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978-0-521-08962-3 - War and Society in Europe, 1618-1648

J. V. Polisensky

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# War and Society in Europe 1618–1648

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE

LONDON NEW YORK NEW ROCHELLE

MELBOURNE SYDNEY

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi

Cambridge University Press  
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)  
Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9780521216593](http://www.cambridge.org/9780521216593)

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First published 1978  
Reprinted 1979  
This digitally printed version 2008

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data*

Polišenský, Josef V.  
War and society in Europe, 1618–1648.  
Includes index.  
1. Thirty Years' War, 1618–1648. I. Snider,  
Frederick, joint author. II. Title  
D258.P644 940.2'4 77–71423

ISBN 978-0-521-21659-3 hardback  
ISBN 978-0-521-08962-3 paperback

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TO THE MEMORY OF  
S. H. STEINBERG  
B. F. PORSHNEV  
O. ODLOŽILÍK

## Contents

<i>Preface</i>	<i>page</i> ix
<i>Map of Czechoslovakia with list of locations of archives and libraries</i>	xiii

### **Introduction**

Seventeenth-century studies and their contemporary significance	I
Sources available for the study of the structure of seventeenth-century society	5
Problems of periodization	12

### PART ONE :

#### PROBLEMS IN THE HISTORY OF THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR

<b>1 Attempts at a reinterpretation of the conflict</b>	
Problems and sources for the history of the Thirty Years' War	17
Spanish and Dutch models of society in Bohemian libraries	27
<b>2 The Bohemian War 1618–20</b>	
Problems: some attitudes	36
Sources	42
The Bohemian War and relations between the European east and west	53
<b>3 The Dutch period of the conflict 1621–5</b>	
Problems and sources	66
The Spaniards in Bohemia and Moravia	73
The beginning of the second phase of the conflict	88

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J. V. Polisensky

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

<b>4</b>	<b>The Danish intervention and the attempts at the formation of a grand coalition</b>	
	Problems and sources	95
	The Danish War in Moravia and Hungary 1626-7	105
<b>5</b>	<b>The Swedish-Dutch period of the conflict 1630-5</b>	
	Problems and sources	122
	The Wallenstein question	130
<b>6</b>	<b>The Swedish-French period 1635-43</b>	
	Problems and sources	155
	The Bohemian question and the English Revolution	163
<b>7</b>	<b>War, revolution, peace negotiations 1643-50</b>	
	Problems and sources	180
	Bohemian sources for the history of the Neapolitan uprising 1647-8	186

## PART TWO:

## THE EFFECTS OF THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR

<b>8</b>	<b>The aftermath of conflict</b>	199
<b>9</b>	<b>Changes in the composition of the Bohemian nobility</b>	202
	<b>Conclusion</b>	217
	<b>Notes</b>	219
	<b>Appendix: Tabular survey of archives, libraries and individual collections</b>	253
	<i>Index</i>	255

## Preface

This is not another attempt at a straightforward history of the conflict commonly known as the Thirty Years' War. Even from a narrow unashamedly Central European viewpoint, such an attempt would be rash; but perhaps I shall undertake it once the edition of the *Documenta Bohemica Bellum Tricennale Illustrantia* is completed.

I have worked on this book for nearly thirty years. The result of my labours should primarily serve future research. It should inform the reader (and the prospective historian) of the present state of our knowledge about the main theme: the interrelationships among different aspects of society, politics and ideas in a period of military and political crisis of continental dimensions. I do not pretend to have solved all the problems, because I am aware that we all exist in a three-dimensional world. We are shaped by the past and the future alike; with our ideas of the future and from our vantage point in the present we are continually reshaping our conception of the past, which also shapes us. I am glad that I can once again agree with my friend Christopher Hill about each generation's need to have history rewritten – an idea superbly expressed in his *Change and Continuity in Seventeenth Century England*.

Thus each of these chapters begins with a word about problems and sources. It is my belief that the historian's profession consists in the search for new problems and, if possible, the attempt to solve them. To do this, he has to find the appropriate methods and suitable source material. Most of the documentation used in this volume comes from the archives and libraries of Czechoslovakia. It was my great privilege to be able to help save and open for research the former private archives in my country. To offer them to the historians of all lands makes all the years spent in bringing them together a labour of love. So it is to my friends, the archivists and librarians, whom I must have exasperated with my insatiable thirst for more books and documents, that I must express my thanks before all.

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[More information](#)

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Next come my former students. They were usually the innocent audiences on whose intellect I was trying to sharpen my muddled ideas. One of them deserves a special mention: Dr Frederick Snider has spent many days travelling with me from one archive to another. He also translated most of the chapters and participated especially in formulating the contents of Part Two. But he is a competent historian himself, and he is in no way responsible for any errors that may be found in this volume.

I must also express my gratitude to the Academia Publishing House and the Böhlau Verlag for permission to reprint material.

The dedication records my continuing debt to three friends whose kindness and wisdom have helped me in different ways. They all died prematurely, but for me and for others they opened up new fields for research.

J. V. POLIŠENSKÝ

*Note.* Seventeenth-century usage in the rendering of proper names was flexible and no attempt has been made in this volume to render it strictly consistent.



## Czechoslovakia Locations of archives and libraries

* State Regional Archives	† Branches of State Archives
† Central State Archives	§ District and Municipal Archives, State Libraries
Czech, German, Hungarian	
Banská Bystrica, Neusohl, Besztercebánya	† Libochovice
Banská Štiavnica, Schemnitz, Selmecebánya	* Litoměřice, Leitmeritz
Bardějov, Bartfeld, Bártfa	§ Louny, Laun
Benešov, Bereschau	§ Mělník, Nikolsburg
Bratislava, Pressburg, Pozsony	§ Mladá Boleslav, Mladá Boleslav
Brno	§ Mladá Vožice, Mladá Vožice
Bytča, Bicsé	§ Mladobuzov, Mladobuzov
České Budějovice, Budweis	§ Mladotín, Mladotín
Český Krumlov, Krumau	§ Mladotín, Mladotín
Český Sternberk, *	§ Mladotín, Mladotín
Cheb	† Olomouc, Olmütz
Chomutov, Komotau	* Opava, Troppau
Děčín, Tetschen	† Plzeň, Pilsen
Frydlant, Friedland	† Praha, Prag
Holešov	† Prešov, Preschau, Eperjes
Horšovský Týn, Bischofteinitz	§ Rimavská Sobota, Gross-Steinfeld, Rima-Szombat
Jablonec nad Nisou, Gablonz	§ Roudnice, Raudnitz
Janovice-Rýmařov, Römerstadt	§ Rožnov, Rosenau, Rozsnyó
Jihlava, Iglau	§ Rychnov nad Kněžnou, Reichenau a. d. Kn.
Jindřichův Hradec, Neuhaus	§ Skalica
Kežmarok, Kásmark	§ Sokolov, Falkenau
Košice, Kaschau, Kassa	§ Stará Lubovna, Alt-Lublau
Klatovy, Klattau	§ Šumperk, Mähr. Schönberg
Komárno, Komorn, Komárom	§ Teplice, Teplitz-Schönau
Kremnica, Kremnitz, Körnőczbánya	§ Treboň, Wittingau
Křivolát, Pürglitz	§ Trenčín, Trentschin, Trencsén
Krnov, Jägerndorf	§ Ústí nad Labem, Aussig
Kroměříž, Krensier	* Zámrsk
Levoča, Leutschau, Lőcse	† Žitnice, Schüttenitz
Liberec, Reichenberg	† Žlutice, Luditz
	§ Znojmo, Znaim
	§ Zvoleň, Altsohl, Zolyom

