

Global Studies in Asian Laws

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This article describes and examines six decades of the study of Asian laws around the world to construct a global map of the field. It demonstrates that Asian legal studies have been increasingly institutionalized as evident in the global proliferation of centers, programs, associations, book series, journals, and courses. Substantively, Asian laws scholarship has grown into a sophisticated system of varied learning, including jurisprudence, legal history, comparative law, law and society, law and economics, and international law.

The institutional and substantive development of Asian legal studies follows a few common patterns corresponding to legal, social, and economic development in the region. These include the formation of Asian legal studies during the post-World War II and post-colonial period between the 1950s and 1970s; its transition during the post-Cold War period between the 1980s and 1990s; and the transformation of the field in the context of globalization in the 21st century, projected as the “Asian century.”

Global studies in Asian law are driven by both a deontological searching for new knowledge and the instrumental necessity for a wide range of international, national, and individual actors. Instrumentalism, however, tends to play a stronger role in shaping Asian legal studies, and this pushes the focus towards large and developed jurisdictions and emphasis on contemporary legal issues.

As a consequence, Asian laws studies as a discipline displays two opposite trends: integration and differentiation. On the one hand, various specific areas of Asian laws deal with common cross-cutting themes, including religion, colonialism, pluralism, authoritarianism, and development, which renders them integral parts of the larger system. On the other hand, as the scholarship has grown to a greater level of complexity, disciplinary balkanization has become discernible. Different areas of Asian laws have different institutional, theoretical, and methodological underpinnings.

The future development of Asian legal studies requires the inclusive study of different areas of law of different Asian peoples. This inclusivity is premised on a balance of the considerations of necessity and the intrinsic pursuit of knowledge of Asian laws.

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Editor’s Note: The term ‘Asian Laws’ in the plural form is used throughout the paper to reflect the author’s position as Professor of Asian Laws and his general use of the term in the plural form. The plural form of other jurisdictions’ laws is also used for consistency. Per the style of this journal, US spelling is used throughout the text (e.g., center) except in titles or official names (e.g., Asian Law Centre).

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Asian laws have been studied in many American law schools since the presence of the United States (US) in Asia after World War II.¹ Asian legal studies as a discipline also has a long tradition in Australia given its geographical proximity.² In the United Kingdom (UK) and continental Europe, the laws of Asian peoples have been taught and researched for many years.³ In Asia, some internationalized law schools have recently focused more on foreign Asian laws.⁴ In Africa, Chinese laws have been taught in conjunction with the expansion of Chinese soft power in the region.⁵ The study of Asian laws now enjoys a global reach. How and why the study of Asian laws has spread globally is the central question of this article.

This article describes and examines six decades of institutional and substantive development of the study of Asian laws around the world to construct a global map of the field. More specifically, it has four purposes: descriptive, systemic, analytical, and directive. First, it aims to present an extensive description of the development of Asian legal studies around the world over time. This includes the description of the institutions underpinning the study of Asian laws and the substantive body of Asian laws scholarship. This is important to understand the status of Asian laws and to invite further engagement with the field. Second, this article seeks to systematically organize the knowledge about the diverse institutions and scholarship of Asian laws. Given the massive proliferation of institutions of Asian legal studies, the systematic organization of knowledge about them is important to facilitate academic understanding of the field. I will also organize Asian laws scholarship in a systematic way. As the scholarship is gargantuan, and ranged over diverse areas, it is important to organize this scholarship to facilitate systematic understanding and study. This necessarily involves typology, categorization, and generalization. The third purpose of this article is analytical. It seeks to identify patterns in the global development of Asian legal studies, explain the driving forces of this development, and anatomize the systematic consequence of this development. Finally, the article anticipates directions for the future development in the study of Asian laws.

Consistent with these purposes, the structure of this study is constituted by the six statements below:

Institutional Statement: Global studies of Asian laws are increasingly institutionalized. There is a global proliferation of numerous institutions supporting the learning and researching of Asian laws, including centers, programs, associations, book series, journals, and courses.

¹ See Kori Cooper, “Why and How U.S. Law Schools Ought to Promote Inclusion of Black Scholars and Legal Practitioners in Chinese Legal Studies Programs,” *Columbia Law Review Forum* 120 (2020): 250–64; L.W. Beer et al., “Asian Legal Studies in the United States: A Survey Report,” *Journal of Legal Education* 29, no. 4 (1977–1978): 501–67; Chin Kim, “Asian Law and Comparative Legal Studies: A Proposed Curriculum Design,” *Boston College International and Comparative Law Review* 5, no. 1 (Winter 1982): 91–126; Nongji Zhang, “Resources on East Asian Law in the United States,” *Journal of East Asia and International Law* 1, no. 2 (Autumn 2008): 311–22; Whitmore Gray, “The Challenge of Asian Law,” *Fordham International Law Journal* 19, no. 1 (Oct. 1995): 1–8; John O. Haley, “Reflections on the University of Washington’s Asian Law Center,” *Pacific Rim Law & Policy Journal* 22, no. 3 (June 2013): 505–12.

² Veronica Taylor, ed., *Asian laws through Australian eyes* (LBC Information Services, 1997).

³ See *infra* Part II on institutional development of Asian laws.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Matthew S. Erie, “The Soft Power of Chinese Law,” *Columbia Journal of Transnational Law* 61, no. 1 (2023): 1–66.

Substantive Statement: Asian laws scholarship has grown into a sophisticated system of legal knowledge. The study of Asian laws is an interdisciplinary field constituted by various areas/subfields, including jurisprudence, legal history, comparative law, law and society, law and economics, and international law.

Pattern Statement: The development of various institutions and scholarship of Asian legal studies follows a few common patterns corresponding to legal development in the region triggered by global events. These include the formation of the discipline of Asian legal studies during the post-War World II and post-colonial periods between the 1950s and 1970s; its transition during the post-Cold War period between the 1980s and 1990s; and its transformation in the context of globalization in the 21st century, projected as the “Asian century.”

Factor Statement: Global studies in Asian laws are driven by both deontological searching for unknown knowledge about Asian laws and the instrumental necessity of Asian laws for a wide range of international, national, and individual actors. Instrumentalism, however, tends to play the stronger role in shaping Asian legal studies, which skews the jurisdictional focus towards large and developed countries in the region, and the concentration on substantive contemporary legal issues.

Systematic Statement: As the consequence of the development, Asian legal studies have emerged as a complex system that displays two opposite trends: integration and differentiation. On one hand, various areas/fields of Asian laws deal with common cross-cutting themes, including religion, colonialism, pluralism, authoritarianism, and development, which renders them integral parts of the larger system of legal knowledge. On the other hand, as the scholarship has grown to a high level of complexity, disciplinary balkanization has become discernible. Different fields of Asian laws have their own institutional, theoretical, and methodological underpinnings.

Inclusive Statement: The future development of Asian laws demands an inclusive study of different areas of laws of different Asian peoples. This inclusivity is premised on a balance of the instrumental considerations of necessity and the deontological pursuit of knowledge about Asian laws.

This study is organized as follow. Part I explains the methodology, data collection, and limitations. Part II surveys the institutional development of the study of Asian laws, while Part III explores the substantive body of the scholarship. Part IV analyses patterns, driving forces, and systematic consequence of the development. Part V concludes with reflection on the future of the study of Asian laws.

I. METHODOLOGY, DATA COLLECTION, AND LIMITATIONS

A. Elements of Asian Laws

Asian laws as an interdisciplinary area of academic inquiry has institutional elements (institutions to support the study of Asian laws), and substantive elements (a body of scholarship on Asian laws).

The study of Asian laws is embedded in institutions. These institutions collect, analyze, generate, and disseminate material about Asian laws. Law

schools and law libraries are general institutions and are obvious starting points. However, there are also specific institutions dedicated to Asian legal studies, such as research centers/programs, journals, associations, and courses. The institutions of Asian legal studies can be regional, jurisdictional, and/or subject-based. Regional institutions cover the laws of the entire Asian region (pan-Asia) or subregion (e.g., East Asia, South Asia, and Southeast Asia). Jurisdictional institutions cover the laws of a particular Asian jurisdiction (e.g., China, Japan, or Korea). Subject-based institutions focus on particular fields in Asian laws, such as commercial law or constitutional law.

The study of Asian laws involves the production of substantive bodies of scholarship. This scholarship is produced by both specialists in Asian laws and scholars specializing in more general fields, such as international and comparative law, which encompass Asian laws. I conducted a general survey of scholarship on Asian laws published in the last six decades. Given the global scope of this study, however, a meticulous examination of Asian laws scholarship was unrealistic. Rather, I focused on general patterns in the development of the scholarship, although I refer to specific literature to illustrate these patterns and trends.

B. Data Collection

This study looks at data about Asian legal studies from around the world. The data includes facts and statistics about centers, programs, associations, journals, book series, courses, and scholarship pertaining to Asian laws. The data was created based on a study of the websites and web pages of relevant institutions. The data is presented chronologically (to identify regular patterns) and according to jurisdictions in the different continents (to demonstrate the global expansion of studies in Asian laws). But this should not mislead that the study of Asian laws constitutes a series of silos.

C. Limitations

Given the global coverage, some limitations are necessary to render the study realistic. First, this study covers East, Southeast, South, and Central Asia. It does not deal with the Middle East due to my limited knowledge of its legal scholarship, although Islamic Law originated from the Middle East is covered.⁶ Second, I focus mainly on Asian legal studies in law schools, while I acknowledge there is such scholarship produced in some social science departments.⁷ Third, due to linguistic limitations, I only studied the data available in English; there may be relevant data in non-English languages. Fourth, I focus on the study of Asian laws after World War II when the field substantively developed, although there are relevant Western writings in the early 20th century and earlier.⁸ Finally, the data presented here cannot be exhaustive: it is illustrative of the extensive and global development of Asian laws as a field of study.

II. INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF ASIAN LAWS

A. Overviews

⁶ Bernard G. Weiss, *The Spirit of Islamic Law* (University of Georgia Press, 2006).

⁷ For example, MIT's Department of History has several scholars producing scholarship pertaining to legal history in China and the Philippines. See, e.g., <https://history.mit.edu/people/>.

⁸ Teemu Ruskola, "Legal Orientalism," *Michigan Law Review* 101, no. 1 (Oct. 2002): 212–17.

The study of Asian laws has been increasingly institutionalized around the world. These include fifty-seven Asian laws centers/programs, fifty-four Asian laws journals, ten Asian laws associations, and numerous Asian laws courses.

Asian Laws Centers/Programs: Asian laws centers/programs are academic and educational institutions dedicated to learning, researching, and teaching Asian laws. Asian laws centers/programs basically conduct four activities, although these vary among institutions. First, they hold events such as conferences, workshops, seminars, and book talks. These events serve various purposes, such as communicating with the public, disseminating knowledge, and improving working papers. Second, they have educative activities engaging students. Students can assist in organizing the events and participate in them, thereby deepening their knowledge of Asian laws. Some centers/programs design curricula on Asian laws. Third, they undertake research projects on Asian laws. Often, these are collaborative projects led by members of the centers/programs, with participants who may include center/program members and people from other institutions. The output of the collaborative projects can be journal articles, edited books, or journal special editions. For the researching function, centers/programs may have postdoc positions and engage doctoral students. Finally, the centers can function as institutional platforms for connecting people interested in Asian laws. For this function, they may have visiting or fellowship programs and annual lectures. The events these centers/programs organize also create opportunities for people to exchange views, connect with one other, and introduce others to Asian laws scholarship.

I identified fifty-seven Asian laws centers/programs located in fourteen countries on four continents. Most of these centers/programs are located in the West, which indicates that Asian laws, like the law of the others, have been studied more outside Asia than inside. The US has the most Asian laws centers/programs (28) in the world. Sub-regional centers/programs are largely concentrated in US law schools that focus more on East Asian laws (6) than South Asian laws (1) and Southeast Asian laws (1). Jurisdictional centers/programs largely focus on large and developed countries in Asia. I identified fifteen Chinese laws centers/programs in four continents, followed by four Japanese laws centers/programs, which are largely based in the US. Other jurisdictional centers/programs deal focus on Korean laws (2), Indian laws (2), Indonesian laws (1), and Myanmar laws (1). Subject-based centers/programs (6) tend to focus on practical concerns in Asia, such as commercial laws, business laws, international economic laws, courts, intellectual property and technology laws, and environmental laws.

The creation of Asian laws centers/programs is driven by common instrumental motivation in signaling institutional commitments to Asian laws⁹ and coordinating educational and research works pertaining to that field, as well as by cognitive motivation in supporting the expansion of knowledge about Asian laws. Some Asian laws centers/programs operate as institutional actors of law and development. They are the platforms for supporting legal advancement in Asian developing countries by hosting legal scholars, researchers, and students, and supporting their work and studies. They can also act as a law and development agency by providing legal advice to Asian developing countries. Apart from in-

⁹ Melissa Crouch, "Asian Law in Australian Universities: Research Centres as Critical Institutional Commitments," Asian Studies Association of Australia, Apr. 21, 2020, <https://asaa.asn.au/asian-law-in-australian-universities-research-centres-as-critical-institutional-commitments/>.

strumental signaling and coordinating, Asian law centers/ programs function as platforms for discovering and expanding people’s knowledge of Asian laws.

Asian Laws Associations: Learned societies or organizations are created to promote the field of Asian laws. I identified ten Asian laws associations created on four continents. Asian laws associations include regional associations, such as the Law Association for Asia and the Pacific and the Asian Law School Association. Jurisdictional associations tend to focus on Chinese laws, including the European China Law Studies Association and the International Society for Chinese Law & History. The subject-based associations include the Asian Legal History Association and the Asian Society of International Law. Asian laws associations are the institutional platforms for scholars to connect with one another to define the field, disseminate their research, and engage in collaborative research. For these purposes, the associations normally organize annual or biannual conferences and thematic workshops.

Asian Laws Book Series and Journals: Over one hundred thousand books and journal articles on “Asian law” have been published.¹⁰ In addition to commercial publishers, leading university presses have published books on Asian laws. In the US, these include Harvard, Princeton, and Stanford, and in the UK, Cambridge and Oxford.¹¹ Apart from general publications, some university presses and commercial publishers have created special series dedicated to the publication of books on Asian laws, including Harvard, Princeton, Washington, and Oxford. Other commercial publishers, namely Hart, Routledge, Edward Elgar, and Brill have also published book series on Asian laws.

In addition to books, thousands of journal articles on Asian laws have been published. These include some in top general peer-reviewed journals in the UK, such as the *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies* and the *Modern Law Review*, and in the US, the *Harvard Law Review*, *Columbia Law Review*, *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*, *University of Chicago Law Review*, and the *Cornell Law Review*. The publications in general law journals and reviews are a sign of the broader interest in Asian laws. Asian laws scholarship has also been published in specialized law journals in various fields (e.g., comparative law, international law, and law and society) without a regional focus. There are, however, a large number of journals dedicated to Asian laws created on four continents. The Washington & Lee Law Journal Rankings report fifty Asian laws journals.¹² Based on that report, and supplementing it with other journals, institutional affiliations, and establishment years, I created a list of fifty-four Asian laws journals (Appendix 4). Oxford University Press and Cambridge University Press house several peer-reviewed journals on Asian laws. There are also student-edited Asian laws journals in several US law schools (e.g., Columbia, UPenn, and UCLA), which reflect the American tradition of law reviews. But student-edited Asian laws journals have also been created in other places, such as the UK, mainland China, and Hong Kong.

Asian Laws Courses: Asian laws are taught on five continents. Asian laws courses are reflected in curriculum design in law schools in two ways. First, they

¹⁰ A search for “Asian law” in HeinOnline’s Law Journal Library on Jan. 11, 2024, yielded 158,649 results.

¹¹ For example, a search for “Asian Law” on Jan. 11, 2024, on Oxford University Press’s website yielded 184 book titles.

¹² See W&L Law Journal Rankings, accessed , <https://managementtools4.wlu.edu/LawJournals/>, accessed 16 February 2025.

are integrated into the teaching curricula of general degrees in law (e.g., JD, LLB, and LLM). The regional courses tend to focus on East Asian and Southeast Asian laws. The Asian jurisdictions-based courses concentrate on the laws of large and developed countries, such as China, Japan, and South Korea. China is the most common jurisdictional focus of Asian laws courses. The subject-based classes tend to highlight such areas as constitutionalism, foreign investment laws, and commercial laws. Second, Asian laws courses are included in specifically designed degrees (e.g., LLB, LLM, and PhD).

Institutions, such as Asian laws centers, journals, associations, and courses, may have their own functions, but they share common purposes—namely, expression, coordination, diffusion, capacity building, and networking.

First, institutions of Asian legal studies reflect an institution's commitment to the study of Asian laws. A law school's creation of an Asian laws center/program, journal, or course demonstrates the school's institutional dedication and promise to regularize engagement with teaching, researching, and learning Asian laws. A society of Asian laws is likewise expressive of a collective commitment to foster the development of the study of Asian laws.

Second, institutions supporting the study of Asian laws coordinate the work of relevant actors. Large-scale, diverse, and complicated issues pertaining to Asian laws that involve numerous people and jurisdictions may go beyond individual efforts and require institutional coordination. Asian laws centers/programs are created to effectively organize and integrate people in large-scale research projects and diverse academic activities (e.g., fellowship, seminars, and conferences). Asian laws associations are also institutional platforms for coordinating large-scale activities (e.g., mega annual conferences) that involve numerous participants. Asian laws journals coordinate scholarship publication, which involves multiple processes (e.g., submission, review, editing, production, etc.) and people (e.g., editors, authors, and producers). Asian laws courses also organize and connect various individuals (e.g., students, teachers, and administrators) with coherent processes (e.g., course design, teaching, examination, and feedback).

Third, institutions that offer Asian legal studies diffuse knowledge. Seminars, workshops, conferences, and lectures organized by these institutions operate as mechanisms for disseminating knowledge about Asian laws. The institutional diffusion of Asian laws knowledge may take place at different levels: in the classroom, academic community beyond the classroom, and broader public beyond the academic circle.

Fourth, institutions underpinning the study of Asian laws play the role of building intellectual capacity. These institutions develop and strengthen individuals' skills, methods, and abilities to acquire, generate, and disseminate knowledge about Asian laws. They can foster capacity building through organizing classroom or public lectures; offering professional workshops on writing skills and methodology, theory, and publishing academic work; arranging formal or informal mentorships; and fellowship.

Fifth, institutions of Asian legal studies facilitate networking. They create the platforms for connecting and building relationships among diverse people (e.g., students, junior and senior scholars, lawyers, and other legal practitioners) who have a common interest in Asian laws. Particularly, mega conferences organized by Asian laws centers/programs and associations are the prominent institutional venues for assembling diverse people to exchange scholarship on Asian laws and foster their connections. Individuals who share a common interest in

Asian laws may join journal staffs playing different roles (e.g., editors, advisors, and contributors). Asian laws courses also create an environment to connect students with students, students with teachers, and teachers with teachers who have a common interest in studying and learning about Asian laws.

The sections below provide more detail on the institutional development of Asian legal studies in five continents.

