

Fourth Issue of 2014's Rivista di diritto internazionale privato e processuale

(I am grateful to Prof. Francesca Villata - University of Milan - for the following presentation of the latest issue of the RDIPP)



The fourth issue of 2014 of the Rivista di diritto internazionale privato e processuale (RDIPP, published by CEDAM) was just released. It features two articles and five comments.

Francesco Salerno, Professor at the University of Ferrara, examines fundamental rights in a private international law - and namely a public policy - perspective in **“I diritti fondamentali della persona straniera nel diritto internazionale privato: una proposta metodologica”** (Fundamental Rights of the Foreigner in Private International Law: A Methodological Proposition; in Italian).

Namely focusing on the role of public policy, this paper examines how personality rights of foreign individuals are ensured under the Italian private international law system. While personality rights are meant to reflect the identity of an individual at a universal level, private international law is aimed at ensuring the continuity of an individual's rights and status across borders. Art. 24 of the Italian Statute on Private International Law (Law No 218/1995) underlies this concern in that it provides, as regards personality rights, for the application of the law of nationality of the individual in question. However, as a result of the fact that personality rights are closely intertwined with human rights, it becomes inevitable to explore the link between the somehow neutral technique traditionally employed by conflict-of-law provisions and the fundamental values shared within the international community, in particular those values safeguarded by international obligations regarding the protection of human rights. As this

paper portrays, the tension between personality rights under an individual's national law and fundamental rights is crucial to Art. 24 of the Italian Statute, as shown, in particular, by the process with which rights are characterized as falling within the scope of the provision: where a given right is perceived as fundamental by the *lex fori*, that right should enjoy protection in the forum regardless of its status according to the law of nationality of the concerned individual (proceedings on sex reassignment provide some significant examples in this respect). This approach embodies a "positive" expression of the notion of public policy: cross-border uniformity is foregone, here, as a means to ensure the primacy of the fundamental policies of the forum. However, as the paper illustrates, the role of public policy in ensuring fundamental rights goes even further: in fact, public policy may also serve as a guide whenever the need arises to adapt the applicable foreign law, should such law fail to provide solutions that are equivalent to those enshrined in the *lex fori*.

Fabrizio Vismara, Associate Professor at the University of Insubria, discusses agreements as to successions and family pacts in "**Patti successori nel regolamento (UE) n. 650/2012 e patti di famiglia: un'interferenza possibile?**" (Agreements as to Succession in Regulation (EU) No 650/2012 and Family Pacts: A Possible Interference?; in Italian).

Law No 55 of 14 February 2006 enacted the regime on family pacts and amended Art 458 of the Italian Civil Code repealing the prohibition against agreements as to succession. This article analyzes the relationship between family agreements and agreements as to succession with reference to the regime enacted by Regulation (EU) No 650/2012 on jurisdiction, applicable law, recognition and enforcement of decisions and acceptance and enforcement of authentic instruments in matters of succession and on the creation of a European Certificate of Succession. After examining the different solutions with respect to the characterization of family agreements (donation, division, contract), this article highlights how family agreements may be referred to the application of Regulation (EU) No 650/2012 as a form of waiver agreement as to succession. In this respect, family agreements may be governed by Regulation (EU) No 650/2012 and, in particular, by the rules on the determination of the applicable law provided therein.

In addition to the foregoing, the following comments are also featured:

Michele Nino, Researcher at the University of Salerno, examines State interests in labor disputes in “**State Immunity from Civil Jurisdiction in Labor Disputes: Evolution in International and National Law and Practice**” (in English).

This article examines the evolution of the international rule on State immunity from civil jurisdiction in labor disputes. After having shed light on the notion and content of the international rule at issue, this article examines the relevant international legal instruments (such as the 1972 European Convention on State Immunity and the 2004 United Nations Convention on Jurisdictional Immunities of States and Their Property), the national practice of civil law and common law States, as well as the case law of the European Court of Human Rights and of the European Court of Justice. In light of this analysis, this paper illustrates that, although an important trend aimed at promoting in labor disputes stable criteria of jurisdiction of the State of the forum (such as the nationality or the residence of the worker and the place of the execution of the employment relationship), the criterion based on the distinction between *acta jure imperii* and *acta jure gestionis* continues to be applied rather permanently in such disputes. As a result, in the conclusions, solutions are put forth so that the application of such criterion be subject to revision, at national and international levels, and that, as a consequence, an effective protection of workers be guaranteed in labor disputes against the need to safeguard State interests.

Giulia Vallar, Fellow at the University of Milan, addresses the topic of intra-EU investment arbitration in “**L’arbitrabilità delle controversie tra un investitore di uno Stato membro ed un altro Stato membro. Alcune considerazioni a margine del caso *Eureko/Achmea v. The Slovak Republic***” (Arbitrability of Disputes between an Investor from a Member State and another Member State. Some Remarks on *Eureko/Achmea v. The Slovak Republic*; in Italian).

The present paper deals with one of the issues that has recently been considered within the *Eureko/Achmea v. The Slovak Republic* case, namely the arbitrability of the so called intra-EU BITs disputes. In essence, it focuses on whether the investor of an EU member state can rely on the compromissory clause contained in a BIT that its country of origin had signed with another country that, in turn, at a later time, became an EU member State. To such a question arbitral tribunals have answered in the positive, while the EU in the negative, without however adopting a normative act in this sense. Throughout the paper, an analysis is

conducted of those aspects of international law and of EU law that come into play in relation to the matter at hand. It is submitted that, in the absence of a definite/hard law solution, the way out should consist, for the time being, in applying soft law principles and, in particular, that of comity; nevertheless, the EUCJ and the arbitral tribunals do not appear to be very much keen to act in this sense. EU member states, on their part, are more and more frequently opting for the termination of the relevant BITs, allegedly on the basis of a law and economics analysis. This attitude, however, might produce negative effects on the economy of these states, since investors, seeking the protection of a BIT, could be encouraged to move their seats in third countries.

