I: 392v-339r. Also see I: 66v, 75v for more examples.

While weather played a significant role, civilians consistently blamed the worst food shortages on soldiers.⁷² Hessian pastor Johann Minck lamented that soldiers raided the fields after the farmers had cut the corn and took what they wanted, “selling what they didn’t need themselves in the cities on the Rhine and Main. They made such a good job of it that within a few days no grain was to be had in the region.”⁷³ Another writer, Kaspar Preis, described one such raid of four thousand Swedish soldiers who “threshed all the grain [. . .] as well as the cabbages in the gardens, the apples and the pears, the whole lot. They left us not the least thing.”⁷⁴ For the civilians of central Europe, famines caused by weather and war were all too real.

Several aspects of war contributed to famine during the Thirty Years’ War. First, since armies were logistically incapable of carrying sufficient stores to supply tens of thousands of troops and camp followers for an extensive campaign, it was necessary that military commanders look to the surrounding region for supplies.⁷⁵ Sources from the era abound with complaints about the burdens of military extortion of goods and money from the civilian population. Second, soldiers who attacked villages, burning homes and stealing valuables, could reduce the agricultural output of the region by damaging crops in the fields, disrupting planting and harvesting with raids, and in some cases forcing large portions of the local population to emigrate.⁷⁶ Minck complained that planting had become so irregular that the land was “so overgrown with firs that one would take it for

⁷² Mortimer, *Eyewitness*, 78. While many soldiers initially purchased food, it was understood that food might simply be stolen if not made available for sale.

⁷³ Quoted and translated from “Die Biberauer Chronik des Pfarrers Johann Daniel Minck,” in Mortimer, *Eyewitness*, 78. For a more extensive excerpt, see Medick and Marschke, 111-113.

⁷⁴ Quoted and translated from “Stausenbacher Chronik des Kaspar Preis,” in Mortimer, *Eyewitness*, 78.

⁷⁵ There is a fairly extensive literature on the subject of feeding armies, especially G. Perjés, “Army Provisioning, Logistics and Strategy in the second half of the 17th Century,” in *Acta Historica* Volume 16, (1970): 1-51 and *Feeding Mars: Logistics in Western Warfare from the Middle Ages to the Present*, ed. John Lynn (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993); for more about this in Chapter Three.

⁷⁶ Mortimer, *Eyewitness*, 78.

woods rather than fields.”⁷⁷ Several writers complained that the constant theft of livestock left peasants with no alternative but to hitch themselves to the plows lest their crops go unplanted.⁷⁸ Years of this sort of activity exhausted the regions which experienced extensive campaigning, including Thuringia and Franconia. Third, when armies engaged in sieges, they remained in one place, feeding off that region for months at a time, starving both the besieged population and the surrounding countryside.⁷⁹ In the eyes of many early moderns, the Black Horseman and the Red Horseman rode together as the punishment from God and woe to those who encountered their wrath.

The seventeenth century saw a marked decline in population as wars, starvation, and disease decimated European communities.⁸⁰ Plague, typhus, typhoid, influenza, and smallpox raged across Europe throughout the early modern period but these threats increased during times of war as armies carried disease with them.⁸¹ Since the majority of epidemic victims were poor and suffering from malnutrition, the impact of colder temperatures and wartime unrest was predictable.⁸² Some estimates place the number of soldiers killed by disease during the Thirty Years’ War as high as 1.8 million men.⁸³ Four

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ This was made worse by the new style of fortifications which increased in popularity during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—the *trace italienne* or “star fort.” Besieging armies faced protracted sieges and frequently built interior and exterior siege lines to defend against sallies from the city and relief forces from the outside. These lines of circumvallation and contravallation meant that in many instances, local populations had to deal with the demands of the besieging army and the army of observation or relief which hoped to assist the city. That meant months of hungry soldiers and rampant disease. For more on early modern siege warfare, see Parker, “The ‘Military Revolution,’ 1560-1660—a Myth?,” in *The Journal of Modern History* 48, no. 2 (June, 1976): 195-214; Mahinder S. Kingra, “The Trace Italienne and the Military Revolution During the Eighty Years’ War, 1567-1648,” in *The Journal of Military History* 57, no. 3 (July, 1993): 431-446, <http://www.jstor.org.proxy-remote.galib.uga.edu/stable/2943987>; and John A. Lynn, “The Trace Italienne and the Growth of Armies,” in *The Military Revolution Debate*, ed. Clifford J. Rogers (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995), 169-200.

⁸⁰ Parker, *Global*, 22-25. The sixteenth century was marked by strong population growth as Europe finally recovered from the appalling losses during the fourteenth century Black Plague pandemic.

⁸¹ Henry Kamen, *Early Modern European Society* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 25.

⁸² Ibid., 26.

⁸³ Wilson, *Tragedy*, 791. This estimate is based on the likely ratio of 1:3 killed in action to killed by

major plague epidemics broke out in the Holy Roman Empire during the war, in 1622-1623, 1625, 1634, and again between 1646 and 1650. These coupled with the numerous other diseases which afflicted the population left hundreds of thousands dead. All told, between disease, malnutrition, and actual violence, current estimated deaths during the Thirty Years' War are around five million people, twenty percent of the total population of the Empire.⁸⁴ For Happe's native region of Thuringia, between death and emigration, the social and psychological impact of such massive losses must have been devastating; Thuringia lost as much as fifty percent of its pre-war population.⁸⁵

The final Horseman of the Apocalypse was the Pale Horseman, the bringer of pestilence and death. Naturally, the diseases borne by armies during the Thirty Years' War spread rapidly to civilian populations and chronicles are full of testaments to the horrors and prevalence of diseases like smallpox, typhus, and plague. Typhus was new and particularly prevalent during sieges, thus earning the epithet "camp fever."⁸⁶ Dysentery also commonly troubled military camps. This was not a new problem; it was a frequent occurrence in the filthy environs of a siege or temporary camp and often afflicted civilians as well.⁸⁷ In 1632, Happe's own "dearest brother and friend" Matthias, died of "malignant fever, gently and happy in God."⁸⁸ Happe's daughter, Euphemia,

disease.

⁸⁴Ibid., 787-795. Estimates vary, and Wilson acknowledges that many place the casualties as high as eight million. A more thorough discussion of the historiographic debates surrounding demographics can be found in Chapter Three.

⁸⁵ Anja V. Hartmann, "Identities and mentalities in the Thirty Years' War," in *War, Peace and World Orders in European History*, ed. Anja V. Hartmann and Beatrice Heuser (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 175.

⁸⁶ Cunningham and Grell, 270. Happe calls it "the Hungarian Disease" because early reports of Germans with typhus came from campaigns in Hungary, Happe, I: 88r; for more see Medick's editorial note for "Ungarische Krankheit." Happe's cousin Hans Christoph may have died from this disease, Happe, I:126v.

⁸⁷ Dysentery is mentioned on ten separate occasions in Happe's chronicle, all focusing on the civilian victims. Happe lost a godfather and brother to dysentery in 1629, Happe, I: 173r.

⁸⁸ Ibid., I: 228r. Things did not get better for Happe's family, as his brother's daughter Sabina succumbed to smallpox later that same year; I: 291r.

sickened and died at only twelve weeks old in 1630.⁸⁹ His niece, Susanna, died of consumption in December of 1635.⁹⁰ The arrival of venereal disease, dramatically introduced into Europe at the close of the fifteenth century, caused a great deal of consternation in the medical community which quickly declared it a clear judgment from God on the lusts of the flesh.⁹¹ Syphilis was not directly associated with war, instead blamed on Columbus' expedition to the New World, but it caused great fear and contributed to the feeling that the sixteenth and, eventually, the seventeenth centuries were particularly afflicted with God's judgment.⁹² Medick estimates forty percent of the soldiers during the Thirty Years' War suffered from syphilis which they spread to the civilian population.⁹³ Smallpox was another disease which was not new but was certainly problematic during the seventeenth century. It is mentioned nine times in Happe's chronicle, and it threatened the lives of two of his children.⁹⁴ Smallpox killed over forty children in Greussen during the summer of 1629.⁹⁵ While all these diseases were horrible and proved fatal for many during the war, plague was certainly the most terrifying and dreaded of the Pale Horseman's weapons.⁹⁶

Plague, the Black Death, was a terrible killer during the fourteenth century and continued to trouble Europe throughout the early modern period, though never with the same horrible ferocity as the first pandemic.⁹⁷ Between 1494 and 1648 Europe-wide

⁸⁹ Happe, I: 198v. Happily he had another daughter in 1636 whom he also named Euphemia. She lived until 1704, see Medick's editorial note, Happe, I: 203v.

⁹⁰ Happe, I: 432v.

⁹¹ Cunningham and Grell, 247-253.

⁹² *Ibid.*, Chapter Five.

⁹³ See Medick's editorial note for "Baumöl", Happe II: 341r.

⁹⁴ Happe, I: 46v-47r, 104v, 345r. Happe's sister Euphemia succumbed to the disease a month later, January 1624, I:48r.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, I: 170v.

⁹⁶ Cunningham and Grell, 274.

⁹⁷ Many estimates place the death toll of the 1348-1349 pandemic as high as one third of the European

plague outbreaks occurred seventeen times, four such outbreaks during the Thirty Years' War.⁹⁸ These were supplemented by frequent, more localized outbreaks. The high mortality rates associated with plague and its horrible symptoms left many with the impression that this was surely a punishment from God.⁹⁹ Happe mentions plague dozens of times in the chronicle. During the most savage outbreak, it was responsible for the deaths of many of his neighbors and relatives in a just one year.¹⁰⁰ This was the summer of 1625. Several of Happe's nieces and nephews, two sisters-in-law, several cousins and their spouses, and many leading members of the town died; in all, the plague killed hundreds that summer.¹⁰¹ "In one day, 23 people were buried at the same time, there has been inexpressible sorrow. I have not yet experienced a sadder year for, due to this cruel war, [. . .] my dear mother, my beloved father-in-law, and a large number of my nearest relatives and beloved friends have been taken away."¹⁰² In one of the most tragic episodes, Happe recounts the death of his young, pregnant sister-in-law:

On August 12th my beloved brother's [Andreas Happe's] faithful and God-fearing, chaste, well-chosen bride, Frau Sibylle Döbler, after nine weeks less than a year living with my brother in heartfelt love in the married state, was separated from this world by the hideous plague at around 6 am. She was not even 16 years old and dealt with a heavily pregnant body, but it was mourned by God, mother and child were dead at once, and the birth remained dead in her womb.¹⁰³

Tragedies like these were commonplace in the early modern world—exacerbated by conflicts like the Thirty Years' War. Happe recognized the connection between disease

population.

⁹⁸ Cunningham and Grell, 275. Note that these figures are based on a broad understanding of "plague," a label which may have been applied to several different diseases, not just the Bubonic Plague which modern medicine has classified.

⁹⁹ Many images show plague as "an arrow sent from God", Cunningham and Grell, 274-275.

¹⁰⁰ In 1625, during one of the worst Europe-wide plague outbreaks of the early modern period, Happe mourned the deaths of 843 people, including several important civic and religious figures, Happe, I: 65v.

¹⁰¹ Happe, I: 57v-60r.

¹⁰² Ibid., I: 65v.

¹⁰³ Ibid., I: 58r-58v.

and war when he lamented at the end of the plague filled summer of 1625 “These days many of the Imperial soldiers under the Duke of Friedland [Albrecht von Wallenstein] have been situated in [the county of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen]. Wherefore, we are unfortunately very much in grave danger [and] at the same time are dying of pestilence, war, famine and are in danger for our true religion.”¹⁰⁴ Pastor Minck wrote “In between, and alongside the scourge of war, God sent the pestilence here after us.”¹⁰⁵ Another chronicler wrote of the “great plagues and suffering and all kinds of maliciousness” which soldiers inflicted upon the population of Ulm in 1625.¹⁰⁶ All these authors understood that disease and war were linked. To many, that connection was God’s righteous anger—punishment upon a sinful people and precursor to the End of Days.

Diseases, famines, wars, and even troubling astrological events were nothing new to early modern Europe. People were used to high infant mortality and crop failure—warfare was a less frequent occurrence in Thuringia but not so distant that adults would have forgotten tales of Thomas Müntzer and the German Peasants’ War of the 1520s, or the Schmalkaldic War of the 1540s—but these tribulations, by striking with greater frequency and ferocity during an age of religious uncertainty and political instability, led many to believe the Apocalypse was nigh.¹⁰⁷ The “Age of Crisis” combined with some of the most destructive warfare in centuries to produce an eschatological expectation. For

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, I: 59v.

¹⁰⁵ Mortimer, *Eyewitness*, 76.

¹⁰⁶ “Hans Heberle’s *Zeytregister*,” in Tryntje Helfferich, ed. and trans., *The Thirty Years War: A Documentary History*, (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2009), 306.

¹⁰⁷ The great irony with this climax of concern was its rapid, if uneven, dissipation by the end of the war. One of the primary criticisms which Cunningham and Grell received for their work was failing to adequately explain the reduction in concern by 1648, see Parker, “The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse: a review,” in *The International History Review* 24, no. 2 (June 2002): 401-403. Barnes addresses this problem by arguing that apocalypticism became such a large movement that it fragmented under the weight of competing political and religious visions of the future. Additionally the pressures of constant, indiscriminant violence during the war eroded popular optimistic interpretations among Lutherans concerning the purpose and eventual outcome of God’s wrath, see especially Barnes, *Prophecy*, 256-260, and 265. For more on the German Peasants’ War in Thuringia, see Chapter Five.

Happe and his contemporaries, the conflict between the Catholic League and the Protestant Swedes took on a profound and holy character. Protestants often described the Pope as an Antichrist and Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, was frequently hailed as the “Lion of the North,” champion of the true Church.¹⁰⁸ This charged language suggests both a deep antipathy between Protestants and Catholics, and an eschatological framework for interpreting the conflict; “to speak of Antichrist was to speak of the Last Days.”¹⁰⁹ Happe believed Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden was God’s instrument to defend the faith and yet, these forces of protection wrecked havoc upon his community time and again, challenging this interpretation.¹¹⁰ For many, the end of days did come, in the form of death by famine, pestilence, or the sword; those that survived had to develop means of carrying on after their hopes in Gustavus astride the White Horse were dashed by the cruel realities of war. Living in a time marked by crisis and plagued by disaster, Happe and his contemporaries navigated an incredibly complex landscape of conviction and chaos. In spite of all this, the people who populate the pages of Happe’s chronicle demonstrated a determination to survive no matter what natural and man-made crises arose.

¹⁰⁸ Barnes, *Prophesy*, 4 and 70-71; Happe, I: 183v, 290v.

¹⁰⁹ Cunningham and Grell, 4. For more on Antichrist as eschatological and political polemic, see Barnes, *Prophesy*, 26.

¹¹⁰ Happe’s perspective on the Swedes was complex. He praises Gustavus as a “most Christian king” but over time his view of the Swedish army is darkened by atrocities. This complicated assessment of violence by co-religionists is dealt with in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER 3

WAR IS HELL

“The entire army of Pappenheim [. . .] miserably plundered and raped many women and cut down many people. Also, the godless soldiers have smashed and destroyed everything in the houses, strewn the grain to their horses, and broken open the churches in Greussen. In sum, poor Greussen is so devastated that it has become like a dwelling of dragons rather than a dwelling of men.”

“The great and terrible fear, misery, and tyranny in all places in Germany cannot be uttered in the tongues of men.”¹¹¹ -Volkmar Happe, *Chronicon Thuringiae*, 1632 and 1635.

These chilling words encapsulate what the Thirty Years’ War meant for many of the people of Central Europe. From 1618-1648 a massive war raged across the Holy Roman Empire and neighboring territories. This violence was uneven in its impact, leaving some regions relatively unharmed and others completely devastated. Happe’s homeland of Thuringia was one of the latter, losing upwards of fifty percent of its population to death and relocation.¹¹² Naturally, with a war of this length, some regions experienced times of calm followed by years of upheaval as the focus of the war shifted theaters. This was the case for Thuringia. While the early years of the war were comparatively peaceful, the Red Horseman and his fellows descended upon Happe and his neighbors with terrible force in the 1630s. The period from 1630 to 1635, known to historians as the Swedish Intervention, proved to be one of the most devastating periods of the war for Thuringia. Given the high volume of interactions between soldiers and civilians during this period, the *Chronicon Thuringiae* provides a wealth of information

¹¹¹ Happe, I: 258v and I: 378r.

¹¹² Hartmann, 175. Thuringia was situated along what some historians call a “diagonal belt of destruction” which ran from north-east to south-west through Thuringia and Saxony.

about the nature of war-time violence upon local communities. During the Thirty Years' War, non-combatants were frequently the targets of military violence as the armies sought to extract resources and exert their power. Happe's position as the *Hofrat* for Count Christian Günther I placed him in an ideal position to witness and record these interactions on a daily basis. His chronicle reveals a world filled with violence as armies extorted, robbed, burned, raped, desecrated, and murdered their way across Thuringia time and again.

This grim story was repeated throughout the Empire during the war in countless diaries, chronicles, complaints, broadsheets and other forms of local source material. The plethora of such reports sparked a lengthy debate among historians about the actual impact of the war on the Holy Roman Empire. Popular memory has long considered this to be one of the most catastrophic conflicts in European history and the fictional works of Grimmelshausen and later Schiller fueled this view during eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.¹¹³ Any serious study of the demographic and economic impact of the war faces steep challenges as anecdotal evidence like ego-documents fail to provide the systematic, empire-wide data necessary to fully analyze these issues.¹¹⁴ Because the violence was uneven, sources from Thuringia or Franconia tell a tale of great woe; those from places like Hamburg, which actually grew during the war, look very different.¹¹⁵ The demographic data which is available cannot entirely explain whether regional population

¹¹³ Grimmelshausen, who wrote in immediate aftermath of the Thirty Years' War, rose in popularity during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, corresponding with Friedrich Schiller career, see Johann Jakob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen, *An Unabridged Translation of Simplicius Simplicissimus*, trans. Monte Frederick Adair (Monte Frederick Adair, 2012), 8-9.

¹¹⁴ While it is true that such systematic data is unavailable from even the more conventional records, ego-documents present an even more spotty picture of demographics than other source types.

¹¹⁵ Mortimer, "Individual Experience and Perception of the Thirty Years War in Eyewitness Personal Accounts," in *German History* 20, no. 2 (2002): 142. According to Günther Franz, Hamburg's population may have risen by as much as 50% during the war.

losses were a result of death (and thus a net loss to the whole empire) or simply emigration. Economic and cultural losses are equally difficult to gauge and thus leave much of the debate over the “all-destructive fury” of the war in the level of conjecture, never to be fully resolved.¹¹⁶ Rather than attempt to settle this debate over total impact, this study can identify the general trends which form a context for understanding Happe’s account of violence and destruction.¹¹⁷

The first trend to consider is demographics. Since the publication of Günther Franz’s foundational assessment of the demographic impact of the Thirty Years’ War, *Der Dreißigjährige Krieg und das deutsche Volk*, many historians have challenged his conclusions that the war resulted in a massive demographic downturn in Germany.¹¹⁸ As Theibault effectively argues, though concerns over Franz’s nationalistic, Nazi assumptions have certainly damaged his credibility, his over-all conclusions have stood the test of time. According to Theibault, the Thirty Years’ War was “the longest-lasting and geographically most widespread demographic crisis in Europe after the Black Death” and thus deserving of greater historical attention.¹¹⁹ The most important criticism of Franz has come as a result of his own lack of discernment concerning sources. He completely ignored the potential biases and distortions to which his various sources were prone and thus, according to his critics, generated local numbers based on faulty

¹¹⁶ This phrase was utilized in Robert Ergang, *The Myth of the All-Destructive Fury of the Thirty Years’ War* (Pocono Pines, PA: The Craftsmen, 1956), as he attacked the once popular belief that a culturally and economically powerful Germany was destroyed and sent backward two hundred years by the Thirty Years’ War.

¹¹⁷ Wilson’s chapter on the “Human and Material Cost” of the war is an excellent overview of the debate and a summation of his findings on the questions of impact, Wilson, *Tragedy*, 779-821.

¹¹⁸ For an extensive treatment of this debate and its merits, see Theibault, “The Demography of the Thirty Years War Re-revisited: Günther Franz and his Critics,” in *German History* 15, no. 1 (1997): 1-21.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 2.

information.¹²⁰ While certainly a valid critique, Theibault notes that until better data can be collected at the local level, Franz's study will remain "the most complete and accurate picture of the demographic impact of the war that we possess."¹²¹ Given the lack of precise data, it is not surprising that current estimates of total losses in the population of the Empire during the war vary from fifteen percent to Franz's forty percent of rural and thirty-three percent of urban populations. As Wilson notes, "Even a 15 per cent decline would make the Thirty Years 'War the most destructive conflict in European history."¹²² Despite incomplete data and uneven impact, there is little doubt that the war was incredibly destructive to human life. The data for Thuringia is actually much clearer than many other regions, and one study shows that the region lost a significant percentage of its population during the war.¹²³ While it did experience a rebound following the war (ostensibly through increased birth-rate and returning expatriates) the total loss as a result of the war was, as stated earlier, around fifty percent.¹²⁴

Population was not the only victim of the war. Economically the Holy Roman Empire experienced major disruptions and damage. While the scope of this impact was not as massive as nineteenth century historians claimed, it was "overwhelmingly negative" for many areas within the Empire.¹²⁵ Just as with population, the economic and cultural impacts of the war were unevenly distributed. Existing economic fault-lines were

¹²⁰ Ibid., 9.

¹²¹ Ibid., 19.

¹²² Wilson, *Tragedy*, 787. This claim is based on percentage not raw numbers, he goes on to explain that the USSR lost 12% of its population during WWII, and of course the world wars were briefer and global thus producing much higher deaths per year.

¹²³ S. H. Steinberg, *The Thirty Years' War and the Conflict for European Hegemony, 1600-1660* (London, 1966).

¹²⁴ This was not the conclusion of the author, but rather of Theibault's analysis of Steinberg's data. Theibault notes the irony that one of Franz's biggest critics actually proved Franz's estimates correct by doing a more thorough investigation of a particular region, in this case Thuringia, Theibault, 7. Also see, Mortimer, *Eyewitness*, 2.

¹²⁵ Wilson, *Tragedy*, 800.

exacerbated by decades of conflict. Inflation became the “Kipper and Wipper” hyperinflation crisis of the 1620s—“the Western World’s first financial crisis.”¹²⁶ Currency debasement, rarely practiced prior to the war, became a common and highly detrimental practice due to the financial strains of the war.¹²⁷ Eventually debasement was reined in, but the inflation crisis created a very unstable economic footing as the war intensified during the Swedish Intervention. As the financial situation worsened for the major regions of the Empire, so too did preexisting credit problems. War was expensive and the tax systems of the seventeenth century were insufficient to supply necessary capital so rulers looked to creditors and debt soared. On a local level, years of war damaged trade and production. As mentioned in Chapter Two, Thuringia’s woad trade was experiencing difficulties as the war began due to overseas indigo competition.¹²⁸ The trade interruptions by the military exacerbated the situation, particularly damaging rural areas which were less able to defend themselves from soldiers.¹²⁹ Urban centers fared better, though certainly not uniformly so; Magdeburg was razed to the ground and many of its inhabitants slaughtered by Imperial troops in 1631. While current historical opinion is strongly opposed to the notion that Central Europe was experiencing some kind of golden age which the war destroyed, the war does appear to have violently disrupted the strengths of the prewar economy and exploited its weaknesses, bringing widespread, but not universal, economic and demographic crises.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 795-798.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 796.

¹²⁸ Holger Berg, *Military Occupation under the Eyes of the Lord: Studies in Erfurt during the Thirty Years War* (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010), 54-55. Berg notes that to local farmers and merchants, this decline, coupled with the currency crisis of 1621-1623, struck locals as a “sudden drop.” To many, the destruction and instability brought by the war should be blamed for their economic misfortune.

¹²⁹ Wilson, *Tragedy*, 798-801. Wilson notes that vital sectors like arms manufacturing continued to do a steady business, but were vulnerable to theft. He notes, for example, an instance when the Swedes never paid for a large shipment of weapons from Suhl in Thuringia; these workshops were destroyed by Imperialists in 1634 but soon reopened. See also Happe, I: 333r.

Given the broad population decline and financial troubles brought about by the conflict, historians are faced with an interesting set of questions. How violent was this war and how much did that violence actually contribute to these trends? Generally, historians agree that the civilian death toll of the Thirty Years' War was more a result of famine and disease than direct violence.¹³⁰ This is not to say that the war was inconsequential; the previous chapter demonstrates the intimate connection between the Pale, Black, and Red Horsemen. What intentional violence may have lacked in terms of civilian body count it made up for in ferocity, terror, and constant disruption of daily life and society. Happe's chronicle is filled with instances of robbery, murder, pillage, arson, rape and torture. While some of these stories may have been more rumor than reality—consider the instance of cannibalism mentioned in Chapter Two—the majority of Happe's reports appear to have been based on the experiences of his own family or neighbors and people of Thuringia.¹³¹ Happe personally experienced the trauma of highway robbery, siege, the near rape of his daughters, and the death of loved ones as a result of this conflict. Violence toward civilians was not a new phenomenon in early modern warfare but the combination of the long duration of the conflict and the lack of consistent protections for friendly civilians shocked many. Changing warfare and larger armies created numerous problems for heads of state. These problems contributed to the unusually horrific experience of many civilians during the war.

Seventeenth century armies were comprised of a polyglot mixture of career mercenaries and new recruits. As such, it is a misnomer to claim that the Swedish army

¹³⁰ Wilson, *Tragedy*, 789-795; Outram, 245; Theibault, "Demography," 3; and Ronald G. Asch, "'Wo der soldat hinkommt, da ist alles sein': Military Violence and Atrocities in the Thirty Years War Re-examined," in *German History* 18, no. 3 (2002): 291-292.

