

Morality and Responsibility of Rulers

International Order: Confrontations of Western and Eastern Humanisms

Friday 12th – Saturday 13th June 2015: 9:30am – 5:30pm

Academic Conference Room, 11/F, Cheng Yu Tung Tower,
Centennial Campus, University of Hong Kong



Amsterdam Center for International Law



This is the second workshop on the exploration of Western humanist views of world order and their impact upon the Confucian inspired order of Imperial China in the course of the 19th Century. It is organized in conjunction between the Centre for Comparative and Public Law, the Amsterdam Center for International Law and the University of Hong Kong Faculty of Law.

There is controversy surrounding the thesis of Richard Tuck that Western humanism was warlike and predatory in international affairs, rather than restrained by ethical standards and especially by the doctrine of just war. Tuck sees such Western humanism as central to colonialism and imperialism. For this reason it is appropriate to explore the impact of Western treatment of China in the course of the 19th century. The workshop will review and challenge Tuck's perspective on Western humanism, showing the picture as more complex and nuanced. It will consider, as well, issues of possible incommensurability between Western and Chinese ideas of international order. The paradox of a Confucian inspired civil service as part of a monarchical Chinese regime will be explored. There will be case studies of conflicts China experienced with respect to the Ryukyu Islands (Okinawa) in the late 1870s, over Tonkin-Indochina in the mid-1880s and again over Korea in the mid-1890s. The 19th century narrative appears to show that neither the humanist ethic of the West nor the Confucian inspired ethic of the Chinese civil service were able to restrain an imperialism-inspired Western practice of international law from aiding the dismemberment of China. The consequences of this shattered authority of both ethics and law in East Asian affairs remain a legacy for the present generations to unravel.

The workshop is led by Tony Carty (Hong Kong Law Faculty) and Janne Nijman, Professor of International Law at the University of Amsterdam. It is the second in a series of workshops under the auspices of the Centre for International Law of the University of Amsterdam and the Hong Kong GRF Project on *The Impact of Western International Law on the Disintegration of the late Qing Empire and the Continuing Consequences for Today*. There will be sessions on: Renaissance Humanist Ideals of World Order; Chinese Thought on World Order compared with European Thought; Confucian Ethic and Chinese Imperial Order; Western Imperialism and late 19th century China; alternative East Asian Visions of World Order for today. There will be participation of prominent Asian and Western scholars (e.g. Aihe Wang, Janne Nijman, Susan Karr, Sungmoon Kim, Christof Stumpf, Yi Ping), as well as many young Mainland Chinese and Hong Kong research students and assistants.

Please click [here](#) for online registration to reserve a place.
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