Normative theories of society and government in five medieval thinkers: St. Augustine, John of Salisbury, Giles of Rome, St. Thomas Aquinas, and Marsilius of Padua.


Abstract

The following text is taken from the publisher's website: "This book is a detailed scholarly examination of five major medieval thinkers who sought to bring out the implications, for social and political life and organizations, of the doctrines, thought-patterns and language of Christianity, and to define the role of the institutional Church in that life and organization. At the heart of their thought lies a large and pervasive question: is unaided human nature capable of genuinely moral activity, and hence of constructive political association? The study takes due account of biographical information, and an understanding of the cultural, historical and political circumstances in relation to which the chosen authors perceived their enterprise. It examines the development of the â€˜ideologyâ€™ of the medieval Church with particular reference to three things: the emergence and career of the â€˜Augustinian/Gelasian principleâ€™; the contribution of Pope Gregory VII and the immediate and long-term issues underlying that contribution; and the decisive conflict at the turn of the 12th and 13th centuries between Pope Boniface VIII and King Philip IV of France. The book closes with a postscript which describes some of the developments that have transformed the agenda of political theory from â€˜medievalâ€™ to â€˜modern. â€™"