

Dear Readers,

In September 2022, the McGill Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism (the *CHLRP*) hosted a two-day workshop on human rights and contested agency. We at *Inter Gentes* were absolutely thrilled when we were approached to publish the pieces developed in this symposium, as we have a strong history of collaboration with the CHLRP. Working with the Centre on many initiatives allows us to foster a dynamic research environment, with exchanges between faculty, visiting researchers, and students at all levels.

This special issue allows us to focus this exchange around one specific topic: agency in human rights. Each article explores a refraction of this multifaceted concept in the wide domain of human rights work and research. Through highlighting the complexities of this topic, this issue fulfills *Inter Gentes*' mandate to provide explorations of the intersections between international law and legal pluralism. Reconsidering the agency of various subjects of international law reveals gaps and inconsistencies in the human rights discourse. While human rights' claims can be perceived as the exercise of agency, many voices are left out of the discussion. With concrete examples and case studies, the following articles outline the power dynamics that provide or take away agency from groups and individuals, and allow us to rethink the concept in an inclusive, collective and incisive way. This reflects our attempts to displace unquestioned power hierarchies in legal pedagogy and in the field of international law. We are happy that our journal can partake in these necessary conversations.

We would like to thank the editors of this special issue Horii Hoko and Edward van Daalen, the *Inter Gentes* editorial team, the authors who contributed their work to this conversation, and of course the readers of our journal.

Enjoy!

Juliette Croce & Sophie Bisping

*Inter Gentes* Co-Editors in Chief, 2022-2023