Editorial

Projects are sometimes born of serendipitous events and chance meetings. So it was with *Kritika*. In November of 2011 Peter Drahos was based at the European University Institute (EUI) for six months as a Braudel Fellow in the Department of Political and Social Sciences. Hanns Ullrich, who had been based at the EUI in the Department of Law, was a frequent visitor to the EUI, as was Gustavo Ghidini. Ghidini and Ullrich were already in conversation about the idea of creating a long-running publication that would serve in the manner of, as Ullrich was later to put it, ‘an island of tranquillity’ for the analysis of intellectual property. Drahos and Ghidini met at a seminar held at the EUI and at a subsequent dinner Ghidini and Drahos discussed the merits of the idea. At another dinner Ullrich assured Drahos that creating such a publication would be a tranquil experience. Julie Ayling, who has Drahos for a husband, later remarked how odd it was that Drahos had so readily agreed to become involved given his constant complaints about the project deadlines in his life. Drahos pleaded Ghidini and Ullrich’s charm as his defence.

In any case under Ghidini’s animating influence *Kritika* entered a phase of concrete planning. The details of how *Kritika* would make its distinctive contribution were put in place through email conversations and the occasional meeting.

The idea behind *Kritika* is to create a publication space that maximizes the freedom of contributing authors to engage analytically and contextually with the principles, assumptions, axioms, and goals of intellectual property systems. Authors are invited to choose their own topic and given a wide range of word length within which to work. As this first volume demonstrates authors have exercised this freedom in very different ways.

Our thinking behind this experimental editorship was to avoid a detailed thematic steering and instead set in train a process of emergent critical scholarship. What are the crucial issues and problems raised by the operation of intellectual property systems that require closer inquiry? The field of intellectual property has broadened and deepened in so many ways that no one person can possibly answer this question. Leibniz, who died in 1716, a time in which intellectual property systems were

rudimentary and still geographically-contained infants, is sometimes described as the last universal genius. The age in which polymaths like him could bestride the disciplines has well and truly passed. We live not just in the age of specialist knowledge, but micro-specialization.

One way in which to break down the barriers of specialization is to work cooperatively and synthetically across the disciplines and sub-disciplines. A form of such cooperation is for editors to select themes and organize authors accordingly. But in taking this approach we would have steered *Kritika* in the direction of our own theoretical pre-occupations. We would not have, as Miranda Forsyth does in this volume, thought about the role of magic in intellectual property in the context of Melanesia, or the analogical processes of transfer identified by Alexander Peukert as being crucial to our understanding of intellectual property's globalization.

Our approach to overcoming the barriers of specialization has been to devolve decision-making about *Kritika's* direction to what we hope will be, in part through the auspices of our international board, an ever-widening community of scholars. Over time the choices made by *Kritika's* various contributors will provide a collective and emerging analysis of those problems that are seen by them as being the important ones to address.

We end with two important notes of thanks. Luke Adams from Edward Elgar has been a very supportive, constructive and patient commissioning editor. In Linda Briceño Moraia, Ghidini, Ullrich and Drahos found their d'Artagnan. Her help in bringing the editorial process to a conclusion was simply invaluable.

Gustavo Ghidini, Hanns Ullrich and Peter Drahos