PREFACE

My intuition in writing this book was that acquiring a better understanding of the history of natural law might facilitate addressing key current issues relating to the Anthropocene era and offer an insight into the development of the power of money.

The book relates how knowledge and nature were rearranged anew in the theories of natural law developed in seventeenth-century England. It locates that novelty of English natural law in its context and explains why it remains relevant today. In so doing it broadens the classical language of governance to encompass notions drawn from natural and social sciences, the theory of knowledge and natural philosophy. These notions concern health, human necessities, the light of nature, innate principles, abundance, scarcity, utility, *oeconomy*, money and, indeed, the human body, all of which have consistently been neglected in legalistic accounts of the history of international law and studies of natural law, or only with theology as a secondary element. My argument is that the Scientific Revolution was as important as the Reformation in the process that transformed natural law from a theological staple into a new philosophy for the development of Europe. I argue that the sacred idea of nature was one of the casualties of the Scientific Revolution, and the innate principles of practical reason were another. They had to give way so that natural scientists could obtain dominion over science and the humanities.

The book offers a complementary interpretation of John Locke's philosophy in relation to the important theological reading produced during the last few decades, to which, I hasten to add, I subscribe. The analysis set out also considers the naturalized aspects of seventeenth-century empirical science and medicine, which is particularly evident in Locke's work and appears in the production of his epistemology, science of money and political theory. I propose to read Locke's main theoretical writings as revolving around the core theme of (human) necessities. Furthermore, this reading is set in the context of the wider seventeenth-century scientific project of making atomism the new foundation of natural philosophy, in

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 15 Nov 2026 at 23:19:12, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009332149.001

the corpuscular version developed in particular by Robert Boyle. I also suggest that the transformation of natural law in the seventeenth century has not been sufficiently reflected upon and that the demise of natural law never took place. The natural sciences and economics that we have inherited from that period constituted a world structured on the basis of natural law that has influenced and shaped our understanding of moral natural law anew. Far from disappearing, natural law has become embedded in the very foundations of all enlightened societies.

The thesis advanced reframes our understanding of Hobbes and Locke's political theory as a reaction to radical scepticism, Neoplatonism and the commercial spirit of England in the seventeenth century, but without ever really escaping the reach of these new ideas and worldviews. It also introduces Robert Boyle's important philosophical and economic work on nature. The book's approach relates to their naturalism and care for the public good, their medical studies, the ambiguous deconstruction of the sacred notion of nature during the Scientific Revolution and the increasingly anxious twenty-first-century debate among scientists and lawyers about how to protect nature and curb greed globally.

Without the magnanimity of the Finnish Cultural Foundation, this book would have not been possible. At the end of the process, the Olga and Kaarle Oskari Laitinen Foundation contributed to costs related to the language checking, which was undertaken by Rupert Haigh, and I was able to conclude the publishing process with a grant of the Funciva Foundation. The Osk. Huttunen Foundation awarded me a one-year research sojourn at the Faculty of Law and Clare Hall of the University of Cambridge. Thus, it was possible to carry out proper research founded on intuitions that came to me during a previous research sojourn at the Faculty of History of the same university. With characteristic generosity, Professor Annabel Brett helped me to fulfil my wish to gravitate around Cambridge. At Clare Hall, I found a wealth of brilliant people, among them historians of science, from whom I constantly learned, and a home, for which I am indebted to Professor David Ibbetson, then President of Clare Hall, and to its great fellows. The people and the vibrant academic environment in the Lauterpacht Centre provided me with the necessary motivation to continue digging despite the apparently daunting nature of the enterprise. During my stay in England, Dan Jolowicz, Matthew C. Nicholson, John Haskell and Sarah Nouwen generously invited me to present embryonic versions of this work. At home in Helsinki and in other places, my friends, colleagues and family faithfully supported my determination to understand what natural law is. They listened to primitive versions of the

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 15 Nov 2026 at 23:19:12, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009332149.001

project; colleagues sent me their unpublished chapters, and even books, and all in all showed me that science is really the common pursuit of truth. Sometimes it is necessary to look at issues from an altogether different perspective, and in this regard, I must thank Professor Anne Orford who gave me the extraordinary opportunity of being a visiting fellow in her outstanding Laureate Program in Melbourne. Australia's design of nature is something else. Matthias Goldmann generously engineered a visiting professorship in Frankfurt through which I learned a lot, meeting many brilliant German law students. The professionalism and friendliness of Tom Randall at Cambridge University Press have been a source of confidence in the process of publishing the book. I am very grateful to the editors of this series, Jean d'Aspremont and Larissa van den Herik, who amidst their busy schedules found time for my manuscript and showed great interest in it, and also to the excellent anonymous reviewers of Cambridge University Press. At different stages, Martti Koskenniemi, Joseph Weiler, Anne Orford and Jan Klabbers have exceeded all bounds of generosity in their support. With its proverbial flexibility and openness, the University of Helsinki enabled me to continue with the task of writing the manuscript at certain key moments. I am extremely grateful to Rafa Domingo, Miguel Arrufat and Jaime García del Barrio who recently welcomed me to their new venture, the Álvaro d'Ors Chair of Global Law at the Institute for Culture and Society, University of Navarre. During these years, a great number of other colleagues and friends, too numerous to mention here, and my family have been a constant source of friendship, inspiration and love.

This book is dedicated to my sister Elsa who passed away unexpectedly last May. A geologist by training, she was a Renaissance woman, equally capable of sewing a winter coat, cooking a delicious Basque meal, talking about any current book or solving the most difficult arithmetic problems to help her engineer nieces, nephews and her students. The most precious treasure she has left to us all is her unassuming capacity to love, giving her time, her things and herself untiringly to those around her. I called her some years ago to learn how gold appeared in the world, and in this way to gain a better understanding of some of the heroes of this story, and I was surprised and enlightened by her explanation about supernovas. I hope you like the book Elsa.

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 15 Nov 2026 at 23:19:12, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009332149.001

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 15 Nov 2026 at 23:19:12, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009332149.001