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## DIGITAL JUNIOR SCHOLARS WORKSHOP LAW AND TRANSFORMATION 2021

The second DAAD-funded Junior Scholars Workshop on Law and Transformation was held between 17 and 26 February 2021. This colloquium is a collaboration between the Chair of Public and Comparative Law at Humboldt University and four Indian universities, the National Law School of India University (NLSIU) Bangalore, Azim Premji University (APU) Bangalore, National Law University (NLU) Delhi, Jindal Global Law School (JGLS), Sonapat. While last year young scholars from India were invited to Berlin, this year's workshop, unsurprisingly, took place in the digital space; however, this did not detract from the intensity of the academic exchange.

During the colloquium, 17 junior scholars submitted unpublished dissertation projects which were discussed among the 28 participants including leading academics from India and Germany. Since the projects were at different stages of development, the format of the submitted articles ranged from simple conceptualisations of the research project to written exposés to entire book chapters.

The contributions also showed a wide diversity in terms of subject matter and they only in part completely related to the broad field of public law in Germany. In respect of constitutional law and constitutional theory, scholars presented papers on topics such as the development of standards of judicial review in India, contributions on the historical process of India's constitutionalization, and the phenomenon of authoritarian constitutionalism in the Global South. Some projects were devoted to postcolonial criticism of German fundamental rights doctrine and international treaty law, others examined the historical reappraisal of German administrative law. Another paper analysed the Indian and German legal systems in context of climate change.

Yet, some contributions could not be assigned to public law *per se*, but shed light on private, labour or criminal law, as well as legal theory. In the field of criminal law papers critically examined forensic science in India for practical inadequacies and the discriminatory practice of predictive policing in India. Another article discussed the normative placement of the death penalty within a right to health framework. Also, criminal justice reform in India was analysed with reference to violence against women, and another contribution looked at gendered labour in Indian labour law. Finally, some papers discussed the analytical nature of the Corporation or dealt with alternatives to traditional development aid in India.

In addition to the academic core business of presenting and critiquing the papers, the workshop also served to provide practical support for the doctoral students. In '*skills workshops*,' the participants were divided into small groups in which they addressed the operational aspect of PhD projects in general: The participants shared their experiences on methods to handle long term projects. Questions about the necessity of building academic networks and techniques of efficient work during the pandemic were also addressed. Lastly, there were also insightful discussions regarding the possibilities of publishing one's own work.

During the entire colloquium, great importance was accorded to a change of perspective, in the sense that, as a general rule, young German scholars presented the work assigned to them by their Indian colleagues and vice versa. This feedback was then followed by a critique from the senior researcher of another law faculty who was not supervising the respective project. In a third step, the plenary was given the opportunity to give feedback. Neither the professors nor the doctoral students were necessarily thematically familiar with the contribution they were

criticising. In this respect, the intended change of perspective was epistemological as well as institutional in nature. This shift from one's own contextually familiar and institutionally acquainted environment into the realm of the unknown led to a slow and eclectic, but steady approach to the complexity of an unfamiliar jurisdiction over the course of six sessions. While this procedure was somewhat unusual at first, one became increasingly accustomed to one's own inexperienced view and thus, over time, developed a comparative and more critical perspective on one's own legal system.

Thilo Herbert  
Jahnvi Sindhu