Ruehl on Statut und Effizienz: Ökonomische Grundlagen des Internationalen Privatrechts

Giesela Ruehl (Friedrich-Schiller University Jena and our new editor for Germany) has published her *Habilitationsschrift* on **Statut und Effizienz: Ökonomische Grundlagen des Internationalen Privatrechts [Applicable Law and Efficiency. Economic Foundations of Private International Law]**. Here's an English description (the monograph itself is in German):

> *Is private international law an efficient answer to the problems of international transactions? In her recent book on the economic foundations of private international law, Giesela Rühl explores this question in great detail.*
>
> *She analyses choice of law-rules on a broad comparative basis and uses economic theory to tackle fundamental conceptual issues just as well as specific problems in the private international law of contracts and torts. Focusing on the recently adopted Rome I- and Rome II-Regulations she contributes to the understanding of the developing European private international law.*
>
> *The book is organized in four parts. In the first part, the author analyses the problems of international transactions from an economic perspective. She takes a closer look at the specific problems associated with international transactions and asks whether private international law – as compared to other governmental, non-governmental, regulatory or non-regulatory mechanisms – is a suitable or at least necessary instrument to deal with these problems. In the second part, the author lays the theoretical foundation for an economic analysis of private international law. She explores whether economic theory may be used to analyse issues in private international law and whether the basic assumptions and assessment criteria of economic theory may claim application. In the third part, the author re-conceptualises private international law from an economic perspective. She develops a general economic framework for the determination of the applicable law essentially based on free choice of law. In the fourth and final part, the author applies this framework to specific issues in choice of law, most importantly contracts and torts.*

ISBN 978-3-16-150698-7. Leinen € 99.00. More information is available on the publisher's website.

The Controversial Succession of Dali

Prof. Pilar Jiménez Blanco (University of Oviedo) published recently an article on the *Dali* ECJ's ruling, a case referred to the Court by the Tribunal de Grande Instance de Paris, af. C-518/08. I have asked her to summarize her opinion. Here it goes:

> The most important aspect of the ECJ judgment in the *Dali* case (C-518/08) is what the Court of Justice *does not say*: which law determines the beneficiaries of the resale right of Dali's original work . The problem is analysed within French law, which establishes a specific system of succession to the *droit de suite*. But, is French law applicable to the instant case?. Actually, neither the approach from the perspective of intellectual property rights nor the approach from the viewpoint of succession law justify determining the beneficiaries of the resale right under French law. It should be for Spanish law, as the law applicable to the succession, to determine both the validity of Dali's will and whether the Spanish State is beneficiary of the resale right. However, it is unlikely that the French judge, who is the one to rule on the merits, obviates the special rule of the *Code de la propriété intellectuelle*. Even if this will be a wrong solution that does not correspond neither with the will of the artist, nor with the assumed trend in the European Union towards a unitary conception of the succession.

Pilar Jiménez's article appeared in *Noticias de la Unión Europea*, 2011, núm. 220.

Cuadernos de Derecho Transnacional, Issue 2/2011

The second issue for 2011 of the Cuadernos de Derecho Transnacional, the Spanish journal published twice a year by the Área de Derecho Internacional Privado of Univ. Carlos III of Madrid under the editorship of *Alfonso Luis Calvo-Caravaca* (Univ. Carlos III) and *Javier Carrascosa-González* (Univ. of Murcia), has been recently published. It contains seventeen articles, shorter articles and casenotes, encompassing a wide range of topics in conflict of laws, conflict of jurisdictions and uniform law, all freely available for download. The journal's website provides a very useful search function, by which contents can be browsed by issue of publication, author, title, keywords, abstract and fulltext.

