Public Lecture
Faculty of Law in cooperation with the
Interdisciplinary Centre for East Asian Studies (IZO) and
the Department of Korean Studies

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Authoritarian Rule of Law:
Constitutional Transitions
and the Judicial Process in South Korea

Modern Korean history has never had a dull moment. Cold War crises in the years after the Korean War not only resulted in the north-south divide, but created profound fissures among South Koreans, giving rise to deeply divided and ideologically tinged debate over politics and government in the 1970s and early 1980s. Central to this discussion is the evolving role of the judicial courts, which have been criticized for having failed to protect citizens’ rights under illiberal governments during the period of South Korea's military government. Korean judicial history reveals classic dilemmas of judges under authoritarian rule of law, facing unjust law sustained by constitutional legitimacy.

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