



Great Legal Traditions: Civil Law, Common Law, and Chinese Law in Historical and Operational Perspective

John W. Head

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Great Legal Traditions: Civil Law, Common Law, and Chinese Law in Historical and Operational Perspective draws on the nearly thirty years of experience that the author has accumulated from working in and writing about a variety of legal systems around the world. After an introduction to the underlying concepts and values of comparative legal studies, Head embarks on a brisk six-chapter survey of European civil law, English and American common law, and Chinese law (both dynastic and contemporary). Each legal tradition is divided into two perspectives first historical and then operational. Numerous illustrations and biographical sketches bring the historical surveys to life, thereby setting the stage for a close examination of several key attributes of representative legal systems in each of the three traditions. Head's "operational" topics include sources of law, the role and training of lawyers, the division of court jurisdiction, constitutional review, the role of codification, and more and he gives special attention to comparative criminal procedure. Great Legal Traditions is designed primarily for use in law schools and other graduate programs in comparative history, international relations, and both European and Chinese area studies, but the book is also written to be accessible to a more general readership. The main text is supplemented with numerous appendices that serve in place of a documents supplement. A teacher's manual is also available with guidance on each of the study questions that Head places at the beginning of each chapter (roughly 200 study questions in all). The teacher's manual also provides guidance (and confidence) to instructors not already familiar with Chinese law and history.

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