

INTRODUCTION

The *East Asia Law Review* is proud to introduce the first issue in our fourth volume. In this issue, we provide our readers four insightful, practical, and well-written articles. In our first full issue since becoming the *East Asia Law Review*, we bring to our readers articles touching much of the region we cover.

First, Professors Randall Peerenboom and Xin He discuss some empirical data with respect to current dispute resolution in China. They elaborate on the current status of mediation, arbitration, and litigation in various types of disputes. Through a detailed analysis, Professors Peerenboom and He arrive at some general conclusions about the current state of various dispute resolution institutions, in particular noting the increased quality and reputability of formal legal channels. At the same time, they note that certain areas of law have more developed frameworks for dispute resolution, and that the quality of institutions varies by socio-geographic context.

Next, Professor Patricia Goedde instructs us on the development of the role of public interest lawyers in South Korea. Professor Goedde discusses the traditional path of lawyers and the exclusivity of the bar as a limiting factor in the progress of public interest lawyers. She then elaborates on recent political history and developments that have altered the landscape of public interest lawyering. Professor Goedde relates the growing importance and influence of public interest lawyers, and notes that public interest lawyers now take up both leftist and rightist issues. As a result of their increasing legitimacy, they also now have a lower profile than before.

In our third article, Professor Brad Roth ventures into an analysis of the legal status of Taiwan as a state. With some historical background and analysis of international law, Professor Roth critiques a preeminent scholar in the field, Professor James Crawford, for his self-consciously weak assertion that Taiwan is not a State because it has not “unequivocally” declared its independence from China. Professor Roth elaborates on subtle, yet critical, issues in the international law of Statehood and argues that Taiwan’s status is, at best, indeterminate.

Lastly, Ingram Weber elaborates on the history of the Japanese justice system, undertakes a comparative analysis of the function of juries, and analyzes the potential effects of the introduction of the lay

juror into Japanese courtroom. Mr. Weber describes how the new *saiban-in* system will integrate lay jurors into the criminal justice system, argues that many of the criticisms lack foundation in reality, and speculates as to the possible broad-reaching effects the new system could have on jurisprudence throughout the region.

We believe that this issue will be thought-provoking and adds significantly to the literature on East Asian law. As always, we welcome feedback from our readers and invite you all to visit our website often for new issues and updates on current *East Asia Law Review* sponsored events. Finally, please look forward to our next issue, due out late this summer, which promises to address some exciting and cutting-edge questions relevant to East Asia and the entire globe.

Alejandro Salicrup
Editor-in-Chief