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Introduction to work: Toward an Universal Economy based on Human Rights

Towards the process of economic positivization

By Francesco Vigliarolo

To understand and reflect on the relationship between economics and human rights, we believe it is absolutely essential to introduce the process of economic positivization that has occurred over the centuries. From its birth in antiquity to the present day, economics has undergone a process that has completely stripped it of any ethical, cultural, social, or even transcendental dimension, to become a science on a par with the so-called exact sciences, such as physics, biology, and so on; based almost exclusively on the use of mathematical logic and statistics. From a conception of man as striving for socialization (Aristotle, one of the founders of the concept of economics along with Xenophon), we have ended up speaking exclusively of a man striving for market exchange, the so-called homo economicus. Furthermore, from man as a bearer of rights, we have ended up speaking of man as a bearer of interests, the only ones that, first with mercantilism and then with Smith, matter in explaining economic systems even today.

Thus we arrive at the end of the 19th century, an era characterized by the crisis of the social sciences, as Husserl defined it, when the distinction between positive economics and normative economics was born, thanks to John Neville Keynes, father of the more famous John Mynard. In an 1891 text on the method of political economy, he defined positive economics as "the description of how an economic system works 'as it is'"; and normative economics as "the assessment of what is desirable, its costs and benefits." Milton Friedman later echoed this definition when he argued that positive economics should be treated on a par with the natural sciences, that is, it is an exact science like physics. Indeed, he argued that positive economics is, in principle, independent of any ethical position or normative judgment; it studies "what is," not "what ought to be." Its task is to provide a system of generalizations that can be used to make correct predictions about the consequences of any change in circumstances. Its functioning must be judged by the accuracy, scope, and consistency of the predictions it provides with experience. In short, positive economics is, or can be, an "objective" science, in exactly the same sense as any physical science. Under these assumptions, the eradication of the social sciences is thus definitive.

Mathematical reasoning aimed at maximizing personal interests, grounded in extreme materialism, has pervaded all spheres of social life, even undermining interpersonal relationships. Everything has become a matter of negotiation. This process has undoubtedly intensified since the fall of the Berlin Wall, which left capitalism and the process of capital accumulation, now in its financial phase, as the sole dominant economic model, permeating all spheres, including feelings and behaviors.

Economic Financialization

Today, individual interests, completely detached from any cultural considerations, are reaching their peak with the emergence of what is called the **financialization of the economy**, which began in the 1970s. According to some, due to the declining rate of profit and the end of the United States' golden age, large American corporations sought enormous profits on the financial markets through the buying and selling of the dollar, which Nixon had separated from its gold standard.

We live in the full Krematist era, predicted by Aristotle himself, in which everyone gambles their fate at the roulette of international stock markets, transforming the global economy into a gigantic casino, as Tonino Perna argues. Just think of the phenomenon of cryptocurrencies, with millions and millions of dollars at stake every day without any production system behind them.

Financialization, however, is now a consolidated process; 95% of financial values have no relation to goods and services. To understand the change in pace that occurred precisely at the turn of the 1970s and 1980s, for example, between 1977 and 1998, global currency transactions grew from $18.3 billion per day in 1977 to $1.5 trillion. From 1977 to 1998, the ratio of annual foreign currency money value to foreign exports increased from 3.51 to 55.97. The ratio of central bank reserves to daily foreign exchange assets fell from 14.5 to 1. In 1995, financial assets represented 76 times more resources than global trade in goods and services: for every dollar spent on trade, $75 was invested in financial assets. Today, we're talking about a spread of 1 to 95, although these measurements are very difficult to sustain given the amount of currency in circulation. It's also estimated that 10% GDP growth corresponds to a 30% increase in financial values. We're therefore witnessing the absorption of a powerless mass of small investors by a financial oligarchy—high finance, as Polanyi defined it. Furthermore, they're swallowing up state-owned sectors such as pensions, healthcare, railways, and so on, reducing their rights or subordinating them to financial logic.

We're also witnessing the phenomenon of corporate impersonality and the loss of industrial identity, with companies engaging in financial speculation. This is why Alain Minc writes: "Today, it's not those who work who are rich, but those who work with money." In other words, since the 1970s, we've seen a growth in global monetary wealth, but also an increase in poverty, even in the so-called Nordic countries, as Daly and Cobb observed in a US study. GDP growth is no longer in line with growth in real well-being.

Some data in the world: social and climate crisis

According to the ILO, in recent decades we have seen a structural increase of approximately 2% in global unemployment, which equates to millions of people losing their right to work. **The number of people living on less than $6.85 a day, approximately $250, is now 3.2 billion, almost a third of the world's population**. This figure has remained stable since the 1990s and is failing to decline (Oxfam data 2025). Added to this are over 7 million citizens worldwide who die from economic pollution. 700,000 in Europe. 70,000 in Italy. And many, far too many, are dying from hunger all over the world. Not because there is no food, but because of the dysfunction of the dominant market, lacking rules and protections for rights. The wealth of billionaires globally has increased at unprecedented rates (e.g., according to Oxfam, growth of $2 trillion is expected in 2024). The richest 1% of the world's population holds a similar share of wealth to the remaining 44% of humanity, highlighting a massive imbalance. Forced labour is the second most widespread illicit economy in the world. It is estimated that, globally, forced labour generates annual profits for traffickers of $236 billion (2025 data). In low- and middle-income countries, informal employment remains the most common form of labour market participation. Women continue to earn approximately 20% less than men for the same job.

The climate crisis and extreme weather events disproportionately affect the poorest communities, directly threatening their livelihoods (agriculture, water resources) and continuously forcing migration. One in five people worldwide is highly exposed to the risk of climate disasters.

Armed conflict leads to massive economic violations. For example, in conflict areas, access to medical services is drastically reduced, and pregnant women face maternal mortality rates up to 60% higher than average.

Disparities in access to education and health services remain a key indicator of economic and social rights violations.

In summary, the violation of economic human rights is seen by major organizations such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and Oxfam as the direct result of regressive economic policies, systemic inequalities, and the lack of adequate global governance to protect the real economy and equity.

We are undoubtedly living in an era of turbocapitalism, where, according to Edward Luttwak, we are experiencing a process of acceleration and deregulation of the global economic system. We are also experiencing the rise of state capitalism, where law is subservient to economic reason, as Chomsky states. Where societies have become homogenized, they are progressively losing their creativity. And societies lacking creative capacity are destined to disappear.

The last few centuries of economic thought have therefore seen a complete loss of cultural and normative reference for this science, that NOMOS, which was the second Greek word from which the word economics derives, along with OIKOS, house. For these reasons, we must rediscover a global NOMOS. As are human rights. Rules that aim to promote the common good, not defend personal interests.

This can refer to the beautiful 1948 Charter. A Charter that establishes that all men and women are equal, not in the sense that everyone must conform, but that everyone is born with the same rights and must be treated equally. White, black, red, yellow, we all belong to the same common home, we could paraphrase to the global economy. Article one, in fact, invites us to act in a spirit of **fraternity**. **That's why we chose Assisi, the symbolic city of world-fraternity founded by Saint Francis**.

Human Rights: the way to universalize the economy and defending from dominant economic

While human rights were also born to defend people from the abuses of states, today we must defend ourselves from dominant economic systems. A great human rights advocate and scholar like Antonio Papisca, whom I always like to remember, said that where there is a dimension of being, there is a right. They can be also considered the universal essence of that human and natural substance, as Polanyi called it, of our humanity, which the economy must advance if we want to once again be fully subjects of rights. Otherwise, we will transform our planet into a war zone like wolves and lambs, where we sacrifice entire generations in the name of god profit.

New social practices

Between the 1980s and 1990s, according to an analysis by Rifkin (1995), we also witnessed the exponential growth of bottom-up, socially-driven economies throughout the world, intervening in various sectors, often providing solutions that the two dominant systems, the state and the market, have left unsatisfied. Called social, solidarity, civil, popular, and other economics, they bring with them characteristics such as democratic participation as a prerequisite for a true connection between society and the economy, carrying out activities of general interest.

In the European Union alone, these forms of economy involve over 2.8 million individuals and employ approximately 13.6 million people. The social economy ecosystem, as it is often called, has a turnover of almost €1 trillion (2021 data), a value comparable to that of the European automotive sector. And according to the Commission, it can reach up to 10% of GDP in some countries.