Here's the table of contents of issue 2/2011 (each contribution is accompanied by an abstract in English):

Estudios

- *José Mª Alcántara, Frazer Hunt, Svante O. Johansson, Barry Oland, Kay Pysden, Milos Pohunek, Jan Ramberg, Douglas G. Schmitt, William Tetley, C.M.Q.C, Julio Vidal*, A Blue Print for a Worldwide Multimodal Regime;
- *Nuno Andrade Pisarra*, Breves considerações sobre a lei aplicável ao contrato de seguro;
- *María José Cervell Hortal*, Pacientes en la Unión Europea: libertad restringida y vigilada;
- *Sara Lidia Feldstein de Cárdenas, Luciane Klein Vieira*, La noción de consumidor en el Mercosur;
- *Pietro Franzina*, The law applicable to divorce and legal separation under Regulation (EU) no. 1259/2010 of 20 December 2010;
- *Federico F. Garau Sobrino*, Las fuentes españolas en materia de obligaciones alimenticias. ¿Hacia un Derecho Internacional Privado extravagante?;
- *Cesáreo Gutiérrez Espada*, La adhesión española (2011) a la Convención de las Naciones Unidas sobre las inmunidades jurisdiccionales de los Estados y de sus bienes (2005);
- *Francesco Seatzu*, La proposta per la riforma del Regolamento «Bruxelles

I» e i provvedimenti provvisori;
- *Sara Tonolo*, L'Italia e il resto del mondo nel pensiero di Pasquale Stanislao Mancini.

Varia

- *Ana-Paloma Abarca Junco, Marina Vargas-Gómez Urrutia*, Vecindad civil de la mujer casada: nuevas reflexiones en torno a la inconstitucionalidad sobrevenida del art. 14.4 C.c. y la retroactividad de la Constitución española en relación a los modos de adquisición de su vecindad civil;
- *Elisa Baroncini*, La politica cinese sulle esportazioni dinanzi al sistema di risoluzione delle controversie dell'OMC: il report del Panel nel caso China – Raw Materials;
- *Pilar Juárez Pérez*, La inevitable extensión de la ciudadanía de la Unión: a propósito de la STJUE de 8 de marzo de 2011 (asunto Ruiz Zambrano);
- *Carlos Llorente Gómez de Segura*, "Forum non conveniens" revisited: el caso Spanair;
- *Pilar Maestre Casas*, El pasajero aéreo desprotegido: obstáculos a la tutela judicial en litigios transfronterizos por incumplimientos de las compañías aéreas (A propósito de la STJUE de 9 julio 2009, Rehder, As. C-204/08);
- *María Dolores Ortiz Vidal*, Ilonka Fürstin von Sayn-Wittgenstein: una princesa en el Derecho internacional privado;
- *Esther Portela Vázquez*, La Convención de la UNESCO sobre la Protección del Patrimonio Subacuático. Principios Generales;
- *Alessandra Zanobetti*, Employment contracts and the Rome Convention: the Koelzsch ruling of the European Court of Justice.

(Many thanks to Federico Garau, Conflictus Legum blog, for the tip-off)

4th Max Planck PostDoc-

Conference on European Private Law

The Max Planck Institute for Comparative and International Private Law in Hamburg calls for applications for the 4th Max Planck PostDoc-Conference on European Private Law. The conference will take place on 7 and 8 May 2012. Applicants are expected to be working on their senior thesis or second book in the wide field of European private law, including private international law, commercial law, company law, capital market law, and competition law. The deadline for application is 31 October 2011. More information are available here.

Kuipers on Cross-Border Infringement of Personality Rights

Jan-Jaap Kuipers, an Assistant Professor of European Law at the Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen, has written an interesting article on cross-broder infringement of personality rights. It has just been published in the German Law Journal and can be downloaded here. The abstract reads as follows:

> *Globalization has led to the emergence of broadcasting services and books aimed at a global audience. Authors of books, journals, and articles have gained readers worldwide. Due to the Internet, the spreading of ideas on a global level has never been easier. The other side of the coin is that authors run a risk of being exposed to civil proceedings in many jurisdictions. What is considered to be proactive journalism, or a provocative academic comment in some jurisdictions is considered to be libel or defamation in others. Although both the freedom of speech and the right to private life have received constitutional protection in all Member States, different balances have been struck between the competing fundamental rights. In a cross-border context, the infringement of the right to private life by foreign media becomes an international horizontal conflict between fundamental rights. The issue is therefore extremely sensitive*

and during the Rome II negotiations no consensus could be reached on the appropriate conflict of laws rule. The infringement of personality rights was therefore excluded from the scope of that Regulation. The present paper attempts to analyze to what extent it is necessary to revise the "defamation exclusion" of Rome II. If it would be necessary to include defamation in Rome II, what would be the most appropriate conflict of laws rule?

