



Towards Utopia – Rethinking International Law



Call for Papers: Walther Schücking Workshop
for Young International Lawyers
Kiel, 19-20 August 2017

The Walther Schücking Institute for International Law at the University of Kiel is organising a two-day workshop on new and utopian approaches to international law.

Walther Schücking, judge at the Permanent Court of International Justice and namesake of the Institute, was said to hold views “[destined to become the law of the future](#)” (James Brown Scott). We wish to discuss visions for that law of the future at the workshop, which will focus on progressive, unconventional thinking and new ways of approaching, using, and conceptualising international (and regional) law. It is aimed primarily at young international lawyers (PhD students or post-docs), in the hope that we may come together as a diverse group of open-minded and idealistic scholars to develop and discuss utopian lines of thought otherwise left unpursued.

We welcome submissions that engage with **utopian thought and international law** – either in form of substantive suggestions or recursively on utopian approaches in general and the possibility of rethinking international law. Possible topics include but are not limited to:

- *The role(s) of utopianism:* Which role(s), if any, does utopianism play in current international legal theory and political morality? Which should it play? Are some areas of law (e.g. human rights, *ius cogens*) particularly relevant – or troublesome?
- *Moral and legal progress:* How, if ever, can we reach or work towards utopia? How should progress be measured? What are the implications for conceptualising time, morality, and law?
- *Existing structures:* How do current structures of international law (e.g. certain dogmatic approaches, formalism, supposed objectivity or neutrality of law) relate to utopian thought? How, if ever, can these be overcome? Should they?
- *Critical approaches revisited:* Can primarily critical and deconstructive approaches (feminist, queer, anti-colonialist, critical race or disability studies, etc.) be given positive and utopian formulations?
- *Practical implications:* What should utopian proposals actually look like? What are their implications for structural reforms of international law and international organisations? What would such reforms entail?

We are honoured that **Professor Philip Allott** of the University of Cambridge has agreed to join our workshop and discuss these matters. His ground-breaking work on reconceiving international law and overcoming current modes of thought, particularly his recent monograph *Eutopia* ([re-published in paperback in March 2017, with a new Introduction](#)), may serve as a starting point for our explorations. It could be commented upon, further developed, or used as a prism through which to analyse certain issues; it can also be criticised or given a feminist or queer reading. All kinds of utopian approaches relating to the topics suggested above are welcome. Professor Allott’s work will serve as a common frame of reference that enables discussion among the workshop participants despite a wide range of substantive topics or different approaches.

Professor Allott will also give the inaugural Walther Schücking Lecture on the day before the workshop, which participants are invited to attend. The title of his lecture will be *Beyond War and Diplomacy. A Giant Step for Mankind*.

The workshop will be held on the weekend of **19-20 August 2017**, with the Walther Schücking Lecture scheduled for the afternoon of **18 August**. We envision a format of intense discussion between around fifteen participants, with each participant giving a brief presentation. Interested scholars should submit an abstract of around 750 words to the organising committee (utopia@wsi.uni-kiel.de) by **8 May 2017**. Abstracts must include a title and the name and affiliation of the author; preference will be given to those at an early stage of their career (PhD students or post-docs). We encourage scholars with different backgrounds to apply – interdisciplinary submissions are welcome.

If your abstract is accepted, you will be expected to submit a paper of around 8,000 words (including footnotes) by **7 August 2017**. The papers will be circulated among the workshop participants in advance to facilitate an in-depth discussion. Selected papers may, subject to peer review, subsequently be published in the German Yearbook of International Law.

The workshop will take place in a beautiful waterfront location in Kiel, Germany. All reasonable travel expenses for workshop participants will be reimbursed, and hotel rooms in Kiel will be provided for two nights. Further information on funding and reimbursement procedures will follow once participants have been chosen.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the organising committee: Isabelle Haßfurter, Wiebke Staff, and Jens Theilen (utopia@wsi.uni-kiel.de).

Timeline:

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| 8 May 2017: | Deadline for submission of abstracts (ca. 750 words) |
| 7 August 2017: | Deadline for submission of full papers (ca. 8,000 words) |
| 18 August 2017: | Walther Schücking Lecture from 4-6 pm |
| 19-20 August 2017: | Walther Schücking Workshop |