Bates

EVOLUTION EUROP CONVENT HUMAN RIGHTS C

The European Convention on Human Rights underwent a spectacular evolution over the first fifty years of its life. In recent times the European Court of Human Rights has been compared to a quasi-constitutional court for Europe in the field of human rights, and for some time the Convention has been viewed as a European Bill of Rights. The 'coming of age' of the ECHR system in the late 1990s was marked by the entry into force of Protocol 11, creating a new, full time Court. By contrast those who first proposed a European human rights guarantee were driven by an ambition to put in place a collective pact to prevent the re-emergence of totalitarianism in 'free' Europe. They were motivated by grisly memories of human rights abuse associated with World War Two, and the protection of 'human rights' was seen in that light. When the Convention was opened for signature in 1950 it was viewed by many with scepticism and disappointment. The Convention system took many years to get established. In the mid-1960s doubts were expressed as to whether the Court had a future and in the 1970s the Convention system of control faced a number of serious challenges. This book examines the story of the evolution of the Convention over its first 50 years (1948-1998). It reflects on the Convention's origins and charts the slow progress that it made over the 1950s and 1960s, before, in the late 1970s, the European Court of Human Rights delivered a series of landmark judgments which proved to be the foundation stones for the European Bill of Rights that we know today.

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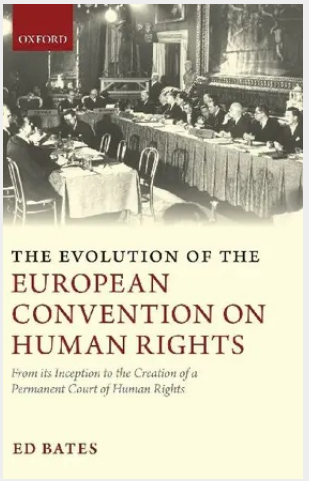

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