Theory and Practice of EC External Trade Law and Policy

By

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 13

PREFACE 15

TABLE OF CASES 17

BIBLIOGRAPHY 25

CHAPTER 1 67

INTRODUCTION TO EC INTERNATIONAL TRADE LAW: AN EU INTROSPECTIVE VIEW 67

I. Objectives and Central Argument 67
   A. Objectives 67
   B. Argument 71

II. An Overview of the Book and Structure 74
    A. Overview 74
    B. Structure 79

III. Contribution of the Book and Research Methodology 79
     A. Intended Contribution/Scientific Originality 79
     B. Relevance of the Project And Intellectual Context 80
     C. Field of Study 82
     D. Research Methodology 82
        D.1. Primary Sources 83
        D.2. Secondary Sources 84
        D.3. Interviews 84

CHAPTER 2 85

THE EU AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS 85

I. Introduction 85

II. The Players of the Game 85
    A. The European Union 86
    B. The European Communities 90
    C. The European Community 91

III. The Problem of the EU in its External Relations 91
    A. International Legal Personality 93
       A.1. Legal Personality of the European Community 94
A.2. Legal Personality of the European Union
   A.2.a. Arguments against the Existence of an EU Legal Personality
   A.2.b. Arguments for the Existence of an EU Legal Personality
      b.1. Analysis of Article 24 TEU: Its Interpretation and Application
      b.2. Interpretations on the EU's Capacity of External Action
   A.3. Some Reflections
   B. Who does What in the EU’s External Affairs?
      B.1. A Note on the so-called Fourth Pillar and CFSP
      B.2. Political and Economic Aspects of Foreign Policy
IV. Theories of Supranationalism
   A. Joseph Weiler's Theory
      A.1. Normative Supranationalism: Approfondissement
      A.2. Decisional Supranationalism
   B. Legal Theories of Economic Integration
      B.1. Neo-liberal Economic policy
      B.2. The European Community as 'Special-Purpose Associations (Zweckverbände) of Functional Integration'
      B.3. Theory of the supranational and intergovernmental dual structure of the EU
   C. Theory by Wils
   D. Conclusion

CHAPTER 3

EVOLUTION OF EC TRADE POLICY: A LEGAL ANALYSIS

I. Introduction
II. What Is Article 133 EC?
III. The Development of the European Communities' External Action
   A. 1952–1958: The ECSC As A Pioneer
   B. 1958–1967: The Three Communities Working In Parallel
      B.1. Euratom in the External Policies of the Communities
      B.2. The Emergence Of The EEC As A Major Negotiating Partner In World Affairs
IV. The Debate on the EC's Competence in the Context of the Creation of the WTO
   A. An Overview
   B. The European Community as a Member of the GATT and WTO
   C. Marrakesh: Opinion 1/94 and its Consequences between 1994 and now
      C.1. Consequences for Later Trade in Services Negotiations
      C.2. Duty of Cooperation
   D. The Amsterdam Treaty
V. The End Of A Millenium: The Nice Treaty
   A. History of the Nice Negotiations
   B. The EC Developments in Trade Policy at Nice
      B.1. Qualified-majority voting and the co-decision procedure
      B.2. Changes made to Article 133 EC at Nice
      B.3. What remains unchanged of Article 133 EC at Nice
      B.4. Article 133 EC after Nice
         B.4.a. The New Scope of EC Trade Competence
         B.4.b. Decision-making Procedures
   C. The Outcome of Nice: Comments and Criticism
      C.1. The Logic of Parallelism
      C.2. With Respect to Services Trade and Intellectual Property Rights
      C.3. Greater Transparency and Simplicity?
      C.4. The Extension of qualified-majority voting and Democratic Legitimacy
      C.5. The Failure to Agree on a WTO Protocol
      C.6. Some Reflections
VI. The Constitutional and Lisbon Treaties' Proposals for External Trade Policy
   A. The Union's Exclusive Competence in Trade Policy: Symptoms of a Federation
   B. The Constitutional Treaty and International Services Trade
VII. Conclusions
EVOLUTION OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF POWERS IN EU EXTERNAL RELATIONS

