

This autumn the Center »History of Knowledge« deals in its Lecture Series with the relation of knowledge and law. One of this semester's academic guests is the Australian cultural scientist **Jessica Whyte**, who has widely published on topics such as sovereignty, biopolitics, revolutions and critical legal theory. The workshop with Jessica Whyte is offering an introduction into the politico-legal thought of one of the theorists she has devoted much attention to: Giorgio Agamben. The wider objective is to ask how knowledge about law, rights or the juridical, can be traced within specific historical constellations, and in what way Giorgio Agamben's thought might be instructive for such undertakings.

On the basis of selected texts we are first going to explore Agamben's understanding of law and politics, and its applicability for the research of legal phenomena. This will be further discussed using the example of Jessica Whyte's current research on the Historiography of Human Rights. In the second part of the workshop, two ongoing projects dealing with the history of law and human rights are going to outline prospects and challenges for historical research on »juridical knowledge«.

# The Politico-Legal Thought of Giorgio Agamben Insights for the History of Law and Human Rights?

Workshop with Jessica Whyte  
31. October 2014, Zurich

**ETH**

Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich  
Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich



Universität  
Zürich <sup>UZH</sup>

ZENTRUM  
GESCHICHTE DES WISSENS

**Friday 31. October**

**9:30 Welcome Address and Introduction**

***Giorgio Agamben's Politico-Legal Thought and the Research of Legal Phenomena***

**9:40 Agamben's Politico-Legal Thought in *The State of Exemption***

11.00 Coffee break

**11.15 Agamben and the Historiography of Human Rights**

**Dr. Jessica Whyte**

**University of Western Sydney, Cultural Studies**

12.30 Lunch break

***How to Research Juridical Knowledge in Historical Perspective?***

**13.00 Human Rights Fact Finding in the Cold War Era**

**Jonathan Pärli, PhD candidate**

**University of Zurich, History & Doctoral Program of the Center »History of Knowledge«, ETHZ & UZH**

**14.15 The Politics of Juridical Knowledge**

**Lucia Herrmann, PhD candidate**

**University of Zurich, History & Doctoral Program of the Center »History of Knowledge«, ETHZ & UZH**

**15.15 Final Discussion**

**Agamben's Politico-Legal Thought: Insights for research on the History of Law and Human Rights?**

**Organization**

Lucia Herrmann (UZH)

Jonathan Pärli (UZH),

both members of the doctoral program of the ZGW

**Venue**

University of Zurich

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Room 015

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Jessica Whyte was invited to the ZGW by Svenja Goltermann and Monica Dommann (both UZH / ZGW)

You will receive the text reader after the registration (until Oct 16).

