Politics, power, and a European law of suspicion


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Abstract

Book synopsis: Debate about the theory underpinning the nature, workings, and development of the European (EU) has in many ways been hampered in recent years by an intellectual divergence in the two main ways that the EU is conceptualized. On the one hand is a political science and comparative government oriented strand that sees the EU as a political system in its own right. On the other is the international relations tradition which conceptualizes it as another international organization. Alongside this, the EU itself has developed a significant constitutional dimension. Indeed, the debate surrounding the ‘Constitutional Treaty’ presented several challenges to our capacity to grasp the normative change of this non-state polity. Despite the eventual contestation of the EU’s ‘constitutional turn’ through the French and Dutch no-votes and the cumbersome procedure of ratifying the Lisbon Treaty in their aftermath, debates about the EU’s constitutional quality have not ceased. In the light of these developments, the editors of this volume, along with their distinguished contributors, have attempted to create a more decisively interdisciplinary theoretical approach to studying the EU within the wider world-political context. The volume brings together scholars in a range of disciplines across the social sciences to offer, not a complete theory, but rather a theoretical approach combining different stands of political and legal theory. The book's aim is to inspire further engagement with the central tenets of political authority and world order, sovereignty and constitutional change and democracy and justice, in the context of the EU's political development.

Metadata

Item Type: Book Section
School: Birkbeck Schools and Departments > School of Law
Research Centre: Innovation Management Research, Birkbeck Centre for
Depositing User: Administrator
Date Deposited: 29 Mar 2011 14:17
Last Modified: 06 Dec 2016 10:07

URL: http://eprints.bbk.ac.uk/id/eprint/1462

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A century before, Europe’s aristocratic rulers had convened in the capital of dynasties, Vienna, to fashion a. In fact, the immense destruction done to the political and economic landmarks of the prewar world would have made the task of peacemaking daunting even if the victors had shared a united vision, which they did not. Central and eastern Europe were in a turmoil in the wake of the German, Habsburg, Russian, and Ottoman collapses. Revolution sputtered in Berlin and elsewhere, and civil war in Russia. Trench warfare had left large swaths of northern France, Belgium, and Poland in ruin.