Professor Chris Thornhill and Research Associate Maria Smirnova from the University of Manchester will share their experience in using socio-legal methods in their research project. The project studies the effect that international law produces on the legal and political systems of different countries, on the transformation of domestic institutions, on the behaviour of litigants, and on the society as a whole. These questions require input from non-legal sources in order to elicit the social impact of law. For example, the use of statistics followed by quantitative analysis reveals patterns of litigation in response to certain legislative initiatives. These patterns are further interpreted from the standpoints of sociology, politics, history and other areas of social sciences. The results are verified in formal or semi-formal interviews with legal practitioners that tend to connect existing legal regulations with the practice of their realisation.

The lecture will be followed by a Q&A session where students can ask questions pertaining to the use of relevant socio-legal methods in their own research papers.