These experiences demonstrate something important: that individual freedoms are not at odds with the common good, or with common happiness. Because it is impossible to separate individual happiness from community identity. This has been the greatest temptation we have experienced in recent centuries: the constant ideological dichotomy based on the contrast between freedom and the common good. Also because after the fall of the Berlin Wall, turbo-capitalism is accelerating further, seeking to impose increasingly unregulated models. Just look at the forms of anarcho-capitalism still in vogue today in some South American countries, where the state is seen as the enemy to be fought. As if caring for the common good—food, education, the right to work, inclusion, infrastructure, the environment, and so on—were now a crime and a limitation of individual freedoms. But let's be careful, for if freedoms aren't accompanied by an ontological dimension, they risk leading us into the abyss. No one questions them, but increasing the ontological dimensions means increasing individual freedoms themselves. The two dimensions feed each other. Without education, food, and healthcare, no society is free.

Ontological reason vs utilitarian reason

These experiences alone, perhaps, are not enough. They are still too small to dent a system also made up of economies of death, of wars, which also serve the needs of economic power groups. To change this trend, we undoubtedly need to intervene at various levels—local, national, and international—but first and foremost, we need to address the dominant theoretical models. Individual interest is undoubtedly to be considered a primitive stage of economics. We need an economy that counters utilitarian reason with what we call **an ontological reason of peoples**. Because every people has, first and foremost, its own **demand for rights** that it must be able to pursue. And all peoples have their **demand for universal rights**.

This is why our UNESCO Chair was born. And this Conference today too. Because we need to build **a universal economy that allows everyone to be**. We can no longer afford an economy that serves the interests of a few. An economy that oppresses us, the enemy of citizenship, that is leading us to destruction; which has annihilated the individual, powerless before a materialistic structure that is devouring him.

We are subjects of rights (and duties), not instruments of consumption. We need to build another economy, intersubjectively, because the process of forming social knowledge is intersubjective; one that promotes new practices that change the current global structure. We also need to address the law of supply and demand, based on price and quantity, which in our opinion is also primitive. Likewise, the micro and macro dimensions, now interpreted solely by mathematical, positivist variables, no longer fully reflect reality. This is why we now also speak of a **meso-economy**, a space where intermediate bodies (social movements, social economy organizations, SMEs, etc.) define territorial strategies and reorient the global economy. Where people, values, ideas, societies and environmental, not capital, are put back at the center.

Peripheries at center: toward an economic socialization on human rights

Pope Francis urged us to leave the centers and move toward the periphery. Perhaps it's time to transform the peripheries into centers, because where there's a single man or woman in need, there's a center. We must go against the grain, as did Francis, the poor man of Assisi, who stripped himself of material riches to be fully enriched by spiritual riches. Walras, a famous classical economist, also spoke of the dichotomy between spiritualism and materialism, arguing that the former enriched law and led to social justice, while the latter only led to material wealth without justice. Undoubtedly, the theoretical foundations of economics must be re-established so that it is as integral as human rights, oriented toward the common good, where individuals are strengthened. Because its opposite is not the same thing.

With these objectives, the Conference offers two lectio magistralis, one by the Bishop of Assisi, **Monsignor Domenico Sorrentino**, and the other by **Prof. Stefano Zamagni**, a world-renowned economist. And four roundtables on **society, finance, environment, and education**, with the participation of academics, experts, professionals, and judges. My only hope is that this may be the beginning of a journey that will take us far, leading us to build together a universal economy based on human rights with concrete practices that will become global. This is no easy battle; we are called to defeat a new Goliath. But perhaps the courage to face it shows us how fragile a system is that is not founded on respect for men and women and for creation.

Finally, I thank all the Sponsors—**the Umbria Region, the Municipality of Assisi, the Umbria Chamber of Commerce, and the University of Perugia**—for their invaluable collaboration. **The participating movements and institutions, as well as the other participating UNESCO Chairs, are also grateful**. I extend my heartfelt thanks to all the speakers and participants will contribute, as well as to the Authorities who attended, along with the **Franciscan Fathers**, to whom I extend a special affection. And last but not least, I thank the **National University of La Plata** for giving me the space to promote these issues for many years, and **to the professors of our UNESCO Chair** who have dedicated themselves for years to working together with different specializations toward this common goal. These are topics overlooked in Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations," the father of classical political economy, which brings back to the centre of the debate that the true wealth of countries, perhaps, lies in the full exercise of human rights and not in the accumulation of financial capital, if we are not to jeopardize the present and future identity of our peoples. Because we need to live and resocialize values, not interests, and human rights are those universal values around which we can build a process of **WORLD ECONOMIC SOCIALIZATION**, that allows us to relate to each other as friendly peoples and not as businessmen.

THEMATICS TABLES

- ECONOMY AND SOCIETY
- ECONOMICS AND FINANCE
- ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT
- ECONOMICS AND EDUCATION

The conference was born within the activities of the UNESCO Chair in “Economic Systems and Human Rights” of the National University of La Plata and it aims to be a regular event every two years. The Chair was established in September 2022 through a specific understanding between UNESCO and the University to promote critical thinking aimed at the promotion and strengthening of human rights, starting from the analysis of the problems that derive from the dominant economic systems. For more information about the UNESCO Chair, you can visit the site from the QR.

Friday, October 17, 2025

10.00-12.00 am

ECONOMY AND SOCIETY: Prof. Francesco Poggi**, University of Pisa,** Introduction and moderation

Dr. Federico Sisti, Secretary General of the Chamber of Commerce of Umbria, **Economy and society. Innovations social practices for Human Rights**

Prof. Chiara Biscarini**,** UNESCO Chair "Water Resources Management and Culture" of University for Foreigners of Perugia, **Equitable Water Governance: A Social Vulnerability Perspective**

Prof. Tonino Perna, University of Messina, **Fair Trade for the Challenge of a Human Rights-Based Economy**

Dr. Antonio González Rojas**,** IUDESCOOP, University of Valencia, **The Social Economy as a Space for Building an Economy for Human Rights**

Prof. Emeritus Wolfram Elsner**,** University of Bremen, **The Limits of Classical Economics and New Economic Models for Human Rights: the meso-economy**

Prof. Roberto Mancini**,** University of Macerata**, Transforming the Economy on the Basis of Human Rights**

12.00.13.00 debate

Prof. Francesco Poggi, University of Pisa

Francesco Poggi, has been a lecturer at the Departments of Economics and Economics and Legislation of Logistics Systems at the University of Pisa since 1998. A former board member of the Fondazione Alti Studi-IMT, doctoral school, of Lucca and of the Fondazione Universitaria Campus di Lucca. From 2002 to 2011 board member of the Banca Monte Paschi di Siena, from 2004 to 2014 mayor of the municipality of Borgo a Mozzano (Lucca). Since 2015, he has organised the Festival Economia e Spiritualità in Pisa, Lucca, Prato, Florence, on the topics of sustainability, ethics in economics and rights.

Dr. Federico Sisti, General Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce of Umbria

Dr. Federico Sisti holds degrees in both Economics and Business, and Law. With over thirty years of experience in senior management roles, he has successfully led private enterprises as well as public institutions and organizations, operating across diverse sectors. Throughout his career, he has developed a strong expertise in local development and enterprise promotion, with a particular focus on strategies that stimulate economic growth and enhance the value of local territories. His work is driven by a deep commitment to fostering inclusive and sustainable development, promoting innovation, and strengthening the connection between businesses and communities.

Economy and society. Innovations social practices for Human Rights

In an era dominated by prevailing economic systems that often undermine fundamental rights, innovative social practices are emerging as strategic tools for promoting and safeguarding human dignity and justice within the global economic framework.

Traditional economic models have largely prioritized profit maximization, frequently at the expense of social and environmental considerations. This presentation will explore how businesses are increasingly moving beyond these limitations by embracing new strategies and adopting innovative organizational and managerial models. These approaches aim to systematically embed ethical and social dimensions into core business practices — from supply chain management to human resources, and community relations.

Drawing on concrete examples and field-based initiatives, the presentation will examine how synergistic collaboration between businesses and local communities can generate measurable, positive impacts on human rights. Such partnerships not only enhance local socio-economic conditions but also contribute to the construction of a universal economy grounded in the essential principles of justice, equity, and sustainability.

The central argument is that social innovation must be understood not as a supplementary element, but as a fundamental and indispensable driver of meaningful economic transformation.

