

*JOURNAL OF HUMAN VALUES**Special Issue January 2020**Temporal Pluralism: Alternative Ethics of Law and Society*Concept Note

We live in transformative times, that is, times when time itself is under threat by losing on its singular character. Interestingly, our times have become plural times in which individuals who are in the same material and spiritual conditions get divergent, at times conflicting, temporal experience. What we call temporal experience is nothing but the “sense of time-space” which is a holistic awareness one has about one’s existence. Of late, this existence has become problematic due to the anachronistic intervention of one time-space into another time-space. It is an interpellation of known past (*déjà vu*), unknown present (individual solipsism and social amnesia), and to-be-known future (transcendental) into the present state of existence. Largely, it is a case of time losing its chronology and linearity.

Individuals and collectivities struggle against these odds by way of discrete imaginations and adaptations, for they have the sense of being in a revolutionary moment, a moment in which they can reinvent their existence. While individual adaptations have always been subjective—ranging from “reinventing the self” to “anesthetizing oneself to the new reality”—responses from systems of social organization have been to create new frameworks of homogeneity such as law and legal system. The inherent legality and normativity of these frameworks make them the ideal space for the selves decentered in the said conditions to reinvent themselves, forgetting any personalized pursuits in self-reorganization and yielding dependently to these frameworks.

In a certain sense all this business of adaptation is part of a “politics of homogenization” and “politics of reinvention” by which centres of historical dominance get the advantageousness of forging a preconceived sociality. They have a historical privilege over individual efforts when it comes to social ordering—“social self-perfecting” as a means for “individual self-becoming” had always a predominance over “social self-becoming” through “individual self-perfecting”. However, if one is ready to give the allowance of ordinariness to this top-down process, the politics of reinvention becomes unproblematic, for social times have always been dominated by centres of power (political, ideological, religious, and so on) which controlled the imaginations and actions of individuals, yet giving them a sense of participation and involvement.

Does that mean that revolutionary moments of modernity have been consumed by frameworks of homogeneity, totalizing and subsuming all possibilities of transformation? Have all important questions and complexities posed by temporal plurality been answered and addressed (respectively) such that individuals have been left in a barrenness of imagination? If so, is there scope left for an alternative revolution for those who have been victims of the politics of transformation? What transformation has law undergone in the politics of imaginations? What is the social ethics of the transformed time? Such and many more questions beg for response as we settle into a false (?) comfort of a “temporal pluralism”—that is a mindset by which the temporal pluralities are accommodated without tension as if a natural state in the evolution to postmodernity.

Responses to these questions can be obtained only within a critical framework of imagination that facilitates discourses on *alternatives*, for when the singularity of time, and the comfort associated with it, is challenged by a plurality, only alternative ideas can release the individual and collective selves from the indeterminacy created by temporal pluralities. This special issue of the *Journal of Human Values* (JHV) seeks contributions from authors that broadly address the tension between the much habituated singularity and the unknown plurality of times. We are equally interested in contributions that explore and envisage alternatives to the predominant positivistic conceptions of law and society, which may be drawn on multidisciplinary insights. New ethics, both the ethics of systems in transformation and the ethics of

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alternative systems, will situate help the discourses on temporal challenges, resistance, and adaptations in a new vantage.

Within the boarder theme which we have submitted, we also seek contributions on the following sub-themes:

- Rational law, rational societies: Economic approaches to social ordering
- Global ethics in global times: Ethics in law/society/education/professions
- Redefining/rediscovering/reinventing human values
- Role of individual in temporal transition
- Communities in transforming times
- Role of religion and other value systems in reimagining societies
- Scope of judicial participation in grappling with temporal pluralism

Submission Timeline:

31 March 2019: Submission of Full Article

April-May 2019: Editorial Comments/ Peer Review

June 2019: Revised Final Versions due to Editors

Manuscript Submission Guidelines:

Please visit: <https://in.sagepub.com/en-in/sas/journal/journal-human-values#submission-guidelines>

About the Journal:

The *Journal of Human Values* is a peer-reviewed tri-annual journal devoted to research on values. Communicating across manifold knowledge traditions and geographies, it presents cutting-edge scholarship on the study of values encompassing a wide range of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. Reading values broadly, the Journal seeks to encourage and foster a meaningful conversation among scholars for whom values are no esoteric resources to be archived uncritically from the past. Moving beyond cultural boundaries, the Journal looks at values as something that animates the contemporary in its myriad manifestations: politics and public affairs, business and corporations, global institutions and local organisations, and the personal and the private.

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