

## CALL FOR PAPERS

### War and Peace in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century (1701–1789)

International annual conference of the German Society for 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Studies  
from September 13<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
at the University of Potsdam

In the year of Frederick the Great's 300<sup>th</sup> birthday, the conference undertakes to examine the question of the material and discursive manifestation of war and peace in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. For that purpose, it goes beyond previous historical reconstructions of warfare and peace settlements. Thus, the general objectives are (i) to discover how meanings of war and peace were constituted in different contexts (e. g. political, courtly, everyday, academic, or aesthetic) and (ii) to explore the rhetorical, pictorial, and symbolic strategies that were employed to impart these meanings.

The conference focuses on the time span from the Spanish War of Succession to the eve of the French Revolution (1701-1789), in order to analyse the concepts of war and peace during the Enlightenment era as the last phase of Early Modern warfare. It is intended to find out about specific differences in comparison to earlier religious and territorial wars in the era of confessionalisation on the one hand and to the later revolutionary and liberation wars on the other.

While Prussia, as a result of the Seven Year's War (1756-1763), established itself as a European centre of power alongside the Habsburg empire, regional theatres of war and peace as well as the perspective of colonial wars with European participation shall also be looked at, especially the American War of Independence as a model and proxy war with far reaching impact on both the constitutional history and the hegemonial self-image of Europe.

Up to now, the research field of war and peace in the 18<sup>th</sup> century is dominated by military history, while only sporadic case studies were carried out in other disciplines involved in 18<sup>th</sup>-century studies. Hence, a systematic exploration from the perspective of cultural history can be regarded as a desideratum.

In order to analyse war and peace as cultural phenomena, i.e. as the causes and results of discourses that form perceptions and interpretations, a methodical approaches will be required that takes into account the genesis, forms and functions of meaning in history. Thus,

international research of all in the ranges of the 18<sup>th</sup> century studies working disciplines shall be brought together and interlinked.

Against this background, yielding source materials are not only records and documents but also mass media like newspapers, pamphlets and broadsheets, personal documents such as letters, diaries and biographies, aesthetic media in art, music in literature and the theatre, as well as the expert knowledge from academic treatises on war, state, and governance as well as on philosophy and theology.

Representations and enactments, interpretations and rhetorics of war and peace recorded in such testimonials are particularly relevant for the history of Enlightenment mentalities: For centuries, bellicose practices of settling state conflicts were the order of the day. During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, however, they had to be re-modelled in accordance with central ideas and values of the Enlightenment like, for instance, the optimism of reason and history, the contemporary perception of constitutionality and human rights or the ideas of tolerance.

Therefore, new strategies of legitimation were required, the nature and cogency of which seems worth a closer investigation because hereby trend setting foundations for modern developments of international law and pacifism – as the successor of early modern irenics – were established at that time.

#### Panels

- I. Patriotism in the context of cosmopolitanism, and eurocentrism
- II. Practices of violence, culture of remembrance, and education to war
- III. Representation and public discourse
- IV. Utopias of peace and bellicose patterns of vindication
- V. Colonial wars and the European self-image

Please send proposals with an outline (approx. 300 words) of the planned talk, postal and e-mail address as well as a short academic CV (approx. 100 words) by April 30<sup>st</sup>, 2011 to:

krieg-und-frieden@uni-potsdam.de

or to:

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