

Copyright Law in Western Civilization. History, International and European Context, Copyright Systems.

What are the main aspects of copyright law in Western civilization? This is the main question the thesis is concerned with. The diversity of social reality makes it difficult to answer the problem with looking at it from only legal perspective. Therefore the answers are provided through following means.

First, the problem of copyright is regarded from a historical perspective, showing the origins of copyright, its development through the system of privileges and the establishment of a statutory protection. The differences between the civil law and common law are pointed out by explaining the natural rights theory and the concept of moral rights leading further to monist and dualist theories that were very influential within the European copyright system.

Second, the international protection, the European Union protection and the main problems and trends of the copyright problematics are targeted as means to demonstrate the different approaches evolving from different principles of the two legal traditions. The development from national to international protection structures is described and so are the main treaties, organizations and provisions, illustrating the differences, similarities and changes in the positions of continental and angloamerican copyright systems. Furthermore, the recent problems such as conflicts of interests between copyright and other areas of law are explained, followed by describing the newly emerging trends with regard to the new technologies.

Finally, the European copyright system and the copyright system of copyright countries themselves are given attention. Their key aspects are compared and so are their main objectives and the role of moral rights in their legal systems. Different concepts that both these approaches share are explained next, and so the concepts of work, author or publication are given their meaning through the lenses of modern copyright systems. The focus is also directed on the notion of limitations and exceptions of author's rights and their meaning in the digital age, as well as on the collective concepts of copyright administration and means of copyright enforcement. In the end of the work a brief comparison of the two main copyright systems is outlined.