

Latest Issue of “Praxis des Internationalen Privat- und Verfahrensrechts” (3/2013)

Recently, the May/June issue of the German law journal “Praxis des Internationalen Privat- und Verfahrensrechts” (**IPRax**) was published.

- **Christopher Selke:** “Die Anknüpfung der rechtsgeschäftlichen Vertragsübernahme” – the English abstract reads as follows:

More than fifty years after Konrad Zweigert’s essay on the applicable law to the assignment of contracts, some issues are still unsettled. The following article gives an overview of previous comments and focuses on the scope of application. It further emphasizes the crucial question, how to determine the applicable law in the case of a cross-border assignment of a contract. In this connection, the role of the principle of party autonomy shall be challenged more carefully than it has been in the past – which does not inevitably mean that it has to be completely dismissed. There just has to exist a subsidiary objective international private law rule in the case that the parties’ choice of law leads to difficulties. Therefore, this article concludes with a proposal for such a rule.

- **Wulf-Henning Roth:** “Jurisdiction and Applicable Law in Cross-Border Defamation and Breach of Personality Rights”

The article discusses the judgment of 25 October 2011, C-509/09 and C-161/10, eDate Advertising, in which the European Court of Justice clarifies two important issues of European private international law concerning cross-border injunctions and damages claims with regard to defamation and breach of personality rights on the internet. The first issue concerns the interpretation of Article 5 no. 3 of the Brussels I Regulation 44/2001/EC which establishes a special concurrent jurisdiction of the courts of the Member States in matters of tort liability. According to the Court, an applicant may bring an action before the court where the publisher is domiciled or before the courts of all Member States where the internet information is accessible, however restricted to the

infringement of the personality rights in the relevant territory (“mosaic principle”). Alternatively, the applicant may also bring an action for an injunction or for all damages, incurred worldwide, before the court where he or she has his or her centre of interests. As for the applicable law concerning tort liability, the Court clarifies the intensely discussed meaning of Article 3 (1) and (2) of the e-commerce Directive 2000/31/EC. The Court holds that both provisions do not contain conflict of law rules. Rather, Article 3 (1) contains an obligation of the Member State where the internet provider has its seat of business to ensure that the internet provider complies with the national provisions applicable in that Member State. And Article 3 (2) allows that the Member States where the internet information is accessed may apply their own substantive law applicable to the infringement of personality rights, but not in such a way that the interstate provision of internet services is restricted.

- **Karl-Nikolaus Peifer:** “International Jurisdiction and Applicable Law in Trademark Infringement Cases”

The German Federal Court had to deal with questions of international jurisdiction and applicable law in a trademark infringement case based upon the broadcasting of an Italian game show which was available in Germany. The Court found that German courts had jurisdiction upon the case and might apply national trademark law because trademark interests were affected in Germany. The result is arguable. However, it demonstrates that even codified rules in IP-Law leave substantial insecurities with regard to international harmony as long as IP-laws have territorial reach only.

- **Oliver L. Knöfel:** “The European Evidence Regulation: First Resort or Last?”

In Continental Europe, treaties and other devices of judicial assistance in the obtaining of evidence abroad have traditionally been understood as tools to prevent intrusions into another State’s authority and territory. Today, there are diverging views as to whether or not the relevant legal instruments designed for civil and commercial matters, such as the Hague Evidence Convention and the European Evidence Regulation (Council Regulation [EC] No 1206/2001), have the quality of being exclusive, that is, the effect of barring any other means of gathering evidence abroad. The article reviews a judgment of the

*European Court of Justice (First Chamber) of 6 September 2012 (C-170/11), dealing with the mandatory or non-mandatory character of the European Evidence Regulation. The question at stake is whether a judge in a Member State must have recourse to the Regulation on each occasion that she wishes to take evidence that is situated in another Member State. The ECJ declared a Member State's court free to summon a witness resident in another Member State to appear before it in accordance with the *lex fori processus*, that is, without recourse to the Evidence Regulation. The author analyses the relevant comity issues, explores the decision's background in international law and in international procedural law, and discusses its consequences for the relationship to Third States, as well as for the traditional concept of judicial sovereignty.*

- **Gerald Mäsch:** "The "Equitable Life" 2002 Scheme of Arrangement in the German Federal Court of Justice"

