



# CORONATION AND CONSTITUTION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

BEKE-MARTOS, JUDIT<sup>1</sup>

## ABSTRACT

The paper establishes a link between the unwritten constitution of the United Kingdom and the significance of the most recent lavish coronation ceremony of King Charles III. For this purpose, it briefly introduces the unwritten constitution of the United Kingdom, as well as its historical development and its role in maintaining the constitutional relevance of the royal coronation ceremony in the UK. It provides a detailed description of the most recent British coronation on May 6, 2023, with King Charles III and Queen Camilla, to highlight the religious and constitutional elements that are intertwined in this power-legitimizing event. In the concluding remarks, the author refers to comparable European monarchies and their lack of coronation ceremonies in order to further support the argument that the coronation ceremony is of constitutional importance in a country that has no written constitution.

**KEYWORDS** Coronation ceremony, unwritten constitution, United Kingdom, King Charles III

## 1. Introduction

The United Kingdom<sup>2</sup> is the primary example of a developed Western European country with a rich and long-standing history, but one that has not codified its constitution to this day. The coronation ceremonies of the British monarchs – similarly to other monarchs up until the 19<sup>th</sup> century – have been the constitutionally relevant ceremonial power-transferring procedures of the UK's kings and queens for centuries. These both religious and ceremonial acts of legitimization provided the opportunity for the crowned head of state and their subjects to agree on the foundation of the reign that was to follow. The

<sup>1</sup> Managing Director and Senior Lecturer at the Legal Faculty of the Ruhr University Bochum, Germany. Research Fellow at ELTE Legal History Researches, Budapest, Hungary.

<sup>2</sup> Though we acknowledge that the legally correct term to describe the geographical focus of our inquiry, namely the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, is “the United Kingdom”, or in short “the UK”, while the purely geographical description of Great Britain, or simply Britain, technically excludes Northern Ireland, we nevertheless use the terms the United Kingdom, the UK and Britain interchangeably and thereby refer to the whole legal entity of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The use of the adjective “British” similarly refers to everyone or everything relating to the whole of the United Kingdom.



transformation of state forms from monarchies to republics, as well as the transition of monarchies from feudal or absolute (though some enlightened) to constitutional through the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, brought about the appearance of written constitutions and with that the decreasing significance of the coronation ceremonies throughout the developed countries of the Western world. At the same time, those countries that did not create a written constitution maintained the constitutional relevance of the coronation as a power-legitimizing constitutional act; this was most prominently true for the United Kingdom and Hungary, with the former still holding on to this governmental system and its legal institutions. In the following, we briefly introduce the development and nature of the UK's unwritten constitution (Part 2), followed by the description of the coronation ceremony of the British monarch, King Charles III, who most recently ascended to the throne, to observe and analyse the elements of this constitutionally relevant historic relic (Part 3). We claim and argue in our closing (Part 4) that this coronation ceremony remains constitutionally relevant in the United Kingdom primarily because the UK's constitution is unwritten and hence it lacks black-letter laws to determine the foundation of any British monarch's reign.

## 2. The Brits and the Constitution

The UK constitution is a unique phenomenon. The British themselves claim to this day that their constitution is unwritten, even though its elements, including especially significant laws, landmark decisions, and even certain parts of customary law have already been separately put into writing. The difference accordingly between the UK constitution and those written constitutions that have not been systematically codified in a single charter document is that in the latter examples – e.g. Sweden or Israel – it is clear which laws constitute collectively the constitution, while the UK's unwritten constitution has no catalogue, and lacking an exhaustive list of its elements, its boundaries are blurred, or so they may seem, especially to continentally trained lawyers.<sup>3</sup> The UK constitution may be defined as a complex system, which outlines the setup of the British state and the modern-day basic rights through a variety of legal sources. Nevertheless, the UK constitution has provided both positive and negative examples for other countries' constitutions.

The history of the UK constitution is not solely a chain of legal documents and institutional changes, but also a result of theoretical political thinking. Jean Bodin's, Thomas Hobbes' (absolute sovereign), as well as John Locke's (new

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<sup>3</sup> New Zealand's constitution is very much in the middle of the written–unwritten scale, since its constitution may be derived from the collective reading of a few concrete laws that are supported and expanded by landmark court decisions as well as constitutional practice. New Zealanders still claim their constitution to be unwritten, and accordingly, the differentiation from the previous colonizers, the UK, is less easy to define.

theory of the separation of powers) theoretical works (Petrétei, 2018) became directly or indirectly embedded in the British public legal system. At the same time, the French Enlightenment and its continental thinkers – primarily Charles de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau – have also had a significant effect on the interpretation and reform of the British constitution, especially from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards.