¹³¹ The veracity of ego documents like Happe's will be assessed in greater detail in Chapter Four.

was actually filled with Swedes. When Gustavus landed in Pomerania in 1630, he did so with a core force of 13,000 Swedish soldiers which he quickly augmented with a large contingent of mercenaries from across Europe.¹³² By 1632 the total of actual Swedish- and Finnish-born soldiers fighting in the “Swedish” army was as low as twelve percent, many of whom served in garrison duty.¹³³ The Swedish army, like every major army during the war, was comprised of Germans, French, Irish, English, Scots, Poles, Italians and others.¹³⁴ For most of the soldiers, war was about earning a living, not about patriotism or even religion; Catholics and Protestants often fought side by side. The realities of mercenary forces help explain a great deal about the nature of early modern warfare and military logistics. Several features of early modern mercenary armies bear consideration here. Fielding an army was very expensive business and maintaining it was even more difficult. As armies grew in size, so too did the financial demands they placed on their employers. These demands were not shouldered by the king or a central government in the way that modern armies are. Instead there were an array of methods for supplying and paying these forces. Due to the international composition of most armies, the ranks were filled through a system of military enterprisers, *condottiere*, and middle men.¹³⁵ Essentially, a monarch like Emperor Ferdinand hired a military commander like Albrecht von Wallenstein to field an army. Ferdinand would provide

¹³² Quentin Outram, “The Demographic Impact of Early Modern Warfare,” in *Social Science History* 26, no. 2 (Summer, 2002), 254, Gustavus’ army swelled to 130,000 men by 1632.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 254; Hartmann, 176.

¹³⁴ Hartmann, 177. Ulbricht notes that a side-effect of such diverse mercenary forces was that, as foreigners, these soldiers were an unexpected aspect of the war for civilians who tended to be more fearful of outsiders. Frequently authors attributed the most horrible acts to the Croats who functioned for many as the embodiment of the terrible foreigner. This does not mean that foreign mercenaries were necessarily worse for being foreign, but rather that foreignness carried an additional stigma and conjured up more fear for many civilians, Ulbricht, 101.

¹³⁵ Wilson, “European Warfare, 1450-1815,” in *War in the Early Modern World*, ed. Jeremy Black (London: UCL Press Limited, 1999), 189-192. Also see David Parrott, *The Business of War: Military Enterprise and Military Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

some of the initial capital (funded by large loans) and promises to continue payments for the maintenance of the force. Wallenstein in turn agreed to provide some of the initial capital and contracted various colonels to raise smaller forces at their own expense. Ultimately, the financial responsibility was spread across the levels of authority while much of the money for payroll and provisions was procured through plunder. If a city was sacked by Wallenstein's army, everyone got a cut of the profits, with the higher ranking officers receiving more than the common soldier.¹³⁶ The whole system was very problematic, "teetering on the edge of bankruptcy;" soldiers were frequently without adequate supplies and pay.¹³⁷ Indeed Martin van Creveld called early modern armies the "worst supplied in history, marauding bands of armed ruffians, devastating the countryside they crossed."¹³⁸ Such systemic weaknesses naturally affected the strategies and realities of early modern warfare. The financial investment that many commanders made to establish and maintain their troops altered strategy as military contractors were unwilling to "squander their investment on ill-planned, unrealistic or badly supported military ventures."¹³⁹ Armies often fought without proper financing or effective control by the government employing them and serious logistical and disciplinary problems arose as a result.

¹³⁶ For more on the subject of the profitability of being an enterpriser, see Martin van Creveld, *Supplying War: Logistics from Wallenstein to Patton*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 207-211. Also see Fritz Redlich, *The German Military Enterpriser and His Workforce: a study in European economic and social history*, 2 vols. (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1964-65).

¹³⁷ Outram, 255.

¹³⁸ Creveld, 7. His book, originally published in 1977, laid the foundation for a historiography of logistics in modern warfare and shaped the course of the subsequent decades of discussion. John Lynn takes Creveld to task for sloppy use of the term "living off the land," contending that armies following the Thirty Years' War were far less likely to resort to foraging and pillaging than during the first half of the seventeenth century. Thus the bulk of the debate over the extent to which early modern armies "lived off the land" is focused on the post war era. Lynn acknowledges that the armies during the Thirty Years' War "depended upon seizing much of their own food in the field", Lynn, "The History of Logistics and Supplying War," in *Feeding Mars: Logistics in Western Warfare from the Middle Ages to the Present*, ed. John Lynn (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993), 9-37.

¹³⁹ Parrott, 154.

Inconsistent supply was one of the most prominent problems facing early modern armies. This was not simply a result of inadequate funding; in the seventeenth century it was logistically impossible to adequately supply large armies operating hundreds of miles from home. G. Perjés' study of seventeenth-century logistics systematically explores the ration requirements of an army of 60,000 soldiers. This was roughly comparable to many of the armies fighting during the Thirty Years' War. With a standard daily bread ration of 1kg per man, plus the necessary rations for support personnel, Perjés estimated 90,000 bread rations per day.¹⁴⁰ By assessing the requisite amount of flour and grain to produce this amount of bread, calculating the milling capacity of average mills, the water, wind or animal power necessary to operate the mills, and the amount of wood and brick and stone for daily baking, Perjés explained the prodigious amount of logistical planning that went into maintaining an army. It was important for commanders to consider the amount of available grain, mills, and ovens in the regions they intended to invade. Despite the difficulties of living off the land, Perjés demonstrated the impossibility of simply carrying the necessary supplies with the army. Armies would have been free to move with far greater speed if they could carry a month's supply with them and not have to forage or set up supply magazines. But by calculating the total amount of flour, bread, and horse fodder an army of 60,000 men and support personnel would have to transport in order to feed it for a month, Perjés concluded such an enterprise would necessitate "11,000 carts, 22,000 drivers and helpers, as well as 50-70,000 draught animals."¹⁴¹ Not

¹⁴⁰ G. Perjés, "Army Provisioning, Logistics and Strategy in the Second Half of the 17th Century," in *Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 16, no. 1/2 (1970): 1-52.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 11. This number correctly includes the necessary supplies to feed the extra drivers and animals, but it does not even include the hoards of camp followers which often included the wives and children of soldiers, nor does it include any other supply needs like meat or water which would have added to the number of carts and animals. For more on camp followers see Mortimer, *Eyewitnesses*, 33-37.

only would such a wagon train have been prohibitively expensive, it would have stretched back behind the army almost two hundred kilometers, or eight days marching distance from front to rear. This would have been an impossibly large and vulnerable supply train for any early modern army to maintain.¹⁴² As a result, armies were forced to rely upon a combination of foraging, supply magazines, and trade with merchants to adequately feed the soldiers and their dependents.

Foraging was the primary way armies provided food for their thousands of horses and pack animals. Fodder was available seasonally, with the young, vitamin-rich spring grass being the most essential for rejuvenating and nourishing the horses after the winter months eating only poor-quality dry food.¹⁴³ As foraging required groups of soldiers and horses to spread out and graze or gather forage it was a dangerous project for the soldiers involved.¹⁴⁴ It was also dangerous for the civilian population as these foraging parties frequently sought provisions for themselves as well as their horses, bringing the soldiers into closer contact with civilians. Furthermore, these soldiers were often at distance from the main body of the army and thus removed from the oversight of the senior commanding officers. Conflicts erupted with locals who resented any attempt to take vital grain, farm animals, and other goods. Thus even basic activities by soldiers led to violence with civilians and contributed to the mutual hatred which characterized the two parties' interactions. For civilians, soldiers represented the ever-present threat of theft, murder, and starvation; for soldiers, these villagers stood in the way of survival and could

¹⁴² Perjés, 11.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 15. Obtaining forage for the horses was an essential consideration when determining the timing and direction of a campaign.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 17-19. Foraging often required extensive covering forces to protect those engaged in gathering supplies.

prove dangerous if they chose to resist. Often local resources were insufficient to provide for both military and civilian requirements, leaving many hungry and angry.

Given the inadequacy of many localities to supply an army with food, the military frequently relied on stockpiles of supplies known as magazines.¹⁴⁵ These required forethought and time to establish and were not always sufficient for the needs of the army.¹⁴⁶ Small-scale traders or sutlers known as *Marketender* followed in the train of armies and “were a flexible and important element of any supply system in this period” which served to funnel supplies from around the region into the camp.¹⁴⁷ Additionally, they frequently purchased and resold stolen goods and were a vital go-between for soldiers and local civilians, potentially reducing the incidences of pillage as armies marched through a territory. Sutlers were subject to many of the same supply issues as a plundering army if the regional food supply were already stripped bare by earlier armies or famine. These sutlers were small-scale operatives and did not have a massive network to bring supplies in from more prosperous sections of the empire. As such, military commanders could not place complete reliance on the services of the sutlers.¹⁴⁸ Where sutlers failed, “networks of large-scale private suppliers, manufacturers, merchants and financiers, working in conjunction either with state administrators or more often with the

¹⁴⁵ Commanders often chose to travel near navigable rivers or the coast in order to transport supplies via water, but this was not always an option. See Creveld, 12.

¹⁴⁶ Parrott, 196-206. His emphasis on alternatives to the magazine system is somewhat opposed to Perjés’ strong emphasis that magazines were essential to military supply. Whereas Perjés’ article is primarily focused on the second half of the century, Parrott argues that during the first half of the century magazines were not as widespread and centrally directed as those of later decades. See also Creveld, 17-26.

¹⁴⁷ Parrott, 203.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 204-206. Camp followers and sutlers are an understudied aspect of early modern society. These were people who profited from the war and were always on the move. Looking at these groups raises interesting gender questions as women could be successful sutlers. Many female sutlers were also wives of soldiers or prostitutes, complicating discussions of their independence. See Barton C. Hacker, “Women and Military Institutions in Early Modern Europe: A Reconnaissance,” in *Signs* 6, no. 4 (Summer, 1981): 643-671. For a more comprehensive assessment of women and war, see Lynn, *Women, Armies, and Warfare in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

military commanders as the contractors in their own right” succeeded in becoming the mainstay of military supply during the war.¹⁴⁹ Ultimately, the task of keeping an army supplied with food presented an immense challenge to early modern commanders. This was met in a variety of ways, but the most immediate impact rested on local communities. This was primarily a war of maneuver rather than large pitched battles, largely due to the size of armies and the logistical realities of the day. In order to survive, early modern armies had to keep moving to find fresh resources.¹⁵⁰ Furthermore, commanders had great incentive to invade unoccupied regions in order to deny the enemy resources. If Wallenstein did not move into a region, Gustavus might and thus reap the benefits of unconquered lands. This meant that allied territories might be occupied to “protect” them from the enemy and be forced to make payments to the army for that protection.¹⁵¹

While armies depended upon a complex combination of local and regional networks to ensure an adequate supply of food, money was always in short supply. The chief complaint by soldiers of the era was irregular pay. To address this problem, the army turned to a system of extortion called “contributions.” While commanders used several versions of contributions during the war, they remained essentially the same.¹⁵² These were war taxes levied against occupied and loyal provinces. As an army marched through a region it would send word to nearby towns that they were required to pay what

¹⁴⁹ Parrott, 211-241. Wallenstein is an example of a military commander who was intimately connected to international finance, production, and supply for his army. He took it a step further by using his duchy of Friedland as a production center. He in turn received financial support from his employer, Emperor Ferdinand II.

¹⁵⁰ Creveld, 12-17. These realities, van Creveld explains, are largely responsible for Gustavus Adolphus’ decision to march across the Empire and strike into regions largely unharmed by the war up to that point.

¹⁵¹ Parrott, 155.

¹⁵² For more on the various forms of contributions see F. Redlich, “Contributions in the Thirty Years’ War,” *The Economic History Review* 12, no. 2 (1959).

was demanded or be burned to the ground.¹⁵³ This was known as the *Brandschatzung* and was a fairly traditional form of military extortion in European warfare.¹⁵⁴ However this “fire tax” proved insufficient to supply the needs of the armies and thus fell out of use in first several years of the conflict.¹⁵⁵ As the war progressed, the system became more organized and was eventually used to extort payment, in cash or in kind, from whole territories, even regions where no army resided.¹⁵⁶ Commanders would supply areas with *salva guardias* which functioned as promises of good behavior by occupying forces and protection from further extortion in exchange for regular support payments.¹⁵⁷ The payments could come in the form of money or goods, and in some cases contributions included the *Werbegeld* which was money earmarked for the raising of new troops.¹⁵⁸ Although the *Brandschatzung* had a long history, the new, more expansive contribution system which afflicted friendly and occupied regions alike was a distinctly seventeenth-century invention and “remained the mainstay of war finance throughout” the century.¹⁵⁹ Indeed, contributions did not end with the cessation of hostilities in the Empire. The

¹⁵³ See Happe, I: 453v.

¹⁵⁴ Redlich, 248. Also see Wilson, *Tragedy*, 402-403.

¹⁵⁵ Redlich, 248.

¹⁵⁶ In this latter instance, the threat was simple: pay or be invaded. Territories chose to comply lest they suffer the greater losses associated with a pillaging army.

¹⁵⁷ Wilson, *Tragedy*, 402-403.

¹⁵⁸ Soldiers often received a lump sum upon joining a company and the *Werbegeld* served to supply that ready cash. See Medick’s editorial note, Happe, I: 241. For an example of money and goods, see Happe, I:363r. Schwarzburg-Sondershausen had to pay thousands of bushels of oats as well as a considerable sum of money to fulfill the contribution demand. Contribution demands varied by commander; Redlich explains that whereas Tilly demanded payments in kind for the majority of his contributions, Wallenstein’s contributions were principally paid in money; Redlich, 253-254.

¹⁵⁹ Redlich, 252-254. Imperial general Albrecht von Wallenstein is credited by many historians for honing the contribution system during his 1620s campaigns. When Gustavus Adolphus arrived in 1630 he attempted to copy the system but placed heavier burdens on the regions under his sway and outstripped the capacities of local production. It is no wonder that the Swedes were viewed by civilians with even greater hostility than the armies of Tilly and Wallenstein. See Wilson, *Tragedy*, 482.

French army continued to use variations on the same theme for the remainder of the century, even on French towns which caused a great deal of popular frustration.¹⁶⁰

Happe frequently laments the burden of contributions in his chronicle. In September of 1632 he explained that the Swedes forced him to sign an agreement committing the districts of Keula and Ebeleben to pay two hundred and fifty Reichsthalers for the *Werbegeld* in addition to their weekly heavy contributions.¹⁶¹ Happe proceeded to complain that despite an arrangement with the commanding officer limiting the amount of food the soldiers would requisition from the district, they proceeded to eat and drink more of the civilians' provisions than they were allotted.¹⁶² The College of Electors attempted to curb excesses in war contributions in 1630, but it appears to have had limited impact.¹⁶³ Happe makes numerous general references to the "harsh contributions" and the "terribly large and unaffordable" burden they placed on his region.¹⁶⁴ In February of 1631 three companies of Imperial infantry arrived in Schwarzburg-Sondershausen and demanded 9,200 Reichsthalers, "a terrible sum, impossible for the poor people to come up with."¹⁶⁵ Only eight months later, the Swedes were in charge and demanded 6800 Reichsthalers.¹⁶⁶ The succession of demands as

¹⁶⁰ Lynn, "How War Was Fed: The Tax of Violence and Contributions during the Gran Siècle," in *The Journal of Modern History* 65, no. 2 (June, 1993) 286-289.

¹⁶¹ Happe, I: 241v. 1 Reichstaler = 1.5 Gulden; 1 Reichstaler = 18 Batzen = 72 Kreuzer = 288 Pfennige; see Medick's editorial note.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, I: 241v.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, I: 250r. This was the meeting of the Electors which resulted in Wallenstein's dismissal and the refusal of the college to elect Ferdinand III as King of the Romans due to the anger over treatment of civilians and the Edict of Restitution. See Wilson, *Tragedy*, 454-458.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, I: 254r. This language of unbearable burden was common throughout the war and has raised a great deal of skepticism in some historical circles, particularly when coupled with the surprising amount of wealth many of these peasants seem to have when they are repeatedly robbed. This debate is addressed more fully in Chapter Four.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, I: 257-258r.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, I: 277r.

territory changed hands made the contributions even more burdensome on the civilian population.

In order to make the contribution system work, the army had to ensure regular payments from civilians. Negotiation with local elites functioned as one of the central elements of these arrangements during the Thirty Years' War. Indigenous tax systems were too inefficient and regionally variable to be adequately subsumed into the greater war finance system. Instead army commanders would negotiate a level of contribution from a region and leave it up to the ruler or his local agents to raise the funds. This meant that civil administrators like Happe received and transmitted countless petitions for reduction in taxes due to hardship. One of the fascinating elements in Happe's chronicle is the thread of frustration and sorrow at his inability to adequately address these concerns. As much as local and regional authorities may have desired to reduce the financial burden on their people, the army was in the position of power. If distant threats were insufficient to inspire compliance, the army could send in soldiers to ensure regular payment. This was one of the important functions of quartering during the war.

On many occasions, army commanders required some military presence in the extorted territories to ensure prompt payment. Billeting or quartering frequently solved this problem by producing just enough violence and discomfort to local populations that they could better understand the consequences of failure to pay. Additionally, armies tasked with occupying a region frequently spread their forces around in garrisons to dilute the burden on the local food supply. Quartering provided soldiers with lodging and regular meals; it also helped to encourage a compliant populace. Soldiers frequently took advantage of their position of power and proximity to extort additional sums of money

from their hosts. In 1632 soldiers were distributed throughout the villages and towns of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen where they proceeded to squeeze money from the locals, steal valuables from local churches, and beat many of the inhabitants.¹⁶⁷ Sometimes quartering was a surprise event which placed an unforeseen strain on the resources of villagers, like the events of Christmas Eve, 1630. Six companies of Imperial cavalry had been operating in the villages around Ebeleben since December 19th, stealing horses and beating peasants. On the 24th several companies of Imperial infantry arrived in area and settled in a handful of villages and small towns, demanding shelter and a meal. This made for a “very sad Christmas feast” for the “poor people” of the region.¹⁶⁸ For some civilians, quartering meant a short-term lodger, a mild drain on resources, and little more than an annoyance. For many others, quartering entailed the long-term presence of a group of people who spent night and day stealing and tormenting their hosts and neighbors; the “terror of billeted soldiers has everywhere been an evil.”¹⁶⁹ In 1634, Happe wrote that the General Banér’s Swedish army “had been quartered in Thuringia to the uttermost spoilage of the poor exhausted country.”¹⁷⁰

Quartering brought physical as well as financial dangers. Soldiers often mistreated their hosts and at times even beat or killed them. In 1633 Happe was the victim of a terrible experience with a murderous guest. Ebeleben was forced to billet a troop of Swedish cavalry which included a “godless, murderous rogue” who was abusing some of the people in town.¹⁷¹ Happe explained that he refused to allow his behavior to

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., I: 222r.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., I: 253r-254r.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., I: 251v.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., I: 337r.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., I: 12r-12v.

continue and thus earned the hatred of this villain who “threatened his life and limb.”¹⁷² As Happe tells the story, God protected him by having him sent to Greussen on official business the same day that this soldier chose to attack him. “As I pulled away in the morning, so the murderer entered my official residence, searched for me with lots of cursing and blasphemy and terrible threats. Seeing that I was not to be found, he ran to the parish and struck the poor innocent Reverend Doctor Kaspar Müller in the head with a pointed hammer, wounding him so badly that he died a few days afterward.”¹⁷³ To many civilians, soldiers were unpredictable villains who left them fearful of the damage these outsiders could inflict on their lives and fortunes.

The most striking stories from the chronicle are encounters between civilians and soldiers bent upon pillaging. These incidents frequently overlapped with quartering, foraging, and attempts to collect on contributions, blurring the line between the violence of pillaging and the violence of other interactions. Writing about the French military at this time, Lynn declares, “Abuse did not simply undermine the system; abuse was the system [. . .] Extortion of money, goods, and even sex by soldiers did not exist outside the French method of maintaining troops in the field, instead it was an integral and necessary aspect of the way in which the Bourbon monarchy tapped the resources required by its army.”¹⁷⁴ This paradigm was true during the Thirty Years’ War as well. Ideally, civilians were protected from pillaging by the rules of military governance which the various belligerents issued to their troops, but the ideal never matched reality. An excellent

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ibid., Happe never mentions what happened to the murderer, whether he was punished or continued to pursue Happe. This story was written during a summary of the terrible events Happe experienced during the war to demonstrate God’s protection and sovereignty during these events. Happe writes that the pastor, on his death bed, told him “ye have such a gracious God who always, before impending disaster, leadeth away.”

¹⁷⁴ Lynn, “Fed,” 290.

example of the attempt to formally defend civilians is Gustavus Adolphus' instructions to his soldiers at the start of the Swedish Intervention. These regulations stipulated that no soldier should rape, pillage, abuse or mistreat any civilians, nor were soldiers permitted to burn civilian property or take anything from civilians without official authorization from their commander who in turn had to receive orders from the general or the king.¹⁷⁵ These rules addressed violence toward civilians in two categories: those termed "our subjects" and those who resided in enemy territory.¹⁷⁶ It is not clear whether Gustavus was including the residents of newly acquired or allied provinces in the category of "our subjects" but he quickly extends the protection against pillage to civilians in enemy territory as well. He also takes care to offer special protection to all clergymen and churches, a particularly important admonition given the heated sectarian divisions of the era.¹⁷⁷ Another point of concern which Gustavus addresses several times is proper treatment of civilian hosts. Given the frequency of quartering troops in local homes, conflict and abuse was bound to arise. The official policy stated that the soldiers were not to abuse or mistreat their hosts, not to demand more than was officially sanctioned in the quartering and contribution arrangement, and not to harass or arbitrarily arrest villagers.¹⁷⁸ In fact, soldiers were admonished to protect farmers as they worked in the

¹⁷⁵ "The Swedish Discipline," in *The Thirty Years War: A Documentary History*, ed. Tryntje Helfferich (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2009), 124-137.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 132.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 133-135. This apparent magnanimity may have been inspired by his recent treaty with the French in 1631. With the Treaty of Bärwalde, the French agreed to fund the Swedish war effort but required protection of Catholic rights of worship. Regardless of his motivations, Gustavus' regulations concerning the treatment of all civilians were clear; civilians from friendly and hostile regions were to be left alone except in cases of military prudence.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 132 and 136.

fields rather than steal from them.¹⁷⁹ If a soldier was caught stealing from his hosts he was required to make restitution.

Given the scope of these regulations, it might be surprising that so much violence and theft occurred during the war. Yet, “within a few months of landing in Germany, Teuffel, a Swedish general, was complaining that his troops were committing ‘unheard-of excesses.’”¹⁸⁰ There are a number of reasons for this phenomenon.¹⁸¹ While a concern for the lives and property of local populations is apparent in this directive, there is an important caveat embedded in the language. “They that pillage or steale eyther in our land or in the enemies [. . .] *without leave*; shalbe punisht.”¹⁸² This emphasis on officially sanctioned pillaging is also attached to the regulations governing arson and goods taken in contribution or quartering.¹⁸³ Thus these rules of warfare were only applicable to soldiers acting on their own initiative, and did not reflect an understood, universal standard of behavior for all military activity. Additionally, officers had a financial incentive to look the other way or even participate in looting as they received a substantial portion of any stolen goods; this was “a perk of the job.”¹⁸⁴ When Happe describes the terrible acts of various soldiers, some may have been officially sanctioned actions, but many seem more personally motivated. Parker attempts to explain the penchant for violence by noting that this was a brutal age when crimes and punishments were more violent than modern readers are accustomed to. Additionally, sieges tended to

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 137. This reflects a concern that local economic and agricultural production continue in spite of the presence of the soldiers.

¹⁸⁰ Outram, 254.

¹⁸¹ It is important to note when seeking to understand the behavior of soldiers that this is “one of the most under-researched aspects of the conflict” and more research is necessary before historians can get a firmer handle on the lives and motivations of this diverse group of people. Wilson, *Tragedy*, 828.

¹⁸² “Discipline,” 132. Emphasis added.

¹⁸³ Ibid., 131.

¹⁸⁴ Mortimer, *Wallenstein: The Enigma of the Thirty Years War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 39.

be much worse on civilians than other actions and early modern warfare was noted for its high volume of lengthy sieges.¹⁸⁵ Parker's point is well taken that the mentality which governed the actions of soldiers was conditioned by their cultural context— a popular expression of the day was “wherever the soldier arrives, everything becomes his property. . . that is *dos belli*, the soldier's dowry.”¹⁸⁶ However, Parker fails to sufficiently consider the variety of regulations which should have prohibited these acts of brutality; it was not so violent an age that monarchs failed to establish such rules. It was a complex situation. Many early modern theorists argued that it was completely legitimate to rob and pillage the civilians of enemies; this was the standard throughout the early modern period.¹⁸⁷ They often called for restraint when dealing with women and children, but portable property was fair game.¹⁸⁸ While earlier armies engaged in violence toward the civilians of neutral or friendly territories , their readiness to breach the regulations and harm these civilians became a strikingly common feature of the Thirty Years' War. .¹⁸⁹ The influence of factors like the mercenary composition of the forces and irregularity of pay, while present in earlier conflicts, was heightened by the duration, scope, and intensity of the war. With many soldiers lacking uniform ideological or national conviction, the only real force keeping them in line and loyal was the coming payment. When that payment lapsed, so did the rules. As one Dutch statesman acknowledged “One could not hang

¹⁸⁵ Parker, *Success is Never Final: Empire, War, and Faith in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 154-155. Parker claims that the most notorious sack of a city during the Thirty Years' War, Magdeburg in 1631, was justifiable and unsurprising to the logic of the era, but this view is called into question by the reaction which the event received by contemporaries and subsequent generations. See Medick, “Historical Event and Contemporary Experience: The Capture and Destruction of Magdeburg in 1631,” in *History Workshop Journal* 52 (Autumn, 2001): 23-48.

¹⁸⁶ Asch, 298.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid. Asch cites the legal writings of Francisco de Vitoria.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 299. The admonition of Alberico Gentili was to leave farmers with their tools, equipment, and necessary livestock lest they starve.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 300.

those whom one did not pay.”¹⁹⁰ Due to the inconsistencies on that score, many soldiers felt they were justified in augmenting their salary by going outside the established guidelines for the treatment of civilians and their property.¹⁹¹ Soldiers were more ready to assault civilians as the war lengthened, supplies decreased, and hostility between peasant and soldier flared.¹⁹² They frequently had families to support and debts to pay, and these pressures certainly drove some to thievery.¹⁹³

Soldiers attacked civilians for reasons beyond economics or greed; religious, sexual, and social forces also fanned the flames. Religiously motivated violence generally focused on the clergy and the church as demonstrated in the numerous admonitions against such acts in Gustavus’ military regulations. Catholic soldiers frequently targeted Protestant ministers due to their obvious theological differences and prominent social position.¹⁹⁴ Stories of rape are among the most horrific from this conflict, though they are remarkably few in number when viewed in comparison with other stories. This was probably due to the reticence of women to report their dishonor.¹⁹⁵ This form of violence was not only physically destructive, but also had a profound social impact and connects to the potential social motivations behind much of the violence.¹⁹⁶ Ulbricht argues that

¹⁹⁰ Everhard van Reyd, quoted in Frank Tallett, *War and Society in Early-Modern Europe, 1495-1715* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), 123.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 301-306.

