
14 July 2017, Friday ✦ 12.30pm – 1.30pm

Seminar Room 4-3, Block B Level 4, NUS (Bukit Timah Campus)

Pride and Prejudice in U.S. Trade

Speaker: Professor Lan Cao, Chapman University Law School

Chairperson: Associate Professor Umakanth Varottil, NUS Law

ABSTRACT

Trade has become a highly contentious issue in the United States, as major Presidential candidates lined up to denounce trade as “fraudulent” and “disastrous for the American worker.” Populism from both the left and the right has played into nativist fears of openness, including fears of open economies and free trade. Trade is equated with job loss and trade deficit, caused by foreigners who cheat and don’t play fair. Much of the corrosive anti-trade rhetoric has taken on nationalist overtones and is regularly targeted against China, India, Mexico and other countries that make up the non-white global poor. The United States also has trade deficits with the European Union generally and Germany particularly, for example, and yet Germany has escaped American wrath and derision. What underlies the current trade controversy in the United States is the belief that jobs, particularly manufacturing ones, should not be allowed to leave the United States and that if they do, trade is generally bad and particularly bad if shifted to apparently undeserving countries like Mexico, China, and India. But the controversy is not just about job loss. Job loss is but a proxy for a resurgent economic nationalism at odds with the international order established by the United States after World War II. Indeed, technology has phased out millions of jobs in both the manufacturing and service sectors, yet technology is not demonized. The speaker will present two main points – the need to zoom in and understand how the nature of trade has changed and the need to zoom out and see trade broadly, as intertwined with U.S. national security and dollar supremacy.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER



Lan Cao is the Betty Hutton Williams Professor of International Economic Law at Chapman Law School in Orange, California. She is a graduate of Mount Holyoke College and Yale Law School and worked as a litigation and corporate attorney at Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison in New York City for many years until she joined legal academia as a law professor. She has taught at Brooklyn Law School, Duke Law School, Michigan Law School, and William & Mary Law School. Her scholarly and teaching interests include public international law, international human rights, international trade, international business and law and development. She is the author of *Culture in Law and Development: Nurturing Positive Change* (Oxford University Press 2016) as well as many law review articles on international law and economic development. She is also the author of two critically acclaimed novels *Monkey Bridge* (1997) and *The Lotus and the Storm* (2014), both published by Viking. Michiko Kakutani of *The New York Times* wrote of *Monkey Bridge*, “Cao has not only made an impressive debut, but joined authors such as Salman Rushdie and Bharati Mukherjee in mapping the state of exile and its elusive geographies of loss and hope.” She was born in Vietnam and went to the United States in 1975.

REGISTRATION

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

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

Closing Date: **12 July 2017, Wednesday**

For enquiries, please contact Margaret Ang at cals@nus.edu.sg

To REGISTER,

click [HERE](#) or
scan the QR Code

