Forum Transregionale Studien

Transregional Academy
21—30 Aug 2017
Berlin

Call for applications

Redistribution and the Law in an Antagonistic World

The Berlin-based Forum Transregionale Studien and the Max Weber Stiftung – Deutsche Geisteswissenschaftliche Institute im Ausland cordially invite doctoral and postdoctoral scholars from the humanities and social sciences, in particular law, political sciences, political economy, history, anthropology and economy to apply for a Transregional Academy. It will be convened 21st to 30th August at the Humboldt-Universtität zu Berlin on the topic "Redistribution and the Law in an Antagonistic World" and chaired by Isabel Feichtner (Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg), Philipp Dann (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin), Jochen von Bernstorff (Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen), Surabhi Ranganathan (University of Cambridge), Celine Tan (University of Warwick), Arnulf Becker Lorca (Georgetown University, Washington, DC).

Deadline:

Application received by March 12, 2017 and addressed to:
academies@trafo-berlin.de

Forum Transregionale Studien · Max Weber Stiftung · Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin · Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen · Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg · Gefördert vom Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung

Rationale

Many pressing societal challenges of our time – environmental destruction, military violence, mass migration, financial crises – can be described as global conflicts of distribution. They raise questions not only as to how a more equitable distribution – of prosperity, capabilities, participation rights – may be achieved, but also as to how current distribution patterns have been produced and are being reproduced.

Law plays a crucial role in addressing such conflicts: It shall provide procedures for equitable distribution, enforce distributive decisions and embody normative guidance for what is to count as just or equitable distribution – or it is mobilized for resistance against allegedly unjust distributions. Yet, law is not only instrumental in processes of re-distribution. Law and legal institutions have always already distributed even before conflicts about distribution emerge. Law is constitutive of institutions which fundamentally shape and determine distributions of entitlements and liabilities between individuals, states, regions – think only of the market, money or state sovereignty.

As discontent with societal distribution patterns is rising globally, it is high time that humanities and social sciences – including lawyers – engage in rigorous analysis of the ways in which legal institutions produce winners and losers and the potential for alternative distributions through institutional re-design.

Structure

The Academy aims to provide a forum for scholars from law and other disciplines who investigate the distributive effects of law and explore avenues for the re-design of legal institutions to achieve more equitable distributions. The Academy seeks to be a venue for scholars interested in collaborative research on global distribution conflicts to connect with like-minded peers around the globe.

The Academy will consist of three modules: (1) project seminars for the discussion of research projects by the participants; (2) reading groups inquiring into the insights to be gained from disciplines other than law for the analysis of law's distributive effects (3) colloquia for engagement with scholars as well as institutional entrepreneurs who are breaking new ground in the study of distribution and institutional re-design.

While the colloquia will take place in plenary, three working spaces will be established to group participants for project seminars and reading groups in order to allow for intensive debate on participants' research and thematically focused reading.

Working Space I: (Re-)Distribution and "Development Assistance"

Development assistance has been one of the most overt and at the same time most contentious instruments of redistribution that apportions not only financial resources but also epistemological clout, institutional voice and normative legitimacy.

In Working Space I we want to scrutinize the role of law in providing institutional, ideological and instrumental structures of this field, reviewing current challenges as well as historical roots and antecedents.

We will discuss, among other themes, the emergence of new actors (new development banks, private banks, philanthropies, NGOs), the normative structures of standards (safeguards, conditionalities, indicators), the role of knowledge, regimes of accountability and, last but not least, the role of law and lawyers and their methods of engagement with these issues.

Working Space II: (Re-)Distribution through Transnational Economic Law

In Working Space III we will focus on the distributive effects of the legal design of economic institutions, including the legal design of international trade and investment agreements, the legal design of money and financial institutions and the legal design of exploitation regimes for the global commons, the deep seabed and outer space.

