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East Asian Economy and Society



Special Lecture

Confucian Culture and Democratization in East Asia: Reassessing the Confucian Asian Values Debate

Tuesday, June 11th, 16:15

Seminar room OAW (2I-O1-05), Hof 5, AAKH Campus

Doh Chull Shin is the Jack Peltason scholar in residence at the Center for the Study of Democracy at the University of California, Irvine and Korea Foundation Chair and the Middlebush Chair at the University of Missouri, Columbia. He is the founder of the Korea Democracy Barometer and co-founder of the Asian Barometer. His recent books include *Confucianism and Democratization in East Asia* (Cambridge, 2012), *The Quality of Life in Confucian Asia* (Springer, 2011), *How East Asians View Democracy* (Columbia, 2008), *Citizens, Democracy and the Markets* (Oxford University Press, 2006), and *Mass Politics and Culture in Democratizing Korea* (Cambridge, 2000).

Why does a region, blessed with rapid economic development, remain cursed with democratic underdevelopment? To explain a lack of democratic development in the region, many scholars and political leaders have often promoted Confucian values as Asian values, and vigorously debated their influence on the democratic transformation of authoritarian regimes in the region. Despite decades of the debate, there is little intellectual consensus about the relationship between the fundamental values and norms of Confucianism and democracy.

Mr. Shin's study reassesses this ongoing Confucian Asian Values Debate on the impact of the Confucian cultural legacies of hierarchical collectivism and paternalistic meritocracy— on cultural democratization in East Asia. He argues that citizens of historically Confucian Asia have an opportunity to combine the best of Confucian ideals and democratic principles in a novel, particularly East Asian, brand of democracy.