

PROFESSOR LEI CHEN

E: LEI.CHEN@DURHAM.AC.UK

M: +44 7546 637876 (UK); +852 531 601 98 | T: +44 20 3589 5729

DELIVERIES: 1 PATERNOSTER LANE, LONDON EC4M 7BQ

Positions Held

- Chair in International Arbitration and Chinese Law, Durham Law School, UK
- The International Commercial Expert Committee Member of the Supreme People's Court, PRC
- Member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts
- Member of the European Law Institute
- Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators
- Called to the Bar (Inner Temple) 2025

General Profile

Professor Lei CHEN (PhD) is Chair in International Arbitration and Chinese Law at Durham Law School, Durham University. He was elected as a member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts in 2024, a Titular Member of the International Academy of Comparative Law in 2021, and a Fellow of the European Law Institute in 2013.

Prof Chen is a visiting Distinguished Professor of Shanghai Jiaotong University, an Adjunct Professor at the City University of Hong Kong, a Honorary Professor at the University of Galway, Ireland, and a visiting Chair at Shandong University. He was the Visiting Professor at the Singapore Management University, the National University of Singapore and the University of Hong Kong. He has been teaching the EMBA and MPA programmes at CityU HK Business School and the School of Public Policy and Management at Tsinghua University.

Professor Chen's research areas are comparative private and commercial law and international arbitration. He has published extensively in these areas in law journals, edited volumes of multidisciplinary scholarship, China studies journals and monographs. He convenes a study group to publish Article-by-article English commentary on the Chinese Civil Code. Professor Chen has been a member of the Law Panel of Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) 2020 and is currently a member of the Humanities and Social Sciences Panel of the Hong Kong University Grant Committee.

Professor Chen has been appointed as a member of the International Commercial Expert Committee of the PRC Supreme People's Court since September 2024. He is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (FCIArb) and a Fellow of the Hong Kong Institute of Arbitrators (FHKI Arb). Professor Chen became a specialist mediator at the Singapore International Mediation Centre in 2019.

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Employment

07/2020– present Chair Professor (Band 3 out of 3), Durham Law School; Durham University
05/ 2024-present Deputy Dean (strategic development), Durham Law School
09/2022-present Director, Durham International Dispute Resolution Institute
05/2015-06/2020 Deputy Dean, School of Law, City University of Hong Kong
07/2014-06/2020 Associate Professor (tenured), School of Law, City University of Hong Kong
08/2009-06/2014 Assistant Professor, School of Law, City University of Hong Kong
08/2008-07/2009 Postdoctoral Fellow, Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore

Education

PhD, 2008, University of Stellenbosch, South Africa,
LLM., 2004, University of Aberdeen, United Kingdom
LLB (Distinction), 2002, East China University of Political Science & Law, Shanghai, China
LLB (Hons), 2010, University of London, United Kingdom

Arbitration Experiences

Prof Chen has issued more than 250 arbitral awards as sole arbitrator, party-appointed arbitrator and presiding arbitrator in Chinese and English, both domestic and international, including those governed by the rules of the LCIA, HKIAC, UNCITRAL, ICC, CIETAC, SIAC, SCIA, GAC and BAC. The cases concern the disputes of sale of goods, banking, real estate and construction, financial, oil and gas (including LNG supply contract), maritime, corporate governance (including Share Purchase Agreements) and insurance. The following are illustrative examples of his recent arbitration experiences:

1. Sole Arbitrator in a dispute relating to the correct English common law governing the appropriation of partial payments under a Loan Facility Agreement (LCIA)
2. Claims for approx. US\$1.1 billion in relation to an indexed linked financial lending in Shenzhen (SCIA)
3. Claims for approx. US\$104 million in relation to investment fund management dispute in Beijing (BAC)
4. Claims for approx. US\$160 million in relation to joint venture project between a Chinese party and a European party (ICC)
5. Claims for approx. US\$ 8 million in relation to a high-end property management dispute ad hoc (UNCITRAL) seated in Hong Kong
6. Claims for approx. US\$ 4 million IP disputes in an online gaming industry in USA (HKIAC)
7. Claims for specific performance in relation to US\$ 300 million share purchase agreement dispute involving a Chinese SOE (CIETAC)

