



The English Historical Constitution: Continuity, Change and European Effects

By J. W. F. Allison

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The fundamental legal and institutional changes of recent decades have brought the English constitution into question. Accompanying issues have been the extent to which its traditional character and main features have been changed, lost their former appeal and retained their distinctness in the European Union. These issues are not readily addressed in everyday thinking about a constitution simply conceived as unwritten or in constitutional accounts variously preoccupied with abstract analysis, political accountability or transcendent norms. The English Historical Constitution addresses these issues by developing a historical constitutional approach and thus elaborating on continuity and change in the constitution's main doctrines and institutions. From an English legal perspective, it offers a complement or corrective to analytical, political and normative approaches by reforming an old conception of the historical constitution and of its history, partly obscured and long neglected through the modern analytical preoccupation with its law as an abstract scheme of rules, principles and practices.

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The English Historical Constitution: Continuity, Change and European Effects By J. W. F. Allison Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #6097517 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Cambridge University Press
- Published on: 2007-11-05
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.98" h x .87" w x 5.98" l, 1.29 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 304 pages

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About the Author

John Allison is a Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Law, University of Cambridge.

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