

**Call for Papers**  
for a Workshop  
at the  
Bundeswehr Centre of Military History and Social Sciences  
on the Topic of  
**“Veterans and Veterans’ Associations in Politics and Society”**  
Potsdam, 10 - 12 June 2020

When wars end, soldiers, nowadays an increasing number of them female, return home. They face the challenge of re-establishing themselves in their everyday professional and private lives. Provision is known to have been made by rulers as early as in the ancient world to facilitate integration or to indeed make it possible at all: materially, pensions, benefits and various forms of integration assistance were granted; symbolically, forms of appreciation for the services rendered were established. However, a look back in history also shows that veterans cannot always be by any means certain of the “thanks of the fatherland” (Diehl). Veterans often have to overcome resistance to assert their claims to recognition, pensions and benefits. They make recourse to the capital they have gained by performing military service: to the social contacts they have forged with former fellow-soldiers, who offer assistance and support; to the sacrifices they have made that are associated with the political and moral obligations requiring society in their country to grant them recognition, this being able to be demanded to be met publicly if necessary; or to the nimbus of heroism that is connected to experiences of war and battle and can develop meaningfulness beyond the groups of those directly concerned.

A workshop on the topic of “veterans and veterans’ associations in politics and society” organized by the Bundeswehr Centre of Military History and Social Sciences will discuss the conditions under which and the consequences with which these and other aspects that typically characterize the space of experience and the horizon of expectation of veterans develop a presence and a relevance in society. The aim of the workshop is to highlight the ways and means used by veterans at different times and in different contexts to publicly articulate and assert their interests and needs. Forms of both organization and mobilization are just as important for the success or failure of these efforts as the specific socio-political constellations that provide or restrict scope for action. The workshop therefore calls for papers discussing the role of veterans in politics and society from one of the following three angles:

- Veteran policy  
What political demands are made by veterans and what expectations of society are voiced when they go public after a war or military operation? What references to the past are made and how, what representations of self and others are revealed, what ideas of the relations between the political authorities, society and the military are brought to light?
- Veterans' organizations  
When and how do veterans organize themselves (and when do these organizations maybe dissolve again)? In what ways and by what means do veterans associations attempt to satisfy the interests and needs of their members? What internal conflicts, what political or social tensions come to light? What connection do these conflicts and tensions have with the respective war and military past?
- Veterans' careers  
Under what conditions do individuals succeed as "veterans", i.e., experiencing social recognition and making explicit use of their war or military past, in carving out a career in the business world or politics? What is the ratio between individuals who make use of their status as veterans and other resources? What do such individuals think of other veterans and their associations, what are the differences between them, what do they have in common?

In addition to papers dealing with veterans and their associations in German-speaking countries, we particularly welcome studies on the situation in other countries. Analyses of historical cases and discussions of contemporary examples are equally welcome. The languages for the papers, which should be 30 minutes long, are German and English. We invite you to submit proposals for papers of up to 2,500 characters together with a short biographical note by 30 November 2019 to [NinaLeonhard@bundeswehr.org](mailto:NinaLeonhard@bundeswehr.org).

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