

China, For Example: China and the Making of Modern International Law

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At Room 10-301, Number 10 Building, Sophia University



This presentation will analyze international law as a transnational cultural and political form that organizes and maintains differences among states, and it will locate China's role and place in the making of modern international law. In broad outline, conventional scholarship represents the modern Sino-Western encounter as a tragic cultural "misunderstanding" by China of such core Western values as free trade and equality among sovereign states. This presentation will instead analyze the encounter as a meeting between two different imperial formations, both of which classified states and peoples according to civilizational criteria, although with distinctive discursive justifications--Confucian and liberal. It will also elaborate the notion of an "East Asian" international law. More broadly, it will analyze Western international law as an epistemological and cultural project the goal of which has been to turn the entire planet into a juridical formation consisting of nation-states.

Upon graduating from Yale Law School, Teemu Ruskola was an associate at Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton, working in the firm's New York and Hong Kong offices. Thereafter, Ruskola completed a master's degree in East Asian Studies at Stanford University, where his research focused on the history of commercial regulation in China. Prior to joining the Emory Law faculty in 2007, Ruskola was Professor of Law at American University in Washington, D.C. He has been a visiting professor at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University and at Cornell Law School, and served as a sabbatical visitor at Columbia Law School. Professor Ruskola's scholarship addresses questions of legal theory from multiple perspectives, frequently with China as a vantage point. His publications – appearing in the *Michigan Law Review*, the *Stanford Law Review*, and the *Yale Law Journal*, among other places – explore the intersection of corporate and family law in China, "legal Orientalism," and the history and politics of Euro-American conceptions of sovereignty in the Asia-Pacific. He is currently working on a book entitled, *China, For Example: China and the Making of Modern International Law*, which examines the history of the introduction of Western international law into China, and the implications of that process for the theory and politics of international law.

Lecture in English / No registration required / Institute of Comparative Culture Office: 03-3238-4082 (Tel) / 03-3238-4081 (Fax) / diricc@sophia.ac.jp

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