

# CALL FOR PAPERS



**23<sup>rd</sup> International Roundtables for the Semiotics of Law – IRSL 2021**

**27-29 May 2021 – Roma (Italy)**

**Organizer: Mario Ricca**

**Hosted by Pontificia Università Antonianum  
Via Merulana, 124 – Roma  
Auditorium Antonianum, Viale Manzoni, 1 – Roma  
<http://www.auditoriumantonianum.it/>**

**IRSL President: Anne Wagner**

## **Global Semiotics and Everyday Legal Claims Intercultural Use of Law, Interreligious Dialogue and Translation Ethics**

The relationship between legal rules and the spaces where they become effective is gradually morphing. This change is precipitated by semantic or cognitive—rather than exclusively political—circumstances. The meaning of legal rules is continually challenged by the transformation of their spatial projections and their cultural coordinates. Law can no longer assume that discrete spatial circuits and corresponding cultural backgrounds coincide. Conversely, each territorial frame, sometimes even those that are most distant from metropolitan areas, can function (at least potentially) as a hub of innumerable threads of actions and interests. All these connections impinge on the significance of legal rules and, especially, the prognosis for their effectiveness. The daily life of law is affected by this spatial-semantic turmoil.

The present law's dynamic involves the conflation of different spatial and semantic frames merging reciprocal 'elsewheres' and giving social phenomena and the consequences of their legal regulation a kind of ubiquity—at least in potential terms. This means that the understanding of what is 'here' and 'now' is to be unmoored by any reification or thinghood attached to empirical events, objects, situations, etc. On the contrary, to grasp their 'real' phenomenality, namely what they are, and the consequences of the application of one legal rule rather than another, each of them is to be considered as a sign. A semiotic gaze allows the remolding of the meaningful connections underlying what we call 'things' and 'events' so as to readjust them in tune with the new scale of spatial implications between the multi-sited and worldwide determinants of what happens and is to be ruled in each 'here.' The inter-penetrations between multiple 'elsewheres' require a global semiotic understanding that

makes the legal interpreter (and even the lawmakers) cognizant of the semantic and spatial web underlying any 'fact' to be ruled. The ability to grasp what the threads of meaning comprising what is perceived as a 'fact' is also a prerequisite to envisage the consequences of the application of each legal rule and thereby the legitimacy of the way to apply each rule with regard to its prerequisites of legitimation. All this implies an effort to translate the 'other' spaces of experience implied in the understanding of the 'present facts' to be ruled, and then the intercultural translation between different circuits of experience which this understanding involves. Furthermore, insofar as culture enshrines the anthropological and historical projections of the religious horizons of meaning, any attempt to give course to intercultural translations implies and intersects with the promotion of interreligious dialogue. The anthropological schemas rooted in religious imageries, on the other hand, mold even the secularized spaces of experiences and the related categorical schemas that people use to define them. Spatial and semantic Otherness, from this point of view, is therefore to be translated as an ingredient already entailed in the production of the present and daily experience of people. In this sense and beyond any identitarian reification of culture, the ability to realize the semantic and pragmatic closeness of what is physically remote can be consistently enhanced by assuming experiential elements as signs and their reconfiguration/aggregation in new categorical frames.

The aim of the conference is to put together semioticians, anthropologists, geographers, law theorists and legal practitioners (experts in civil law, business law, family law, international law, legal anthropology, etc.) to show how the semiotic approach can function as a powerful support to face the present challenges of legal experience and transform legal practices in an outpost of a bottom-up and emancipatory intercultural use of law.

In line with the above, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary proposals will be welcomed in the hope that they can help to trigger a transdisciplinary collaboration aimed to give legal practitioners new instruments to attune people's experience with their renewed understanding of the real spatial/semantic coordinates shaping the environment they live by.

**Contributions are requested on—but not limited to—the following topics:**

- Local actions, global meanings: the space threads and the legal relevance of facts.
- The embodiment of language and the worldwide spatialities of human rights
- Language and Spaces in Global and Contextualised Human Rights Discourse
- Justice for work: intercultural communications and the semiotics of worldwide economics
- Legal assistance and the ubiquitous omnipresent? connections of the legal subject
- Beyond the Anthropocene: the legal semiotics of ecological sustainability and human subjectivity
- Translating multi-dimensional/multi-sited ordinary life experiences and the intercultural semiotics of rights
- Intercultural use of law and legal practitioners (lawyers, notaries, accountants)
- Against exotic legality: cultural difference as cognitive diffraction in daily legal experience

- Is the secularization of law a limit to the understanding of the interpenetration between religion and cultures?
- Is it possible to envisage a legal intercultural secularization as a remedy to the cognitive/cultural defectiveness of the idea of political 'neutrality' of institutions?
- Interreligious dialogue and semiotic translation as anthropological means of molding an intercultural legal lexicon
- Intercultural use of law and semiotic translation/transaction beyond the multiculturalism/interculturalism debate

**Abstracts of 300 words (max.) should be submitted by January 6, 2021 to both Mario Ricca (Organizer: [mario.ricca@icloud.com](mailto:mario.ricca@icloud.com)) and Anne Wagner ([valwagnerfr@yahoo.com](mailto:valwagnerfr@yahoo.com)) with participation decisions made by January 20, 2021.**

Selected papers will be invited for publication in a Special issue of the International Journal for the Semiotics of Law (Springer: <https://www.springer.com/journal/11196>) and/or for inclusion in an edited volume of the Law Book Series (Law and Visual Jurisprudence – Springer: <https://www.springer.com/series/16413>).

Respecting the tradition, the roundtable languages will be English and French.

Organizational Committee: Mario Ricca, Anne Wagner, Lluís Oviedo, Peter Petkoff, Paolo Heritier, Alessandro Saggiaro, Giancarlo Anello, Silvia Zorzetto, Giuditta Bassani, Riccardo Bertolotti, Kay Lalor, Jenny Ponzo, Tommaso Sbriccoli, Melisa Vazquez.