



Akademie der Wissenschaften
und der Literatur | Mainz



Call for Papers

Annual Workshop on the Vienna School of Jurisprudence and the Pure Theory of Law 3–4 April 2023

Background. The Pure Theory of Law (*Reine Rechtslehre*) is one of the most important legal theories to emerge in the 20th century. It provides a particular approach to law, normativity and legal scholarship. Yet, just as the writings of its founder Hans Kelsen (1881–1973) are not all contributions to the Pure Theory (for example his theory of democracy), the Pure Theory, in turn, is not limited to Kelsen's writings. The original members of the Vienna School of Jurisprudence, such as Adolf Julius Merkl, as well as their global post-war heirs have developed and modified this body of thought. While neither the Pure Theory nor Kelsen's writings have lost their potential to spark interest and controversy, this approach also generates a fair amount of perplexity, misinterpretation and even deliberate ignorance. The Vienna School originated as a response to the problems of mainstream legal scholarship of its day and was intimately connected to doctrines of constitutional, administrative and international law. Its members have also contributed greatly to those fields, for example Kelsen, Josef L Kunz and Alfred Verdross in international law. Its global theoretical appeal, however, is much broader than that.

The premise. This is what we, the Hans Kelsen Research Group at the University of Freiburg, would like to discuss with you. The Annual Workshop is an intensive small two-day event where you will have the opportunity to present and discuss your ideas with the other participants of the workshop, with in-house experts, such as Matthias Jestaedt and Jörg Kammerhofer, and with an international guest expert, this year Lars Vinx of Cambridge University.

We encourage those identifying themselves as 'junior scholars' in a very broad sense (PhD students and beyond) to apply to present cutting-edge research ideas on Kelsen, the Vienna School and/or the Pure Theory. Proposals for **all topics broadly within the remit** of the workshop are welcome. We particularly encourage:

- applications from doctoral students who wish to integrate Kelsen's writings, the Vienna School and/or the Pure Theory into their work;
- proposals which deal with inter-cultural and inter-linguistic problems of the approach;
- those focusing on lesser-discussed aspects (such as political theory), arguments and writings, or on less well-known members of the Vienna School;
- papers which apply the Pure Theory to areas of doctrinal legal study, including public international law, or to specific problems of law and legal theory.

Our Annual Workshops are limited to ten participants; papers may be presented in English or German. Accommodation and food will be provided by the organisers in addition to a staggered subsidy for travel expenses (max. € 150 for intra-German, € 400 for European, € 800 for transcontinental travel). The third workshop will take place on 3 and 4 April 2022 in a rural retreat in the Black Forest, near the town of Freiburg.

Application procedure. Please send an abstract (max. 500 words) as text file (.rtf, .docx, .odt etc., *not* .pdf) and a *curriculum vitae* to rechtstheorie@jura.uni-freiburg.de until **30 November 2022**. Selected speakers should be ready to submit short papers (max. 5000 words) to the conference organisers by **13 March 2023**.