

## Flying Kites in a Globalizing Sky and Dodgy Weather Forecasts

—Accommodating Ethnic Minority Laws in the UK —

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Legal theory to me is not just theory. It crosses all the time over into forms of lived experience. In real life, there is all the time much need to navigate and to find solutions to problems and answers to questions, visible and invisible. For me as a legal theorist and comparative lawyer, the constant private and public manipulations of legal, socio-economic, ideological and political systems suggest now that an image of kite flying, of subtle navigation of a quite vulnerable structure in a potentially turbulent atmosphere, can help us illustrate and understand more deeply what we are doing while manipulating law and legal processes as individual people, members of social groups, citizens of a state or foreigners, or as office bearers in official positions. Judges, I mean to say therefore, are flying kites too, and Parliaments fly kites when they make laws. The global skies are full of kites of different shapes and sizes, with many colours and culture-specific ornaments. Assuming that there are no invisible boundaries in the sky, to avoid massive collisions and crashes of kites we have to be hyper-sensitive about pluralism and extremely skilled in handling competing pulls from different corners of the kite.

From a pluralist perspective, I find that some of the new unofficial ethnic minority laws will eventually need to be accommodated by state laws. While English law and other European laws are certainly not ready to accept a full-fledged personal law system, some ameliorative kind of recognition will eventually need to be given to avoid manifest injustices to ethnic minority populations and primarily women and children.