

UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG FACULTY OF LAW  
CENTRE FOR COMPARATIVE AND PUBLIC LAW

*Seminar*

**Constitutional Adjudication and  
Populist Democracy: When Hard  
Cases Make Really Bad Law**

**Raul Pangalangan**

*Professor, University of Philippines*

*Visiting Professor, HKU*

**Friday, 12 September 2008**

**1:00 – 2:00 pm**

**Room 303, 3/F KK Leung Building, University of Hong Kong**

In many Asian countries today, courts have faced hard cases where the constitutionally mandated results would have violated the communal sense of what is a “just” outcome, and judges have thus compromised their law for what purports to be a “higher” politics. In the process, they have re-conceived themselves not as a check on popular power but as its handmaiden. This in turn transforms the source of legitimacy of judicial decision, the roles of the lawyer and the judge in vindicating public norms through non-democratic institutions and, generally, the place of courts in democratic governance.

Professor Pangalangan is a Visiting Professor at HKU. He is Professor of Law and former Law Dean at the University of Philippines. He specialises in Public International and Constitutional Law and has taught Public International Law at Harvard Law School in Spring 2007. He received his A.B. cum laude (1978) and LL.B. (1983) from the University of the Philippines, and his LL.M. (1986) and S.J.D. (1990) from Harvard Law School.

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