I. Introduction

II. Allocation of Competences: A Recapitulation
   A. Legislative Competence
      A.1. Exclusive EC Competence
      A.2. Shared Competence
      A.3. Complementary Competence
      A.4. Exclusive EU Member States' Competence
   B. Non-legislative or Executive Competence
      B.1. Implementation of Legislative Acts
      B.2. Administrative, Material or Budgetary Implementation of Community Acts

III. Criteria for Evaluating the Distribution of Powers and its Compliance

IV. Other Legal Bases for Trade Agreements
   A. Association Agreements
   B. Non-Preferential Trade And Cooperation Agreements
   C. Partnership Agreements
   D. Agreements With International Organisations

V. Conclusion

CHAPTER 5

MIXED AGREEMENTS

I. Introduction

II. Mixed Agreements
   A. Type of Competence
      A.1. Mixed Agreements and EC Competences
      A.1.a. External and Internal EC Competences
      A.1.b. Express and Implied Powers
      A.2. Parallel Competences
      A.3. Shared Competences
      A.3.a. Concurrent Competences
      A.3.b. Coexistent Competences
   B. Type of Mixity
   C. Questions of International Responsibility under Mixed Agreements

III. The 'Duty of Close Cooperation:' The Panacea?

IV. Conclusion

CHAPTER 6

INSTITUTIONAL BALANCE IN THE FIELD OF TRADE POLICY

I. Introduction

II. The Negotiation
   A. The Negotiating Procedure: A Three-Level Game
   B. The Management of the EC's International Trade Relations
   C. The Article 133 Committee
      C.1. Its Role in Trade Policy
      C.2. Structure and Organisation
      C.3. Relations between the Commission and the Article 133 Committee
         C.3.a. Issuing Directives to the Commission
         C.3.b. Adoption of Agreements by Consensus
         C.3.c. Tensions over Control of the EC Commercial Policy
      C.4. The Case of Telecommunications Services
   D. NGOs and Civil Society

III. Conclusion and Ratification
   A. The Council's Working Structure
   B. The Council's Role to Conclude Agreements
   C. The Council of the EU versus the 27 Member States
   D. The European Parliament
      D.1. An Overview and its Role
      D.2. The Changes Proposed by the EU Constitutional Treaty
   E. National Parliaments

IV. Implementation and Dispute Settlement
   A. Implementation of Agreements
   B. Dispute Settlement
      B.1. The EC as a Respondent
      B.2. The EC as a Claimant

V. Tension in the Decision-Making Process in Trade Policy
   The Dilemma of Efficiency v Accountability
   1. Efficiency at the Cost of Democratic Accountability
   2. Four Possible Scenarios
   3. Democratic Deficit
   4. Concluding Remarks on Efficiency v Accountability

VI. Conclusion
CHAPTER 7

JUDICIAL ENFORCEMENT

I. Introduction

II. The Jurisdiction Of The European Court Of Justice In International Trade
   A. Limited Jurisdiction of the ECJ
   B. Acts Subject To Judicial Review By The ECJ
      B.1. Council Decision To Leave To The Member States The Negotiation Of An International Agreement
      B.2. International Agreements
   C. Acts Subject To Interpretation By The ECJ
      C.1. Pure Community Agreements
      C.2. Mixed Agreements
   D. With Regard To WTO Law

III. International Agreements in EC Law
   A. The Link between International Law and EC Law
      A.1. Institutional Views
      A.2. Hierarchical Ranking of International Agreements
   B. The Outcome of International Law on the EC Legal System
      B.1. Invocability of an EC International Agreement in an EU Member States’ Court
      B.2. Invocability of an EC International Agreement in the EC Courts

IV. The WTO Agreement in EC Law
   A. The Link between the WTO Agreement and EC Law
   B. Invocability of WTO Agreements in the EC Courts and National Courts
      B.1. Invocability of WTO Agreements in the EC Courts
      B.2. Invocability of WTO Agreements in EU Member States’ Courts

V. The Relationship between the ECJ and the WTO Dispute Settlement Understanding

VI. Conclusions

CHAPTER 8

THE DOHA ROUND AND SERVICES TRADE

I. Prologue

II. The Doha Round
   A. What is a Round?
   B. Why Did We Need a New Round?

III. The GATS
   A. Objectives and Principles
   B. Historical Background to the GATS
   C. Scope of the GATS
   D. What is Trade in Services?
   E. Progressive Liberalisation of Services Trade

