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# Statute as a socio-normative sign: A multidimensional semiotic model

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**Abstract.** From a semiotic perspective, a statute is not merely a normative text but also a sign of legal reality whose meaning varies across social actors. This makes semiotics relevant to examining how statutes function within legal communication and acquire meanings extending beyond their formal legal content. This study aimed to conceptualise the statute as a multidimensional semiotic sign functioning within legal reality and socio-cultural space. The statute was examined as a normative legal act and a textual and semiotic object, illustrated through specific Ukrainian statutes and distinguished within the framework of the law as the broader system of legal norms, principles, institutions, and relations. The results of the study showed that the application of a semiotic approach to the consideration of the statute as a socio-normative sign allows demonstrating in a new way its effectiveness in normative, communicative, axiological, cultural, political, civilisational, and symbolic dimensions; to show the functionality of related processes (such as legal understanding, law-making, legal realisation, legal communication, legal practice, etc.). Such a multidimensional semiotic typology of the statute has not yet been systematically considered in Ukrainian legal science, which demonstrates scientific originality and reveals the practical significance of this study, because through the mutual agreement of all significant dimensions of the statute, the state can not only provide a mechanism for legal regulation, but also construct new meanings of legal reality, and therefore, contribute to the development of appropriate values and a proper level of legal awareness in society. The combination of semiotics with the structural and functional method shows the statute through the legal text, legal sign, social interpretation, media reflection, political rethinking, collective legal awareness, and legal effectiveness. Collectively, this is another multi-level model for building a stable semantic integrity of legal reality in the context of dynamic development of the socio-cultural space

**Keywords**: statute; law; legal reality; normativity; legal communication; social interpretation; legal awareness

## Introduction

The statute has outgrown the level of the source and form of law and has become a multidimensional socio-cultural sign that simultaneously functions in normative, communicative, axiological, cultural, political, civilisational, and symbolic dimensions. And this quite openly demonstrates the prioritisation of the statute not only as a regulator of public relations, but also as a producer of new social meanings. If the classical theory of law explains what the law prescribes, then semiotics of law adds a further dimension by examining what the law signifies for the state and society. It is this shift in focus (from the normative prescription through social interpretations to the construction of legal meaning) that actualises the semiotic methodological turn in the reading of the statute. Since in the conditions of war, global communication, digitalisation, European integration, and the value transformation of law, the statute increasingly functions as a complex semiotic construct, the semiotic reading of the statute acquires not only theoretical, but also practical significance for understanding contemporary mechanisms of law-making, law-realisation, and law-thinking.

The semiotic reading of the statute is gaining a new wave of relevance. If back in 2010-2015 the semiotic approach to understanding law was perceived mainly as one of the humanitarian methodologies, then further it is increasingly used as an applied tool for explaining contemporary legal phenomena and processes. Thus, O. Bandura *et al.* (2022) in the collective study, describing the current state of legal semiotics, demonstrated it as a method of studying legal practice and see its applied significance in the interpretation of legislation, the development of legal symbols, the assessment of the quality of legal communication, and the analysis of the effectiveness of the functioning of legal institutions. V. Nevidomyi & O. Pavlyshyn (2022) described the possibility of applying semiotics in the analysis of court decisions, the legal status of citizens, the activities of government bodies, administrative procedures, etc. A.L. Harold (2021) showed how semiotics can be applied in legal argumentation, in the writing of court documents, in the interpretation of statutes in legal education, and most importantly – moving from classical semiotics to the practice of a lawyer. D. Wright & I. Picornell (2024) demonstrated the use of semiotics to analyse evidence and witness statements, in the field of expert linguistics and forensic science. P. Blandino (2026) was one of the first to use semiotics to analyse digital law, big

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databases, blockchains, artificial intelligence, etc. A. Lopo Martinez (2026) revealed a completely new area and created a model for semiotic analysis of digital evidence, establishing the digital authenticity of electronic documents.

The main approaches used in this study were semiotics and structural functionalism, which together explain how legal signs (in particular, the statute) shape social stability. In particular, semiotics regards statute as a signifier within the context of legal reality as the signified, whereas structural functionalism analyses statute as a component of the social system that performs normative, communicative, integrative, and symbolic functions. The research was based on the analysis of scientific sources (papers, monographs) published in a certain period and selected according to the criteria of thematic relevance, authority, and scientific value.

