

Alison Jones & Brenda Sufrin. *EC Competition Law: Text, Cases and Materials*, Oxford University Press, 3rd ed., 2008, ISBN 978-0-19-929904-1.

EC Competition Law by Professors Alison Jones and Brenda Sufrin, has, to a great extent, achieved its intended goals. These goals, as clearly stated in the Preface, include an important attempt 'to provide students and others interested in competition law with as comprehensive as possible a package of text, commentary, and materials as is possible given the confines of space'. Many students using this book had the impression that it is 'self sufficient'. Although the book is relatively big (1430 pages), I do not think that this is of any significant disadvantage; so long as it is capable of attaining the goals behind it.

The book covers several important issues and topics such as the origins of competition law, horizontal and vertical restraints, mergers, intellectual property rights, enforcement, among others. It explores competition law ranging from its early beginnings to its modern developments.

The first chapter is an introduction to the basic concepts of competition and its origins and objectives in the EU and US legal systems. This is very useful not only for European students but also for those who are not familiar with the EU System or competition law in general. It is interesting to see references to Ordoliberalism in the context of discussing the historical origins of competition law in Europe. This school of thought had a major impact on the development of EC competition law. Its proponents, basically, believed that there should be 'constitutional' protection to the competitive process in the market place.

Following the introduction, the book begins – as do many other EC competition law books – exploring Articles 81 and 82 EC Treaty. The writers set the analysis in a chronological order, where: in chapter 3 they introduce the elements of Article 81; chapter 4 explores the relation between Articles 81 and 82 EC; chapters 5, 6 and 7 deal with abuse of dominance; and in chapter 11 the writers discuss cartels and oligopolies. Locating chapter 11 in its position however – after the chapters dealing with Article 86 EC (state aid) and distribution agreements and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) (chapters 8, 9 and 10 respectively) is quite unclear. These three chapters are definitely related in one way or another; however it would have made more sense for chapter 11 to feature as chapter 8 in the book especially since it deals with Articles 81 and 82 EC infringements. In short, I had the feeling that chapter 11 is misplaced between chapter 10 (IPR) and chapter 12 (Mergers).

The book – throughout the different chapters – refers to several similarities and differences between the US and EU systems. This is of appreciable value because it gives the reader a broader view of the nature of the US system without discussing it in detail. This facilitates exploring the extent by which EC competition law has been influenced by the US system. Apparently, there are still many differences between the two systems in theory and practice as argued in the book.

Furthermore, the book has thrived in providing a simplified explanation of many economic theories and their relation to competition law. This is welcome given that competition law incorporates many of these theories and students with legal background are not usually familiar with them.

For those who would be interested in reading the entire book, and not simply particular chapters, it might appear to be daunting. There is an element of repetition in the book in relation to the discussion on basic concepts and issues, such as the objectives of competition law. Moreover, the writers, in many cases, refer to relevant case law and explain it but then insert the text of the relevant decision as well; probably this is unnecessary since they had already offered a sufficient account of the decision. On numerous occasions, sentences are repeated more than once on the same page using very similar wording. Nevertheless, the only advantage I can see in these repetitions is the ease of reference to other chapters which the reader is able to benefit from. Furthermore, some sentences were ten lines or more without having any full stops which made it a bit lengthy and needed more effort to follow.

Notwithstanding these different criticisms, Professors Jones and Sufrin have given students a book, which offers them a one-stop shop and which is rich in updated case law, scholarly articles and legislative materials. The book is of an added value as a starting point for those interested in the subject. Moreover, the presence of an online resource (which is updated twice per year), where recent and current developments are provided, qualifies this book to maintain its leading position as an excellent introduction to EC competition law.

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