

Rechtskul- turen

Forum
Transregionale
Studien

Recht / im Kontext



Rechts- kulturen Lecture

Wed 19 Jun 2012

20:00—22:00

Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin,
Wallotstr. 19,
14193 Berlin,
Großer Kolloquienraum

Please register in advance:
rechtskulturen@trafo-berlin.de

RECHTSKULTUREN —
Confrontations Beyond Comparison
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Hans Joas: The Sacredness of the Person

Hans Joas' book "The Sacredness of the Person" offers an alternative to the two dominant narratives on the history of human rights: the mostly secularist view that traces human rights back to the French Revolution and its roots in Enlightenment thinking and the mostly Catholic view of human rights as an outgrowth of the personalist understanding of God. The alternative "genealogy" Joas proposes deals with human rights as the product of a profound cultural transformation for which he uses the term "sacralization of the person". The empirical cases studied in his book concern the abolition of torture and of slavery and the codification of human rights in the late 18th century and after World War II. After a brief summary of the book the lecture will expand Joas' argument in connection with the study of slavery and torture in a global perspective. This will shed new light on the connection between the emergence of moral universalism in the Axial Age and the history of human rights in the last centuries.

Hans Joas, Dr. phil., born 1948 in Munich, is Permanent Fellow at the Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies, and Professor of Sociology at the University of Chicago where he also belongs to the Committee on Social Thought. He was professor of sociology at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg (1987—90), professor of sociology and North American Studies at the Free University of Berlin (1990—2002), and Max Weber Professor and Director of the Max Weber Center at the University of Erfurt (2002—11). He was a Fellow at the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study in Uppsala (1992, 1999/2000, 2004/05, 2010) and at the Berlin Wissenschaftskolleg (2005/06). He holds honorary doctorates from the University of Tuebingen and the University of Uppsala and is recipient of the Niklas Luhmann Prize in 2010 and the Hans Kilian Prize in 2013.