*The German Federal Court of Justice's IVth Senate, in its decision of 15 February 2012, took the view that the High Court sanction of the English Insurance Company Equitable Life's 2002 voluntary solvent scheme of arrangement has no binding effect on a dissenting policy holder residing in Germany on the ground that art. 35 (1) and 12 of the Brussels I Regulation prevent its recognition. In this article, the author argues that, based on the European Court of Justice's ruling in "Group Josi Reinsurance", the Brussels I Regulation provisions on insurance contracts should instead be interpreted as not applying to collective procedures aiming at the financial redress of an insurance company where the individual policy holder's inferior knowledge of insurance issues is irrelevant. The same interpretation applies - *mutatis mutandis* - for the consumer contract provisions (art. 35 (1), 15 Brussels I Regulation), whereas the position of the IVth Senate would make the restructuring of any English company by way of voluntary agreements under English law nearly impossible if a significant number of dissenting private investors from Germany is involved. The author calls upon German courts confronted with the issue of recognition of English solvent scheme of arrangements not to follow the IVth Senate but rather to seek a preliminary ruling by the ECJ.*

- **Herbert Roth:** “Problems concerning the certification as a European Enforcement Order under the regulation (EC) No 805/2004”

The reviewed order of the German Federal Supreme Court (BGH) is dealing with the revocation of a German decision fixing costs of an interim prohibition procedure, which was certified as an European Enforcement Order by German authorities. Both the result as well as the legal reasoning must be criticized for the excessive requirements concerning the information on legal remedies and the wrongfully denied cure of non-compliance with minimum standards. On the other hand the order of the local Augsburg trial court (Amtsgericht) is rightfully based on prevailing opinion of scholars and courts demanding only the formal service of the foreign judgement to the debtor in accordance with § 750 German Civil Procedure Code as a prerequisite of the execution of an European Enforcement Order. By contrast the formal service of the certification as an European Enforcement Order itself is no mandatory requirement of the later execution.

- **Kurt Siehr:** “Foreign Certificate of Succession for Estate in Germany?”

A Turkish citizen passed away in Turkey. The deceased had a bank account with a German bank in Munich. The plaintiff, a son adopted by the deceased, presented to the bank a Turkish certificate of succession and asked for payment of the account. The certificate of succession mentioned the plaintiff as the only heir. The defendant bank declined to pay and asked for a German certificate of succession (§ 2369 BGB) which may be granted for that part of the estate which is located in Germany. The County Court of Munich gave judgment for the plaintiff. The Turkish certificate of succession has to be recognized under § 17 of the German-Turkish Succession Treaty of 1929 and the defendant is not allowed under principles of good faith to insist on the presentation of a German certificate of succession by the plaintiff.

The County Court decision has to be criticized. Certificates of succession in continental European law are quite different. The most advanced certificate is the German one which also served as a model for the European certificate of succession as adopted by the European Union in Articles 62 et seq. of the Succession Regulation of 2012. The Turkish certificate, as the Swiss one (as the model for the Turkish Civil Code), are not very well regulated and many

questions are left open and have not yet been settled by the courts of these countries. Open is still the question whether a debtor of the estate can validly pay his debt to the person mentioned as heir in the Turkish certificate. This is different according to German law. The German certificate is issued by the probate court after diligent examination of the facts and, if issued, guarantees that the debtor may validly pay his debt to the person mentioned in the German certificate [§ 2367 BGB; similar Article 69 (3) Succession Regulation]. If it is not established without any doubt that a foreign certificate of succession has the same effect of a German one, the debtor in Germany of any claim of the estate of a foreigner may insist that a German limited certificate of succession (§ 2369 BGB) be presented by the collecting heir.

- **Götz Schulze/Henry Stieglmeier:** “The State’s Right to succeed in shares of the inheritance – Qualification, Subrogation and ordre public”

The State’s Right to succeed to shares of the inheritance asserted by the KG in the context of Russo-German relations has already been the subject of comment by Dörner (see: IPRax 2012, 235-238). As an additional point of analysis, in question here is the qualification of an undivided joint-inheritance of co-heirs (Miterbgenenschaft) of an estate. It is our opinion that the portion of the estate subject to co-inheritance should share the conflict-of-law judgement applied to the whole estate. In the case of sale, this also applies to the subrogation of revenues accruing on the estate. Otherwise, the choice-of-law decision depends upon chance factors such as the number of heirs or the date of alienation of the estate. The portion of the estate subject to co-inheritance is therefore to be considered immovable property, which in the case of the KG would have led to a partial renvoi to German law. Furthermore, the KG’s judgement leads to the strange outcome that the USSR’s legal successor can exercise a State’s Right to succeed that it would not enjoy in either of the present-day jurisdictions. A nephew’s subjective right of inheritance, as that of an heir of the third order, is eliminated by an intertemporal referral to an earlier and then already controversial legal situation in the USSR. Ordre public can be set against an entrenchment of outdated judgements and ensure application of laws governing relatives’ inheritance rights in line with all the legal jurisdictions involved at the time of judgement.

