



Lecture Series: China and the 'Third World' in International Law - On Bandung and Beyond (28 Apr 2023)

15 May 2023

Katy Ng

In light of a forthcoming book on Histories of International Law in China: All Under Heaven? (edited by Ignacio de la Rasilla, Jiangyu Wang, and Congyan Cai, Oxford University Press 2025), the Centre for Chinese and Comparative Law (CCCL), in partnership with Wuhan University Law School and Fudan University Law School, is organizing a massive series of public lectures on the histories of international law from both Chinese and global perspectives. On 28 April 2023, the Centre for Chinese and Comparative Law (CCCL) of the City University of Hong Kong's School of Law hosted the fifth lecture to assist students and lawyers in discovering China and the 'Third World' in the international law. Assist. Prof. **Maria Adele Carrai, New York University** was invited as our speakers.

Prof. Cai Congyan, Fudan University delivered a welcome speech to start the public lecture and gave a brief introduction of the speakers.

Maria Adele Carrai is an Assistant Professor of Global China Studies at NYU Shanghai. Her research explores the history of international law in East Asia and investigates how China's rise as a global power shapes norms and redefines the international distribution of power. She co-leads the Research Initiative 'Mapping Global China,' and is the author of *Sovereignty in China. A Genealogy of a Concept since 1840* (CUP 2019) and co-editor of *The China Questions 2 - Critical Insights into US-China Relations* (HUP 2022). Before joining NYU Shanghai, she was a recipient of a three-year Marie-Curie fellowship at KU Leuven. She was also a Fellow at the Italian Academy of Columbia University, Princeton-Harvard China and the World Program, Max Weber Program of the European University Institute of Florence, and New York University Law School.

She began the lecture by briefly describing her chapter, like the research questions. She started with a quotation from James Thuo Gathii (2021), who writes a lot about Third World approaches to international law. Limited geographies of international law and shift of our focus to the Third World, considered as a subaltern epistemic location. TWAIL not only challenges international law's universality, but it also theorizes a view of international law from the perspective of the Third World. Then, she talked a bit about the Third World, and how it emerged as a concept,

how this third world has been mobilized and used by China in certain, and how it was contributed to changing some aspects of international law, and she has focused in particular to the maritime rights. From the law of the sea, she concluded with a preliminary summary. Maria Adele Carrai believed we can see how China uses and mobilization of Third World and International law to advance new order, and promote the sovereignty and interests of developing countries.

Dr John Haskell, Senior Lecturer, Manchester University led a discussion session following **Dr. Maria Adele Carrai's** thought-provoking speech, in which they shared their insights. The majority of all those attending took the opportunity to express themselves, and many of them were insightful and imaginative. **Prof. Congyan Cai** gave a closing remark in which he thanked all of the attendants for their contributions to the lecture's success.



Dr. Maria Adele Carrai.



Dr. John Haskell.