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**UNIVERSITÄT
BERN**

Philosophisch-historische Fakultät
Historisches Institut
Schweizer Geschichte vor 1800

Conference concept

Officers, Entrepreneurs, Career Migrants and Diplomats: Military Entrepreneurs in the Early Modern Era

Research pertaining to the early modern military entrepreneurship is comparatively recent. It was in the 1960s when Fritz Redlich laid down the marker for a historical phenomenology with his masterful study on the “German Military Enterpriser and his Work Force”. A few years ago, the discussion about the defining characteristics of a military entrepreneur gained new attention. The debates about the 18th century *fiscal-military state* and the *contractor state* respectively, directed the view away from the “entrepreneur in uniform”. The label *Military Entrepreneur* now entails all actors providing armies with goods, services and funds. Additionally, various historical subfields have provided pertinent impulses for new approaches. Current issues such as the social mobility or the transnational entanglement of the military entrepreneur are closely related to the turn of the “new” military history to social history and to methodological reflections of the “new” history of diplomacy. Lately, gender history as well as the history of migration have challenged the narrow interpretation of military and warfare as acts of domination and as an exclusively male domain.

These multidisciplinary approaches as well as the country-specific differences regarding the shaping and development of military entrepreneurship in early modern Europe provide an incentive to bring together the latest research results in a diachronic and transnational comparison and to point out future research aspects.