

The Military labour working group of the European Labour History Network (ELHN) will take part in the next (2nd) European Labour History Network Conference, hold in Paris in late October or Early November 2017 (exact dates not yet set). Please see below for call for papers.

Military Labour History

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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 Siècle. 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.

Yet another field of research that needs to be developed further, and which is intertwined with the

previous, is gender and military labour. In 1981, Barton C Hacker demonstrated that the 14th to 19th Centuries' armies not only comprised of women as well as men, but that women were vital in the organization of the campaigns. Since then researchers (eg. Yuval Davis, Glucksman) have for example analysed gender division of labour in armies and war industries. But there is still a remarkable lack of literature bringing together gender history, military history and labour history.

The session aims to discuss these and other topics related to military labour, 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 areas of discussion are proposed to include:

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

Please, send an abstract **before September 19th 2016** to Giulio Ongaro (giulio.ongaro@univr.it), or to Fia Sundevall (fia.sundevall@ekohist.su.se)