

Radical Federalism

Professor Roderick M. Hills, Jr.

William T. Comfort, III Professor of Law, NYU Law School

12 April 2018, 12:30pm-1:30pm

**Room 723, 7/F, Cheng Yu Tung Tower,
Centennial Campus, The University of Hong Kong**



Professor Hills teaches and writes in public law areas with a focus on the law governing division of powers between central and subcentral governments. He holds bachelor's and law degrees from Yale University. Following law school, he served as a law clerk for Judge Patrick Higginbotham of the US Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit and practiced law in Colorado. Professor Hills previously taught at the University of Michigan Law School from 1994 to 2006. He is a member of the state bar of New York and the U.S. Supreme Court.

“Federal regimes are sometimes defended as a means for reducing ethnocultural or religious conflict between groups that, for practical reasons, must inhabit the same nation-state but fear that they may be submerged and oppressed in a unitary state by rival groups. By giving each group a geographical enclave in which their members are likely to prevail, the federal system functions as a sort of power-sharing arrangement, ideally allowing each group to regulate their enclave with respect to those issues most likely to be sources of divisive conflict between the rival groups. What if rival groups differ with respect to political ideology rather than religious or ethnocultural identity? Can federal regimes facilitate the cooperation of such groups within a single political system? I call the use of federal regimes to mitigate ideological conflict “radical federalism.” Radical federalism confronts a special challenge: The same ideological disagreements that suggest the usefulness of the federal regime for facilitating cooperation and reducing conflict might also interfere with the divisions of authority between center and subnational governments needed for the federal regime to function well. The talk will explore some of the interjurisdictional challenges confronted by radically federal regimes in the United States and elsewhere. I will ask whether radical federalism provides a feasible solution to Hong Kong-Mainland relations and whether radical federalism might provide some basis for unification of the People’s Republic of China with Taiwan.”

Online Registration: www.hku.hk/law
(Seminars & Conferences)

For inquiries, please email Shelby Chan at shelbyc@hku.hk