## Basic principles of semiotics methodology and its role in the study of law

Before proceeding to the description of the semiotic model of the statute, it is worth briefly outlining the existing theoretical and methodological foundations of such an understanding. Here it is worth mentioning that the issues of defining social reality by means of language were mainly studied by structuralists and post-structuralists, ranging from classical linguists to semiologists. F. de Saussure (2013) received the greatest recognition for the idea of dividing the phenomenon of language into an abstract language system (a structured system of signs) and individual utterances, or speech proper (a concrete application of an abstract system); moreover, he applied a structural principle to an individual sign (word), dividing it into a sound image (a material substance that he called a signifier) and its concept (or signified). According to this concept, the statute is an image, the legal reality is the signified. The linguistic and structuralist approach was also applied to new subjects of study in this context by the French anthropologist C. Lévi-Strauss (1963). He studied the components of behaviour of representatives of different cultures as linguistic phenomena. The specific codes that Lévi-Strauss identified as mediators of the exchange of similarities and differences between nature and culture, and between social groups, can be used as a basis for a semiotic analysis of the legal behaviour of social subjects. Danish linguist H.L. Trolle (1969) divided language into "system" and "process"; clarified two aspects of the Saussurean language sign by distributing two fundamental levels of language – "expression plan" and "content plan"; advanced the idea of a semiological function, which he defined as the relationship between two aspects of the act of meaning production (signification) – between the signifier and the signified, or between expression and content; ultimately, he extended his semiological research to non-verbal information systems (traffic lights, clocks, etc.). According to this approach, the "act of producing meaning" of a statute occurs in the process of its implementation, in particular, through the interpretation of the content.

French theorist of semiotics R. Barthes (1967) distinguished five codes of perception for the analysis of cultural phenomena: hermeneutical, proeretic, symbolic, semic, and referential. The first two concern "structural poetics", whereas the remaining three demonstrate the connotative (expressive-Author's note) aspect and, consequently, the stereotypical nature of culture. Such stereotypes are, for example, certain sociolects – types of socio-ideological "writing", including the language of law. The concept of the Italian scholar U. Eco (1979) revealed the general principles of semiological analysis. His ideas are so universal that they can be applied not only to the phenomena that he offers for consideration (architecture, cinema, painting, music, advertising, etc.); general problems of semiology can be suitable for analysing both non-verbal and verbal signs and their systems.

The essential distinction between the terms "semiotics" and "semiology" became particularly widespread in the 1970s at the Paris School of Semiotics, founded by the French scientist A.J. Greimas (1989). His theory of structural semantics is regarded as analytical and applicable across all fields, as virtually anything can be regarded as a text conveying information and therefore as containing signs or constituting signs itself It is this theory that is called the "basic semiotic theory" in France and it can be considered a clear division between the study of the process of emergence, generation of production of meaning, or designation (semiotics) and the study of the functioning of sign systems, including language signs (semiology). Representatives of the Lviv-Warsaw School of Philosophy also expressed support for the semiotic method, developing concepts of the world of language, the philosophy of names, the philosophy of sentences, and the formalisation of language. The significant role of the Polish School of Semiotics should be noted, which developed in the middle of the 20$^{th}$ century. In Germany, the so-called semiotics work platform was created at the Technical University of Berlin in 1974. This is the only research centre in Germany that deals with semiotic problems. In particular, this publication applies semiotics in the fields of cuisine, sports, communication, medicine, and even burial sites. The practical application of semiotic analysis was demonstrated in the study of various types of motorists, which helped to further stimulate their behaviour when testing technical means used in road traffic.

Contemporary science distinguishes several approaches to understanding the concepts of "semiotics" and "semiology". The first treats semiotics as a theory of signification, the creation of new meanings; while semiology presents it as the science of sign systems and their functioning. That is, semiotics studies the ways in which values are formed, and semiology studies the effect of these values. The second approach presents semiotics as the concept of signs in general, and semiology as only linguistic signs. However, some scientific schools identify semiotics and semiology within the framework of structuralism.