¹⁹² Herbert Langer, *Thirty Years’ War* (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1980), 103-111. For more on the hostility between these parties, see Chapter Five.

¹⁹³ Outram and Tallett offer this economic explanation as a leading cause of the violence; see Outram, 253-256, and Tallett, 115-128.

¹⁹⁴ Ulbricht, 112-113. Pastors often remained in dangerous situations out of concern for their parishioners, thus increasing the likelihood that they would fall victim to violence. As Natalie Zemon Davis demonstrated, early modern religious violence by Catholics tended to focus on the bodies of Protestants, while the latter tended to focus on destroying the sacred property and “idols” of the Catholic Church; see Davis, “The Rites of Violence,” in *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 152-187.

¹⁹⁵ Ulbricht, 113-115. They may also have been prevented from speaking out by the men in their communities, see Ulbricht, 114, n. 82.

¹⁹⁶ Ulbricht’s discussion of the social implications of rape for women is useful, see *Ibid.*, 114, 118-124.

the social humiliation of civilian victims served as a key motivational factor for many of the actions of pillaging soldiers. Essentially, soldiers were outsiders, reviled and excluded from society, feared and hated. By asserting social dominance and placing their victims in humiliating positions, soldiers could attempt to reverse the social equation.¹⁹⁷ Often these humiliations included the stripping of civilians, making them wear clothes which did not befit their station in life, or making important figures walk barefoot and wear a dunce cap.¹⁹⁸ In September 1631 Happe recorded one such instance where soldiers stripped nine people “to the shirt” and forced them to walk to a nearby town barefoot and almost naked.¹⁹⁹ Mocking and humiliating their victims served to temporarily elevate the common soldier above the most exalted local figure. Given the paucity of detailed studies of the lives of mercenary soldiers during the war, the existing evidence can only generally suggest various causes for the rampant disregard for civilian life and property. It is clear, however, that the civilian/soldier dynamic produced a remarkable level of violence and disruption during this conflict.

Before turning to the precise nature of this violence, it is important to recognize the attempts to curb the violence and protect civilian lives and property. The consequences for violation of military regulations were often quite harsh, with many statutes enforced by capital punishment. In the Swedish army, rape, some cases of unauthorized arson, pillaging friendly civilians, churches, or merchants engaged in trade with the army, and even the harming of clergy were infractions punishable by death.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁷ Asch, 302; Ulbricht, 118-120.

¹⁹⁸ Wilson, *Tragedy*, 834; Ulbricht, 119-120. Clothing was an important symbol of social standing, to strip a public figure of his garments of station was to symbolically strip him of his social value.

¹⁹⁹ Happe, I: 273r.

²⁰⁰ Helfferich, 124-137. Frequently capital punishment came in the form of hanging, although shooting or beheading the guilty was not uncommon. Later seventeenth century Swedish regulations stipulated the guilty be clubbed to death in particular cases, see Tallett, 123.

Commanders exercised a great deal of leeway with capital punishment and often reduced the penalty or chose a select few for death as an example to the disobedient.²⁰¹ Even when falling short of executions, there are examples of military commanders attempting to minimize indiscriminate looting and theft. In 1625, when Wallenstein heard that one hundred of his troops requisitioned horses on their way to join up with his force, he irately demanded that the horses be returned, for his troops “had already caused far too much damage and disruption, and [he] did not want them further to molest the peasants,” and he promised to punish the officers responsible for the action.²⁰² In another incident, a young ensign was found guilty of stealing money from the widow in whose house he was billeted. Despite his age and brief time in the army he was initially condemned to death. However, the military tribunal chose to commute his sentence in light of his noble descent, his age, and the dubious claim that “he was almost given cause to commit the crime, since the keys were left in the money chest in the first place.”²⁰³ Ultimately, the ensign appears to have gotten away with only the repayment of the stolen property and the scare of near execution.

Beyond the enforcement of general regulations, military command often sought to limit damage to civilians and maximize cooperative payments through the issuance of *salva guardias*. As explained earlier, these were more specific and (hopefully) binding promises to restrain from pillaging in exchange for regular contributions. Lastly, even when military necessity demanded that soldiers be quartered with civilians, regional rulers sought to protect the peasants. Duke Maximilian of Bavaria, a leading military and financial ally of Emperor Ferdinand during the war, sent a letter of complaint to his

²⁰¹ Tallett, 123.

²⁰² Benecke, *Germany*, 71.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, 72-73. The court cited the old proverb, ‘opportunity makes a thief’ as a rationale for this mercy.

sovereign requesting the immediate relocation of the military forces quartered with his subjects.²⁰⁴ Citing the harsh winter, the cumulative effect of repeated encounters with soldiers, and the pitiable condition of his people, Maximilian explained that the “few still remaining, poor and oppressed subjects plead for redress in such lamentable circumstances, that it would make a stone feel compassion.”²⁰⁵ Their meager supply of food, barely enough to “keep body and soul together,” was being consumed by the soldiers, forcing the peasants to flee into the wilderness and “die and rot of frost and hunger.”²⁰⁶ Sadly, despite these attempts to minimize the impact of warfare upon the civilian population, the behavior of the soldiers toward civilians, even those loyal to their party, was deplorable and horrific. Asch summarized this situation admirably by writing:

In Germany and elsewhere during the Thirty Years War the state, by recruiting enormous armies which proved almost impossible to finance sufficiently, created essential preconditions for outbreaks of uncontrolled military violence against civilians. However, these outbreaks themselves often gained a momentum of their own, once discipline had broken down, better explained in psychological terms than purely by the lack of provisions. Only when officers risked being punished themselves for the excesses of their troops could they really be relied upon to enforce the official articles of war.²⁰⁷

Unfortunately for the people of Thuringia, officers were rarely punished during the Thirty Years’ War and the rampant violence persisted throughout the conflict.²⁰⁸

In 1631, following their destruction of Magdeburg, the Catholic forces under Tilly turned south to launch a campaign of violence and pillaging in Happe’s native region of Thuringia. The whole region was “miserably plundered” with Schwarzburg-Sondershausen experiencing particular disruption as Tilly’s soldiers “spared none of the

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 71-72.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Asch, 308.

²⁰⁸ Ibid. Following the atrocities of the war, many regions attempted to reform their military codes and enforcement systems to better combat this problem.

churches and raped many of the honest women and virgins” because Happe’s employer, Count Christian Günther I, was a signatory to the recent Leipzig Agreement.²⁰⁹ This sort of wholesale rampage exemplifies one of two types of pillaging and violence which Happe and his neighbors experienced. From Happe’s description, it appears this was an officially sanctioned assault upon the civilian population of the region. The other type of violence was the smaller scale, and more likely unsanctioned, pillaging and violence which occurred with great frequency throughout the war. In 1631 a small band of Swedish cavalry attacked and plundered a monastery near Ilfeld and captured one of the monks.²¹⁰ In 1635 Happe described the plundering of several villages as soldiers stole horses and looted farms and churches.²¹¹ For nearly every month Happe includes stories of this or that village being pillaged by soldiers during this period of the war, either by small bands of soldiers or in larger rampages. The most horrific are the latter, as commanders set about to extract maximum resources before departing. This occurred in 1632 when Catholic forces under Pappenheim ravaged Thuringia in the months before the critical battle of Lützen. Almost a dozen villages were plundered, some burned, and many of the inhabitants were killed.²¹² This degree of damage suggests a deliberate campaign of violence or official disregard for official military policy and not simply the actions of renegade soldiers without the knowledge of their superior officers. They

²⁰⁹ Happe, I: 211v. This agreement, published in April 1631, bound the Protestant territories together in uneasy neutrality as they opposed the Imperial Edict of Restitution but were not confident in the military capabilities of the newly arrived Swedish army. Emperor Ferdinand demanded their agreement be annulled and Protestant forces disband. When Tilly destroyed Magdeburg, many of the Protestant signatories looked to Sweden to rescue them as they determined to oppose further Catholic aggression. Thus Tilly’s behavior is attributed by Happe to the participation of the count and his family in that convention. For more on these broader concerns see Wilson, *Tragedy*, 465-472.

²¹⁰ Happe, I: 272v.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, I: 371v. Horses were one of the most frequently mentioned stolen properties in Happe’s chronicle. Sometimes these were used by the army, but often they would be sold back to the civilian community as part of a black market of stolen goods. This is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five.

²¹² *Ibid.*, I: 230v-235v.

attacked, burned down homes, stole cattle, shot and cut down many people, and generally “terrorized the surrounding villages with robbery, murder, and arson.”²¹³ These acts, and the horrors of rape and torture, comprised the broad spectrum of violence perpetrated upon the civilians in Happe’s chronicle— violence without regard to the official codes of conduct which ostensibly governed military behavior. For the villagers and townspeople of Thuringia, the Thirty Years’ War was a terrible succession of violence, extortion, and fear.

Since the primary cause of soldier-civilian interaction during the war was the acquisition of resources, it is useful to first look at the violence that took place during attempted theft and looting. Because the victims of these crimes often hid their valuables, soldiers frequently resorted to torture as a means of uncovering hidden treasures. If the victims could resist the initial round of torture, they were often able to offer a sufficient amount of money that the soldiers would leave, but if the amount was deemed insufficient, or if another raiding party arrived, more torture could ensue.²¹⁴ Perhaps the most famous torture from this era was called the “Swedish Drink.”²¹⁵ Essentially, the soldiers would forcibly pour water or sewage down the throat of their victim and then jump on them, inducing vomiting and sometimes bursting their internal organs.²¹⁶ One pastor reported experiencing this horrible treatment as his tormentors demanded the location of the houses of the wealthy families in the town. Martin Bötzingler, a pastor in Heldburg in Thuringia, twice was given “the Swedish cocktail, filled with manure

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ Ulbricht recounts an excellent example of five successive waves of raiding parties each torturing the victim, a school teacher named Ebert, for valuables. He appears to have had a series of hiding spots and by revealing them one at a time, he had enough money to pay off each group, though he was tortured by each; see Ulbricht, 104.

²¹⁵ It was actually first practiced by Spanish soldiers but was quickly adopted by the Swedish army; see Medick’s editorial note, Happe, I: 456r.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

drippings,” threatened with hanging, beaten and nearly drowned by the Imperial soldiers who captured the town.²¹⁷ Eventually, he was able to escape by cutting his bonds, jumping into a shallow stream, and hiding in the water and brush for five hours until darkness fell.²¹⁸ At other times, soldiers used ropes to crush the skulls or split the abdomens of their victims as they slowly tightened the cords.²¹⁹ They also used ropes to perform the *strappado* where the victim was suspended by ropes binding their hands behind their back, dislocating their shoulders. The “Turkish Beating” involved whipping the soles of the victim’s feet and then rubbing salt into the raw wounds.²²⁰ A final form of torture in Happe’s chronicle involved burning the victim with sulfur dioxide.²²¹ During a 1636 Swedish raid on Happe’s hometown of Greussen, two parties of horsemen descended upon the city, one in the early morning and the other at noon. They plundered the city for five hours, capturing some of the citizens and torturing them with sulfur burns and the Swedish Drink.²²² These tortures were both means of obtaining hidden wealth, and opportunities for the truly sadistic to exert power over their victims.

In the story of the Swedish attack on Greussen, Happe laments that these soldiers, this “devil’s brood,” violently seized several women in the field and raped them.²²³ When the soldiers captured and plundered the nearby castle of Clingen, they “committed much shame with the women folk.” These horrible crimes were a common motif in war

²¹⁷ Medick and Marschke, 68-72. Stories like this are remarkably detailed and help create an image of the sorts of tortures soldiers employed. However, specific reports are rare among the body of ego documents from the period; most authors referenced tortures like the Swedish drink as horrors they heard of but did not witness. In Happe’s chronicle, tortures are rarely so specifically explained; rather, the term torture is more often used as a general description of the actions of the soldiers. Mortimer, “Experience,” 150-151.

²¹⁸ Medick and Marschke, 68-72.

²¹⁹ See Medick’s editorial note, “reuteln,” Happe, I: 455r.

²²⁰ See Medick’s editorial note, “übertürkisch prügeln”, Happe, II: 454v.

²²¹ Happe, I: 457r-458r.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Ibid., I: 457v.

chronicles, though more often used as a general statement about the character of soldiers than in specific stories.²²⁴ Happe mentions rape over two dozen times, revealing the special vulnerability of women and even young girls during the war.²²⁵ In 1630 “a roguish soldier so raped a girl of ten in the County of Sondershausen that she died.”²²⁶ This act, the only one of its kind in the chronicle, is representative of the particular dangers associated with being a child during the war.²²⁷ Happe’s family was not immune to sexual violence during the war; his own daughter was attacked during the sacking of Sondershausen in 1640, “Among others, I also had the additional misfortune that without my knowing, my daughter, Anna Samina and many females, out of sheer terror, fled the castle toward the woods, and in the fields they fell into the hands of the horsemen. They undressed her and all the other females and let them run away in their underclothes, and thank God I got her back in the castle unharmed.”²²⁸ She appears to have been fortunate in escaping with just a scare and the humiliation of returning in such a state of undress.²²⁹ Women were vulnerable when their homes were attacked as illustrated above, but they were also vulnerable in the countryside engaged in farm work. In March of 1632 a group of four horsemen stopped in Ebeleben, the town where Happe lived, and demanded food

²²⁴ Mortimer’s systematic study of seventy-two personal accounts of the war supports this tendency. He quotes examples of authors who decry the rape of women in a distant town but rejoice at avoiding such acts in their towns when soldiers arrive. Mortimer acknowledges the possibility that people did not want to report specific victims when they knew them, but he appears to resist the claim that rape was a frequent occurrence during the war, Mortimer, “Experience,” 153; cf. Ulbricht, 113-114, and Wilson, *Tragedy*, 789-790. Rape was chronically under-reported in early modern society (see Ruff, 140-147) and was “probably one of the most common forms of interpersonal violence during the war” according to Wilson, 790.

²²⁵ Many of these instances are specific events like those mentioned here, others are more general claims about the actions of a particular army over the course of a month, raping and pillaging the region.

²²⁶ Happe, I:193r. The term here translated “roguish” is *schelmischer*. This was one of the most defamatory insults Happe could employ; it was extremely pejorative, see Medick’s editorial note.

²²⁷ Ulbricht, 116; even young boys were raped by the soldiers at times. Also see Ruff, 142 who notes that sexual violence against minors constituted a remarkable thirty percent of peacetime cases in some regions.

²²⁸ Happe, II:118v-119r, translation by Medick and Marschke, 132.

²²⁹ It is possible that Happe purposefully obscured a rape here in order to mitigate the shame to his family but there is no way of verifying that claim.

from the townsfolk. After eating lunch they rode on and spotted a woman in the field; two men raped her while the others watched.²³⁰ Even in peacetime women who “regularly worked outside of the home, as agricultural laborers or as domestic servants [. . .] were most vulnerable to assault because of their physical isolation.”²³¹ During a war, this vulnerability simply increased as civil and military authorities were unable or unwilling to sufficiently deter sexual assault.

When not physically assaulting civilians, soldiers frequently engaged in wanton destruction of property, smashing windows and furniture and burning homes and churches. When the Swedish army attacked Greussen in 1636 they entered the castle and proceeded to “smash everything,” looting and destroying.²³² In 1632 Happe reported the destruction of over eighty houses, barns, and monasteries as Imperial soldiers moved through the area.²³³ One chronicler in Frieburg wrote that a troop of horsemen attacked his village in the night and “set the village on fire in five places” destroying many houses and the church.²³⁴ As with the other forms of violence, arson and destruction of property occurred in several contexts. In the case of the raid on Greussen, a large party of soldiers bent on theft and violence created chaos and ruin. In 1632 Happe described the Swedish invasion of the nearby territory of Eichsfeld. They occupied Heiligenstadt and besieged Duderstadt and wrecked havoc on the surrounding countryside; they “plundered the whole of Eichsfeld, basically laying waste to everything, killed over 2000 people and burned down most of the villages in Eichsfeld, laying them to ashes. Who will atone for

²³⁰ Happe, I: 221v. Also see I: 231r.

²³¹ Ruff, 141.

²³² Happe, I: 457r-458r.

²³³ Ibid., I: 243v.

²³⁴ Mortimer, *Eyewitness*, 56.

the innocent blood [that was] shed?”²³⁵ At times this large-scale arson functioned as a military tactic to bring pressure to bear on the ruler of the province, or as punishment for failure to pay a contribution, or even to keep supplies from falling into enemy hands.²³⁶

In early 1636 the Swedes burned the village of Waltersdorf because the inhabitants failed to pay the ransom demanded of them.²³⁷ In some cases, civilians who quartered soldiers lost valuables and even their homes. When Imperial troops quartered in Großbrüchter and Mühlhausen in 1635 they set fire to parts of the cities, prompting Happe to complain “this time the Imperials have, with singeing and burning, very evilly dwelt” in the homes of civilians.²³⁸ At other times, soldiers turned to arson as a form of retribution for attempted resistance during raids. One author described an attack upon a village near Ulm in 1634 in which the locals defended their cattle and possessions for two days. This stubborn resistance infuriated the soldiers who set the village on fire and thus broke the civilians’ will to fight.²³⁹ Naturally, the most prominent instances of arson occurred during the storming of besieged cities. Fires, intentional and accidental, were a great threat to the lives of citizens attempting to survive the horrors of siege warfare.²⁴⁰ In all these situations, arson functioned as a terrible weapon, frequently leaving civilians homeless, on the run, and even more vulnerable to famine, disease, and soldiers than before.²⁴¹

²³⁵ Happe, I: 238r.

²³⁶ Wilson notes one instance in which Tilly marched into Saxony and used this tactic with the hope that he could force the elector to side with the Emperor rather than Gustavus Adolphus. This failed to convince the elector and Saxony joined forces with the Swedes, Wilson, *Tragedy*, 472.

²³⁷ Happe, I: 453v.

²³⁸ Ibid., I: 385v. Happe here uses the phrase *übel hausriet* as a “euphemism for the pressure exerted by soldiers during the terror billeting;” see Medick’s editorial note.

²³⁹ Wilson, *Tragedy*, 838 and Helfferich, *Thirty*, 314.

²⁴⁰ See Mortimer’s description of the fall of Magdeburg, *Eyewitness*, 67-70.

²⁴¹ The terrible toll of war was not limited to civilians alone. Mortimer includes an account of a soldier who returned home on leave only to find his wife and children killed, his house and the whole village burned, and all his possessions and livestock stolen by French soldiers; see Mortimer, *Eyewitness*, 95.

With all the violent encounters between soldiers and civilians during the war, it is not surprising that many ended in death. As with arson, sieges presented civilians with particularly grave risks of death as soldiers were typically at their most angry and murderous when taking a city by storm. However, sieges are rarely mentioned in Happe's chronicle; instead surprise raids and plundering expeditions were the leading cause of violent death in his experience. In 1632, Pappenheim's soldiers descended upon the town of Keula in the early hours of the morning, plundering the castle and the village. They proceeded to attack villages in the area; several people were killed and wounded, including "two honest old men" (one of whom Happe described as a "pious eighty year old") and mortally wounded a local pastor.²⁴² When the cavalry reached Ebeleben they shot fourteen people, smashing homes, pouring wine out into the mud, raping several women, and stealing money and horses and entire herds of livestock.²⁴³ This sort of large-scale raid was thankfully a rarity for the people of Thuringia. More commonly they faced smaller groups of soldiers like the group of four Imperial horsemen who agreed to accompany some merchants only to shoot four, badly wound two others, and steal their horses.²⁴⁴ In 1630 a small band of soldiers attacked some farms, killed the farmers and stole three horses leaving only a woman and her new-born baby alive.²⁴⁵ These sorts of violent episodes only highlight the lethal edge which any encounter between soldier and civilian could take. Despite these stories, civilian mortality was primarily caused by famine and disease not sword-wielding horsemen. The raid on Greussen is an excellent

²⁴² Happe, I: 234v-236r.

²⁴³ Ibid. These losses included some of Happe's own livestock and other property.

²⁴⁴ Ibid., I:251r. Happe reports that nine people were robbed and shot in the area during an eight day period, not all of these murders were necessarily by soldiers, though the breakdown in law and order was a side-effect of the ongoing warfare.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., I: 195r.

example of a violent encounter which does not appear to have ended in the deaths of any civilians, though the soldiers shot at several.²⁴⁶

Torture, rape, arson, and death all afflicted the people of Thuringia as soldiers sought to profit by right of conquest. Systematic extortion in the form contributions and quartering paired with foraging and pillaging to produce a whirlwind of violence. On several occasions Happe could only lament “everything has been plundered and miserably laid to waste.”²⁴⁷ On another occasion, Happe expressed his sorrow at the plight of his people and his belief in God’s sovereign hand in their situation, writing “As the danger of war has come even to our door, our people have been persecuted and put to death by fire and sword most horribly, so we receive what God has so mercifully and strangely given us in Thuringia.”²⁴⁸ Despite the efforts of many of the civil and military authorities, the reality of war was brutal and tragic for the people of Thuringia and much of the Empire. Without adequate financial support, generals were powerless to prevent soldiers from seeking alternative sources of revenue. Thus began a resource war between soldiers and civilians as the former turned with passion and violence upon the communities which held them in contempt. The *Chronicon Thuringiae* serves as a register of that violence for historians seeking to better understand the nature and effects of the war on a civilian population. This record of wrongs is not simply a depiction of the way war turned people into helpless victims. Rather, Happe’s chronicle helps reveal the way the events of the war shaped civilian perception of violence and their determination to act in response to it. As violent and deadly as this war was for the civilians of Thuringia, it was not an entirely one-sided affair. The next two chapters will assess how

²⁴⁶ Ibid., I: 457r-485r.

²⁴⁷ Ibid., I: 205v.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., I: 338r. Issues of his perspective on God and the war are dealt with in Chapter Four.

the war shaped people and how those people fought back to preserve their lives and property.

CHAPTER 4

SOURCES AND PERCEPTIONS

“Such terrible raping, looting and murder in all places and ends have hardly occurred since the beginning of the war. Our supposed friends have probably stolen, robbed, and tyrannized more than the enemy. The poor people have been abominably and unchristianly tortured and crushed because of the accursed Contribution.”²⁴⁹ -Volkmar Happe, *Chronicon Thuringiae*, 1635.

Disease, hunger, and violence rippled throughout the Holy Roman Empire as armies marched, fought, and pillaged for over a decade. By 1629 the Danes were defeated and removed from the equation with the Peace of Lübeck, the armies of the Catholic League and the Empire had won nearly every major battle since 1620, and the various Protestant princes throughout the Empire were divided over how to best proceed. Though the Thirty Years’ War was not simply divided along confessional lines, a strong confessional element contributed to the decisions and rhetoric of 1629 and 1630. Specifically, at the height of Imperial, and therefore Catholic, power during the war, Ferdinand chose to issue his infamous Edict of Restitution. Essentially, this edict was designed to reset the Empire to the 1555 Peace of Augsburg, returning to the Catholic Church any ecclesiastical property which may have changed hands during the intervening decades and potentially excluding Calvinists from the official protections which Lutherans enjoyed. The Edict, properly understood, should be viewed as the result of a complex blend of religious and political priorities (as most state decisions were during the early modern era) and as a reflection of many voices, some more fanatically devoted

²⁴⁹ Happe, I: 377v-378r

to the eradication of Protestants than others.²⁵⁰ Ultimately this document, intended to foster peace, fanned the flames of the conflict.²⁵¹ While the first ten years of the war could reasonably be framed as the Imperial suppression of rebellion, Ferdinand's edict shifted the Protestants around the Empire raised shouts of horror and anger over the perceived danger to their way of life.²⁵² This Edict was the formal call to carry out a process of Empire-wide Re-Catholicization which the Imperial and Catholic League forces had been conducting on a more limited scale in the territories they conquered throughout the 1620s.²⁵³ Re-Catholicization greatly troubled Volkmar Happe who viewed Catholicism with distrust and hatred. Assessing the events of early 1629, Happe wrote, "The greatest misfortune, and one to be lamented with tears of blood, among a number [of terrible events] that have taken place in this year, is that in many places the Papists have driven out the pure teaching of the Gospel and have brought back the anti-Christian monstrosity of popery [. . .]. This year also saw the publication of the troublesome religious edict of Emperor Ferdinand II."²⁵⁴ Protestants seemed to be on the defensive throughout the Empire; "the feverish pace of events appeared to confirm the arrival of the long-prophesied Armageddon."²⁵⁵ For Protestants like Happe, this terribly dark time was

²⁵⁰ For more on the Edict and the various political and religious influences in its creation, see Wilson, *Tragedy*, 446-454

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 446.

²⁵² Not all Protestants viewed the Edict in this light; many initially believed it was legal, although ultimately its final language left many Protestants and Catholics very angry. Wilson notes that the complex reaction to the Edict demonstrates the "primacy of politics over religion," Wilson, *Tragedy* 453.

²⁵³ Bohemia, the Palatinate, Franconia and the Rhineland were all subject to this expansion of "Catholic political and spiritual authority," Wilson, *Tragedy*, 446.

²⁵⁴ Happe, I: 183v.

²⁵⁵ Wilson, *Tragedy*, 424. This impression was particularly powerful to those who were aware of the events around Europe at this time. War seemed ready to break forth across the whole of Europe as France, Britain, Spain, Poland, Sweden, Denmark, and the Dutch all engaged in conflicts which appeared ready to entangle each other in one massive war. Seven major sieges, including the Protestant strong-holds of La Rochelle, Magdeburg and Stralsund, added to the tension. All this rising conflict certainly influenced the thinking of the great and powerful but may have a little if any impact on the everyday citizen of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen. While Happe clearly had an eye on the broader Imperial aspects of the Thirty Years' War

pierced by the shining arrival of Gustavus Adolphus, self-proclaimed champion of Protestants.²⁵⁶

It would be erroneous to suggest that the king of Sweden was instantly and universally celebrated by German Lutherans or won their loyalty and support when he arrived in Pomerania in July 1630. When Christian of Denmark claimed to be the champion of the Protestant cause he failed to garner the support of the prominent Protestant princes. When Gustavus Adolphus made the same claim, they eventually joined him, largely due to the confessional pressure applied by Ferdinand's Edict and his military victories.²⁵⁷ This was a shaky alliance forged over the course of the subsequent year, beginning with a nervous neutrality with the Leipzig Convention in early 1631 and only turning into a true alliance with the sack of Magdeburg, the military campaigns against those regions which participated in the Leipzig convention, and the successful military actions of the Swedes in Pomerania.²⁵⁸ Indeed, Happe claims that Tilly's violent actions in Schwarzburg-Sondershausen were a result of Christian Günther I's participation in this convention.²⁵⁹ The perception of Gustavus Adolphus as a Protestant savior was popularized with propaganda and the reality that finally a Protestant prince had substantial success on the battle field; finally the decade of Protestant reverses

there is no evidence that he was aware of these greater tensions. Such awareness would have been even more limited for his average neighbors. However, the attempts to reassert Catholic supremacy in Thuringia struck much closer to home.