B. Americas

US. Law Schools: Many elite and other law schools in the US have created permanent centers dedicated to the study of Asian laws, have scholars who publish Asian laws scholarship, Asian laws journals, and offer Asian laws courses. To illustrate, consider the information below:

- The University of Chicago Law School has offered “Buddhism and Comparative Constitutional Law,” taught by Professor Tom Ginsburg, a world-renowned scholar of international and comparative law who has published extensively on comparative constitutional law in Asia.

- Columbia Law School has three centers on Asian laws (i.e., Japan, China, and Korea), which involve faculty members specializing in these areas. Columbia Law also has an Asian laws journal. The law school offers a wide range of courses on Chinese laws, in addition to courses on Japanese and Korean laws.

- Cornell Law School has an East Asian laws and culture program directed by Professor Yun-chien Chang, an expert on East Asian laws, and the school has offered a course on North Korean laws, Chinese laws, and East Asian laws and culture.

- Duke Law School has offered a course on Chinese laws, taught by Professor Shitong Qiao, an expert on comparative law, property, and urban laws in China.

- Georgetown University Law Center has an Asian law center, offers a course on Chinese law, and has academics producing scholarship on Chinese laws and public laws in Southeast Asia.

- Harvard Law School has the US’s oldest program dedicated to the study of East Asian laws. The school has offered courses on Chinese and Japanese laws and has scholars producing scholarship in both of these areas.

- The Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law and Renmin University of China School of Law in Beijing have operated the Joint Center for Asian Law Studies since 2010.

- The University of Michigan Law School has programs in Chinese laws and Japanese laws and has offered courses on Chinese laws and law and development in India.

- The New York University (NYU) School of law has a preeminent academic institute for the study of East Asian laws. Members of the institutes are experts on East Asian legal studies. NYU has offered various courses on Chinese laws and a course on Japanese laws.

- Stanford Law School operated the China Guiding Cases Project between 2011 and 2021.

- The University of California Law San Francisco College of Law has an East Asian laws center, offers courses on Chinese and Japanese laws, and has scholars producing scholarship in both areas.

- The University of California, Berkeley School of Law has centers focusing on Japanese laws, Korean laws, China’s climate change, and Asian intellectual property (IP) laws (focusing on Chinese IP laws). The school has scholars writing about Korean laws and Chinese IP laws.

- The University of California, Irvine School of Law has a center on Korean laws and an expert on Chinese laws.

- The University of Hawai‘i at Manoa William S. Richardson School of Law has one of the most comprehensive programs in Pacific and Asian laws in the US, an institute dedicated to Asian-Pacific business laws, and an Asian-Pacific law journal. The school offers a Pacific-Asian Legal Studies certificate that includes various Asian laws courses. The law school has faculty producing scholarship on Asian laws, particularly Japanese laws, Korean laws, Asian human rights systems, and human rights in Hong Kong.

- The University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School has an Asian laws center, an Asian laws journal, courses on Chinese and Japanese laws, and scholars publishing in the areas of Chinese and Japanese laws.

- The University of Washington School of Law has the oldest Asian laws center in the US. Its members include experts on Chinese laws and Islamic laws. The law school has an Asian laws-focused journal, and it has offered LLM and PhD degree programs in Asian laws and courses on Japanese, Chinese, and Islamic laws.

- The University of Virginia School of Law has offered a course on Chinese laws and has an internationally recognized expert on the comparative study of public laws and courts who possesses regional expertise on Asia: Professor David Law.

- Vermont Law School created the US-Asia Partnerships for Environmental Law in 2006.

- The University of Wisconsin Law School in Madison has a center for the study of East Asian laws and a working group for South Asian legal history. The school has scholars producing scholarship on East and South Asian laws, particularly law and development in East Asia, constitutions and law and society in Vietnam, philanthropy and law in South Asia, and South Asian legal history.

Canada: The Centre for Asian Legal Studies at the Peter A. Allard School of Law at the University of British Columbia includes “the largest group of academics teaching and researching Asian legal issues in Canada.”¹³ The center focuses on the laws and legal cultures of China (including Taiwan), Japan, Korea, and Southeast Asia. The center organizes conferences, a speaker series, and a visiting scholar program, and offers courses in Asian law.¹⁴ Several law schools in Canada offer Asian law courses. Allard School of Law offers the courses Introduction to Asian Legal Systems; Chinese Law: Implications for Canada-China Relations; Japanese Law: Business Law in Japan. University of Victoria Faculty of Law offers a course on States, Companies, and Legal Orders in Asia.

Brazil: The Center for Asian Legal Studies of the University of São Paulo, Faculty of Law, was created in 2014, probably the only Asian law center in Latin America.¹⁵ The creation of the center is stemmed from the recognition that Asian legal studies is important due to “the increasing importance of Asian countries in

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

the international arena, the substantial immigration of Asian peoples to Brazil and the scarcity of research, academic production and debates on the subject in Brazil.”¹⁶ The center aims to produce and diffuse knowledge about legal systems, legal professions, and the dynamics of the law in Asia. Its activities include publishing papers by its members, holding academic events, and using social networks and the internet to share matters of interest.¹⁷

C. Oceania

The field of Asian legal studies has an extensive tradition in Australia given its geographic proximity to the Asian region. Melissa Crouch reports that there are thirty-four academics based in Australian law schools with permanent positions who primarily focus on Asian laws.¹⁸ Among these thir-four academics, they primarily focus on China, Indonesia, and India, followed by Japan, Singapore, and Malaysia.¹⁹ However, these academics are based at just five out of the forty-four law schools in Australia.²⁰ Their scholarship “has often been driven by themes relevant to public debate, bilateral trade relations and global commercial legal practice. This includes all aspects of commercial laws; legal pluralism; criminal law, particularly terrorism; and constitutional law.”²¹

Centers: In Australia, there are five centers dedicated to the study of Asian laws, which are housed at three law schools.

Melbourne Law School created the Asian Law Centre in 1985, which is considered “the first and largest Australian centre devoted to the development of our understanding of Asian law and legal systems.”²² Like its US counterparts, Melbourne’s Asian Law Centre originally focused on East Asia, particularly Japan in the 1980s.²³ Specifically, “[t]he Centre leadership, appreciating the significance of strong economic growth in Japan that would drive a need for commercial legal services, developed its capacity to research and write on the Japanese legal system.”²⁴ Later, however, the Asian Law Centre expanded its jurisdictional scope. The center has conducted extensive programs for teaching and researching the laws and legal systems of a wide range of countries and jurisdictions in the Asian region, including Japan, China, Indonesia, Vietnam, Taiwan, Malaysia, and Timor Leste.²⁵ The center has also engaged with other Asian countries, such as Korea, Thailand, Laos, and the Philippines.²⁶ Members of the center include experts on Chinese laws, Indian laws, Indonesian laws, Japanese laws, and Asian commercial laws. The center is currently directed by Professor Sarah Biddulph, an expert on

¹⁵ Center for Asian Legal Studies, “About us,” accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://celafdusp.wordpress.com/about-us/>.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Crouch, “Asian Law in Australian Universities” (n 9).

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Melbourne Law School, Asian Law Centre, accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://law.unimelb.edu.au/centres/alc>.

²³ Pip Nicholson, “Asian Law Centre Celebrates 30th Anniversary” (originally published Oct. 2015), <https://law.unimelb.edu.au/alumni/mls-news/issue-14-october-2015/asian-law-centre>.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Melbourne Law School, Asian Law Centre (n 23).

²⁶ Ibid.

Chinese laws. The former director of the center is Professor Pip Nicholson, a Vietnamese laws expert.²⁷

Melbourne Law School also created the jurisdictional Centre for Indonesian Law, Islam and Society in 2013, which is dedicated to the study of Indonesian laws and Islamic legal studies.²⁸ The center is directed by Professor Tim Lindsey, a specialist on various aspects of Indonesian laws, including public laws, criminal laws, commercial laws, and family laws.²⁹

Sydney Law School created the Centre for Asian and Pacific Law in 1993. The center has legal experts on a wide variety of Asian jurisdictions, including China, Japan, Indonesia, and Malaysia. It organizes seminars, workshops, and conferences, and hosts visiting scholars from all over Asia.³⁰

The *UNSW Faculty of Law & Justice* created the China International Business and Economic Law Centre in 2015, which is dedicated to researching and teaching Chinese international business and economic laws. The center has a large number of Chinese scholars who have expertise in such areas as the global trading system, international dispute resolution, state-owned enterprises, and corporate laws.³¹ The UNSW Faculty of Law & Justice also founded the Asia Law and Policy Forum in 2015 as “a network of researchers who foster and support research on law and politics in Asia.”³²

Association: The Australia-based Law Association for Asia and the Pacific (LAWASIA) was created in 1966 as a regional association of lawyers, judges, jurists, and legal organizations.³³ It “advocates for the interests of the legal profession, the cross-border exchange of legal resources, and commitment to the rule of law, professional integrity and human rights.”³⁴ For this purpose, LAWASIA organizes legal conferences, seminars, and meetings throughout the year.³⁵

Journals: Some Asian laws journals operate in Australia. The University of Melbourne Law School founded the *Australian Journal of Asian Law* in 1999. Published twice a year, this peer-reviewed journal seeks to operate as a forum for academic debates on the laws and legal cultures of Asia.³⁶ LAWASIA has also published the *LAWASIA Journal* since 2008 under the General Editorship of the

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Melbourne Law School, Centre for Indonesian Law, Islam and Society, “Overview,” accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://law.unimelb.edu.au/centres/cilis/about/overview>.

²⁹ Melbourne Law School, “Professor Tim Lindsey,” accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://law.unimelb.edu.au/about/staff/tim-lindsey>.

³⁰ Melbourne Law School, Centre for Asian and Pacific Law, “Overview,” accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.sydney.edu.au/law/our-research/research-centres-and-institutes/centre-for-asian-and-pacific-law.html>.

³¹ UNSW Sydney, China International Business and Economic Law Centre, “About us,” accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.cibel.unsw.edu.au/about-us>.

³² UNSW Sydney, Asian Law and Policy Forum, accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.unsw.edu.au/law-justice/our-research/centres-and-institutes/asia-law-policy-forum>.

³³ The Law Association for Asia and the Pacific, “Our Mission,” accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://lawasia.asn.au/mission>.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Melbourne Law School, *Australian Journal of Asian Law*, accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://law.unimelb.edu.au/centres/alc/research/publications/ajal>.

Centre for Public, International and Comparative Law at the T.C. Beirne School of Law at the University of Queensland.³⁷

Courses: Australian law schools that support Asian laws offer jurisdictional courses (mostly on China, Japan, and Indonesia), regional courses (mostly on South Asia and Southeast Asia), and subject-based courses, such as “Human Rights in Asia”; “Rule of Law in Asia”; “Asian Competition Law”; “Drugs in Asia”; “Law and Investment in Asia”; and “Land Law and Development in Asia.”³⁸ In New Zealand, some law schools have scholars on Chinese laws and offer courses on Chinese laws. For example, at the Victoria University of Wellington Faculty of Law, Dr. Ruiping Ye teaches the following courses: “Introduction to Chinese Legal Systems” and “Chinese Law in [the] New Zealand Context.”³⁹ At the University of Otago Faculty of Law, Dr. Anna High teaches a course on Chinese laws.⁴⁰

D. Europe

Asian laws have been studied in Europe for many years. This section explores the institutional development of Asian legal studies in various European countries, based on the institutional categories of centers/programs, associations, publication platforms, and courses.

Centers/Programs: I identified sixteen Asian law centers/programs in Europe. The UK has the largest number of Asian laws centers/programs (7) in Europe, followed by Germany (4); Austria, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, and Russia have one center each. There are four region-based centers on Asian laws. Asian laws centers in continental Europe tend to focus on China, with six dedicated to the study of Chinese laws. Other country-based centers/programs focus on the laws of Japan, Korea, Myanmar, and India.

Austria: The Research Platform Asian Law seeks to improve and deepen cooperation with faculty partners in Asian countries. It has conducted projects related to various Asian countries, such as Bhutan, China, and Japan.⁴¹

Germany has four Asian laws centers.

- The Centre of Expertise on Japan at the Max Planck Institute for Comparative and International Private Law was created as a center for Japanese laws in 1985.⁴² The center is driven by the recognition of the influence of Japanese laws on other East Asian countries and the emergence of modern Japan as a “mixed legal system,” which incorporates legal concepts from different legal orders.⁴³ The center conducts research, supports academic exchanges, fosters cooperation with guest researchers, publishes monographs and edited collections,

³⁷ LAWASIA, *LAWASIA Journal*, accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://lawasia.asn.au/resources-publications/publications/lawasia-journal>.

³⁸ Crouch, “Asian Law in Australian Universities” (n 9).

³⁹ Victoria University of Wellington, “Dr. Ruiping Ye,” accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://people.wgtn.ac.nz/ruiping.ye/teaching>.

⁴⁰ University of Otago, “Associate Professor Anna High,” accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.otago.ac.nz/law/staff/associate-professor-anna-high>.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² Giorgio Fabio Colombo et al., “The State of Japanese Legal Studies in Europe,” *Zeitschrift für Japanisches Recht / Journal of Japanese Law* 25, no. 49 (2020): 40.

⁴³ Max Planck Institute for Comparative and International Private Law, Centre of Expertise on Japan, accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.mpipriv.de/centre-of-expertise-japan>.

and sponsors comparative symposia pertaining to Japanese laws (particularly Japanese civil, commercial, and economic laws).⁴⁴

- The China Unit at the Max Planck Institute for Comparative and International Private Law was extended into the Centre of Expertise on China and Korea in 2002. The center conducts research, supports academic exchanges and cooperation, publishes monographs and edited collections, and sponsors comparative symposia concerning the evolution of civil law in China and Korea.⁴⁵

- The Sino-German Institute for Law, a joint project of the Georg-August University of Göttingen and the University of Nanjing, commenced its activities in 1989. It seeks to promote dialogue between German and Chinese legal cultures through cooperation in teaching, research, and legal practice. The institute initially focused on civil and commercial laws but turned to public laws in 2001.⁴⁶

- The Department of Chinese Legal Culture at the University of Cologne was established in 1992. The department's research and teaching covers, among others, constitutional and administrative laws, criminal and criminal procedure laws, judicial reforms, the social credit system, and Chinese positions on international law. The department maintains cooperation with partners in China and Hong Kong. It frequently hosts conferences and workshops on contemporary issues of Chinese laws.⁴⁷

Finland: The Finnish China Law Center was created in 2012 to coordinate and support research and education related to Chinese laws and legal culture. The center's members include eight Finnish universities and the Institute of Criminology and Legal Policy. The University of Helsinki Faculty of Law serves as the center's coordinator.⁴⁸

The Netherlands: The China Law Centre seeks to promote Chinese laws research and education in the Netherlands; serves as a primary resource for cooperation between Dutch and Chinese academic institutions and government bodies and facilitates the understanding of the Chinese legal system and its impact on international politics, law, and business.⁴⁹ The center's research projects focus on the rule of law in China and globalization's impact on the Chinese legal system, EU-China trade and investment, and law and economic development.⁵⁰

Norway: The Norwegian China Law Centre was created in 2017 at the University of Bergen Faculty of Law. The center aims "to increase the knowledge of Chinese law, and to foster a better understanding of the Chinese legal system, in the Norwegian society at large, and in particular among academics, PhD candidates, students and members of the industry and business community."⁵¹ For this

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Max Planck Institute for Comparative and International Private Law, Centre of Expertise on China and Korea, accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.mpipriv.de/china-and-korea>.

⁴⁶ Deutsch-Chinesisches Institut für Rechtswissenschaft, accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/history+of+the+institute/423331.html>.

⁴⁷ Bjoern Ahl and Daniel Sprier, *Department of Chinese Legal Culture China*, *WTO Review* 8 436 (2022), available at: https://cwto.net/index.php/CWR/article/view/140/cwr_v8n2_10.pdf

⁴⁸ University of Helsinki, Finnish China Law Center, "Objectives," accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://blogs.helsinki.fi/chinalawcenter/objectives/>.

⁴⁹ Erasmus University Rotterdam, Erasmus School of Law, China Law Centre, "Our Mission," accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.eur.nl/en/esl/research/our-research/research-centres/china-law-centre/our-mission>.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ University of Bergen, Norwegian China Law Centre, accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.uib.no/en/chinese-law-centre/105367/objectives>.

goal, the center conducts such activities as student and teacher exchanges, research cooperation, and hosting Chinese scholars and PhD candidates.⁵²

Russia: The Centre for Asian Legal Studies was created in 2016 at the Faculty of Law, Lomonosov Moscow State University. It aims to conduct research on Asian law, expand Russian connections with the region, and develop educational courses.⁵³

United Kingdom: There are seven centers/programs dedicated to the study of Asian laws in the UK.

- The Centre for Law in Asia at the SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies), University of London, was originally established in 1988 as the Centre for East Asian Law and is perhaps the oldest Asian law center in the UK. The center widely covers South, South-East, East, and Central Asian laws. The center has academics focusing on various aspects of Asian laws, including criminal laws, constitutional laws, human rights, the legal profession, sustainable development laws, and dispute resolution.⁵⁴

- The Oxford-Burma/Myanmar Law Programme was created in 2012 as part of a university-wide effort to support Myanmar's redevelopment.⁵⁵ In addition to Oxford Faculty of Law-sponsored visits and lectures in Myanmar, the program has published two books: one on Myanmar's law of contracts and the other on private international law in Myanmar.⁵⁶

- The Oxford Programme in Asian Laws (OPAL) was established in 2021 within the Oxford Faculty of Law to support and facilitate the long-term research and teaching of Asian laws. Professor Mindy Chen-Wishart, former Dean of the Oxford Faculty of Law, is one of OPAL's founders.⁵⁷ Members of OPAL include scholars and professors in the Faculty of Law and other departments at Oxford. By the end of 2023, the program had organized thirty-eight activities, including conferences/workshops, seminars, book talks, interviews, and public lectures.⁵⁸

- The Centre for Chinese Law and Policy at the Durham Law School was created in 2019, focusing its research on Chinese laws and policy issues of contemporary significance. The center organizes conferences, regular seminars, workshops, and dialogues. It also supports the teaching of Chinese laws by offering courses on Chinese laws within Durham Law School's curriculum and

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Lomonosov Moscow State University, Faculty of Law, Centre for Asian Legal Studies, accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <http://rc-law.ru/en/association/cals/>.

⁵⁴ University of London, SOAS, Centre for Law in Asia, accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.soas.ac.uk/about/research-centres/centre-law-asia>.

⁵⁵ University of Oxford, Faculty of Law, Oxford-Burma/Myanmar Law Programme, accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/the-oxford-burma-myanmar-law-programme/oxford-burmamyanmar-law-programme#:~:text=Since%20June%202012%2C%20Oxford%20has,programme%20of%20research%20and%20teaching>.

⁵⁶ Adrian Briggs and A.S. Burrows, *The Law of Contract in Myanmar* (University of Oxford Faculty of Law, 2017); Adrian Briggs, *Private International Law in Myanmar* (University of Oxford Faculty of Law, 2015).

⁵⁷ University of Oxford, Faculty of Law, "Mindy Chen-Wishart," accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/people/mindy-chen-wishart>.

