



CALL FOR PAPERS

Class Conflict and Institutional Change

Otto Kahn-Freund (1900–1979) and the Invention of Labor Law

Conference, November 13–15, 2024 | MPIfG, Cologne

Conference theme

Employing the lens of the life and work of Otto Kahn-Freund (1900–1979), we investigate the invention of labor law as a distinct field of legal doctrine and scholarship. Invention and reinvention are understood here to be ongoing political and scholarly processes, involving the defense of existing institutions and the development of new ones. We consider developments across the twentieth century, from the end of the first world war to the struggle over the second postwar settlement in the 1970s and thereafter. Following Kahn-Freund, we conceive of labor law scholarship as an interdisciplinary endeavor, combining insights from political economy, sociology of law, and empirically-oriented industrial relations. As such, our investigation allows us to address two questions: How was legal scholarship on the changing conflict between capital and labor related to contemporary developments in the social sciences, and what can we learn from this today?

We invite paper proposals which address the conference theme. In particular, authors may wish to address the following:

- The relations and interactions of labor law scholars and trade unionists in the Weimar Republic
- The reception of Karl Marx and Max Weber in Weimar labor law scholarship and, especially, the work of Otto Kahn-Freund
- Labor law and the state under capitalism: from Heller and Neumann to Laski and Miliband
- Labor law and corporatism: the legal empowerment and control of trade unions through the institutionalization of trade union rights; delegated rights and imposed restriction; Keynes to Marshall to Donovan – Keynesian full employment – incomes policy in the 1970s and its failure
- Labor law and comparative political economy: the origins and significance of commonality and difference.

Venue

The Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies (MPIfG) is located in Cologne, Germany. It is one of the largest social science research institutions in Germany, regarded internationally as one of the top research institutes in the social sciences. Cologne has its own airport and can be easily reached by train from Frankfurt International Airport, Düsseldorf airport, and other locations throughout mainland Europe.

Confirmed speakers

- Zoe Adams, University of Cambridge
- Ruth Dukes, University of Glasgow
- Richard Hyman, London School of Economics

- Agustín José Menéndez, Universidad Complutense de Madrid
- Brishen Rogers, Georgetown University
- William Scheuerman, Indiana University
- Wolfgang Streeck, MPIfG
- Rebecca Zahn, University of Strathclyde

Submissions

Scholars who are interested in presenting papers at the conference are invited to submit an abstract of up to 500 words. Please include a title, your name and affiliation, and contact information.

Abstracts should be sent to **Ruth Dukes** at ruth.dukes@glasgow.ac.uk by **April 30, 2024**. Please copy the following text into the title of the email: **Class Conflict and Institutional Change Paper Proposal**. Decisions on the acceptance of paper proposals will be communicated by **May 31, 2024**.

Logistics and key dates

We are grateful for the financial and administrative support provided by the MPIfG. Thanks to that support, no fee will be charged for attendance at the conference, but participants may be asked to cover their own travel and accommodation expenses. Information about recommended hotels will be provided at a later date.

- **April 30, 2024**: Last day to submit paper proposals
- **May 31, 2024**: Decisions on acceptance of paper proposals
- **November 13–15, 2024**: Conference in Cologne

Any questions can be addressed to **Ruth Dukes** at ruth.dukes@glasgow.ac.uk.