

Human rights articulate a universal or natural moral law. But contrary to the modern natural law tradition, they are not independent of all inclusive goods or purposes, the universal right to general emancipation being dependent proximately on the comprehensive good of our maximal common humanity and remotely on the maximal divine good.

But while human rights are thus inseparable from a common good, this good, contrary to certain recent communitarian proposals, is far from being in all respects historically specific, the universal right to general emancipation being dependent on a comprehensive good defined by reality as such, and so not historically specific, but metaphysically general.