²⁵⁶ When he first arrived in Pomerania, Gustavus justified his invasion on several grounds, including safeguarding German constitutional protections, but he did not declare himself the Protestant savior. He was receiving financial support from Catholic France and sought to generate broad appeal in the Empire, Parker, *Thirty*, 108-109. Parker fails to acknowledge Gustavus' subtle allusions to his divine purpose in an address to the Swedish estates in 1630 and in a prayer upon landing in Germany, see John Roger Paas, "The Changing Image of Gustavus Adolphus on German Broadsheets, 1630-3," in *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 59 (1996): 205-244.

²⁵⁷ Mortimer, *Eyewitness*, 10. John George of Saxony, the influential neighbor of Thuringia was the most prominent Protestant ally of Ferdinand in the early years of the war.

²⁵⁸ For a full explanation of these events see Wilson, *Tragedy*, 459-472.

²⁵⁹ Happe, I: 211v, see Chapter Three, footnote 207.

appeared to be over. A contemporary print circulated by pro-Swedish factions in the Empire depicted “the king posed heroically in full armour, while his troops disembark in Pomerania. The hand of God reaches from a cloud to give him the sword of divine justice to smite Catholic tyranny.”²⁶⁰ Happe, writing about the Swedish arrival, described it in far less colorful terms, merely noting that they arrived and conquered sections of Pomerania.²⁶¹ Gustavus’ importance for Happe came later, following his victories near Thuringia. Over time Gustavus Adolphus came to represent the White Horseman triumphant, the one who heralded Christ’s return in the eyes of Lutherans like Happe. Here was a Protestant to hold up as a contrast to the villainy of the Pope and the evils which Catholic forces had perpetrated upon “true Christians.”

Perhaps most prominent among these evil deeds, the capture and destruction of Magdeburg stood as a testament to all that was terrible about Catholic military power in the eyes of many in Protestant circles. This was a profoundly shocking event, with upwards of four-fifths of the civilian population killed by fire and sword as one of the most prominent Lutheran cities in the Empire, a “symbol of Protestant freedom in Germany” was destroyed by the army of Tilly in 1631.²⁶² Interpreting this event is a complex endeavor for historians as the immediate and long-term reactions across the Empire were mixed, influenced by confessional and political biases and agendas. For the Swedes, it was important to focus on the horrors in order to highlight Catholic guilt and divert attention from the fact that the first German city to declare for Sweden was burned

²⁶⁰ Wilson, *Tragedy*, 462. This depiction suited Gustavus as it helped generate popular support in Protestant quarters, although his true motives were probably far more mercenary and have been the subject of debate in countless histories.

²⁶¹ Happe, I: 198v.

²⁶² Wilson, *Sourcebook*, 144-169; Medick editorial note, Happe, 211.

to the ground without aid from Gustavus.²⁶³ Some, both Catholic and Protestant, simply viewed the events as part of the normal, albeit unfortunate course of siege warfare.²⁶⁴ But many Protestants, using the literal meaning of the city's name, "Maiden's castle" depicted this event as the savage rape and murder of a helpless, pious Protestant maiden.²⁶⁵ In one song, allegedly composed by a survivor of the attack, the city is hailed as an "innocent, chaste maiden" who chose to "run into the blaze" and "suffer martyrdom" rather than submit to the Catholic League. She bravely faced death with only "one dear Swedish hero true" whose failure to arrive is attributed to the intransigence of others "who him no passage gave."²⁶⁶ For many Protestants around the Empire, Magdeburg's destruction was the seminal example of Catholic villainy and a stirring confirmation of the apocalyptic age in which they lived. "According to this view, the city's fate was inextricably interwoven with God's plan of salvation and the life to come. Thus a capture and destruction of the city brought about by a catholic 'anti-Christ' as divine punishment was also considered possible."²⁶⁷ Essentially, even before the destruction of the city, Protestants were couching these events in apocalyptic terms, viewing Magdeburg's position as potentially that of Jerusalem, nearing destruction unless she repents.²⁶⁸ For Catholics, this was justifiable due to the Jerusalem parallel; a wicked city is destroyed. This was how General Pappenheim viewed his participation in the

²⁶³ Ibid., 170.

²⁶⁴ Ibid., 146. Wilson cites Christian of Anhalt as an example of a Protestant who congratulated Tilly on his victory, see his diary entry, Wilson, 149-150. However, Medick notes that Anhalt was a near neighbor of Magdeburg and Christian's letter was written "desiring a good peace in Germany." Four days later, Anhalt nuanced his views by labeling it a tragedy with Magdeburg partly to blame by refusing to capitulate when given the chance, Medick and Pamela Selwyn, "Historical Event and Contemporary Experience: The Capture and Destruction of Magdeburg in 1631," in *History Workshop Journal* 52 (Autumn, 2001): 28-29.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., 151-152

²⁶⁷ Medick and Selwyn, "Magdeburg," 25.

²⁶⁸ Ibid. Here Medick cites a sermon preached in August 1630 from Luke 19:42-44 in which Jesus foretold the destruction of Jerusalem. The pastor sought to convince his congregation of the wisdom of alliance with Sweden, as Medick describes it, a "choice between divine punishment and salvation."

sacking: “I believe that over twenty thousand souls were lost. It is certain that no more terrible work and divine punishment has seen since the destruction of Jerusalem. All of our soldiers became rich. God with us.”²⁶⁹ Even if innocent, Magdeburg’s destruction, like the violence of the previous eleven years, could be explained as part of the lead up to the glorious return of Christ.²⁷⁰

When news of Magdeburg reached Happe, he described the men, women, and children who were “miserably cut down and thrown into the Elbe River,” the rape of countless women, the plunder and burning of the city, and the cruel murder of “the poor people who kneeling and praying in the churches.”²⁷¹ These were, of course, second-hand accounts of the siege and mirrored the statements made by those closer to the events. Otto von Guericke, who survived the sack, wrote: “Then there was nothing but murder, burning, plundering, torment, and beatings. Through such enduring fury—which laid this great, magnificent city, which had been like a princess in the entire land, into complete burning embers and put it into such enormous misery and unspeakable need and heartache—many thousands of innocent men, women and children were, with horrid, fearful screams of pain and alarm, miserably murdered and wretchedly executed in manifold ways, so that no words can sufficiently describe it, not tears bemoan it.”²⁷² Such reports, repeated and embellished around the Empire, joined with Swedish official reports to reinforce the confessional divide for the benefit of the pro-Swedish party. One such report from the Swedes attributed truly terrifying behavior to the Catholic forces, claiming they “spiked small children onto their lances, waved them around and cast them

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 30.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 31.

²⁷¹ Happe, I: 263r-264r.

²⁷² Helfferich, 108-109.

into the flames.”²⁷³ These actions were not the actions of true Christians, “Turks, Tartars and heathens could not have been more cruel.”²⁷⁴ The destruction of Magdeburg came to profoundly shape popular conceptions of violence during the war.²⁷⁵ It came to represent the great calamity that the war brought upon so many during the war and stood as a shocking example of what the Catholics might do to Protestants. Ultimately, the fall of Magdeburg and the Imperial attempts to reassert Catholic supremacy in Protestant strongholds, particularly in the form of the Edict of Restitution, left many Protestants, Happe included, looking to Gustavus Adolphus for rescue. The terrors of war, rising tide of Catholic victory, and the arrival of a Protestant “Lion of the North” fit well into an apocalyptic schema looking for the White Horseman and the salvation of true believers.²⁷⁶

Given Gustavus Adolphus’ prominence in the eschatological and military thinking of many Protestants in the early 1630s, it is important to take a closer look at how he, and his army by extension, was described. When the Swedish army arrived in Pomerania in July of 1630, Gustavus described his mission as one “to sustain [God’s] oppressed Church.”²⁷⁷ Popular Protestant reaction as demonstrated in broadsheets was tepid and unconvinced, “reflect[ing] the hesitation on the part of the Protestant princes to embrace Gustavus Adolphus as their leader against the Catholic forces.”²⁷⁸ John George of

²⁷³ Benecke, 35.

²⁷⁴ Ibid. This epithet was frequently applied by both sides to the other throughout the war. Wilson cites Ferdinand II’s use of this comparison to Turks when describing Hungarian violence against civilians in 1620, Wilson, *Tragedy*, 302.

²⁷⁵ Medick and Selwyn, “Magdeburg,” 38.

²⁷⁶ It is important here to re-emphasize that religious feelings were not the only forces driving the Protestant leaders into the arms of the Swedes. The political and economic realities of Ferdinand’s policies were strong motivations for the less pious princes, and early modern Europeans regularly acted on a complex blend of what modern readers would see as distinct religious and political priorities.

²⁷⁷ Paas, 209.

²⁷⁸ Ibid., 218.

Saxony was the most influential Protestant in the Empire and most Protestants were reluctant to replace him in that role.²⁷⁹ Those early pro-Swedish broadsheets which did appear sought to cast Gustavus as a powerful military figure and draw visual and anagrammatic parallels with Biblical and Church history.²⁸⁰ One of the most interesting broadsheets of 1630 appeared first in either Ulm or Nuremberg, far south of Swedish military influence. Here was the early connection between the Swedish king and apocalyptic preoccupations. The broadsheet “depicts the arrival of a lion-warrior, who has come to rescue Germany” from a seven headed dragon.²⁸¹ The dragon is clearly the Catholic Church and appears as “the Antichrist intent on the destruction of Christianity.”²⁸² Gustavus’ generally lukewarm reception in popular media, marked only by a few tributes like the aforementioned broadsheet, was mirrored in Happe’s reaction in his chronicle. He makes only passing reference to the Swedish arrival in Pomerania; he appears more interested in the events of the war closer to home than the newest army arriving in far-away regions.²⁸³ Happe’s first warm references to Gustavus and the Swedes came after their victory over Tilly’s army at Breitenfeld and even then these

²⁷⁹ Ibid., 212. Paas acknowledges the probable Swedish involvement in broadsheets, but notes that the lack of reliable information about authors and motives leaves historians with little means of discerning between official propaganda and real popular opinion.

²⁸⁰ Ibid., 214. As Paas describes one such broadsheet, “The poet begins by explaining that the name of God in Latin is ‘Deus’, which when spelled backwards yields a reference to the Swede, ‘Sued’. Similarly, when the letters in the king’s first name are arranged differently, they yield the name ‘Augustus’, the Roman emperor at the time of the Saviors’ birth. It is implied that just as Christ overcame his enemies in this world, so too Gustavus will overcome his and bring peace once again to Germany.”

²⁸¹ Ibid., 217.

²⁸² Ibid. The broadsheet also contains a poem referencing sunlight from the North and “A long yellow cross in a blue flag.” If these allusions to Gustavus and Sweden were not obvious enough, a reprint added labels to explicitly demonstrate the pro-Swedish message. Broadsheet authors continued this apocalyptic tone during the Swedish Intervention. Paas includes an image from 1632 where the true Christians, Protestants, are associated with “the woman clothed with the sun” (from Revelation 12:1) and the Catholics are depicted with the Whore of Babylon, Paas, 236.

²⁸³ Happe, I: 255r-255v.

mentions are only in connection with the great victory which John George of Saxony had.²⁸⁴

Protestant celebration of Gustavus grew following his victory Breitenfeld in September, 1631.²⁸⁵ Broadsheets and a “veritable ‘Gustavus industry’” of likenesses, goblets, medallions and statues developed across the Empire.²⁸⁶ This was not an overnight development, but as the Swedish forces and their German allies enjoyed success after success the image on an invincible warrior from the north developed. Sixty percent of the roughly two hundred and fifty known broadsheets from that year came after the battle and one third contained “a visual depiction of the king.”²⁸⁷ By the end of the year, Gustavus was widely hailed as the divinely appointed hero of Protestants.²⁸⁸ In 1632 more than half of the three hundred known German broadsheets dealt with the king, emphasizing his connection with Biblical figures and his role in combating the threat of Re-Catholicization.²⁸⁹ The near-universal Protestant adulation of Gustavus is not strongly evident in Happe’s writing concerning Breitenfeld and the victories that followed.²⁹⁰ His several mentions of the Swedes during 1631 and 1632 are largely dispassionate. This is not to imply that he gave the Swedish army a free pass during 1632, he certainly records their mistreatment of people in Schwarzburg-Sondershausen when many troops were

²⁸⁴ Ibid., I: 207r-207v, 213r, and 276v. Happe seems unaware of or unwilling to mention the disgraceful flight of the Saxony army during the battle and the conspicuous part the Elector played in that debacle, fleeing with his troops in a panic; only Catholic mistakes and a strong Swedish counterattack saved the battle for Gustavus and his allies, Wilson, *Tragedy*, 475.

²⁸⁵ Wilson, *Tragedy*, 476-477.

²⁸⁶ Parker, *Thirty Years War*, image caption 14.

²⁸⁷ Paas, 223.

²⁸⁸ Ibid., 228. Paas outlines the shifting image of Gustavus Adolphus at this time as images began to emphasize his martial, sacred, and physical greatness.

²⁸⁹ Ibid., 230, 234.

²⁹⁰ He appears to give John George of Saxony credit for Breitenfeld, despite the Saxon Elector’s flight from the field early in the battle, Happe: I: 207v. A few pages later he describes Gustavus’ actions as a “move to help the innocent and oppressed” John George, and is fairly even handed in his praise for both princes for their victories following Breitenfeld, Happe, I:213r, 276v.

quartered throughout the region and proceeded to steal from the villagers and even the churches, and he complained about high contributions.²⁹¹ However, generally his tone toward the Swedes is level and understanding. Berg notes that “locals continued to honour the Swedish king as their helper in need long after they realized that his army plundered as badly as others when wages ran short,” illustrating the power of religious interests to overcome other practical considerations.²⁹² This contrasts with the much harsher language he used during that year to describe the actions of the armies of the Emperor and the Catholic League.²⁹³ This sort of religiously based double-standard can be seen in other authors. Mortimer quotes one such writer who described Protestant civilians as “‘poor, defenceless and abandoned people’ when they were forced to acquiesce in the recatholicisation of monastic lands, whereas he notes with satisfaction the removal of Catholics from office in Augsburg: ‘Here God, the righteous justice, has passed judgement and gladdened the worthy Protestant citizenry.’”²⁹⁴ Whereas strong religious perspectives were, understandably, more common among clerical authors, lay authors like Happe varied in their religious fervor; their accounts ranged from almost no mentions of religion to texts filled with sectarian and pious language.²⁹⁵ Happe is certainly closer to the latter end of the spectrum. While his pro-Protestant sympathies are evident throughout the chronicle, his strongest pro-Swedish, pro-Gustavus writing came at the moment when the king transformed from hero to martyr—the Battle of Lützen.

²⁹¹ Happe, I: 222r, 225v.

²⁹² Berg, 53.

²⁹³ In August 1632 Happe described a raid by Imperial forces as terrible, evil, and incredibly violent, Happe, I: 239r.

²⁹⁴ Mortimer, *Eyewitness*, 74.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

The great Pyrrhic victory for the Swedish army at Lützen in November 1632, defeating the forces of Wallenstein and Pappenheim, was critically marred by the death of Gustavus Adolphus.²⁹⁶ This catastrophe for the Protestant side was deeply felt by writers around the Empire. Happe wrote “they [. . .] obtained by God’s blessing an impressive victory. But, alas, alas, unfortunately, the most Christian, knightly, courageous King has remained dead on the battlefield; what joy we had otherwise experienced because of the beautiful victory has turned very bitter. The worth king, as a dear knight of Jesus Christ, for God’s honor and German liberty, has gallantly given his blood and life.”²⁹⁷ All around the Empire, Protestants mourned his death with similar tributes.²⁹⁸ One author wrote “[God] tears from us through death the one man/ Who with the courage of a mighty lion and by many heroic deeds/ Gloriously saved us from the enemy, when we were nearly lost.”²⁹⁹ Another wrote that Gustavus was a “beloved hero” who “poured out his kingly blood for religion, for German freedom, and for our good.”³⁰⁰ Happe reports that in the city of Erfurt, “the entire city, by great and small, rich and poor, a very large, painful lamentation arose” and all plays and celebrations were canceled out of mourning for the king’s passing.³⁰¹ Many authors sought to comfort their readers by returning to their faith in God’s continued favor for the Protestant side, “God sends whom he wishes; He also sent him [i.e. Gustavus Adolphus]/ And will continue to act this war. Thus dear Germany/ Hold fast to God and act yourself/ Be thankful to Him at all

²⁹⁶ For a description of the battle, see Wilson, *Tragedy*, 507-511. This battle proved devastating to the fortunes of the Swedes and their German allies; without the leadership of Gustavus, the alliance weakened and began suffering military reverses. This was a major turning point of the war.

²⁹⁷ Happe, I: 290r-291r.

²⁹⁸ Paas includes several broadsheet illustrations, see Paas, 238-243.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 238.

³⁰⁰ Mortimer, *Eyewitness*, 74.

³⁰¹ Happe, I: 291r.

times, and place your deep trust in Him.”³⁰² One letter to a duke in northern Germany described the way Protestants in Nuremberg responded, as the city authorities “ordered that the sad death of the king of Sweden be proclaimed from all pulpits and that all citizens and residents be duly admonished to righteous repentance and penance.”³⁰³ In all, the great popularity of the king reached its height in the months around Lützen. However, this popularity faded into disillusionment as the harsh realities of the war met the tragedy of Gustavus’ death. As the war wore on, Happe replaced hero worship with anger and despair at the treatment of Protestant civilians at the hand of the ostensibly friendly Swedish army.³⁰⁴

In October, 1634, the Swedish field-marshal Johann Banér entered Thuringia, falling back to the north following the great Imperial victory at Nördlingen in September. Banér established himself in Erfurt and billeted his troops throughout Thuringia to the terror and frustration of the inhabitants.³⁰⁵ Thus began a period of occupation and violence by the once “friendly” armies of Sweden and its Protestant German allies; here Happe’s perspective of his co-religionists is noticeably darker.³⁰⁶ When the army arrived

³⁰² Paas, 239.

³⁰³ Medick and Marschke, 151. This letter goes on to report that in neighboring Catholic Bavaria, Jesuits were spreading lies that at his death, Gustavus uttered great blasphemies and proved that he was struck down by God so that “now the Roman Catholic religion will bloom and prosper again.”

³⁰⁴ It would be useful at this point to assess the language Happe uses to describe the Swedes in the months following Gustavus’ death; however, the chronicle contains no entries for the 1633. This unfortunate gap in Happe’s writing, either through his own or the copyist’s neglect, damages our ability to fully assess the way Happe’s views changed during the year after Lützen.

³⁰⁵ Happe, I: 330v.

³⁰⁶ This shift in perspective was not just Happe’s. Hans Heberle, who wrote in 1631 that “because the Imperialists behaved so badly, robbing and plundering everything, and the Swede was a little less demanding, he made a good name for himself and was liked better than the emperor was” changed his view of the Swedes by 1634; segments translated by Thomas A. Brady Jr. available online at http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/docpage.cfm?docpage_id=4406. After Nördlingen, Heberle wrote, “We were in peril, for the [Catholic] enemy was breathing down our throats. The Swedes, too, did nothing for us. Whatever they could pick up of ours during their flight, they took along, so that we were in peril from both sides;” Thomas A Brady Jr., *German Histories in the Age of Reformations, 1400-1650* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 399.

it imposed “severe contributions” on Schwarzburg-Sondershausen which the soldiers “extorted with hideous tyranny from the poor people.”³⁰⁷ Soon they were engaged in skirmishes with Imperial troops who were burning towns and villages in southern Thuringia, having killed, robbed, burned and raped their way across Franconia as they pursued the faltering protestant forces in the wake of Nördlingen.³⁰⁸ The presence of Imperial forces, and their great violence, provided Happe with a contrast to the Swedes, despite his anger of contributions, they were still better than the Imperial soldiers who “ravaged with fire and sword.”³⁰⁹ He may have viewed the Swedes as necessary protection, calling some of them “brave men of valor” following their deaths by plague on October 7th.³¹⁰ Despite their protection, by the end of a month of Swedish occupation Happe wrote, “Banér’s Swedish army has been quartered in Thuringia to the uttermost spoilage of the poor exhausted country.”³¹¹ Happe’s patience was wearing thin. By mid-November, the situation was worse, “everywhere there is great distress, unspeakable sorrow, misery, and destitution” due to the demands of Swedish troops.³¹² Throughout the next two months, he records the various thefts and abuses which the civilians of Thuringia experienced at the hands of their protectors. Following a litany of crimes, Happe issued the most glaring declaration of his disillusionment with the Swedish forces he had once celebrated, “There is no more luck on our side, for good reason, for there is no piety and integrity any longer with our people. Killing, robbing, stealing, taking,

³⁰⁷ Ibid., I: 332r, 336r.

³⁰⁸ Ibid., I: 336r. For more on the aftermath of Nördlingen, see Wilson, *Tragedy*, 549-553.

³⁰⁹ Happe, I: 336v.

³¹⁰ Ibid.

³¹¹ Ibid., I: 337r.

³¹² Ibid., I: 337v. Here the context reveals that “everywhere” refers to Schwarzburg-Sondershausen and Franconia.

maltreating, whoring, roguery, etc., which are our gallant soldiers deeds and virtues.”³¹³

Over the course of November, Happe records the horrible violence which his people sustained at the hands of Imperial troops and laments the failure of the Swedes.³¹⁴ Instead of protecting the people, “Our army, which cost us so much, is lazily residing in their quarters, plaguing and torturing the poor peasants, flaying, pressing, robbing, stealing, and it is hardly surprising that [. . .] God strikes with thunder and lightning.”³¹⁵ In Happe’s eyes, the Swedes were “contribution parasites, not a hair better than the enemy” who “miserably squeezed, vexed and robbed” the people “in a most unchristianlike manner.”³¹⁶ His inflammatory language included terms like “God-forsaken” and “predatory” and he rejoiced when several companies of godless Swedes were cut down by Croats.³¹⁷ This sentiment is a far cry from his celebrations of Swedish victory and sorrow at the death of Gustavus Adolphus; disillusionment had descended upon Thuringia.³¹⁸

Amazingly, in spite of the treatment Happe and his neighbors received at the hands of the Swedes, he still clung to his favorable image of Gustavus Adolphus. Following the Swedish plundering of several villages in Schwarzburg-Sondershausen in

³¹³ Ibid., I: 341v.

³¹⁴ Ibid., I: 342r. He writes that because of their “godless lives” they are cursed and “cannot stand before their enemies.”

³¹⁵ Ibid., I: 343r.

³¹⁶ Ibid., I: 344r, 345v-346v.

³¹⁷ Ibid., I: 343v-344v.

³¹⁸ Similar sentiments are visible in other author’s works. One Lutheran pastor from the area near Magdeburg, complained that after Lützen, troops from both sides treated the people with contempt and violence: “When troops from Saxony marched into the area they ravaged it, captured Magdeburg and stayed the whole summer in camp, destroying all the grain in the fields and driving off the cattle. Soon the Imperialists came, the Lüneburgers, in fact a medley of nations, French and Spanish, so that Germany became nothing but a looting ground. Church services were forgotten, the land lay waste [. . .] Many churches were dens of thieves inhabited by soldiers, and robbery, murder and arson were daily occurrences. The miseries of hunger were widespread [. . .] *Mars et Mors* [War and Death] held sway and many people died of starvation.” Saxony was a Protestant territory and yet John George’s soldiers treated their co-religionists as badly as the Imperialists did, Mortimer, *Eyewitness*, 174-175.

1635, Happe wrote “It seems as if, with the most laudable king Gustavo Adolpho, all the virtue of the Swedish army has died. *However, not all of those marauding are of the nation of Sweden, more are, in part from Pomerania.*”³¹⁹ Despite several years of harsh treatment by the army commanded by Sweden, Happe’s inclination is to honor the memory of Gustavus Adolphus and blame the Pomeranian mercenaries who fought for Swedish masters. His image of Gustavus remains untarnished, but his view of friend and foe is radically altered. Only a few pages later he wrote the lines quoted at the beginning of this chapter: “Such terrible raping, looting and murder in all places and ends has hardly occurred since the beginning of the war. Our supposed friends have probably stolen, robbed, and tyrannized more than the enemy. The poor people have been abominably and unchristianly tortured and crushed because of the accursed contribution.”³²⁰ This indeed is a terrible condemnation of “supposed friends” and Happe was not alone in this sentiment. Numerous civilian authors complained that their erstwhile friends treated them terribly, contributing to a hatred and fear of all soldiers, regardless of creed or colors.³²¹ One author wrote, “As regards the enemy, one could quite well travel in the country, but on account of our supposed friends, our very own robbers, one often dared not venture outside the gates.”³²² It was not just Protestant authors that felt the sting of betrayal by co-religionists; one nun, Maria Magdalena Haidenbucher complained that the convent was unable to pay a post-war tax because “our feudal tenants, who had been ruined by the soldiers, friend and foe alike, so that our beloved house of God suffered losses of 2943

³¹⁹ Happe, I: 372r, emphasis mine. This is the last time that Gustavus is mentioned in the chronicle, suggestive of the fading memories of the once-celebrated hero.

³²⁰ Ibid., I: 377v-378r.

³²¹ Mortimer, “Experience,” 155.

³²² Ibid., 148-149.

florins.”³²³ Another nun, Klara Steiger, wrote, “Our soldiers, as well as the enemy, broke into churches and cloisters, and they pushed about, beat and robbed people in their houses and in the countryside. [. . .] They plundered more than the Swedish themselves.”³²⁴

Expressions of anger and disillusionment can be found across the Empire and for Happe, the destruction of the friend-or-foe dichotomy was complete by 1636 when he revealed that the Swedish regiment responsible for a series of truly terrible attacks on civilians in Thuringia was primarily comprised of Germans, many from Schwarzburg itself. Local soldiers turned upon their former neighbors with violence and terror.³²⁵ The inability to trust fellow Protestants or even soldiers from home left many civilians in terrible fear for their lives and property. This was certainly the case for Happe during the months of Swedish occupation.

