Research and Teaching of International Law in Contemporary China: A Landscape Sketch

Lin Zhang* & Lingsheng Zhang**

The rapid developments of research and teaching of international law in China have attracted the attention of international law academics of the world, who have looked over the landscape of international law in China with great interest. Unfortunately, existing literature has yet to completely satisfy their interests in this aspect. This article is intended to compensate for this gap by introducing representative international lawyers, publications, academic associations and research funding schemes on international law in China. More concretely, this paper will show the mainstream research sources of their Chinese counterparts as well as embrace teaching as part of the research system of international law in China. It is expected that, with their more attention into the holistic research methodology and the “One Belt, One Road” strategy, the Chinese academia of international law will contribute more to the international rule of law.

Keywords
International Lawyers, Research, Teaching, Contemporary China, Law Schools, Academic Societies

* Minjiang Distinguished Professor [闽江学者特聘教授] at the School of Law of Fujian Normal University; Adjunct Professor in the School of Law at Korea University. LL.B./LL.M.(Shandong Univ. of Sci & Tech), Ph.D. (Hong Kong). This article is funded by the “Bao Chen Scheme” for Bright Middle or Early-Age Researchers [福建师范大学“宝琛计划”中青年人才支持计划] and the Innovative Research Team on Legal Issues of Green Development [福建师范大学绿色发展法律制度创新研究团队] of Fujian Normal University. He may be contacted at: zlin1981@qq.com/Address: Room 207, School of Law, Fujian Normal University Qishan Campus, Minhou County, Fuzhou, Fujian Province, P.R. China.

** Research Fellow at the School of Law of Fujian Normal University, China. M.A. (FAFU). She may be contacted at: lszhang2017@outlook.com / Address: 8 Upper 3rd Rd, XueSheng Jie ChengShi GuangChang, Cangshan Qu, Fuzhou Shi, Fujian Sheng, P.R. China 350007.

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.14330/jeail.2017.10.2.05
1. Introduction

In December 1978, the national policy of reform and opening-up was passed by the historic Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (“CPC”). The implementation of the reform and opening-up policy symbolizes that China would have abandoned the diplomatic strategy of “Leaning on One Side” left over from the reign of Chairman Mao Zedong and embarked on full-spectrum integration into the international community. This strategic change in China for developing international relations swiftly restored the research and teaching on international law that were completely suspended during the chaotic years of the Cultural Revolution. Its purpose was to legally prop up China’s widened interactions with other sovereign States and international organizations.

Similar to its economic transition, China’s restoration of research and teaching on international law also adopted a gradual approach. Initially, several of the most prestigious law schools in China took the lead to develop and open international law courses as well as began to carry out theoretic research on international law in 1979. Next, in the wake of the great efforts made by the above pioneer law schools, several other law schools in China followed the same steps to create or rebuild their own research and teaching on international law. Over the past 40 years, international law has been remarkably established and developed in China. The rapid developments of research and teaching of international law in China have attracted the great attention from the global academics, who have looked over the landscape of international law in China. Unfortunately, existing literature has yet to completely satisfy their interests in this aspect, a lack for which this article is intended to compensate.

Along with its economic rise, China has nowadays become a very influential force in pushing the evolution of international law. The creation and application of international law by Chinese authorities are based on the theories and ideologies

---


