

## CityU Law 35th Anniversary Public Lecture Series

# WTO as A Social Contract

by Dr GUAN Wenwei

### Abstract

Through a brief introduction of the basic Three, Two, One of the WTO, the Three basic functions, the Two groups of countries between the developed and the developing, and the One principle of non-discrimination, the talk elaborates the jurisprudence of the WTO as an emancipatory international social contract on trade. The talk explains how the WTO operates within the reign of state primacy—the force—ultimately for the benefits of individuals—the ends—in the global marketplace, and gains a soul of its own in the institutional evolution—the means—of the global trading regime. During this evolution, WTO has successfully made governments accountable to foreign individuals in various capacities either as traders of goods, providers of services, or holders of IP rights within the global marketplace. The talk offers a unified WTO jurisprudence looking at the WTO as an international social contract on trade allowing a fresh look at the force, the means, and the ends of the constitutional evolution of the global trading regime. Hopefully, this is a timely discussion within the context of the contemporary haze of free trade fragmentation where local and regional trade protectionism on the rise.

### Biography

LL.B. (Zhongshan University), LL.M. (Peking University), M.A. and Ph.D. (University of British Columbia). Associate Professor at the School of Law, City University of Hong Kong. Research interests cover intellectual property, international trade, trade and investment in the PRC, and legal theory. Arbitrator, South China International Economic and Trade Arbitration Commission; Central IRB Member, Hong Kong Hospital Authority Central Institutional Review Board. Recent publications include monographs *The Origin of Copyright: Expression as Knowing in Being* and *Copyright Onto-Epistemology* (London: Routledge, 2021), and *WTO Jurisprudence: Governments, Private Rights, and International Trade* (London: Routledge, 2020), and other peer-reviewed articles in various journals such as *World Trade Review*, *Asian Journal of Comparative Law*, *Leiden Journal of International Law*, *Journal of International Economic Law*, *Journal of World Trade*, *Journal of East Asia and International Law*, and *Hong Kong Law Journal*.



Date: 4 November 2021 (Thursday)  
Time: 5:30 pm to 6:40 pm  
Format: Online via Zoom  
Registration: <https://forms.gle/ujqbBD5MPPsjH6Ac8>  
Registration Deadline: 1 November 2021  
Language: English



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