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BOOK REVIEW

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*J. Paul Lomio and Henrik Spang-Hanssen:
Legal Research Methods in the U.S. & Europe.*
DJØF Publishing 2007; 329 pages. Price 300
DKK incl. VAX.

The internationalization of legal matters increases the need for lawyers to be able to orientate themselves with foreign legal systems. This useful book contributes to help lawyers in doing that.

The book consist of an introduction in chapter one of six. Chapter two deal with American law, chapter 3 with European law, chapter with four E.U. law, chapter five with public international law, chapter six with legal families and chapter seven with comparative method. The aim is to guide one through how to work with legal material in the different areas of law. This aim is achieved because the book take the base that law is best understood in the particular social context in which it is created (page 236).

In the discussion of the particular legal systems is given a presentation of the common characteristics, an explanation of the sources of law (“law-foundation source”), a description of how to work with these sources of law, a going through of the viable sources and how they are used, and also mentioning how a source should be cited.

For a Danish reader especially chapter two on American law has interest. It is

recommended that one first search secondary sources, for example legal literature, next examine statutes and administrative regulations, and finally examine case law. The latter is the crux of American law, but if a relevant statute exists, then it has to be used, while one among the many decisions often can choose which one to use for ones legal argumentation (page 130).

The authors have a good understanding of the different legal cultures. If an American lawyer read articles in the Danish Legal Journal [UfR], he will not believe they are of high quality because of only a few footnotes (page 100), which is why European lawyers often get articles rejected by American law reviews (page 5). Europeans are often being tired out with many notes; whereas Americans are liven up by them. An example of differences that hamper productive communication.

This book contributes to the understanding of such differences. A reason for it has been written is that comparative methods now are given a prominent place in the American legal educational system. The national law is considered as by us as a too narrow perspective, and books like this makes it possible to get beyond in a qualified way.

The book is well-written and instructive. It can be recommended to anyone that has a need to be instructed in foreign legal systems, specially the American.