Fornasier on European Contract Law and Choice of Law

Matteo Fornasier, a senior research fellow at the Max Planck Institute for Comparative and International Private Law in Hamburg, has written an interesting article on the optional instrument of European contract law and choice of law. The article is forthcoming in Rabels Zeitschrift für ausländisches und internationales Privatrecht and can be downloaded here. The English abstract reads as follows:

Ten years after placing the idea of a European contract law on the political agenda, the European Commission has announced its intention to take legislative action soon. A proposal for a regulation on an optional instrument of European contract law is expected in the fall of 2011. The regulation would create a set of European contract rules which would exist alongside the various national regimes and could be chosen as the applicable law by the parties to the contract. Such an instrument raises a number of questions with regard to private international law in general and the Rome I Regulation in particular. Should the choice of the European contract law be subject to the general rules on party choice under Rome I or does the new instrument call for special rules? Also, should the European contract law be eligible only where the relevant choice of law rules refer the contract to the law of a Member State or should the parties also be allowed to opt for the European rules where private

international law designates the law of a third state as the law applicable to the contract? And finally, how does the optional instrument relate to the CISG and other uniform law conventions? The following paper discusses possible models of how to fit the optional instrument into the system of private international law. In particular, it examines which solution is the best suited to achieve the primary goal of the optional instrument, i.e. to improve the functioning of the internal market.

Towards a Coherent European Approach to Collective Redress

The Commission's consultation on collective reddress, aiming to identify common legal principles on collective redres, ended in April 2011. On 15 July 2011, the European Parliament published a draft report on collective redress. I might be wrong, but I think the document has gone unfairly unnoticed. You can have a look at it here.

Twenty Years' Work by GEDIP

A new book gathering 20 years of work by the European Group for Private International Law has just been published. Building European Private International Law. Twenty Years' Work by GEDIP was edited by Marc Fallon, Patrick Kinsch and Christian Kohler.

During the last 20 years, private international law has been significantly transformed in Europe. Since its creation in 1991, the European Group for Private International Law (EGPIL, also commonly known as GEDIP) sustained

this evolution. Composed of specialists in private international law who are also interested in European law, the GEDIP focuses on the interaction between these two fields of research. The work of the GEDIP focuses on international instruments of various nature – in particular, those of the Hague Conference on Private International Law, and the European Convention for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The issues covered by the annual meetings are chosen and analyzed in an independent way without a mandate from European or international institutions. The aim is to foster progress of knowledge by using an issue-by-issue method. This working method allowed the GEDIP to develop new tools which turned out to sustain the preparation of several European acts in civil and commercial matters – namely, the Regulations Brussels II, Rome I, Rome II, and Rome III, as well as possibly the forthcoming regulation on succession or the revision of the Brussels I Regulation. GEDIP documents reflect the evolving debate on private international law in Europe for 20 years. Their publication into a monograph at the occasion of the GEDIP's 20th anniversary aims to improve their dissemination and is accompanied by a detailed index to facilitate their consultation.

The full table of content is available here. More details are available here.

European Parliament's Workshop on the Brussels I Proposal (rescheduled)

The workshop organized by the EP JURI Committee on the review of the Brussels I regulation, originally scheduled on 20 September 2011 (see our previous posts here and here) is taking place in Brussels this morning (h 10.00 – 12.00).

The live video streaming is broadcasted on this page. The link to the recorded session can be found here.

ECHR Finds Immunity Violates Right to Access to Court

We should have reported earlier about this interesting judgment of the European Court of Human Rights of June 29th, 2011 (*Sabeh El Leil v. France*), where the Great Chamber of the Court ruled that France violated Article 6 of the European Convention by failing to give access to a court to an ex-employee of the Koweiti embassy in Paris suing his employer after it had dismissed him in 2000.

The ECHR had already ruled a year before in *Cudak v. Lithuania* that while sovereign immunities coud justify limiting the right to access to courts, preventing employees of embassies from suing their employers was a disproportionate limitation to their right when they were neither diplomatic or consular staff, nor nationals of the foreign states, and when they were not performing functions relating to the sovereignty of the foreign state.

