

Editorial

Katharina Boele-Woelki*

From the 16th until the 22nd of July 2006, the XVIIth World Conference on Comparative Law was held in Utrecht. This conference took place under the auspices of the International Academy of Comparative Law and was organised by the Law Faculty of Utrecht University in collaboration with the Netherlands Comparative Law Association. The conference allowed the global voice of the legal profession to showcase the work that is going on throughout the world of comparative law. It provided delegates with unsurpassed value through exposure to interesting issues.

In addition to the 35 parallel sessions on different subjects in the field of private law and public law, the Utrecht conference organisation invited eleven distinguished keynote speakers who tackled several topical issues from a comparative law perspective. We selected them on the basis of their excellent reputation in their specific field of interest. They addressed the conference in plenary sessions which were divided over all the days of the event. As the chair of the Organising Committee of the Utrecht conference and a member of the editorial board of this journal, I am delighted to present the final written versions of these contributions in this volume. Already at the conference, the interventions were highly appreciated and praised by the participants.

Traditionally, the conferences of the International Academy of Comparative Law are bilingual French/English conferences. This is also reflected in this volume. Four contributions have been written in French, the others are in English.

The contributions provide an insight into the significant role of comparative law in the law-making in several fields of law either in the legislative or judicial process. The first three articles (Steyn, Lokin and Örtücü) address the aim and objectives of comparative law, its close relationship with legal history as well as methodological aspects. The next three articles (Auby, Canivet and Curtin) deal with recent developments in the field of public law: its globalisation and interrelationship with private law and more in particular the future of a constitutional framework for the European Union. The contributions by Schulz, Kessedjian and Dujardin can be categorised under the heading procedural law. The new Hague Convention on Choice of Court Agreement is introduced and explained and the position and function of both the *amicus curiae* and the bailiff is examined. Finally, Zaman tackles the ever increasing importance of cross-border mergers in Europe, whereas Vervaele critically discusses the anti-terrorist legislation in the US.

* Professor of Comparative Law, Private International Law and Family Law at the University of Utrecht.

All in all, the contributions reflect topical issues where the comparative approach has been proved to have a major influence. I heartily thank the authors for sharing their highly appreciated views with the global community. Finally, I particularly recommend this volume for teaching comparative law.