



**The Institute for
Korean Studies
presents:**



Serk-Bae Suh
University of California, Irvine
**"Against the Chains of Utility:
Sacrifice and Literature in
1970s and 1980s South Korea"**

In this talk, Suh discusses the ways in which the visions of anti-utilitarian sacrifice figure in 1970s and 1980s South Korean literature, which range from the idea of sacrifice as an escape from instrumental rationality to the view of literature as a deviation from the mundane world. In doing so, Suh challenges the notion of utilitarian sacrifice, which continues to pervade every aspect of Korean society. He argues that any act of sacrifice for a higher cause is inherently utilitarian, regardless of whether its motives are morally sound or questionable.

April 8, 2026

2:30-3:40pm

Arps Hall 012

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