Due to the behavior of the Swedes and their allies, the winter of 1634-1635 was an unhappy time for many inhabitants of Thuringia. Happe wrote, “We have been so frightened by soldiers that we weep bloody tears.”³²⁶ The people were “so anxious and fearful due to the grievous burdens of war that [they] despair.”³²⁷ In the midst of this fear and despair, the people sought redress for their grievances. “So many complaints come from all places” wrote Happe, “that we may weep blood over it, and be no help, neither in heaven nor on earth have we yet to find mercy from a few greedy soldiers.”³²⁸ The exactions have stripped the people “down to marrow and blood” and “in all places it is not more than a devilish wickedness.”³²⁹ Here, in this context of great woe, Happe

³²³ *Ibid.*, *Eyewitness*, 109.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, 111.

³²⁵ Happe, I: 458r.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, I: 361v.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, I: 348v.

³²⁸ *Ibid.*

³²⁹ *Ibid.*, I: 349r-349v.

deploys all the rhetoric of pain and suffering he can muster, issuing the statement apocalyptic fear quoted in opening of chapter one: “These are certainly signs that our redemption through the second coming of Jesus Christ is near [. . .] and everybody, greatly shaking and quaking, was of the opinion that Judgment Day was at hand.”³³⁰ Such was the disillusionment with his fellow Lutherans that Happe believed Judgment Day had arrived during a time of great turmoil wrought by the very people he once hoped would usher in the last days. Instead of seeing the Swedes as friendly forces coming to bring judgment upon the wicked Catholics, he feared judgment had come upon his own people. This is a striking change and his animosity of the Swedes only worsened as the years went by.³³¹

Given the way that Happe’s perspective and loyalties shifted over the course of the war, using different rhetoric to describe the early actions of Gustavus’ army compared to the behavior of the Imperial and Catholic League armies only to later reverse course, it is important to consider the various biases which may have influenced Happe’s account of the war. There are several categories of bias in Happe’s chronicle which help explain and contextualize his descriptions of events. One that has already been touched on in this chapter is the role of religious loyalties. The Swedish Intervention provided a particularly interesting context for this bias as Happe was presented with a Protestant hero and a dramatic increase in violent co-religionists to challenge his perspective. A second category of biases for Happe is his socio-political loyalty. Happe’s allegiance to Schwarzburg-Sondershausen and his broader association with the people of the Thuringian region clearly shape his depiction of events and the parameters of the war as

³³⁰ Ibid., I: 349r-349v, as quoted and translated in Medick, “Experience and Memory,” 72.

³³¹ By 1640, he was openly hostile and praised Imperial troops for defeating Swedes; the latter had become “Happe’s main enemies”, Berg, 313.

he perceived it. Additionally, his role in the government enhanced his perspective of the broader war and potentially shaped his view of the impact of violence on the local level. The third influence on his account is his personal agenda. Happe is writing an account in which he is a fairly prominent narrator, a position of importance bolstered by his lengthy genealogical introduction to his chronicle. Naturally, any auto-biographical accounts present reliability concerns when the author reports events in which he plays a part, or fails to report incidents which might harm his reputation in the eyes of his readers. It is also important to consider why he chose to write this chronicle; was he attempting to convince a future audience of the value of his role in the events? Lastly, there are genre-specific concerns which influence the historical assessment of ego-documents like Happe's. How much time separated the events from their recording? Was the account altered or revised? Did the author witness these events himself, or are his reports second-hand? Happe's chronicle obviously raises numerous questions of reliability and historical utility; questions which all ego-documents must endure.

As a historical source, a chronicle like Happe's has certain value and limits. In recent years, historians of the Thirty Years' War have increasingly turned their attention to such sources in order to more fully assess the experiences of ordinary people.³³² Medick and Marschke describe this approach as historical-anthropology—"an approach that puts the actions, sufferings, experiences, and perceptions of people and individuals from both the lower and higher ranks of society into the center of the historians' attention and research."³³³ Ego-documents can provide a close, intimate viewpoint of the conflict

³³² Medick and Norbert Winnige, eds. *Mitteldeutsche Selbstzeugnisse der Zeit des Dreissigjährigen Krieges*, (Jena: Thüringer Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Jena, 2008), available at <http://www.mdsz.thulb.uni-jena.de>.

³³³ Medick and Marschke, 17.

and reveal aspects of human experience of violence which a more traditional macro-study could not.³³⁴ If there is value in this approach, reliance upon ego-documents like the Thuringian Chronicle presents real challenges. Happe's chronicle is a curious combination of contemporaneous record and later revisions by the author and the only surviving version is an early eighteenth century handwritten copy of Happe's original.³³⁵ This last point is an unfortunate reality of the source; there is the possibility that the copyist failed to faithfully transcribe the original. As there is no way to determine whether the original differed from the existing version, this objection must be noted but passed over. In regard to the time of authorship, Happe appears to have written most of his entries in the days or weeks after the events transpired. This is fortunate as a contemporaneous approach can limit the impact of hind-sight and the failures of memory.³³⁶ Of course, Happe's chronicle is not immune to either of these influences. Hind-sight is clearly evident in many entries as he makes foreshadowing comments, like his description of the comet of 1618: "because of it, war, sedition, bloodshed, pestilence,

³³⁴ Debates over the nature of experience have resulted in two forms of experience—*Erlebnis* and *Erfahrung*. The former is defined as "the fleeting experience an individual feels through the constant succession of lived events" and is generally out of reach for historical study. The latter is "the accumulative knowledge an individual acquires from his or her transient experiences, involving a process of selection and reflection on life" and "can be studied, because such reflections have been committed to paper;" Wilson, *Tragedy*, 822-. Essentially, this division allows historians to side-step some of the objections of poststructuralists who deny the validity of experience as a category of analysis. It acknowledges that chronicles like Happe's are not a perfect reflection of his experiences, "but rather selected events [Happe] thought important enough to write down;" Ulbricht, 98. As such, Happe's chronicle, and ego documents like it, reveal a great deal about the authors perceptions of violence through what is included, omitted, and emphasized.

³³⁵ For a thorough explanation of particular value of fully contemporaneous, partially contemporaneous, and non-contemporaneous ego documents, see Mortimer, *Eyewitness*, 17-28. For more about the Happe manuscript, see Joachim Ott, "Zur Text- und Manuskriptgestalt von Volkmars Chronicon Thuringiae" (Jena: Thüringer Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Jena, 2008) Available at <http://www.mdsz.thulb.uni-jena.de>.

³³⁶ Mortimer, *Eyewitness*, 17-21. Mortimer notes that "few diarists consistently maintain up-to-date records, and while some entries may indeed refer to the events of the day, others might have been written up weeks, months, or even longer afterwards," this was surely true of Happe's chronicle, 18.

and famine and unspeakable misfortune occurred around the world.”³³⁷ Knowing how the years after the comet’s appearance were filled with war and violence, Happe was able to record that ominous warning with his account of the comet. The most obvious instance of revision is Happe’s inclusion of dozens of pages of genealogical and auto-biographical material at the beginning of the chronicle.³³⁸ Overall, the bulk of the chronicle appears to have been recorded relatively soon after the actual events, thus offering a more immediate encapsulation of the events and impressions which the author felt important enough to include.

Happe filled his chronicle with accounts of violence, theft, and the burdens of war; however, he also included moments of importance for his family and community including births, deaths, and the state of the weather and agriculture. Thus his writings offer a window into more than just the suffering of the community, they include instances of joy and celebration. The events, both good and bad, are a mixture of personally experienced or witnessed events and those which he received second-hand. As has been discussed earlier, some of the truly horrible accounts of violence or cannibalism are clearly reports he has heard from unnamed sources and thus are a bit more suspect than events which Happe personally experienced. However, his official position as *Amtschösser* and later *Hofrat* provided Happe with opportunities to ascertain the impact of war on his region.³³⁹ Additionally, his formal training and, indeed, the standard

³³⁷ Happe, I: 24v.

³³⁸ He references his promotion at the end of 1642 on page I: 17v

³³⁹ In these roles he would have received numerous complaints and petitions from civilians. This is something of a two-edged sword for historical assessment however, his role expanded his awareness of violence, but the reports he received were potentially exaggerated by civilians seeking a reduction in taxes. For a discussion of this practice and the problems it raises for historians, see Chapter Five and Theibault, “Rhetoric”.

practices of seventeenth century chroniclers, dictated that he keep thorough accounts.³⁴⁰ Thus, the Thuringian Chronicle provides a detailed, thorough account of the effects of the war on the people of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen. Though useful in producing an interesting manuscript, Happe's official position and his personal proximity to the events in the chronicle also raise potential barriers to his credibility. As a man partially tasked with the maintenance of the fiscal and social well being of his native region, the violence, breakdown of law and order, and the crippling burden of taxes and contributions had direct connection with his job performance. Happe could not stop the war, nor could he prevent the violence, but how he responded during the crisis could substantially impact both his job security and the way he was remembered by his family and neighbors. Given the sheer volume of stories about violence and theft, there is little reason to suspect that Happe intentionally minimized or obfuscated the impact of the war. Conversely, there are several possible reasons to inflate both the violence of the war and his faithful service to the Count of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen. Determining why he wrote his chronicle and its intended audience can clarify these potential motivations for exaggeration.

Diaries were common among the literate classes of the seventeenth century, and the momentous events of the Thirty Years' War provided plenty of life events to record.³⁴¹ Happe appears interested in recording the events of the war for both personal and professional reasons, his lengthy genealogy testifies to the former motivation, the numerous references to his employer and the aspects of the war which affect his job suggest the latter motivation. This is not to imply that Happe only recorded things which personally impacted him, although that would not be terribly unusual for a diarist. Rather,

³⁴⁰ Parker, *Thirty*, 187.

³⁴¹ Mortimer, *Eyewitness*, 179-180.

Happe's job seems to have naturally influenced what he deemed worthy of recording; thus he includes numerous entries about the state of the crops (professionally relevant as a tax official and of personal interest as a farmer), about the lives of his friends and family, and about the terrible burden of contributions and violence which affected him personally and professionally as well. It does not appear, at first glance, that there was a specific audience in mind when Happe wrote the chronicle. Like most authors in the genre, he wrote for posterity but who he specifically envisioned reading his chronicle is not evident from the text. What is suggestive is his apparent interest in establishing several facts early in the text and then reiterates these points throughout the chronicle. An excellent example of all three can be found in the early pages of the chronicle. Happe, writing in 1623, recalls entering into the employ of Count Christian:

In the year 1619, by the gift of almighty God, by my Gracious Lords, the Counts of Schwarzburg-Hohenstein [he lists their names...] I was appointed the Amtsschösser of the districts of Keula and Ebeleben. [...] While I certainly had a perilous and difficult time during the dangerous, evil war, yet my gracious God as mercifully protected me always in all danger, preserving me with his strong arm and saving me from all trouble and danger. All that I endured by accident, it can be seen in the following events in this book. To the true God be eternal words of praise and thanks for his gracious protection [. . .] Having now for four years, as an Amtsschösser in the two districts of Keula and Ebeleben, ministered assiduously for my gracious lord [Christian Günther I], my dear, faithful God has conveyed to me even more of His paternal grace and goodness without a single thought of mine, by allowing me to assume for my lord Christian Günther of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen and Hohenstein the position of Hofrat.³⁴²

This verbose description demonstrates that first, Happe consistently gives God credit for his success, survival, and protection. Second, Happe makes numerous favorable references to his employer and the Count's family, describing them in glowing terms. Third, and related to the previous point, Happe seems concerned to establish his faithful service to the ruling family of the region. These themes are prominent throughout the

³⁴² Happe, I: 10r.

chronicle. He highlights his years of steadfast and unflinching service to the Count, while praising both him and God. If one views passages like this through a critical or cynical lens these references to God's goodness and the Count's generosity could appear as false modesty, designed to highlight Happe's quality. Interpreting the chronicle through this light, many of Happe's stories take on a very self-serving dimension. From this perspective there are many factors which may have influenced Happe to record events and his role in them in a way that reflects well on him. Happe appears to have retired as a fairly prosperous farmer and merchant.³⁴³ How, after decades of war combined with the market decline of his family's principle export, woad, does Happe retire a rich man? There is no record of his salary, nor is it known the extent of his pre-war properties and wealth. However, graft and embezzlement were everyday realities in seventeenth century government, and Happe's position negotiating and collecting contributions and war taxes would have provided him with opportunity to line his own pockets.³⁴⁴ A chronicle which highlights his loyalty and devotion to his employer and position could be an attempt to establish a narrative in which Happe would never abuse his authority. However, this is merely speculation; there is no evidence of such nefarious behavior on Happe's part.³⁴⁵ The general impression of local officials like Happe from across the Empire is sympathetic; they were "a group of underpaid, poorly supported men struggling to do

³⁴³ Bähr, "Inhaltliche."

³⁴⁴ It is important to recognize that modern standards for public officials do not necessarily correspond with seventeenth century expectations; not all personal gain through public office was deemed corrupt, see Sharon Kettering, *Patrons, Brokers, and Clients in Seventeenth Century France* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 204. During the war local officials sometimes collaborated with soldiers to "falsify accounts" and share profits from contributions, Wilson, *Tragedy*, 405.

³⁴⁵ Unfortunately very little is known about Happe beyond his autobiographical material. Bähr refers to two works which contain some genealogical material about Happe: Hermann Gresky, "Volkmarr Happe, der unbekannte Chronist von Nordthüringen und sein Werk," in *Das Thüringer Fähnlein. Monatshefte für die mitteldeutsche Heimat*, 5/12 (1936), 583-585; and Wolfgang Huschke, "Die Happesche Chronik als genealogische Quelle," in *Mitteldeutsche Familienkunde* 27/8/2 (1986): 257-281. The latter is cited as the source of Bähr's claim that Happe retired wealthy.

their best in fearful times” as they tried to meet heavy demands from the military and not strip their local communities of all wealth and supplies.³⁴⁶

Obscuring indiscretions is not the only potential motivation for altering Happe’s tale. It is possible that Happe inflated his own actions in order to impress upon posterity his diligence and bravery. Happe describes how he stayed in places of danger to fulfill his duty in spite of the risk.³⁴⁷ In other instances he shows up as a negotiator, seeking to reduce the burden of contributions or bring military incursions to a halt.³⁴⁸ By inventing or exaggerating his personal risk or diligence, Happe could present himself as a courageous and dutiful public servant. Again, there is no way to verify this suggestion, and indeed there are a couple reasons why such a theory is to be doubted. First, the description of his personal danger is certainly colorful, but it is not any more descriptive than the other instances of pillage, murder, and robbery throughout the chronicle; he does not inflate the rhetoric when recounting his own risks. Second, the accounts of negotiations and petitions are rarely if ever concluded; that is, there he spends little to no time explaining how his attempts to assist his neighbors worked. If he were lying, it would probably have been accompanied by some declaration of success or, at the very least, excuse for failure. Instead, Happe just moves on to other matters.³⁴⁹ If he did not exaggerate his own actions, perhaps he inflated the challenges. The timing of Happe’s

³⁴⁶ Wilson, *Tragedy*, 405. This impression is the product of numerous chronicles and reports, thus Happe’s account corresponds to the general depiction.

³⁴⁷ Happe, I:91r-92r. As explained in Chapter Two, in this situation the danger was plague. Happe remained in Ebeleben while his master fled. Much of the household staff died and the he had to deal with an influx of thieving soldiers.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, I: 288r. Here Happe was arrested for his pains, this episode is explained in greater detail in Chapter Five.

³⁴⁹ For example, when he writes to the military authorities in Nordhausen to complain about the terrible actions of the Swedish soldiers, that ends his story, he never reveals whether the letter had any effect or response, Happe, I: 453v-460v. For more on this situation, see Chapter Five.

revision of the chronicle is interesting; he chose the end of 1642 and the beginning of 1643. In 1642, Happe's long-time employer, Christian Günther I, died leaving his son Anton Günther I to succeed as count. Happe briefly alludes to some job insecurity during the transition, claiming that his adversaries and even the new count endeavored to demote him.³⁵⁰ Happe declared that in the face of these trials "I was patient and held firmly to my dear God. He has so strongly protected me and confused my adversaries" and instead of losing his job, the new count gave him a promotion.³⁵¹ This may suggest that Happe's revisionary efforts were intended to demonstrate his long history of service and the great obstacles he faced.³⁵² In this scenario, Happe would have been in the process of updating his chronicle in response to job insecurities; upon learning of his promotion, he dutifully recorded it. It is unclear how long after Christian Günther's death on November 25, 1642 that Happe had to wait before his promotion, although he never mentions the turning of the year, so it is very possible that it occurred in December. Even if this did not give Happe very much time for extensive revisions as part of a campaign to bolster his image, it is conceivable that his brush with unemployment inspired subsequent revisions just in case he needed proof of loyalty. In any event, Happe's chronicle clearly depicts the author as a diligent public servant living in very difficult times, a self-representation which cannot be verified. One point in favor of Happe's reliability, he consistently gives God credit for promotion, success, and protection; he does not claim personal glory.³⁵³ This again could be a false modesty, but it suggests the possibility of a genuinely contentious public servant who deeply believed in God's personal protection and favor.

³⁵⁰ Happe, I:14v-15r.

³⁵¹ Ibid.

³⁵² Berg, 314.

³⁵³ Medick, "Analysebeispiel".

Happe's document then should be seen as a complex document, potentially the product of several agendas.

The *Chronicon Thuringiae* is useful in two respects; it serves as a report of the events of the war and their effects on the populace, and it provides a window into the way one public official perceived the violence and suffering around him. In both of these respects, Happe's reliability as an author is tempered by the aforementioned concerns of biases and obfuscations. However, these concerns are present with any such source; historians must approach these documents with healthy skepticism while not assuming a dishonest author. This tension has featured prominently in a historiographic debate over the reliability of documents from the war which complain of terrible financial losses and the unbearable burden of quartering and contributions.³⁵⁴ Even before the war began, villagers commonly petitioned their lords for reduction in taxes; this practice understandably accelerated during the war as the fiscal burdens upon civilians were compounded by the demands of the military. This process was part of the power relationship between lord and subject known as *Herrschaft*, essentially the "reciprocal relationships that had their ideological underpinnings in the phrase *Schutz und Schirm*, which suggested that obedience was due only so long as the ruler offered protection to his subjects."³⁵⁵ Happe served as "an agent of *Herrschaft*" for the Count of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen and thus formed a vital connection between the average subject and the Count.³⁵⁶ When subjects felt abused or threatened they could appeal to Happe for redress and protection. Such appeals were "neither acts of naive faith in the paternal affection of

³⁵⁴ Theibault, "Rhetoric," 271. This debate is also covered in Chapter Five as it is relevant to civilian negotiation tactics.

³⁵⁵ Theibault, *Villages*, 21. This concept is explored in more detail in Chapter Five.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

the ruler for his ‘children’ nor abject capitulations to a dominant force; they were attempts to maneuver and negotiate within the framework of *Herrschaft*.³⁵⁷ Thus it was not uncommon for civilians to attempt to exaggerate their suffering in order to reduce their financial losses. If official complaints could be fabrications, how can they be believed by historians? Going a step further, Happe’s chronicle is a reflection of his own experiences and observations and he probably drew some material from the numerous conversations and petitions he engaged with as a public official. If such petitions are suspect, is not Happe’s account as well? This last concern is diminished by the recognition that the authorities were aware of the potential for exaggeration in petitions; men like Happe were tasked with differentiating between falsehood and truth, “a supplication, therefore, was not automatically accepted by its audience as an accurate description of local circumstances.³⁵⁸” Theibault argues that historians are missing out on a wealth of source material if they dismiss these documents as invariably tainted.³⁵⁹ Such scholars, while correct that these sources cannot be uncritically believed, are guilty of “merely substitut[ing] a presumption of dishonesty for a presumption of honesty in all reports. [. . .] Unless one assumes that supplicants are incapable of ever representing faithfully their circumstances [. . .] every time a description cannot be confirmed [by hard data] one has proof that it was not as bad as people claimed.”³⁶⁰ The alternative approach is to assess the way that the author describes his environment and experiences while

³⁵⁷ Ibid., “Community,” 5.

³⁵⁸ Ibid., “Rhetoric,” 275. Happe was also unlikely to be misled by complaints of unbearable contributions as he was surely well aware of the agricultural output of his native region, both from his years of experience and his own farming background.

³⁵⁹ Ibid., 271-272.

³⁶⁰ Ibid., 272. Here Theibault is referring to S. H. Steinberg and Gerhard Benecke.

assuming neither total honesty nor total dishonesty barring strong evidence to the contrary. This is the dynamic at play in the historical assessment of Happe's chronicle.

“The rhetoric of death and destruction” during the Thirty Years' War is a promising subject for study; as Theibault reveals, there is a noticeable shift in the way authors communicated their plight as the war progressed.³⁶¹ As the war continued it became increasingly obvious that the local nobility were incapable of protecting their subjects from violence and mistreatment.³⁶² This impotence produced several civilian responses. One, which is explored in greater detail in the next chapter, was a determination to resist soldiers, with violence if necessary. Ideally, the relationship of *Schutz und Schirm* would ensure civilian compliance with agreements reached between the civilian and military authorities. It would be “illegitimate within the structure of *Herrschaft*” for civilians to attack soldiers who entered the territory with the permission of the lord or his agents, as signified by a *salva guardia*.³⁶³ But as the system failed to protect, civilians took matters into their own hands. A second civilian response to the failure their protectors was a “change in the tone of supplications and in the formats and descriptions of death and destruction.”³⁶⁴ Standard practice assumed that a supplication represented an unusual moment of crisis, but after more than a decade of intermittent conflict, “situations worthy of supplication were the rule rather than the exception.”³⁶⁵ As the violence and destruction increased in many regions of the Empire, reports of these events took on the language of inexpressibility. When Happe writes that constant

³⁶¹ Ibid., 274.

³⁶² Ibid., 279. Theibault explains that in the region of his particular study, Werra, the local nobles attempted to protect civilians through *salva guardia* and, this failing, fled leaving them “with neither advice nor support

³⁶³ Ibid., *Village*, 143.

³⁶⁴ Ibid., “Rhetoric,” 279.

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

pillaging “is a great, unspeakable misery” or that “there is no way to describe all the misery” caused by a month of looting and rape, he is participating in a cultural escalation in rhetoric.³⁶⁶ Many former supplicants turned to writing their feelings about the violence, not in an attempt to persuade any particular reader, but rather as a way to make sense of their circumstances.³⁶⁷ This “self-conscious reflection” and an attention to detail are marks of Happe’s work. He often flits between almost mechanically reporting incident after incident and heartfelt summations of the terrible calamity which has gripped his home.³⁶⁸ By rooting his entries in detail, including the names of many of those killed or robbed, Happe lends his stories plausibility; by engaging in the rhetoric of despair and destitution, Happe roots his account in the broader literature of the war.³⁶⁹ When looking at this chronicle as a source, historians should recognize that the rhetoric is vital to understanding the way those who experienced the war perceived it. “It is less important whether the descriptions seem sincere to us than whether they were perceived as sincere by their audience. [. . .] The persuasive power of descriptions of suffering and devastation came from the fact that the narrators really believed that they were suffering and could link that suffering to identifiable circumstances.”³⁷⁰ Thus “the rhetoric of death and destruction was not, therefore, simply a symptom of the war, it became part of the impact of the war,” reinforcing and solidifying a perception that this conflict was an

³⁶⁶ Happe, I: 366v, 267v. The corresponding growth of broadsheets and pamphlets detailing atrocities from other regions of the empire may have inspired similar language in local accounts of violence and potentially contributed to this escalation of rhetoric as local victims sought to more firmly establish their claim to extraordinary suffering, see Theibault, “Rhetoric,” 278.

³⁶⁷ Theibault, “Rhetoric,” 284.

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 284. The former, “detached and impersonal” aspect of Happe’s writing is fairly typical of seventeenth-century writers who “generally lack reflection on events, descriptions of emotions or psychological insights,” Wilson, *Tragedy*, 823; also, Ulbricht, 98.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 286.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 274.

unprecedented calamity of apocalyptic import.³⁷¹ The *Chronicon Thuringiae* is useful as a source for details of the war when taken together with hundreds of other first-hand accounts; when viewed in its rhetorical context it can reveal a great deal about Happe's perception and experience of the war.

One way to consider the perceptual contours of Happe's chronicle is to assess the nature of his "world."³⁷² This world can be viewed in spatial, religious, and personal terms. Happe was born and lived his life in Schwarzburg-Sondershausen, Thuringia, as detailed in chapter one. Medick argues that a full understanding of Happe's perception and experience requires recognition of how he viewed his physical space.³⁷³ Medick and his colleagues mapped out all the locations which Happe records as having resided, visited, or experienced a significant event and demonstrated the preponderance of experiences in the principle towns and cities of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen—Ebeleben, Keula, Greussen, and Sondershausen.³⁷⁴ Despite close dynastic ties with other polities in the area, Schwarzburg-Sondershausen was the "primary perceptual horizon" of Happe's chronicle, with the surrounding Thuringian region, including nearby fortified cities like Erfurt, forming a secondary place of interest.³⁷⁵ Thus, Medick argues, when Happe wrote that "'in all the world there is nothing but war and war cries' he did not mean the world of the Holy Roman Empire, or of the German nation, or even for what passed in his time as a consciousness of a global world context, but primarily [he meant] his Thuringian 'world.'"³⁷⁶ This is not surprising for a local farmer and official, living and working in

³⁷¹ Ibid., 286.

³⁷² This term is borrowed from Medick, "Analysebeispiel".

³⁷³ Medick, "Analysebeispiel".

³⁷⁴ Ibid. The map is available at <http://www.mdsz.thulb.uni-jena.de/anhang/karten.php>.

³⁷⁵ Medick, "Analysebeispiel".

³⁷⁶ Ibid., quote from Happe, I: 33r.

his native territory and not traveling extensively beyond the vague confines of Thuringia. However, religious and personal factors helped expand Happe's chronicle to incorporate information and sympathies that might otherwise have been left out of the chronicle.

