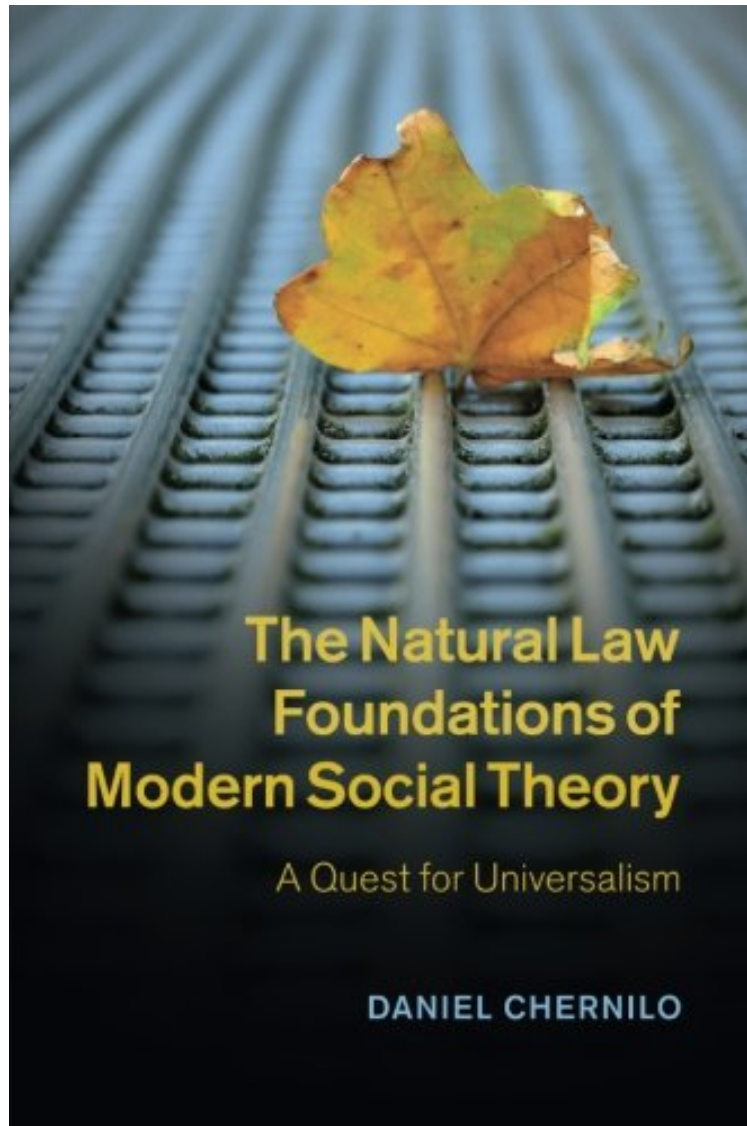


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# The Natural Law Foundations of Modern Social Theory: A Quest for Universalism

*Daniel Chernilo*

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**Daniel Chernilo : The Natural Law Foundations of Modern Social Theory: A Quest for Universalism** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Natural Law Foundations of Modern Social Theory: A Quest for Universalism:

After several decades in which it became a prime target for critique, universalism remains one of the most important issues in social and political thought. Daniel Chernilo reassesses the universalistic orientation of social theory and explains its origins in natural law theory, using an impressive array of classical and contemporary sources that include, among others, Jrgen Habermas, Karl Lwith, Leo Strauss, Weber, Marx, Hegel, Rousseau and Hobbes. 'The Natural Law Foundations of Modern Social Theory' challenges previous accounts of the rise of social theory, recovers a strong idea of humanity and revisits conventional arguments on sociology's relationship to modernity, the Enlightenment and natural law. It reconnects social theory to its scientific and philosophical roots, its descriptive and normative tasks and its historical and systematic planes. Chernilo's defence of universalism for contemporary social theory will surely engage students of sociology, political theory and moral philosophy alike.

"A striking defense of universalism in philosophy and social theory. Daniel Chernilo outlines a compelling narrative on the sublation of natural law by social theory. He demonstrates that natural law is not only overcome by modern social theory but that a hard core survived criticism, and came back with ever better justifications." Hauke Brunkhorst, University of Flensburg "This superb book is a major contribution to the history of social theory and to our understanding of natural law theory." William Outhwaite, Newcastle University "Against a background of postmodern thought with its emphasis on particularity and relativism, Daniel Chernilo offers a robust defence of the on-going relevance of natural law and universalism for modern social theory that takes seriously the idea of a common humanity. A brilliant excursus into the continuities of social theory, the intellectual results of his investigation are important and compelling." Bryan S. Turner, Presidential Professor of Sociology, City University of New York "Chernilo's work offers valuable insights into the genesis of social theory [and] brims with fascinating insights into the development of social theory ... [I] recommend this readable book for its depth and remarkable clarity." Niall Bond, University of Lyon "Chernilo convincingly shows how modern social theory has sublated the natural law tradition, and he does so without falling into the simplification of assuming that social science is merely a continuation of this tradition ... In a world riven by social inequalities, and in which the inalienability of political and economic rights is under serious threat, Chernilo's proposal is a deeply serious and ambitious attempt to strengthen the role of social theory such that it becomes a fundamental discipline for science and society in the twenty-first century." Jordi Mundo, University of Barcelona "[This] book offers a disruptive but convincing claim about the interconnectedness between the tradition of natural law and the discourse of social theory ... Chernilo's book is not simply about the past; his reconstruction of the historical and philosophical roots of universalistic arguments about humanity is also about the prospects of sociological thinking." Csaba Szalo, Masaryk University "A major virtue of Chernilo's book is to recall to our attention what is at stake when we seek to construct meaningful social theory." Mark Gould, Haverford College "Recommended." Choice About the Author Daniel Chernilo (BA, University of Chile; PhD, University of Warwick) is Reader in Social and Political Thought at Loughborough University. He has written widely on nationalism, cosmopolitanism and the problem of universalism in classical and contemporary social thought. He is the author of *A Social Theory of the Nation-State* (2007) and, in Spanish, of *Nacionalismo y Cosmopolitismo* (2010) and *La Pretensin Universalista de la Teora Social* (2011). He has given over fifty invited seminars and lectures in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, the Czech Republic, Germany, Singapore and the UK. He is also a member of the international advisory boards of the *British Journal of Sociology*, the *European Journal of Social Theory* and *Revista de Sociologia*.