



Natural Law, Religion, and Rights: An Exploration of the Relationship Between Natural Law and Natural Rights, With Special Emphasis on the Teachings of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke

Henrik Syse

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This book discusses some of those ethical and political questions that puzzled several of the great minds of the twentieth century, such as Leo Strauss, Eric Voegelin, Jacques Maritain, and John Finnis: the question of natural law and its relationship to a teaching of individual freedom and rights.

The main aim of the book is to interpret anew the relationship between law and rights in Thomas Hobbes and John Locke, two important founders of modern rights doctrines. But in order to put their teachings into the right perspective, Syse also portrays and discusses other models of law and rights, from Aristotle, through Thomas Aquinas, to John Duns Scotus and William of Ockham, with detours to the teachings of Plato, Cicero, and Augustine. Throughout the discussion, the role of religion and revelation is given center stage as a complex, yet fascinating picture of the relationship between natural law, religion, and rights emerges – one which is neither as simple nor as complicated as often imagined.

Natural Law, Religion, and Rights should be of interest both to students struggling with the meaning and contents of the natural law tradition, as well as to teachers and researchers working on the many-faceted problems of natural law and natural rights.

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