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8. Claims approx. US\$50m in connection with a maritime insurance dispute ad hoc UNCITRAL rules
9. Claims totalling approx. US\$ 18 million in connection with construction of a major dam in China (BAC)

Arbitration Panels or Membership

Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (FCIArb)

Fellow of the Hong Kong Institute of Arbitrators (FHKI Arb)

Panel Arbitrator at Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre (HKIAC)

Panel Arbitrator at China International Economic and Trade Arbitration Commission (CIETAC)

Panel Arbitrator at Asian International Arbitration Centre (AIAC)

Panel Arbitrator at Korean Commercial Arbitration Board (KCAB)

Panel Arbitrator at Dubai International Arbitration Centre (DIAC)

Panel Arbitrator at Thai International Arbitration Centre (TIAC)

Member of London Court of International Arbitration (LCIA)

Member of International Chamber of Commerce (UK)

Panel Arbitrator at Beijing Arbitration Commission (BAC)

Panel Arbitrator at CAA (Taipei)

Panel Arbitrator at Shenzhen Court of International Arbitration (SCIA)

Panel Arbitrator at Shanghai International Arbitration Centre (SHIAC)

Panel Arbitrator at Shanghai Arbitration Commission (SHAC)

Panel Arbitrator at Guangzhou Arbitration Commission (SHAC)

Panel Arbitrator at Chinese local arbitration commissions at Tianjin; Nanjing; Xi'an; Ningbo; Dalian; Zhengzhou; Yangzhou; Hainan; Qingdao; Zhuhai; Langfang; Guiyang; Yantai; Weihai; Foshan; Shantou; etc.

Expert Witness Experiences

As a seasoned expert witness, Professor Chen has provided expert evidence on PRC law in proceedings before the London Commercial Court, the Hong Kong High Court, the Singapore High Court, and the New York State Court, as well as in commercial and investment arbitrations under HKIAC, SIAC, ICC, ICSID, PCA, and LCIA rules. He has also attended cross-examinations in these forums. His recent engagements include the following.

1. Engaged as an expert consultant by the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) in a high-profile cryptocurrency fraud case before the High Court of England and Wales.
2. Engaged by a foreign investor in a PCA-administered UNCITRAL treaty arbitration

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- against an Asian state involving claims of expropriation and unfair treatment in an agricultural investment, with over USD 300 million in dispute.
3. Engaged by a Southeast Asian investor in an ICSID-administered treaty arbitration against an Asian state concerning claims of expropriation and unfair treatment in a mining investment, with over USD 400 million in dispute.
 4. Engaged by a Chinese party in litigation before the Hong Kong Court of First Instance regarding the application of the non bis in idem rule under PRC civil procedure law and the enforcement of a PRC judgment in Hong Kong.
 5. Engaged by a Hong Kong family foundation in litigation before the Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal involving PRC charity law and state immunity issues, with over USD 8 billion at stake.
 6. Engaged by a Chinese party in Hong Kong High Court proceedings concerning the refusal to recognise a PRC arbitral award on public policy grounds.
 7. Engaged by a Chinese party in an HKIAC arbitration concerning causation issues under PRC insurance law.
 8. Engaged by a U.S. company in a SIAC-administered arbitration involving claims under a share purchase agreement in the heavy industry sector.
 9. Engaged by a Chinese state-owned enterprise in an HKIAC-administered arbitration concerning insolvency law issues under PRC law.
 10. Engaged by a Chinese state-owned enterprise in litigation before an Australian court concerning financial fraud and corruption-related matters under PRC law.
 11. Engaged by a Singapore-listed company in proceedings before the Singapore High Court involving PRC tax and social security contribution issues.
 12. Engaged by a PRC-incorporated company in litigation before the Singapore International Commercial Court concerning contract validity and illegality under PRC law.
 13. Engaged by a Singaporean company in litigation before the Singapore International Commercial Court concerning financial fraud and PRC civil procedure issues.
 14. Engaged by a Canadian company in court proceedings in Vancouver concerning PRC evidence rules.
 15. Engaged by a Hong Kong investor in proceedings before the Hong Kong Court of First Instance regarding the limitation period under PRC law.
 16. Engaged by an Isle of Man-incorporated company in proceedings before the London Commercial Court involving disputes under the PRC Foreign Investment Law.
 17. Engaged by British investors in proceedings before the London Commercial Court concerning the conflict of law rules under PRC law.