Prof. Chiara Biscarini, University for Foreigners of Perugia

Chiara Biscarini is a Full Professor of Water Engineering and Co-Chair of the UNESCO Chair on Water Resources Management and Culture. She serves as the Rector's Delegate for Research and Project Design and is Director of the Water Resources Research and Documentation Center (WARREDOC). Prof. Biscarini holds a Ph.D. in Sea and Engineering Sciences from the University of Naples Federico II and an M.Sc. in Civil Engineering from the University of Perugia. Her research focuses on water resources management and the analysis of natural hazards, with particular attention

Equitable Water Governance: A Social Vulnerability Perspective

Water governance is increasingly recognized as a central dimension of climate adaptation and disaster risk management, particularly in relation to hydraulic hazards such as floods. This contribution explores equitable water governance through the lens of social vulnerability, emphasizing how differential exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity shape urban resilience in diverse territorial contexts. Drawing on interdisciplinary insights, the contribution highlights the need to move beyond purely technical solutions to floods, foregrounding instead the social, economic, and institutional dynamics that condition both risks and responses. Special attention is given to the uneven distribution of impacts among marginalized populations, whose vulnerabilities are often amplified by inadequate planning and governance frameworks. The contribution also examines the role of participatory processes and multi-level governance in fostering inclusive resilience pathways that bridge scales from local to regional. To ground these reflections, a case study of the Tiber River in central Italy is presented. The analysis illustrates how historical urban development, infrastructure decisions, and governance structures have intersected with hydrological dynamics to produce current vulnerabilities and resilience challenges. Ultimately, the contribution argues for a rethinking of water governance as a socially embedded process that integrates risk reduction, equity, and long-term sustainability.

Prof. Tonino Perna, University of Messina

Tonino Perna (Reggio Calabria, 28 January 1947) is an Italian economist, sociologist and politician, deputy mayor of Reggio Calabria. He is professor emeritus of economic sociology at the University of Messina and editorialist for the Manifesto and the Quotidiano del Sud. Since 2005, he has been part of the international scientific committee on Fair Trade coordinated by the Department of Social Sciences of the University of Montreal. From 2000 to 2005, he was president of the Aspromonte National Park. In this capacity, he has, among other things, experimented with a fire prevention system which has become a model at European level. He also had the State Polygraphic Institute mint the first local currency (Ecoaspromonte) that was in circulation in Italy. He has held various positions at national and international level and is the author of several books and scientific articles.

Fair Trade for the Challenge of a Human Rights-Based Economy

Let us remember that the first human right enshrined by the UN is the right to life. Unfortunately, this is contradicted by the facts. Every day, thousands of people die from hunger and malnutrition, especially children, a situation worsened by conflict, climate change, and economic crises. If we saw, as in Gaza, millions of malnourished children concentrated in one corner of our planet, reaching out for a little food, we would realize that this global economic system kills innocents: it cuts funding for humanitarian aid (primarily to the US), finances wars, and multiplies extreme events. In particular, unequal exchange has grown, creating a chasm between small-scale producers in the Global South and industrialized countries. Fair trade, which involves hundreds of millions of artisans and farmers, is still a valid tool for countering unequal exchange and the impoverishment of entire populations. The alternative to capitalist globalization based on "free trade" (often false) is certainly not the neo-mercantilism of the US government or the sovereignism of European countries, but international trade that guarantees a living wage for workers, that respects the environment and the health of animals as well as the Earth.

Dr. Antonio Gonzalez Rojas, IUDESCOOP, University of Valencia

Antonio González-Rojas is a Professor of Applied Economics at the Universitat de València, member of the International Centre of Research and Information on the Public, Social and Cooperative Economy (CIRIEC) and the Institute on Social Economy, Cooperativism and Entrepreneurship (IUDESCOOP). His research focuses on economic policies and Social Economy entities, such as cooperatives and non-profit organizations.

The Social Economy as a Space for Building an Economy for Human Rights

The reconceptualisation of economy through the prism of Human Rights demands a critical departure from the prevailing capitalist logic of profit maximisation, which perpetuates structural inequality, ecological destruction and the commodification of human dignity. In this context, the Social Economy is not merely a marginal corrective; rather, it is a consolidated alternative grounded in solidaristic principles and collective governance.

Constituted by heterogeneous legal forms, Social Economy has proven how economic activity can be organised to embed participation, reciprocity, and normative commitments to justice. These organisational forms are not confined to the sphere of philanthropy; rather, they function as productive systems capable of creating dignified labour, redistributing value, and fostering sustainable relations with both human and non-human environments.

The constitutive link between institutional architecture and ethical outcomes reveals that modes of organisation predicated on democracy and social purpose are structurally aligned with the advancement of Human Rights. Yet the scaling of such practices requires more than grassroots innovation; it demands enabling regulatory frameworks, redistributive policy, and cultural recognition of alternative economic rationalities. Social Economy is therefore a strategic locus for reorienting development towards human flourishing and justice, displacing financial accumulation as the central metric of collective progress.

Prof. Emeritus Wolfram Elsner, University of Bremen

Wolfram Elsner is a Full Professor of Economics (retired) at University of Bremen, Germany. He received his PhD and Venia Legendi ("Habilitation") at the University of Bielefeld. He worked as a head of regional economic development at city level and Head of Planning of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, State of Bremen, as well as Director of the State's economic research institute (1986-1995). After his appointment as a professor in 1995, he continued to work as a state advisor for industrial restructuration until 2001. He served as President of the European Association for Evolutionary Political Economy (EAEPE), 2012-2014, 2014-2016. He had an affiliation at the University of Missouri—Kansas City and has been an associate professor at Jilin University, Changchun, China. He taught and researched at several universities in Europe, USA, Mexico, China, South Africa, and Australia and served on the editorial boards of a number of international scholarly journals and on many committees of heterodox academic associations. He edited books and book series and published numerous articles in international journals and edited volumes. He authored textbooks on complex microeconomics (Edward Elgar, Academic Press/Elsevier), was a managing editor of the Forum for Social Economics 2012-2018 and was Editor-in-Chief of the Review of Evolutionary Political Economy 2018-2023.

The Limits of Classical Economics and New Economic Models for Human Rights: the meso-economy

The "meso" level of a socio-economy, logically located between "micro" and "macro", but in fact a theoretical tier on its own, has been neglected in mainstream economics. However, in the tradition of evolutionary-institutional and complexity economics, it has been theorized, focusing on informal-institutions emerging as "structures" from collective problems of intricate direct interdependencies and interactions, the ubiquitous "commons" or social-dilemma problems. Institutions may condense into norms and ethics, and represent a larger cultural development. As an emerging phenomenon, this is beyond static-statistical "mid-sized" entities. While agents and their interactions define the micro-level, "aggregation" in entire populations and economies remains "macro", including the state and its formal-legal rules. The dimension of structural emergence of institutions is meso. Beyond the deterministic model solution, we provide a stochastic population approach, explore required agency capacities, and determine minimum and maximum critical masses of cooperators. Meso-size thus is the logical space of cultural evolution.

Prof. Roberto Mancini, University of Macerata

Roberto Mancini is full professor of Theoretical Philosophy and Philosophy of Sustainable Development at University of Macerata. In the same University is Director of Department of Humanities.

Transforming the Economy on the Basis of Human Rights

The need to have an economy that serves human rights requires referring to the measure of the human. While the economy of growth rejects any measure, an economy of service requires respecting the measure of human dignity and the common good. At the same time, this human measure implies ecological care for the network of vital relationships, because mankind doesn't live in a vacuum or by its own strength.

We must redefine the meaning of wealth. It consists not in the growth of capital and goods, but in the equitably distributed availability of the goods essential to everyone's existence. Wealth is also defined by its responsiveness to needs, by the universality of the response offered by the economy, and by the fact this response frees humanity from enslavement to the economy itself. The measure of harmony with universal life requires that economy takes on the task of caring for the natural balances of the living world of nature.

The agents of this transition must be local communities, social movements, and the protagonists of awakening of collective consciousness. In this transformative learning process, companies and governments will be able to change their attitudes and contribute to such a global turn.

