

Books Review

ESTEVE GARCÍA, F.; JIMÉNEZ CORTÉS, C (dirs.). *La liberalització dels serveis culturals a l'OMC i el seu impacte a Catalunya*. Barcelona: Institute of Autonomous Studies, 2006.
ISBN: 84-393-7322-8

This study is the result of a collective research project financed by the Institute of Autonomous Studies. Six lecturers in international law from the Autonomous University of Barcelona and Girona University analyse the current legal system applicable to cultural services. They then examine the current negotiations underway in the World Trade Organisation and the effects they may have for Catalonia and its public authorities in the area of culture. The study ends with a comparison of the different international commitments in this area, contained within the framework of the GATS and UNESCO, their direct affect on Catalonia and the need to improve effective ways to take part in European and international negotiations.

This work, fundamental for applying cultural and communication policies in Catalonia, has been directed by the lecturers Francina Esteve Garcia and Clàudia Jiménez Cortés with contributions by Susana Beltran García, Mariona Illamola Dausà, Montserrat Pi Llorens and Esther Zapater Duque.

FLAMAND-LÉVY, B. *Les compétences culturelles de la Communauté Européenne* Aix-en-Provence: Presses Universitaires d'Aix-Marseille-PUAM, 2004.
ISBN: 2-7314-0406-X

Although culture has been the object of solemn declarations almost since the Treaty of Rome, it was not until the Maastricht Treaty that this sector became part of a treaty for the constitution of Europe. Notwithstanding this, the member states have been very hesitant in giving up a large part of their cultural authority to European institutions. On the other hand, the authority of "Brussels" has not been created by means of legislation but rather empirically and via coordination. Moreover, in the view of the author, this authority does not aim to integrate a collective heritage but should be used as an instrument to strengthen the cultural diversity of member states, including their regions.

And in this maze of powers and authority, the author concludes the book analysing the role of Europe in negotiations on the opening up of international trade in the WTO. Consequently, this study by Bénédicte Flamand-Lévy is pioneering in its presentation of a scientific systemisation of a poorly defined area.

GAGNE, G. (dir). *La diversité culturelle. Vers une convention internationale effective?* Montreal (Quebec): Fides, 2005.
ISBN: 2-7621-2627-4

On 31 March 2004, the Groupe de recherche sur l'intégration continentale (GRIC), from Quebec University organised a seminar entitled "La diversité culturelle: vers un convention internationale?". It should be noted that GRIC is one of the decanal bodies on international economic integration. On the other hand, both Canada and Quebec have always stood out in their demand for a specific treaty for the cultural sector within international treaties. So, in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) between Mexico, the USA and Canada, the latter managed, in spite of the USA, to get cultural goods and services excluded from free trade.

With all this background, it is understandable that this seminar should become a landmark in the process of negotiating the Convention on protecting and promoting the diversity of cultural expressions of UNESCO, also known as the Convention on cultural diversity. This book comes from the debates during that seminar.

GERADIN, D.; LUFF, D. *The WTO and Global Convergence in Telecommunications and Audiovisual Services* Cambrigde (UK): Cambridge University Press, 2004
ISBN: 0-521-83611-5

This book has a series of chapters edited by David Luff, partner in a legal firm in Brussels, and Damien Geradin, lecturer in Law and director of the Institute for European Legal Studies at Liège University (Belgium). The work is made up of three parts, the first of which analyses the regulatory framework applicable to telecommunication services within the context of the WTO. The second debates the current framework regulating broadcasting services and particularly mentions the impact of regulation on content and digital convergence in distributing programmes. It also studies the protection, subsidies and public intervention in the sector. And the third part attempts to clarify the phenomenon of convergence from different points of view: a whole chapter explains the concept from a technological perspective, while other collaborators attempt to predict the legal and economic consequences that convergence might entail for the international trading of these new converging services.

TARDIF, J.; FARCHY, J. *Les enjeux de la mondialisation culturelle* Paris: Ed. Hors Commerce, 2006
ISBN: 2-915286-62-0

In the preface to this work, written by Abdou Diouf, secretary general of Francophonie and president of Senegal, we can read that "the globalisation affecting our era not only involves a growth in the flow of goods. It also transforms how we represent ourselves in the world". In other words, globalisation is an ambivalent process that, on the one hand, multiplies the possibilities of each culture to make itself felt with regard to other communities but, on the other hand, also involves the risk of multiplying the inequalities and imbalances in dialogue between cultures. It is then, when there is no dialogue, that a shock is produced, the so-called *civilisation shock*. In order to overcome this possibility, the authors propose placing culture in the centre of international dynamics, in political, economic and social terms. With this objective, they propose that cultural diversity should be one of the pillars of the world government of the new 21st century and so that this may come about they propose, among other measures, the creation of a World Council of Cultures.

UNESCO. *Culture, Trade and Globalisation. Questions and Answers* UNESCO: Paris, 2003
ISBN: 92-3-103748-X

This booklet is yet another example of the role UNESCO has taken on as an agency for the United Nations to promote participative, fair and committed cultural and communication policies. For two decades the institution had fallen into institutional hibernation and did not awaken until 2001 when, with the new director-general, Koïchiro Matsura, the Declaration on Cultural Diversity was approved. From here on, the role of UNESCO has grown and the institution has once again become a point of reference in public policies that propose the specific nature of culture, beyond the trade it generates. The book is structured into 25 key questions to understand the trade regulations for commercial goods and services and the debate currently being discussed. Questions are answered, for example, on the importance of copyright or the Agreement on trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights (TRIPS) and even the WTO's agenda for negotiations.