

Why Authority?



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A pluralist turn in jurisprudence, to encompass phenomena such as transnational law, indigenous law, customary law, religious law, and international law, must grapple with a number of core building blocks that legal theorists take to be central to their field. Ideas about institutions, normativity, coercion, reasoning, jurisdiction and authority have all been subjected to pluralist challenges and revision. In this paper I defend the centrality, to pluralist jurisprudence, of the idea of authority, which, alone among concepts of control, captures not only a distinctive normative power, but also a role - and indeed an embodied role - in which some persons are both recognized and charged with special powers and duties.

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