

# Protecting *the Weak*

Entangled Processes of Framing, Mobilization and Institutionalization in East Asia

## Disaster Law

**Kristian Cedervall Lautu,  
University of Copenhagen**

In 2012 a spectacular penal case played out in Italy. The world watched with disbelief as an Italian court sentenced six scientists and one public official for involuntary manslaughter in the aftermath of the L'Aquila earthquake. How could scientists be responsible for a disaster so clearly inflicted by nature? An almost similar display occurred in Japan around 10.000 km away from L'Aquila, after the magnificent earthquake in 2011. The catastrophic consequences of the Great East Japan earthquake were discussed and approached as the responsibility of the nuclear-plant operator TEPCO, a negligent central government or failed energy policies.

Our basic conception of what a disaster is, has changed significantly over the last 50 years, and this has major consequences for law. One immediate consequence is what we witnessed in L'Aquila and Japan. As our idea of a disaster, becomes one of human agency or social organization (vulnerability, resilience or misinterpretation on risk), it also alters *who* can be responsible and for *what*.

Under the title *Disaster Law* Assistant Professor Kristian Cedervall Lautu will address how modern disasters and law interplay. The presentation will focus on the redistribution of responsibility after disasters as well the present legal frameworks for the management of disasters. The aim is to address the present state of Disaster Law and to outline some of the outstanding challenges ahead.

**Wednesday, November 18, 2015, 6:00 pm (c. t.)  
Campus Westend, SH 1.105 (seminar house)**

This lecture is part of our Wednesday Lecture Series within the IZO's research project "Protecting the Weak. Entangled Processes of Framing, Institutionalization and Mobilization in East Asia" funded by the Volkswagen Foundation.

**Kristian Cedervall Lautu** is an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Law, University of Copenhagen. He holds a LI.M. and PhD from the University of Copenhagen, and has been a visiting scholar at UC Berkeley. Kristian is presently co-heading the interdisciplinary research program *Changing Disasters*, and is a founding member of COPE, Copenhagen Centre for Disaster Research. His research regards different aspects of law and disasters

Contact person: Prof. Heike Holbig, Faculty 03, Institute for Political Science,  
Email: [holbig@soz.uni-frankfurt.de](mailto:holbig@soz.uni-frankfurt.de)

For further information: [www.protectingtheweak.uni-frankfurt.de](http://www.protectingtheweak.uni-frankfurt.de)