- **Arkadiusz Wudarski/Michael Stürner:** “Unconstitutional EU Secondary Legislation?”

For the first time the Polish Constitutional Court had to decide whether it is competent to hear a complaint based on the alleged unconstitutionality of a provision of European secondary legislation. The claimant had contested as unconstitutional the procedure of exequatur in which a Polish court had declared enforceable a Belgian judgment in ex parte proceedings pursuant to Article 41 Brussels I Regulation. The Constitutional Court admitted the request in principle, but held that in the present case there was no violation of the relevant provisions of the Polish Constitution. The article explores whether there are other examples where EU secondary legislation in the field of international civil procedure might conflict with national constitutional law.

- **Brigitta Lurger:** “The Austrian choice of law rules in cases of surrogate motherhood abroad – the best interest of the child between recognition, European human rights and the Austrian prohibition of surrogate motherhood”

In the first decision reviewed in this article the Austrian Constitutional Court (VfGH) held that a child born by a surrogate mother in Georgia/USA after the implantation of the ovum and sperm (embryo) of the intentional parents, an Austro-Italian couple living in Vienna, was the legal child of the intentional parents and not of the surrogate mother. The same result was achieved by the second VfGH decision reviewed here, in the case of a surrogate motherhood in the Ukraine. The intentional and genetic parents of the twins born by the Ukrainian surrogate mother were Austrians living in Austria.

This outcome is surprising, considering the Austrian legal provisions which forbid surrogate motherhood and determine that the legal mother is always the woman who gives birth to the child. In the first decision, the reasoning of the court focusses on the supposedly limited competence/scope of the Austrian rules which could not apply to “foreign” artificial procreation cases, the internationally mandatory character of the laws of Georgia and on the best interest of the child. In the second case, the court recognizes the Ukrainian birth certificate of the twins which was purportedly based on Ukrainian family law and argues that the application of Austrian substantive law to this case

would violate Art. 8 ECHR and the principle of protection of the best interest of the child. In both cases, the Austrian Constitutional Court unjustifiedly avoids addressing the issue of non-conformity of the Austrian substantive rules on motherhood with Art. 8 ECHR.

The article tries to show that the result achieved by both decisions is correct, albeit the reasoning is flawed in many respects. It analyzes the conflict of laws problems arising in cases of Austrian intentional parents causing foreign surrogate motherhood on a general basis, and discusses the implications of European primary law (Art. 21 TFEU) and European human rights (Art. 8 ECHR). Even though present Austrian choice of law rules lead in most cases to the application of the Austrian “birth-motherhood rule”, the constitutional protection of private and family life by Art. 8 ECHR requires Austrian authorities to somehow “recognize” the legal family status acquired by a child and its intentional Austrian parents under the law of Georgia or the Ukraine where surrogate motherhood is legally permissible. The conformity of the birth-motherhood rule in domestic cases of surrogate motherhood (or in international cases where no “real” conflict of laws is present) with Art. 8 ECHR is questionable and should be re-viewed thoroughly by national courts and the ECHR.

- **Yuko Nishitani:** “International Jurisdiction of Japanese Courts in Civil and Commercial Matters”

This paper examines the 2011 reform of the Japanese Code of Civil Procedure (CCP), which introduced new provisions on international adjudicatory jurisdiction. After considering the salient features of major jurisdiction rules in the CCP, the author analyzes the regulation of international parallel litigations. The relevant rules of the Brussels I Regulation (Recast) are taken into consideration from a comparative perspective. In conclusion, the author points out that the basic structure of Japanese jurisdiction rules is in line with that of the Brussels I Regulation (Recast), whereas some important jurisdictional grounds clearly deviate from the latter.

- **Erik Jayme:** “Glückwünsche für Fritz Schwind – Der Schöpfer des österreichischen Internationalen Privatrechts wird 100 Jahre alt”

- ***Simon Laimer***: “Richterliche Eingriffe in den Vertrag/L’intervention du juge dans le contrat”