There are tendencies to distinguish the so-called "third tradition", which emphasises the special role of the person and their consciousness in the formation and development of sign systems and semantic structures; this refers the so-called "deep semiotics" as the "expansion of the traditional theory of sign systems (semiotics) due to the metaphysical and personological dimension of comprehension and meaning formation". This approach is similar to the transition in physics from kinematics, which traces the trajectory of motion, to dynamics, which considers the forces that give rise to this motion; therefore, this allows discussing "semiodynamics". In addition, despite the three-part division of semiotics into semantics, syntactics, and pragmatics, there is another section that deals with the study of methods for

creating new signs – semionics, and the concept of "semiurgy" refers to the activity of creating such signs and introducing them into the language. Science also recognises significs (significo – "I signify, express"), which studies the meaning of words in language as a process of communication, with particular emphasis on the psychological aspect, and other related approaches.

## Establishment of legal semiotics in Ukrainian science

For the first time, the semiotic approach as such was mentioned in Ukrainian studies in the late 1970s and also in the context of jurisprudence (Rabinovych & Nakonechna, 2022; Rabinovych, 2023), which, through the application of axiological and anthropological approaches, demonstrated that the rule of law acquires social significance only in the context of social values and human needs), and then – at the turn of the 1980-90s, but exclusively in the philological context. Initially, it was only about certain areas of semiotics, in particular the structure of lexical and grammatical semantics (Rusnivskyi, 1988), which was used even in the study of the specifics of legal texts, for example, through structural and semantic analysis of legal documents (Saienko, 1990). Further, this area began to be included in the curriculum in the humanities. In particular, I. Khomenko (2004) revealed the semiotic nature of logic, proposing this aspect as one of the sections of the textbook on logic for lawyers.

The study by J. Deely (2000) first proposed to the Ukrainian public a systematic and holistic concept in the field of sign systems. Subsequently, A. Karas' (2003) published a monograph, where in the section "Contours of semiotic interpretation" he attempted to highlight the development of civil society as a semiotic and discursive process, in particular, considering specific features of Ukrainian social and cultural development. Dissertations of a philosophical and applied nature, in particular in the field of legal understanding, were defended. These include research by S. Zarkhina (2005), where the reconstruction of the historical development of ideas concerning the philosophical understanding of the language of law and legal semiotics was carried out; P. Baltadzhi (2008), who used the methodology of semiotics to identify patterns and features of the language of acts of application of law and determine its dependence on the level of professionalism, language training, general and legal culture of law enforcement subjects; A. Tokarska (2008), who carried out a comprehensive scientific and theoretical analysis and investigated key areas of optimisation of regulation of legal communication activities, and their comprehensive philosophical and legal substantiation based on hermeneutics, axiology, and semiotics. T. Podorozhna (2009) separately considered the symbolic function among the main functions of legislative definitions. A. Berniukov (2009), supplemented the universal method of interpretation with structural and semiotic analysis, which helped to investigate legal hermeneutics as a methodology for the administration of justice.

A study related to the semiotics of law, particularly examining the relationship between law and symbolic reality and their interaction and mutual influence, is the monograph by V. Rechytskyi (2007), who analysed the concept, functions, and properties of symbolic reality, including legal reality. T. Dudash (2010) successfully conducted a general theoretical study of the semiotic nature of law, addressing, in particular, the semiotic foundations of legal signification and the symbolisation of mononormativity. In doing so, she distinguished between legal signification and legal naming, placing these issues within the context of the hermeneutic aspects of the process and outcome of legal understanding and their influence on the official interpretation of legal norms.

Legal semiotics was analysed by O. Merezhko (2010), who emphasised that law and all legal phenomena should be considered from two main standpoints: psychological (or internal, which is done by legal psychology) and symbolic (or external, which is the subject of legal semiotics). In particular, the researcher suggests that "without the semiotics of law, social communication would be impossible... this is obviously the function of legal semiotics – ensuring legal communication in the process of distributing rights and obligations in society".

All these studies were useful for developing the author's position on the conceptual foundations of semiotics and semiology of law as a philosophical and legal paradigm by O. Balynska (2013). This idea was developed by O. Pavlyshyn (2017), taking only semiotics as the basis for research on law and legal relations, without mentioning semiology. The most applied application of semiotics in the field of jurisprudence was found by D. Bocharov (2012), who used this method to investigate crimes, in particular the examination of physical evidence.