⁵⁸ Oxford Programme in Asian Laws, accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/oxford-programme-in-asian-laws/oxford-programme-asian-laws>.

developing extra-curricular activities for students and scholars interested in studying Chinese laws.⁵⁹

- The Centre for Indian Law and Policy at the Durham Law School was established in 2023, becoming the first academic research center in Europe that focuses on Indian laws. Its creation was spurred by the recognition that India plays a central role in the global economy and legal order of the 21st century. The center aims to conduct original and interdisciplinary research on Indian laws and policy.⁶⁰

- The Chinese Law Society and Economy Research Interest Group was launched by the Northumbria Law School and the Faculty of Business and Law in 2019 as “a research outlet and platform for China-related socio-legal research.”⁶¹ It seeks to promote China-related and comparative socio-legal and criminal justice studies, stimulate interdisciplinary and collaborative international studies, and operate as a platform for its members to showcase their research.⁶²

- Manchester Law School launched the Manchester Asian Law Group in late 2024.

Association: The European China Law Studies Association was established in 2006. It seeks to provide an international venue for scholars and practitioners engaged in the study of Chinese laws from both comparative and interdisciplinary perspectives.⁶³ The association currently has some three hundred members from around the world. The association organizes annual conferences, workshops, and summer schools.⁶⁴

Book Series and Journals: Academics at the Oxford Faculty of Law initiated the Oxford Studies in Asian Law series in 2023. This series seeks to publish high-quality monographs on new directions in Asian legal studies.⁶⁵ The *Journal of Japanese Law* has been jointly published in Western languages (German, English, and French) by the Max Planck Institute for Comparative and International Private Law and the German-Japanese Association of Jurists since 1996.⁶⁶ The *Durham Asian Law Journal*, a student-run journal established in 2019 at the Durham Law School, publishes articles and papers written by students, academics, and practicing lawyers on current legal issues in Asia.⁶⁷

Courses: Some European universities offer regional courses on Asian laws. SOAS Law School at the University of London offers various courses, including “Legal Systems in Asia and Africa”; “Law and Society in South Asia”; “Law, Religion, and State in South Asia”; and “Law and Society in Southeast Asia.”⁶⁸ Stockholm University offers “Law and Society in Asia,” which deals

⁵⁹ Durham University, Centre for Chinese Law and Policy, accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.durham.ac.uk/research/institutes-and-centres/chinese-law-policy/about-us/>.

⁶⁰ Durham University, Durham Centre for Indian Law and Policy, <https://www.durham.ac.uk/research/institutes-and-centres/dcilp/>.

⁶¹ Northumbria University, Chinese Law, Society and Economy, accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/about-us/academic-departments/northumbria-law-school/law-research/chinese-law-society-and-economy>.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ European China Law Studies Association, accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.ecls.eu/about/>.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ On file with author.

⁶⁶ *Journal of Japanese Law*, accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.zjapanr.de/index.php/zjapanr/index>.

⁶⁷ *Durham Asian Law Journal*, accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.durhamasianlawjournal.com/about>.

⁶⁸ Search with SOAS Law Course filter conducted on 16 February 2025, <https://www.soas.ac.uk/study/areas-study/law>.

with the concept of law, the rule of law, and legal consciousness through case studies of Myanmar, Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, China, and Singapore.⁶⁹ The Oxford Faculty of Law offers the subject-based course “Constitutionalism in Asia,” which examines various forms of constitutionalism in the region: liberal (e.g., India, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan); hybrid (e.g., Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Singapore); socialist (e.g., China and Vietnam); military (e.g., Myanmar and Thailand); and tradition/religion-based (Confucian and Buddhist).⁷⁰

Jurisdictional courses in Europe tend to focus on Chinese laws. The European China Law Studies Association reports thirty-seven courses on Chinese laws taught throughout Europe.⁷¹ The courses range from a general introduction to the Chinese legal system to various substantive aspects of Chinese laws, such as business, property, and human rights. Several UK law schools offer Chinese laws courses, such as “Law and Justice in Contemporary China” (SOAS), “Chinese Law and Institutions” (Queen Mary), and “Chinese Business Law” (Queen Mary), and “Chinese Legal System” (Durham). The University of Sheffield School of Law even offers a bachelor’s degree in Chinese laws.⁷² The topic of Chinese laws is widely taught at universities in continental Europe, including Cologne University, the University of Göttingen, the University of Vienna, the University of Copenhagen, KU Leuven, and the University of Helsinki, among others.⁷³ The University of Göttingen offers a master’s degree in Chinese and Comparative Law.⁷⁴ Aix-Marseille University offers a master’s degree in Chinese Business Law.⁷⁵

E. Asia

Asian laws, like the laws of the others, have been less studied in Asia than in Western countries. Japan has engaged in the law and development movement and concomitantly in the study of the laws of other Asian countries since the 1990s. In recent years, Singapore, Hong Kong, and South Korea have engaged in the study of the laws of other Asian jurisdictions.

Centers: There are only seven Asian law centers in Asia, concentrated in a few developed Asian jurisdictions—namely Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, and Singapore. Some legal research centers in Asia (such as the University of Hong Kong or HKU’s Center for Comparative and Public Law and the Chinese University of Hong Kong or CUHK’s Centre for Comparative and Transnational Law)

⁶⁹ Stockholm University, Law, Culture and Society in Asia, accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.su.se/english/search-courses-and-programmes/sv9002-1.498268?open-collapse-boxes=course-detail,course-time-table,course-material,course-contact>.

⁷⁰ University of Oxford, “Constitutionalism in Asia,” accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/content/constitutionalism-asia>.

⁷¹ European China Law Studies Association, “Chinese Law taught in Europe,” accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.ecls.eu/chinese-law-taught-in-europe/>.

⁷² University of Sheffield, “Law (with Chinese Law) LLB,” <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/programmeregulationsfinder/programme?code=LAWU20&org=SHEFFIELD&start=24-Sep-2018&moa=ML&year=2024>

⁷³ European China Law Studies Association (n 74).

⁷⁴ Chinese Law and Comparative Law (LL.M./M.A.), <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/325011.html>

⁷⁵ Master’s Degree in Business Law-Chinese Business Law, <https://facdedroit.univ-amu.fr/en/academics/bachelor-master-phd/master-degree-business-law/chinese-business-law>

have engaged with Asian laws even though the study of Asian laws is not their primary focus.

Hong Kong has two centers focusing on Chinese laws.

- The Centre for Chinese and Comparative Law at the School of Law -City University of Hong Kong (CityUHK School of Law) was established in 1994, and is “one of the world’s oldest research centres on Chinese and comparative legal studies as a discipline.”⁷⁶ Members of the center have expertise in the laws of China, Hong Kong, and Singapore. The center seeks to promote Hong Kong as a legal hub for researching Chinese and comparative laws; provide a forum for academic discussions on the laws of China, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Asia in general; and promote the rule of law in Hong Kong, mainland China, and the Asia-Pacific region, among others.⁷⁷

- The Philip K.H. Wong Centre for Chinese Law at the University of Hong Kong Faculty of Law was established in 2009 as the Centre for Chinese Law and was renamed in 2022 in honor of a donation of HK\$100 million from the Philip K.H. Wong Foundation.⁷⁸ The center seeks to connect “legal communities and civil society sectors in the mainland with the international community to promote free, open dialogue and knowledge exchange.”⁷⁹ The center conducts research, organizes events (conferences and seminars), manages an LLM in Chinese laws, and runs a Chinese laws blog that promotes scholarship on Chinese laws.⁸⁰

Japan has two Asian law centers:

- The *Center for Asian Legal Exchange* at Nagoya University was created in 1992 as the institutional hub for the Japanese government’s assistance with legal reforms in other Asian countries (particularly the former and current socialist countries). The center seeks to coordinate research in Asian laws and the theories of legal assistance, develop human resources for law-making and enforcement in Asian countries, and train Japan’s human resources in Asian laws.⁸¹

- The Waseda Institute for East Asian Legal Studies has operated at Waseda University since 2000. The center collects and arranges historical resources on Taiwan and Korea and conducts research on modern Japanese laws and the influence of Japanese laws on the laws of East Asian countries during the prewar period. The center also seeks to promote research collaboration and develop a research network.⁸²

South Korea has one center dedicated to Asian laws. The *Asia-Pacific Law Institute* at Seoul National University was created in 2012. The institute

⁷⁶ City University of Hong Kong, Centre for Chinese and Comparative Law, <https://www.cityu.edu.hk/slwc/cccl/about.html>.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ University of Hong Kong Faculty of Law, “HKU names theatre and Centre for Chinese Law in honour of loyal alumnus Dr Philip K.H. Wong,” press release, Dec. 18, 2022, <https://www.law.hku.hk/news/hku-names-theatre-and-centre-for-chinese-law-in-honour-of-loyal-alumnus-dr-philip-k-h-wong>.

⁷⁹ Philip K.H. Wong Centre for Chinese Law, “Our Centre,” accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.ccl.law.hku.hk/our-centre>.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Nagoya University, Center for Asian Legal Exchange, “About us,” accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.ccl.law.hku.hk/our-centre>.

⁸² Waseda University, Waseda Institute for East Asian Legal Studies, accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.waseda-eals.com/index.html?locale=eng>.

seeks to promote the comparative analyses of various legal regimes in the Asia-Pacific region and formulate solutions to significant legal issues, among other purposes.⁸³ The institute seems to have a strong research interest in Chinese laws. The institute has published five books in Korean on various aspects of Chinese laws, such as antimonopoly laws, industrial and commercial registration, and state-owned enterprises.⁸⁴ It has also published in Korean a book on Japanese constitutional laws, a book on Indonesian laws, and a book comparing Korean and Mongolian laws regarding the responsibilities of a company director.⁸⁵

Singapore has two Asian law centers:

- The NUS Faculty of Law created the *Centre for Asian Legal Studies* in 2012, recognizing that “legal developments in Asia are now of critical importance to Singapore and to the entire world.”⁸⁶ The founding director of the center is Professor Andrew Harding, a leading scholar in the fields of Asian legal studies and comparative constitutional law.⁸⁷ Members of the center have expertise in various aspects of Asian laws, including public, civil, and commercial laws; international law, and law and religion. The center conducts various research projects, conferences, seminars, and training and mentoring sessions.⁸⁸

- The Singapore Management University (SMU) Yong Pung How School of Law created the *Centre for Commercial Law in Asia* (formerly Centre for Cross-Border Commercial Law in Asia) in 2014 to promote the law school as “the leading centre in Asia for the study of commercial law.”⁸⁹ The center conducts and facilitates research in all areas of commercial law. The center’s current director is Professor Dan W. Puchniak, an internationally recognized scholar in comparative corporate law and governance in Asia. The center engages faculty members specializing in various aspects of commercial laws.⁹⁰

Associations: The 21st century has witnessed the creation of societies for various aspects of Asian laws, including law and economics, corporate laws, international law, law and society, constitutional laws, legal history, and the legal profession. These societies were initiated by Asian scholars and housed in Asia. This development indicates efforts to consolidate the institutional base of Asian legal studies in Asia.

- The *Asian Law Institute* was established in Singapore in 2003 by an association of Asian law schools to promote Asian legal scholarship and to facilitate greater interaction among scholars working in the area of Asian laws. The institute conducts a fellowship program, annual conference, research symposium, and young scholars’ workshop. The National University of Singapore (NUS) leads the initiative and provides continued administrative and financial support for the institute.⁹¹

⁸³ Seoul National University, Asia-Pacific Law Institute, accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <http://aplaweng.snu.ac.kr/18>.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ National University of Singapore, “NUS Law establishes new Centre for Asian Legal Studies,” press release, Feb. 8, 2022, https://law.nus.edu.sg/cals/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2020/06/PReL_8_Feb.pdf.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ National University of Singapore, Centre for Asian Legal Studies, “About Us,” accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://law.nus.edu.sg/cals/about-us/>.

⁸⁹ Singapore Management University, Centre for Commercial Law in Asia, accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://ccla.smu.edu.sg/>.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Asian Law Institute, accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://law1a.nus.edu.sg/asli/about.html>.

▪ The *Asian Law & Economics Association* was established in 2005. Its annual conferences are the association’s major event. The association held its inaugural conference at the Seoul National University School of Law in South Korea. The subsequent annual conferences have been organized in different Asian jurisdictions, including mainland China, Japan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam.⁹²

▪ The *Asian Constitutional Law Forum*, held biannually, provides a venue for academic discussion on Asian constitutional laws. The forum was first held at Seoul National University in 2005. Subsequent meetings have been organized in Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, mainland China, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, and Taiwan, respectively.⁹³ Based on the forum, the Association for Asian Constitutional Studies was established in 2017.⁹⁴

▪ The *Asian Society of International Law* was established in 2007. It held its inaugural conference at NUS. The society seeks to promote research, education, and international law practice in Asia; foster Asian perspectives on international law; and promote awareness of and respect for international law in Asia. To realize these goals, the society organizes conferences, seminars, workshops, and other meetings; endeavors to publish about the field; and collects and disseminates information regarding international law in Asia. The society currently has four chapters, namely in Japan, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Bangladesh.⁹⁵

▪ The *Asian Law & Society Association* was created in 2015 with its executive office housed at Waseda University in Japan. The society seeks “to develop the Asian law and society field into a vibrant and cohesive discipline.”⁹⁶ Its annual meeting, conceived as “a timely platform to define the field, advance theory, and cultivate empirical work and new scholarship,” has been held in various jurisdictions, including Australia, Japan, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam.⁹⁷

▪ The *Asian Law Schools Association* was established in 2020 by twenty-eight Asian law schools to support legal education and scholarship in Asia through collaboration among Asian law schools. The CityUHK School of Law led the initiative, and the NUS Faculty of Law currently hosts its secretariat. The association organizes biennial deans’ forums, research workshops for junior scholars, seminars and conferences on legal education, and comparative law research projects.⁹⁸

▪ The *Asian Legal History Association* was created in 2021. The Chinese University of Hong Kong Faculty of Law led the initiative. The association has supported Asian legal history conferences hosted and organized by the University of Law at Hue University, the Faculty of Law at Thammasat University, the Centre for Asian Legal Studies at NUS, and the Faculty of Law at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.⁹⁹

⁹²Asian Law & Economics Association, “AsLEA Board,” accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://law1a.nus.edu.sg/asli/about.html>.

⁹³ Institutum Iurisprudentiae, “The 9th Asian Constitutional Law Forum,” accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.ias.sinica.edu.tw/en/introduction>.

⁹⁴NUS Law, <https://www.facebook.com/NUS.Law/photos/a.296294460418385/1536938036354015/?type=3&source=57>

⁹⁵ Asian Society of International Law, “About us,” accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.asiansil.org/about-us/>.

⁹⁶ Asian Law & Society Association, accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.alsa.network/home>.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Asian Law Schools Association, “About ALSA,” accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.alsa.asia/about-alsa/>.

▪ *The Asian Corporate Law Forum*, created in 2023 should also be noted. Although it is not an association per se, it plans to organize annual meetings similar to those of an association. Its founding institutional members include 10 Asian law schools.¹⁰⁰ The forum aims to become “the preeminent organisation in the world for scholarship on corporate law and governance in Asia.”¹⁰¹ To realize this goal, the forum will hold an annual conference, with the inaugural conference taking place at the Singapore Management University, Yong Pung How School of Law in April 2024.¹⁰²

Journals: In addition to numerous national journals focusing on domestic laws, law schools and societies in Asia have created a wide range of journals dedicated to the study of the Asian laws of others.

Several Asian laws journals are housed at law schools. The *Asia Pacific Law Review* (APLR), based at the CityUHK School of Law, was created in 1992. This generalist law journal publishes scholarship on the laws of South, Central, East, South-East, South Asia, Australasia, and the Pacific islands. Other journals are specific, dealing with particular approaches or issues pertaining to Asian laws. The *Chinese Journal of Comparative Law* has been published by OUP since 2013, with its editorial office currently based in the Centre for Chinese and Comparative Law of the CityUHK School of Law. The *Chinese Journal of International Law* has been published, in association with the Chinese Society of International Law and Institute of International Law of China Foreign Affairs University, since 2013 by OUP. Published by Brill since 2000, the *Asia-Pacific Journal on Human Rights and the Law* is housed at the University of Hong Kong Faculty of Law and contains scholarship focusing on issues of law and human rights in the Asia-Pacific region.

Some specialist journals on Asian laws are published or supported by associations. Published by De Gruyter from 2006 to 2015 and by CUP since 2015, the *Asian Journal of Comparative Law*, an initiative of the Asian Law Institute, publishes comparative scholarship on Asian legal systems. The *Asian Journal of Law and Economics*, the official publication of the Asian Law & Economics Association, has been published by De Gruyter since 2010. The *Asian Journal of International Law*, the official publication of the Asian Society of International Law, has been published by CUP since 2011. The *Asian Journal of Law and Society*, supported by the Asian Law and Society Association, has been published by CUP since 2014.

Courses: Asian law schools, of course, offer courses on the laws of their own jurisdictions. However, some internationalized law schools in Asia offer comparative and foreign Asian laws courses in English. NUS offers the most comparative and foreign Asian laws courses, including a region-based course, “Legal Systems in Asia”; jurisdiction-based courses, “Chinese Commercial Law,” “Chinese Corporate and Securities Law,” and “Indonesian Law”; and subject-based courses, “Confucianism and Law,” “Law and Democracy in East Asia,”

⁹⁹ Chinese University of Hong Kong, “Call for Papers – The 4th Asian Legal History Conference,” accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://www.law.cuhk.edu.hk/app/events/call-for-papers-the-4th-asian-legal-history-conference/>.

¹⁰⁰ Singapore Management University, Asian Corporate Law Forum, accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://site.smu.edu.sg/asian-corporate-law-forum-2024#about-organisers>.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid.

“Human Rights in Asia,” “Strategies for Asian Disputes - A Comparative Analysis,” “China, India and International Law,” “ASEAN Economic Community Law and Policy,” “Private Law in East Asia,” “Trusts Law in the Asia-Pacific Region,” and “Transitional Justice in Asia.” Comparative and foreign Asian laws courses have also been offered in other Asian law schools, such as “Law in Transnational East Asia” (University of Tokyo), “Human Rights and Constitutionalism in Asia” (HKU), and “Foreign Investment Law in Asia” (SMU), and “Japanese Labor and Employment Law” (National Taiwan University, College of Law).

