FRONTIERS OF LAW IN CHINA
VOL. 15 JUNE 2020 NO. 2
DOI 10.3868/s050-009-020-0014-9

ACADEMIC NEWS

SCHOLARS TO DISCUSS THE CRITICAL AGENDA OF INTERNATIONAL THEORIES IN RENMIN LAW SCHOOL

The world is experiencing turbulence. Conservative responses to this turbulence include de-globalization and populism. A group of young theorists felt that better responses are needed and they decided to call the attention of international lawyers to a research agenda. On December 20, 2019, they gathered at Renmin University Law School. The Center for Global Law and Strategy hosted a symposium on the Critical Agenda of International Law. Scholars from the European University Institute, Ottawa University, and leading Chinese law schools joined the discussion. Dr. LIU Yang from Renmin Law served as the moderator.

CHEN Yifeng, an associate professor at Peking University, discussed the presumption of industrialization of the International Labor Organization. He argued that the rules of labor protection were based on the premise of the market model and a particular ideology. ZHU Mingzhe, an associate professor at China University of Political Science and Law, introduced Bruno Latour and discussed the mutual constructive relationship between science and international law. Expert knowledge, he said, also blinds people. Dr. DING Ru, a colleague of ZHU, agreed that a critical perspective could be useful even in doctrinal analysis. She argued that the benchmark price in countervailing duty calculation was a construction. YU Xiaohong, an associate professor of law and political science at Tsinghua University, reminded us that the politicization of international organizations was the norm. Critical legal scholars should not be content with revealing this fact. Ms. HUANG Pengbei followed the torch and she argued that the metaphysical foundation of critical legal studies was flawed. YANG Ken, a Ph.D. researcher at the European University Institute, doubted whether there was local knowledge in critical legal studies. He asked whether it was possible to have a universal critique or we should develop ours in China. Dr. LIU Yang from Renmin University of China further elaborated that there was a danger of orientalism in critical legal studies. The central problems for scholars in developing countries are different from those of scholars in the North Atlantic, even though they originally came from the periphery of the world system. Dr. LAI Huaxia, who teaches international law at Peking University, pointed out that there had been a long

discussion on de-statelization in international relations studies. Dr. WEI Wumei from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences tested the policy implementation of the critical agenda in the business and human rights politics. Dr. HE Tiantian, a colleague of WEI, emphasized the significance of the critical approach to the study of international law in China.

Senior scholars, including Professor LIANG Yong from Fudan University, Mr. GAO Shan from the Law Press, and Professor LIAO Shiping from Beijing Normal University, served as commentators, confirming the promise of the critical agenda in the research of international law.

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