

Military labour between XV and XX century

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Call for Papers

Military labour is a topic that for a long time has been present unconsciously in the researches of the military historians; John Lynn in *The Giant of the Grand Siécle. The French Army, 1610-1715* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997) proposed an evolution of the enlistment of the soldiers – soldiers of fortune, mercenaries, subject armies and mass armies. More recently, David Parrott (*The Business of War. Military Enterprise and Military Revolution in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012) criticized these categories; his perspective conveyed however the ‘Tillyan’ prejudice (Chris and Charles Tilly, *Work under capitalism*, Boulder, Westview Press, 1998) according to which the military cannot be considered a labour, because it does not ‘add a use value to goods or services’.

Therefore, the military history did not approach the military environment as a working environment, while the labour history made interesting progresses in this sense. Several researches have been carried on by the IISG (International Institute of Social History) of Amsterdam, especially thanks to Jan Lucassen and Erik-Jan Zürcher. The perspective adopted aimed to analyze the complexity of the military labour (E. J. Zürcher, *Fighting for a living: a comparative history of military labour 1500-2000*, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2013), proposing new fields of research. The mobility and the life-cycle of the workers, the wages and so on, acquired new importance and, moreover, new workers have been considered in the analysis, like the militiamen, sappers, oarsmen and more broadly all the ‘tributary’ workers.

Another field of research that should be considered, is the study of the workers that, in spite of being – more or less uninterruptedly – employed in the military apparatus, were “non combatant personnel”. Manual labourers in the fortresses, carters, smiths and so on, carried out activities directly linked with the military and so their work was influenced by the changes occurred in this field over the centuries. For the contemporary age this problem can be easily placed in the context of the war industries (about the Italian case study, see Santo Peli e Alessandro Camarda, *L'altro esercito: La classe operaia durante la prima guerra mondiale*, Book & Book, 2014), unlike the ancient régime where the situation was more variable and problematic. The sense of self of the military workers can be another field of research, as the propagandistic use of it, especially during the interwar period.

The session aims to discuss these topics, in a transnational and long run perspective (from the Middle Ages to the Post-World War II). The importance of this kind of approach emerges clearly from the words in the lines above, since the problems proposed are not limited to a single historical period. The area of discussion will include:

- The evolution of military labour: toward a more professionalisation?
- From ‘knights’ repasts’ to contracts. The wage systems of the soldiers.
- Assistance to the workers: the military as a testing ground of social security.
- The military as an incentive to the domestic and international mobility.
- The military and the life-cycle: from ‘occasional’ workers to professional?
- Not only soldiers: the workers linked to the military apparatus. From a ‘military putting out system’ to war industry.
- Perception of the military labour: sense of self and propaganda.

- Women and military labour.

The topics are many; therefore, the session can be divided into narrow working groups, depending on the paper accepted. The conference will not be limited to the exposition of the papers, but the aim is to characterize it as a workshop, leaving enough time for the discussion – especially in a long run perspective. This characterization of the paper will be preferred.

Please, send an **abstract before 30 July 2015** to Giulio Ongaro (giulio.ongaro@univr.it), or to Fabrizio Novellino (fabrizio.novellino@unitn.it).