



Call for Abstracts

Time pervades all dimensions of law. Time manifests as a function of the most conventional aspects of law, including law’s role in defining, regulating, and sanctioning human conduct as well as in governing and protecting societies. By the same token, law and legal processes do not exist outside of time. The relationship between law and time can be articulated through at least three broad dimensions (or legal temporalities), including:

- 1) *Functional legal temporalities*, i.e., the objectives the law seeks to achieve based on past events and/or future goals. Examples of such temporalities involve, for instance, the goals of punishment (backward-looking; forward-looking) for the determination of sanctions, or the implementation of tools such as neuropsychological testing and surveillance technologies to assess past, present and future events.
- 2) *Transformational legal temporalities*, which reflect the development of law across changing political, moral, scientific, and societal landscapes. These temporalities comprise, for instance, institutional change; changes in legal foundations, concepts, rules and their underlying paradigms (e.g., changing paradigms of legal subjects that are situated in given temporal and spatial contexts); the recognition of new human rights; criminal policy changes.
- 3) *Experiential legal temporalities*, which pertains to the role of time in the law as concretely applied on and experienced by the individuals. This type of temporalities includes, for instance: the identification of the relevant “moment” of criminal responsibility for the purposes of adjudication; the role of prior fault, the individual experience of punishment; judicial decision-making.

Even though ‘legal time’ is inextricably marked by these temporalities, it may be said to be artificial as it does not necessarily correspond to the temporalities that the law is meant to impact. That is, there may be a mismatch between (*on the one hand*) the way in which time is reflected in the law (in each of its different dimensions) and the way in which the law depicts time, and (*on the other hand*) how such time is represented and experienced in non-legal dimensions. Accordingly, the time of law is often not respondent to the time of individuals and society, including their shifting moral paradigms, political ideas, evolving social standards, and renewed knowledge. For instance, with regard to transformational legal temporalities, an increasingly common claim is that the progress of law does not keep pace with advances of new sciences and technologies. Considering the law’s slow adaptation to (more fast-paced) scientific and technological change, a risk exists that the law fails to fulfill its proclaimed roles in a variety of contexts.

Against this backdrop, this LACS Conference intends to explore the specific contribution of modern cognitive sciences (including neuroscience, neurotechnology, philosophy of mind,



psychology, artificial intelligence, robotics) in giving substance and (re)defining the complex and dynamic relationship between time, law, and change across the three temporalities sketched above. The core questions this conference seeks to tackle include: *What role does time play in shaping the contribution of cognitive sciences to the law? Can cognitive sciences shift the relational dynamics between law and time? Can cognitive sciences promote change to law's temporalities across different normative domains (e.g., adjudicative; institutional)? Can knowledge from cognitive science aid the law in keeping pace with more nuanced understandings of human conduct across different dimensions? Can cognitive sciences help the law more effectively regulate innovation?*

The LACS Conference will take place on **15 and 16 June 2023** in Maastricht (the Netherlands). There will be an option to follow/join online as well.

Interested young and established scholars and researchers with an expertise in either law, philosophy, cognitive sciences, or a combination of these, are welcome to submit a short abstract (300-500 words) by **31 January 2023**.

All contributions should include elements of the three main subjects of this conference: law, time, and (insights from) the cognitive sciences. Relevant sample topics include the impact of modern cognitive sciences on:

- Time & legal decision-making (e.g., the role of time constraints on biases)
- Time & law enforcement
- Time & legal ontology
- Time & institutional change
- Time & the (continuity of) personhood
- Time & legally relevant acts (e.g., actus reus)
- Time & the establishment of legal responsibility
- Time & punishment
- Time & risk assessment
- Time & the identification/recognition of (new) human rights (e.g., neurorights)
- Time as age(ing) (e.g., cognitive ageing and judicial decision-making; access to voting; ageing in prison)
- Time & the evolution of legal concepts/paradigms/theories
- Time & exceptional legislations (e.g., emergency legislations like COVID-19-related laws and policies)
- Other pertinent topics