Publications

Books

1. L. Chen, *Property Law in China: Transition and Trend*, 2025 Cambridge University

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Press Link

2. L. Chen & L Zhao, Contract Law in China, 2025 Kluwer Law International
3. L. Chen (ed) The Civil Code of the People's Republic of China, English Translation, 2021 Brill.
4. L. Chen & Andre Janssen (eds), Dispute Resolution in China, Europe and World, 2020 Springer.
5. L. Di Matteo & L. Chen (eds), Chinese Contract Law: Civil and Common Law Perspectives, 2017 Cambridge University Press.
6. L. Chen & C.H. van Rhee (eds). Towards A Chinese Civil Code: Historical and Comparative Perspectives. 2012 Brill.
7. L. Chen, The Making of Chinese Condominium Law, 2010, Intersentia, Cambridge.

Recent Book Chapters

1. Lei Chen & Zhicheng Wu, (2025), Contract Termination in Chinese law, in Mindy Chen-Wishart, Stefan Vogenauer and Dora Neo (eds), Studies in the Contract Laws of Asia V: Ending and Changing Performance, OUP
2. Lei Chen & Jia Wang, (2025) The use of AI in China's Internet Courts, Amy J. Schmitz, Marco Giacalone, Pietro Ortolani (eds) The Cambridge Handbook of AI in Civil Dispute Resolution, CUP, forthcoming
3. Lei Chen (2023). The Security Interests in Chinese Law: Some Nuances. In Jiang & Sirena (eds.), The Making of the Chinese Civil Code: Promises and Persistent Problems, CUP 131-152.
4. Lei Chen & Hao Wang (2020) Judicial Control over Arbitral Awards in Mainland China. In The Cambridge Handbook of Judicial Control of Arbitral Awards. CUP. 210-225.
5. L. Trakman, Q. Liu. & L. Chen (2020) Investor-state Arbitration in China: A Comparative Perspective. In Dispute Resolution in China, Europe and World, Springer. 231-261.
6. Jia Wang & Lei Chen (2019). Regulating Smart Contracts and Digital Platforms: A Chinese Perspective. The Cambridge Handbook of Smart Contracts, Blockchain Technology and Digital Platforms. CUP. 183-210.
7. Lei Chen (2018) Changing Perceptions of Land Ownership in China: Between the Socialist Heritage and Liberal Market. in Socialist Law in Socialist East Asia. CUP, 385-405.
8. Lei Chen (2017) Damages and Specific Performance in Chinese Contract Law. in Chinese Contract Law: Civil law and Common Law Perspectives, CUP, 377-403.
9. Lei Chen (2017) Relaxations to Contractual Privity and the Need for Third Party Rights in Chinese Contract Law. Mindy Chen-Wishart, Alex Loke & Stefan Vogenauer (eds) Formation of Contract and Third-Party Beneficiaries: Studies in the Contract Laws of Asia, OUP, 45-63.
10. Lei Chen (2016) The Availability of Specific Performance in Chinese Contract Law, in Mindy Chen-Wishart and Alexander Loke (eds) Remedies for Breach in Asia, OUP, 21-

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11. Lei Chen (2015), The Changing Landscape of Condominium Laws and Urban Governance in China. In Lehari A. (ed) Private Communities and Urban Governance: Theoretical and Comparative Perspectives, Springer 1-26.
12. Lei Chen (2014) The Legal and Institutional Analysis of Land Expropriation in China, in John Gillespie & Fu Hualing (eds), Resolving Land Disputes in East Asia, CUP, 59-85.
13. Lei Chen (2012) Contextualizing Legal Transplant: China and Hong Kong in P.G. Monateri (ed) Methods of Comparative Law, Elgar Edward, 192-212.

