

Call for Papers**“Hugo and the Law”****8 May 2025****Maastricht University Faculty of Law****Maastricht, The Netherlands**

On the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the publication of the first volume of *Actes et Paroles*, the collection of Victor Hugo’s political speeches, the *UM Law and Popular Culture Research Network* organizes a Workshop on 8 May 2025 dedicated to the author’s conceptualization of several legal issues. The Workshop will take place at the Faculty of Law of Maastricht University (The Netherlands), with a fully in-person program.

Goal and Background of the Workshop

In his several works, Victor Hugo has often delved into profound perspectives into the relationship between humanity and the law. Hugo was not merely a renowned novelist but a visionary thinker who engaged with multiple societal issues, including the intricacies of the legal system, the condition of women, the rise of socialism, and the future of Europe. On the 150th anniversary of the publication of *Actes et Paroles* – which perfectly captures such themes– this Workshop aims to examine Hugo’s conception of the law.

Hugo’s conception of the law is multifaceted, encompassing both its theoretical foundations and its practical implications. His writings often reflect a deep concern for the struggle for power and the ethical responsibilities of institutions. Through an examination of Hugo’s literary corpus, the Workshop will explore how his books’ characters grapple with the complexities of law and its impact on individuals and society. One key aspect of the Workshop is Hugo’s emphasis on the moral dimension of the law. His characters navigate questions of morality, duty, and conscience by their interactions with legal systems. At the same time, the Workshop will address Hugo’s critique of the legal machinery, shedding light on his observations regarding the potential for injustice and the abuse of power. Furthermore, this Workshop will investigate the historical context in which Hugo lived and wrote, considering the political and social upheavals that influenced his views on the law. From the aftermath of the French Revolution to the establishment of the Second French Republic, through the rise and fall of the Empire of Napoleon III, until the experience of the Commune, Hugo’s observations of the evolving legal landscape are integral to understanding his perspective on the nature of power, the State and the foundations of Europe, and the condition of women.

By examining the philosophical, historical, and theoretical underpinnings and practical implications of Hugo’s thoughts on law, the Workshop aims to illuminate the enduring relevance of his insights and their potential to inspire contemporary discussions on law and justice.

Abstract Submissions

The “Hugo and the Law” Workshop will feature panel sessions. Submissions should relate to the overarching theme of the Workshop.

Submissions should indicate the title of the contribution, an abstract (max. 400 words), and the contact information and a short biography of the speaker (max. 150 words). Fully written papers are not required. We encourage submissions in English, and co-authored papers will be also considered.

Who Can Participate in this Workshop?

The “Hugo and the Law” Workshop is not restricted to lawyers. We welcome proposals that offer multi-disciplinary perspectives from various areas of law (including civil, criminal, tax, and labor law), as well as from scholars in e.g. the humanities and other social sciences (e.g. history, economics, political science, sociology) with an interest in the Workshop’s theme. We welcome submissions from senior and junior scholars (including doctoral students) and interested practitioners.

How and When to Submit?

Send your submission to agustin.parise@maastrichtuniversity.nl

The Call for Papers closes on 22 December 2024. Shortly after that, the authors will be informed whether their papers are selected for a presentation during the Workshop.

Conference Organizing Committee

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Workshop Organizing Committee:

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