Thus, the semiotic approach in the Ukrainian scientific tradition was formed gradually: from the first references in legal and philological studies of the late 1970s-early 1990s to its systematic understanding as a methodology of humanitarian knowledge. At the initial stage, semiotic ideas were applied mainly to the analysis of the language, text and structure of legal documents, and later were integrated into the study of logic, philosophy of law, legal hermeneutics, and legal communication. In the 2000s, the problem expanded significantly: researchers turned to the symbolic nature of law, symbolic reality, legal designation, symbolic function of legislative definitions, and semiotic aspects of legal understanding. Further, semiotics began to be considered not only as a tool for analysing legal texts, but also as a means of explaining the functioning of law in the field of social communication and interaction of legal and cultural meanings. The result of this development was the establishment of the concept of semiotics and semiology of law as an independent philosophical and legal paradigm and its further application to theoretical and applied problems, in particular, legal understanding, law enforcement, and investigation of crimes.

## Statute as a normative text and socio-cultural sign

Despite the fact that the semiotic approach is being actively applied in the study of legal practice (law-making, official interpretation, criminalistics, legal proceedings, etc.), the concept of understanding the statute in the context of semiotics of law remains insufficiently investigated. The transition from the legal content of the statute to its socio-cultural significance involves a number of points. First, the statute as a normative text contains formally defined norms and rules, rights and obligations, permits and prohibitions, clear

procedures, and sanctions. A statute becomes a legal sign when its content correlates with the social context (the concepts given in it have real correspondences – objects, values, expectations, behaviour patterns, etc.). Then the meaning of the statute ceases to depend only on the legislator, and constructs new legal meanings within the framework of interpretation and application of this normative legal act. The statute can simultaneously perform regulatory, communicative, value, identification, political, and legitimation functions. This gives grounds to distinguish between the legal content of the statute, and official interpretation, professional legal reading, media representation, and public perception of its text, where all elements of legal reality are indicated.

Regardless of how the process of signification is understood, whether as arbitrary or dynamic, the semiosis of statute, as the process of creating and interpreting legal signs, is possible only when users of legal signs (citizens and social actors) already possess some prior understanding of the objects represented by the signs they perceive. As a rule, such a preliminary representation is formed throughout the entire socialisation of the subject, their cognitive activity, the acquisition of life experience, etc. B. Cassin (2013) in this case emphasises the importance of "meaningful use" (the term borrowed from L. Wittgenstein) of signs, when their content (symbolism) is actually manifested. In particular, she writes: "It is a mistake to assume that where the same sign exists, there is the same symbol – despite the significant differences written in the word life, and despite the "tangible" reality of the symbol. Thus, the limit of meaning and nonsense is not determined either by "empirical content", or by some transcendental guide that delineates the boundaries of thought, or by the reality with which our language must be consistent in its structure. But this limit is determined by usage". Therefore, this refers to different perceptions of the statute.

In general, in the legal context, denotation occurs primarily in the process of law-making: modelling signs that would exhaustively mean objects, facts or events from real life involves directly naming the signified phenomena with maximum reproduction of their content. Moreover, the statute as a sign should not only indicate, but also in a certain way meaningfully characterise the signified from legal reality to which it points; this gives grounds to consider the statute as a sign means of cognition and understanding of legal reality. Thus, denotation (which involves one sign referring to a single object) applies when dealing with a specific legal case; when referring to a normative legal sign (statute as the result of generalisation), it should be understood that this sign is the result of designation (the semiotic representation of a generic concept, i.e., an entire class of homogeneous

Law can be imagined as a sheet of paper with what is permitted, encouraged, and rewarded in society written on one side, and what is prohibited, rejected, and condemned written on the other; the edge of the sheet represents the demarcation line between good and evil (what is permitted and prohibited), and any attempt to divide it would be absurd, because this line is as thin as the thickness of the paper. Accordingly, the statute as a legal message is a semiotic pointer, a vector that stands at a crossroads and demonstrates what to expect by turning in one direction or another.