In *Sabeh El Leil*, the French Courts had mentioned that the employee had "additional responsabilities" which might have meant that he was involved in acts of government authority of Koweit. The European court finds that the French courts failed to explain how it had been satisfied that this was indeed the case, as the French judgements had only asserted so, and had not mentioned any evidence to that effect.

Here are extracts of the Press Release of the Court:

> ***An accountant, fired from an embassy in Paris, could not contest his dismissal,in breach of the Convention***
>
> ***Principal facts***
>
> *The applicant, Farouk Sabeh El Leil, is a French national. He was employed as an accountant in the Kuwaiti embassy in Paris (the Embassy) as of 25 August 1980 and for an indefinite duration. He was promoted to head accountant in 1985.*

In March 2000, the Embassy terminated Mr Sabeh El Leil's contract on economic grounds, citing in particular the restructuring of all Embassy's departments. Mr Sabeh El Leil appealed before the Paris Employment Tribunal, which awarded him, in a November 2000 judgment, damages equivalent to 82,224.60 Euros (EUR). Disagreeing with the amount of the award, Mr Sabeh El Leil appealed. The Paris Court of Appeals set aside the judgment awarding compensation. In particular, it found Mr Sabeh El Leil's claim inadmissible because the State of Kuwait enjoyed jurisdictional immunity on the basis of which it was not subject to court actions against it in France.

Complaints, procedure and composition of the Court

Mr Sabeh El Leil complained that he had been deprived of his right of access to a court in violation of Article 6 § 1 of the Convention, as a result of the French courts' finding that his employer enjoyed jurisdictional immunity.

The application was lodged with the European Court of Human Rights on 23 September 2005 and declared admissible on 21 October 2008. On 9 December 2008, the Court's Chamber relinquished jurisdiction in favour of the Grand Chamber, neither of the parties having objected.

Decision of the Court

Access to a court (Article 6 § 1)

Referring to its previous case-law, the Court noted that Mr Sabeh El Leil had also requested compensation for dismissal without genuine or serious cause and that his duties in the embassy could not justify restrictions on his access to a court based on objective grounds in the State's interest. Article 6 § 1 was thus applicable in his case.

The Court then observed that the concept of State immunity stemmed from international law which aimed a promoting good relations between States through respect of the other State's sovereignty. However, the application of absolute State immunity had been clearly weakened for a number of years, in particular with the adoption of the 2004 UN Convention on Jurisdictional Immunities of States and their Property. That convention had created a significant exception in respect of State immunity through the introduction of the principle that immunity did not apply to employment contracts between

States and staff of its diplomatic missions abroad, except in a limited number of situations to which the case of Mr Sabeh El Leil did not belong. The applicant, who had not been a diplomatic or consular agent of Kuwait, nor a national of that State, had not been covered by any of the exceptions enumerated in the 2004 Convention. In particular, he had not been employed to officially act on behalf of the State of Kuwait, and it had not been established that there was any risk of interference with the security interests of the State of Kuwait.

The Court further noted that, while France had not yet ratified the Convention on Jurisdictional Immunities of States and their Property, it had signed that convention in 2007 and ratification was pending before the French Parliament. In addition, the Court emphasised that the 2004 Convention was part of customary law, and as such it applied even to countries which had not ratified it, including France.

On the other hand, Mr Sabeh El Leil had been hired and worked as an accountant until his dismissal in 2000 on economic grounds. Two documents issued concerning him, an official note of 1985 promoting him to head accountant and a certificate of 2000, only referred to him as an accountant, without mentioning any other role or function that might have been assigned to him. While the domestic courts had referred to certain additional responsibilities that Mr Sabeh El Leil had supposedly assumed, they had not specified why they had found that, through those activities, he was officially acting on behalf of the State of Kuwait.

The Court concluded that the French courts had dismissed the complaint of Mr Sabeh El Leil without giving relevant and sufficient reasons, thus impairing the very essence of his right of access to a court, in violation of Article 6 § 1.

Just satisfaction (Article 41)

The Court held, by sixteen votes to one, that France was to pay Mr Sabeh El Leil 60,000 euros (EUR) in respect of all kind of damage and EUR 16,768 for costs and expenses.