F. Africa

China has increasingly expanded its investment and “legal cooperation” in Africa.¹⁰³ This has spawned an interest in Chinese laws at some African universities and within the African legal community. To illustrate, in 2015, twenty-three legal professionals (including lawyers, consultants, government researchers, judges, and prosecutors) from fourteen African countries “came to Beijing for a month-long legal exchange program,” which involved studying the Chinese legal system.¹⁰⁴

The University of Cape Town Faculty of Law offers a master’s-level course on “Chinese Law and Investment in Africa.”¹⁰⁵ The course includes ten lectures that seek to “assist lawyers and other professionals to navigate China’s emerging role in the global economy, with a specific focus on China’s investments in Africa.”¹⁰⁶ The lectures deal with Africa-China relations; China’s Belt and Road Initiative and Africa and lending practices; Chinese investments in Africa; labor and environmental issues; digital authoritarianism; China’s policing and military investments in Africa; US-China tension and its impact on Africa; the development of Chinese laws; Chinese economic laws; Chinese contract laws; and China-Africa legal cooperation.¹⁰⁷ One of the course’s instructors is Tebogo Lefifi, an African doctoral researcher specializing in Chinese laws and African investments.¹⁰⁸

III. SUBSTANTIVE DEVELOPMENT OF ASIAN LAWS SCHOLARSHIP

Western and Asian scholars of different generations have produced a sophisticated body of scholarship on Asian laws. In addition to some generic works, the evolution of Asian laws scholarship has led to the emergence of different fields, such as jurisprudence, legal history, comparative law, law and society, law and economics, and international law. This is particularly evident in institutional underpinnings (e.g., associations and journals) of various fields of Asian laws. The fields of Asian laws may deal with the same legal topics but with different approaches, theories, and methodologies. To be sure, some works are internally interdisciplinary involving approaches and insights from different fields of legal

¹⁰³ Samuli Seppanen, “Chinese Legal Development Assistance: Which Rule of Law - Whose Pragmatism,” *Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law* 51, no. 1 (Jan. 2018): 101–57, 117; Salvatore Mancuso, “China in Africa and the Law,” *Annual Survey of International & Comparative Law* 18 (2012): 243–62, 255.

¹⁰⁴ Zhang Yiqian, “African Legal Professionals Study in China Due to Closer Business Ties,” *Global Times* (June 23, 2025), <https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/928476.shtml>.

¹⁰⁵ University of Cape Town, “Chinese law and investment in Africa - Master's course,” <https://law.uct.ac.za/law-at-work/courses/chinese-law-africa-masters-course#:~:text=The%20course%20aims%20to%20provide,and%20Chinese%20Investments%20in%20Africa>

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

studies. I will devote more space to the emerging fields/areas (jurisprudence and legal history), which have been surveyed less often than the more established fields (comparative law, law and society, law and economics, and international law), which have been well documented elsewhere.

A. Generic Works on Asian Laws

A body of generic works provides comprehensive introductions and materials on Asian laws. They may be regional and jurisdictional. The regional works highlight the laws of Asia as a whole, while the jurisdictional introduce the legal systems of individual Asian countries (but mainly focus on large or developed Asian countries, such as China, Japan, and Indonesia).

Regional, generic works collect and produce holistic materials about Asian laws. An early example is *Selected Writings on Asian Law*, edited by Chin Kim, Professor of International, Comparative and Asian Law at the California Western School of Law, which includes a useful collection of essays (mainly published in US law journals) on Asian laws published between 1969 and 1982.¹⁰⁹

The 1997 book *Asian Laws through Australian Eyes*, edited by Veronica Taylor, explores Asian legal systems vis-à-vis the rule of law.¹¹⁰ The book includes 20 chapters by Australian and New Zealand academics, which explore conceptual and systematic issues and various substantive topics of Asian laws, including constitutionalism, public law and order, media freedom, civil law, and business regulation.

Another generic work on Asian legal systems was published in 2011, edited by two senior experts on comparative law and Asian laws: Gary F. Bell at the NUS Faculty of Law and E. Ann Black at the University of Queensland T.C. Beirne School of Law. This book is a collection of essays on the legal systems of 11 Asian jurisdictions.¹¹¹

More recently, the 2017 *Routledge Handbook of Asian Law*, edited by Australian scholar Christoph Antons, serves as a comprehensive resource on Asian laws. The book covers issues as diverse as family laws and Islamic courts, decentralization and the revival of traditional forms of law, and discourses on the rule of law, human rights, corporate governance, and environmental protection. The volume is divided into five parts: Asia in Law and the Humanities and Social Sciences; The Political Economy of Law in Asia; Asian Traditions and their Transformations; Law, the Environment, and Access to Land and Natural Resources; and People in Asia and their Rights.¹¹²

Also in 2017, Gary F. Bell edited a generic book on Asian laws in honor of M.B. (Barry) Hooker, a prominent New Zealand scholar who taught at various institutions in Singapore, the UK, and Australia.¹¹³ Given the broader scope of Hooker's scholarship,¹¹⁴ the *festschrift* includes essays on various aspects of Asian

¹⁰⁹ Chin Kim, *Selected Writings on Asian Law* (Fred B. Rothman & Co., 1982).

¹¹⁰ Taylor, ed. (n 2).

¹¹¹ E. Ann Black and Gary F. Bell, eds., *Law and Legal Institutions of Asia: Traditions, Adaptations and Innovations* (Cambridge University Press, 2011).

¹¹² Christoph Antons, ed., *Routledge Handbook of Asian Law* (Routledge, 2017).

¹¹³ Gary F. Bell, ed., *Pluralism, Transnationalism, and Culture in Asian Law: A Book in Honour of M.B. Hooker* (ISEAS Publishing, 2017).

¹¹⁴ The National University of Malaysia has the M.B. Hooker Collection, which includes more than 2,500 titles produced by Veronica L. Taylor, M.B. Hooker, and Virginia Hooker, "M.B. Hooker and Southeast Asian Law: Path-Breaking Passions," in *ibid.* at 1.

laws, including legal theory, legal anthropology, comparative law, law and religion, constitutional law, and Islamic law. In 2020, Janos Jany, a legal scholar at Pazmany University, Hungary, authored a book on various legal traditions in Asia.¹¹⁵

In addition to generic works covering Asian laws as a whole, some generic works focus on the laws of particular Asian jurisdictions, mainly large and developed ones. These works cover the civil law jurisdictions (Japan and Indonesia), a socialist law jurisdiction (China), and several common law jurisdictions (Singapore, Malaysia, and Hong Kong). Three American scholars, Curtis J. Milhaupt, J. Mark Ramseyer, and Michael K. Young, published a textbook on Japanese laws, which includes 130 selected readings that cover various aspects of Japanese laws, such as the civil law tradition, the legal services industry, dispute resolution, constitutional laws, contracts, torts, criminal laws, family laws, employment laws, corporate laws, and economic regulations.¹¹⁶ The UK-based Japanese scholar Hiroshi Oda published an introductory book on Japanese laws.¹¹⁷ Australian scholars Tim Lindsey and Simon Butt co-authored an introductory book on Indonesian laws.¹¹⁸ There are several generic works on Chinese laws, including books by Professor Albert Chen at the University of Hong Kong¹¹⁹ and Jianfu Chen at La Trobe University.¹²⁰ Other generic jurisdictional works introduce the legal systems of the common law jurisdictions in Asia, such as Singapore,¹²¹ Malaysia,¹²² and Hong Kong.¹²³

B. Asian Jurisprudence

Jurisprudence deals with “general theoretical questions about the nature of laws and legal systems, about the relationship of law to justice and morality and about the social nature of law.”¹²⁴ Asian jurisprudence has not yet emerged as a field. There is no dedicated society and/or journal on Asian jurisprudence. However, a nascent body of scholarship explores jurisprudential questions about Asian laws. The existing literature on Asian jurisprudence has developed in three directions: legal philosophy, comparative jurisprudence, and normative jurisprudence.

First, some works explore legal conceptions in ancient and modern Asian philosophy. For example, Chongko Choi, a leading Korean legal scholar, explores ancient East Asian jurisprudence derived from classical Chinese philosophies, including Confucianism, Legalism, and Taoism.¹²⁵ In the same vein, Wejen

¹¹⁵ Janos Jany, *Legal Traditions in Asia: History, Concepts and Laws*, (Springer International Publishing, 2020).

¹¹⁶ Curtis J. Milhaupt, J. Mark Ramseyer, and Michael K. Young, *Japanese Law in Context: Readings in Society, the Economy, and Politics* (Harvard University Asia Center, distributed by Harvard University Press, 2001).

¹¹⁷ Hiroshi Oda, *Japanese Law*, 2nd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2021).

¹¹⁸ Simon Butt and Timothy Lindsey, *Indonesian Law* (Oxford University Press, 2018).

¹¹⁹ Albert Chen, *An Introduction to the Legal System of the People’s Republic of China*, 5th ed. (LexisNexis, 2018).

¹²⁰ Jianfu Chen, *Chinese Law Context and Transformation*, revised and expanded ed. (Brill Nijhoff, 2015).

¹²¹ Kevin Tan, ed., *The Singapore Legal System*, 2nd ed. (Singapore University Press, 1999).

¹²² Arfah Hamzah, *A First Look at the Malaysian Legal System* (Oxford Fajar, 2009).

¹²³ Stefan H.C. Lo, Kevin Kwok-yin Cheng, and Wing Hong Chui, *The Hong Kong Legal System*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2020).

¹²⁴ Michael D.A. Freeman, *Lloyd’s Introduction to Jurisprudence*, 8th ed. (Sweet & Maxwell, 2008), 3.

¹²⁵ Chongko Choi, “Ancient Foundations of East Asian Jurisprudence—Confucianism, Legalism and Taoism,” *Seoul National University Law* 43 (2002): 141–70, <https://docslib.org/doc/1598503/ancient-foundations-of-east-asian-jurisprudence-confucianism-legalism-and-taoism-1>.

Chang, a leading Taiwanese scholar, explores the legal philosophy of the most prominent Chinese classical philosophers, namely Confucius, Laozi, Mozi, Zhuangzi, Mencius, Xunzi, Lord Shang, and Han Fei.¹²⁶ The study of East Asian jurisprudence also involves the exploration of legal thoughts of modern thinkers in East Asia (particularly in China, Japan, and Korea).¹²⁷ Apart from East Asian jurisprudence, other works explore legal ideas in other traditions of Asian philosophy, including scholarship on Islamic jurisprudence¹²⁸ and Buddhist jurisprudence.¹²⁹

The second direction echoes comparative jurisprudence, which explores the embodiment of philosophical ideas and principles in legal systems.¹³⁰ Works on Asian comparative jurisprudence investigate ancient and modern philosophical underpinnings of ancient and modern Asian legal systems. For example, Norman Ho, a scholar at the Peking University School of Transnational Law, explores the influence of Confucian jurisprudence on dynastic legal judgments in China.¹³¹ Turning to modern practices, a group of Korean scholars examine the reception of Western legal philosophy in Korea and its role in the social context.¹³²

The third direction in Asian jurisprudence is normative. This involves the contemporary normative reconstruction of ancient Asian legal and political concepts. Chongko Choi, for example, advocates the contemporary reconstruction of East Asian jurisprudence, which requires rethinking the conceptions of law, justice and goodness; legal aesthetics; legal ideology; human rights; and responsibility.¹³³ Norman Ho draws on the teachings of Confucius and Mencius to provide Confucian normative justifications for private property.¹³⁴

The literature on legal conceptions in Asian philosophies, the incarnation of Asian and Western legal philosophy in Asian laws, and normative legal theories rooted in Asian intellectual sources may be formative to the future emergence of the field of Asian jurisprudence.

C. Asian Legal History

Asian legal history scholarship explores the evolution of laws and legal institutions in Asia. A rich body of scholarship on legal history in Asia has been produced by both legal scholars and historians with an interest in law. Works on Asian legal history can be grouped into the seven categories below:

General Legal History: This genre encompasses general introductions and materials on a subregion or national jurisdiction in Asia. The prominent New

¹²⁶ Wejen Chang, *In Search of the Way: Legal Philosophy of the Classic Chinese Thinkers* (Edinburgh University Press, 2022).

¹²⁷ Chongko Choi, *East Asian Jurisprudence* (Seoul National University Press, 2009).

¹²⁸ Wael B. Hallaq, *A History of Islamic Legal Theories: An Introduction to Sunnī Uṣūl al-Fiqh* (Cambridge University Press, 1999).

¹²⁹ D. Christian Lammerts, *Buddhist Law in Burma: A History of Dhammasattha Texts and Jurisprudence, 1250–1850* (University of Hawaii Press, 2018).

¹³⁰ William Ewald, “Comparative Jurisprudence(I): What Was it Like to Try a Rat?,” *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* 143, no. 6 (June 1995): 1889–2150.

¹³¹ Norman P. Ho, “Confucian Jurisprudence in Practice: Pre-Tang Dynasty Panwen (Written Legal Judgments),” *Pacific Rim Law & Policy Journal* 22, no. 1 (Jan. 2013): 49–112.

¹³² Jeong-Oh Kim et al., *Philosophy of Law in Korea: Acceptance, Engagement and Social Change* (Routledge, 2023).

¹³³ Chongko Choi, “Foundations of East Asian Jurisprudence,” *Seoul Law Journal* 41 (2000): 60.

¹³⁴ Norman P. Ho, “A Confucian Theory of Property,” *Tsinghua China Law Review* 9, no. 1 (Fall 2016): 1–22.

Zealand scholar M.B. Hooker, who taught at various institutions in Singapore, the UK, and Australia, has contributed enormously to various areas of scholarship on Southeast Asian laws, including legal history. *A Concise Legal History of South-East Asia*, a book Hooker published in 1978, explores oriental laws (Indian, Islamic, and Chinese) and occidental laws (English, French Dutch, Spanish, and American) in Burma, Siam, Indochina, Malaya, the East Indies and the Philippines.¹³⁵ In addition, his two edited volumes, *The Laws of South-East Asia*, published in 1986 and 1988, respectively, provide rich materials on the development of pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial laws in Southeast Asia.¹³⁶ Other general works deal with the legal history of individual Asian jurisdictions: a 2005 handbook introduced Japanese legal history;¹³⁷ Marie Seong-Hak Kim, a Korean legal historian, published an edited collection in 2016 on Korea's legal history, from the Chosŏn to colonial and modern periods;¹³⁸ Xiaoqun Xu, a historian at Christopher Newport University, authored a book in 2020 that offers a comprehensive history of Chinese laws and justice from the imperial era to the post-Mao period;¹³⁹ Professor Andrew Harding and Dr. Munin Pongsapan, former dean of the Thammasat University Faculty of Law, published an edited volume on Thai legal history in 2021.¹⁴⁰

History of Customary Law: The second group of scholarship deals with the history of customary law in Asia. For example, Henderson explored village law during the Tokugawa period in Japan;¹⁴¹ Marie Seong-Hak Kim examined Korean customary law in a 2012 work;¹⁴² Hooker studied *adat* law (customary law) in modern Indonesia;¹⁴³ Mahabat Sadyrbek published a historical and anthropological study in 2018 on customary legal practices in Central Asia (particularly Kyrgyzstan).¹⁴⁴

History of Religious Law: Asia is home to the world's major religions (Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism) and legal systems based on these religions. Scholars study the evolution of the religious legal systems longitudinally. For example, Hooker explored the history of Islamic law in Southeast Asia;¹⁴⁵ Elizabeth Lhost, a historian of law and religion in South Asia, published a monograph in 2022 on the history of Islamic law in modern South Asia;¹⁴⁶ SOAS's Andrew Huxley, a legal historian of Burma and Southeast Asia, explored the history of Buddhist law in Thailand, Laos, and Burma;¹⁴⁷ scholars at the University of Texas at Austin,

¹³⁵ M.B. Hooker, *A Concise Legal History of South-East Asia* (Clarendon Press, 1978).

¹³⁶ M.B. Hooker, ed., *The Laws of South-East Asia, Volume I: The Pre-Modern Texts* (Butterworths, 1986); M.B. Hooker, ed., *The Laws of South-East Asia: European laws in South-East Asia* (Butterworths, 1988).

¹³⁷ Wilhelm Rohl, *History of Law in Japan since 1868* (Brill, 2005).

¹³⁸ Kim Marie Seong-Hak, ed., *The Spirit of Korean Law: Korean Legal History in Context* (Brill, 2016).

¹³⁹ Xiaoqun Xu, *Heaven Has Eyes: A History of Chinese Law* (Oxford University Press, 2020).

¹⁴⁰ Andrew Harding and Munin Pongsapan, eds., *Thai Legal History: From Traditional to Modern Law* (Cambridge University Press, 2023).

¹⁴¹ Dan Fenno Henderson, *Village "Contracts" in Tokugawa Japan: Fifty Specimens with English Translations and Comments* (University of Washington Press, 1975).

¹⁴² Kim Marie Seong-Hak, *Law and Custom in Korea: Comparative Legal History* (Cambridge University Press, 2012).

¹⁴³ M.B. Hooker, *Adat Law in Modern Indonesia* (Oxford University Press, 1978).

¹⁴⁴ Mahabat Sadyrbek, *Legal Pluralism in Central Asia: Local Jurisdiction and Customary Practices* (Routledge, 2018).

¹⁴⁵ M.B. Hooker, *Islamic Law in South-East Asia* (Oxford University Press, 1984).

¹⁴⁶ Elizabeth Lhost, *Everyday Islamic Law and the Making of Modern South Asia* (University of North Carolina Press, 2022).

¹⁴⁷ Andrew Huxley, *Thai Law: Buddhist Law: Essays on the Legal History of Thailand, Laos and Burma* (White Orchid Press, 1996).

Patrick Olivelle and Donald R. Davis, edited a comprehensive collection of essays in 2018 on the history of Hindu law.¹⁴⁸

History of Dynastic Law: The fourth category examines the dynastic law in Asia, particularly East Asia. Pre-modern dynastic governments in East Asia (namely, in China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam) enacted many legal codes and constructed the dynasties' legal institutions, which were largely informed by Confucianism. A rich body of scholarship explored the history of these dynastic legal codes and institutions. Many works deal with Chinese dynastic laws. For example, Harvard's East Asian Legal Studies Program published two books on the Qing Code and the Qing's bureaucracy;¹⁴⁹ Princeton University Press's Studies in East Asian Law published a series of books on Chinese legal history, including a collection of essays on the Chinese legal tradition (particularly, the laws of the Zhou, Sung, and Qing dynasties) and its influence on dynastic laws in Japan and Korea,¹⁵⁰ and a book on the legal system of the Yuan dynasty (1271–1368) and its legal code;¹⁵¹ the University of Washington Press's series in Asian laws published translations of the Ming Code and other books on criminal laws in imperial China;¹⁵² more recently, Taisu Zhang authored a book in 2019 on kinship and property in preindustrial China (and England) and another monograph in 2023 on the belief systems underpinning Qing taxation.¹⁵³

Other works explore dynastic laws in Japan, Korea, and Vietnam. For example, Henderson authored two volumes in 1965 on the conciliatory practices during the Tokugawa period in Japan;¹⁵⁴ a 1981 research monograph of the Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California explored various aspects of laws in force during Korea's Chosŏn dynasty, including the influence of Confucianism on law and legal thought, law-making, the judicial system, and law and the village society;¹⁵⁵ the English-language translation of the Confucian-influenced legal code of Vietnam's Lê Dynasty (1428–1788) was published in 1987 with the support of Harvard Law School;¹⁵⁶ Korean scholar In-son Yu, in a book published in 1990, explored the history of family and law during the Restored Lê dynasty (1428–1789) in Vietnam;¹⁵⁷ a research monograph of the Institute of East

¹⁴⁸ Patrick Olivelle and Donald R. Davis, eds., *Oxford History of Hinduism: Hindu Law: A New History of Dharmasāstra* (Oxford University Press, 2018).

