

PROLOGUE

This book is about interdependence. More specifically, it is about the implications of interdependence for constitutional governance. It is the result of an intellectual journey that started in the nineties when a conference in Bilbao on ‘Sovereignty and National Identity’ first triggered my interest in constitutional democracy as the archetypical form of a modern political organization. Coincidentally, these years also gave rise to the Internet revolution and saw the birth of a new field of academic research in globalization studies.

Since then, much work has been done on globalization, the Internet and constitutional governance. This book, however, is not a repetition of arguments. What I have wanted to show in this book is how globalization, as a process which increases transnational interdependence between actors, is shaping modern governance in the public interest and what this means for the role of the State as vehicle for decision-making in the public interest. The Internet forms an interesting testing ground for examining these potential transformations since it is the most inclusive and important manifestation of this phenomenon.

Whereas the odyssey leading to this book has led me to touch upon a variety of disciplines, including philosophical logic, the foundations of law and constitutional theory over a considerable length of time, the vast amount of research was conducted in the last four years at the Department of Legal Theory at the University of Groningen and at the Netherlands Institute for International Relations ‘Clingendael’. I particularly wish to thank Henry Prakken, Frans Nelissen and Aernout Schmidt for their valuable comments on earlier drafts of this book. A special debt of gratitude is due to Kees de Vey Mestdagh for his encouragement and thought-provoking comments throughout the research and writing process.

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