

Call for Papers: Illegitimate Violence during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1792-1815)

International Conference presented by the DFG Sub-Project: Illegitimate Violence in the French and Austrian Militaries during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1789–1815)

(Paris Lodron University Salzburg, 22-24 February 2024)

Conveners: Prof. Dr. Tanja Bühner (LMU Munich), PD Dr. Gundula Gahlen (LMU Munich)

The French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1792-1815) had a more thorough impact on European history than any other military conflict between the Thirty Years' War and the Great War. They raged for more than twenty years throughout almost the whole of Europe as well as parts of Asia, Africa, and the Americas. These global wars, in addition, marked a changing character of warfare that can be roughly characterized as people's war (*Volkskrieg*). The new mass armies were recruited from large strata of the population that was partly driven by patriotic motivation. The conference invites scholars to reflect on specific moments, spaces and agents of excessive military violence in these wars that were perceived in contemporary assessment as illegitimate. We specifically would like to explore the changing yardsticks of legitimacy and illegitimacy of violence and the conditions for their transformation during these wars.

The conference focuses on both violent practices proceeding from members of a collective military agent, and on the associated interpretative discourses. The level of practice scrutinizes violence against regular armies, irregular combatants, civilians, prisoners of war, and internal violence against one's own soldiers. The level of discourse analyzes discourses on illegitimate violence led by military and political decision-makers of the war, legal experts and printed media.

We invite papers that address, but are not limited to, the following questions:

1. Did new forms of violence or to-date unknown intensifications of violence emerge?
2. What forms of violence did contemporaries perceive as appropriate or illegitimate? When was illegitimate violence sanctioned?
3. Were acts of violence that were understood as illegitimate planned, tolerated or rejected from above?
4. Can separate spaces of violence with specific moral and legal standards be identified? Which role played political, geographic and social factors in spaces of violence?
5. Did specific warring parties defy in a particularly striking way to-date normative laws of war, and if so, how can this be explained?
6. Can differences between colonial and European spaces of violence regarding practices and perceptions of illegitimate violence be identified?
7. Did new forms of violence emerge from intercultural conflicts? Can transnational transfers or global circulations of experiences and practices of violence be identified?

The explicit aim of this conference is to explore illegitimate violence during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars from a European and global perspective in current or recently completed research on this topic. Apart from empirical case studies, we particularly welcome comparative and long-term approaches to the conference theme.

Funding: We expect to cover accommodation as well as travel costs. However, if funds should be limited, PhD students and early career scholars will be preferred with regard to funding.

Individual paper proposals must include: (1) the presenter's name and email address; (2) the title of the paper; (3) an abstract (roughly 500 words); (4) the presenter's bio (max. 250 words).

Please submit your paper proposals by 14 April 2023 to:

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