We will inquire into methods for assessing the distributive effects of transnational economic law; explore explicit and implicit normative assumption – in law, politics and scientific discourses – as to what counts as just or equitable distribution. Finally, we will engage with projects of institutional re-design that aim at remedying perceived distributional inequities such as the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America, the Asian Development Bank or the Icelandic Proposal for Sovereign Money Reform.

Working Space III: (Re-)Distribution and Interventionism

Historically states have used various ways of intervening in foreign communities and contexts with open or covert distributive agendas. Colonialism in its multiple legal and political forms is a paradigmatic phenomenon employing such forms of intervention. From the 19th century onwards international institutions in various fields did replace unilateral interventions through new and allegedly more legitimate forms of interventions, be they political, economic or of a military nature. From the perspective of the affected communities these interventions remain interventions from outside. International legal discourse in various ways thus empowers and constrains interventionism inter alia through the principles of non-intervention, the prohibition of the use of force, international human rights law and the law of international institutions.

In Working Space III we will analyze the distributive effects of various patterns of interventionism and of the accompanying legal discourse. In what way stabilize specific interpretations of international legal norms interventions with distributive effects? How and to what extent does international law “normalize” hegemonic forms of interventionism? Why and how do aspired constraining effects of international legal norms on interventionism fail in practice?

Organization

The Transregional Academy is chaired by the above-mentioned group of scholars and organized by the Forum Transregionale Studien and the Max Weber Stiftung.

The Transregional Academy will invite up to 21 doctoral and postdoctoral scholars from different countries and academic backgrounds to present and discuss their current research within an international and multi-disciplinary framework. The Academy is designed to support scholarly networks.

For questions regarding the concept of the Academy, please contact Prof. Dr. Philipp Dann: philipp.dann@rewi.hu-berlin.de; for questions regarding eligibility and format please contact Alix Winter: academies@trafo-berlin.de; T: +49 (0)30 89 001-424; F: +49 (0)30 89 001-440.

Conditions of Application and Procedure

Participants receive a stipend covering travel and accommodation. The program targets doctoral and postdoctoral researchers who wish to present their ongoing projects in both a comparative perspective and in relation to the questions raised above. Moreover the researchers' work should be clearly relevant to the themes of the Transregional Academy. The working language is English. The application should likewise be in English and consist of:

— a curriculum vitae;
— an outline of the project (300 words max.) on which the applicant is currently working
— a brief motivation letter which describes the relevance of the own research for the topic of the Academy;
— two suggested readings relevant to the Academy and which you would like to discuss with other participants (please provide bibliographical data only, no copies of the suggested readings are required);
— the names of two university faculty members who can serve as referees (no letters of recommendation required).

Sent by **e-mail** as **one PDF file** by **March 12, 2017** to **academies@trafo-berlin.de**

Applicants will be notified with the result of the selection process by May 1st. Successful applicants will be asked to submit by July 1st, 2017 the draft of a research paper, draft chapter of their PhD or comparable work (6,000 words max.) to be discussed in the project seminar.

The Transregional Academy is part of the strategic cooperation between the Forum Transregionale Studien and the Max Weber Stiftung – Deutsche Geisteswissenschaftliche Institute im Ausland. It is supported by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, BMBF).

The Berlin-based Forum Transregionale Studien is a research organization that promotes the internationalization of research in the humanities and social sciences. It is dedicated to a research agenda that systematically links disciplinary approaches and the expertise of area studies, by focusing on entanglements and interactions across national, cultural or regional borders. The Forum is supported by the Land of Berlin.

The Max Weber Stiftung promotes global research, concentrated around the areas of social sciences, cultural studies, and the humanities. Research is conducted at ten institutes in various countries worldwide with distinctive and independent focal points. Through its globally operating institutes, the Foundation is able to contribute to the communication and networking between Germany and the host countries or regions of its establishments.

For more information please see:
academies.hypotheses.org
forum-transregionale-studien.de
maxweberstiftung.de