

Book Reviews

Anne Weyembergh, *L'harmonisation des législations: condition de l'espace pénal européen et révélateur de ses tensions*, Editions de l'Université de Bruxelles (2004). Paperback; 404 pp (ISBN 2-8004-1331-X; D/2004/0171/3).

The book is based on Anne Weyembergh's doctoral thesis. As a result, it presents a detailed analysis of her topic in a manner that few monographs manage to achieve. The book is divided into three Parts. Part 1 examines the general overview of approximation of criminal laws amongst member states of the European Union and identifies the limited areas of existing *acquis* which constitutes a paradigm of feasibility in uncertainty. Part 2 presents the need to develop the approximation of criminal laws as the exclusive means of achieving an area of freedom, security and justice within the Union. Part 3 discusses the content and form of approximation of criminal laws in the EU.

This monograph is a detailed theoretical analysis of the concept of approximation of criminal laws at two interactive parallel levels of integration: the EU level and the intergovernmental level of unity in diversity. The sheer volume of research undertaken by the author renders this monograph an indispensable addition to the readings of academics, students and practitioners. The main argument of the monograph, and the core of its originality, is the identification of autonomous and auxiliary functions of approximation of criminal laws and their bi-directional reinforcement of penal integration. The monograph is prophetic on the development of criminal law in the Union. As a result, it seems more applicable now than on the day that it was initially put into place.

Helen Xanthaki
Senior Lecturer and Academic Director
Centre for Legislative Studies, IALS