Giovanna Adinolfi, Associate Professor at the University of Milan, tackles the issue of financial instruments and State immunity from adjudication in **“Sovereign Wealth Funds and State Immunity: Overcoming the Contradiction”** (in English).

The increasing number of sovereign wealth funds (SWFs) and the growth in the value of their assets are among the main current trends in the global financial markets. The governments of recipient States have voiced their concerns, contending that SWFs are financial vehicles used by States to pursue general public aims but acting like private economic agents. The question this contribution tackles is whether SWFs, as “sovereign” investment vehicles, come within the scope of international and national rules on sovereign immunity. This topic will be analyzed from three perspectives. As a starting point, the definition of “foreign State” given by immunity legal regimes will be investigated in order to define in which circumstances SWFs meet it. Next, the issue of SWFs’ immunity from adjudication will be ascertained. In this regard, the main point is whether SWFs investments are to be understood as actions engaged in within the exercise of sovereign authority, or as mere commercial activities, over which immunity from judgment on the merits is removed. As it may not be excluded that courts render judgments against SWFs, the rules on immunity from pre-judgement and post-judgement measures of constraint are to be considered, so as to identify the property against which jurisdictional rulings may be enforced for the full satisfaction of the legitimate expectations of judgment creditors. The enquiry mainly focuses on the rules established under the UN and the Council of Europe conventions; the content and practice under national regimes is also considered, mainly the US Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act and the UK State Immunity Act.

The main result is that there is no univocal answer to the question whether rules on sovereign immunity are helpful in overcoming the contradiction between the different but complementary public and private natures of SWFs. The form through which funds have been established and the content of the specific legal regime on the basis of which courts have to judge in their regard are the fundamental variables, and their combination in each case may lead to different results in terms of immunity from both the adjudicative process and enforcement measures.

Laura Carpaneto, Researcher at the University of Genoa, examines the interface of the Brussels II-*bis* Regulation and the European Convention of Human Rights in **“In-Depth Consideration of Family Life v. Immediate Return of the Child in Abduction Proceedings within the EU”** (in English).

The paper focuses on the EU regime on child abduction provided by Regulation No 2201/2003 and, in particular, on its Art. 11(8) expressly providing for the replacement of a Hague non return order by a subsequent judgment (the so called “trumping order”) imposing the return of the child made by the courts of the State where the child was habitually resident prior to the wrongful removal or retention. Starting from the analysis of some recent decisions of the European Court of Human Rights, stating that some return orders held by domestic courts in applying the 1980 Hague Convention (*Neulinger and Shuruk v. Switzerland and X v. Latvia*) as well as the Brussels II-*bis* Regulation (*Sneersonne and Kampanella v. Italy*) were not in compliance with Art. 8 of ECHR, the paper is aimed at demonstrating that a too strict “Art. 8 ECHR’s test” is capable of undermining the functioning of the Brussels II-*bis* trumping order and that a specific human rights’ test for intra-EU child abduction should be carried out. In this light, the paper firstly highlights the added value of the Brussels II-*bis* regime on child abduction compared to the 1980 Hague Convention; it goes on to critically analyze the recent decisions of the European Court of Human Rights on the return orders in child abduction cases, and it finally proposes a possible human rights test capable of protecting the “effet utile” of the EU regime on child abduction.

Matteo Gargantini, Senior Research Fellow at the Max Planck Institute Luxembourg, examines and shares some considerations on the AG’s Opinion in *Kolassa* in **“Jurisdictional Issues in the Circulation and Holding of (Intermediated) Securities: The Advocate General’s Opinion in *Kolassa v.***

Barclays” (in English).

This article addresses the Advocate General’s Opinion in *Kolassa v. Barclays* (released on September 3, 2014, in the case C-375/13) from the perspective of financial markets law. The case raises some issues on the establishment of jurisdiction in disputes concerning securities offerings. The article suggests that a restrictive interpretation should be given of the Opinion (as well as of the CJEU decision on the case, which substantially follows the Opinion). On the one hand, the interpretation affirmed by the Advocate general may in fact, if read extensively, rule out the possibility that investors enjoy the protective regime of Brussels I Regulation *vis-à-vis* the issuer if they purchase securities on the secondary market, as it denies the possibility of establishing jurisdiction on the basis of Articles 15 and 16 of the Brussels I Regulation where a consumer has purchased a security not from the issuer but from a third party that has in turn obtained it from the issuer. On the other hand, the Opinion may expose offering companies to the risk of being sued by professional investors in multiple jurisdictions on the basis of tortious liability, even in cases where a prospectus was not published and, therefore, such companies did not intend to conduct any activity in other countries, on the basis that no contractual relationship can be identified in *Kolassa* between the issuer of the certificate and the final investor. Tortious liability, which is admitted by the Opinion, may therefore sometimes be an imperfect substitute for contractual liability. Hence, the article proposes that the Advocate General’s (and the CJEU’s) reasoning should be narrowly interpreted so as to confine its purview to the issues raised by the holding of certificates through trusts and other similar devices. On the contrary, further reflections are needed before a conclusive position is taken on the effects of circulation of securities under the Brussels I Regulation.

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