As has already been noted, Happe was a Lutheran. His religious loyalties explain why he includes information about places outside of Thuringia as well as influenced his perception of the war's participants. In 1623 Happe wrote of the "darkening of the Lutheran Sun in Thuringia" by the "Spanish Eclipse."³⁷⁷ Here his religious and political loyalties led him to point to the Catholic Habsburgs as the villains of the war, notably connecting Ferdinand with his Spanish cousins whose "Black Legend" was already established throughout Protestant circles.³⁷⁸ Happe here draws attention to the source of military money; he thus paints a predominantly German military presence, comprised primarily from mercenaries drawn from across the Empire, as the chief outsider, the other, the Catholic archenemy. This language, when connected to his, and other Protestants' claims that the Pope was the anti-Christ, places Happe's chronicle solidly in a Protestant/Lutheran context.³⁷⁹ When Happe's chronicle does venture beyond the confines of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen and Thuringia, the areas it mentions are "almost exclusively in the north, northeast, and northwest of his primary reference point of the Thuringian region"—Halle, Braunschweig, Magdeburg, and Göttingen were all Protestant territories and cities of importance which receive Happe's attention. As the Swedes entered the war and their Lutheran king established himself as the champion for Protestants, Happe's religious interests expanded the scope of the chronicle to include

³⁷⁷ Ibid., quote from Happe, I: 32

³⁷⁸ There is a robust scholarship on the long history of the "black legend". For a thorough summary of this scholarship, see Linda Bradley Salamon, "Gascoigne's Globe: The Spoyle of Antwerpe and the Black Legend of Spain," in *Early Modern Literary Studies* 14.1/Special Issue 18 (May, 2008): 7.1-38.

³⁷⁹ For more on this eschatological language see Chapter Two.

information about the victories and death of Gustavus. Happe's religious loyalties, and the apocalypticism described in chapter one, demonstrate the importance of the authors' faith in shaping his perception of his world and the war which threatened to destabilize it.

Happe's personal vision of the war was shaped by employment and his first-hand experience. As a public official, Happe's personal investment in the well-being of his employer and the people living in his territory produced another layer in his view of the conflict. His role in government required him to understand the fiscal status of territory in order to manage taxation and negotiate contributions. This familiarity with economic realities informs his comments about contributions and theft. Further, Happe's role in maintaining order and peace within the region kept him attune to the suffering and violence around him. He thus experienced "ex officio," through witnesses and written reports, the suffering of the people of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen and "meticulously [. . .] recorded thousands of acts of violence" throughout the war.³⁸⁰ Whereas some authors might have solely focused on their own plight and that of their family and friends, Happe's chronicle offers a broader assessment of the conflict, enhanced by the addition of events he heard or read in his official capacity as an agent of the count. His professional position not only broadened his knowledge of the war, it also brought him into personal contact with soldiers when engaging in negotiations or when required to remain in dangerous areas.³⁸¹ Happe's personal experiences with danger and violence lend his chronicle a layer of intensity which a more distant author, relying solely on the reports of others might have lacked. Happe lost children, nephews, nieces, and siblings to the war and the famine and pestilence that accompanied it. He was robbed and had his

³⁸⁰ Medick, "Analysebeispiel."

³⁸¹ For more about negotiation and Happe's role in it, see Chapter Five.

house destroyed on several occasions and had to watch as his own daughter was attacked by soldiers following a siege. His personal and professional experiences shaped his perception of the conflict and prompted him to write that “Sondershausen has become nothing more than a *Schinderhausen*.”³⁸² This play on words means that Sondershausen, or “special house” has become Schinderhausen, or “slaughter house” and dramatically demonstrates the personal connection which he shared with the suffering of his homeland.

The geographic, religious, and personal/professional layers of Happe’s perceptual world cannot be divorced from each other. They mutually support, complicate, and enhance his description of violence. As noted earlier, “all the world” often meant either all of Thuringia, or perhaps all of the Protestant regions of the Empire. When he describes hearing shooting in Northeim all the way in Ebeleben, a distance of some forty-three miles, he is not literally recording an experience, but illustrating his connection with a regional, Protestant town which was besieged by Catholic troops.³⁸³ As he looked out his window in Keula, he recounted the burning of many of the houses there and also reported of the flight of many of the inhabitants of Eichsfeld, around fifteen miles away.³⁸⁴ His religious and personal/professional inclinations helped him overcome geographic boundaries to report and describe events outside of his immediate vicinity and explain his reaction to important, distant events, like the sacking of Magdeburg or the victory of Gustavus Adolphus at Breitenfeld. These moments did not impact his day-to-day, but they took on significance when viewed through a religious and political lens. As

³⁸² Happe, II: 354v. It is possible that this editorial comment was added later, but it vividly captures the sense of despair and anguish which characterizes Happe’s later descriptions of his home, see Medick, “Analysebeispiel.”

³⁸³ Medick, “Analysebeispiel” citing Happe, I: 111.

³⁸⁴ Ibid., citing Happe, I: 40v-41r.

a Protestant, the fall of Magdeburg could signal all sorts of calamities, both religiously and practically. The ascendancy of Gustavus or Ferdinand might determine the future security and free practice of the Lutheran faith in Schwarzburg-Sondershausen, or at the very least, make Happe's job much more difficult. His professional connection to the people of the region—they were his responsibility—and his religious loyalties expanded his chronicle beyond what was immediately visible to him. The geographic, religious, and personal dimensions of Happe's world are frequently displayed in his numerous monthly reviews where he recaps the major events of the month as they occurred locally, and in the broader Thuringian and Protestant communities. It is often in these moments that Happe is the least connected with his immediate surroundings and demonstrates his awareness of the broader contours of the war. Thus, throughout the chronicle, Happe reveals a concern for his family, neighbors, regional context, and his co-religionists.

The layers of Happe's "world" shaped his perception of the events of the war as they structured his vision of outsiders and created for him a presumption of friend and foe. For Happe, the Swedes were initially outsiders whose presence in the Empire was viewed with suspicion. Following Gustavus' assumption of the mantle of religious heroism and his victories over Happe's long-standing enemies, it was natural that Happe view the Swedish army as part of his religious world. This explains his interest and celebration of Swedish victory. But the years of Swedish occupation and violence, coupled with the death of the protestant champion, left Happe disillusioned. In what Medick describes as a loss of religious confidence, Happe lamented the "cruel actions of Sweden in Thuringia" and caused him to "significantly reduce his 'religious

interpretation' of the war and violent events."³⁸⁵ He continued to care about his people and the events within Thuringia, but his interest in Protestant territories in the north and the successes of the Swedes diminished during the latter portions of the Swedish Intervention through the end of the war.³⁸⁶ Happe's disillusionment with Sweden, coupled with the experience of personal violence and the near-rape of his daughter gave rise to a more pessimistic outlook during the second half of the war.³⁸⁷ He moved from a more realized eschatology focused on the person of Gustavus Adolphus to a generalized despair. The illusion of friendly troops and glorious Protestant victory faded after Lützen and Nördlingen and was replaced by sorrow and frustration at the violence and extortion which successive armies imposed on the civilian population of Thuringia with little regard for religious creed. Happe focused on administrative efforts to mitigate suffering as a way to cope and stabilize with his chaotic world while not losing his Protestant faith in God, just his conviction that God's will was discernible and in favor of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen.³⁸⁸ Within this framework, it is not surprising that civilians like Happe chose to resist the violence around them. As the war progressed and Happe's perceptual boundaries narrowed and personalized, his response to the chaos was to endeavor to exert more agency.³⁸⁹ Even the act of writing his chronicle may have served to contextualize and limit the violence and chaos of the war years. Tragically, in the midst of this conflict and his attempts to reduce the cost, Happe could only lament the "unspeakable misery"

³⁸⁵ Ibid.

³⁸⁶ It would be worthwhile to conduct a thorough analysis of the entire chronicle in order to more fully assess the scope of Happe's perceptual transformation, particularly in regard to Swedish forces.

³⁸⁷ Medick, "Analysebeispiel."

³⁸⁸ Ibid. Here Medick situates Happe in Theodore Rabb's "struggle for stability" which Rabb argues defined the seventeenth century, see Rabb, *Struggle*.

³⁸⁹ This is not to imply that civilians were without agency in the early years of the war; as the next chapter will demonstrate, the actions taken by civilians during the Swedish Intervention were not uncommon in the early years. Rather the point here is to highlight Happe's personal journey and the intensification of his reaction as his presuppositions collapsed.

and shame which he and his fellow officials felt knowing that they could not protect the people.³⁹⁰ Social and perceptual breakdown, met with staunch determination to resist, marked the civilian experience of the war as recorded by Happe.

³⁹⁰ Bähr, "Erläuterungen," citing Happe, I: 182v-183r.

CHAPTER 5

CIVILIAN RESISTANCE IN THE FACE OF WAR

“Early in the morning of February 26, at six o’clock, over two hundred Swedish horsemen came before the Grüningen gate of Greußen. [The gate] hewn by force, [they] invaded with great fury into the city, all they encountered on the streets, hewn down; afterwards they fell upon the churches and Heuser, looting everything, people were beaten, tortured, hung and tortured for money. Master David, the old Bader, was shot dead in the churchyard, Bürgermeister Leuber tortured, beaten and cut down dead, as well as my brother Jakob, Tobias Heufler, Bürgermeister Tobias Herr and almost all citizens.”³⁹¹ -Volkmar Happe, *Chronicon Thuringiae*, 1636.

Volkmar Happe and his neighbors in Thuringia were tragically familiar with the ravages of war throughout the Swedish Intervention. They dealt with the violence in several ways. First, they had to choose whether to comply with the demands of the soldiers or resist. Those who chose resistance employed an array of tactics to mitigate their suffering and perhaps defend their village and property. These resistance strategies can be broken down into three basic categories: flight, negotiation, and violence.³⁹² Flight was either temporary, to the nearest safe place such as a walled town or nearby forest, or permanent relocation to a neighboring province. If they chose flight, it carried the risk of disease, exposure, starvation, or the specter of a burned-out village upon their return. Those who elected to remain in their homes could attempt to minimize their losses

³⁹¹ Happe, I: 455r-455v.

³⁹² This categorization system for responses to violence is fairly standard, see Peter Wilson, *The Thirty Years’ War: Europe’s Tragedy* (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 2009), 833-839; John Theibault, *German Villages in Crisis: Rural Life in Hesse-Kassel and the Thirty Years’ War, 1580-1720* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, 1995), 142-143; Otto Ulbricht, “The Experience of Violence during the Thirty Years War: A Look at the Civilian Victims,” in *Power Violence and Mass Death in Pre-Modern and Modern Times*, eds. Joseph Canning, Hartmut Lehmann, and Jay Winter (Burlington, VT: 2004), 101; and Julius R. Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe, 1500-1800* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 56-60. However, instead of calling these actions “responses” I have classified them as resistance. Rather than seeing violence as the only form of civilian resistance, I am suggesting that all three responses can be understood as forms of resistance.

through various negotiation tactics including formal agreements like *salva guardias*, worked out by local officials, or face-to-face bargaining with raiding soldiers, more commonly practiced by ordinary villagers.³⁹³ Such encounters might result in the torture and murder of peasants who appeared to be hiding valuables from the raiders.³⁹⁴ In many cases, civilians decided to resist these incursions by attacking soldiers. They ambushed small groups of soldiers, sallied out of their homes to defend their livestock, and formed militia bands known as *Ausschüsse* to defend their territory. Though they carried great risk, these resistance strategies reveal an attempt to control the events in civilians' lives and not simply allow the tides of war to destroy them. Far from being passive victims of a conflict too immense to envision, the civilians depicted in Happe's chronicle demonstrated agency and action in the face of upheaval and war.

For the purposes of this study, agency will be defined as: the ability of an individual to affect change in his circumstances or situation. Much of the debate over agency and structure among Thirty Years' War historians has focused on issues of broad causality. When seeking to determine the reasons why the war began or continued, scholars employ a variety of explanatory models which rely on structural explanations such as economics or environment, or they focus on the motives and justifications found in official documentation.³⁹⁵ Agency is only recently being acknowledged in the realm of the commoner and the civilian. Marxist historians have sought to bridge the gap between structural and agency causes but have left the latter in the realm of the elite, decision

³⁹³ *Salva guardias* were promises of protection and good behavior in exchange for regular payments of goods and money.

³⁹⁴ Ulbricht, 103-104.

³⁹⁵ Peter Wilson, "The Causes of the Thirty Years War, 1618-1648," in *English Historical Review* CXXIII, No. 502 (June, 2008): 554-586.

makers.³⁹⁶ There is precious little in the historiography of early modern Germany that seeks to address the realities of agency on the part of commoners or, as Wayne te Brake labels them, “ordinary people.”³⁹⁷ To be sure, there are more robust discussions among historians of early modern England and France, the latter pioneered by Natalie Zemon Davis.³⁹⁸ In many ways, historians are willing to accept that everyone has agency, but seem less interested in discovering how the average person in central Europe wielded that agency. This line of inquiry is made more complex by the destabilizing effects of war upon early modern society.

With the disruption of normal economic and social structures during the war, many civilians sought to take advantage of the situation. While the agency most evident in Happe’s work is resistance of soldiers, it is instructive to take a moment to address other instances in which the war provided opportunities for ordinary folk to act. One obvious arena for civilian action was economics. As described earlier, the war had a damaging effect on many sectors of the local and regional economies. Some economic sectors benefitted from the war however. Arms manufacturing, and any other business which contributed to the supply and outfitting of armies would have benefitted from the establishment of new, large armies. As an extension of this economic sector, the merchants who functioned as middle men between the manufacturing centers and the traveling armies also saw the war as an opportunity to do business.³⁹⁹ Huge armies

³⁹⁶ Ibid., 574.

³⁹⁷ Wayne te Brake, *Shaping History: Ordinary People in Early Modern Politics, 1500-1700* (London: University of California Press, 1998).

³⁹⁸ Natalie Zemon Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern Europe* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1965).

³⁹⁹ This group is described in greater detail in Chapter Three. See also, Wilson, *Tragedy*, 798-801. Wilson argues that those who participated in sectors of the economy which saw an increase in business, like arms production, could rarely be called “war profiteers”. Instead, he writes, “Most producers tried to remain on good terms with all parties, not just for profits but to avoid reprisals”; Ibid., 800. This argument has bearing

required thousands of support personnel like wagon drivers and muleteers as demonstrated by Perjés' study described in Chapter Three.⁴⁰⁰ Not all attempts to profit from war were as innocuous as manufacturing or trading goods. The currency debasement and resulting crisis of 1619-1623 known as the "Kipper and Wipper" hyperinflation, though a result of government policies, was largely conducted by wealth civilian currency consortiums.⁴⁰¹ These men proceeded to mint bad coins and turn large profits while causing massive price increases on basic goods and practically destroying the Imperial economy.⁴⁰² One author place inflation alongside famine, disease, and the sword as one of the punishments from God, "we were hard hit this year by God's imposition of his four retributions, war, inflation, hunger and plague."⁴⁰³ Local mints began sprouting up around the Empire causing further monetary chaos. When several opened in Clingen, Arnstadt, and Keula in 1621, Happe wrote that it "was a very miserable trade" which ruined the local money and caused the people "great distress."⁴⁰⁴

While there were many ways civilians could turn the war to their advantage, some chose to capitalize on the disruption of social norms to profit through crime or undo political influence. In the former case, constant warfare naturally affected the ability of local governments to police their territories. Happe recorded several instances of murder in which the criminal was not a soldier, but instead a civilian. In one incident a man was

on a discussion of the morality of war profiteering, but does not mean that these merchants and tradesmen were without agency in their economic dealings. More scholarship is needed on this subject.

⁴⁰⁰ While Perjés' study was written to demonstrate the logistical impracticality of hiring tens of thousands carts and drivers, armies did employ many such civilians over the course of the war, just not on the scale Perjés describes.

⁴⁰¹ One such consortium, headed by the prominent Bohemian banker Hans de Witte and a Prague-based merchant named Jakob Bassevi, partnered with Wallenstein in 1622 to engage in significant coin debasement under a commission from the government. See Mortimer, *Wallenstein*, 38-41.

⁴⁰² Wilson, *Tragedy*, 795-798. The price of bread in Franconia rose 700% in four years.

⁴⁰³ Mortimer, *Eyewitness*, 177.

⁴⁰⁴ Happe, I: 28v-30r.

found dead in the woods, killed by a blow to his neck. From the passage it is clear that Happe is frustrated at the inability of the local legal system to do anything about it, lamenting “only God knows who did it”.⁴⁰⁵ Crimes like murder or highway robbery are areas where the civilian/soldier distinction becomes blurred for historians. Eyewitnesses and victims like Happe were often unable to distinguish between soldiers and civilian criminals.⁴⁰⁶ Since desertion was a common enough practice in early modern warfare, such unaffiliated soldiers often turned to highway robbery as a preferable alternative to the risks of continued military service. Grimmelshausen provides a literary example of this practice when he describes the actions of his title character, Simplicissimus, and the villainous Oliver during one of their periods away from the ranks of an army. The two soldiers-turned-vagabonds waited in a church, attacked a passing carriage, murdered the guard and driver, and stole all the valuables.⁴⁰⁷ This sort activity, described in a colorful, picaresque style in *Simplicissimus*, was not uncommon during the war as people from all walks of life sought to improve their lot or simply survive the chaos. Increasingly, historians are engaging in microhistorical studies of early modern communities to address the agency of “ordinary people”.⁴⁰⁸ What is lacking is a greater emphasis on assessing agency in the context of seventeenth century war. Given the paucity of discussion on this

⁴⁰⁵ Happe, I: 292v.

⁴⁰⁶ While majority of thefts and murders recorded in the chronicle are attributed to soldiers, Happe sometimes refers to the villains as generic “thieves” leaving their affiliation unclear; eg. Happe, I: 380r.

⁴⁰⁷ Grimmelshausen, 359-361. Earlier, Simplicissimus learned to steal during his time with a band of Croats and, leaving their company, he took to living alone and stealing from whomever he came upon; *Ibid.*, 141-144.

⁴⁰⁸ Prominent among these are Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992) and Natalie Zemon Davis, *Return of Martin Guerre* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984). For central Europe, focusing predominantly after the Thirty Years’ War, see William Hagen, *Ordinary Prussians* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002) and David Sabean, *Power in the Blood* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984).

topic as it pertains to the central European context, it is necessary to look for parallel cases in other regions.

Historians of the English Civil War have debated the nature of power structures and civilian agency for a couple decades, particularly in light of James C. Scott's book, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance* in which he argues that surface-level deference to authority masked a "hidden transcript of popular resistance."⁴⁰⁹ No amount of domination by elites could crush the resistance of the commoners of England. However, Andy Wood contends, by applying the concept too broadly, historians risk devaluing the very real fact of power relations.⁴¹⁰ In the cases of the English Civil War and the Thirty Years' War, the power inequality between the soldiers and civilians was very real, and certainly favorable to the mercenary armies. Wood argues that the recent historiographic emphasis on agency in the context of the English Civil War is both valuable and overdone. In its place, he demonstrates the potential of "socio-political structures which often—although not always—limited that agency."⁴¹¹ In this way, Wood walks a middle path between those of an earlier era that might seek to reject all outright agency for the subjugated, and those who would argue for an almost unfettered agency. Less pessimistically, R. B. Goheen argues that the extensive literature concerning the agency of even the most oppressed peoples, even chattel slaves, supports the premise that even at its most domineering moments, the English monarchy could not destroy the political agency of the peasants.⁴¹²

⁴⁰⁹ Andy Wood, "Subordination, Solidarity and the Limits of Popular Agency in a Yorkshire Valley c. 1596-1615," in *Past & Present* no. 193 (November, 2006): 42.

⁴¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 43-44.

⁴¹¹ Wood, "Subordination," 45.

⁴¹² R. B. Goheen, "Peasant Politics? Village Community and the Crown in Fifteenth-Century England," in *The American Historical Review* 96, no. 1 (February, 1991): 62. There is an extensive literature on slave resistance in the Americas, see Eugene D. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New

While the English Civil War and the Thirty Years' War were profoundly different conflicts in many ways, the English conflict's roughly contemporary occurrence and violent treatment of civilians makes it an instructive comparison.⁴¹³ With armies roaming the countryside, violence and extortion were commonplace. Historians have assessed the diversity of allegiances which complicated the English landscape, but many civilians remained neutral. As the violence began to affect these unaffiliated populations, they transformed from "a nation full of fearful neutrals, undecided which way to turn, [into] a nation full of embittered, desperate neutrals, seeking first to hide from the war, and then, driven from their hiding places, determined to stand and fight the implications of the war."⁴¹⁴ A substantial portion of the population fought to protect themselves from the abuses of the warring parties. During the Thirty Years' War, this determination to defend family and property was strikingly similar. Morrill argues that localism and a desire to return to peace and traditional systems of governance motivated communities to maintain neutrality and view all soldiers as "invaders"⁴¹⁵ In particular, he noted the actions of the Clubmen—civilians who banded together to maintain the peace and security of their local regions in the face of military incursion and depredation. In his assessment, "fear drove some men into royalism; it drove far more into neutralism."⁴¹⁶ Later historical engagement with these issues has revealed that civilian reactions to the war were

York: Pantheon Books, 1974); Stephanie M. H. Camp, *Closer to Freedom: Enslaved Women and Everyday Resistance in the Plantation South* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2004); John Hope Franklin and Loren Schwening, *Runaway Slaves: Rebels on the Plantation* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999). For the broader Atlantic World see John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

⁴¹³ The English Civil War was an internal struggle which lacked the level of "willful destruction of civilian life and property" which characterized the Thirty Years War, but civilians were still profoundly impacted by the conflict. John Morrill, *Revolt in the Provinces: The People of England and the Tragedies of War, 1630-1648* (New York: Addison Wesley Longman, 1999), 193.

⁴¹⁴ Morrill, 123.

⁴¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 153.

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 54.

products of a complex blend of fiercely localist neutralism, religiously influenced partisanship, the practical military considerations, and a strong desire for peace.⁴¹⁷ Mark Stoye contends that, for the people of England during the Civil War, “popular allegiance was a fixed, not a constantly shifting, condition. [. . .] Those communities which were badly split tended to be those which contained more than one parish. [. . .] This again suggests that religion was the prime determinant of wartime allegiance.”⁴¹⁸

This extensive look at popular agency in the English case is pertinent as it sheds some light on the potential issues involved in mainland Europe at this time. It is important to acknowledge differences between the societies and power structures of seventeenth century England and the Holy Roman Empire. The situation in England was charged with local and national debates over the rights of subjects and the robust Parliamentary tradition of that country. Englishmen choosing between Parliament and crown faced a very different situation than the German civilians during the Thirty Years’ War, who were exploited for resources by armies in an international conflict. These differences aside, the Clubmen raise two important themes to consider in the context of the Thirty Years’ War. First, they exercised a level of organized resistance which has no parallel in the German context. However, as Stoye and others have demonstrated, the Clubmen were not a monolithic organization. Instead they were diversely aligned and regionally variable movement which demonstrated the capabilities of local, popular resistance to military incursion. Second, Stoye’s recognition of religious influence on

⁴¹⁷ While Morrill argues that allegiances shifted as different forces impacted a region, David Underdown contends that groups like the Clubmen also based their shifting loyalties on the internal composition of their community, with factors like religion playing a prominent role; see David Underdown, *Revel, Riot, and Rebellion: Popular Politics and Culture in England, 1603-1660* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985) and Underdown, “The Chalk and the Cheese: Contrasts among the English Clubmen,” in *Past & Present*, no. 85 (November, 1979): 25-48.

⁴¹⁸ Mark Stoye, *Loyalty and Locality: Popular Allegiance in Devon During the English Civil War* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1994), 255.

loyalty has parallels with Happe's experience during the Thirty Years' War. As described in chapter three, Happe's loyalties appear to have been both local and religious. As the war progressed and his co-religionists in the Swedish army committed atrocities to the people of his province, Happe's perspective shifted to a more neutral one.⁴¹⁹ He never abandoned his desire for a peace which would ensure Protestant worship and he always decried the ravages of war, but any abstract loyalty to the cause of a Protestant prince was tempered by the day-to-day resistance to soldiers of all creeds. The Clubmen were more organized than popular forces in the Holy Roman Empire, but they parallel the local willingness to resist military outsiders and the complexities of religious and political allegiances during seventeenth century conflict.

In the German context, historians have widely acknowledged the potential for group resistance at moments of extreme passion. The German Peasants' War of the 1520s is a stirring example of one such occasion. In Thuringia, this uprising had a particularly diffuse and local appearance, but was also deeply ideologically and emotionally charged under the influence of Thomas Müntzer.⁴²⁰ While the causes, motivations, and character of the uprising have all been debated by historians, violent peasant action, particularly the uncoordinated version seen in Thuringian theater of the rebellion, did not end with the defeat of the peasants in 1526. Indeed, the seventeenth century was filled peasant uprisings and disturbances.⁴²¹ Generally, however, this active peasantry is viewed as the exception, not the rule, particularly in the English-language historiography of the Thirty

⁴¹⁹ This shift in perspective is addressed in Chapter Four.

⁴²⁰ Tom Scott and Bob Scribner, eds. *The German Peasants' War: A History in Documents* (London: Humanities Press International, 1991), 36-44.

⁴²¹ For more on the global reach of seventeenth century popular unrest, see Roland Mousnier, *Peasant Uprisings in Seventeenth-Century France, Russia, and China*, trans. Brian Pearce (New York and Evanston: Harber & Row, 1970).

Years' War. German authors have been more willing to study the subject in the last several decades. Peter Blickle boldly declared in 1980 that "The history of Germany during the later Middle Ages and the early modern era cannot be correctly understood, as long as the common man [. . .] is not seen as that history's principal subject."⁴²² Blickle, took issue with the teleological approach of historians in the vein of Leopold von Ranke who sought to understand German history through the lens of the evolution of the modern nation-state. Blickle argued that the German-speaking peoples of central Europe were not obedient and docile.⁴²³ While some of the impetus for this assessment stems from a Marxist class conflict paradigm, Blickle rightly notes the numerous peasant revolts in the Holy Roman Empire during the early modern era, conducted for a variety of reasons, demonstrate the determination of the peasant populations to risk great harm to achieve their ends.⁴²⁴ While Blickle was not attempting to assess resistance efforts by civilians during times of war, his study reveals the historical context for these actions. In his conclusion, he boldly proclaims, "Historically, subjects in Germany were not just faceless peasants, pawns without strategic worth whom the lords pushed about on the chessboard. On the contrary, the subjects were actors, black playing against white."⁴²⁵ Blickle rightly calls attention to the potential of peasant agency. More recently, scholars have sought to more thoroughly assess the actions of civilians during the war.

⁴²² Peter Blickle, *Obedient Germans? A Rebuttal: A New View of German History*, trans. Thomas A. Brady, Jr. (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1997), 101. In this slim volume, Blickle seeks to tackle the assumption that Germans have traditionally been passive and obedient subjects. By briefly assessing the political and historical antecedents to the modern era, Blickle reveals a very different picture of German subjects.

