

[Warring for the Nation: Armed Conflicts, Mass Mobilization and Nation-Building in East-Central Europe between 1789 and 1922](#)

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Warring for the Nation

Armed Conflicts, Mass Mobilization and Nation-Building in East-Central Europe between 1789 and 1922

International Conference on the History of Nationalism

11 October 2022

University of Public Service

Budapest

Keynote speaker: AZAR GAT (Ezer Weitzman Professor at Tel Aviv University)

As recent examples in contemporary Europe clearly show, the role of armed conflicts in the state- and nation-building processes should not be underestimated in the contemporary era. This is even more evident when considering the history of Europe in the “long nineteenth century”: the massive interdependences between bellicism and nation have played a crucial role in the processes of collective identity-making since at least the French Revolution. In the early modern period, war was one of the major drivers of state formation in Europe.

However, whereas dynastic wars mainly involved the elites, implicating a rather limited role for the population, with the shaping of modern nations and nationalism, armed conflicts became increasingly “social” phenomena. In close interrelation with the tendency towards democratization and the

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broadening of political participation, wider and wider sections of society identified themselves with national ideas and the modern nation-state and accordingly could be mobilized to fight for causes and issues constructed in the increasingly nationalized political discourses.

Although the nineteenth-century in Europe was exceptionally peaceful compared to previous and subsequent periods, it had started with the French Revolution and the series of Napoleonic Wars and was terminated by the Great War, while the pan-European Revolutions of 1848-49 split it in two markedly different parts. Apart from the most important pan-European warring phases there were, nevertheless, several regional wars that proved to be crucial either immediately or in the long run for national movements and for emerging or even established nation-states alike, such as the Second Schleswig War, the Austro-Prussian and Franco-Prussian War, the Russo-Turkish War (1877-78) or the First and Second Balkan Wars. Finally, as is well known, the aftermath of the Great War brought a "golden age" of creating and restoring nation-states (along with self-styled ones) with the fall and the dismemberment of the great continental multi-ethnic empires in Europe.

In our conference we welcome contributions that deal with aspects of the complex interconnectedness between (inter- and intrastate) armed conflicts and modern nationalism and nation-state building processes in Eastern and Central Europe (including the German-speaking territories, Austria-Hungary, the Balkans and European Russia) within the timeframe between 1789 and 1922.

The subjects of the contributions may include, but are not limited, to the following topics:

- military reforms and the militarisation of civil society (the introduction of compulsory military service etc.)
- the ideas of the "citizen soldier" and the "nation in arms"; popular mobilization, the arming of the people; the making of modern national armies and makeshift solutions
- mass warfare and total war with the aims of national self-defence, independence or restoration
- the idea and phenomenon of military voluntarism
- revolutions, rebellions, upheavals; civil war, genocide, ethnic conflicts - reconsideration of the old terminology during the "Sattelzeit"
- paramilitary violence; continuation of war beyond regular armies (transitions from war to peace); instruments of revolution, self-defence, substitute of regular armies
- the experience and collective memory of armed conflicts; national cults of heroes and the fallen; the role of monuments in the making of collective identities
- the role played by the political and cultural elites and the masses along with the potential of democratization via warfare
- border changes and ethnic conflicts

- the role of propaganda and the printing press in mobilization
- visual representations and symbolism of war and violence
- conceptual backgrounds of armed conflicts: political discourses, narratives, idioms of violence, warfare and upheaval; historical narratives; the ideologization and nationalization of armed conflicts
- composite states, nationalized empires and new nation-states in time of armed hostilities
- valorous self-images and masculinities

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The keynote lecture will be delivered by AZAR GAT (Ezer Weitzman Professor at Tel Aviv University), whose many seminal books include *A History of Military Thought: From the Enlightenment to the Cold War* (Oxford UP, 2001); *War in Human Civilization* (Oxford UP, 2006); *Nations: The Long History and Deep Roots of Political Ethnicity and Nationalism* (Cambridge UP, 2013); *The Causes of War and the Spread of Peace: But Will War Rebound?* (Oxford UP, 2017). In 2019 Professor Gat was awarded the EMET Prize in the fields of Political Science and Strategy.

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Selected papers will be published in an edited volume by an international academic publishing house.

The conference has no registration fees. For a limited number of participants who cannot benefit from the financial support from their institution, accommodation bursaries are available. Interested applicants should state this clearly in their paper proposals.

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Abstracts of 300 words for 20 minute papers should be submitted to warringforthenation2022@gmail.com, along with the applicant's name, a contact email address and a short (max. 200 words) biography. All applications are welcomed and will be reviewed by the Organising Committee.

The **deadline for submissions is 24:00 on 31th August 2022.**

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