¹⁴⁹ Thomas A. Metzger, *The Internal Organization of Ch'ing Bureaucracy: Legal, Normative, and Communication Aspects* (Harvard University Press, 2014); Derk Bodde, and Clarence Morris, *Law in Imperial China: Exemplified by 190 Ch'ing Dynasty Cases* (Harvard University Press, 1967).

¹⁵⁰ Jerome Alan Cohen, R. Randle Edwards, and Fu-mei Chang Chen, eds., *Essays on China's Legal Tradition* (Princeton University Press, 1980).

¹⁵¹ Ch'en Paul Heng-chao, *Chinese Legal Tradition Under the Mongols: The Code of 1291 as Reconstructed* (Princeton University Press, 1979).

¹⁵² University of Washington, Asian Law, accessed Feb. 8, 2025, <https://uwapress.uw.edu/search-results/?series=asian-law-series>.

¹⁵³ Taisu Zhang, *The Laws and Economics of Confucianism: Kinship and Property in Pre-Industrial China and England* (Cambridge University Press, 2017); Taisu Zhang, *The Ideological Foundations of Qing Taxation: Belief Systems, Politics, and Institutions* (Cambridge University Press, 2022).

¹⁵⁴ Dan Fenno Henderson, *Conciliation and Japanese Law, Tokugawa and Modern*, 2 vols. (University of Washington Press, 1965).

¹⁵⁵ William Shaw, *Legal Norms in a Confucian State* (Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, Center for Korean Studies, 1981).

¹⁵⁶ Ngọc Huy Nguyễn, Văn Liêm Trần, and Văn Tài Tạ, *The Lê Code: Law in Traditional Vietnam: A Comparative Sino-Vietnamese Legal Study with Historical-Juridical Analysis and Annotations* (Ohio University Press, 1987).

¹⁵⁷ In-son Yu, *Law and Society in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Vietnam* (Asiatic Research Center, Korea University, 1990).

Asian Studies, University of California, published in 1988, employed the framework of international human rights law to explore the protection of human rights in Vietnamese dynastic laws.¹⁵⁸

History of Colonial Laws: The fifth category considers colonial laws in Asia. Most Asian countries were colonialized, and law and legal institutions were inherently tools of colonialism. Historical accounts of colonial laws in Asia include a 2020 book on colonial legal infrastructure in Southeast Asia by Nurfadzilah Yahaya, a Southeast Asia historian at Yale;¹⁵⁹ a book published in 2022 by Michael Ng, a legal historian at the HKU Faculty of Law, which explores political censorship in British Hong Kong;¹⁶⁰ a book published in 2014 by Mitra Sharafi, a legal historian of modern South Asia at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Law School, which examines the legal culture of the Parsis or Zoroastrians of British India.¹⁶¹

History of the Laws of Non-Colonized Countries and the Modern Development of the Laws of Former Colonies: Some works explore the history of the laws of non-colonized countries (Japan, China, and Thailand) and the post-colonial laws of former colonies. For example, Michael Ng published a monograph in 2014 on legal transplants in early 20th-century China¹⁶² and Jason Buhi, a legal scholar at Barry University's Dwayne O. Andreas School of Law, published a monograph in 2021 on Macau's constitutional history.¹⁶³ In the same year, Eugénie Mériéau, a French scholar of public law at the Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University, published a monograph on the monarchy and constitutional history in Thailand;¹⁶⁴ Rohit De, a legal historian at Yale who specializes in the legal history of modern South Asia, authored a book in 2018 exploring the role of individuals on the margins of society in shaping Indian constitutional culture.¹⁶⁵

History of Transnational Law: Works on the history of transnational law explores transnational encounters in the evolution of Asian laws and the reception of international law in Asia. Some works explore Western encounters with Chinese laws. For example, in a 2013 book, Teemu Ruskola, an interdisciplinary legal scholar at the University of Pennsylvania's Carey Law School, investigated the history of "legal Orientalism" or Chinese laws in the Western imagination;¹⁶⁶ in a monograph published in 2016, Li Chen, a legal historian at the University of Toronto, explored the imperial imagination of Chinese laws;¹⁶⁷ Ryan Mitchell, an expert on international law and Chinese laws and legal history at CUHK, pub-

¹⁵⁸ Văn Tài Tạ, *The Vietnamese Tradition of Human Rights* (Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 1988).

¹⁵⁹ Nurfadzilah Yahaya, *Fluid Jurisdictions: Colonial Law and Arabs in Southeast Asia* (Cornell University Press, 2021).

¹⁶⁰ Michael Ng, *Political Censorship in British Hong Kong: Freedom of Expression and the Law (1842–1997)* (Cambridge University Press, 2022).

¹⁶¹ Mitra Sharafi, *Law and Identity in Colonial South Asia: Parsi Legal Culture, 1772–1947* (Cambridge University Press, 2014).

¹⁶² Michael Ng, *Legal Transplantation in Early Twentieth-Century China: Practicing Law in Republican Beijing (1910s–1930s)* (Routledge, 2014).

¹⁶³ Jason Buhi, *Global Constitutional Narratives of Autonomous Regions: The Constitutional History of Macau* (Routledge, 2021).

¹⁶⁴ Eugénie Mériéau, *Constitutional Bricolage: Thailand's Sacred Monarchy vs. the Rule of Law* (Hart, 2022).

¹⁶⁵ Rohit De, *A People's Constitution: The Everyday Life of Law in the Indian Republic* (Princeton University Press, 2018).

¹⁶⁶ Teemu Ruskola, *Legal Orientalism: China, the United States, and Modern Law* (Harvard University Press, 2013).

lished a 2022 monograph on the history of Western-imposed legal structures in China and Chinese officials, jurists, and citizens' engagements with international law;¹⁶⁸ Priyasha Saksena, a legal historian at the University of Leeds, authored a book in 2023 on the history of the international law concept of sovereignty in the princely States of colonial South Asia.¹⁶⁹

D. Asian Comparative Law

The field of Asian laws is often integrated into the general discipline of comparative law.¹⁷⁰ However, Asian comparative law has emerged as a specific field with its own institutions and a substantive body of scholarship. The Asian Law Institute is largely an Asian association of comparative law. A dedicated journal to Asian comparative law has existed for decades. Specific scholarship on Asian comparative law is well-developed. Two prominent lines of the comparative study of Asian laws have emerged: comparative legal traditions and the comparative study of substantive areas of Asian laws.

Comparative Legal Traditions: A rich body of comparative scholarship explores Asian legal traditions, which are an intersection between comparative law and legal history.¹⁷¹ The difference, however, is that historical work traces the evolution of the legal traditions, while the comparative literature focuses on the legal traditions' institutions and substantive principles. Some works in Asian comparative law examine pre-modern legal traditions in Asia, including Confucian law,¹⁷² Islamic law,¹⁷³ Hindu law,¹⁷⁴ and Buddhist law.¹⁷⁵ Other works deal with Western legal traditions in modern Asia, including common law,¹⁷⁶ civil law,¹⁷⁷ and socialist law.¹⁷⁸

Substantive Comparative Law: An extensive body of literature in Asian comparative law explores various areas of substantive law. A rich body of Asian comparative constitutional law has been developed. Some work introduces general themes of comparative constitutional law in Asia.¹⁷⁹ Other specific literature

¹⁶⁷ Li Chen, *Chinese Law in Imperial Eyes: Sovereignty, Justice, and Transcultural Politics* (Columbia University Press, 2015).

¹⁶⁸ Ryan Martínez Mitchell, *Recentering the World: China and the Transformation of International Law* (Cambridge University Press, 2023).

¹⁶⁹ Priyasha Saksena, *Sovereignty, International Law, and the Princely States of Colonial South Asia* (Oxford University Press, 2023).

¹⁷⁰ Uwe Kischel, *Comparative Law* (Oxford University Press, 2019).

¹⁷¹ Thomas Duve, "Legal Traditions: A Dialogue between Comparative Law and Comparative Legal History," *Comparative Legal History* 6, no. 1 (June 2018): 15–33.

¹⁷² Marie Seong-Hak Kim, "Commensurability, Comparative Law, and Confucian Legal Tradition," in *A Cosmopolitan Jurisprudence: Essays in Memory of H. Patrick Glenn*, edited by Helge Dedek (Cambridge University Press, 2024): 202–20.

¹⁷³ Khaled Abou El Fadl, "The Islamic Legal Tradition," in *The Cambridge Companion to Comparative Law*, edited by Mauro Bussani and Ugo Mattei, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012): 295–312

¹⁷⁴ Werner F Menski, *Hindu Law: Beyond Tradition and Modernity* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009).

¹⁷⁵ Benjamin Schonthal, "Buddhists Rules about Rules: Procedure and Process in the (Theravada) Buddhist Legal System," *American Journal of Comparative Law* 69, no. 3 (Sept. 2021): 539–73.

¹⁷⁶ Kwai Hang Ng and Brynna Jacobson, "How Global is the Common Law? A Comparative Study of Asian Common Law Systems Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Singapore," *Asian Journal of Comparative Law* 12, no. 2 (Dec. 2017): 209–32.

¹⁷⁷ Yuka Kaneko, ed., *Civil Law Reforms in Post-Colonial Asia: Beyond Western Capitalism* (Springer, 2019).

¹⁷⁸ Hualing Fu et al., eds, *Socialist Law in Socialist East Asia* (Cambridge University Press, 2018).

¹⁷⁹ Rosalind Dixon and Tom Ginsburg, eds., *Comparative Constitutional Law in Asia* (Edward Elgar Publishing, 2015); Wen-Chen Chang et al., *Constitutionalism in Asia: Cases and Materials* (Hart Publishing,

explores various forms (e.g., liberal, socialist, hybrid, military, Islamic, Buddhist, and Confucian) of constitutionalism in the region.¹⁸⁰ Other works explore issues of constitutional design, such as constitution-making and constitutional amendments.¹⁸¹ Some works examine structural issues, such as courts and parliaments.¹⁸² Other scholarship deals with constitutional rights.¹⁸³ Scholarship in other areas of Asian comparative public law includes comparative administrative law¹⁸⁴ and comparative criminal law.¹⁸⁵

Another body of comparative scholarship explores various aspects of laws pertaining to private rights and the market in Asia. A significant body of scholarship on comparative contract law in Asia has been produced. To illustrate, Professor Mindy Chen-Wishart is leading a six-book project on contract laws in fourteen Asian jurisdictions, four of which have been published—those analyzing remedies for breach of contract,¹⁸⁶ contract formation and third-party beneficiaries,¹⁸⁷ the contents of contracts and unfair terms,¹⁸⁸ and a contract's invalidity.¹⁸⁹ Also, a sophisticated literature on comparative corporate law in Asia has been developed, which includes works on independent directors,¹⁹⁰ derivative actions,¹⁹¹ shareholders' fiduciary duties,¹⁹² sustainability and corporate mechanisms,¹⁹³ and

2014).

¹⁸⁰ Albert Chen, ed., *Constitutionalism in Asia in the Early Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge University Press, 2014); Michael W. Dowdle and Michael A. Wilkinson, eds., *Constitutionalism beyond Liberalism* (Cambridge University Press, 2018) (covering socialist and Islamic constitutionalism); Mark Tushnet, "Authoritarian Constitutionalism," *Cornell Law Review* 100, no. 2 (Jan. 2015): 391–462; Benjamin Schonthal, "Formations of Buddhist Constitutionalism in South and Southeast Asia," *International Journal of Constitutional Law* 15, no. 3 (July 2017): 705–33; Chaihark Hahm, "Ritual and Constitutionalism: Disputing the Ruler's Legitimacy in a Confucian Polity," *American Journal of Comparative Law* 57, no. 1 (Winter 2009): 135–204; Melissa Crouch, "Pre-Emptive Constitution-Making: Authoritarian Constitutionalism and the Military in Myanmar," *Law & Society Review* 54, no. 2 (June 2020): 487–515.

¹⁸¹ Ngọc Sơn Bùi and Mara Malagodi, eds., *Asian Comparative Constitutional Law: Volume 1: Constitution-Making* (Hart Publishing, 2023); Ngọc Sơn Bùi and Mara Malagodi, eds., *Asian Comparative Constitutional Law, Volume 2: Constitutional Amendments* (Hart Publishing, 2024); Kumarasingham, Harshan, ed., *Constitution Making in Asia: Decolonisation and State-Building in the Aftermath of the British Empire* (Routledge, 2018).

¹⁸² Po Jen Yap, *Courts and Democracies in Asia* (Cambridge University Press, 2017); Yvonne Tew, *Constitutional Statecraft in Asian Courts* (Oxford University Press, 2020).

Yasser Kureshi, *Seeking Supremacy: The Pursuit of Judicial Power in Pakistan* (Cambridge University Press, 2022); Po Jen Yap and Rehan Abeyratne, eds., *Routledge Handbook of Asian Parliaments* (Routledge, 2023).

¹⁸³ See, e.g., Jamal Greene and Madhav Khosla, "Constitutional Rights in South Asia: Introduction," *International Journal of Constitutional Law* 16, no. 2 (Apr. 2018): 470–74.

¹⁸⁴ Tom Ginsburg and Albert Chen, *Administrative Law and Governance in Asia: Comparative Perspectives* (Routledge, 2009).

¹⁸⁵ Danielle Ireland-Piper, *Extraterritoriality in East Asia: Extraterritorial Criminal Jurisdiction in China, Japan, and South Korea* (Edward Elgar, 2021).

¹⁸⁶ Mindy Chen-Wishart, Alexander Loke, and Burton Ong, eds., *Studies in the Contract Laws of Asia I: Remedies for Breach of Contract* (Oxford University Press, 2016).

¹⁸⁷ Mindy Chen-Wishart, Alexander Loke, and Burton Ong, eds., *Studies in the Contract Laws of Asia II: Formation and Third Party Beneficiaries* (Oxford University Press, 2018).

¹⁸⁸ Mindy Chen-Wishart and Stefan Vogenauer, *Studies in the Contract Laws of Asia III: The Contents of Contracts and Unfair Terms* (Oxford University Press, 2020).

¹⁸⁹ Mindy Chen-Wishart, Stefan Vogenauer, and Hiroo Sono, eds., *Studies in the Contract Laws of Asia IV: Invalidity* (Oxford University Press, 2022).

¹⁹⁰ Dan W. Puchniak, Harald Baum, and Luke Nottage, eds., *Independent Directors in Asia: A Historical, Contextual and Comparative Approach* (Cambridge University Press, 2017).

¹⁹¹ Dan W. Puchniak, Harald Baum, and Michael Ewing-Chow, *The Derivative Action in Asia: A Comparative and Functional Approach* (Cambridge University Press, 2012).

¹⁹² Ernest Lim, *A Case for Shareholders' Fiduciary Duties in Common Law Asia* (Cambridge University Press, 2021).

¹⁹³ Ernest Lim, *Sustainability and Corporate Mechanisms in Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023).

social enterprises.¹⁹⁴ The market-related scholarship includes works in other substantive areas, such as financial laws,¹⁹⁵ competition laws,¹⁹⁶ and intellectual property laws.¹⁹⁷

E. Asian Laws and Society

Asian laws and society scholarship focuses on Asian laws and legal institutions as social phenomena.¹⁹⁸ In addition to the solid institutionalization of an association and a journal, the field has produced a sophisticated body of scholarship. The recent book *The Asian Law and Society Reader* provides a useful explanation of the field's nature, evolution, features, and major themes.¹⁹⁹ The book's content includes religion, legal pluralism, dispute resolution, legal consciousness, legal mobilization, the legal profession, courts, and crime and justice.²⁰⁰ These topics may overlap with those of comparative law, but law and society scholars employ distinctive theories and methodologies that differentiate the topic from comparative law.

F. Asian Laws and Economics

The field of Asian laws and economics involves the economic analyses of various aspects of public and private laws in Asia. Together with the institutional underpinnings of an association and a journal, a rich body of Asian laws and economics has been produced. Two major trends are reflected in the literature: constitutional economics and the legal origin thesis in law and finance. Some scholars employ methods of constitutional economics to analyze constitutional issues in Asia. To illustrate, Eric C. Ip draws on constitutional economics to explain issues involving public laws in Hong Kong.²⁰¹ His recent book articulates a transaction cost theory to explain the divergence of constitutional review in Hong Kong and Macau.²⁰²

The second trend in Asian laws and economics engages (usually critically) with the legal origin thesis in law and finance literature, which posits that law matters for financial development, and the common law provides better legal protections for financial development than civil law.²⁰³ Scholars point out that China provides a counterexample for this thesis: "In spite of relatively poorer applicable

¹⁹⁴ Lim, Ernest Lim, *Social Enterprises in Asia: A New Legal Form* (Cambridge University Press, 2023).

¹⁹⁵ Douglas W. Arner et al., eds, *Research Handbook on Asian Financial Law* (Edward Elgar, 2020).

¹⁹⁶ Amber Darr, *Competition Law in South Asia: Policy Diffusion and Transfer* (Cambridge University Press, 2023); Steven Van Uytsel, Shuya Hayashi, and John Owen Haley, eds. *Research Handbook on Asian Competition Law* (Edward Elgar, 2020).

¹⁹⁷ Christoph Antons and Michael Blakeney, eds., *Intellectual Property Law in South East Asia* (Edward Elgar, 2023).

¹⁹⁸ Lynette J Chua, David M Engel, and Sida Liu, *The Asian Law and Society Reader* (Cambridge University Press, 2023), 3.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁰ For some books on these issues, see Lynette J. Chua, *The Politics of Rights and Southeast Asia* (Cambridge University Press, 2022); Lynette J. Chua, *The Politics of Love in Myanmar: LGBT Mobilization and Human Rights as a Way of Life* (Stanford University Press, 2019); Xin He, *Divorce in China: Institutional Constraints and Gendered Outcomes* (New York: New York University Press, 2021); Kwai Hang Ng and Xin He, *Embedded Courts: Judicial Decision-Making in China* (Cambridge University Press, 2018); Tu Phuong Nguyen, *Law and Precarity: Legal Consciousness and Daily Survival in Vietnam* (Cambridge University Press, 2023); Mark Sidel, *Law and Society in Vietnam* (Cambridge University Press, 2008).

²⁰¹ Eric C. Ip, "The Constitution of Economic Liberty in Hong Kong," *Constitutional Political Economy* 26, no. 3 (Sept. 2015): 307–27.

²⁰² Eric C. Ip, *Hybrid Constitutionalism: The Politics of Constitutional Review in the Chinese Special Administrative Regions* (Cambridge University Press, 2020).

legal protection and standard financing channels, the Private Sector has been growing much faster than the others and has been contributing to most of the economy's growth."²⁰⁴

The literature in the area of Asian laws and economics examines various aspects of private law (such as contract laws, tort laws, property law, and corporate law)s.²⁰⁵ Again, these issues overlap with the general field of comparative law, but laws and economics scholars employ tools of economics to analyze various issues, which renders Asian laws and economics a distinctive kind of scholarship.

G. International Law in Asia

International law in Asia scholarship examines the practices of Asian jurisdictions concerning international law. Apart from the institutionalization of an association and journal, there is a significant body of scholarship on international law in Asia. For example, the recent *Oxford Handbook of International Law in Asia and the Pacific* presents studies on two major themes in the field:²⁰⁶ generic and jurisdictional. The generic themes include the historical development of Asia's engagement with international law, regional organizations (e.g., ASEAN), regional peace and security, human rights, international humanitarian law, international criminal law, international environmental law, the law of the sea, international economic law, and dispute settlement.²⁰⁷ The jurisdictional themes involve contributions of individual Asian States to the development of international law.²⁰⁸

IV. ANALYSIS

A. Development Patterns of Asian Laws

The diverse institutions and fields of Asian laws follow a few common patterns, characterized here as formation, transition, and transformation.