## 2.1. *The Magna Carta and the Constitutional Development in the Middle Ages*

One of the landmarks of the UK constitution, as well as the starting point of its development, is the Magna Carta Libertatum issued in 1215 by King John of England, who was forced to make concessions to the British nobility. From a constitutional perspective, it is of utmost importance that this document declared limits on the monarch's power and provided rights for the subjects vis-à-vis the king for the first time. The Magna Carta received not only legal but also symbolic relevance over the years (Radin, 1947). Its provisions were reinforced in multiple royal charters throughout the 13<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>th</sup> centuries (Goerlich, 2016).

Perhaps the most disputed issue in the British constitutional development ever since the Magna Carta is that of the royal prerogatives. Towards the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, they were divided into two groups: regular and absolute. The regular royal prerogatives were regulated by law and were enforceable even through the courts, while the absolute royal prerogatives were those exclusively of the Crown and were not transferable (Baker, 2017).

## 2.2. *The Constitutional Crises and the Civil War of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century*

The 17<sup>th</sup> century was a decisive period for the British constitution (Foxley, 2018). The civil war and the interregnum that followed raised new constitutional questions: It became disputed whether the monarch's power derived from God, and the theory of parliamentary sovereignty gained weight.

During the reign of King Charles I (1625–1649), the relationship between the monarch and Parliament deteriorated, and the tension was rising. The king mostly ruled with authoritarian methods, i.e. taxing the subjects without the consent of Parliament. Parliament objected to these measures and accordingly issued the Petition of Right in 1628. This public legal milestone declared among others that citizens could not be arrested arbitrarily or taxed without the consent of Parliament (Foster, 1974; Popofsky, 1979). Charles I subsequently dissolved Parliament in 1629 and governed alone for eleven years (Richards, 1986), which resulted in the significant infringement of Parliament's rights. This was the period of personal rule during which the king introduced new reforms, especially of religious nature, leading to further dissatisfaction within Parliament

(Smith, 1991). Finally, the king reconvened Parliament in the fall of 1640, which immediately issued the so-called Triennial Act (1641), obligating the king to call a session of Parliament at the latest every three years (Yelby, 2008). This regulation could not sufficiently diminish the tension, hence armed clashes erupted in 1642, and the civil war began (Orr, 2002; Cressy, 2003). King Charles I was charged, convicted, and beheaded in 1649 (Aitken & Aitken, 2007), and a republic was declared with Oliver Cromwell as Lord Protector at its head. The next eleven years, this time as a military dictatorship, limited the functioning of the state organs in different ways (Woolrych, 1990). In 1660, with King Charles II's ascent to the throne, the Restoration began (Malcolm, 1992), despite the monarch's difficulty in finding the adequate cooperation with his subjects and with Parliament (Greenspan, 2011). Charles II's reign remained limited, and Parliament gained an advantage in the political power balance (Hinton, 1960; Weston & Greenberg, 1981). An exemplary product of that time is the 1679 Habeas Corpus Act, which further strengthened individual liberty, guaranteed the constitutional protection of personal freedom, and specifically prohibited illegal incarceration. Charles II's 25-year reign (1660–1685) can be considered relatively fruitful (Behrens, 1941; Miller, 1982). His successor, his younger brother King James II (Rigó, 2016), as a Catholic monarch, did not get along well with Parliament, hence the latter invited William of Orange to the throne. On February 12, 1689, James II's abdication was announced, after he had been hiding since December of the previous year, and the throne was officially offered to William of Orange on February 13, who accepted it (Rigó, 2018, 2020).