Friday, October 17, 2025

15.00-17.00

ECONOMICS AND FINANCE, Prof. Donatella Strangio, Sapienza University, Rome Introduction and moderation

- **Prof. Marcello Signorelli**, Director of Economic Department, University of Perugia, **Problems and limits of economic and financial global system for Human Rights**
- **Prof. Alberto Lanzavecchia**, University of Padua, **Ethical finance: limits and challenges of our time for Human Rights**
- **Dr. Andrea Baranes**, Ethical Foundation, **Ethic Finance for Human Rights in Italy. Challenges and Limits**
- **Prof. Srikanta Patniak**, Director, IIMT, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India, **Human Rights in India**
- **Prof. Michael Humprhey**, University of Sydney, **Big Pharma and the Pharmaceuticalisation and Financialisaton of Global Health: the Neoliberal Economics of the Right to Health**
- **Prof. Francesco Vigliarolo**, UNESCO Chair National University of La Plata, **From the financialization of the economy to economic socialization for Human Rights**

17.00-18.00 debate

Prof. Donatella Strangio, Sapienza University, Rome

Donatella Strangio is Professor of Economic History Sapienza University of Rome Department of Methods and Models for the Economy, Territory and Finance (Memotef). Also she is: Deputy of the Rector of Sapienza for Chile and Brazil, in the Latin America area and the Caribbean countries, Associate with collaboration assignment at the Institute of History of Mediterranean Europe (CNR), Member Unesco Chair Sapienza in Population, Migration and Development, Scientific and Director "Migrations/Migrazioni" New Culture Series Sapienza University of Rome. Her research Interests move in the field of economic development and underdevelopment; history of finance; history of tourism and cultural heritage; international migrations; colonization and decolonization. Her teaching activity are courses (in English and in Italian): Economic History, Global economic History; History of Bank and the financial crises; Global economic history in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Her visiting experiences include Professor Universidad de Quilmes, Lujan, UBA, Caxias do Sul (BR Rio Grande Do Sul), Columbia University (European Institute at Columbia University in the City of New York), Universidad Nacional ARTURO JAURETCHE, CVCE Luxembourg, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, University of Adelaide. Her main participation in recent international research projects include: Project PRIN 2020 Call – "Economic development in Italy from the Middle Ages to today: a regional perspective", sector SH1 (Economic history); -Project application PID2021-122476NB- I00 call 2021 (2022-2023) Tourism in Spain in the first third of the 20th century. Characteristics and evolution of an economic activity and a social practice in comparative perspective; -Proyecto Impacto de la crisis en las Pymes del partido de Lujan, province of Buenos Aires. Extudio Explorativo en el sector textil y lacteo (IMPYME) Investigaciòn aplicada no. 80020190600043UU 2020-2022); -Jean Monnet Project Past and Present Migration Challengers what European and American History can teach us (application no. 620748-EPP-1-2020-1-it-EPPJMO-project Erasmus+); -Project H2020 Covinform 2020-2023 (https://web.uniroma1.it/memotef/en/archivionotizie/covinform-project-gets-underway); -Project H2020 Perceptions 2019-2022 (https://web.uniroma1.it/memotef/progetti-europei Memotef website).

Prof. Marcello Signorelli, Director of Economic Department, University of Perugia

Marcello Signorelli is Director of the Department of Economics of the University of Perugia, Professor of Economic Policy, elected member of the Presidency Council of the Italian Economic Association and member of the Scientific Committee of the Foundation "Economy of Francesco". In 2010 he was elected President of the European Association for Comparative Economic Studies. He authored and edited some books and, especially, he published more than 120 articles in several international journals or as book chapters (www.marcellosignorelli.it).

Problems and Limits of Economic and Financial Global System for Human Rights

Starting from Amartya Sen vision, including the relationship between freedom, capabilities and development, I will briefly discuss some key problems and limits of economic and financial global system with implications for human rights.
The global scenario and dynamics are considered also in a long-run perspective, and a special focus will be devoted at the actual and potential (desirable) role of European Union (as defined in "A Code for a New Europe" recently launched in Camaldoli and signed by more than 100 academic professors), also for favouring an integral sustainability and a generative freedom (that include "freedom of expression"). Following the necessary "Reneissance in economics" (including a multidisciplinary approach), as recently launched in a "Manifesto" signed by more than 300 economists, the crucial aspects of today and tomorrow global complexities and uncertainties need to be better investigated for their implications for human rights.

Prof. Alberto Lanzavecchia, University of Padua

Alberto Lanzavecchia holds a Master of Science in Financial Management from the University of London-SOAS-CeFiMS and a Ph.D. in Financial Markets and Intermediaries from the University of Bologna. He has professional experience in corporate banking, management consulting, and family offices, which he left to enter academia. As an Associate Professor, he pursues research and teaching in sustainable finance. At the University of Padua's Center for Human Rights, he coordinates the Ph.D. program in Human Rights and the innovative teaching programs "Microfinance in Action" and "Learning by Experience." He is a researcher at the Climate Justice Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence and the National Biodiversity Future Center.

Ethical finance: limits and challenges of our time for Human Rights

The global arms industry is experiencing intense growth, attracting significant financial investment due to high profitability expectations. However, the inclusion of arms manufacturers in Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) investment funds raises ethical concerns about transparency and adherence to stated principles of sustainability and peace. This study analyzes the top 20 SFDR Article 8 ESG funds and reveals a contradictory reality - many of these funds, even those with "sustainability" in their name, allocate capital to companies linked to arms production. The findings highlight inconsistencies between the promoted environmental and social characteristics and the actual investments made. The paper questions the role of finance as a lever for peace and human rights when funding the arms industry. It proposes introducing a specific quality label to certify funds that completely exclude investments in the military sector. This labeling would provide clarity for investors seeking alignment with ethical principles of ethical finance.

The research aims to contribute to the academic and institutional debate on the need for more stringent ESG regulations and accountability, promoting a financial model that concretely supports the right to peace and sustainable development.

Dr. Andrea Baranes, Ethical Foundation

Andrea Baranes is a researcher and head of European networks and campaigns at the Fondazione Finanza Etica, part of the Banca Etica network. He is a member of the Board of several European organizations, such as Febea or Finance Watch. He was a member of the Board of Directors of Banca Etica from 2016 to 2022 and Vice President of the bank from 2019 to 2022.

He is the author of several books on the functioning of the financial system, including "Con i nostri soldi", "Finanza per indignati" and "La Borsa o la vita" (Ponte Alle Grazie), "Dobbiamo restituire fiducia ai mercati!" - Falso" (Laterza), "Come depredare il Sud del mondo" (Altreconomia).

Abstract: Ethic finance for human rights in Italy. Challenges and limits

The relationship between finance and human rights is diverse. First, we must consider the negative impacts that too often characterize the financial system. One could think of the enormous resources that continue to flow to the arms industry or to polluting activities.

But more generally, the financial system itself has lost its social role. Finance was born as a means to support economic activity. Today, for the most part, it has become an end in itself, with the sole objective of making money from money in the shortest possible time.

While enormous amounts of capital circulate frenetically to extract profits from any activity, ever larger segments of the population are excluded from basic financial services, starting with access to credit. This situation affects not only the poorest countries, but also—and significantly — Italy. People in temporary difficulty often end up in the hands of organized crime.

Ethical finance seeks to provide answers. For instance by promoting access to credit, especially for the poorest and most excluded and by analyzing the social and environmental impact of each loan.

This is perhaps the first right we must reclaim: a full transparency on how our money is used once channeled through financial circuits. The goal is simple: whatever the challenge we have to face, finance can and must shift from being part of the problem to contribute to the solution.

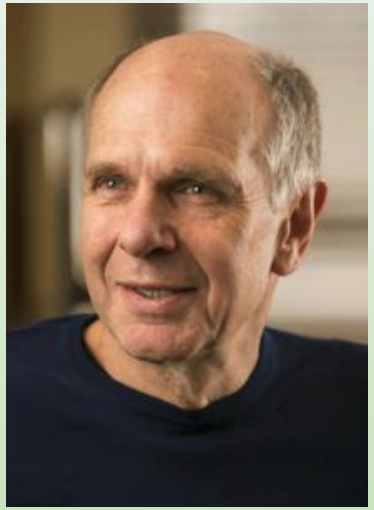
Prof. Srikanta Patniak,
Director, IIMT, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India

Prof. (Dr.) Srikanta Patnaik is Chairman-Co-Founder of Interscience Institute of Management & Technology, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India. He has received his Ph. D. (Engineering) on Computational Intelligence from Jadavpur University, India in 1999 and supervised 12 Ph. D. theses and more than 30 M. Tech theses in the area of Machine Intelligence, Soft Computing Applications and Re-Engineering. Dr. Patnaik has published more than 60 research papers in international journals and conference proceedings. He is author of 2 text books and edited 12 books and few invited book chapters, published by leading international publisher like Springer-Verlag, Kluwer Academic, etc... Dr. Patnaik was the Principal Investigator of TAPTEC project "Building Cognition for Intelligent Robot" sponsored by All India Council for Technical Education, New Delhi and Major Research Project "Machine Learning and Perception using Cognition Methods" sponsored by University Grant Commission. He is the Editors-in-Chief of International Journal of Information and Communication Technology and International Journal of Computational Vision and Robotics published from Inderscience Publishing House, England and also Editors-in-chief of Book Series on "Modeling and Optimization in Science and Technology" published from Springer, Germany.

