

Dieser Text stammt vom Max-Planck-Institut für Wissenschaftsgeschichte (Berlin).

Was the efflorescence of natural law in both European jurisprudence and natural philosophy from circa the mid-sixteenth through the mid-eighteenth centuries merely a coincidence? Was the fact that so many early modern authors seemed to use terms such as *ius naturale* and *lex naturalis* (or *lex naturae*) roughly as synonyms and, perhaps more significantly, to use the same qualifying adjectives, such as "certain" and "universal," to modify the "laws" from both realms just so much linguistic confusion? Or did these disciplinary traditions develop within a common conceptual matrix, in which theological, philosophical, and political arguments converged to make the analogy between legal and natural orders compelling? If so, what were the implications of this common matrix for the understanding of natural laws in each discipline? For at least a half-century, historians of law and science have wondered why the concept of natural law should have achieved such prominence in juris-prudence and natural philosophy in the seventeenth century. They have wondered in parallel, both in the sense of lines never meeting but also following one another closely. This project and the resulting Working Group book was the first cross-disciplinary attempt to give preliminary answers to these questions, on hand from examples drawn from the history of law, science, philosophy, and theology. The Working Group on Natural Law and Laws of Nature in Early Modern Europe was co-sponsored by the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, the Max Planck Institute for Legal History, and the University of Bern, Switzerland.

Publications

Natural Law and Laws of Nature in Early Modern Europe, edited by Lorraine Daston and Michael Stolleis. Ashgate, 2008.