

Jointly Present

Chinese (PRC & ROC) Nationality Laws and Reconceptualizing Asian-American Identity

Assistant Professor Norman Ho*Assistant Professor of Law, Peking University School of Transnational Law***Chairperson: Associate Professor Mike Dowdle****6 March 2017, Monday, 12.30pm – 1.30pm**

Executive Seminar Room, Block B, Level 3, NUS (Bukit Timah Campus)

ABSTRACT

Existing Asian-American Jurisprudence (AAJ) scholarship has largely focused its attention on American law's impact on the experience of Asian-Americans in the United States, especially in relation to themes of racialization and identity. This talk adopts a transnational and comparative approach, focusing on how Asian-Americans – specifically, the identity of Chinese-Americans – are racialized and affected by perceptions in, and the nationality laws of, their ancestral home countries, the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Republic of China (ROC, or unofficially, Taiwan). Examining Chinese-Americans' both social (namely, perceptions and expectations from PRC and ROC society) and legal (via nationality law) treatment in these countries arguably allows us to reconceptualize Chinese-American identity not simply as a narrative of Americanization, but also one of Sinicization. Coupled with perceptions of "foreignness," "disloyalty," and "inassimilability" in the United States, a twilight zone of Chinese-American identity then occurs, where Chinese-Americans are in a tug-of-war of sorts between what we might describe as "dueling vectors" of their American identity and the identity of their home countries. They may not feel fully accepted as "Americans," but at the same time they may feel "too accepted" as "Chinese" by the PRC or ROC. I will discuss specific case studies, namely the experiences of Chinese-American ESL teachers working and living in the PRC and ROC, former U.S. Ambassador to China Gary Locke, and NBA basketball player Jeremy Lin, to highlight the tensions between Americanization and Sinicization of Chinese-American identity both by PRC and ROC society and also PRC and ROC nationality law.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER



Norman P. Ho is an assistant professor of law at the Peking University School of Transnational Law ("STL") in Shenzhen, PRC and an ASLI Visiting Fellow (February to April 2017) here at NUS. His research interests broadly are in legal theory and legal history, and he writes specifically in the areas of premodern Chinese legal history and legal theory, comparative jurisprudence, property theory, and Asian-American jurisprudence. He has also taught as a lecturer in the University of Hong Kong ("HKU") Faculty of Law and has served as a Visiting Fellow in the HKU Center for Chinese Law. Prior to joining the STL faculty, Norman practiced in the Hong Kong offices of Morrison & Foerster and Slaughter and May, where his practice focused on capital markets and private equity transactions. He received his JD degree from NYU School of Law and his undergraduate and graduate degrees in Chinese history from Harvard University.

REGISTRATION

There is no registration fee for this seminar but seats are limited.

Light lunch will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis.

Closing Date: **1 March 2017, Wednesday**

For enquiries, please contact Sunita Tavabalan at cals@nus.edu.sg

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