The same position is described in the concept of understanding law and in the papers by the American philosopher R.M. Cover (1995), who rejected the traditional view of legal positivism and proposed a cultural, narrative, and deeply ethical approach to law that combines nomos, jurisprudence, and the connection to violence. Here, law is not only a rule of behaviour, but the whole world, living space, culture, and the system of their interpretations. Each rule of statute is a separate story (narrative); without stories about origin, values, and the future, the law becomes meaningless. But the law acts as a kind of "bridge" from the current social reality to the imaginary ideal future. R.M. Cover introduced two fundamental concepts: "jurisgenesis" (the creation of law, i.e., the emergence of legal meanings within communities, religious groups, ideological movements, and minorities that develop their own narratives and construct their own understanding of law) and "jurispathy" (the death of legal meanings within state courts, which resolve conflicts between different normative "universes" of communities by choosing one narrative and neutralising another; courts are the "pathos" (killers) of alternative law). Abstracting from the perception by most philosophers of the judicial process as a rational and purely linguistic discussion, R.M. Cover (1986) focused on the material nature of statute. It describes the violent nature of justice (a judge's decision is not just a text, but a command to action, the execution of which deprives the offender of property, funds, freedom or life) and institutional violence (to implement a judge's decision, one needs a complex system of institutions with certain powers – the police, prosecution service, lawyers, correctional labour institutions, etc.).

British jurist B.S. Jackson (1985) proposed a synthesis of structural semiotics and Anglo-American jurisprudence. His concept shifts the focus from the simple logic of legal norms to the deep meaning hidden in the text of the statute; he treats the statute not as a static set of commands, but as a dynamic discourse in which meaning is born through the social context, the culture of the people and the interpretation of citizens.

Therefore, the text of the statute as a properly organised form of communication, as a message, contains units, means, signals, etc., that are sufficient and necessary to build a correct and meaningful model based on it. Therefore, the statute can be considered an ideal abstract information model (because it models behaviour in an abstract situation without defining the subject) of specific social relations and legal facts. Read more: the statute is a socio-legal sign model that reflects the essential features of an object, phenomenon or process of legal reality, embodied in a generalised form in a legal norm; it is one of the communicative models of the socio-cultural space, which describes an ordered type of relations of social subjects within this space. Given this, the statute can be considered an active socio-cultural sign.

## Author's multidimensional semiotic model of the statute

The statute as a sign of the socio-cultural space has seven interdependent dimensions. It is worth noting that the measurement of the statute should be understood as a relatively independent aspect of its functioning, revealing its specific symbolic purpose and showing the totality of certain socially significant symbols. The first (main) dimension is normative; at this level, the statute performs traditional legal functions: it establishes a model of behaviour, defines rights and obligations, and formalises legal prescriptions. The second is

communicative; this dimension reveals the statute as a command of the state, addressed not only to individuals (citizens here and now, and to those who will be born), but also to institutions (national – authorities, courts, institutions and organisations, etc.; international – to other states, interstate associations, etc.). The third is axiological; here the statute encodes an understanding of the basic principles of society as social values, such as freedom, equality, justice, dignity, the rule of law, etc. The fourth is cultural; this dimension corresponds to the manifestation of the statute as a means of reproduction and a way of preserving collective memory, covering the state language, style of education, attitude to science and innovation, cultural heritage, faith and religion, customs and traditions, worldview, and universal values. The fifth is political; in this dimension, the statute appears as a symbol of the state vector of development, such as statutes on national security and defence, joining the European Union, anti-corruption policy, reforming public administration and maintaining sustainability, etc., which is of great symbolic importance for the entire state. The sixth (derived from the previous one) is civilisational; this dimension is the most significant, because it demonstrates how Ukraine positions itself in the global context; here the statute becomes a sign of civilisational affiliation (priority of democracy and the rule of law, final departure from the post-Soviet heritage, strategic course for unification in profitable economic, military and other alliances with the preservation of national identity). The seventh (most significant) is a symbolic resource of legitimacy; in this dimension, the statute is perceived as a means of building trust in the authorities, recognition and support from society, establishing the authority of the state, projecting expectations, and establishing justice.

This multidimensional nature of the statute is constantly increasing with the dynamic development of society and the state. This is especially facilitated by the latest conditions. Thus, during a large-scale war, the statute is transformed into a means of mobilising society and a symbol of national unity. Almost total digitalisation encourages the statute to shift the focus from the official text to its media translations, emphasising the intensity of social networks that show operational short videos, memes, and other content of bloggers, which forces legal institutions to adapt to the media space. The tendency of artificial intelligence to dominate in many areas where subject-subject relations (in particular, legal relations) previously prevailed causes a crisis of confidence in the law and a loss of normativity of the statute. And only in the aggregate do all dimensions form a complete symbolic foundation of the statute.