Representative Journal Articles

14. L. Chen and J. Wang (2025) The Tort Law Reform under the Chinese Civil Code, 33 (1-2) European Review of Private Law 217-249
15. L. Chen (2024) Will Virtual Hearings Remain in Post-pandemic International Arbitration? 37 Int J Semiot Law, 829–849
16. L. Chen, (2024) Self-governing Organizations and Culture: Addressing Condominium Law Developments in China, 16 (1) Journal of Property, Planning and Environmental Law, 20-35
17. L. Chen, (2023). Court-ordered Apologies: A Chinese Law Position. 31 (5) European Review of Private Law, 1023 – 1030
18. Wu, Z., & L. Chen. (2023). Revisiting property transfer theory: English law and Chinese law compared. 43 (2) Legal Studies, 259-277. doi:10.1017/lst.2022.36
19. L. Chen, Z. Liu and Y. Tang (2022). Judicial Transparency as Judicial Centralization: Mass Publicity of Court Decisions in China, Journal of Contemporary China 31:137, 726-739
20. L. Chen, (2021). Continuity and Change: Some Reflections on the Chinese Civil Code, 29 (2) Asia Pacific Law Review 287-305
21. L. Chen & Qiyu Wang (2021) Demystifying the Doctrine of Change of Circumstances under Chinese Law—A Comparative Perspective from Singapore and English Common Law, Journal of Business Law, issue 6, 475-497.
22. L. Chen & S. de Rey, (2021) Non-Monetary Relief for Breach of Contract: A European Perspective on Chinese Contract Law, 29 (2) Asia Pacific Law Review 325-345
23. L. Chen & Zhuang Liu, (2020) Jury trial and public trust in the judiciary: evidence from cross-countries comparison, 28 (2) Asia Pacific Law Review, 412-436
24. Howells (et al.) (2020) Consumer law and policy relating to change of circumstances due to the COVID-19 pandemic, 43 Journal of Consumer Policy 437-450
25. L. Chen (2019). Specific Performance as a Contractual Remedy in Chinese Courts: An Empirical Study 7 (1) Chinese Journal of Comparative Law 95-123
26. L. Chen & L. Di Matteo (2019) Inefficiency of Specific Performance as a Contractual Remedy in Chinese Courts: An Empirical and Normative Analysis, Northwestern

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27. L. Chen & J Wang (2018). Will Innovative Technology Cause Innovative Legal Framework? Smart Contracts in China. 26 (6) European Review of Private Law 921-942
 28. L. Chen (2018). Debating Personality Rights Protection in China: From a European Perspective. 26 (1) European Review of Private Law. 16-38
 29. L. Chen (2014) Evolving Property Rights in China: Patterns and Dynamics of Condominium Governance, 2(1) Chinese Journal of Comparative Law, 21-42
 30. L. Chen & Gordon Sng (2014) Whither Adverse Possession in Hong Kong? Some reflections on the Consultation Paper by the Hong Kong Law Reform Commission (5) Conveyancer and Property Lawyer. 413-429
 31. M. Kielsgard & L. Chen (2014) The Emergence of Private Property Law and its impacts on Human Rights, 15: 1 Asian-Pacific Law and Policy Journal 94-134.
 32. L. Chen (2013). Land Registration, Property Rights, and Institutional Performance in China, 2014 Hong Kong Law Journal 44 (3), pp. 841-864
 33. H. Mostert & L. Chen (2011) The Dynamics of Constitutional Property Clauses in the Developing World: China and South Africa, Maastricht Journal of European and Comparative Law, 17(4), 377-405.
 34. L. Chen (2010) The historical development of the Civil Law tradition in China: a private law perspective, The Legal History Review, 78(1-2) 159-181.
 35. L. Chen (2010) The Developer's Role in the Surging Chinese Condominium Housing: Through the Comparative Lens of the US System, Asia Pacific Law Review, 18(2), 223-242
 36. L. Chen, (2010) Private Property with Chinese Characteristics: A Critical Analysis of the Chinese Law on Property of 2007, European Review of Private Law, 18(5), pp 983-1004
 37. L. Chen & C G. van der Merwe (2009) Reflections on the role of the managing agent in South African and Chinese condominium legislation, Tydskrif vir die Suid-Afrikaanse Reg (Journal of South African Law), Issue 1, 22-38
 38. L. Chen and H. Mostert, (2007) 2 The Unavoidable Necessity of Formalizing Condominium Ownership in China: A Pilot Study, Asian Journal of Comparative Law, 68-88.