We are delighted to welcome you to our newsletter. It is designed for everyone with an interest in legal history, global history, or legal studies. Our institute - the Max Planck Institute for European Legal History - has devoted itself to the investigation of the history and development of law in Europe and beyond. In our monthly newsletter, we will keep you updated about events at the institute, new publications by our fellows, and other news about the field. For comments, suggestions, and general feedback please email us: media @ rg.mpg.de. We hope you enjoy this month’s issue.

Opportunities

- Postdoc and research scholarships in 2018 at the MPI, deadline 31.05.2017.
- Postdoc scholarship Simon-Dubnov-Institute, research project "jewish jurists during the 19th and 20th century",

Events in April and May

- 03.05.2017 PhD@maxlaw meeting 2017
- 09.05.2017 Institute retreat, the institute at the Reichskammergericht
- 15.05.2017 Jour Fixe: HyperMachiavel
New Publications

The Soviet Union and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

This essay by Anna Lukina examines the Soviet role in the creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It distinguishes between the Soviet and the Western models of fundamental rights up to 1948, and puts the Soviet context into its historical perspective. Available via SSRN.

The legitimation of private and public regulation

A special issue of the journal "Politics and Government", edited by Peter Collin (et al.) focuses on non-state actors who participate in generating and implementing norms and rules in non-governmental or semi-governmental organizational arrangements within as well as beyond the borders of the nation-state. The issue is available in open access.

Parental Care and the Best Interests of the Child in Muslim Countries

Jean-Philippe Dequen treats India in the recently published volume by Nadjma Yassari et al. (eds.), Parental Care and the Best Interests of the Child in Muslim Countries, The Hague: T.M.C. Asser Press 2017, p. 29-61
Religion in the Mirror of the Law

Volume 280 of the Studien zur europäischen Rechtsgeschichte series, "Religion in the Mirror of Law. Eastern European Perspectives from the Early Modern Period to 1939", edited by Yvonne Kleinmann, Stephan Stach and Tracie L. Wilson, is now also available in Open Access.

Featured Event

Jour Fixe: HyperMachiavel

First results of a comparison tool between the first edition of The Prince and its French translations of the XVIth century, 15.05.2017, 12.00 noon at the Institute

We will present the first results of a comparison study between the early French translations of Machiavelli’s The Prince (Jacques de Vintimille 1546, Gaspard d’Auvergne et Jacques Cappel 1553, Jacques Gohory 1571 and Amelot de la Houssaie 1683) and its editio princeps by Blado 1532. The work published online was done thanks to a tool specifically designed for the project called “HyperMachiavel”. Inspired by machine translation and lexicographic domains, HyperMachiavel proposes an annotation environment dedicated to the edition of lexical correspondences between different versions of a text and assist humanities researchers in their interpretations of the quality and the specificities of the translator's work.

Meet the Author: Tamar Herzog

May 31, 16.00-18.00, Z01

On May 31, the Institute will host a meet-the-author evening with Tamar Herzog, the Monroe Gutman Professor of Latin American Affairs at Harvard University. We will have the great opportunity to discuss her most recent book: Frontiers of Possession: Spain and Portugal in Europe and the
Americas (Harvard, 2015). Herzog, a professor in Harvard’s Department of History and School of Law, has a distinguished publishing history and has been an essential contributor to the historiography on law in colonial Latin America, and the development of early modern law, in general.

Guests and Visiting Scholars

- **Aloni, Omer** *(Tel-Aviv University)*, research project: "The League of Nations, 1919-1939", visiting May and June 2017.
- **Heirbaut, Dirk** *(Ghent University)*, research project: "Convivencia", visiting May 2017.
- **Luque-Reina, Antonio-Manuel** *(Autonomous University of Madrid)*, research project: "Reassessing the Emergence of Spanish Administrative Law", visiting May and June 2017.
- **Sakrani, Raja** *(Käte Homburger Kolleg, Bonn)*, research project: "Convivencia", affiliate researcher in May 2017.
- **Villa-Flores, Javier** *(University of Illinois, Chicago)*, research project: "Public Faith and the Dark Side of Trust in 18th Century Mexico", visiting 22.05.-22.06.2017

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What are you reading?

I recently (re)discovered Susan Sontag’s “Illness as Metaphor” and was absorbed by it. I’m not an avid reader, but she has a sublime style. The topic itself is not new to us. Indeed, one might label it a piece of “Begriffsgeschichte”: how have people talked about illness in the past? How are they talking about it today? What does this mode of talking and assigning meaning reveal about society’s state of mind? Having said this, this book offers a number of lessons for us today: First, there is the astonishing fact that Susan Sonntag wrote it in 1969 and added new chapters during the Aids crisis in the 1980s. Cancer research was far behind it’s modern state of art; thousands of people were dying from Aids while scientists had no remedy yet. She opened a whole new field for humanists and social scientists. She applied a succinct and essayistic style, which seems necessary to advance thinking in a time of crisis. Second, there is the realization that illness changes mores. The advice regularly pronounced by HIV and cancer researchers in public media impacts the ways we behave – so far so Foucault’ish. Yet the real impact of cancer and HIV is their respective latency. One can be pronounced ill before the fact manifests itself in symptoms. Once fallen ill, the treatment stretches over such a long period...
of time, that it effectively transforms a victim’s life. Latency in turn is this aspect of time-bound dynamics, which rarely features in social or cultural theories. And then there is her warning, articulated throughout the book: beware of premature interpretations! Susan Sontag does not condemn military metaphors or Star Wars imagery per se. She acknowledges the crucial function of metaphors in our communication. But metaphors can turn normative; and self-reinforcing interpretations do more harm than good. This is a problem well-known to legal historians. Reading this book raises awareness for the subcutaneous functioning of metaphors. And the book demonstrates stylish academic writing at its best. (Jasper Kunstreich)

The project seeks to understand extradition practices comparing three case studies in the British Empire: Hong Kong, Trinidad and Gibraltar. The cases are from three different regions of the globe and demonstrate interaction with different neighboring British jurisdictions and other empires: Hong Kong with the Chinese Empire, Trinidad with French Guiana, and Gibraltar with Spain. It asks: what were difficulties of implementing bilateral treaties and the Fugitive Offenders Act? What were the sources of contestation? How were metropolitan ideas as enshrined in law shaped by local contexts and negotiations and why? Can we draw any commonalities in the development of extradition practices?

Save the Date!

Workshop: Work and family in a society of orders, 8th to 9th June 2017 at the Institute

Treaties as travaux préparatoires: Conference on the 60th Anniversary of the Treaties of Rome, 22nd to 23rd June 2017 at the MPI

Max Planck Summer Academy for Legal History 2017, July 25th to August 4th at the MPI