The United Kingdom transformed itself from a feudal monarchy into the currently existing parliamentary monarchy over nearly one and a half centuries following the Glorious Revolution (1688–1689) – though this transformation can only be traced sporadically in the sources (Ruszoly, 2005; Szente, 2011). The Glorious Revolution altered the line of succession since it gave control rights to Parliament and limited the royal prerogatives through the Bill of Rights (Bogdanor, 1998). This 1689 Bill of Rights was one of the guarantees of the British system; a basic document, which initiated the new governmental structure's stabilization. It redefined the relationship between the monarch and Parliament, and through the latter, the subjects. The Bill of Rights made it possible that the royal prerogatives were transformed into government prerogatives (Hazell & Foot, 2022). Though it barely touched upon the issue of succession, in as much as it banned James II from returning to the throne (Horváth, 2023), it declared the principle of parliamentary sovereignty as well as the limits of the monarch's power. Based on the Bill of Rights, legislation was the exclusive right of Parliament, and it prohibited the maintenance of a standing army without Parliament's approval. Though the issue of royal prerogatives still left – and continues to leave, for that matter to this day – gray areas, it seemed accepted

that the laws also applied to the monarch: „[...] *his Majesty is under, and not above, the laws; that he is bound by them equally with his subjects.*” (Chitty, 1820, p. 5) Regarding the composition of Parliament after the Glorious Revolution, the landlord aristocrats could maintain their power there vis-à-vis the merchants and other urban population up until 1832, which was a rather conservative realignment. The courts subsequently relied more and more on the unwritten constitution in their judgments, which contributed to the formation of the common-law-based constitutional order.

### 2.3. *The Unwritten Constitution*

The theoretical foundations of the thus-formed unwritten constitution can be found in the works of numerous British thinkers and political philosophers. Just to briefly mention a few of them here, such as Jean Bodin, who systematically explained the term sovereignty (Karácsony & Monostori, 2021) for the first time in his 1576 work entitled *Les Six Livres de la République*. According to Bodin, sovereignty is indivisible and constant, but he also emphasized the importance of keeping in line with the acts of Parliament (Bodin, 1577; Nagy, 2023). Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan* (1651) argued in favour of absolute sovereignty, but solely based on natural law (Hobbes, 1914; Nagy, 2023); during the conclusion of the social contract the people transferred all power to one monarch in favour of order and security, a theory which differed from the later adopted theory of parliamentary sovereignty. Undoubtedly, John Locke had the biggest effect on the British constitutional development, laying the foundation of the modern principle of the separation of powers, combining sovereignty with popular sovereignty based on natural law (Rigó, 2017; Laslett, 1988; Kennedy, 2022). Though the British constitutional development had a strong impact on Montesquieu's 1748 work *De l'esprit des lois*, the book also worked backwards on the British governmental setting. Rousseau's 1762 seminal work *The Social Contract*, which emphasized popular sovereignty, had a similar effect.

Numerous court decisions also form part of the UK's unwritten constitution, i.e. the Case of Proclamations (1611), which declared that the king could not create a new act through a decree. Based on *Dr. Bonham's Case* (1610), the common law may make acts of Parliament void if they are repugnant to the principles of justice. This principle, which was penned by Judge Edward Coke, became the foundation of the subsequent US-American judicial review procedure, which provided the basis for the constitutional relevance of the US judiciary (Smith, 1966; Helmholz, 2009). The unwritten constitution keeps changing, hence in the 20<sup>th</sup> century the so-called *Factortame* case (1990) also became a part of it, reinforcing the primacy of EU law over English law, giving the British

constitutional system a whole new dimension. Since Brexit, this constitutional regulation has been modified again through the practice of the courts.

Throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, as the United States of America and France created their written constitutions, the UK remained true to its unwritten framework, even if the impact upon the British political thinkers was palpable. Since the British constitution remains unwritten to this day and consists of a variety of historical charters, acts, judicial precedents, customary law, and constitutional practices, the coronation ceremony of its head of state, the British monarch, maintains its constitutional significance. This is why the most recent coronation of King Charles III on May 6, 2023, was both an example of living history and a constitutional affirmation.

### 3. The Coronation of Charles III

The coronation of Charles III was an extraordinary event because for the first time in 70 years a new king was crowned in the United Kingdom. At the same time and compared to other contemporary monarchies – there are about 40 monarchies in the world now<sup>4</sup> (Buchholz, 2023; Hallemann, 2017) – the British coronation is unique because of its both religious and constitutional significance. In the UK, the primary church is the Church of England, also known as the Anglican Church, which was founded by Henry VIII in 1534 and declared the head of state (the king or queen) as the head of the church as well. This makes the British coronation extraordinary and absolutely necessary. Additionally, the British coronation also has constitutional relevance, which did not diminish over time, as arguably did those of other countries, where in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, written constitutions appeared (van Gelder, 2021). The British coronation ceremonies have therefore changed little over time, not even through the legal development of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, though both the 1689 Bill of Rights as – and more importantly – the 1701 Act of Settlement played a role in the order of succession determining the next ruler on the British throne. Thus, the 2023 coronation in its schedule and ceremonial elements differed only slightly from previous similar events.

