

FFJ/CRBC Joint Seminar «History of Laws and Foreigners»

Friday March 20th, 2015, 2 :30 p.m.-6 :30 p.m.

Venue: Conference Room 638-640, 190 Avenue de France 75013 Paris

« **Laws of Blood: The Invisible Common Sense of Race in U.S. Courtrooms** »



Ariela Gross

is Professor of Law and of History at the University of Southern California, and invited professor at the CRBC-Mondes Américains at the EHESS during the month of March 2015.

« **How Meiji Japan governed Foreigners: Foundation of Treaty Revision** »



Kaoru Iokibe

is Professor of Political and Diplomatic History at the Graduate School for Law and Politics at the University of Tokyo.

This presentation explores the determination of racial identity in American law through trials of racial identity – legal cases in which, for a variety of reasons, American courts were trying to decide whether someone was black, white or Indian. I will argue that the common sense of invisible race implies some commonalities between the racial caste systems of the United States and Asia. Just as the paekjong of Korea or the burakumin of Japan were racialized despite their being physically indistinguishable from others in society, people in the U.S. who were not clearly black or white found their race determined by invisible and imagined markers of blood.

To revise the so-called unequal treaties, which Japan signed with the Western powers from the 1850s onwards, was the most important and difficult task of Meiji diplomacy. It also called for various reforms which, to a large extent, shaped the fundamental character of modern politics and society in Japan. In this presentation I will ask what the “administration” was like and how it developed under and against the treaty privileges enjoyed by foreign residents in Meiji Japan. I will illustrate several episodes of disputes between foreigners and the Japanese administration to identify distinctive patterns of Japanese tactics to control foreigners through administrative regulations.

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