IV. Recommendations

CHAPTER 9

THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY IN THE DOHA ROUND: THE SPECIFIC CASE OF SERVICES TRADE

I. Introduction

II. The EC in the Doha Round
   A. The EC and the Doha Development Agenda
   B. The Case of Services Trade
   C. Hong Kong: the Sixth WTO Ministerial Conference
      C.1. Objectives of the Conference
      C.2. Intent and Examples of the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration
      C.3. Actual Modus Operandi of Services Negotiations: How to Go About Negotiations Among 148 Members, and the Outcome of Hong Kong
   D. After the Hong Kong Conference
      D.1. Suspension of the Multilateral Talks
         D.1.a. The Failure of Multilateralism?
         D.1.b. Consequences of Protectionism: Competing Views of NGOs
         D.1.c. Trying to Get Negotiations Back on Track and the Way Forward
      D.2. Resumption of the Multilateral Talks
   III. Impact of the Doha Round on Services Negotiations
   IV. Epilogue and Recommendations

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

INDEX

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
While writing this book, I encountered two unexpected circumstances: First, a political agreement was reached at the European Council meeting of June 2007 to abandon the European Union (EU) Constitutional Treaty after it failed ratification in France and the Netherlands in 2005, despite having been ratified by more than 15 EU Member States. This meeting agreed on a fall-back revision treaty—the Lisbon Treaty—which confirms much of the substance of the EU Constitutional Treaty, including the provisions concerning external trade. Therefore, an examination of these external trade provisions is amply justified, since they are still likely to enter into force, possibly in 2009.

In sharp contrast to the abandoned EU Constitutional Treaty, which would have replaced all previous Treaties in a single text, the Lisbon Treaty would merely create another layer of Treaty law, if it enters into force. An Intergovernmental Conference with a mandate to draft the Lisbon Treaty commenced work on 23 July 2007, encompassing a revised Treaty on European Union and a revised European Community Treaty, which is called the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. The European Council decided that the intergovernmental conference would conclude before the end of 2007, so that the Lisbon Treaty could be ratified by all 27 EU Member States before the European Parliament elections in June 2009.

The second unexpected circumstance was the fact that the Doha round should have been concluded some time ago. Many deadlines for the conclusion of the Doha round were missed. The Doha round was suspended in July 2006 and resumed in February 2007. Of course the Doha round is not over yet, so this book could not provide an analysis of the actual results of the Doha round negotiations in the field of services trade. However, the purpose of the latter part of this book was not to contribute to the academic literature of international services trade law, but rather to illustrate the general issues around European Community (EC) external trade relations dealt with in the earlier chapters by dealing with one topical area of EC international trade relations. Services trade is particularly interesting, from the intra-EU institutional perspective, because it is an area in which the dividing line between Member State

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and EC competence has long been, and continues to be, controversial, and one in which the EU Member States and the European Parliament particularly distrust the policy priorities of the European Commission. Because of the numerous missed deadlines, this book has therefore seen the light before the conclusion of the Doha round.

**TABLE OF CASES**

A. **European Community**

Court of Justice (chronological order)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cases</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case 26/62 Van Gend en Loos v Nederlandse Administratie der Belastingen [1963] ECR 1</td>
<td>129, 460, 464</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 6/64 Costa v ENEL [1964] ECR 585</td>
<td>153, 242, 301, 460-1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 14/68 Walt Wilhelm and Others v Bundeskariellamt [1969] ECR 1</td>
<td>261</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 22/70 Commission v Council [1971] ECR 263</td>
<td>235, 249, 251, 305-6, 445, 448</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 7/72 Boehringer v Commission [1972] ECR 1281</td>
<td>261</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 21-24/72 International Fruit Company v Produktsschaapp voor Groenten en Fruit [1972] ECR 1219</td>
<td>194, 304, 467, 469, 480</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Case 9/73, Schulte v Hauptzollamt Loerrach [1973] ECR 1135</td>
<td>417</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Case 181/73 Haegeman (R &amp; V) v Belgium [1974] ECR 449</td>
<td>449, 459, 460, 465</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Case 87/75 Bresciani v Amministrazione Italiana delle Finanze [1976] ECR 129</td>
<td>466, 469</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>252, 323</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>150, 181, 244, 250, 257</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Case 120/78 REWE Central v Bundesmonopolverwaltung für Branntwein [1979] ECR 649</td>
<td>152</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>