#### 3.1. *The Events of the Day: May 6, 2023*

The King and Queen Consort went in the early morning from their home in Clarence House to Buckingham Palace, where they were vested in their robes for the ceremony. Subsequently, they were seated in their carriage, this time the Diamond Jubilee Carriage, which had been made for Queen Elizabeth II's 60th throne jubilee and was now reused to limit further costs to an already extremely

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<sup>4</sup> Some claim the number of monarchies, while others refer to the number of monarchs reigning over a larger number of countries.

expensive ceremony. The carriage was drawn by six horses, and they went with it from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Abbey, which journey is known as the King's Procession. N.B. the way back from Westminster Abbey to Buckingham Palace after the coronation ceremony, which has a different composition of the people in the procession, is known as the Coronation Procession.<sup>5</sup> In between is the Coronation Service,<sup>6</sup> a special religious service conducted by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the operative head of the Church of England, right after the monarch, who is the actual head of the church, in Westminster Abbey. The host of the ceremony is the Dean of Westminster, also participating in the ceremony, though not leading it. Following the Coronation Procession, there is a private lunch in Buckingham Palace for the extended royal family, hence no invited guests, followed by the Fly-Past and the Greeting on the Balcony. The Fly-Past had to be scaled back somewhat due to severe rain, but there was the traditional gun salute and further ceremonial elements greeting the newly crowned head of state.

### 3.2. *The Coronation Service*<sup>7</sup>

As for Westminster Abbey, there is an order of the procession of arriving guests. Once all guests are in the church, all elected officials, selected for that day, arrive. Accordingly, for example, the Lord High Steward is an office which had existed before but no longer exists because it can no longer exercise its duties, yet for the day of the coronation, this office is brought back into existence again and one person takes on the role from 7 a.m. for that one day to fill the office and exercise its duties. The Lord High Steward is the person carrying the crown. All other regalia were also carried by dignitaries elected or selected for that day and for the task.<sup>8</sup> They all proceed slowly into and through the church, all the way up to the high altar, upon which they place the regalia. This includes i.e. multiple swords, the orb, the crown (N.B. there were two crowns, St. Edward's Crown, with which King Charles was crowned, and Mary's Crown with which Camilla was crowned).<sup>9</sup> The holy oil was already on the altar when all entered the church. The procession into the church started with the elected officials carrying the regalia, followed by Camilla and then Charles. He was followed by the Prince of Wales, as the heir to the throne, and his family. They were all seated – Charles and Camilla

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<sup>5</sup> The route went from Buckingham Palace along The Mall to Admiralty Arch, then turned right to Whitehall, and went on until Westminster Abbey ([Changing-Guard, n.d.](#)).

<sup>6</sup> Allegedly, the basis for this religious service is the *Liber Regalis*, a book probably compiled in 1382 and kept in Westminster Abbey. The first British coronation dates to 1066, when William the Conqueror was crowned on Christmas Day. The ceremony took place on the very same spot where Westminster Abbey stands today. The rule book *Liber Regalis*, unclear as to the exact occasion for which it was compiled, remains the basis of the Christian coronation ceremony to this day ([Westminster Abbey, n.d.b.](#)).

<sup>7</sup> See: The complete Coronation Order of Service ([The Royal Household, 2023d](#)).

<sup>8</sup> See: Roles to be Performed at the Coronation Service at Westminster Abbey ([The Royal Household, 2023a](#)).

<sup>9</sup> See: The Coronation Regalia ([The Royal Household, 2023b](#)).

on the so-called chairs of the estates, which are only two of multiple chairs, including the coronation chair from 1301 that is used to crown and anoint the king, while another chair is the throne and serves the enthronement of the monarch.

The recognition is when the Archbishop of Canterbury presents the king to the congregation, having him recognized as the true monarch, introducing him as “this is your king, King Charles”, and the congregation responding with “God save the King!”, followed by fanfare and repeated in all four cardinal directions. This is very similar to the earlier popular elections, the *acclamatio*, when the subjects claimed their king, which is rather irrelevant in hereditary monarchies, or at least in those cases where the person of the king is clear and undisputed. For example, in Charles’ case it had been clear for 70 years that he would become the king the moment his mother passed away, which happened on September 8, 2022. Hence, Charles had been king since September 8, 2022, and yet he still needed to be crowned by the Archbishop of Canterbury in Westminster Abbey with St. Edward’s Crown in the coronation chair.

