General Crisis Key Notes

**KEY READING**

Helen Christian, H. *Plague and Persecution: The Black Death and Early Modern Witch-Hunts, 2011,* P. 15

Parker. G “Crisis and Catastrophe: The Global Crisis of the Seventeenth Century Reconsidered.” *American Historical Review.* pp.1053-1079 (2008)

**The Thirty Years War 1618 – 48.**

* The Thirty Years War had various effects on the witchcraze. Soldiers returning to Sweden from Germany after the war may have introduced more extreme diabolical ideas in the 1640s.
* Partly because of the witch hunts, but even more because of the periodic fighting in the region during the War, Trier became an area in which almost nothing could function regularly.’
* The years between 1627 and 1631, which saw the climax of these gruesome persecutions directed by the prince-bishops, (in Bamberg and Wurzburg) were also the peak period for similar outbreaks across south-western Germany.
* The 1627 – 1632 peak coincides with the moment when the Counter-Reformation reached its political zenith in Germany with the victories of the Imperial armies in the first phase of the Thirty Years War.
* The witchcraft persecutions, however, also took place in areas hardly touched by the conflict.

**The English Civil War**

* Although there were certainly cases of witch-hunting in England in our period, there was a relative tameness in witch-hunting in Britain.
* This is linked to the limited use of torture in witchcraft cases because in both England and Scotland, torture could only be used at the specific command of the Privy Council and only when matters of state were involved.
* In England, this prohibition was strictly enforced, with the result that only once, during the disruptive period of the Civil War, was torture used illegally in witch–hunting.
* In other words, the link between warfare and witch-hunting in this instance is to do with the disruption of normal legal, political and cultural norms.
* There was a wave of trials’ in the 1640s which were related to the intense political atmosphere of the Civil War period.