Human Rights in India and financial system

Human rights in India have evolved through traditional values, colonial experience, and constitutional developments. The country has established legal and institutional frameworks to protect civil, political, social, and economic rights, supported by adequate funding that has sustained institutional operations. Despite these foundations, a gap persists between the formal recognition of rights and their practical enforcement, especially for marginalized groups. India continues to face challenges such as caste- and religion-based discrimination, gender violence, custodial abuse, and increasing digital surveillance. Institutions including the judiciary, civil society organizations, and the media contribute actively to rights protection but face procedural and systemic obstacles. A multidisciplinary analysis of India's rights landscape shows that while financial investment is improving, better coordination, stronger accountability, and inclusive policymaking remain necessary. Advancing human rights in India requires not only legal safeguards but also political will, administrative efficiency, and broad public engagement to ensure equal rights and freedoms for all.

Prof. Micheal Humphrey, University of Sydney



Michael Humphrey is Professor Emeritus at the Department of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Sydney. was appointed to the Chair in Sociology in the Department of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Sydney in February 2007. He is a graduate of Macquarie University in Anthropology and Comparative Sociology (BA Hons 1975, PhD 1983) in Sydney. He has held positions at the University of Western Sydney, Macquarie University and the University of NSW. At UNSW he was Head of School and Professor of Sociology. He has also held visiting positions at Oxford University, American University of Beirut, Coimbra University, University of Tucumán, and the Catholic University Leuven.

Big Pharma and the Pharmaceuticalisation and Financialisaton of Global Health: the Neoliberal Economics of the Right to Health

‘Affordable medicine is fundamental to the right to health. However, the global accessibility to medicines is restricted by the Big Pharma business model based on protecting patents and profits making them – especially the latest treatments – unaffordable for many. Big Pharma justifies high prices necessary to meet the cost of R&D for new drugs. But Big Pharma is increasingly accused of prioritising R&D on the basis of potential profit rather than health. Some states have protected their citizens’ health by establishing health schemes which selectively subsidize the most effective drug therapies - e.g. Australia, Canada, European countries, Japan, South Korea, Brazil. Big Pharma regards these schemes as ‘socialised medicine’ because they restrict their ability to market expensive new drugs at market prices. This paper looks at the Australian Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) and how it has come under attack in the Trump tariff era. But the high cost of new drugs is not just because R&D is very expensive but because financialization and debt has changed the Big Pharma business model. Patents for blockbuster drugs are expiring and Big Pharma needs to acquire new patents to sustain itself. Instead of R&D, M&A (mergers and acquisitions) are the solution to acquire new patents through financialization and debt. As a consequence, private equity is increasingly shaping the Big Pharma business model from R&D to M&A. In addition, Big Pharma is off-shoring R&D by selectively patenting Chinese biotech research to reduce risk and the high cost of clinical trials. The shift from R&D to M&A to acquire patents has placed greater emphasis on returns to shareholders over health.

Prof. Francesco Vigliarolo, UNESCO Chair, National University of La Plata

Francesco Vigliarolo, PhD in Social Sciences. Post PhD. in Economic and Master's in Sustainable Development. He holds a degree in Political Science, specializing in economic sociology. He is currently a Titular Professor of Regional Economics at the Catholic University of La Plata and Director of the UNESCO Chair in "Economic Systems and Human Rights" at the National University of La Plata, which he founded. He is also an Associate Researcher at the CESOT (Economics and Human Rights Research Institute) of the Faculty of Economics of Buenos Aires. He studies local and regional development processes as the construction of territorial identities that imply the affirmation of rights (he calls ontological reason) through the strengthening of associative and democratic forms of production. He published more than 10 books and numerous scientific articles.

From the financialization of the economy to economic socialization for Human Rights

The paper aims to demonstrate how financialization is an expression of economic positivism, which over the years led the economy itself to lose its human, social, and environmental horizon, leaving aside important questions such as: what kind of society do we want?

In this regard, it illustrates the dichotomy between utilitarian and ontological reasoning of the economy and proposes how it can reincorporate values and principles by referring to human rights as its governing principles, thus transforming the economy into a universal one.

Starting from the Charter of Human Rights, it therefore illustrates certain principles and values and how the economy itself must uphold them if it wants to promote what is called the demand for universal human rights of peoples.

Saturday, October 18, 2025

10.00.12.00

ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT, Prof. Margherita Ciervo, University of Foggia **Introduction and moderation**

Dr. Francesco Neri, Magistrate - Advisor to the Court of Appeal of Rome, **Economics and Toxic Waste, Problems and Challenges for the Protection of Human Rights**

Prof. Annamaria Vitale, University of Calabria, **The environmental deterioration of the global south and the dominant economic models of the global north**

Dr. Arturo Hermann, Senior Research, Istat, **Ecology, Peace and Human Rights in the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

Prof. Dr. Kelvin Kian Loong Woong, University of Saskatchewan, **A Human-AI Trust Framework for Healthcare AI within Sustainable Innovation Ecosystems**

Dr. Francesco Tassone, Expert in public procurement, **Public procurement management in terms of sustainability**

Dr. Massimo Franchi, University of Modena Reggio Emilia, **Corporate Social Responsibility and Socio-Environmental Rights**

12.00.13.00 debate

Prof. Margherita Ciervo, University of Foggia

Margherita Ciervo, PhD. Associate Professor of Economic and political geography, University of Foggia. Teaching courses: Geography of development (2011), Economic geography (2011-present day), Geography of enterprise (2011-2015), Social conflict for renewable energy (2015), Geography of Tourism (2016), Geography of finance (2019-2020), Geography of communication (2024-present day).

Associate Researcher, LAPLEC, Laboratory for the analysis of places, landscapes and European countryside, University of Liege (Belgium). Honorary title “Collaborator of the University of Liège” (since 2017). Lecturer at the UNESCO Chair in “Economic Systems and Human Rights” established at the National University of La Plata in Argentina. Seminars in university courses in Italy and abroad. Research activities in South America (Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador) and Europe (Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg). Founding member of the Interdisciplinary Observatory on Bioeconomy (OIB), www.observatorbioeconomia.it. Participation in international and national scientific projects and research networks.

Publications of articles in national and international scientific journals. Recipient of six awards for scientific research and dissemination. Member of scientific societies, scientific committees and referee panels. Member of Referee list for valuation of programs and products of ministerial research. Member of the following PhD Colleges at the University of Foggia: “Economics, culture and Environment”, cycles: XXXVI, XXXVII; “Economic sciences”, cycles: XXXVIII; “ASTIS-Environment, Sustainability, Territories, Innovation & Security”, Cycles, XXXIX, XL.

Institutional and social public engagement.

Mean field of research: Economic and political geography of water resources and others natural resources, renewable energy (models, management scale, territorial effects), Bioeconomics and bioeconomy, production models and territorial effects, sustainable development, common goods, social participation, socio-economic organization and transformation of rural territories.

Dr. Francesco Neri, Magistrate - Advisor to the Court of Appeal of Rome

Dr. Francesco Neri is an Italian magistrate, currently President of the Court of Appeal of Rome. In 2005, when he was Deputy Prosecutor General of the Reggio Calabria Prosecutor's Office, he investigated the trafficking of toxic waste from the global north to the global south, including Calabria and Sicily, where the infamous poison ships were sunk. This investigation resulted in the killing of one of the investigators of the specially formed "pool", Captain Natale De Grazia. Based on his work, the only magistrate to carry out this work in Italy, the environmental crime was defined. From August 10, 2010 until today, he has worked at the Court of Appeal - Criminal Sections - where he obtained the VII professional evaluation in April 2014 and has served as Counsel to the First Criminal Section - Organized Crime - and, concurrently, to the Civil Section of "Equitable Reparation", as well as President of the Second Section of the Court of Assizes of Appeal of Rome.

Economics and Toxic Waste, Problems and Challenges for the Protection of Human Rights

The paper outlines the investigative work undertaken since 1994, with the investigation into toxic waste dumped in the global south, including Calabria and Sicily, where the so-called poison ships were sunk. It explains the phenomenon of toxic waste disposal and how it gave rise to a veritable criminal economy that poisoned entire territories, severely damaging the living conditions of local populations and claiming numerous victims. Finally, it explains how, based on this investigation, environmental crime was defined in Italy.