The very first part of the service, however, even before the recognition, was a minor element, but one that differed at Charles’ coronation from that of his mother’s 70 years earlier. A young boy, Samuel Strachan, Child of His Majesty’s Chapel Royal, welcomed the king to Westminster Abbey.<sup>10</sup> As a response to the welcome, Charles said – based on Jesus’ example – that he comes not to be served but to serve. This was important to Charles to start with this statement from the outset, while it also served as a gesture to the congregation and set the tone for the whole religious service. Their aim was to express that the coronation is a ceremony in which the rights and obligations of the king are officially vested in this individual, and that this individual, a monarch in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, is someone who serves. The notion is anything but new, as already in the 18<sup>th</sup> century the head of state’s role transformed from the absolute ruler to that of a primary public servant, even if in the UK the God-given power remains, while the service he or she provides continues to be adjudged by the subjects. Yet, this was a deviation from Queen Elizabeth’s coronation, as she did not start with such a declaration – despite her truly having served her people, her country, and the whole Commonwealth all throughout her life. For Charles, this active declaration was important. The rest of the coronation service followed the one Queen Elizabeth had, with some cuts, as her coronation was over three hours and Charles’ took merely an hour, but the basic elements were the same.

Following the recognition, the king took a religious oath declaring that he was a faithful Protestant, who was bound to protect the church that he was the head

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<sup>10</sup> See: Coronation Order of Service, supra 44 ([The Royal Household, 2023d](#)).

of, and a secular oath to serve his people and to thereby finalize the contract between the sovereign and the subjects.<sup>11</sup>

The most sacred part of the coronation service is the anointing. The British king – unlike the other European monarchs – is still one with God-given powers. This alliance, this investiture of God-given powers onto the individual, is the very reason why a British monarch cannot abdicate the throne. If their powers derive from God, then it is theirs as long as they live, and only God can take these powers away. Accordingly, the British monarch cannot abdicate, cannot resign his or her duties, and he or she must carry them out as long as they live (*Watanabe-O’Kelly, 2021*). The anointing takes place behind a screen, since the King must open his robe for the sacred oil to touch his chest. The oil came from Jerusalem for this ceremony.<sup>12</sup> It was kept on the high altar in a golden container with a dove on it. Next to the container was a golden spoon, into which the oil was poured so that the Archbishop could take it and use it for the anointing of the King. While the King is seated in the coronation chair, the Archbishop touches the King’s head, hand, and chest with the sacred oil, a very private moment behind the screen so that the King can focus on his faith and his relationship with God.

Once the anointing is complete, the screens are taken down and the King remains seated in the coronation chair.<sup>13</sup> There, he receives the regalia, especially the sceptres, and subsequently the orb – all blessed by the Archbishop of Canterbury before they are handed over to the King. The last element of the investiture is the crowning of the King with St. Edward’s Crown. Once the King is fully dressed in all the royal regalia, he is escorted to the throne and seated upon it, which is the enthronement of the King. At Charles’ coronation the next point on the agenda was the homage to the King, which had been extensively debated while drafting the schedule, most deeming it unnecessary and outdated. This used to be a vital element of any coronation earlier on, as it is the reassurance the subjects give to the King. What remained is that the members of the congregation were called to swear allegiance to the King, if they so wished.<sup>14</sup> Accordingly, everyone who was present could decide whether to utter the words or not. Once the King was anointed, invested, and enthroned, the Queen was crowned. For that, she remained in her original chair, the chair of the estates, and the Archbishop of Canterbury crowned Camilla with Queen Mary’s

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<sup>11</sup> For the exact text of the oaths see the Coronation Order of Service, supra 44 (*The Royal Household, 2023d*). There are multiple oaths the monarch takes throughout the accession period, starting from the moment his or her predecessor dies. The text of the secular coronation oath was enshrined in the Coronation Oath Act 1688. Among the oaths Charles III took is the one promising to uphold the union with Scotland, based on the 1707 Act of Union.

<sup>12</sup> See: The consecration of the Coronation Oil (*The Royal Household, 2023c*).

