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Foreword

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FOREWORD

The appearance of the *Columbia Journal of European Law* is a response to the phenomenal growth of interest in European law among Americans; it will also prove, I hope, to stimulate still further growth in that interest. European law has traditionally played a key role in comparative law teaching and writing in this country, due in part to Europe's deep civil law roots, and it continues to play that role. At the same time, European law figures prominently in the conduct of international transactions and the practices of international trade. Finally, the European Community has proved to be a powerful engine for legal developments in virtually all spheres on the continent of Europe. Above and beyond their implications for U.S. business, each of these developments has a very special intellectual appeal to American observers because of the shared U.S. and E.C. preoccupation with issues of federalism and democracy.

Meanwhile, the boundaries of Europe, for purposes of comparative and international law, have themselves undergone spectacular changes in recent years. These changes are reflected not only in the reawakening of interest in the civil law traditions of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, but also in the developing institutional linkages between those countries, on the one hand, and the European Union and its Member States, on the other.

There is a natural tendency, given the Europe-wide character of these developments, to focus on Europe in strictly, or at least in predominantly, regional terms. The fact remains, however, that the various states of Europe are, at the same time, distinctive legal cultures deserving of study and research in their own right. Many of them are "host" to still more narrowly drawn legal subcultures. While perhaps increasingly a "bloc" for some purposes, Europe also has preserved its national and sub-national particularities and thus represents something like the "laboratories" for "experimentation" that we often associate with the American States.

While giving legal developments on the European Community and European Union level the prominence to which they are naturally entitled, the editors of the *Columbia Journal of European Law* intend to explore all the dimensions of European law to which I have alluded above. The *Journal* will publish in each of its three yearly issues — as in this Inaugural Issue — a small number of scholarly articles by distinguished legal academics exploring subjects lying along one or more of these dimensions. The editors will seek to present articles that — whether authored by Americans, Europeans or scholars from still other parts of the world — bring a special comparative law perspective to bear on the issues under discussion. The *Journal* thus aims to share the focus that marks the many distinguished European journals on European law, while at the same time benefiting from the unique circumstance that it is conceived and produced in the United States.

Each issue of the *Journal* will in addition contain three special features. The first two — a Community Case Law feature and a Community Legislation feature — will attempt to fill the need, particularly among readers in this country, for information and insight into the leading recent case law and legislative developments on the European Community level. With respect to

the first of these features, the *Journal* is pleased and proud to have the valuable collaboration of the Institute of European Law at the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium. The Books Received and Books Reviewed feature will take European law in its broadest sense, including but not limited to the law of the European Communities. In this Inaugural Issue, by way of exception, the Books Received and Reviewed feature presents a guide to E.C. law research for U.S. users. The editors are grateful to Marilyn J. Raisch, Columbia Law School's International, Foreign and Comparative Law Librarian for producing it.

More generally, the editors gratefully acknowledge the support of both the Columbia University School of Law and the Parker School of Foreign and Comparative Law. As European law deepens and diversifies its significance for the American audience, the *Columbia Journal of European Law* will seek to reflect and promote the highest level of scholarship in that field. In so doing, it hopes also to contribute a distinctive American forum to the many, mostly European, fora that now exist for the academic study of law in Europe. We look forward to the challenge of fostering a greater appreciation of European law.

GEORGE A. BERMANN
Editor-in-Chief