Prof. Annamaria Vitale, University of Calabria

Annamaria Vitale is professor of sociology of territory and environment, she teaches sociology of development at the Department of Political and Social Sciences of Calabria University (Italy). Her research interests focus on development theories and international cooperation, with reference to rural development and migration on world scale. Currents research projects are focussing on the role of agroecology in the renewal of rural areas. Her most recent publications concern the innovative role of agriculture in neo-endogenous development between global value chains and alternative food networks: (with Sivini) "Return to the Land. De-Commodification of Local Foods in South Italy", in Miele M. et al. (eds), Transforming the Rural, Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing (2017); "From modernized agriculture to peasant farming: The case of Calabria, Italy", IAER (2020); "La anomalía del ascenso chino en la lectura de Giovanni Arrighi", in Caria S. Giunta I. (a cura di), Pasado y presente de la cooperación internacional: una perspectiva crítica desde las teorías del sistema mundo, Quito: IAEN (2020).

The environmental deterioration of the global south and the dominant economic models of the global north

The conference presentation intends to show how environmental degradation in the global south is rooted in the historical hierarchies and global inequalities that that have fueled capitalism development, and which have been exacerbated by the neoliberal turn. Drawing on the Anthropocene-Capitalocene debate, we will reflect on how patterns of capital accumulation based on extractivism and expropriation have driven the current planetary ecological crisis, generating "wasting relationship" (Armiero), especially between core and peripheral areas.

Dr. Arturo Hermann, Senior Research, Istat

Arturo Hermann is a “Senior researcher” (“Primo ricercatore”) at the Italian National Institute of Statistics (Istat), Rome, Italy. In his main research fields – Sustainable and Equitable Development, Institutional and Keynesian Economics, Political Economy, also considered in their relations with psychology and psychoanalysis – has authored/edited over 15 books and over 30 book chapters with qualified publishers (in particular, Routledge, Elgar, Pickering and Chatto), and over 60 articles in scholarly journals.
He is a lecturer at the UNESCO Chair “Economic Systems and Human Rights” at the Universidad Nacional de La Plata, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
He is the scientific director of the journal *Il Pensiero Economico Moderno*, member of the Advisory Board of the *International Journal of Pluralism and Economics Education*, of the Editorial Board of the *International Journal of Green Economics*, *Studi Economici e Sociali* and *Nuova Economia e Storia*.

Ecology, Peace and Human Rights in the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

In this contribution, I try to highlight the (i) “revolutionary” dimension of the UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and of the related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and how (ii) a number of economics’ contributions can help attain its objectives. As for the point (i), the Agenda is often criticised by radical ecologists for putting too much emphasis on economic growth and for not clearly embracing a notion of strong sustainability. This is partly true, but it is also true that the Agenda constitutes a far-reaching attempt to address the imbalances of our economies. Hence, the Agenda contains also important SDGs (in particular, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 16) aimed at reducing poverty, inequalities and at improving empowerment and fair opportunities for all. These aspects, which can appear as obvious principles at a first glance, actually embody a revolutionary import. As a matter of fact, there is still a widespread conviction (and a corresponding policy orientation) that, especially in developing countries, very low wages and insecure jobs (and corresponding poverty and economic inequalities) are a necessary step for promoting, even at the expense of the environment, a sustained growth in such countries. From this basis, I will consider in the second part (ii) how a number of concepts — in particular, strong sustainability, micro and macroeconomic imbalances, the institutional analysis of the market, social value, qualitative development, democratic planning — elaborated in particular by ecological, post Keynesian, Original Institutional Economics and the Italian “Economia Civile” can help attain the SDGs and, in this way, build a more sustainable and humane economy.

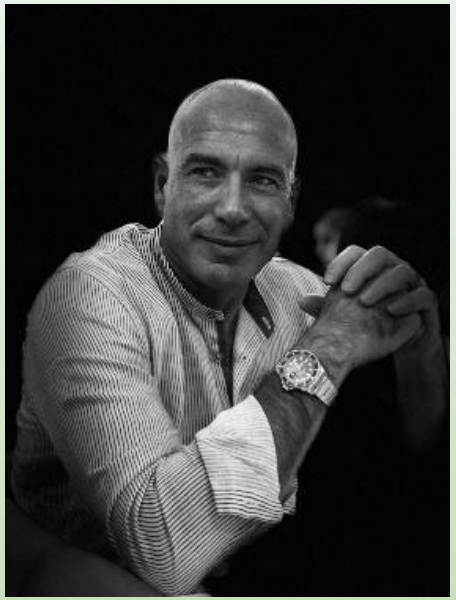
Prof. Dr. Kelvin Kian Loong Woong, University of Saskatchewan

Kelvin K. L. Woong received the B.Eng. degree (Hons.) in mechanical and production engineering from Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, in 2001, the M.A.I.T. degree in applied information technology from The University of Sydney, Australia, in 2003, and the Ph.D. degree in electrical and electronic engineering from The University of Adelaide, Australia, in 2009. He is currently a Professor with the University of Saskatchewan, Canada. He has more than ten years of computer science and engineering research experience. He has applied engineering technology and skills to solve the practical application problems of machine learning, image processing, signal processing, and multi-objective optimization. Dr. Kelvin Wong's research has won international recognition (totaling more than 30 relevant papers). He has published more than 100 papers in top journals and internationally recognized academic journals, and served as a Deputy Editor and a Guest Editor-in-Chief in many well-known academic journals. He has participated in international conferences as a Keynote Speaker, and won awards at various international conferences. He developed the NeuralX Programming tool to be used in deep learning-based logogram research and data analytics. Since 2024, Prof. Dr. Wong has been at the forefront of merging the fields of cybernetics and artificial intelligence (AI). He is widely recognized for introducing the term "Cybernetical Intelligence" published by John Wiley & Sons Limited, ISBN: 9781394217489. He was elected Fellow of the Institution of Engineers, Australia (FIEAust), and Senior member of the Institution of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE). He was elected Foreign Fellow of the Zambia Academy of Sciences (FZaAS) in 2024.

New technologies, limits and challenges for a sustainable social and environmental economy

Artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping high-stakes domains such as healthcare, and human–AI trust has become a binding constraint on adoption and sustainable value creation. Addressing the fragmentation between explainable AI (XAI) and human factors engineering (HFE) and the field's overemphasis on individuals while overlooking ecosystem levels, this study proposes the Sustainable Innovation Ecosystem Trust framework (SIE-Trust) for AI. The framework situates trust within the perspective of sustainable innovation ecosystems and treats XAI and HFE research communities as knowledge sub-ecosystems within that broader ecology. Drawing on a narrative review with critical synthesis, we synthesize three classes of drivers of human–AI trust—user characteristics, AI system attributes, and contextual factors (use environment and social setting)—introduce a risk-sensitive trust calibration band, and review mainstream trust-measurement approaches together with pathways for extending measurement to ecosystem levels. Building on these insights, we offer design and governance recommendations to support the trustworthy and sustainable deployment and diffusion of healthcare AI.

Dr. Francesco Tassone, Lawyer, Expert in public procurement



Lawyer admitted to the Italian Foro, author and co-author of several specialized publications, he has written for the daily newspaper Italia Oggi, the Sole 24 Ore magazines, and the Maggioli Group magazines. He also serves as a trainer in public procurement and public contracts. For over twenty years, he has been a consultant and trainer for national trade associations and leading supply and service companies, primarily in the healthcare sector. He has spoken at numerous conferences on public procurement and public contracts, and has taught various training courses.

Protection tools, social needs, and measures to promote and safeguard human rights and sustainability in public procurement at EU level

The integration of social and environmental criteria in public procurement is a strategic element for the protection of human rights and the promotion of sustainability in the European Union. This paper aims to analyze the regulatory instruments and measures adopted at the EU level to ensure that public procurement is not only an economic instrument, but also a lever for meeting social needs and pursuing social and environmental equity objectives. The approach adopted by the EU in recent years through directives and regulations aims to combine competition requirements with ethical and social responsibility principles, providing contractual clauses and reward criteria for companies that adopt sustainable practices. The role of public authorities in implementing these measures will also be examined, with particular attention to their legal and operational implications. The analysis will conclude with a reflection on the effectiveness of existing protection tools and on possible regulatory developments to further strengthen the social and environmental impact of public procurement within the EU.

Dr. Massimo Franchi, University of Modena Reggio Emilia

Massimo Franchi, PhD, is a Strategic advisor for multinational organisations, Senior Research Fellow and Adjunct Professor of Business Economics at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia in the Department of Law.

