

Hannah Arendt Institute for Totalitarianism Studies / Institute for History, Technische Universität Dresden (Prof. Dr. Thomas Lindenberger, Malte Wenk, M. A., in collaboration with Prof. Dr. Dagmar Ellerbrock, Dr. Alexander Kästner, Prof. Dr. Gerd Schwerhoff)

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Call for Papers

Emergency aid, welfare, crisis management and the state's monopoly on the use of force: the policing of states of emergency and the institutionalization of public order from the early modern times to the present

The Colloquium on Police History (Kolloquium für Polizeigeschichte) has met annually since 1990 and provides an interdisciplinary discussion forum for innovative research into the history of policing. The main aim of the colloquium is to offer younger academics in particular the opportunity to present and discuss their research findings. The 33rd Colloquium on Police History will take place from 4 to 6 July 2024 at the Technische Universität Dresden, Germany. The conference is organized by the Hannah Arendt Institute for Totalitarianism Studies at TU Dresden and the Institute of History of TU Dresden.

First responders who are obstructed and attacked by onlookers when they arrive at the scene of an accident, firefighters who are met with a bombardment of bottles and pyrotechnics when they arrive at the scene, but also police officers who are called out for a banal disturbance and are physically attacked without further ado - more and more frequently, the victims themselves, but also the media, are reporting such incidents. This is where respectable "normal citizens" flaunt their disregard for the responsibilities and competences of their fellow citizens and institutions, on whose commitments the community depends and who constantly contribute to the practical legitimization of the modern welfare state. At the same time, police practices of violence are critically discussed in the context of racism and political partisanship.

Against the background of such observations in the present, the 33rd Colloquium on Police History is dedicated to the topic of "Emergency aid, welfare, crisis management and the monopoly of the use of force: the policing of states of emergency and the institutionalization of public order from early modern times to the present".

The development of Western European police forces into the 'public institutions' of modern states that we take for granted today was based from the outset on the dual task of ruling over subjects and maintaining security and safety in society. Besides instances of autonomous 'self-help', the fulfilment of these tasks was in the early modern period distributed across a widely ramified network of local offices and sovereign powers. In Europe, it took a long process of transition to institutionalize and stabilize demands for order, and to finally establish executive bodies based on the state monopoly of the use of force. They combined both executive political rule and public safety-oriented hazard prevention while integrating new traditions of 'civic' self-help based on voluntarism and voluntary work.

In situations of existential danger, the indispensability of joint action becomes apparent. The acute emergency must be averted, people in need must be cared for and, in extreme cases, the viability of the community as a whole must be ensured. This requires the swift mobilization and concentration of extraordinary logistical and social resources under coordinated and authoritative leadership.

Routines, privileges and customary rights must be temporarily suspended. At the same time, these situations enable various actors to communicate specific practices of order and to derive norms and claims of a "good police" ("gute Polizey") transcending the mere state of exception.

Historical and social science studies on the significance of "states of exception" have so far largely focused on restoring the security of political orders and specific privileges: the promise of "peace and order" has always been decisive for processes of (re)legitimizing state power in political states of exception, regardless of whether such claims have been and still are being made by democratic or autocratic polities.

By contrast, the 33rd Colloquium on Police History will focus on the management of emergencies and exceptional circumstances, which are provisionally referred to here as "non-political". Whether famines, fire and flood disasters, epidemics and plagues of vermin, industrial accidents and environmental catastrophes, or everyday accidents and emergencies requiring immediate intervention - emergency helpers were and are always active in these events. In doing so, they invoke a public mandate, an office, an authority, which is generally accepted by those in need of help. At the same time, these claims communicate the meaningfulness of institutionalized norms and orders. What significance did and do practices of this emergency aid have for the establishment of the modern, constitutionally contained state monopoly on the use of force and its most important representative in everyday life, the public police? Did they contribute to their legitimacy and stabilization, and if so, how? And were such developments specific to Europe or what role did and do practices of collective emergency aid play in non-European societies?

For the 33rd Colloquium on Police History, we are looking for contributions that are dedicated to various aspects of the development of police, security and modern statehood - for the early modern period, the 19th and 20th centuries or the recent present or also in a *longue durée* perspective (without any claim to completeness!):

- Scenarios of policing emergencies and crises
- Voluntariness and altruism, pastoral care and psychological counselling: The emotional dimension in the history of emergency aid, welfare and crisis management
- States of emergency and (competing) modes to communicate social threats and their significance for the institutionalization of claims to order
- Emergency aid, welfare and crisis management and the long development of the modern, "negative" concept of policing (emergency response – "Gefahrenabwehr")
- Autocracy vs. democracy: effects of the political system on the policing of emergencies and disasters
- "Non-political" emergencies (epidemics, natural disasters, supply crises) and their interactions with political states of emergency
- Civic "self-sense" or nihilistic negation of the state? Configurations of the invective negation of public security and aid services

We welcome contributions from early modern to the history of the present. Contributions on the history of non-German-speaking and non-European regions and countries as well as from disciplines others than history are highly welcome.

The contributions will be presented as 20-minute oral presentations, in German or English, preferably with the use of PowerPoint and media examples. When compiling the program, preference will be given to empirically argued and source-based case studies rather than general conceptual discussions and pure project presentations. PhD students and postdocs are expressly encouraged to report on their current projects.

As always, in addition to the thematic sections, there will also be an open section in which current research findings on police history can be presented.

Please send your proposal (maximum 3,000 characters including spaces) in German or English plus a short CV and, if applicable, a list of a maximum of 5 relevant publications to KPG2024@tu-dresden.de by 15 February 2024 at the latest. Travel and accommodation costs for speakers will most likely be covered by HAIT e.V. or the Chair of Totalitarianism Studies at TU Dresden.