Editorial

The *Queen Mary Journal of Intellectual Property* is now celebrating its first anniversary. A tremendous year of hard work has been rewarded by the expansion of the journal into libraries around the world. And we would like to thank in particular our contributors in the first year for their participation in launching a significant new forum for rigorous and interdisciplinary intellectual property scholarship.

In this, our first issue for 2012, the cultural and social dimension of intellectual property law and frameworks is clear. This is an area of commercial law with important implications for intellectual development, and so its reach into all areas of societal advancement is critical and relevant, yet often controversial and always challenging. In developing intellectual property frameworks we are operating within a clear cultural and political context, and in facilitating commercialization of intellectual products we are also necessarily negotiating our cultural and intellectual futures. We are all working in the intersection of technology and law, of science and culture.

In this issue, Michael Blakeney looks at the very contentious area of gene technology and the role of patents in facilitating the technological tools to contend with environmental pressures on food security and agriculture, particularly in the developing world. This operation of the law at the convergence of public health and food security, environment and technology, highlights not only the relevance of commercial tools to resolve social problems, but also the subsequent direction of those tools to specific recipients and societies, as facilitated by intellectual property markets.

This relationship between intellectual property and development is also explored by Cerkia Bramley and Estelle Bienabe in the context of geographical indications (GIs) and their application for developing economies. The authors consider in particular the more complex questions of strategic development and use of GIs by developing countries and, again, show that it is necessary to explore the implementation and operation of intellectual property in a wider context and alongside concurrent pressures and systems.

Robin Kerremans looks at an issue of tremendous importance on the European agenda in particular, namely, that of orphan works. In an important assessment of the recent draft proposal for a Directive in this area, Kerremans considers the evidence on which these developments are based, including the impact assessment study preceding the draft. The issue of orphan works is a critically significant case of the relationship between commercial rights and cultural resources, and Kerremans' analysis is a crucial and timely contribution to the discourse on these developments.

In this first issue of the new year, QMJIP firmly situates the debate in the intersection of art and science, ushering in the 'two cultures' in the one forum: that is, through the critical dimension of intellectual property.

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