Corporate Social Responsibility and Socio-Environmental Rights

The correct application of Corporate Social Responsibility, with the centrality of Stakeholders and their recognized role, sees the identification of social and environmental rights as an essential pillar of strategic reasoning.

Indeed, environmental protection and adequate social conditions are now considered, by part of the business community, a key component of sustainable development and an indispensable element of the common good to which Corporate Social Responsibility should aspire. Respect for urban, local, and rural communities, as well as their growth and preservation over time, should be a key part of the positive impact of CSR implementation. Unfortunately, market failures, or even those of a single large company operating in a given area, have demonstrated the negative impact, measured retrospectively, on ecosystems, the landscape, the historical and artistic heritage, and Stakeholders.

Many fundamental charters, such as the Constitution of the Italian Republic, stipulate that economic activity must not be conducted in a manner that harms health, the environment, safety, freedom, or human dignity. Environmental crimes and disasters, also known as eco-crimes, are often linked to organized crime that involves laundering money through businesses whose primary objective is not to create long-term value or address the health and social needs of a community. These crimes are joined by purely speculative economic operators, which must be opposed by a concept of Social Responsibility based on a genuine purpose and the common good.

Saturday, October 18, 2025

15.00-17.00

ECONOMICS AND EDUCATION: Prof. Cristina Giudici, UNESCO Chair Director in Population, Migrations and Development**,** University Roma La Sapienza, Introduction and moderation

- Prof. Arianna Fermani, University of Macerata, **The need to be re-educated to the good use of economics: listening to Aristotle's lesson**
- Prof. Jurema Tomelin, Education for Peace and Human Rights Network, Brazil, **Education and Human Rights in Latin America: problems and challenges**
- Prof. Vincenzo Bonazza, University of Pegaso, **Educational challenges for human rights in neoliberals' economy**
- Prof. Gloria Ramirez, UNESCO Chair in Human Rights, UNAM, Mexico**, Education for Peace and Human Rights in Mexico**
- Prof. Massimo Dell'Utri, University of Sassari**, Economics, Education, Universality**
- Prof. Marina Formica, University of Rome 2, **A barrier to recidivism: the University in prison**
- Dra. Olga Tarzia, Judge**,** President of the Court of Messina, **Mafia economies and children's rights: models and pedagogical challenges**

17.00-18.00 debate

Prof. Cristina Giudici, UNESCO Chair Director in Population, Migrations and Development, University Roma La Sapienza

Cristina Giudici is associate professor of Demography at Sapienza University of Rome and Chairholder of the UNESCO Chair on “Population, Migrations and Development”.

She is coordinator of the doctoral curriculum in Demography, Ph.D. program on "School of statistical sciences" at Sapienza University of Rome, and member of the European Doctoral School of Demography (EDSD) Board. She is PI of the EU project “Migration and Displacement Action Plan for Sub-Saharan Africa (MAPS) Developing policy-oriented research on Migration and Displacement in the Sub-Saharan Region.

She served as expert consultant for several national and international institutions, such as United Nations, UNESCO, Council of Europe, Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Italian Ministry of Interior. She currently serves as a member of the UNESCO Liaison Standing Committee of the World Council for Comparative Education Societies (WCCES).

Prof. Arianna Fermani, University of Macerata

Professor of History of Ancient Philosophy (Qualified as a Full Professor, Competition Sector 11 C 5: History of Philosophy). Representative of the Associate Professors in the Academic Senate (2024-2027). Delegate for Continuing Education for the Department of Humanities. President of SFI Macerata.

The need to be re-educated to the good use of economics: listening to Aristotle's lesson

«What would be the use of such wealth if it were taken away to do good to others?»

(Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* VIII, 1155 a 7-8)

When speaking of economics and the good and bad use of wealth in the ancient world, one cannot help but refer to Aristotle, who teaches that, on the one hand, economics has wealth as its end (cf. *NE* I, 1094 a 9) and that, on the other hand, wealth (*ploutos*) is an instrument at the service of the good life and not its end. The proper use of wealth, in fact, in itself is a good, but it can turn into an evil and can ruin life («in fact it has already happened that some have gone to ruin because of wealth» *NE* I, 1094 b 18-19) if we do not know how to use it properly. Teaching that the good and happy life certainly needs wealth, but that it must be correctly and wisely framed in *oikonomia*, that is, in that discipline that knows how to give order, rhythm and melody (*nomos*) to our *oikia* (that is, to our “common house”), is the very task of philosophy, particularly practical philosophy, according to Aristotle, a philosopher whom it is, therefore, more urgent than ever to read again.

Prof. Jurema Tomelin, Education for Peace and Human Rights Network

PhD in Business Administration with studies at the University of Pavia, Italy, in the area of International Business, Technology Parks, and Open Innovation. Master's degree in Business Administration, Specialization in International Relations, and bachelor's degree in Foreign Trade. Twenty-five years of practical experience in the areas of import and exports and as a consultant professor in the area of business internationalization. She has also served as institutional coordinator of the PEIEX program - APEX Brazil's Export Agency Qualification Program. Develops and coordinates COIL – Collaborative on-Line Projects within Lutheran University of Applied Sciences in Nuremberg in the field of Social Work. Professor of Foreign Trade and Business Administration courses. Currently Dean of the International Relations and Foreign Trade Bachelor courses, and Educational Advisor at the International Office of Univille.

Education and Human Rights in Latin America: problems and challenges

Human rights can be interpreted as supranational social contracts of humanity with the aim of protecting human dignity and ensuring democratic coexistence (OHCR, 2023b). It´s known that globalization promoted significant economic growth for countries meanwhile has brought inequalities among nations (Dorn et al, 2018). Thus, social justice issues needs to be addressed, such as the right to education, adequate health, and decent standards of living, and must be conveyed within the local historical and cultural contexts (Almeida & Chase-Dunn, 2018; Gupta, 2018). The Univille´s UNESCO Chair in Education for Citizenship and Human Rights aims to promote and support projects and initiatives in the areas of Citizenship, Social Justice, and Human Rights. The region covered by Univille and the Unesco Chair, has five remaining “Quilombo Communities”, totaling approximately 900 people according to the latest census in 2022. Another important reality in the region is the Guarani MBYA Indigenous Villages shows that there are 13 indigenous villages located in the municipalities of the northeastern region of Santa Catarina State, totalling approximately 1,200 indigenous people in the region. Research projects carried out so far have sparked an important discussion about land preservation. Protecting the land and recognizing the importance of land and water as cultural heritage and human rights are essential for the entire population. Environmental education aims to encourage conservation through educational interventions among the population surrounding these traditional communities and within the communities themselves.

Prof. Vincenzo Bonazza, University of Pegaso

Vincenzo Bonazza is Associate Professor of Experimental Pedagogy. He teaches Docimology at the Faculty of Human Sciences, Education and Sport at Pegaso Online University. His research interests focus primarily on evaluation, instructional design, and distance learning. He has published, among others, Evaluation and School. Ideology, Common Sense, and Research Culture (Rome, 2019), which won the SIRD "Luigi Calonghi" Award, translated into English by Harmattan (Paris, 2022), with Anicia. With B. Vertecchi, he co-authored Docimology. An Introduction (2020); Rethinking School. Evaluating for the Long Term (2022); Who Teaches Who Learns. Profiles Towards Tomorrow (2024).

Educational challenges for human rights in neoliberals' economy

Competition, understood as social action necessary to obtain high rewards, now appears to be the aspect on which to focus in order to best guide (not only) the economic system: meritocracy, consequently, is establishing itself as an important ideal to follow for the strengthening (not only) of globalized economies. It should be remembered that, starting in the 1990s, meritocratic ideology began to develop in public debate, precisely on the ashes of failed communist regimes, but also due to the gradual obscuring of the *grand récits*. Although liberal democracy seemed destined to take the reins of future political structures, in reality things went in another direction: neoliberalism made its way, distinguished by a greater pervasiveness, to the point that the subject itself ends up being totally involved: it insinuates itself into the deepest recesses of the ego, involving both its cognitive patterns and behavioral models, thus becoming a true form of mind for the subject.

