

## CALL FOR PAPERS

### INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR THE SEMIOTICS OF LAW - REVUE INTERNATIONALE DE SÉMIOLOGIE JURIDIQUE

#### **Human Rights, Recognition and Decoloniality**

*Special Issue Editors:*

*Colin Samson, University of Essex, Irene Strazzeri, Marta Vignola University of Salento.*

In recent years, human rights debates have been enriched and challenged by decolonial perspectives that question abstract universalism and the power structures underlying rights practices and discourses. These are apparent in recent books such as Ariella Aisha Azoulay's *Unlearning Imperialism*, Jessica Whyte's, *The Morals of the Market*, Colin Samson's *The Colonialism of Human Rights*. Critical sociologists and others have highlighted how dominant human rights narratives are deeply intertwined with colonial modernity and the persistence of Eurocentric epistemologies. Decoloniality, understood as an intellectual and political project, invites us to rethink human rights in terms of epistemic plurality, social justice, and recognition of the historical, cultural, and political differences of marginalised populations.

The special issue proposes a reflection starting with the concepts of human rights, recognition, and decoloniality. The colonial language and knowledge, beginning with the expansion of Europe, has taken root, and developed across the globe. It is made up of a set of elements – past and ongoing colonial violence, capitalism, misogyny, and racism - which have now become an integral part of multiple relationships of subordination. It is not enough to proclaim decolonisation without calling into question colonial modernity, its practices, knowledge production, and the much-vaunted universal human rights.

We propose to articulate this journal issue around critical reflections around human rights and the intense debate that has arisen around their alleged universalism and effectiveness. We wish to interrogate the idea of a norm of universal recognition that risks becoming a normative imposition that nullifies cultural and identity specificities, generating an intrinsic tension between individual aspirations and social normative drives. We hope to recognise decoloniality as an option, perspective, analytic, project, and/or praxis in perpetual transformation.

The proposed contributions should fall within the following thematic fields:

- Epistemologies of the South and Human rights: The decolonial critique of human rights universalism. Epistemic pluralism and cognitive justice. Indigenous and Afrocentric perspectives on rights.
- Decoloniality and recognition: Recognition and redistribution in postcolonial societies. Recognition of difference and practices of inclusion in global contexts. The role of identity politics in the decolonial context.
- Social movements and transformative practices: Social movements and human rights struggles in Latin America, Africa and Asia. The contribution of decolonial theories to the struggle against racism and patriarchy. Collective resistance practices and the construction of alternatives to colonial

modernity.

- Communication and Human Rights: The role of the media in shaping narratives on human rights. Intercultural communication and social justice. Communication strategies in decolonial and resistance movements. Critique of media representations of marginalized populations.

### *Formalities*

Papers should not exceed 15,000 words. Submissions which exceed this length will not be considered. Please take into consideration the journal's [author instructions](#)

Submission of abstracts should be addressed to [irene.strazzeri@unisalento.it](mailto:irene.strazzeri@unisalento.it) and [marta.vignola@unisalento.it](mailto:marta.vignola@unisalento.it)

### **Key dates:**

- Abstract submission deadline: **Abstracts of 300 words by 15 January 2026**
- Full paper submission deadline: After selection, **final papers should be submitted by April 2026.**