

CALS SEMINAR SERIES: ASIA & INTERNATIONAL LAW

18 November 2015, Wednesday ✦ 3.00 pm – 4.30 pm ✦

Law Block B Conference Room (BBCR), NUS (BTC)

Osaka City Government v The Man With No Tattoos: Using The Courts As Arbiters Of Social Norms In Japan

by Ms Stacey Steele

Asian Law Centre, Melbourne Law School

ABSTRACT

This presentation will examine recent decisions from litigation against the Osaka City Government and related entities by employees who refused to respond to its 2012-tattoo survey. Tattoos have become a global fashion statement and are a part of life in some societies, but for other people they are still inextricably linked to social and cultural taboos.

What caused employees to pursue their claims through the courts when other employees conformed to the City's employment order and responded to the survey asking them whether they have a tattoo, negotiated concessions through their professional association, or complained to an internal department? Litigants stress the need to resist the government's invasion of their privacy and successfully used the Japanese courts to intervene. Are these cases part of larger struggles between labour and government supported by motivated lawyers which are being played out in Japan's courts? How are the Japanese courts reacting to these claims?

ABOUT THE SPEAKER



Stacey Steele is Associate Director (Japan) at the Asian Law Centre, Melbourne Law School. Stacey also works in-house as a financial services lawyer and was previously a senior associate at a leading Australian commercial law firm. Stacey holds degrees from the University of Queensland (BA (Jap)), Monash University (MA (Jap)) and the University of Melbourne (LLB (Hons) and LLM (by thesis)). She has taught Insolvency Law and Corporate Banking and Finance Law, as well as Issues in Japanese Law and in graduate subjects offered by the Asian Law Centre.

She recently co-edited *Internationalising Japan: Discourse and Practice* (Routledge, 2014) and *Legal education in Asia: Globalization, Change and Contexts* (Routledge, 2010). Her publications in 2015 include: 'Elderly in Japan and the saiban'in seido (lay judge system)' (Japanese Studies); 'Proposal to reform the Japanese saiban'in seido (lay judge system) to exclude drug-related cases: context and complexities from the Chiba District Court' (Australian Journal of Asian Law); and a new chapter on Insolvency Law in CCH's Japan Business Law Guide' (forthcoming).

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Closing date of registration: 16 November 2015