1. Formation

The formative development of Asian legal studies occurred between the 1950s and the 1970s and was connected to the post-war and post-colonial reconstruction of Asian legal systems. This legal reconstruction in Asia was triggered by

²⁰³ Rafael La Porta, Florencio Lopez-de-Silanes, and Andrei Shleifer, "The Economic Consequences of Legal Origins," *Journal of Economic Literature* 46, no. 2 (2008): 285–332.

²⁰⁴ Franklin Allen, Jun Qian, and Meijun Qian, "Law, finance, and economic growth in China," *Journal of Financial Economics* 77, no 1 (2005): 57–116, 59. See also Shitong Qiao, "Finance against Law: The Case of China," *Harvard International Law Journal* 64, no. 2 (Spring 2023): 431–88.

²⁰⁵ Yun-chien Chang, Wei Shen, and Wenyu Wang, eds., *Private Law in China and Taiwan: Legal and Economic Analyses* (Cambridge University Press, 2018).

²⁰⁶ Simon Chesterman, Hisashi Owada, and Ben Saul, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of International Law in Asia and the Pacific* (Oxford University Press, 2019).

²⁰⁷ For books on some of these themes, see Pasha L. Hsieh, *New Asian Regionalism in International Economic Law* (Cambridge University Press, 2023); Pasha L. Hsieh and Bryan Mercurio, eds., *ASEAN Law in the New Regional Economic Order: Global Trends and Shifting Paradigms* (Cambridge University Press, 2020); Emma Palmer, *Adapting International Criminal Justice in Southeast Asia: Beyond the International Criminal Court* (Cambridge University Press, 2022); Suzannah Linton, Timothy L.H. McCormack, and Sandesh Sivakumaran, eds., *Asia-Pacific Perspectives on International Humanitarian Law* (Cambridge University Press, 2020); Gary F. Bell, ed., *The UNCITRAL Model Law and Asian Arbitration Laws: Implementation and Comparisons* (Cambridge University Press, 2018).

²⁰⁸ Some books on the jurisdictional aspects tend to focus on large and developed countries. See, e.g., Hidehisa Horinouchi, *Japan's Practice of International Law* (Leiden University Press, 2023); Congyan Cai, *The Rise of China and International Law: Taking Chinese Exceptionalism Seriously* (Oxford University Press, 2019).

global events, namely, the end of World War II and the breakdown of colonialism in the region between 1945 and 1960. After World War II, Japan reconstructed its legal system and emerged as the first developed nation in Asia, which made its mixed legal development (embracing elements of both European civil law and US common law) attractive to legal academics.²⁰⁹ South Korea and Taiwan also reconstructed their legal systems after the end of Japanese colonial rule.²¹⁰ In Southeast Asia, many countries rebuilt their legal systems after gaining independence, “in which it was assumed that the logic of ‘law-and-development’ would result in the convergence of all Asian legal systems along Western lines.”²¹¹ In the late 1970s, China restored a socialist legal system in conjunction with economic reforms made after the period of legal nihilism caused by the Cultural Revolution.²¹² The establishment of a new legal system after war, colonialism, and tumultuous political events like China’s Cultural Revolution necessitated the creation of public legal institutions, including a general constitutional framework, a legislature to create law, an administrative system to enforce the law, and a court system to resolve legal disputes.

In addition, post-war legal construction in East Asia was shaped by a developmental State. The concept of “developmental State” is often used by scholars of political economy to refer to the active role played by governments in promoting economic development in post-WWII Japan and other East Asian contexts.²¹³ To promote economic development, these governments implemented a series of industrial policies, “including tariff protection, subsidies, and other types of controls aimed at developing selected productive sectors of economic activity.”²¹⁴ Law played an instrumental role in the developmental States. Countries used law to implement industrial policies. For example, the Japanese government enacted the Foreign Capital Law to allow the Ministry of Trade and Industry “to negotiate the price and conditions for the import of technology.”²¹⁵ Developmental States require public institutions to implement policy directions, and this explained the focus on public law in post-war and post-colonial legal development in East Asia.

Early studies in Asian laws during the formative period were a response to the post-war, post-colonial reconstruction of Asian legal systems. The formative institutionalization of Asian laws involved the modest creations of some centers/programs and a journal mainly in the US and Australia with a narrow jurisdictional focus on East Asia, particularly Japan and China. Like institutional underpinnings, US scholarship during this period was preoccupied with East Asian laws. Scholarship outside the US, as Hooker’s works show, paid more attention to Southeast Asian laws. The formative scholarship tended to focus on questions foundational to the reconstruction of a legal system. Thus, public law is

²⁰⁹ Charles R. Stevens, “Modern Japanese Law as an Instrument of Comparison,” *American Journal of Comparative Law* 19, no. 4 (Fall 1971): 665–84.

²¹⁰ Tay-sheng Wang, “The Legal Development of Taiwan in the 20th Century: Toward a Liberal and Democratic Country,” *Pacific Rim Law & Policy Journal* 11, no. 3 (June 2002): 531–60.

²¹¹ Andrew Harding, “Global Doctrine and Local Knowledge: Law in Southeast Asia,” *International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 51, no. 1 (Jan. 2002): 35–54, 43.

²¹² Richard Baum, “Modernization and Legal Reform in Post-Mao China: The Rebirth of Socialist Legality,” *Studies in Comparative Communism* 19, no. 2 (1986): 69–103.

²¹³ For a classical work on this, see Chalmers Johnson, *MITI and the Japanese Miracle: The Growth of Industrial Policy, 1925–1975* (Stanford University Press, 1982).

²¹⁴ Esteban Pérez Caldentey, “The Concept and Evolution of the Developmental State,” *International Journal of Political Economy* 37, no. 3 (2008): 27–53, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23317224>.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 28.

a prominent theme in Asian legal studies during the 1950s–1970s period. Scholars studied constitutions, bureaucratic systems, and criminal systems in Asia. In addition, a sophisticated body of scholarship on East and Southeast Asian legal history was developed during this time. The reconstruction of the legal systems required the assessment of the previous and existing legal landscapes, which animated the studies of Asian legal history.

The formative development of Asian legal studies is reflective of the law and development movement in both institutional and substantive aspects. Some law and development actors directly supported the institutional development of Asian laws. For example, the Ford Foundation supported the creation of an Asian laws center and program at Harvard and the University of Washington. Substantively, some early writings on Asian laws resonated with prevailing ideas of liberal legalism in the early moments of law and development. The focus on Asian public law is connected to the post-war imagination of public law as more salient than private law as a developmental State needs public entities to formulate and implement its policy objectives.²¹⁶

The emphasis on Asian legal history also reflects the idea of liberal legalism to some extent. Kennedy points out the following:

Legal anthropologists and sociologists studying traditional or primitive societies tended to search for functional equivalents to the legal institutions familiar in the developed world—legislation, dispute resolution, contract, and so forth. If anything, their work supported the background notion that traditional societies were functionally similar to, if more primitive than, modern societies, suggesting that there was no inherent reason why they could not come to function along modern lines.²¹⁷

This idea is embodied in some post-war studies of Asian legal history.

Some scholars have searched for functional similarities of institutions of Asian traditional systems with institutions of modern national and transnational legal systems in the Western world. William Shaw, for example, employed the concepts of modern legal systems (law-making, legislation, and dispute resolution) to explore the legal norms of the Chosŏn Confucian State. Ta Van Tai relied on the framework of international human rights law to discuss Vietnamese traditional laws. The functional implication is that traditional laws are not an impediment to Asia's legal modernization.

2. *Transition*

The second pattern in the development of Asian laws studies is connected to transitional legal developments in the Post-Cold War context of the third wave of democratization, economic development, and legal reform in Asia during the 1980s and 1990s. Legal development during this period is transitional in the sense of legal responses to authoritarian rules in a contingent manner: legal change is both reflective of the preceding old legal order and constructive to the emergence

²¹⁶ David Kennedy, "Law and Development Economics: Toward a New Alliance" in *Law and Economics with Chinese Characteristics: Institutions for Promoting Development in the Twenty-First Century*, edited by David Kennedy and Joseph E Stiglitz (Oxford University Press, 2013), 26.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 28.

of a new legal order.²¹⁸ The radical transition from authoritarian regimes into democracies in Asia (particularly in Korea, Taiwan, Indonesia, and Mongolia) in the late 20th century led to the reconstruction of public laws in these jurisdictions.²¹⁹ Economic development in Japan and the Four Tigers (South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and Hong Kong)²²⁰ in the late 20th century led to legal reforms (particularly in private law) to support economic development.²²¹ In addition, the remaining socialist countries (China and Vietnam) in the 1990s carried legal reforms (again, particularly in private law) to support the socialist market economy.²²²

These transitional legal developments are reflected in the study of Asian laws beyond Japan and China. Asian laws centers and programs were further expanded in US law schools (e.g., NYU, Columbia, Yale, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison). Some US law schools further created and expanded journals on Asian laws. In Australia, Melbourne Law School expanded the scope of its Asian Law Centre beyond East Asia, and the University of Sydney Law School created an Asian laws center focusing on a wide range of Asian jurisdictions. Beyond the US and Australia, the transitional era witnessed the creation of some Asian laws centers in Asia (Japan and Hong Kong) and Europe (the UK and Germany). Consistent with institutional development, substantive scholarship also expanded beyond East Asia. As a reflection of legal development, scholarship focused more on contemporary private law issues. Studies of Asian legal history tended to decline as legal scholarship became preoccupied with contemporary issues associated with market reforms and democratization.

Asian laws scholarship during the transitional period echoed the revival of law and development in the 1980s and 1990s. A body of scholarship (the interaction of comparative law, law and society, and international law) dealt with the role of law and legal institutions in economic development in a wide range of Asian jurisdictions.²²³ This literature resonated with common ideas of neoliberal legalism on the rule of law, which largely meant the protection of private property, freedom of contract, and judicial independence.²²⁴

3. Transformation

The third pattern in the development of Asian legal studies is its transformation in the 21st century, which is projected as the “Asian century.”²²⁵ One basis for this term is the region’s continuing economic development. China and

²¹⁸ Ruti Teitel, “Transitional Jurisprudence: The Role of Law in Political Transformation,” *Yale Law Journal* 106, no. 7 (May 1997): 2009–80, 2016.

²¹⁹ Tom Ginsburg, *Judicial Review in New Democracies: Constitutional Courts in Asian Cases* (Cambridge University Press, 2003).

²²⁰ World Bank, *The East Asian Miracle: Economic Growth and Public Policy* (Oxford University Press for the World Bank, 1993).

²²¹ Katharina Pistor, Philip A. Wellons, and Jeffrey Sachs, *The Role of Law and Legal Institutions in Asian Economic Development 1960–1995* (Oxford University Press, 1999).

²²² John Gillespie and Penelope Nicholson, eds., *Asian Socialism & Legal Change: The Dynamics of Vietnamese and Chinese Reform* (ANU E Press, 2005).

²²³ Kanishka Jayasuriya, ed., *Law, Capitalism and Power in Asia: The Rule of Law and Legal Institutions* (Routledge, 1999); Robert L. Brown and Alan S. Gutterman, *Asian Economic and Legal Development: Uncertainty, Risk, and Legal Efficiency* (Kluwer Law International, 1998).

²²⁴ Kennedy, “Law and Development Economics,” 43–45 (n 219).

²²⁵ John West, *Asian Century... on a Knife-Edge: A 360 Degree Analysis of Asia’s Recent Economic Development* (Springer Nature, 2018).

India have emerged as major global economic powers.²²⁶ Despite a recent recession, Japan's economy remains one of the world's top economies.²²⁷ In a few decades, the Four Tigers (South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore) developed from agrarian economies into high-income economies.²²⁸ They serve as the model for the Tiger Cub Economies, the five emerging industrialized economies in Southeast Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam).²²⁹ A 2011 report by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) predicted the following:

Asia is in the middle of a historic transformation. If it continues to follow its recent trajectory, by 2050 its per capita income could rise sixfold in purchasing power parity (PPP) terms to reach Europe's levels today. It would make some 3 billion additional Asians affluent by current standards. By nearly doubling its share of global gross domestic product (GDP) to 52 percent by 2050, Asia would regain the dominant economic position it held some 300 years ago, before the industrial revolution.²³⁰

In addition to economic development, a wide range of other factors account for Asia's rise in this new century. Singapore diplomat Kishore Mahbubani argues that the rise of Asia resulted from Asian societies absorbing and implementing seven pillars of Western wisdom: free market economics; a mastery of science and technology; a culture of pragmatism; meritocracy; a culture of peace; the rule of law; and education.²³¹

Development requires legal underpinnings. Legal transformation is, therefore, part of Asia's development. An important feature of legal transformation in Asia in the 21st century is the influence of legal globalization. Legal development in many Asian countries involves the adoption and adaption of global legal ideas, institutions, models, and discourses.²³² This, in turn, has stemmed from various global triggers, such as the integration of national economies into the global economy, the influence of international trade agreements on domestic law, the continued expansion of the international law and development movement, and the internationalization of legal education.²³³

The global transformation of law in Asia is reflected in the transformation of Asian legal studies. Major new features of Asian legal studies in the 21st century include high institutionalization, global reach, decentralization, jurisdictional expansion, and pluralization.

²²⁶ Ibid., 2–3.

²²⁷ "The Top 5 Economies in The World by 2028," *FocusEconomics*, Dec. 22, 2023, <https://www.focus-economics.com/blog/the-largest-economies-in-the-world/>.

²²⁸ West, *Asian Century*, 8 (n 228).

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ Harinder S. Kohli, Ashok Sharma, and Anil Sood, *Asia 205: Realizing the Asian Century* (Sage, 2011), 1.

²³¹ Kishore Mahbubani, "The Not-So-Surprising Rise of China and India," *Journal of International Affairs* 64, no. 2 (2011): 221–26, 223.

²³² See generally, John Gillespie and Penelope Nicholson, *Law and Development and the Global Discourses of Legal Transfers* (Cambridge University Press, 2012).

²³³ Ngoc Son Bui, "Vertical Law and Development," *Cornell International Law Journal* 54, no. 1 (Spring 2021): 1–46; Stacey Steele and Kathryn Taylor, *Legal Education in Asia: Globalization, Change and Contexts* (Routledge, 2011).

First, the study of Asian laws has been highly institutionalized. The majority of institutions supporting Asian laws have been created in the 21st century. Forty-six of the fifty-seven Asian laws centers/programs were created during or after 2000. Of the fifty-four Asian laws journals, thirty were created during or after 2000. Nine out of ten Asian laws associations were created during or after 2000.

Second, there has been a global expansion of Asian legal studies. This has involved the dramatic spread of institutions supporting the study of Asian laws around the world. Indeed, most institutions of Asian laws in Asia and Europe have been created in the 21st century. An important development in this global reach is the creation of institutions of Asian laws in Asia. The 21st century has witnessed the creation of associations for various aspects of Asian laws, including law and economics, international law, law and society, constitutional law, legal history, and the legal profession. These associations were initiated by Asian scholars and are housed in Asia. This development indicates efforts to consolidate the institutional base of Asian legal studies within Asia. The study and teaching of Asian laws no longer prevail in Western countries but have moved to Asia. Ralf Michaels observes that “[a]s Asia is a Western concept, so is the idea of ‘Asian’ law (as opposed to Chinese, or Buddhist, etc). Courses in ‘Asian’ or ‘East Asian’ laws have been long taught primarily in Europe and the United States, not Asia.”²³⁴ Several law schools in Asia, such as NUS, SMU, the University of Tokyo, and the University of Hong Kong now offer comparative and foreign Asian laws courses in English. Courses in Chinese laws are also taught in Africa. Substantively, Asian laws scholarship is produced by academics around the world.

The third feature is decentralization in the development of Asian laws. In the 20th century, centers/programs of Asian laws were concentrated in a few elite Western law schools. In the 21st century, however, these centers/programs are widely distributed around the world in both elite law schools and beyond. The production of Asian laws scholarship has also been decentralized and now involves the contributions of academics at various institutions in different countries around the globe.

The fourth feature involves the jurisdictional expansion of Asian legal studies. Beyond China and Japan, other large and developed jurisdictions are covered, including South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, and Indonesia. In addition, the field has considerably engaged with the laws of some small and developing Asian countries, such as Myanmar, North Korea, and Vietnam. Other works on the laws of South Asian and Central Asian jurisdictions were also produced during the transformative period.

The fifth feature is the pluralization of the themes and topics of the institutions and scholarship of Asian laws. Asian laws centers/programs now engage in activities on a wide range of legal topics. Journals have published a more diverse selection of papers. Asian laws courses cover a variety of legal issues. Asian scholarship covers a wide range of topics in legal theory, legal history, comparative law, law and economics, law and society, and international law. Particularly, Asian legal studies are not merely dominated by private law but have expanded to public law. The studies also deal more with philosophical and historical legal

²³⁴ Ralf Michaels, “How Asian Should Asian Law Be?” in *Convergence and Divergence of Private Law in Asia* ed. Gary Low (Cambridge University Press, 2022): 227–51, 232.

questions. Most works about Asian jurisprudence have emerged in the 21st century. The study of Asian legal history has returned; an association on Asian legal history and a society on Chinese law have been established during the transformative period. The historical scholarship tends to be jurisdiction-focused. While China remains the common focus, the literature has expanded to Southeast and South Asian countries.²³⁵ The study of pre-modern legal historical issues has continued but has expanded to the modern history of colonial legal institutions, constitutional arrangement, and international law.

B. Why Study Asian Laws?

The global development of Asian legal studies is driven by two major factors: the deontological pursuit of knowledge about Asian laws and the instrumental necessity of understanding Asian laws.

1. Deontological Logic: Knowledge

Academic inquiry, including inquiry into other's laws, is driven by intellectual curiosity and the search for new knowledge.²³⁶ With the same logic, the study of Asian laws is animated by the intellectual endeavor to generate new knowledge. The study of Asian laws is impelled by the intrinsic meaning of study. Tom Ginsburg, who has written voluminously on legal issues related to Asia, particularly on comparative law, law and society, and international law, states that

[t]he study of law is a practical discipline, but it is also an academic one and academic inquiry by its nature involves a certain responsibility to follow one's interests regardless of "payoff." To say that Japanese, or German, or Chinese law are worth studying because those jurisdictions are large and important is to imply that the study of, say, Tibet, Fiji or Mongolia is unimportant. But knowledge, it has been said, is "capable of being its own end" and this is as true in law as in literature. One can unapologetically study a foreign legal system simply for its own sake.²³⁷

The study of Asian laws is driven by the same academic impulse. Asian laws are studied for their own sake. Intrinsic attraction drives the academic search for new knowledge about Asian laws. Asian laws are inquisitively attractive for at least four reasons: antiquity, diversity, complexity, and irregularity.

