

TEXTILES OF TRUTH

Law, Language, and
the Semiotics of
Environmental Style




LILLE UNIVERSITY,
FACULTY OF LAW
6-10 JULY 2026



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 **Call for Papers**

26th International Roundtable for the Semiotics of Law (IRSL)

 **Theme:** *“Textiles of Truth: Law, Language, and the Semiotics of Environmental Style”*

 **Lille University, Faculty of Law** –  **6–10 July 2026**

In an age where environmental degradation, climate change, and hyper-consumerism converge with fast-paced global trade and digital communication, the language of law must evolve to meet new ethical, ecological, and cultural challenges. From courtroom rulings to eco-labels, from fast fashion to forest protection, how we speak, legislate, and translate ideas of sustainability and responsibility is not neutral—it is deeply semiotic, symbolic, and political.

This roundtable invites critical and creative engagements with the legal, linguistic, and visual forms of communication that shape contemporary discourses around environmental justice and consumer responsibility. We are particularly interested in how climate change reshapes the legal imagination, calling for the protection of animals, the preservation of biodiversity, and a rethinking of legal obligations in the face of ecological collapse.

The fashion and textile industries serve as prime sites for exploring these dynamics. Whether critiquing the impact of fast fashion, tracing the rise of “upfashion,” or investigating upcycling as a semiotic and legal gesture of resistance, contributors are encouraged to unpack how style, law, and communication are entangled in the ethics of our material world.

Core Threads & Suggested Topics

Submissions should align with one or more of the following themes. We particularly welcome analyses grounded in legal interpretation, jurisprudence, and comparative legal contexts:

- **The linguistic turn in environmental and consumer law:** metaphor, narrative, and legal meaning-making
- **Semiotics of sustainability and style:** fast fashion, “upfashion,” branding, and regulatory symbolism
- **Legal translation and transfer:** multilingual challenges in global consumer and environmental governance
- **Eco-labels, certification, and compliance:** between legal language and marketing discourse
- **The visual performance of legal norms:** activism, advertising, and public persuasion
- **From legalese to plain language:** improving access to environmental and animal rights
- **Courtroom discourse and jurisprudence in climate, biodiversity, and consumer law**
- **Comparative legal storytelling:** how different legal cultures narrate sustainability and responsibility
- **Legal responses to upcycling and circular economy:** redefining value, reuse, and innovation
- **The legal recognition of animals:** sentience, welfare, and rights in ecological legal frameworks
- **The semiotic dimension of legal interpretation:** how visual and verbal signs shape legal meaning
- **Textiles of Truth: Aesthetic Codes, Legal Attire, and Iconographies of Justice:** This theme invites exploration of how textiles and clothing shape not only legal identity but also the symbolic performance of justice. From the veiled or blindfolded figure of Lady Justice to the varying aesthetics of legal dress across cultures—robes, sashes, wigs, or indigenous regalia—textiles express both authority and ideology. How do such visual codes construct or challenge narratives of impartiality, colonial legacy, or environmental responsibility? What does it mean to weave sustainability into the garments of the law, both literally and metaphorically?

Interdisciplinary Invitations

We welcome proposals from scholars, practitioners, and creators working in:


- Legal semiotics, law and language, and legal translation
- Environmental law, fashion law, and consumer protection
- Semiotics, discourse analysis, and communication studies
- Comparative law, legal anthropology, and global legal theory
- Design, material culture, visual studies, and sustainability studies
- Political ecology, animal law, and post humanist theory

We especially encourage interdisciplinary contributions that rethink the role of law in shaping ethical consumption, environmental justice, and interspecies futures.

Submission & Publication Opportunities


Accepted contributions will be considered for:

- A **Special Issue** of the *International Journal for the Semiotics of Law* (Springer)
- A volume in the *Law and Visual Jurisprudence* book series (Springer)

 **Please submit a 300-word abstract** (including title, author(s), affiliation(s), and 5 keywords) to:


Anne Wagner – valwagnerfr@yahoo.com

Aurélien Fortunato – aurelien.fortunato@univ-lille.fr


 **Deadline: 15 March 2026**

Conference Details

 Lille University, Faculty of Law

 6–10 July 2026

 *In-person only*

 *Format: Dialogic roundtable with thematically focused panels and moderated discussions*