⁴²³ *Ibid.*, x.

⁴²⁴ *Ibid.*, 62-65. He cites and expands upon Chalmers Johnson's distinction between revolt/rebellion — "a spontaneous, violent act of ordinary people who reject existing social conditions" — and revolutions which "aim to reshape a corrupt society" in line with an ideology.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, 97.

While there is limited discussion of civilian agency in German-language historiography of the war and even less in English, what has been written is an important part of a growing discussion of the concept.⁴²⁶ Peter Wilson notes that the term is most often bandied about in relation to broader questions concerning the causes of the war.⁴²⁷ But “agency” should not be left only to rulers of empires. Otto Ulbricht rightfully claims the term for ordinary civilians when he assesses the experiences of violence during the war.⁴²⁸ He acknowledges that the agency/structures dichotomy that Wilson describes is at work at the level of local interaction between soldier and civilian. The key structural force in influencing the outcome of a particular encounter is the “uneven power relationship” commonly in favor of the army.⁴²⁹ This naturally dominates the average encounter and explains many civilian actions. Ulbricht divides the strategies of civilians into three types: flight, confrontation, and violent resistance.⁴³⁰ He nuances confrontation by exploring several methods which villagers used to minimize the impact of a band of soldiers bent on plunder. Villagers hid, lied about their possessions, withstood torture, offered small amounts of money or property hoping their offer would prove sufficient to buy off the raiders, and often appealed to local authorities for protection from burdensome demands.⁴³¹ This tripartite division of response builds upon Julius Ruff’s earlier categorization of civilian behavior. Ruff described flight and resistance but did not address confrontation as a viable survival strategy.⁴³² Wilson offers division similar to

⁴²⁶ Several of the German-language historians who engage in this discussion include Hans Medick, Benigna von Krusenstjern, and Johannes Burckhardt. Medick and Otto Ulbricht frequently write in English, helping to propel this line of inquiry in the English-speaking community.

⁴²⁷ Wilson, “Causes”, 554-555.

⁴²⁸ Ulbricht, 100.

⁴²⁹ *Ibid.*, 100.

⁴³⁰ *Ibid.*, 101.

⁴³¹ *Ibid.*, 101-107.

⁴³² Ruff, 57-58.

Ulbricht's but changes confrontation to negotiation, more accurately reflecting the nature of the interaction.⁴³³

All three responses to violence were forms of resistance; violence was simply the most overt. Negotiation and flight were more subtle means to reduce the impact of threats and violence by soldiers. Each will be discussed in turn, both generally and in the specific context of Happe's chronicle. As mentioned earlier, agency is the ability of an individual to affect change in his circumstances or situation; even running away served to reduce damage to persons and vital property as well as prevent necessary and desired goods from falling into the hands of raiding soldiers. Ulbricht offers a very thorough assessment of the relative dangers and benefits of each strategy and concludes that "it becomes obvious that it would be wrong to claim that the experience of the civilians was always that of down-and-out losers."⁴³⁴ In many cases civilians were able to escape with few losses or even reclaim stolen property. Even when the material impact of these actions remained modest, there is no doubt that the determination of civilians across the Empire to exert some level of agency and not passively acquiesce to the demands of every soldier had an impact on the perspectives of soldiers and influenced their actions to some degree.⁴³⁵

In the case of Volkmar Happe and the inhabitants of Thuringia, the record of the violence perpetrated against them is punctuated by numerous moments of resistance. While Happe certainly documents the many injustices which he and his neighbors experienced when acquiescence appears to have been the standard response, the chronicle

⁴³³ Wilson, *Tragedy*, 833. Theibault notes that direct negotiation with military commanders was outside the control of peasants and thus left them with only the ability to petition and complain; Theibault, *Villages*, 142.

⁴³⁴ Ulbricht, 110.

⁴³⁵ In some cases the results were far from helpful for civilians. In one Swedish account of the war, Bavarian peasants behaved so viciously toward soldiers that they "provoked such bitterness on the Swedish side toward the Bavarian peasants, that they [the soldiers] returned and took their revenge most grimly with fire and sword"; Wilson, *Sourcebook*, 255.

demonstrates the willingness of civilians to utilize the three types of resistance in the hope that they might stave off death and ruin. Just as the forms of violence differed day by day, so too did the response. Flight frequently meant retreating to the nearby a walled town or castle like Erfurt or Sondershausen, but it was not always possible to run away from soldiers who were mounted, controlled the surrounding countryside, or surprised a village in the night. Neither could villagers simple flee a force stationed in garrison, quartered in civilians' homes, demanding contributions. In these instances negotiation could prove a more meaningful response. Negotiation was either conducted by elites or their agents, like Happe, often in response to popular complaint, or face-to-face by individuals trying to avoid total financial ruin. Lastly, violence took on many forms, from reactionary sorties upon thieving horsemen to staged ambushes and once even an attack upon the wife and child of a soldier. Just as the actions of soldiers afflicted all members of society, so too did the violent resistance of civilians. Just as Happe felt the effects of the violence as his neighbors and family were harmed by the war, so too did Happe witness and participate in these forms of resistance.

Flight served as the most obvious response to the news of an invading army. When soldiers began to march into northern Thuringia in June of 1632, Happe moved his wife and children from Ebeleben to the relatively safer environs of the small, walled town of Greussen. This was a short-term relocation, meant simply to avoid the immediate threat. Others chose to permanently abandon their homes and emigrate to less traumatized lands. This migration within the Empire helps explain some of the massive demographic impact of the war in regions like Thuringia which experienced more than fifty percent population loss over the course of the conflict according to some

estimates.⁴³⁶ Since the war had an uneven impact as armies shifted theaters, a few regions experienced relative peace and even prosperity at different phases of the war.⁴³⁷ If lucky, some civilians could find a home there and avoid deadly confrontations with soldiers. Flight, both short-and long-term, offered villagers an opportunity to potentially minimize direct contact with soldiers and thus avoid torture, rape, and death, but such safety in flight was often illusory.

As natural as flight might appear when faced with an invading force, it carried great risks. In the case of short-term flight, temporary evacuation of a home and farm left those properties even more vulnerable to destruction.⁴³⁸ Civilians could often find refuge in nearby walled towns but many lived too far from such strong places and were forced to seek shelter in nearby forests, mountains, or swamps.⁴³⁹ These makeshift hiding places were vulnerable to the elements and not particularly safe. One town official from Württemberg described the terrible experience of fleeing the town of Calw in 1634. He, with 200 other refugees, primarily women and children, roamed the countryside. “Like ants we scurried over hills and rocks” in search of shelter and protection from the Imperial soldiers.⁴⁴⁰ They were turned aside by one town and forced to hide in barns and scattered across the woodlands, pursued by hired huntsmen “who knew the forests to

⁴³⁶ Anja V. Hartmann, “Identities and mentalities in the Thirty Years’ War,” in *War, Peace and World Orders in European History* ed. Anja V. Hartmann and Beatrice Heuser (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 175. For further discussions of demographic debates, see Theibault, “The Demography of the Thirty years War Re-revisited: Günther Franz and his Critics,” in *German History* 15, no. 1 (1997): 1-21. Also see, Wilson, *Tragedy*, 786-789; Quentin Outram, “The Demographic Impact of Early Modern Warfare,” in *Social Science History* 26, no. 2 (Summer, 2002): 245-272; and Geoffrey Parker ed., *The Thirty Years’ War*, 2nd ed., (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 178-179.

⁴³⁷ One such region the port city of Hamburg which engaged in a brisk trade throughout the war; Parker, *Thirty*, 179.

⁴³⁸ See Theibault, *Villages*, 145; Ruff, 58; and Ulbricht, 102.

⁴³⁹ Wilson, *Tragedy*, 835; Ulbricht, 101.

⁴⁴⁰ Andrea, 80-83 as translated and cited in Gerhard Benecke, *Germany in the Thirty Years War* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1979), 85-87.

track us down with their dogs.”⁴⁴¹ Civilians who did make it into walled cities faced overcrowding and disease.⁴⁴² The threat of plague, always present during the war, intensified when peasants sought long-term refuge in over-crowded shelters.⁴⁴³ Ulbricht contends that the risk of disease was often a powerful factor in persuading civilians to return home and brave the dangers in their native region.⁴⁴⁴ A powerful yearning for home featured in the writings of many refugees weighing the risks of return.⁴⁴⁵ Finally many civilians had to consider the impact of departure on livelihood and life. Constant short-term flight disrupted daily life and threatened agricultural production. Long-term flight could jeopardize the businesses and professions of many civilians and do even greater damage to agriculture.⁴⁴⁶ In the face of these considerations, flight was not a simple decision.

When civilians were inclined to evacuate in the face of oncoming forces, they required some degree of forewarning. In some cases, as described by Hans Heberle’s *Zeytregister*, civil authorities could warn people to place their belongings in cities like Ulm and take refuge.⁴⁴⁷ This level of advanced notice was the exception rather than the rule. Since so many of the day to day clashes between soldiers and civilians were limited to small parties of raiders, villagers had to rely on their own system of lookouts to alert

⁴⁴¹ Ibid. His ten year old son died on the road from hunger and exposure.

⁴⁴² Wilson, *Tragedy*, 835-836; Ulbricht, 102. Many cities were wary of accepting large numbers of villagers and would attempt to exclude the poorest members of these communities who would be unable to support themselves and thus strain local welfare systems.

⁴⁴³ Outram, 252-253.

⁴⁴⁴ Ulbricht, 102-103.

⁴⁴⁵ Eventually the man from Calw received word that it was safe to return home, only to find his “beloved town of Calw in ashes and rubble.” Benecke, *Germany*, 87.

⁴⁴⁶ Wilson, *Tragedy*, 835.

⁴⁴⁷ Tryntje Helfferich ed. and trans., *The Thirty Years War: A Documentary History*, “Hans Heberle’s *Zeytregister*” (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2009), 308.

the community of danger.⁴⁴⁸ These frequently insufficient, makeshift measures left many communities with few opportunities to flee. In the instances when warning reached a community early, entire villages could be evacuated to nearby cities and carry with them everything of value. An official in Franconia wrote a letter to his employer complaining that “None of your subjects are here; they have all gone to Nuremberg, Schwabach and Lichtenau with every bit of their possessions down to goods worth scarcely a kreuzer.”⁴⁴⁹ This total abandonment of a village can also be seen in Happe’s chronicle, but both times are in the context of repeated looting during a small period of time. In those instances, the local population decided that there was little chance the armies would leave them alone and so they moved with everything they could carry.⁴⁵⁰

While Happe does not provide numerous instances of entire villages decamping, he recorded his personal experiences with flight on multiple occasions. On June 18, 1632, Happe reacted to the news that the Imperial Field Marshall Pappenheim’s forces were pillaging nearby areas and moved his wife and children to the walled town of Greussen.⁴⁵¹ As the enemy forces drew closer, Happe rode with great haste to Greussen and, together with his wife, children, and many other family and neighbors, fled again to Arnstadt. This departure from Greussen was only three days after he sent his family there for safety.⁴⁵² No place was truly safe and the process was, in Happe’s words, “a miserable flight.”⁴⁵³ In October, Happe and his family again had to flee Pappenheim’s forces to the larger and ostensibly safer city of Erfurt.⁴⁵⁴ Imperial soldiers raped and pillaged the

⁴⁴⁸ Ulbricht, 101; Ruff, 57.

⁴⁴⁹ Parker, *Thirty*, 191.

⁴⁵⁰ Happe, I: 373v.

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.*, I: 234v.

⁴⁵² *Ibid.*, I: 236v.

⁴⁵³ *Ibid.*, I: 236v.

⁴⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, I: 282r.

people who remained in Greussen following Happe's withdrawal and left it in such a state that Happe described Greussen as a "dwelling of dragons."⁴⁵⁵ For many, this extended period of unrest left them with nowhere to turn for safety.⁴⁵⁶

Accounts of the war are filled with stories of villagers fleeing before the oncoming armies. Wilson, Ulbricht, and Ruff all categorize flight as a type of response to violence but fall short of viewing it as a form of resistance. How should historians understand what, at face value, appears to be little more than survival instinct akin to the predator and prey dynamic among animals? At a very basic level, villagers denied their oppressors resources by running away. Certainly, there were moments when civilians escaped with only the clothes on their backs, but more frequently they were able to hide or carry away their most precious belongings. Long-term evacuations left occupying forces with a reduced labor force and subsequently lower agricultural yields. Short-term departures reduced plunder and prevented armies from maximizing their plunder in monies and livestock. In a sense, flight functioned as a form of resource war which soldiers and civilians waged for the duration of the conflict. It was a subtler form of war than that conducted between great armies for the world to see.

Soldiers frequently prevailed in this local battle for control of vital resources, but civilians never ceased to hide or carry away portable resources when possible. In the resource war, livestock—horses are stolen and recaptured with great frequency in Happe—currency, grain, and even the villagers themselves were important to the war

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid., I: 285v.

⁴⁵⁶ By this point in the war, the Imperial and Catholic League forces under Pappenheim had ravaged much of Thuringia and a month later would engage in the important battle of Lützen in the neighboring region of Saxony. Lützen resulted in the deaths of both Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden and general Pappenheim which had a profound impact on the course of the conflict and, in the case of the Swedish forces, the behavior of the troops toward civilian populations. Never well-behaved, the king's death removed a powerful impediment to their depredations.

effort and to the maintenance of civilian life. Even if the best a farmer could do was escape to a neighboring province with his wife and children, he participated in a reduction in agricultural output and taxable property thus diminishing the effectiveness of the contribution and spoils systems which fed, and largely “paid,” the army. Flight-as-resistance is a fundamental paradigm in reconstructing the nature of resistance. The key question is this: Can historians appropriately label this as resistance if the actors (in this case, local villagers) were not consciously waging this war? Scott, in his pioneering work on the resistance strategies of peasants, argues that expecting all resistance activities to be charged with sweeping ideological motivation ignores a critical aspect of local, daily, defiance. Scott’s definition of resistance highlights the importance of intentions, that is the intent to “mitigate or deny claims” of the powerful, while noting the inherent difficulties with assessing the complex intentions of historical groups.⁴⁵⁷ He elaborates on this discussion by effectively explaining that there is no reason to limit the term “resistance” to organized groups of ideologically inspired revolutionaries. Instead it is justifiably applied to those whose motives are inextricably bound with the practical concerns of survival, and who chose to deny resources to powerful parties who would take them. Scott argues that for scholars “to ignore the self-interested element in peasant resistance is to ignore the determinate context [. . .] of peasant politics. It is precisely the fusion of self-interest and resistance that is the vital force animating the resistance of peasants [. . .]. When a peasant hides part of his crop to avoid paying taxes, he is both

⁴⁵⁷ Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (Bethany, CT: Yale University Press, 1985) 290-303. He argues that “an understandable desire on the part of the peasant household to survive—to ensure its physical safety, to ensure its food supply, to ensure its necessary cash income—to identify the source of its resistance to the claims of press gangs, tax collectors, landlords, and employers.”

filling his stomach and depriving the state of grain.”⁴⁵⁸ Happe’s chronicle does not claim that the average peasant was aware of the broader effects of such actions. But such awareness is not essential. These daily efforts to maintain control of resources, in the face of a potentially deadly zero-sum game between soldiers and civilians, stand as examples of the various methods of resistance open to ordinary Germans.

Even if the average civilian had no conception of the strategic ramifications for a military commander if an entire village decamped and carrying off portable property in the face of oncoming troops, it did not change the impact. Civilian and military elites were aware of the effect of this behavior.⁴⁵⁹ Furthermore, there can be little doubt that civilians were painfully aware of the lengths soldiers would go to extract resources from local populations. In that sense, then, it is certainly safe to say they knew that they were depriving soldiers of plunder and armies of resources. Though many may have lacked the perspective to appreciate the full impact of their collective action, their decisions to deprive the enemy of resources were made with the knowledge that they possessed something the soldiers desired and, in many cases, needed—in a battle for resources, most soldiers were the enemy. While it may not have been immediately apparent to civilians that soldiers from every army could pose a dire threat, Happe’s chronicle demonstrates how effective the military could be in persuading people of that fact. Even the most isolated of villagers understood, after repeated raids, that soldiers desired property; by hiding it or fleeing with it, civilians deprived their oppressors of those resources. It is reasonable to conclude that flight, inspired as it was by impulses of self-preservation and fear, knowingly functioned as a form of resistance.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid., 294.

⁴⁵⁹ Ulbricht, 110; Blickle, 97.

Accurate information flow was vital for civilians to effectively wage the resource war. Flight required time and forewarning, which was often not available. Despite efforts by villagers to post look-outs and create early warning systems, in many instances there was no opportunity to escape.⁴⁶⁰ The number of violent encounters between soldiers and civilians in Happe's chronicle attest to this fact. Between the risks presented by running away and the frequency of surprise attacks, villagers had to choose between other resistance strategies and acquiesce. As Happe demonstrates, many civilians chose the former option.

Negotiation as a means of resistance had a complex composition during the Thirty Years' War. In order to more clearly assess the nature of civilian response, it is helpful to consider the types of civilians involved in negotiation. Broadly, one can divide civilians into two basic categories—villagers/townfolk and elites/administrators—the latter group was comprised of those individuals who had civil authority over a region or city and thus were in a position to negotiate with military elites. In general, there were two kinds of scenarios which might lead to negotiation: the formal demands for money, supplies, and shelter known as contributions and quartering, and the everyday attempts to extort plunder from locals. These situations were handled differently by the two types of civilians. In the first case, Theibault rightly notes that the power dynamics of quartering and contributions kept negotiations primarily between elites in the army and civilian rulers. However, the ordinary villagers who appear so frequently in Happe's chronicle were not without negotiation options when it came to dealing with the contribution system. Civil authorities sought to reduce contributions by bargaining with military commanders while ordinary villagers sought to reduce violence and financial loss

⁴⁶⁰ Theibault, *Villages*, 143.

through a ritual of complaint to civil authorities. In the second case, everyday extortion primarily affected the villagers. When not fleeing or fighting, they tended to seek a compromise between the soldiers' desire to take everything and the peasants' desire to give nothing. Because this form of demand came from the lower ranks of soldiers, elite civilians rarely had to respond to such attacks, except as private individuals who were not exempt from the robbery and violence which afflicted many of the inhabitants of Thuringia during the war.

Generally, negotiation existed as a response to demands for resources. In the case of the contribution system, military commanders placed taxation demands on territories and the civil authorities sought to fulfill those demands in exchange for *salva guardias*. If the military demanded too much, rulers attempted to negotiate to reduce that burden.⁴⁶¹ Happe was personally involved in one such negotiation in 1639. He made several trips to Erfurt to discuss the contribution demands of the newly installed Swedish garrison. The people had been "violently vexed" by the exactions and Happe, with several counselors from the neighboring region, went to Erfurt to have a joint negotiation with the garrison commander.⁴⁶² The people were being plundered when they could not pay, but a month of negotiations on behalf of the Count accomplished nothing.⁴⁶³ Letters and face-to-face wrangling did not prevent the Swedish garrison from demanding and confiscating raw materials and food. The army further demanded money to raise new recruits and space to train and house them.⁴⁶⁴ Happe arrived in Erfurt on October 4 to convince the garrison commander to lay aside his demands. Instead, the commander "threatened us with

⁴⁶¹ Wilson, *Tragedy*, 833-835.

⁴⁶² Happe, II: 282r-288v.

⁴⁶³ *Ibid.*, II: 285v-286r.

⁴⁶⁴ *Werbegeld, Musterplatz* and *Laufplatz* respectively. *Ibid.*, II: 286v.

capture, fire, and sword and arrested us.”⁴⁶⁵ Happe was released a few days later and allowed to return home, his negotiations failing to reduce the demands of the Swedish forces. His unsuccessful attempt at negotiation demonstrates both the great power-inequality between the civilians and soldiers and the potential dangers of negotiation.

Situations where Happe engaged in negotiations are rare in the chronicle; instead Happe’s focuses on the burden of contributions and the dangers of failed payment. One such instance occurred in 1636. “On February 21, the Swedes burned down a village [. . .] named Waltersdorf because it could not ransom itself in accordance with their demands.”⁴⁶⁶ Happe proceeds to explain that the Swedish commander in the nearby town of Weissensee, having demanded a large payment from the surrounding villages, felt justified in plundering and burning several villages when his demands were not met. Following the razing of Waltersdorf, Happe sent an envoy to the Imperial city of Nordhausen to appeal to the military authorities. Meanwhile, the Swedes proceeded to attack and fire another village, Kannawurf, “but thank God not more than three homes were burned.”⁴⁶⁷ What followed was one of the most horrific and lengthy narrations of arson, torture, murder, and theft that Happe records. For fifteen pages he describes a series of attacks upon the towns and villages of Thuringia.⁴⁶⁸ A castle in Clingen, just ten miles from Sondershausen, was ransacked, its female occupants brutally raped.⁴⁶⁹ People were tortured in the most appalling ways, several women from Greussen were burned with sulfur dioxide and then forced to partake of the Swedish Drink.⁴⁷⁰ All this took place

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid., II: 288r.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid., I: 453v.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid., I:454r.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid., I: 453v-460v.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid., I: 457v-458r.

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid., I: 457r-457v. This particular torture gained great notoriety during the war. It involved the forced consumption of liquid sewage followed by induced vomiting. This process was repeated until the victim

over just a ten-day period; his appeal to Nordhausen appears to have been left unanswered. The only silver lining in this litany of woes was on the night of February 28 when the Imperial army made a night raid upon the Swedish “parasites,” killing twenty four and capturing many more; these Happe declared would “very soon have to receive their just reward.”⁴⁷¹ It is not surprising that by 1636 Happe’s favorable view of the Protestant Swedes had chilled considerably.⁴⁷²

Unfortunately, Happe does not provide much insight into daily negotiation. His chronicle, so meticulous in recording the effects of violence upon the population, is mute when addressing the face-to-face negotiation between soldier and civilian. This is not surprising as so many of his stories are second-hand, focusing upon outcomes rather than process. He appears more concerned with who ended up dying in an encounter with troops than how the victim minimized the amount of money that was stolen. His silence may also be a product of his social position. As a tax official and intermediary between the people and their lord, he was probably regularly confronted by villagers demanding a reduction in the tax burden. It would not be very effective for a farmer to petition for a reduction in the burden of the contribution system and then explain how he was able to preserve half his valuables by negotiating with the last band of soldiers who came through town.⁴⁷³ While his official capacity may have hampered his view of daily negotiation, it probably increased the frequency of references to the burden of contributions. He understood, better than many, how financially damaging these demands

revealed the location of hidden valuables.

⁴⁷¹ Ibid., I: 458r-458v.

⁴⁷² Happe is further distressed in this instance because he notes that many of the villains are fellow Germans under Swedish command, in fact many were originally from the Sondershausen area. The complex ramifications of this reality of war are discussed further in Chapter Four.

⁴⁷³ Self-reported losses in the context of petitioning for reduction in taxes is a problematic source for historians seeking to understand the fiscal impact of war. This will be discussed below.

were to local populations and his chronicle constantly refers to the size of the demands and the strain they placed on the finances of the region.⁴⁷⁴ This awareness, and the frequent mentions of contributions and quartering, places Happe in the broader context of complaint and protest which marked this significant mode of civilian resistance during the war.

While civil authorities like Happe and his employer negotiated with the military commanders, ordinary villagers could not. Instead they sent waves of protests to their lords demanding a reduction in the tax burden and declaring their inability to pay the outrageous taxes. This form of civil discourse was part of the fabric of *Herrschaft* and existed, to a lesser degree, before the war.⁴⁷⁵ Villagers acknowledged that rulers had the right to negotiate the terms of a *salva guardia* but that did not mean that the average civilian had to agree or quietly comply. Theibault explains:

If the agents of *Herrschaft* accepted a *salva guardia* from invading troops, they were responsible for ensuring the terms were adhered to. When the demands of the troops exceeded the village's ability to supply them without undermining the livelihood of the village inhabitants, the principle of *Schutz und Schirm* required the authorities to grant relief either by convincing the troops to take less or by reducing the seigniorial and tax burdens in proportion to the size of the troops' demands.⁴⁷⁶

This process of supplication and negotiation continued throughout the war and raises an interesting debate for historians. To what degree should these supplicants be believed?

Gerhard Benecke has argued that the sensational accounts of the destruction and destitution were simply dishonest ploys to limit financial contributions.⁴⁷⁷ In his estimation, historians have been too gullible in assuming honesty on the part of the

⁴⁷⁴ See Chapter Three.

⁴⁷⁵ Theibault, *Village*, 145.

⁴⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, *Village*, 145.

⁴⁷⁷ Gerhard Benecke, *Society and Politics in Germany, 1500-1750* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974).

sources.⁴⁷⁸ Theibault objects to this school of thinking, pointing out that Benecke “merely substitutes a presumption of dishonesty for a presumption of honesty in all reports.”⁴⁷⁹

Not all reports are complete lies; there must be a middle course.

Many historians have chosen to avoid the problematic specifics of each claim by using these sources to create a tapestry of damage to assess the over-all destruction caused by the war.⁴⁸⁰ This is a useful tact to take when dealing with big-picture questions concerning the economic impact of the conflict. However, if historians are interested in the way that these events affected the participants it is vital that they deal with the challenge of reliability posed by Benecke.⁴⁸¹ There can be no doubt that civilians exaggerated for a number of reasons and tax evasion was almost certainly one of them. As Scott’s work demonstrates, peasant resistance was not limited to military forces; it was a major part of everyday life, even in times of peace.⁴⁸² However, Theibault’s thorough investigation of the petitions that circulated Hesse during the war demonstrate a change in language, an altered rhetoric to describe the destruction which frequently ended with a declaration of inexpressible suffering.⁴⁸³ Happe uses this language, following a

⁴⁷⁸ Theibault, “Rhetoric”, 272.

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid., “Rhetoric”, 272.

⁴⁸⁰ See Henry Kamen, “The Economic and Social Consequences of the Thirty Years’ War,” *Past and Present* 39 (1968: 44-61; also Christopher Friedrichs in Geoffrey Parker, *The Thirty Years War* (London, 1984), 208-215.

⁴⁸¹ His perspective is bolstered by the appearance of inexhaustible wealth in many villages over the course of the war. Villages seem to have a never ending supply of horses to be stolen and treasures hidden away to be confiscated. Horse theft is mentioned in almost every instance of robbery in Happe’s chronicle; one might think the villagers would run out of horses. Horses and cattle, vital to the agricultural economy, were actually frequently stolen for sale in nearby markets. The original owners sometimes even bought their own livestock back, thereby transferring once hidden money into the purses of the thieves. Hans Heberle chronicle mentions this black market and a futile attempt by local authorities to curtail the practice, Heberle, *Zeitregister*, translation in Helfferich, 323.