Antiquity: Law has a centennial history in Asia. To illustrate, Asian laws prominently feature in the seminal book *The Rule of Laws*, in which legal anthropologist Fernanda Pirie traces the four thousand years of development of the world's great legal systems—Chinese, Indian, Roman, Islamic—and other smaller traditions.²³⁸ The Indian Brahmins "drafted their first legal texts in the second century of the common era, but their rules and principles were rooted in traditions that stretched back to the very origins of the Vedas more than a thousand years earlier."²³⁹ The Chinese legal system also has a tradition of more than two thousand

²³⁵ Mitra Sharafi, "South Asian Legal History," *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 11 (2015): 309–36.

²³⁶ Ran Hirschl, *Comparative Matters: The Renaissance of Comparative Constitutional Law* (Oxford University Press, 2016), 148.

²³⁷ Tom Ginsburg, "Studying Japanese Law Because It's There," *American Journal of Comparative Law* 58, no. 1 (Winter 2010): 15–26, 16.

²³⁸ Fernanda Pirie, *The Rule of Laws: A 4,000-Year Quest to Order the World* (Profile Books 2021).

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, 46.

years.²⁴⁰ The antiquity of Asian laws, which often include mysterious and unknown elements, evokes academic curiosity. The antiquity explains a great deal of Asian legal studies, particularly in the areas of legal history, comparative law, and legal anthropology.

Diversity: Asia is a diverse region, and this is translated into its laws. *Ethnic* diversity is reflected in the plurality of customary laws of different ethnic groups. *Religious* diversity is embodied in various religious legal systems (Islamic, Hindu, and Buddhist). The diversity in the presence of *imperial powers* (e.g., British, French, Dutch, Portuguese, Spanish, American, and Soviet) in the region has led to the existence of different legal systems in the region, including common law (e.g., India, Singapore, Malaysia, and Hong Kong), civil law (e.g., South Korea, Taiwan, Indonesia), socialist law (e.g., central Asia), and mixed (e.g., the Philippines). *Regime* diversity is also manifested in law. Asia is the home of various political regimes, including stable democracies, fragile democracies, military regimes, an absolute monarchy, socialist regimes, and hybrid regimes. This regime diversity spawns various models of democratic law and authoritarian law, which in turn makes the study of Asian laws attractive.

Complexity: The trajectory of laws in Asia is highly complex, which motivates academic investigations. In pre-modern times, many Asian countries practiced customary law and applied State laws. In many dynamic regimes in Asia, State law was changed (sometimes dramatically) following the change of the ruling dynasty. In modern times, colonialism brought new layers of law to many Asian countries. Following the decolonization process, legacies of colonial law are retained, supplemented by new layers of law constructed by legal transplants or autonomous innovations. Due to this complex evolution, many legal systems in Asia include multiple layers of law, although some layers may be more prominent than others. The legal system of an Asian jurisdiction may include layers of indigenous laws, dynastic laws, religious laws, modern national laws, and global law. For example, the Chinese modern legal system is a mixture of customary law,²⁴¹ Islamic law,²⁴² Buddhist law,²⁴³ Confucian law,²⁴⁴ Soviet-socialist law,²⁴⁵ civil law,²⁴⁶ common law,²⁴⁷ transnational law,²⁴⁸ and global law.²⁴⁹ The integration, overlapping, contraction, and enlargement of multiple layers of Chinese laws instigate academic inquiry.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 71.

²⁴¹ Zhou Yong and Brian Donahoe, “Law and Anthropology in China: A Roundtable Discussion at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology,” *Legal Pluralism and Critical Social Analysis* 55, no. 3 (2023): 453, 457.

²⁴² Matthew S. Erie, *China and Islam: The Prophet, the Party, and Law* (Cambridge University Press, 2016).

²⁴³ Rebecca Redwood French, “Buddhism and Law in Tibet,” in *Buddhism and Law: An Introduction*, eds. Rebecca Redwood French and Mark A. Nathan (Cambridge University Press, 2014): 305–18, 316.

²⁴⁴ Chenglin Liu, “Confucius and the Chinese Legal Tradition,” *Michigan State International Law Review* 28, no. 3 (2020): 477–534.

²⁴⁵ William Partlett, Eric C. Ip, “Is Socialist Law Really Dead?,” *New York University Journal of International Law and Politics* 48, no. 2 (Winter 2016): 463–512.

²⁴⁶ Hao Jiang, “The Making of a Civil Code in China: Promises and Perils of a New Civil Law,” *Tulane Law Review* 95, no. 4 (Apr. 2021): 777–820.

²⁴⁷ “Chinese Common Law: Guiding Cases and Judicial Reform,” *Harvard Law Review* 129, no. 8 (June 2016): 2213–34.

²⁴⁸ Matthew S. Erie, “Anticorruption as Transnational Law: The Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, PRC Law, and Party Rules in China,” *American Journal of Comparative Law* 67, no. 2 (Summer 2019): 233–80.

²⁴⁹ Alec Stone Sweet and Trevor T.W. Wan, “Global Constitutionalism and the People’s Republic of China: Dignity as the ‘Fundamental Basis’ of the Legal System?,” *International Journal of Constitutional Law* 21, no. 2 (2023): 433–60.

Irregularity: The laws in Asia sometimes contradict normal patterns of legal development and common assumptions about law, which also attracts academic attention. The presence of numerous legal codes in premodern East Asia runs counter to some Western imaginations, which has led to critical studies of legal orientalism and historical explorations of Asian dynamic laws. Turning to modern times, constitutions are normally enacted and imagined as the foundation of a democracy, but many Asian constitutions serve various democratic and authoritarian purposes. A number of studies about law and development in China were prompted by the fact that China can achieve great economic growth without the support of a strong rule of law, which is at odds with the neoliberal theory of law and development.

2. *Instrumentalist Logic: Necessity*

Academic inquiry into law is also driven by necessity.²⁵⁰ The study of Asian laws is motivated not only by the intrinsic meaning of the study but also by the study's extrinsic outcomes. The study of Asian laws is shaped by a wide range of instrumental necessities of various actors, including legislators, courts, practicing lawyers, governments, international agencies, social activists, and entrepreneurs. Categorically, global studies of Asian laws are induced by the following necessities:

Diplomatic Necessity: Sovereign States and international organizations need an understanding of the laws of Asian peoples to facilitate international relations. To illustrate, US studies of Chinese laws seek to facilitate a US-China mutual understanding of their respective legal systems, which is instrumental to their diplomatic relations. The study of Asian perspectives on international law is also necessary for diplomatic relations. The studies of Asian comparative law and international law in Asia particularly respond to this diplomatic demand.

Political Necessity: The study of Asian laws responds to the political agendas of foreign governments and international organizations to promote certain worldviews about Asian law. Law and development projects, for example, seek to promote democratization, human rights, and rule of law reforms in Asian developing countries. This requires the study of the existing legal conditions of the relevant jurisdictions. Transnational social movements also need legal knowledge about Asia to mobilize for social change there. For example, human rights NGOs that seek to change the situation of human rights in North Korea need some understanding of North Korean laws pertaining to human rights. Studies about law and human rights in North Korea respond to this political need.²⁵¹

Legislative Necessity: Asian laws are studied to facilitate legislative reform. Many Asian countries have engaged in reform of their legal systems largely through legislative enactments. This requires systemic knowledge and solutions guided by academic research. This instrumental consideration is embodied in both institutional underpinnings and the substantive scholarship of Asian laws. The creation of some Asian laws centers/programs has been driven by the need to provide support for legal reforms in Asian countries. Asian laws scholarship also seeks to formulate solutions for legal reforms in the region. Particularly, Asian laws and development scholarship is connected to the instrumental agendas of law and development actors. Some Western studies of Asian laws are also driven by the need to learn from the Asian experience to reform Western laws, as the case of US studies of Japanese

²⁵⁰ Hirschl, *Comparative Matters* 148 (n 239).

²⁵¹ Patricia Goedde, "Legal Mobilization for Human Rights Protection in North Korea: Furthering Discourse or Discord?," *Human Rights Quarterly* 32, no. 3 (2010): 530–74.

laws demonstrates.²⁵² Eric A. Feldman argues that the US can reform its gun laws by learning from the Japanese experience.²⁵³

Judicial Necessity: Another instrumental driver of Asian legal studies is the judicial need for knowledge of Asian laws. This stems from the emergence of transnational litigation.²⁵⁴ Western courts may need knowledge about Asian laws to decide cases involving Asian parties. To illustrate, in recent years, US courts have had to assess various aspects of Chinese laws, including arbitration, banking, competition, contracts, corporations, criminality, export, family relations, foreign exchange, foreign investment, jurisdiction, privilege, procedure, securities, service of process, State secrets, tortious conduct, and intellectual property.²⁵⁵ The judicial necessity in part explains the proliferation of Chinese legal studies in the US.

Lawyering Necessity: The study of Asian laws is now a necessity for many legal professionals. The globalization of the legal profession is evident in the proliferation of international law firms operating in many Asian jurisdictions.²⁵⁶ For example, by the end of 2020, 234 law firms from twenty-three countries and regions had established representative offices in mainland China.²⁵⁷ International law firms and lawyers need knowledge about the laws of the relevant Asian jurisdictions to provide legal services. Asian comparative law is particularly instrumental for this professional need.

Commercial Necessity: Commercial interests also drive the need for Asian legal studies. Entrepreneurs who invest in Asian jurisdictions need to know the local law to conduct business. Foreign investment, therefore, triggers academic research of Asian laws. Commercial necessity is a strong driving force of Chinese legal studies in Europe, Africa, and other places given China's huge market. Another aspect of commercial need involves the push towards a common legal framework (mainly private law) to facilitate transnational transactions in the region. This explains the emergence of scholarship on the convergence of private law in Asia.²⁵⁸

3. *Interplays*

Intellectual inquisitiveness and necessity may be overlapping factors of legal studies, but they can be analytically separated.²⁵⁹ The study of Asian laws is driven by the interplays of the intrinsic meaning of searching for knowledge on Asian laws and the external consequences of the knowledge. The presence of these factors varies in different times, places, jurisdictions, and disciplines. The study of Asian laws in the transitional and transformative period may be more responsive to instrumental needs than those of the formative period. The study of

²⁵² Eric A. Feldman, "The Death of Japanese Legal Studies? An American Perspective," U of Penn Law School, Public Law Research Paper no. 23-19, <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4452422>.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 19.

²⁵⁴ Anne-Marie Slaughter, "A Global Community of Courts," *Harvard International Law Journal* 44, no. 1 (Winter 2003): 191–220.

²⁵⁵ Mark Jia, "Illiberal Law in American Courts," *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* 168, no. 6 (May 2020): 1685–744, 1699–700. See also Donald Clarke, "Judging China: The Chinese Legal System in U.S. Courts," *University of Pennsylvania Journal of International Law* 44, no. 3 (Spring 2023): 455–618.

²⁵⁶ Holly McKechnie and Alex Ryan, "International round-up: Global 100 firms expand in the Middle East and Asia," *Legal Business*, Nov. 9, 2023, <https://www.legalbusiness.co.uk/blogs/international-round-up-global-100-firms-expand-in-the-middle-east-and-asia/>.

²⁵⁷ Ministry of Justice of China, "Statistical Analysis of Lawyers and Grassroots Legal Services in 2020," Ministry of Justice of China, June 11, 2021, https://www.moj.gov.cn/pub/sfbgw/zwxgk/fdzdgknr/fdzdgknrtjxx/202106/t20210611_427394.html.

²⁵⁸ Gary Low, ed., *Convergence and Divergence of Private Law in Asia* (Cambridge University Press, 2022).

²⁵⁹ Hirschl, *Comparative Matters* 149 (n 239).

Asian jurisprudence and legal history may be driven more by intellectual curiosity, while the study of Asian commercial laws is motivated more by instrumental considerations. Instrumental necessity is greater in large and developed countries like China and Japan and less so in small and developing Asian countries like Laos and Bhutan, where study is more inspired by the curiosity to gain unknown legal knowledge.

Instrumental necessity tends to play a stronger role than deontological searching for knowledge in shaping the current status of Asian legal studies. This is manifested in the substantive and jurisdictional focus of institutional agendas and scholarship. Asian laws centers/programs and Asian laws courses focus more on large and developing countries like China, Japan, South Korea, Indonesia, and India. Journals also publish more articles about the laws of these countries. To be sure, these nations' laws are compelling, which drives academic inquiry. However, studying the larger and more developed countries' laws tends to result in larger benefits, such as greater opportunities for investing and practicing law, which explains why those nations' legal infrastructures are studied more. Substantively, Asian legal studies tend to focus more on contemporary, cutting-edge legal matters than historical and philosophical issues. This focus is evidence that Asian legal studies are more useful for contemporary practice needs than academic investigations.

System of Asian Laws

As a consequence of six decades of development, the field of Asian laws has emerged as a complex system of legal knowledge. This intellectual system includes numerous strands of inquiry into Asian legal theory, legal history, comparative law, law and society, law and economics, and international law. The system of Asian laws presents two competing trends: integration and differentiation, which are both described below.

4. Integration

The integration of Asian laws scholarship is both external and internal. Externally, Asian laws scholarship is part of general legal scholarship. The subfields of Asian legal studies are connected to the respective subfields in general legal studies (legal theory, legal history, etc.). This is particularly evident in general Asian legal scholarship. For example, inquiries into law and development in Asia engage with general accounts of law and development. The universality of the law constitutes the common base for the integration of Asian and general legal scholarship. Another factor lies in global triggers—that is, common global political-geographic events such as wars, decolonization, democratization, the law and development movement, and globalization. Consequently, legal development in Asia is part of the broader global legal development. This creates conditions for the integration of Asian legal studies into global legal studies. Institutional factors also drive the integration of Asian laws into general legal studies. International fellowships, visiting programs, exchange programs, and courses of internationalized law schools create the institutional conditions for integrating Asian legal discourse into the global legal discourse. Academic associations (particularly through their annual mega conferences) also supply venues where Asian legal studies can connect with global legal studies.

Internally, various fields and strands of scholarly inquiry can constitute the broader interdisciplinary field of Asian laws. At an abstract level, the laws of Asian peoples provide a common foundation for integrating Asian laws scholarship. Regardless of theoretical and methodological underpinnings, Asian jurisprudence, legal history, comparative law, and so on, deal with a common subject: the law of Asian peoples. At a more specific level, legal development in Asia is influenced by common factors, which lead to common themes integrated into various areas of law. These areas include religion, colonialism, pluralism, authoritarianism, and development. In the following section, I explain the embodiment of these themes and factors in Asian legal studies. I also identify certain lines of academic inquiry related to each theme and factor. These lines may overlap, but they are analytically distinguishable.

Religion: One common factor of legal development in Asia is religion. Given the influence of religions in the region, nearly all areas of Asian laws deal with religions, albeit in different ways. The literature includes philosophical, historical, comparative, socio-legal, economic, and international studies of relevant aspects of law-religion connections.²⁶⁰ Asian legal studies involving religion can be categorized as *religious jurisprudence* or legal theories in religious works; *religious law* or legal systems based on religions; or *religion law* or State law regulating religion.

Colonialism: It is common knowledge that legal development in modern Asia is shaped by colonialism since most Asian countries were colonized. The legal aspects of colonialism and decolonization are multidimensional, leading to their influence in many areas of Asian legal studies. This explains the emergence of scholarship dealing with law and colonialism in Asia from various perspectives. The scholarship on colonialism and law in Asia includes historical accounts of colonial legal infrastructures in the region, the colonial legacy in post-colonial legal development, the historical-economic study of law and the economy in colonial settings, comparative and jurisprudential explorations of Western imaginations of Asian traditional law, and inquiry into the impact of colonial legacies on international legal issues in Asia (e.g., the law of the sea, territorial disputes, and international dispute settlement).²⁶¹ Asian legal studies involving colonialism include *colonial jurisprudence* or legal theories underpinning colonial rule; *colonial law* or law and legal institutions created under colonial governments; and *post-colonial law* or the continuing influence of colonialism on the law and legal institutions of the independent Asian States.

Pluralism: Another common factor and theme of Asian laws is pluralism vis-à-vis the coexistence of different sources of normative orders. This pluralism is legally embodied in different ways. Consequently, pluralism is present in nearly all areas of Asian laws. The lines of Asian legal inquiry involving pluralism include pluralist jurisprudence, legal pluralism, and pluralist law. *Pluralist jurispru-*

²⁶⁰ E.g., Surya P. Subedi, *Human Rights in Eastern Civilisations : Some Reflections of a Former UN Special Rapporteur* (Edward Elgar Publishing, 2021); Jianlin Chen, *The Law and Religious Market Theory: China, Taiwan and Hong Kong* (Cambridge University Press, 2018); Jaclyn L. Neo, Arif A. Jamal, and Daniel Pei Siong Goh, eds., *Regulating Religion in Asia: Norms, Modes, and Challenges* (Cambridge University Press, 2020); Dian Abdul Hamed Shah, *Constitutions, Religion and Politics in Asia: Indonesia, Malaysia and Sri Lanka* (Cambridge University Press, 2017).

²⁶¹ In addition to various literature already cited, see Chin-hyon, Paek, Kevin Tan, and Sog-u Yi, eds., *Asian Approaches to International Law and the Legacy of Colonialism: The Law of the Sea, Territorial Disputes and International Dispute Settlement* (Routledge, 2013); Tirthankar Roy and Anand V Swamy, *Law and the Economy in Colonial India* (University of Chicago Press, 2016).

dence or “theories of law moving beyond, within or without [S]tate,” explores theoretical questions pertaining to “phenomena such as customary law, international/regional law, transnational law, religious law, indigenous law, and global law.”²⁶² These phenomena are replete in Asia, providing a cornucopia of resources for pluralist jurisprudential studies.²⁶³ The second line is *legal pluralism*, the co-existence of more than one legal system in a single jurisdiction. One driving force of legal pluralism in Asia resulted from colonizers introducing Western law while recognizing its coexistence with local law. In addition, many parts of Asia are marked by *ethnic pluralism*, which is translated into legal pluralism or the coexistence of ethnic groups’ customary law with State law. Consequently, legal pluralism is a common theme across areas of Asian laws. Legal pluralism and customary law involve aspects subjected to interdisciplinary and disciplinary treatments, such as anthropological accounts of customary law as the expression of the legalist (categorical and generalist) thinking and actions of indigenous people, historical studies of the evolution of legal pluralism under colonial settings, comparative study of legal pluralism as the coexistence of different legal orders in the same jurisdiction, and the study of indigenous people, including the right to maintain their distinctive legal institutions under international law.²⁶⁴ The third line of inquiry is *pluralist law*. The study of pluralist law examines the embodiment of value, moral, ethnic, and religious pluralism in State law, including constitutional law.²⁶⁵

Authoritarianism: A prevailing influence of traditional and modern legal development in Asia has been authoritarianism or the concentration of political power in the hands of a small number of political elites without significant accountability or constraint of that power. Long ago, German-American historian Karl A. Wittfogel explored “oriental despotism” or the hydraulic empire, mainly in Asia where the government exclusively controlled the access to water.²⁶⁶ The arrival of Western powers generated colonial authoritarianism in modern Asian history. In contemporary Asia, stable democracy has functioned in a few settings, and new authoritarianism in independent countries is the prevailing norm albeit in varied forms (e.g., personal, military, and single-party). In both traditional and modern practices, authoritarian rule in Asia is underpinned by law in various degrees. Authoritarianism is, therefore, a common theme cutting across areas of Asian laws. Numerous studies have explored the influences of authoritarianism on legal mobilization, private legal rights, constitutions, and international law in Asia from various historical, comparative, sociological, and economic perspectives.²⁶⁷

²⁶² Nicole Roughan and Andrew Halpin, “Introduction,” in *In Pursuit of Pluralist Jurisprudence*, ed. Nicole Roughan and Andrew Halpin (Cambridge University Press, 2017).

