



UNIVERSITÉ DU LUXEMBOURG  
FACULTÉ DE DROIT, D'ÉCONOMIE ET DE FINANCE

## Lecture

# Constellations of law, religion, and justice in the thoughts of Benjamin, Scholem, and Arendt

**Sigrid Weigel**, Professor of German Literature and Director of the Centre for Literature Research in Berlin.

### Abstract

The lecture addresses the authors' reflections on the tension-filled relation of law to the idea of justice. They share the attempt to approach the hidden yet excluded precondition of positive law against the backdrop of the history of religion by both tracing central aspects of the juridical system back to religious or biblical ideas and discussing the limits of jurisdiction in certain cases that are not covered by jurisdiction - whether concerning 'crimes against the humanity' (Arendt) or '*ungeheure Fälle*' (immense cases, Benjamin). The lecture refers to constellations such as: the "conversation on the dirge" between Scholem and Benjamin during their stay in Bern 1918 as a primal scene of their ideas on „law and justice“ and „lament and accusation" (*Klage* and *Anklage*), Benjamin's *Critique of violence* and essay on *Karl Kraus*, Arendt's reflections on treatise and the Covenant in *Human Condition*, and her dispute with Karl Jaspers preceding her visit of the Eichmann-trial in Jerusalem.

**Wednesday 23 January 2020**  
**6.00 pm – 7.30 pm**

### Place

**Centre Culturel de Rencontre Abbaye de Neumünster**  
28, rue Münster  
L-2160 Luxembourg-Grund

### Language

English

### Registration

- Entrée gratuite
- Registration via <https://bit.ly/2Qtg8eQ>
- Maximum of participants: 80
- The Lecture will be followed by a cocktail.

### Contact

Sandra Schwarz – [sandra.schwarz@uni.lu](mailto:sandra.schwarz@uni.lu)  
Tel.: +352 4666 44 5737

## Biography

Sigrid Weigel, the former director of the *Research Center for Literature and Culture* (ZfL Berlin), was prior professor at Hamburg, Zürich, TU Berlin, Visiting Professor at Princeton, and director of the *Einstein Forum*. – Her numerous books include: *Body- and Image Space. Re-Reading Walter Benjamin* (1996); *Genea-Logik* (2006); „*Escape to Life*”. *German Intellectuals in New York. A Compendium on Exile after 1933*. (Ed. 2012); *Walter Benjamin. Images, the Creaturly, the Holy* (2013); *Grundordnungen. Geographie, Religion, Gesetz* (Ed. 2013); *Testimony/ Bearing Witness. Epistemology, Ethics, History and Culture* (Ed. 2017); *Grammatologie der Bilder* (2015, engl. transl. forthcoming), and editions of the works of Aby Warburg, Susan Taubes, Stéphane Mosès, and Gershom Scholem.