

The History of Law in Europe

An Introduction

Bart Wauters and Marco de Benito, Professors of Law, IE University, Spain

Comprehensive and accessible, this book offers a concise synthesis of the evolution of the law in Western Europe, from ancient Rome to the beginning of the twentieth century. It situates law in the wider framework of Europe's political, economic, social and cultural developments.

'In their new introduction to European legal history, Bart Wauters and Marco de Benito have provided an excellent example of the genre. Difficult as it may be for some of us to remember what it was like to be the cupidae legum iuventutes to whom the authors dedicate their book, it does appear to be the sort of genuinely introductory survey that may be recommended to students without hesitation. In under 200 pages the authors cover all the ground most teachers of the subject would consider essential, delineating the broad contours of legal development in Europe from antiquity to modernity, and finding space for a surprising amount of specific information, all of which has been skilfully selected to illuminate the broad themes outlined. The authors are professors at a Spanish university whose lucid prose should put some native speakers of English to shame.'

– The Edinburgh Law Review

'The authors have navigated this project with aplomb and insight. Most worthwhile books on the legal history Europe are massive or focus on one aspect. The authors have presented a book that is truly an introduction, orienting a reader to the subject in manageable and understandable manner. Yet they have accomplished more than just a summary. Through examples of legal texts, insights into relevant persons and jurisprudential movements, and the contextualization in culture and politics, the writers effectively elucidate the different periods and their character. . . The History of Law in Europe would serve well as a first text in legal history for students, or for anyone who desires an introduction to the subject.'

– Legal issues Journal

'The rule of law and property rights were the "secret weapons" that made Western Europe and its offshoots in North America and Oceania democratic and prosperous. How did this European legal system come to be? To answer this question, Bart Wauters and Marco de Benito offer us a fresh overview of the history of law in Europe, dealing with both civil and common law, from Roman times through to its codification. This book is a stimulating, lucid, and imaginative read.'

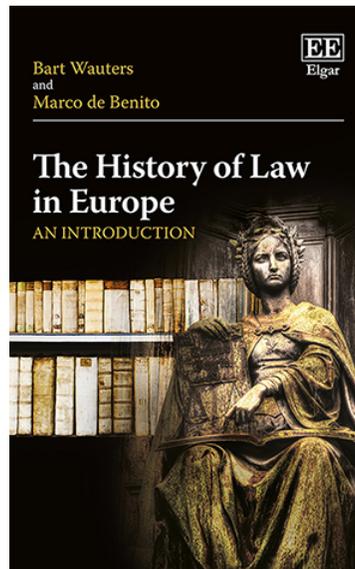
– Jesus Fernandez-Villaverde, University of Pennsylvania, US

'Wauters and de Benito's The History of Law in Europe is an ideal first port of call for anybody who wants to quickly get to grips with European legal history. Succinct, the book offers far more than a simple summary of the subject. Providing snippets of the social, political and intellectual development of the law, it lures the reader to further explore Europe's legal past.'

– R.C.H. Lesaffer, Tilburg Law School, the Netherlands

'The History of Law in Europe: An Introduction is a short companion to legal European history, written for students or non-specialists interested in this crucial aspect of western History. The development of the history from Roman law to the bourgeois age is exposed with clarity and balance, according to the classical historiography. The last chapter is devoted to the common law and it allows a dialogue between all the European legal traditions. Overall this is an excellent book for starting to learn legal history.'

– Rafael Ramis-Barceló, Universitat de les Illes Balears, Spain



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'This fascinating and powerful epitome of the history of European law offers a comprehensive overview of its legal tradition, analysed through scientific research. Its contribution to the present literature is highly appreciated.'

– Fernando Reinoso Barbero, The Complutense University of Madrid, Spain

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