



Call for Papers

“Case and Code in the Chinese Legal Tradition”

Chinese Legal Tradition Working Group Conference:

June 24-28, 2024

Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities, Bad Homburg

The Max Planck Institute for Legal History and Legal Theory invites paper presentations for the second conference of a working group dedicated to exploring the history of a distinctly Chinese legal tradition linking the imperial past to the legal regimes of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The theme of this and the subsequent volume planned to convey the results of the workshop is “Case and Code in the Chinese Legal Tradition.”

The conference aims to:

- (1) pinpoint specific sites of continuity and disjuncture in the juridical practices of the Chinese legal tradition;
- (2) identify processual and material characteristics of the production, translation, and negotiation of normativity in the Chinese legal tradition;
- (3) produce an analytical and conceptual language for comparative histories of the Chinese legal tradition.

Applicants are invited to propose individual or group research papers that pertain to the theme of the conference. Special consideration will be offered to projects covering time periods not yet represented in the conference (early China, middle China, and the first half of the twentieth century are currently lacking) and to those whose subjects or methodology offer strong potential for comparison across the various times and spaces of the Chinese legal tradition.

Topics might include but are not limited to:

- Material, procedural, or conceptual definitions of what constitutes a “case,” the “code,” and any other institutions or mechanisms that mediate the relationship between the two.
- Evidence of how the judgment of individual cases is or is not influenced by the code (or alternative sources of legal order, such as administrative regulations, custom, etc.).
- Analysis of how processes traditionally excluded from legal history influenced the production and interaction of “code” and “case.”
- Theorizations or illustrations of the role of “precedent” in deciding cases and fixing or refining legal codes.
- Studies on processes and theories of codification in the Chinese legal tradition.



Research papers offering particular insight into the relationship between case and code in the Chinese legal tradition, or critical traction on the concepts and practices integral to the relationship between the two as they evolve over time, will be invited to contribute to an edited volume or journal forum.

Application process

Scholars interested in contributing to the first round of this conference are invited to submit 1) a paper abstract (anywhere between 250 and 1,000 words); and 2) a CV.

Please send applications to sekduve@lhl.mpg.de by February 16, 2024.

Organizers

The workshop is organized by Elif Akcetin and Maura Dykstra (Yale).