Not only the multidimensional nature of the statute gives grounds for different reading of its text. Its interpretation also depends on the subject of "reading": a citizen, a foreigner, a journalist, a police officer, a prosecutor, a lawyer, a judge, a civil servant, a people's deputy, a foreign expert, etc. In fact, this refers to the probability of the emergence of several "meanings" of the same statute. It involves not only the semiotics of the statute, but also about the semiotics of the operation of the statute in the state. Considering the symbolic nature of law, the effectiveness of legal myths, the symbolism of legal communication and legal practice in general, it becomes clear that the statute acquires social significance after its adoption. This concerns not so much the text of the statute as its "social life". The statute shifts its functional and semantic load from normativity towards social interpretation and construction of legal meanings.

One example is Law of Ukraine No. 2704-VIII (2019). Legally, this document regulates the functioning and use of the Ukrainian language as the only state language in Ukraine. In a semiotic context, a socio-cultural reading of this statute possible as one of the symbols of independence and national identity of the state, as a tool for decolonisation of society and a mechanism for preserving culture, as a means of protecting the rights of Ukrainians and limiting possible encroachments of foreigners, as a political marker, and a basic system-forming element of the Ukrainian nation.

Law of Ukraine No. 317-VIII (2015), from the document regulating the procedures for renaming and dismantling symbols, becomes the leading sign of the civilisational choice of the state. This involves "recoding" collective memory, changing state narratives, and eventually replacing the Soviet system of symbols with the Ukrainian one. The statute performs the function of "semiotic purification" of the socio-cultural space of the state; it regulates not only the behaviour of social subjects, but also the semantic load of symbols.

Law of Ukraine No. 3543-XII (1993) demonstrated a departure from the traditional mobilisation legislation, which in peacetime establishes a legal mechanism for recruiting troops, and in times of war it becomes a sign of civic responsibility, belonging of a person to a political nation, and collective self-preservation of the people. Ideally, this statute symbolises the priority of the existence of the state, builds a new balance between human freedom and the security of the entire people, and forces citizens to rethink the concept of constitutional rights and obligations. In a society exhausted by war, such a statute for some turns into a means of direct state coercion, which leads to internal conflicts.

Law of Ukraine No. 2108-IX (2022) is special in that it not only criminalises certain actions, but simultaneously constructs the boundaries of the political community, defines the normative understanding of loyalty, creates new legal symbols of trust in the authorities, forms the concept of "friends" and "strangers", which symbolises a moral assessment of a person's behaviour. If earlier criminal law mainly described actions (or omissions), then this statute "works" with the social meaning of behaviour. Therefore, its semiotic load is much higher. In other words, a single statute can produce several meanings: from a normative sign – through media and political interpretation and public reading – to the development of new legal symbols.

The semiotic mechanism of transformation of the statute reveals another multi-level model, but with a functional and active emphasis: 1) legal text, 2) legal sign, 3) social interpretation, 4) media reflection, 5) political rethinking, 6) mass legal awareness, 7) legal efficiency. This mechanism demonstrates the Statute as a multi-level social sign, the content of which is not identical to the social meaning, because social interpretations affect the final pragmatic effect of the statute. In addition, semiotic analysis allows explaining the reasons for different perceptions of the same regulatory requirements.

## Conclusions

The statute has not always been the focus of semiotics as the science of signs and sign structures. The analysis of the

basic principles of this methodological approach and its role in the study of law gives grounds to assert that almost until the end of the 20th century, legal semiotics only gained momentum, and Ukrainian science also actualises the use of the semiotic method for studying subjects of various branches of knowledge. Focusing on the statute within the framework of the latest legal discourse with a semiotic reading, it can be interpreted as a separate landmark phenomenon in which the state generalises and most clearly crystallises its will, social values, and political orientations.

The latest social changes demonstrate that one normative text can cause different models of legal behaviour depending on the "reading" and this creates a crisis of normativity of law, when the analysis of the normative content of the statute alone is no longer enough. In addition, the Russian-Ukrainian war has exacerbated social transformations in the semiotic reading of law, the statute itself begins to produce social symbols (for example, the statute on decommunisation is a tool for rethinking national historical memory; the statute on mobilisation is not only a mechanism for recruiting the armed forces, but also a means of translating society and the economy into functioning under martial law; the statute on collaboration is a symbolic division into "friends" and "strangers"; the statute on the state language is an attempt to preserve national identity and sustainability, the blatant public disregard of which has repeatedly led to negative consequences on a national scale, etc.).