<sup>13</sup> See: The Coronation Chair (*Westminster Abbey, n.d.a*).

<sup>14</sup> See: Coronation Order of Service, supra 44 (*The Royal Household, 2023d*).

Crown. Following her crowning and with the crown on her head, Camilla was escorted to the throne chair next to the King and seated upon it. To wrap up the ceremony, the Archbishop delivered Holy Communion and the newly crowned King and Queen left Westminster Abbey.

## 4. Constitutional Relevance of the British Coronation: Concluding Remarks

Today, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, all other functioning European constitutional monarchies refrain from (religious) coronation ceremonies. The oldest still working European constitutional monarchy is the Belgian one, where the 1831 Constitution provides the foundation of the state and even the king is to abide by the constitution. Accordingly, Leopold I was elected by the National Congress and was introduced to the throne in 1831 by taking an oath in front of the National Congress. There was no crown, no coronation ceremony, though there were some festivities, there was no religious service. This practice has been maintained to this day, whenever there is a new monarch, he takes the oath in front of the joint Houses of Parliament and with that – in addition to his right to the throne as the rightful heir of the previous king – he takes upon himself the rights and obligations of the Belgian monarch. Since there is no religious ceremony, but rather an agreement between the monarch and the people, the Belgian monarch may abdicate, as did the last one, Albert II, in favour of his son, the current king, Philippe, on July 21, 2013 ([The Belgian Monarchy, n.d.](#)).

All other modern European monarchies followed the Belgian example in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and established a constitutional monarchy, where the monarch no longer has his or her God-given power but rather is also subject to the constitution. Because of that, the relevance of a coronation ceremony, with or without a crown and royal regalia, has diminished, as the constitutionally relevant elements are also regulated by the constitution and no longer rely on a tradition-based ceremony. Due to the same reason, an abdication is possible, as was the case with two of the seven Belgian kings thus far, or with Beatrix, the Queen of the Netherlands in 2013, so that her son, Willem-Alexander could take the throne ([The Royal House of the Netherlands, n.d.](#)).

The British monarch is anointed with sacred oil as part of a coronation ceremony, hence he or she cannot abdicate the throne. The king is, though, the primary public servant of his country and is subject to the constitution, but in the UK, he is also a monarch whose power derives from God and who retains the absolute royal prerogatives to this day. Not having the single-charter constitution, the British parliamentary monarchy functions on its long-standing principles and constitutional practice. A significant element of this system is the crowned head of state, who is in and of himself or herself an element of the constitution, while

the coronation ceremony, the ceremonial transfer of rights and obligations, and the religiously reinforced relevance of the proper use of power in the service of the subjects, is a necessary element of the royal reign. If any subsequent British monarch were to refuse to be crowned, that would either be the end of his or her reign, or of the complete current system of the UK. This is due to the actual relevance of the monarch and his or her induction into office. The coronation ceremony relies heavily on tradition. When planning a coronation, the drawing board the committee goes back to is the historic collection of coronations past. Tiny little details make this an extraordinary event, such as the Dean of Westminster wearing a cape that had been worn for the coronation of King Charles II in 1661, since this cape, if at all, can only be worn for coronations. It is imperative that the heir to the throne be crowned in a coronation ceremony to rightfully receive all rights and obligations that come with the office of head of state. It is logical to ask why such a lavish ceremony is necessary when the King's powers are God-given. The British monarchy is a parliamentary monarchy with the head of state also being the head of the church. He or she, accordingly, needs the approval of his people, to seal an agreement with his subjects, as well as to take his or her rightful place in the church's structure. It is undoubtedly a very costly affair, there were no official numbers published, but the estimated costs of Charles III's coronation lie between 50 and 100 million pounds (Elston, 2023). Yet it is an affair that unites a country, that demonstrates strength and gives the people the overall feeling that they are taken care of – something most people crave and something that in the more modern form of states, especially constitutional monarchies or representative republics, is becoming rarer. By crowning the king, the United Kingdom elevates the heir to the throne into a privileged position with a significant workload. The British coronation is, no question, a historic relic, but one that continues to thrive and survive, transporting tradition to the present day and possibly the future years to come.

We conclude as we started, that the United Kingdom maintains that its constitution is unwritten and its monarch is crowned and anointed. It is quite likely that there will not be any changes in either of these two phenomena in the foreseeable future, even if, with high probability, the next British coronation will happen in less than 70 years.

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