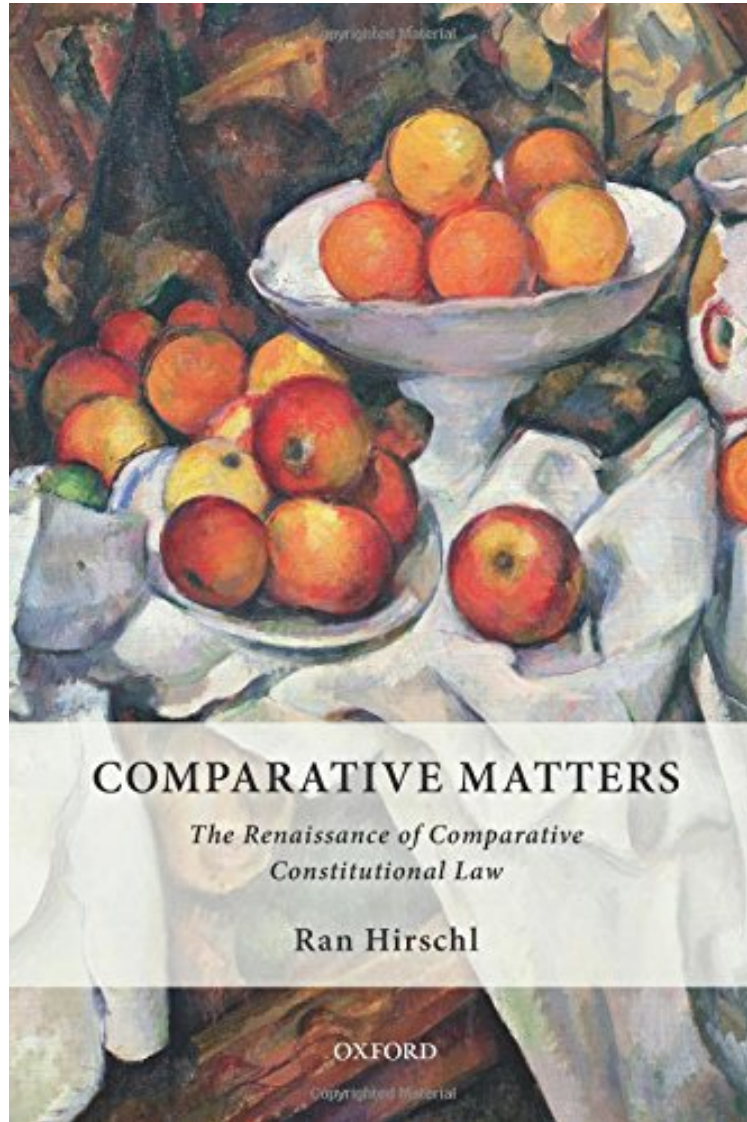


Comparative Matters: The Renaissance of Comparative Constitutional Law

Ran Hirschl

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#623647 in Books 2016-05-03 2016-03-03Original language:English 6.10 x .60 x 9.10l, .0 #File Name: 0198714521304 pages | File size: 46.Mb

Ran Hirschl : Comparative Matters: The Renaissance of Comparative Constitutional Law before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Comparative Matters: The Renaissance of Comparative Constitutional Law:

Comparative study has emerged as the new frontier of constitutional law scholarship as well as an important aspect of constitutional adjudication. Increasingly, jurists, scholars, and constitution drafters worldwide are accepting that 'we are all comparativists now'. And yet, despite this tremendous renaissance, the 'comparative' aspect of the enterprise, as a method and a project, remains under-theorized and blurry. Fundamental questions concerning the very meaning and purpose of comparative constitutional inquiry, and how it is to be undertaken, are seldom asked, let alone answered. In this path-breaking book, Ran Hirschl addresses this gap by charting the intellectual history and analytical underpinnings of comparative constitutional inquiry, probing the various types, aims, and methodologies of engagement with the constitutive laws of others through the ages, and exploring how and why comparative constitutional inquiry has been and ought to be pursued by academics and jurists worldwide. Through an extensive exploration of comparative constitutional endeavours past and present, near and far, Hirschl shows how attitudes towards engagement with the constitutive laws of others reflect tensions between particularism and universalism as well as competing visions of who 'we' are as a political community. Drawing on insights from social theory, religion, history, political science, and public law, Hirschl argues for an interdisciplinary approach to comparative constitutionalism that is methodologically and substantively preferable to merely doctrinal accounts. The future of comparative constitutional studies, he contends, lies in relaxing the sharp divide between constitutional law and the social sciences. *Comparative Matters* makes a unique and welcome contribution to the comparative study of constitutions and constitutionalism, sharpening our understanding of the historical development, political parameters, epistemology, and methodologies of one of the most intellectually vibrant areas in contemporary legal scholarship.

"A book of dazzling scope and depth. At once a methodological manifesto and a sweeping intellectual history, Hirschl reminds us that our contemporary debates about universality and particularity in law are simply new variations on a very old theme. This is an instant classic, from which no one will fail to learn something new." --Tom Ginsburg, Leo Spitz Professor of International Law, University of Chicago Law School

"Ran Hirschl solidifies his position at the apex of students of comparative constitutional law. Both his range and depth of interests are remarkable. Every page has insights; it would be a pleasure to assign in courses and seminars, not only for the discussions it will surely provoke, but also for the plethora of papers, dissertations, and books it will surely inspire." --Sanford Levinson, author of *Framed: America's 51 Constitutions and the Crisis of Governance*

"*Comparative Matters* is a sharp reminder that law is too important a matter to leave in the hands and minds of lawyers. It is also a sharp reminder that comparative law, properly understood, is, can be and should be more than, yes, comparative law. It is a window to, and a tool for, an understanding of the political, the social, indeed, the human condition itself. Finally it is a gentle reminder that comparative 'law' would be a very different field absent the voice of Ran Hirschl." --J.H.H Weiler, President of the European University Institute

"*Comparative Matters* truly matters, for if indeed we are now entering the 'era of comparative law,' we will need instruction and guidance in both the sources for, and possible futures of, this exciting renewal of intellectual exploration. In this wonderful book Ran Hirschl demonstrates that he is uniquely qualified to fill this role. By tracing contemporary debates and challenges in comparative constitutionalism to classical antecedents, he clears the path for a "renaissance" of methodologically and analytically diverse scholarly inquiry into the multifarious ways in which societies might choose to organize themselves constitutionally. In so doing he exemplifies the very transcendence towards which the book is devoted; thus the reach of his learning and the catholicity of his interdisciplinary applications are precisely what are required for the successful evolution from comparative constitutional law to comparative constitutional studies." --Gary J. Jacobsohn, University of Texas

About the Author
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Ran Hirschl (PhD, Yale) is Professor of Political Science and Law, and holder of the Canada Research Chair in Constitutionalism, Democracy and Development at the University of Toronto. He is the author of three books: *Towards Juristocracy: The Origins and Consequences of the New Constitutionalism* (Harvard University Press, 2004 and 2007), *Constitutional Theocracy* (Harvard University Press, 2010) (which won the Mahoney Prize in Legal Theory), and *Comparative Matters* (Oxford University Press, 2014), as well as over 75 articles and book chapters on comparative constitutional law, constitutional law and religion, and the intellectual history of comparative public law. Hirschl is a founding executive committee member of the International Society of Public Law, an editorial board member of the *Journal of Law Courts* and the *International Journal of Constitutional Law (I-CON)*, and the co-editor of a book series on comparative constitutional law and policy published by Cambridge UP.