Almost total dynamic digitalisation creates a specific information space in which citizens, for ease of perception, get acquainted with the statute no longer through the official text, but rather through news feeds, messages in social networks, various videos, memes, and comments of bloggers – and together all this forms a complex circle of circulation of legal meanings, symbols and signs (a specific socio-legislative semiosis is being created). In general, the functionality of the statute is increasingly shifting the focus from regulatory to communicative, because many statutes (especially those adopted during the war) have a strong declarative character and are designed to unite society and build a collective national identity through demonstrating the values of the state, outlining the political course, and forming the international image of the country (that is, the role of symbolic power of the statute increases).

Therefore, the statute ceases to be a static text, but acquires the properties of a dynamic sign, the meaning of which is formed in a continuous interpretation by various subjects: from individual citizens, public associations, scientists, journalists – to the Supreme and Constitutional Courts and international institutions. And considering the European integration trends, many statutes are adopted with the aim of introducing European standards and relevant institutional changes, so the meaning of the contemporary national statute demonstrates, despite its regulatory capacity, also the civilisational choice of the state with an emphasis on Ukraine's integration into the European space, in particular the legal one.

Therefore, the statute should be understood in a multidimensional way: as a normative sign (that is, as a carrier of legal prescriptions), a communicative sign (as a way of interaction between the state and citizens), an axiological sign (as a reproduction of socio-legal values), a cultural sign (as a component of historical memory and an element of legal tradition), a political sign (as a marker of domestic and foreign state policy), a civilisational sign (as an indicator of belonging to a certain socio-cultural space with the prospect of its expansion – for Ukraine, considering European integration), a symbolic sign (as a means of forming citizens' trust in the law and recognition of symbolic violence of state power). Highlighting such a variety of manifestations of the statute as a sign allows analysing all the processes that accompany the statute – law-making, legal understanding, law enforcement, legal communication, legal interpretation, legalisation of symbolic violence of law, etc.

A promising area of research on this issue should be the study of the possibilities of mutual agreement and interaction of these dimensions of the statute, which actually ensures its ability not only to regulate social relations, but also to reproduce the value foundations of society, to form legal consciousness and legal worldview, to construct legal meanings, and therefore legal reality.

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# Закон як соціонормативний знак: багатовимірна семіотична модель

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**Анотація**. Із позицій семіотики закон є не лише нормативним текстом, а й знаком правової дійсності, значення якого по-різному сприймають різні соціальні суб'єкти. Це зумовлює актуальність застосування семіотичного підходу для дослідження функціонування законів у правовій комунікації та набуття ними значень, що виходять за межі їхнього формально-юридичного змісту. Метою дослідження була концептуалізація закону як багатовимірного семіотичного знаку, що функціонує у правовій дійсності та соціокультурному просторі. Закон розглядався як нормативно-правовий акт, а також як текстовий і семіотичний об'єкт; цей підхід конкретизований на прикладах окремих законів України та вирізняє закон у межах права як ширшої системи правових норм, принципів, інститутів і відносин. Результати дослідження продемонстрували, що застосування семіотичного підходу до розгляду закону як соціонормативного знаку дає змогу по-новому продемонструвати його дієвість у нормативному, комунікативному, аксіологічному, культурному, політичному, цивілізаційному та символічному вимірах, а також показати функціональність супутніх процесів (таких як праворозуміння, правотворчість, правореалізація, правова комунікація, правова практика тощо). Така багатоаспектна семіотична типологія закону досі системно не розглядалася в українській юридичній науці, що демонструє наукову новизну і розкриває практичну цінність цього дослідження Адже через взаємоузгодження всіх знакових вимірів закону держава здатна не тільки забезпечувати механізм правового регулювання, а й конструювати нові смисли правової дійсності, а отже, сприяти формуванню в суспільстві відповідних цінностей і належного рівня правосвідомості. Поєднання семіотики зі структурно-функціональним методом показує закон через юридичний текст, правовий знак, соціальну інтерпретацію, медійне відображення, політичне переосмислення, колективну правосвідомість і юридичну ефективність. Сукупно це ще одна багаторівнева модель побудови стабільної смислової цілісності правової дійсності в умовах динамічного розвитку соціокультурного простору

**Ключові слова**: закон; право; правова дійсність; нормативність; правова комунікація; соціальна інтерпретація; правосвідомість