

Conference Call for Papers

The 16th Annual Minerva Conference on International Humanitarian Law

Looking from the Outside In: Evaluating IHL from Other Normative Perspectives

Jerusalem, November 9-10, 2021

Introduction:

The Minerva Center for Human Rights at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem is organizing an international conference that seeks to evaluate the state of the discipline of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) from critical viewpoints located in other disciplines.

The conference, the sixteenth in the series of annual Minerva international conferences on IHL, is scheduled for November 9-10, 2021, in Jerusalem. The conference will take place in an in-person format, while allowing for the remote participation of a small number of participants who are not yet able to travel.

Recipients of this call for papers are invited to submit proposals to present a paper at the conference. Authors of selected proposals may be offered full or partial flight and accommodation expenses.

Submission deadline: 15 August 2021

Background:

There is a significant gap between the formal rules of IHL and popular perceptions of what constitutes legitimate conduct in and around the battlefield and an acceptable level of harm to humanitarian values and interests. Practices such as civilian incidental injury and targeted killings, which are accepted in some circumstances as lawful by many, if not most, IHL scholars and professionals in the field, are often viewed with horror and repulsion by the general public. At the same time, other members of the public criticize the restraining effect of IHL from the opposite direction, because they allegedly hamper the ability of governments to take effective security measures against military and terrorist threats.

Such gaps between rules and perceptions of appropriate action point to an inherent, perhaps inevitable, tension between law and morality, as well as changing moral sensibilities about armed conflicts and victimhood. This dissonance underscores the fact that alongside IHL, other normative systems generate different expectations that compete with IHL for influence over public opinion, the positions of third states vis-à-vis an armed conflict, and the actual conduct of the parties to the conflict. The evaluation of IHL from external normative vantage points, especially non-legal ones, may provide academics and practitioners operating within the discipline of IHL or studying it with reflective tools to understand IHL's mechanics, biases, limits and blind-spots.

The conference seeks to appraise the impact of external normative perspectives on the evaluation of the interpretation and application of IHL, as well as the actual influence over time of these perspectives on IHL doctrines regulating the conduct of hostilities and public reactions to such conduct. It also seeks to explore the impact of extra-legal norms for developments within IHL and on the discourse surrounding the discipline's legitimacy and effectiveness. Finally, it aims to examine non-legal fora in which normative challenges to IHL are presented,

including traditional media, social media, popular culture, academia, civil society, political venues and the military itself.

The conference organizers invite proposals to present papers dealing with any of the following questions:

- IHL as a power-legitimizing vocabulary in an era of hyper-connectivity
- IHL as reflected in traditional media - can popular misconceptions help to revitalize IHL?
- Normative assumptions about IHL as represented in popular culture
- Social media campaigns to reform or ignore IHL
- The principle of proportionality in IHL and in public perceptions
- The role of NGOs in advancing new conceptions or misconceptions about IHL
- War as a crime - the effect of criminalizing aggression on the perceptions about the *jus in bello* / *jus ad bellum* distinction
- The role of human rights law as mediating between IHL and morality
- Has the time come for new emancipatory projects to replace IHL as a regulatory framework for armed conflicts?
- Does the changing nature of international conflicts (including resort to new and emerging military technologies) encourage greater resort to new normative sources?
- Do asymmetrical conflicts aggravate the tensions between IHL and other normative systems?

The organizers also welcome proposals on other relevant and contemporary issues relating to the topic of the conference.

Submissions:

Researchers and practitioners interested in addressing these issues are invited to respond to this call for papers with a 1-2 page proposal for an article and presentation, along with a brief CV.

Proposals should be submitted at: <http://gss.huji.ac.il>, no later than **15 August 2021**. Note that in order to apply, applicants must first create an account on the website. Once the account has been created, the "16th Annual Minerva IHL Conference" can be found under the category "General Applications".

For questions regarding the application process, please contact: mchr@savion.huji.ac.il.

Applicants should expect notification of the committee's decision by 30 August 2021. Written contributions (of approximately 20 pages) based on the selected proposals will be expected by 30 October 2021.

Publication:

The [Israel Law Review](#) (a Cambridge University Press publication) has expressed interest in publishing selected full length papers based on conference presentations, subject to its standard review and editing procedures.

Conference Academic Committee:

Einat Albin, Minerva Center for Human Rights, Hebrew University of Jerusalem; Tomer Broude, Hebrew University of Jerusalem; Danny Evron, Minerva Center for Human Rights, Hebrew University of Jerusalem; David Kretzmer, Hebrew University of Jerusalem; Yaël Ronen, *Israel Law Review*, Hebrew University of Jerusalem; Yuval Shany, Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Chair).