⁴⁸² Theibault argues that the letters were not the only way that the civil authorities gained information, relying upon local administrators to convey a more balanced perspective. Since Happe would have had access to all this information, both first-hand and in official records, his frequent allusions to the excessive burdens of contributions can probably be read with greater confidence than the average angry letter to the Count of Sondershausen.

⁴⁸³ See Chapter Four for a more thorough discussion of the “rhetoric of destruction.”

month of plundering and rape in 1631, when he laments, “there is no way to describe this misery.”⁴⁸⁴ He also calls the war a cause of “inexpressible misfortune.”⁴⁸⁵ Early supplicants mirrored pre-war patterns by complaining that their villages were unfairly burdened when compared to other regions.⁴⁸⁶ By the middle of the crisis, it was no longer extraordinary to experience excessive demands—it had become the new normal. The standard language ceased to be suitably expressive causing many to turn to language like Happe’s.⁴⁸⁷ One administrator in Hesse demanded that Landgrave come and see for himself if he doubted the account.⁴⁸⁸

Villagers could complain but faced rhetorical difficulties in the expression of their despair, and dubious reception when the veracity of their claims was doubted. Even when these petitions were given credence, civilian elites frequently failed in their attempts to reduce contributions. In these situations, villagers turned to direct negotiation with their oppressors. This final negotiation practice which civilians utilized is not discussed in Happe’s chronicle but is evident in other works. Ulbricht elaborates on the strategy by explaining that many soldiers might demand everything, but were willing to accept what was offered if they were in a hurry and did not care to try to torture villagers for hidden valuables.⁴⁸⁹ It was frequently in the best interest of the military establishment to reach an agreement with local populations that would ensure a consistent flow of resources.⁴⁹⁰ If

⁴⁸⁴ Happe, I: 267v.

⁴⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, I: 24v.

⁴⁸⁶ Theibault, “Rhetoric,” 277. He cites an example where two villages successfully petitioned General Tilly to reduce the number of troops quartered there because the burden was greater than that borne by their larger neighbors. Theibault claims they used different arguments depending on their audience, claiming inequality to appeal to Tilly, claiming excessive burden to appeal to the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel.

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 279.

⁴⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 280.

⁴⁸⁹ Ulbricht cites several chronicles as well as secondary studies which support the claim that face-to-face haggling over plunder sometimes worked.

⁴⁹⁰ Wilson, *Tragedy*, 834.

the military pushed too hard, they risked driving the civilians into other forms of resistance. The fact that villagers continued to have valuables to steal after being robbed repeatedly attests to the civilians' success at lying about their total wealth.⁴⁹¹ Soldiers frequently resorted to torture to discover more money. Civilians engaged in a form of dangerous negotiation with their oppressors by attempting to maintain the balance between protestations of destitution and provision of satisfactory plunder. This was a deadly dance with all the power in the hands of the soldiers. Those instances where civilians chose to withstand torture and keep their property stand as examples of passive resistance to the claims of the military.

Negotiation is a very gray area in the sources. It is clear that civilians of all ranks sought to reduce the burdens of contributions and extortion through words, but details of these exchanges are not available in most instances, particularly the verbal negotiations between villagers and would-be thieves. Taken together, the formal attempts by men like Happe, the thousands of complaints made by farmers and townsfolk, and the evidence of face-to-face bargaining, all suggest a diverse array of negotiation tactics open to civilians. While these appear to have been frequently ineffective, they were not without merit. Furthermore, they exist as a peaceful form of resistance which was, in many cases, less dangerous than fleeing to the hills or attacking the raiders. In the case of the contribution system, there was no other feasible way to resist short of full-scale revolt or outright

⁴⁹¹ Conversely, it is possible that soldiers did not always try to take everything from civilians. Instead, many soldiers may have intentionally left some possessions in the hands of civilians so as to not leave them in utter destitution. This theory is, of course, difficult to test as the bulk of civilian accounts focus on the great greed of the pillaging soldiers and the soldiers' knowledge that any property left behind could be stolen by the enemy. However, it is apparent that for many soldiers, there was an amount of plunder which, if deemed acceptable, could result in the end of torture and the departure of the soldiers. It is not apparent whether these amounts were based on a desire to spare the victims from experiencing total deprivation, or simply based on a practical assessment of the poverty of the civilians.

immigration. Negotiation was a weak form of resistance, but if civilians played their cards right, they stood a chance of avoiding total financial ruin and death.

When it came to violent resistance by the civilians in Happe's account, the instances ranged from spontaneous to premeditated. Frequently, would-be assailants or thieves found themselves swarmed with angry peasants bent on protecting their property and punishing those who daily harassed their community. Happe recorded one such incident in 1630, "On the 12th of May, four soldiers took a peasant's goat to Grossbrüchter, but as these peasants were inside, they so miserably defeated the thieves that they [barely] escaped with life, and [the peasants] have reclaimed the goat again."⁴⁹² The villagers responded to the aggression of the soldiers with a more furious, nearly deadly attack. In March of that year, when some cavalry attempted to steal some horses, "the peasants resisted valiantly, so that the horsemen had to flee and the peasants caught a horseman and beat him miserably, and had not the *Amtsschreiber* come, they would have beaten him to death."⁴⁹³ These peasants appear to be doing more than trying to preserve their property, there is a level of furious violence which speaks to the anger and hatred that developed between soldiers and civilians during this conflict.⁴⁹⁴

During the Swedish Intervention, Happe records scores of instances of violent reactions to the depredations of soldiers. In many situations, resistance came in the form of defense of property. In the case of the goat mentioned above, such a small group of

⁴⁹² Happe, I: 191r.

⁴⁹³ Ibid., I: 187v.

⁴⁹⁴ A London press report from Augsburg in 1632 reported locals banded together and surprised fifty Swedish soldiers and "did cut off their ears and noses, chopped off their hands and feet, and put out their eyes, so left them. [. . . the other] soldiers would not put it up but presently cried revenge and fired their villages, in so much that in one day there were seen 200 several fires blazing at once." This report is cited in Benecke, *Germany*, 69. Other examples of this bitter conflict can be found in Boguslav von Chemnitz, *Königlich Schwedischer in Teutschland geführter Krieg* quoted in *The Thirty Years War: A Sourcebook* ed. Peter Wilson (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 255.

soldiers posed a limited threat to the village. The peasants clearly believed themselves sufficiently strong to immediately and violently oppose the soldiers. Another instance of defense of property came in April of 1630 when villagers set a watch over their fields and shot down some soldiers who tried to steal some grain.⁴⁹⁵ In August of the following year, soldiers tried to steal some horses from Urbach and were repelled from the village.⁴⁹⁶ Throughout the chronicle, civilians appear to consistently be armed and prepared to protect their property and lives when attacked.

Not all of the violence between civilians and soldiers was as reflexive as these examples. Sometimes the attacks on soldiers were premeditated or retributive. Happe mentions an incident in May of 1630 during which some villagers hid in a field and ambushed two “predatory soldiers” who had been causing trouble in a village.⁴⁹⁷ This sort of ambush was recorded by other chroniclers as well. Peter Hagendorf, a mercenary for the Catholic forces, wrote of one such ambush in June of 1641. He was drunk and straggling behind his unit when he was attacked by three peasants hiding in the brush. They beat him up, and stole his coat and pack before running off.⁴⁹⁸ In many situations it was neither practical to ambush passing soldiers nor for immediately resist when robbed. However, villagers could quickly gather and track down the offending soldiers. In those moments the local resource war truly comes into focus. In late November of 1631 some horses were seized by a group of civilians who ambushed the thieves and reclaimed them.⁴⁹⁹ The following spring Happe recorded a similar incident: “On the 18th of March,

⁴⁹⁵ Ibid., I: 189v.

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid., I: 271v.

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid., I: 192r-192v.

⁴⁹⁸ Peter Hagendorf, *Tagebuch eines Soldners aus dem Dreissigjahrigen Krieg (Diary of a Mercenary from the Thirty Years War)* quoted in Medick and Marschke, 74.

⁴⁹⁹ Happe, I: 208r-208v.

several Swedish horsemen invaded Bebra and took the poor people's horses from the stables, but the farmers followed after with their rifles and reclaimed their stolen horses by force."⁵⁰⁰ Ulbricht described this reclamation tactic as "a way to avoid paying for one's own belongings [and as a] signal to the soldiers that the sufferers had turned into the fighters."⁵⁰¹ To put this another way, by reclaiming stolen property, villagers were asserting their rightful possession of that property and their determination to keep it out of the hands of the military, even at the risk of further bloodshed.

Whether engaged in defense, ambush, or reclamation, there are too many variables to gauge, from Happe's brief accounts, what factors influenced the villagers to choose these moments to resist. In situations like the goat incident, the simple numerical advantage may have been the determining factor. Though the amount of peasants involved in the attack is unclear, four soldiers hardly seem sufficient to completely overawe a whole village. Numbers alone cannot explain all such moments however. In November of 1632 Happe recorded an early morning raid by five horsemen upon a village. They violently stole three horses and got away unscathed. He laments this moment exclaiming, "The poor farming folk are so fearful that even an entire village cannot defend themselves against five horsemen."⁵⁰² Fear and intimidation, accumulating over years of raids and attacks, could certainly dampen the willingness of civilians to fight, no matter how great their numerical advantage.

While much of the violent resistance featured in Happe's chronicle was spontaneous, there were examples of more organized encounters with soldiers. Many communities had militia groups known as *Ausschüsse* which organized to defend their

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid., I: 223v.

⁵⁰¹ Ulbricht, 109.

⁵⁰² Happe, I: 292v.

homes and property. When mentioned in the chronicle, they appear as a generally ineffective fighting force. In 1632, following days of horrible violence by Pappenheim's forces, Happe records "On the 18th of October our *Ausschuss* was attacked and cut into during the night by Pappenheim's soldiers in Grossfahner, but thank God, all got away healthy into the dark night."⁵⁰³ In another instance, almost exactly two years later, the *Ausschuss* was not so lucky to escape. "On [October] 15th, the Imperials burned Suhl and cut down the *Ausschuss* therein."⁵⁰⁴ Organized violent resistance was neither typical nor particularly effective in this kind of warfare. It made more sense to respond with violence to small raids when possible and pursue the alternative methods of resistance when faced with larger bodies of troops.

Local communities might shy away from outright violence against oppressive soldiers for socio-political reasons as well. Theibault's extensive study of communities in Hesse during the war reveals an initial reluctance among the lower classes to resort to violence when dealing with troops who had reached agreements with the lords of the region.⁵⁰⁵ The relationship between the Count of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen and the villagers in this region was more complex than simple civil administrative authority. The Count exercised *Herrschaft* or lordship, a term which "connoted reciprocal relationships that had their ideological underpinnings in the phrase *Schutz und Schirm*, which suggested that obedience was due only so long as the ruler offered protection to his subjects."⁵⁰⁶ This meant that villagers looked to their lord for order and protection from

⁵⁰³ Ibid., I: 283r.

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid., I: 333r. The correct date for this attack was actually October 26, 1634.

⁵⁰⁵ Theibault, *Villages*. His study reveals, with impressive detail, the power structures of Hesse during this era. Allowing for some variance by region, the concepts and structures were also at play in Thuringia.

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid., *Villages*, 21.

both internal and external threats.⁵⁰⁷ In times of war this responsibility was difficult to fulfill. Often powerless to actually stop an army from invading, rulers and their agents frequently tried to arrange a contribution system in exchange for a *salva guardia*.⁵⁰⁸ In theory this arrangement would shield villagers from violent depredations and limit the impact of invasion to simply a major tax increase. In reality, however, this did not always prove true.⁵⁰⁹

When faced with an external enemy who had an arrangement with the lord, the principles of *Herrschaft* dictated that villagers refrain from violence.⁵¹⁰ As Theibault describes it, “The issuance of a *salva guardia* meant that the agents of *Herrschaft* formally approved the presence of troops within the territory. To resist the *salva guardia* was thus to undercut legitimate rule.”⁵¹¹ Instead, villagers frequently chose petitions and supplications as the means of redressing grievances. Theibault highlights the volume of appeals to the civil authorities as an attempt to stay within the system. *Schutz und Schirm* bound the lord to address these grievances and negotiate to protect his people.⁵¹² If he failed in this task villagers were more likely to turn to violence or permanent flight to protect their lives and property. Happe describes an incident in June of 1631 in which soldiers attempted to plunder a village and the locals “resisted valiantly,” killed five and wounded and captured six others whom they imprisoned in the local castle.⁵¹³ A year earlier, peasants in Kuela almost killed a would-be plunderer and only the intervention of

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid., 25.

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid., 136, 138. In practice, Theibault notes, these negotiations were replicated at every level. The generals with the major princes, the low-level officers with civil representatives, and individual soldiers with local villagers.

⁵⁰⁹ Medick and Marschke, 18.

⁵¹⁰ Ibid., 143.

⁵¹¹ Ibid.

⁵¹² Theibault, *Villages*, 145.

⁵¹³ Happe, I: 267r.

the *Amtschreiber* saved his life.⁵¹⁴ In both these instances, the relationship between villagers and the civil authorities is evident and yet unclear. Happe seemed to believe that the local officials, of which he was one, were a restraining force. However, the military weakness of the various rulers in Thuringia placed civilians in danger and could thus free them from some normal constraints on violent resistance. It is telling that Happe never criticizes the villagers for violence and even laments those times when they fail to defend themselves.⁵¹⁵ Happe's chronicle suggests the complexities of maintaining order amid chaos, of fulfilling the responsibilities of *Schutz und Schirm* without the actual military forces to negotiate with an army on even remotely equal terms. By listening to the *Amtschreiber* or using the castle to imprison soldiers, the villagers were demonstrating a willingness to operate, at least partially, within standard authority structures. However, the constant scenes of violent resistance suggest a loosening of the constraints traditionally placed on civilian behavior by *Herrschaft*.

When pushed to the brink, how did civilians respond? Happe's chronicle reveals the answer to this question through the numerous stories of resistance. Villagers and townsfolk should have been protected by their lords but all too often the standard protections of a peacetime society were no match for the stresses of war. Murder, arson, theft, extortion, and rape frequently occurred across the countryside of Thuringia, particularly during the Swedish Intervention. In many cases, the burdens of war left the civilian population angry and frightened, but compliant. However, the *Thuringian Chronicle*, and others like it, demonstrates with stark clarity how determined civilians were to exercise agency in the face of disaster. They waged a war over resources with the

⁵¹⁴ Ibid., I: 187. An *Amtschreiber* was a local administrative official.

⁵¹⁵ Ibid., I: 292v.

numerous soldiers who marched across Thuringia. In some cases civilians took to the road, keeping their portable possessions out of the hands of soldiers, thus depriving military forces of needed supplies and plunder, as well as disrupting the economics of the contribution system. Civilians at all levels participated in forms of negotiation when flight was too dangerous or not possible. Through complaints, the hiding and gradual surrender of valuables, and formal arrangements, civilians attempted to diminish their losses and keep resources out of the hands of soldiers. Flight and negotiation were not always successful or wise. In those situations, civilians frequently fought back with violence.

Civilian agency, exercised through an array of strategies, is fundamental to understanding the local level of the conflict. When the Clubmen in England resisted the incursions of armed forces they were frequently concerned with national politics and local repercussions. When civilians during the Thirty Years' War resisted, the sprawling and decentralized nature of the conflict and region made local concerns of far greater import. Local, individual efforts on the part of villagers to protect and defend their property and lives demonstrate a pattern of resistance and a war for resources fomented by local concerns, at times scarcely visible beneath the formal campaigns. This is not to suggest that this conflict had no recognizable effect on the war. If agency really is "the ability of an individual to affect change in his circumstances or situation," such effects should be visible. Civilian agency in the form of these three resistance strategies changed the equation of local conflict and resources for both the military and civilians. Through flight, negotiation, and violence, villagers were able to limit the death toll and mitigate their financial losses. Though their actions did not end the violence and may have, at

times, even exacerbated the immediate danger, the cumulative effect of thousands of civilians resisting in various ways altered the way they were perceived by the military and civil authorities and let the individual soldier know that he was not always facing a docile and easily destroyed foe. It is also important to recognize that civilian agency can exist even in the highly uneven power relationship between army and village. As Scott so effectively argues, peasant action does not have to be large-scale and collective for it to be properly termed resistance.⁵¹⁶ As long as civilian behavior “denies or mitigates claims from the appropriating classes” (in this case, the military) that behavior is rightly termed resistance.⁵¹⁷

Volkmar Happe’s *Chronicon Thuringiae* tells the tale of a community of civilians who frequently chose to exercise agency in the face of aggression. The countless stories of brutality and destruction wrought by armies from all sides of the conflict highlight the stresses of everyday life in seventeenth century Thuringia. They further reveal the array of responses available to the local people. When forced to weigh the risks of acquiescence and resistance on a daily basis, these civilians frequently chose to resist. In doing so, they engaged in a conflict which defined the experiences of daily life for thousands of Germans across the Empire. By sometimes fleeing to safety, sometimes negotiating for systemic or momentary relief, and sometimes fighting back, the people of Thuringia refused to passively submit to the violence and cruelty of war. That refusal was agency. That agency, so easily lost in the cacophony and chaos of a continental struggle, is brought into focus by the words of Volkmar Happe.

⁵¹⁶ Scott, *Weapons*, 289-303.

⁵¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 302.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

At the end of October, 1635 Happe wrote, “This month we have had quite beautiful, quiet, and lovely autumn weather, we thank God specifically that the danger of war has been quite silent so that you can trade and walk secure and comfortable on the road and in the field which seems excellent to us.”⁵¹⁸ This experience of relative peace was short-lived; plundering and hostilities again afflicted Thuringia in January and would continue intermittently throughout the war. This was Happe’s encounter with the war: violence followed by periods of relative normalcy only to be replaced again by more violence. Happe was a just over thirty years old when the war began. He joined the service of Count Christian Günther the following year and spent his entire professional life dealing with the social and fiscal implications of a three-decade long conflict. So much of his life was spent experiencing and reacting to the war; it deeply shaped the way he perceived his life and work. While Schwarzburg-Sondershausen was not perpetually afflicted with contributions, quartering, and raids, the war’s impact on the region was profound and the fear that at any time daily life could be disrupted by soldiers, disease, or famine as a result of the on-going conflict certainly weighed on Happe’s mind and echoed in his writing. Happe’s story reveals the tension between the commonplace experiences of normalcy—gripping about the weather or rejoicing at births, baptisms, and weddings— and the cruel realities of conflict and fear which followed on the heels of the four horsemen of the apocalypse. The *Chronicon Thuringiae* provides historians with an

⁵¹⁸ Happe, I: 425r.

opportunity to witness the way the author experienced and perceived this tension and how he and many of his contemporaries sought to navigate the tumultuous realities of everyday life during the Thirty Years' War. The agency which civilians like Happe exerted in the face of suffering counters the presumption that non-combatants were passive victims at the mercy of forces outside of their control. Rather, Happe's story suggests that civilians exercised an array of tactics to mitigate their suffering, explain and rationalize their situation, and seek to establish normalcy in the face of disruption and chaos.

Such determination deserves further study. Ego documents like Happe's offer a uniquely local perspective which is easily lost in macro-studies. This micro-view can inform our understanding of the broader events and movements of history. Theibault's investigation of the village life in Hesse-Kassel during this period is a testament to the value of such local studies as he contends that in order to appreciate the way the Thirty Years' War fits within the context of "broader social and cultural history of early modern Germany" one must understand how the war was experienced at a local level.⁵¹⁹ There is a wealth of source material available to increase our awareness of the war's impact on local communities and the ways those communities sought to survive during such a lengthy and brutal conflict. By expanding this study to incorporate the entirety of Happe's chronicle and others like it, historians can develop a more complete comprehension of regional and local variances in resistance and perception. The local, religious, and occupational variations within the authorship of extant primary source material provide ample opportunity for comparative analysis. Mortimer uses just over seventy such documents from across the empire in his research, from many walks of life

⁵¹⁹ Theibault, *Villages*, 221.

and both Catholic and Protestant communities.⁵²⁰ The volume and variety of existing ego-documents offers great promise for future study. Perhaps one of the best known civilian accounts is the Zeytregister of the Ulm shoemaker, Hans Heberle. As a comparison to Happe's chronicle, Heberle is remarkably well informed for a civilian without an official position; he demonstrates an awareness of the progress of the war and the impact of military demands on the Ulm region.⁵²¹ His perspective on local government decisions contrasts with Happe's insider understanding as Heberle is forced to comply with policies which men like Happe hand down. As an example, in 1628 Heberle complained:

Although we expected good times and a good year, yet immediately trouble arose, for unexpectedly, a decision came from the authorities at Ulm in the government office that called together the entire community. [...] They commanded, on pain of harsh punishment, that everyone should swiftly and right away set aside all weapons and muskets and bring them to the government office, and that no one should defend himself or shoot.⁵²²

This order, issued in advance of the arrival of Bavarian troops, troubled the inhabitants and Heberle's perspective as one of these disarmed villagers could prove a useful comparison with the way Happe views such decisions. Whereas Happe's role in the war was to minimize suffering through official action and occasional flight, Heberle exemplifies one of the many ordinary villagers, like the ones described throughout Happe's chronicle, who chose to resist in whatever ways he could, even joining the militia at one point during the war.⁵²³ Thus study of civilian accounts can provide an

⁵²⁰ Mortimer, 199-200.

⁵²¹ Helfferich, 302.

⁵²² "Zeytregister," 307. This decision appears to have been a good one, as Heberle reports that the soldiers maintained relatively good discipline and he included no mention of violence between civilians and soldiers during their stay.

⁵²³ Helfferich, 275.

array of viewpoints and opinions about the war as the authors observed and participated in resistance and agency.

While accounts like Happe's and Heberle's reveal civilian perspectives of the conflict, the few existing military ego-documents can provide a fascinating contrast.⁵²⁴ One soldier, Peter Hagendorf, demonstrates the way a prolonged conflict could make soldiers callous and cruel, a declining sense of shame or guilt which helps account for the behavior which, from a civilian perspective, seems so inexplicable.⁵²⁵ Military accounts contextualize and humanize the soldiers, many of whom chose the life of war in order to survive.⁵²⁶ Hagendorf joined a regiment because he was "down and out," took his wife with him, had four children, mourned the destruction of Magdeburg in which he participated, lost his entire family to illness, and by 1636 he could write without emotion "we set fire to the castle and burned it up, along with the peasants [. . .] we set fire to their village and let it burn."⁵²⁷ Such accounts, while they do not excuse the behavior of many soldiers toward civilians, reveal the truth that both civilians and soldiers could be victims of this war. Lastly, soldiers' accounts can provide insight into the way civilian resistance was perceived and the impact it had on military thinking and the development of the great hatred between civilians and soldiers.⁵²⁸ The variety of professions, locations, and experiences encapsulated in ego-documents from the Thirty Years' War provides historians with ample ground for comparative analysis of issues of agency and perception. Given the uneven impact of the war across the Empire, parallel studies in

⁵²⁴ Ibid., 276.

⁵²⁵ Ibid., 274. This slide into villainy mirrors the fiction of Grimmelshausen as *Simplicissimus* undergoes a similar process, see Grimmelshausen, *Simplicissimus*, 143, when he becomes a hermit, not to pray, but to loot and pillage; 343, when he realizes that while once he would have been shocked by drinking too much wine, he now is ready to commit highway robbery.

⁵²⁶ "A Soldier's Life in the Thirty Years' War," in Helfferich, 276-302.

⁵²⁷ Ibid., 280; 283; 286; 293.

⁵²⁸ For more on the two perspectives, see Mortimer, *Eyewitness*, 29-58 and 151-163.

regions less hard-hit than Thuringia might reveal alternate behavior by civilians. Additionally, we may be able to determine whether there was a general tipping point for civilians, a level of violence by soldiers which generally provoked civilian action in regions around the empire. How did regional variations in culture and religion effect civilian perceptions and responses to violence? These questions can be more fully addressed with a careful assessment of ego-documents like Happe's.

Medick and others have also engaged in interesting work on the cultural memory of events during the war, a study which is enriched by works like Happe's.⁵²⁹ Given the relatively recent development of this line of inquiry there are several underdeveloped arenas which would benefit from further study. One is the experience and agency of women within the conflict. This dearth of historical analysis of women in the Thirty Years' War is primarily a result of a lack of source material, although nuns have proved a valuable resource due to their higher than average literacy rates and the greater likelihood that their writings would survive in the convent archives than elsewhere.⁵³⁰ Despite the lack of material written by women, we can gain a greater appreciation for the position of women within a war-torn society through careful consideration of accounts like Happe's which makes reference to women throughout, although they are rarely described in any detail. Women operated with an intriguing level of autonomy in the world of camp followers and sutlers during the war and deserve greater historical attention.⁵³¹ This world of constant movement and precarious existence forms a second environment

⁵²⁹ See Medick and Marschke, 23-25.

⁵³⁰ Mortimer, *Eyewitness*, 96-111. Mortimer provides several examples of sources written by women, most of whom were nuns.

⁵³¹ The female sutler, a figure in Grimmelshausen's work named *Courage* and the inspiration for title character to the 20th century play "Mother Courage and her Children" by Bertolt Brecht, exercised dubious independence during the war, see Chapter Two footnote.

worthy of closer examination. Camp followers lived in a world of uncertainty, constant movement, and unusual social dynamics which would make them a fascinating group to study. However, very little has been attempted beyond general statements about their existence and the impact they had on military strategy and logistics. Again, the limited source material creates difficulties, but the tens of thousands of people, including so many children born and raised in military camps, certainly deserve closer study. One of the important questions to consider when looking at camp followers is how these people sought to turn the realities of war into opportunities for personal gain. Happe's chronicle reveals agency and disruption in the settled environment of town and village thus providing a reference point for similar analysis of more transient communities like camp followers. Black marketeers and prostitutes abounded and these actions can be considered further opportunities for civilian agency in a world upturned by the chaos of war. When this chaos reached into the more stable communities like those of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen, disrupting law and order, some civilians sought to turn the situation to their advantage as addressed briefly in chapter four. Additional historical attention should be given to assessing the ways people at all social levels sought to benefit from the war, as mercenaries, merchants, thieves, or just by exploiting a local legal system destabilized by conflict and depopulation. Through local, micro-studies like this one, historians can uncover social and cultural responses to war and enrich our understanding of how war and society influenced and shaped each other over the course of three decades of conflict and violence.

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