Editor’s Note

Growth and evolution have been the dominant themes of the Asian Pacific Law and Policy Journal this year. The current issue is the product of changes in our internal procedures as well in the way APLPJ is presented to the world. Our readers will notice the new look and improved functionality of our website. Under the leadership of Editor in Chief, John Donovan, we have laid the foundation for updated search capabilities and new features to our site. These are the first steps in an ongoing project to use forward-thinking technology solutions to ensure that APLPJ remains accessible and responsive to our world-wide audience of practitioners and scholars.

Behind the scenes, APLPJ has instituted a streamlined submission process and an iterative editorial process that encourages communication and collaboration between contributors and editorial staff. The goal of these developments is to ensure that APLPJ remains a leader in international legal scholarship by attracting high-quality submissions and developing good working relationships with our contributors. The editors extend special thanks to all of the authors who have worked with us through this new process; your input has been invaluable.

Ernest Abbott’s discussion of disaster-management planning was originally presented as the keynote address at APLPJ’s Fall 2007 symposium Outbreak in Hawaii: Realities and Legal Consequences of Public Health Emergencies. Abbott considers historical disaster events and the lessons that have emerged from experience in the United States and Canada. The author draws on his experience as General Counsel for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and in private practice to recommend an integrated management approach that balances public safety and individual rights.

Raymond Gabriel explores patent law in China and presents it in context of global intellectual property rights concerns. The author notes historic and ideological foundations that prioritize collective over individual ownership of ideas and the tension between these foundations and the realities of the international market. Gabriel posits that Chinese patent law must become more protective of the ownership of ideas in response to market forces.

APLPJ is proud to continue its annual tradition of publishing Professor Teruki Tsunemoto’s digest of “academically and socially important” decisions from Japan’s courts in translation. This year’s Juristo reports decisions from courts across Japan interpreting voting rights, judicial review of private action, privacy rights, human rights, anti-discrimination laws, and freedoms of speech and thought. Asami Miyazawa and staff editor Angela Thompson prepared the annotated translation of Prof. Tsunemoto’s work.
The District Court’s ruling in *Arudou v. Earth Cure* is socially significant because of the decision’s holding banning private discrimination in access to public accommodations. It is legally significant because the District Court applied rights and duties under international conventions to a municipal government. This case marks a new willingness in Japan’s courts to look outward to foreign and international law. Timothy Webster’s translation makes insight into the lower court’s fact-finding and decision-making process, incorporating both domestic and international law, available to a broad audience.

Finally, Anna Dobrovolskaia’s translation of the 1931 Jury Guidebook, published when pre-war Japan instituted its citizen jury system, is a timely resource for scholarship on Japan’s current judicial innovations. Before the end of next year, Japan will institute a mixed panel of citizen jurors and professional judges to decide verdict and sentencing for major crimes. The 1931 Guidebook puts citizen participation in Japan’s legal system in a historical context and offers a foundation for analysis of the changing place of the individual within that system.

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Rebecca L. Anderson
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