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alternative vision of politics: Hobbes; A third vision of politics: Augustine; The nature of the question; 7 Legalism and modernity I: Identifying and understanding the problem; The nature and source of the problem; The centrality of legalism to modern politics 8 Legalism and modernity II: Reflections upon the problemHabit, tradition and rule; Direction and purpose; Wisdom and unwisdom in politics; Politics in the perspective of eternity; 9 Political thought and the 'well-ordered society'; What connects utopianism to politics?; Utopian thought and the character of philosophy; 10 The limits of legal ideologies; Man's reason and social order; Reason and ideology; The 'rational existence' as an object of legal thought; Reason in society; 11 Conservatism and its dilemmas; The dilemma of conservatism; Kantian vs. Aristotelian conceptions of ethics Kantian and Platonic forms of ethicismLessons for law and government; 12 Liberal jurisprudence and its order; Order and its absence; Ordo virtutum; The problem of justice; Part III Justice; 13 Justice without mercy; Law, justice and society; Mercy and society; The character of mercy; The role of mercy in the world; 14 Justice and moral judgment; Integrity and conscience; Morality and metaphysics; The morality of the law; 15 Fallen justice; Augustine: justice without the law; Aquinas: The justice of the law; Justice and its implications; 16 Freedom and justice in a democratic age; Freedom JusticeThe state; The importance of civil society; Bibliography of Works Cited; Primary sources; Secondary sources; Index

Sommario/riassunto

Understandings of law and politics are intrinsically bound up with broader visions of the human condition. Sean Coyle argues for a renewed engagement with the juridical and political philosophies of the Western intellectual tradition, and takes up questions pondered by Aristotle, Plato, Augustine, Aquinas and Hobbes in seeking a deeper understanding of law, politics, freedom, justice and order. Criticising modern theories for their failure to engage with fundamental questions, he explores the profound connections between justice and order and raises the neglected question of whether human beings in all their imperfection can ever achieve truly just order in this life. Above all, he confronts the question of whether the open society is the natural home of liberals who have given up faith in human progress (there are no ideal societies), or whether liberal political order is itself the ideal society?
