



# Call for proposals

## Law Schools Global League

### The Human Rights Research Group

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#### **Human Rights and the Decay of Democracy**

Decay of democracy has been the subject of countless manifestations from academics, journalists, civil society representatives and politicians in recent years. At every scheduled election in any relevant democracy, issues such as the increasing numbers of absent voters, the rise — or the prevalence — of ultra-right political parties and the distrust of representative institutions become central topics for the domestic electoral debate. While the linkage between democracy and the advancement of Human Rights remains largely unquestioned, the effects of deteriorating democracies on Human Rights around the globe have not been fully understood.

Human Rights are also at the very heart of this phenomenon. The rise in populist and authoritarian regimes has been closely followed, if not fuelled, by rhetoric and policies which question (i) the notion or scope of Human Rights as it's been developed since the end of the Second World War and (ii) the role and actions of international organisations and NGOs, which have, over the past 75 years, played a vital role in promoting and protecting Human Rights. As such, it is important to understand how the change of domestic political landscape has impacted the work done by international organisations, and by extension, international law itself, as well as to map out strategies undertaken by NGOs and academics to reaffirm the Human Rights discourse and related norms.

Grasping the relationship between Human Rights and the decay of democracy is likely to require the understanding of different developments arising from national experiences, the role of Supreme or Constitutional Courts in reaffirming Human Rights, the differences, if any, between developed and developing democracies and if resilient institutions have been capable of preventing degradation in political, social, economic and cultural rights. Still, research questions such as the following remain to be addressed: How can we frame and explain the current debate on democratic decay and human rights from historical, economic or sociological perspective? Are there especially vulnerable rights in this moment of crisis? Is there an interpretative change of rights and freedoms by the Supreme and Constitutional Courts, and international human rights mechanisms in an age of democratic decay? How does the democratic decline affect the interaction of domestic



jurisdictions, particularly the Supreme and Constitutional Courts, with the international or regional human rights bodies? What kind of strategies do the NGOs and civic society deploy for protection and promotion of human rights under illiberal populist regimes? What is the role of legislatures for protection of human rights in a democratic retrogression? If a crisis of democracy exists, may it also be understood as a crisis of political representation and political rights? How does it impact the rights of minorities, refugees and vulnerable groups in different countries?

For this call for proposals, we welcome works with an interdisciplinary approach (Law, International Relations, Political Science, History, Economics and other) as well as to comparative research which draws on the experiences of multiple countries simultaneously. The selected proposals will be part of a special issue or an edited volume by a collaborative work of the Human Rights research group under LSGL.

Interested participants from LSGL member schools should submit an abstract of no more than 500 words before 20<sup>th</sup> May. All abstracts will be reviewed and selections will be announced by 30<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

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