In addition, the neoliberal perspective, in addition to meritocratic competition, sees the company as the leading model for all types of human organizations and is so evident to everyone that it is even gaining ground in the public sector (local authorities, healthcare system, universities, schools, etc.): we are, in fact, dealing with Azienda Italia (Company Italy), Azienda sanitaria (Healthcare Company), Azienda scuola (School Company), and so on. The increasingly vocal criticism of the res publica for widespread inefficiency, waste, rampant bureaucracy, corruption, and more has paved the way for meritocracy, seen as the main solution to the ills afflicting public institutions, *and schools are no exception.*

Prof. Gloria Ramirez, UNAM, Mexico

Doctora en Ciencias Sociales de la Universidad de Paris I, Francia. Coordinadora de la Cátedra UNESCO de Derechos Humanos de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, con sede en la Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales. Fortalece desde la academia, la defensa, investigación y promoción de los derechos humanos en México. Ha recibido diversos reconocimientos como el “Elvia Carrillo Puerto” en 2017, otorgado por el Senado de la República por contribuir a la igualdad sustantiva y empoderamiento de las mujeres mexicanas. Autora de diversas publicaciones.

Educación en Derechos Humanos y para la Paz: perspectivas globales y desafíos en México”

La presente ponencia aborda la educación en derechos humanos y en la paz, una aspiración compartida por educadores, responsables políticos, ciudadanía y sociedad en general. No obstante, es necesario responder a interrogantes fundamentales: ¿Por qué educar en derechos humanos?, ¿Para qué educar en derechos humanos y en la paz?, ¿Desde qué perspectiva o metodología debe hacerse?, y ¿Quién forma al personal docente y de qué manera?

Desde la Declaración Universal de los Derechos Humanos, la educación en derechos humanos se planteó como una exigencia; sin embargo, solo en tiempos recientes se ha consolidado como una obligación que los Estados deben garantizar. En contraste, el derecho a la paz aún no cuenta con un reconocimiento jurídico pleno ni a nivel nacional ni internacional, lo que impide su exigibilidad. Si bien la investigación para la paz se ha desarrollado como un campo disciplinar en diversas universidades, la educación para la paz suele abordarse desde enfoques heterogéneos e incluso con usos políticos que fragmentan su sentido.

En 2023, la UNESCO emitió una importante recomendación denominada: Recomendación sobre la Educación para la Paz, los Derechos Humanos y el Desarrollo Sostenible que busca superar dichas divergencias y convoca a los Estados a avanzar en su implementación. Esta ponencia propone reflexionar y debatir sobre sus alcances y desafíos en el contexto mexicano.

Prof. Massimo Dell'Utri, University of Sassari

Massimo Dell'Utri is Full Professor of Philosophy of Language at the University of Sassari, Italy, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences. He teaches courses in philosophy of language, philosophy of multiculturality, and philosophy of literature and the arts. He has served as President of the Italian Society for Analytic Philosophy (2018-2021), and he currently serves as Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Argumenta* (https://www.argumenta.org/), as member of the European Cultural Parliament and of the Italian Society for the Philosophy of Language. He has written four books in Italian, one in English, and many articles on realism, the concept of truth, and Hilary Putnam's thought (both in English and Italian). The book in English is *Hilary Putnam's Philosophical Naturalism: Making Philosophy Matter for Life* (Lexington 2024). Among the articles are: *Choosing Conceptions of Realism: The Case of the Brains in a Vat*, "Mind", 99 (1990), 79-90; *"Metaphysics Without Ethics is Blind": The Legacy of Hilary Putnam*, "Journal for General Philosophy of Science", 48 (2017), 501-15; *Alethic Deflationism and Normativity: A Critique*, "Veritas", 63 (2018), 292-303; *Plain Alethic Pluralism: The Human Face of Truth*, "Synthese", 204 (2024), 1-20. His research deals with topics in epistemology, metaphysics, and the philosophy of language, especially the concept of truth.

Economics, Education, Universality

Economics can be the object of education in more than one way. The most straightforward approach focuses on major economic theories—their differences, authors, historical contexts, and the specific problems they sought to address. Another approach, not necessarily unrelated to the first, emphasizes the values that economics is meant to promote. These include not only strictly economic values but also moral, social, and political ones. After all, education in a broad sense is education in values—those that best support human flourishing. This paper will focus on this second approach to the relationship between economics and education, concentrating on values.

It is widely accepted that values are shaped by culture, with each society developing its own value systems based on its interests and theoretical frameworks. From this, a traditional line of thought concludes that values are inherently subjective, even incommensurable across cultures that differ greatly in time or place. According to this view, no objective discourse on values is possible—let alone a universally valid form of education.

However, drawing on thinkers such as Vivian Walsh and Hilary Putnam, I will argue that this is not necessarily the case. There is reason to believe that some economic values are universal, as is a corresponding form of education.

Prof. Marina Formica, University of Rome 2

Marina Formica is full professor of 'Modern History' at the University of Rome Tor Vergata.

President of the Italian Society for 18th Century Studies since July 2018, she is a member of the Scientific Council of the Vittoriano and Palazzo Venezia, a member of the Steering Committee of the Fondazione Roma, of the Board of Directors of the Fondazione Camillo Caetani, and a councillor of the Steering Committee of the Istituto di Studi Romani and the Società romana di storia patria.

Creator and organiser of the 'Teledidactics in Prison' project (2006), of which she is still the scientific coordinator, she is a member of the UNESCO Chair in 'Economic Systems and Human Rights', established at the Universitad Nacional de La Plata.

Her research focuses on the socio-political reality of the Church State in the Modern Age, political information circuits and the formation of public opinion in the ancient Italian States, publishing typologies in the Modern Age, the formation of European identity between the 16th and 18th centuries through the confrontation with the Other, and Risorgimento themes.

Organiser of the international conference on the 150 years of Rome as capital inaugurated at the Campidoglio, she has published numerous works on the Urbe. Among the most recent are: *Roma Romae. Una capitale in Età moderna*, Laterza, 2019; *Roma capitale. La città laica, la città religiosa (1870 - 1915)*, Viella, 2021; *Resilience in Papal Rome, 1656 - 1870. A City's Response to Crisis* (with D. Strangio), London, Palgrave Macmillian, 2023.

A barrier to recidivism: the University in prison

The report will illustrate the main features of the UNIVERSITY IN PRISON project, promoted by the University of Rome within the Rebibbia Nuovo Complesso Prison.

The aim has been, and continues to be, to promote, support and facilitate the university education of prisoners with a view to their social reintegration and with a view to full equality with all other individuals under the law.

Dozens of degrees have been awarded, and hundreds of students have enrolled in the various courses offered by the University: Literature and Philosophy, Law, Political Science, Economics.

After twenty years of activity, we continue to be driven by a firm belief in the individual and social value of knowledge, not only as a factor in improving job opportunities but also as an element of human development and promotion, critical awareness and self-criticism, without which every action is destined to remain meaningless and devoid of significance.

Dra. Olga Tarzia, Judge**,** President of the Court of Messina

Dra. Olga Tarzia is an italian Judge. After 23 years of judicial practice in Locri, in 2009 she moved to Reggio Calabria following her appointment as Section President at the City Court, serving as President of the Criminal Trial and Review Panel, a position she held until April 2011. She was then appointed Sole President of the Trial Section until September 15, 2013, and then, from September 16, 2013, to February 27, 2018, President of the Office of the Judge for Preliminary Investigations. From May 7, 2016, to December 12, 2016, she simultaneously served as President of the GIP (Preliminary Investigations Judge) Section and Acting President of the Court of Reggio Calabria.
On February 28, 2018, she took up her new position as Section President of the Criminal Trial Section and Specialized Juvenile Section of the Court of Appeal of Reggio Calabria. From April 3, 2023, to June 11, 2024, she served as Acting President of the Court of Appeal, in addition to her judicial duties. On September 16, 2024, she was appointed President of the Court of Messina, where she currently serves.

Mafia Economies and Children's Rights: Educational Models and Challenges

The economy is a field of action where power, influence, and profit are exercised. Interest is not limited to immediate gain but is structured into a long-term strategy that involves territorial control, penetration into key economic sectors, and the ability to influence economic and political decisions. The Mafia also continues to profit through traditional means, extortion, and illicit trafficking, including by exploiting minors from criminal families, sometimes leveraging their innocence. This causes them to suffer serious harm to their moral heritage, as they are negatively affected by growing up in a family context characterized by oppression, violence, and the pursuit of power.
In such families, the Mafia culture is passed down to ensure a criminal continuum that prevents the development of an independent and mature personality by choosing paths other than those linked to illicit contexts.
In this context, the paper presents the judicial experience of the Juvenile Court of Reggio Calabria and the "Free to Choose" intervention project, which began as an inter-ministerial protocol and sees the active participation of civil society. Recently, in March 2024, it was renewed and expanded to include new judicial offices and new associations.

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