²⁶³ See, e.g., Masaji Chiba, ed., *Asian Indigenous Law: In Interaction with Received Law* (Routledge, 1986); Masaji Chiba, *Legal Pluralism: Toward a General Theory Through Japanese Legal Culture* (Tokai University Press, 1989).

²⁶⁴ UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, art. 5, Sept. 13, 2007, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/indigenous-peoples/un-declaration-rights-indigenous-peoples>.

²⁶⁵ Jaclyn L. Neo and Ngọc Sơn Bùi, eds., *Pluralist Constitutions in Southeast Asia* (Hart Publishing, 2019).

²⁶⁶ Karl August Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power* (Vintage Books, 1981).

²⁶⁷ E.g., Lynette J. Chua, *Mobilizing Gay Singapore Rights and Resistance in an Authoritarian State* (Temple University Press, 2014); Weizeng Chen and Hualing Fu, eds., *Authoritarian Legality in Asia: Formation, Development and Transition* (Cambridge University Press, 2022); Tom Ginsburg, “Authoritarian International Law?,” *American Journal of International Law* 114, no. 2 (Apr. 2020): 221–60, 243–45 (ASEAN’s authoritarian use of international law); Shitong Qiao, “The Authoritarian Commons: Divergent Paths of Neighborhood Democratization in Three Chinese Megacities,” *American Journal of Comparative Law* 71, no. 2 (Summer 2023): 388–443; Mark Jia, “Authoritarian Privacy,” *University of Chicago Law Review* 91, no. 3 (May 2024): 733–810.

The lines of legal inquiry involving authoritarianism include authoritarian jurisprudence and authoritarian law. *Authoritarian jurisprudence* comprises legal theories and thoughts underpinning authoritarian rule. For example, its elements are present in Chinese classical legalism, which emphasizes the strict application of codified criminal laws by an absolutist ruler,²⁶⁸ and in the modern political discourse of Asian values that prioritize collective interests and respecting authority over individual rights.²⁶⁹ *Authoritarian law* refers to legal rules, principles, and institutions shaped by authoritarian regimes and includes both national laws and the international legal framework. The law can be authoritarian in both structural and functional senses. The law is created and operated by authoritarian regimes, which facilitate concentrated, unaccountable, and unlimited power. The law can be democratic in origin (e.g., derived from the foreign laws of democracies or international law) but are used for authoritarian purposes.

Development: Legal development in Asia has become intertwined with the region's general development. Indian economist and philosopher Amartya Sen, a Nobel Prize laureate, famously argued that development is the process of expanding human freedom,²⁷⁰ which comprises five types: political freedom; economic facilities; social opportunities; transparency guarantees; and protective securities.²⁷¹ While these development issues are ubiquitous, they are prominent in Asia and are connected to other aforementioned issues. The prevailing authoritarian practices affect all types of human freedom in Asia. Development as the expansion of the freedom of Asian peoples is also influenced by colonialism, ethnic divisions, religion, and economic inequality. In addition, most Asian economies are developing. This status influences not only economic facilities but also other types of freedom. Numerous development issues in Asia (e.g., the restriction of civil rights, inequality, poverty, education, healthcare, corruption, and social security) connect with various areas of law. The laws of Asian peoples are shaped by the concerns and reality of development and the scope, extent, and quality of their freedom. Consequently, virtually all fields and areas of Asian laws concern some aspect of development.

There are three types of Asian legal studies involving development: development jurisprudence, law and development, and development law. *Development jurisprudence* is the philosophical study of development, including, for example, philosophical inquiry into human dignity in religious traditions in Asia.²⁷² *Law and development* involves the study of the role of law and legal institutions in social and economic transformation. After the Cold War, law and development in Asia has been well studied in the contexts of comparative law, law and economics, law and society, and international law. *Development law* includes national and international norms, principles, rules, and institutions about development, including sustainable development law (e.g., climate change law, natural resources law, poverty law, and health law). The shared concerns of development as freedom integrates fields of Asian laws into a larger system of legal academic studies.

²⁶⁸ Eric C. Ip, "The Idea of Law in Classical Chinese Legalist Jurisprudence," *Global Jurist* 9, no. 4 (2009): [i]–18.

²⁶⁹ Michael C. Davis, "Constitutionalism and Political Culture: The Debate over Human Rights and Asian Values," *Harvard Human Rights Journal* 11 (1998): 109–48.

²⁷⁰ Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (Oxford University Press, 1999), 3.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 10.

²⁷² Jimmy Chiashin Hsu, ed., *Human Dignity in Asia: Dialogue between Law and Culture* (Cambridge University Press, 2023).

5. *Differentiation*

At the same time, the differentiation of Asian legal scholarship is evident. Like integration, differentiation is external and internal. *External differentiation* involves the development of the properties of Asian legal scholarship, which are divergent from other strands of legal scholarship with a regional focus. Among others, the prominence of various forms of diversity (ethnic, religious, linguistic, legal traditions, political regimes, etc.) in Asia shapes the emergence of the properties of Asian legal scholarship. This diversity is particularly reflected in the literature on Asian jurisprudence, legal history, comparative law, law and society, and international law. The recent theme of “Comparative Comparative Law” at the 2023 annual meeting of the American Society of Comparative Law provides a good illustration of the different images of comparative law in different regions of the world.²⁷³ Asian comparative law has a prominent focus on regional legal traditions (Islamic, Hindu, Buddhist, and Confucian) and regional contexts (religion-based, pluralism, colonialism, and authoritarianism) shaping legal development in the region.

Asian legal studies also display internal differentiation. As the scholarship has grown to a greater level of complexity, the disciplinary balkanization of Asian laws has become discernible. Different areas/fields of Asian laws have their own institutional, theoretical, and methodological attributes. The differentiation is manifested in the institutional entrenchment of the separate fields, such as the proliferation of professional associations and journals dedicated to the fields. In addition, the differentiation is embodied in the substantive scholarship. The emerging fields of Asian laws are underpinned by different theories and methodologies. For example, Asian laws and society studies do not analyze legal texts in their own terms but situate them within social and cultural contexts, using different methodologies, including participation, observation, and quantitative interview styles.²⁷⁴

V. CONCLUSION: THE FUTURE OF ASIAN LAWS

After six decades of development, from post-war and post-colonial formation to post-Cold War transition, and finally to the “Asian century,” the discipline of Asian legal studies has achieved great institutional and substantive accomplishments. Even so, there is ample room for developing Asian laws in the future. Inclusive development of the study of Asian laws is key to its future.

Inclusive development requires continued jurisdictional expansion of the study of Asian laws beyond the large and developed countries. The laws of many peoples in East Asia (particularly North Korea and Mongolia), Southeast Asia (particularly Laos, Cambodia, Brunei, and East Timor, and the Philippines), South Asia (particularly Bhutan, Maldives, and Sri Lanka), and the whole of Central Asia are largely understudied and in need of substantive research. In addition to the substantive production of scholarship, jurisdictional expansion requires institutional underpinnings. Asian laws centers/programs and associations may include more activities and research projects on the laws of the small and developing countries in the region and integrate them into the teaching curricula of law

²⁷³ American Society of Comparative Law, 2023 Annual Meeting, *Comparative Comparative Law*, <https://ascl.org/event/2023-annual-meeting-comparative-comparative-law/>.

²⁷⁴ Chua, Engel, and Liu, *The Asian Law and Society Reader* 3 (n 201).

schools. Journals and publishers need to publish more scholarship on the laws of these nations.

The inclusive future direction also requires a substantive expansion of Asian legal studies. While contemporary, cutting-edge legal topics are important, more attention should be paid to lasting, fundamental, philosophical, and historical topics. Thus, Asian jurisprudence, which has been underdeveloped, requires further academic treatment. The return of Asian legal history needs to be strengthened. This substantive expansion requires further study and institutional underpinnings. The institutional base of Asian jurisprudence can be further consolidated, for example, by the creation of institutional networks or the integration of Asian jurisprudence in educational curricula.

The inclusive agenda necessitates the balance of instrumentalism and deontology in the rationales of Asian legal studies. While instrumental considerations of necessity are inevitable, genuine interest in producing knowledge regardless of material outcomes would drive a more inclusive development in the study of Asian laws.

Appendix 1: Asian Law Centers/Programs

Jurisdiction	Center/Program	Affiliated Institution	Establishment Year
1. Australia	Asian Law Centre	University of Melbourne Law School	1985
2. Australia	Centre for Asian and Pacific Law	University of Sydney Law School	1993
3. Australia	Centre for the Study of Indonesian Law, Islam and Society	University of Melbourne Law School	2013
4. Australia	China International Economic & Business Law Initiative	University of New South Wales	2015
5. Australia	Southeast Asia Law & Policy Forum	University of New South Wales Faculty of Law and Justice	2015
6. Austria	Research Platform Asian Law	University of Vienna	2017?
7. Brazil	Center for Asian Legal Studies	University of São Paulo Faculty of Law	2014
8. Canada	Centre for Asian Legal Studies	University of British Columbia Peter A. Allard School of Law	2015
9. Germany	Centre of Expertise on Japan	Max Planck Institute for Comparative and International Private Law	1985
10. Germany	Centre of Expertise on China and Korea	Max Planck Institute for Comparative and International Private Law	2002

11. Germany	Sino-German Institute for Law	University of Göttingen (and the University of Nanjing)	1989
12. Germany	University of Cologne	Department of Chinese Legal Culture	1992
13. Finland	University of Helsinki	Finnish China Law Center	2012
14. Hong Kong	Center for Chinese and Comparative Law	City University of Hong Kong School of Law	1994
15. Hong Kong	Philip K.H. Wong Centre for Chinese Law	University of Hong Kong Faculty of Law	2009
16. Japan	Center for Asian Legal Exchange	Nagoya University	1992
17. Japan	Waseda Institute for East Asian Legal Studies	Waseda University	2000
18. Netherland	China Law Centre	Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam	2010
19. Norway	Norwegian China Law Centre	University of Bergen	2017
20. Russia	Centre for Asian Legal Studies	Moscow State University	2016
21. South Korea	Asia-Pacific Law Institute	Seoul National University	2012
22. Singapore	Centre for Asian Legal Studies	National University of Singapore	2012
23. Singapore	Centre for Commercial Law in Asia	Singapore Management University	2014
24. United Kingdom	Centre for Law in Asia	SOAS University of London	1988
25. United Kingdom	Myanmar Law Programme	University of Oxford Faculty of Law	2012
26. United Kingdom	Centre for Chinese Law and Policy	Durham University	2019
27. United Kingdom	Chinese Law Society and Economy (CLSE) Research Interest Group	Northumbria Law School and the Faculty of Business and Law	2019
28. United Kingdom	Oxford Programme in Asian Laws	University of Oxford Faculty of Law	2021
29. United Kingdom	Durham Centre for Indian Law and Policy	Durham University	2023
30. United Kingdom	Manchester Asian Law Group	Manchester Law School	2024
31. United States	Asian Law Center	University of Washington	1962

		School of Law	
32. United States	East Asian Legal Studies Program	Harvard Law School	1965
33. United States	East Asian Legal Studies Program	University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law	1977
34. United States	Center for Japanese Legal Studies	Columbia Law School	1980
35. United States	Hong Yen Chang Center for Chinese Legal Studies	Columbia Law School	1983
36. United States	Pacific-Asian Legal Studies	University of Hawai'i at Manoa William S. Richardson School of Law	1983
37. United States	Center for Asian Law	Georgetown University Law Center	mid-1980s
38. United States	Sho Sato Program in Japanese and US Law	University of California, Berkeley School of Law	1986
39. United States	U.S.-Asia Law Institute	New York University Law School	1990
40. United States	East Asian Legal Studies Center	University of Wisconsin-Madison Law School	1990
41. United States	Center for Korean Legal Studies	Columbia Law School	1994
42. United States	Paul Tsai China Center	Yale Law School	1999
43. United States	Clarke Program in East Asian Law and Culture	Cornell Law School	2002
44. United States	Institute of Asian-Pacific Business Law	University of Hawai'i at Manoa William S. Richardson School of Law	2006
45. United States	South Asia Legal Studies Working Group	University of Wisconsin-Madison Law School	2006
46. United States	U.S.-Asia Partnerships for Environmental Law	Vermont Law School	2006
47. United States	Korea Law Center	University of California, Irvine School of Law	2009
48. United States	Joint Center for Asian Law Studies	Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law	2010
49. United States	Chinese Guiding Case Project	Stanford Law School	2011
50. United States	Korea Law Center	University of California, Berkeley School of Law	2014
51. United States	Center for East	University of California	2015

	Asian Legal Studies	College of the Law, San Francisco	
52. United States	Center for Asian Law	University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School	2016
53. United States	Asia IP & Technology Law Center	University of California, Berkeley School of Law	2017
54. United States	California-China Climate Institute	University of California, Berkeley School of Law	2019
55. United States	India Law Center India Center for Law and Justice	Cornell Law School Seattle University	2019 2021
56. United States	Chinese Legal Studies Program	University of Michigan Law School	?
57. United States	Japanese Legal Studies Program	University of Michigan Law School	?

Appendix 2: Asian Laws Associations

Society	Establishment Year
1. Law Association for Asia and the Pacific	1966
2. Asian Law Institute	2003
3. Asian Law & Economics Association	2005
4. European China Law Studies Association	2006
5. Asian Society of International Law	2007
6. International Society for Chinese Law & History	2014
7. Asian Law & Society Association	2015
8. Association for Asian Constitutional Studies	2017
9. Asian Law School Association	2020
10. Asian Legal History Association	2021

Appendix 3: Asian Laws Book Series

Series	Publisher
1. Harvard Studies in East Asian Law	Harvard University Press
2. Studies in East Asian Law	Princeton University Press
3. Asian Law Series	University of Washington Press
4. Oxford Studies in Asian Laws	Oxford University Press
5. Constitutionalism in Asia	Hart Publishing
6. Routledge Law in Asia	Routledge

7. Elgar Asian Commercial Law and Practice series	Edward Elgar
8. Asian Law Series	Brill

Appendix 4: Asian Laws Journals

Journal	Publisher	Establishment Year
1. <i>Asia Pacific Journal of Environmental Law</i>	Edward Elgar Publishing	1996
2. <i>Asia Pacific Law Review</i>	Taylor & Francis	1992
3. <i>Asian Business Lawyer</i>	Korea University	2008
4. <i>Asian International Arbitration Journal</i>	Wolters Kluwer	2005
5. <i>Asian Journal of Comparative Law</i>	Cambridge University Press	2006
6. <i>Asian Journal of Criminology</i>	Springer	2006
7. <i>Asian Journal of International Law</i>	Cambridge University Press	2011
8. <i>Asian Journal of Law and Economics</i>	De Gruyter	2010
9. <i>Asian Journal of Law and Society</i>	Cambridge University Press	2014
10. <i>Asian Journal of WTO & International Health Law and Policy</i>	National Taiwan University, College of Law	2006
11. <i>Asian Yearbook of International Law</i>	Brill	1991
12. <i>Asian-Pacific Law & Policy Journal</i>	University of Hawai'i at Manoa S. Richardson School of Law	2000
13. <i>Asia-Pacific Journal on Human Rights and the Law</i>	Brill	2000
14. <i>Ateneo Law Journal</i>	Ateneo de Manila University	1951
15. <i>Australian Journal of Asian Law</i>	University of Melbourne	1999
16. <i>Berkeley Journal of Middle Eastern & Islamic Law</i>	University of California, Berkeley School of Law	2021
17. <i>Chinese Journal of Comparative Law</i>	Oxford University Press	2013
18. <i>City University of Hong Kong Law Review</i>	City University of Hong Kong School of Law	2009
19. <i>Columbia Journal of Asian Law</i>	Columbia Law School	1987
20. <i>Contemporary Asia Arbitration Journal</i>	National Taiwan University, College of Law	2008
21. <i>Durham Asian Law Journal</i>	Durham University	2019
22. <i>Frontiers of Law in China</i>	Springer	2006

23. <i>Hitotsubashi Journal of Law and Politics</i>	Hitotsubashi University	1960
24. <i>Hong Kong Journal of Legal Studies</i>	University of Hong Kong Faculty of Law	1994
25. <i>Hong Kong Law Journal</i>	Sweet & Maxwell Ltd.	1971
26. <i>Indian Journal of Human Rights and the Law</i>	Serials Publications Pvt. Ltd.	2019
27. <i>Indian Journal of International Law</i>	Springer	2015
28. <i>Indian Law Review</i>	Taylor & Francis	2017
29. <i>Japanese Yearbook of International Law</i>	International Law Association of Japan	1958
30. <i>Journal of East Asia and International Law</i>	Yijun Institute of International Law	2011
31. <i>Journal of Eurasian Law</i>	Duke University	2014
32. <i>Journal of Japanese Law</i>	Max Planck Institute for Comparative and International Private Law	1996
33. <i>Journal of Korean Law</i>	Seoul National University School of Law	2001
34. <i>Journal of Malaysian & Comparative Law</i>	University of Malaya	1974
35. <i>Kobe University Law Review</i>	Kobe University Faculty of Law	1962
36. <i>Korea University Law Review</i>	Korea University Legal Research Institute	2007
37. <i>LAWASIA Journal</i>	Law Association for Asia and the Pacific (LAWASIA)	1998
38. <i>Middle East Law and Governance</i>	Brill	2009
39. <i>National Law School of India Review</i>	National Law School of India University	1988
40. <i>National Taiwan University Law Review</i>	National Taiwan University	2006
41. <i>Osaka University Law Review</i>	Osaka University Graduate School of Law and Politics	1952
42. <i>Palestine Yearbook of International Law</i>	Brill	1997
43. <i>Peking University Law Journal</i>	Taylor & Francis	2013
44. <i>Philippine Law Journal</i>	University of the Philippines College of Law	1914
45. <i>Ritsumeikan Law Review</i>	Ritsumeikan University	1986
46. <i>Singapore Academy of Law Journal</i>	Academy Publishing	1989
47. <i>Singapore Journal of Legal Studies</i>	National University of Singapore Faculty of Law	1991
48. <i>Singapore Law Review</i>	National University of Singa-	1969

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49. <i>Thai Legal Studies</i>	Thammasat University Faculty of Law	2021
50. <i>Tsinghua China Law Review</i>	Tsinghua Law School	2008
51. <i>UCLA Asian Pacific American Law Journal</i>	UCLA School of Law	1991
52. <i>UCLA Journal of Islamic and Near Eastern Law</i>	UCLA School of Law	2001
53. <i>UCLA Pacific Basin Law Journal</i>	UCLA School of Law	1982
54. <i>University of Pennsylvania Asian Law Review</i>	University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School	2004