

## CALL FOR PAPERS

Monographic issue of the *International Journal for the Semiotics of Law* (Berlin and New York: Springer), to be published in December 2011.

### **The Authoriality of Religious Law – A Semiotic Inquiry**

Ed. by Massimo Leone, Department of Philosophy, University of Torino

In every religious culture, the life of individuals, social groups, and institutions is regulated, in a more or less articulated manner, by a multiplicity of laws, norms, and rules. Complicated processes are established, maintained, and developed in order to create such regulatory system, modify it, and implement it. The semiotics of religious law has already investigated many aspects of these processes: if religious laws, norms, and rules are considered as texts, and if regulatory systems are conceived as legal semiospheres, semiotics, be it construed according to the Peircean, structural, or Lotmanian point of view, can analyze these texts and semiospheres, describe their signifying features, understand how they exert pragmatic effects in social life.

Yet, a fundamental aspect of these processes urgently requires further semiotic investigation: the authoriality of religious law. From the semiotic point of view, the question is not to understand what socio-cultural agencies play a role in shaping the regulatory systems of religious cultures, but the semio-linguistic dynamics through which authoriality, that is, the idea of the presence and agency of an author, is embedded in legal texts and semiospheres.

*The International Journal for the Semiotics of Law*, an ISI (pending evaluation), peer-reviewed international journal published by Springer, will consecrate a monographic issue on “The Authoriality of Religious Law”. Articles are invited to concentrate specifically, but not exclusively, on the following lines:

1. in-depth semiotic analyses of legal texts of specific religious cultures in order to understand through which signifying features they convey the idea of the presence and agency of an author, be it represented as transcendent, immanent, or as an intermediate agency between these two poles;
2. detailed inquiries into the semiotic dynamics through which religious legal systems seek to strike an equilibrium between the representation of a transcendent authoriality and that of an immanent authoriality;

3. thorough studies of the pragmatic processes through which cooperation between transcendent and immanent authoriality is conceived in religious laws, especially as regards the procedures of interpretation;
4. comparative remarks about the role of transcendent authoriality in religious and 'secular' law; in other terms, how can the influence of the structure of authoriality in the former on the structure of authoriality in the latter be characterized both in diachronic and synchronic terms?
5. Critical insights into the contestations of authoriality in religious legal systems: through which rhetorical strategies is the authoriality of religious law criticized, contested, subverted? Through which rhetorical strategies is it, on the contrary, defended, asserted, reestablished?
6. Authoriality, authority, and authoritarianism: the semiotic processes that establish or, on the contrary, destabilize the concept of the authoriality of religious law are closely related to those that consolidate or, vice versa, dismantle its legal authority. How can the link between semantic authoriality and pragmatic authority be characterized in semiotic terms? How can semiotics explain the passage from authority to authoritarianism in the construction of the authoriality of religious law?

Comparative and interdisciplinary approaches are particularly welcome.

Article proposals in US English (max 1000 words) will have to be sent no later than January 15, 2011 to the following e-mail address: [massimo.leone@unito.it](mailto:massimo.leone@unito.it)

Only six to eight proposals will be selected. The complete articles will have to be sent to the same address no later than June 15, 2011.

This monographic issue of the *International Journal for the Semiotics of Law* will be published in December 2011.