

**The Famous and the Nameless: The Lives and Afterlives of Chosŏn Catholic Martyrs**

**Premodern Korea  
Lecture Series**

with Franklin Rausch



Institute for  
Korean Studies  
THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

GW 한국학연구소

**Franklin Rausch, Associate Professor in the History and Philosophy Department,  
Lander University**

Wednesday, September 28, 2022

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM Eastern Time

Virtual Event via Zoom

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◇ **EVENT DESCRIPTION**

The Chosŏn dynasty looms large in the history of Korean Catholicism. Korean Catholic saints are presented in visual media, from art to movies, as wearing imagined traditional Chosŏn dress in locations shot through with imagery from and references to the dynasty. And Korean Catholics need not travel abroad to go to holy sites, but can find plenty throughout their homeland, many of which are connected to the Chosŏn state and are celebrated by local Korean government and by the Vatican and UNESCO as “international.” However, there is an awkwardness in such memories, as it was principally that Korean government that killed Catholics, who, at the time were accused of subverting Confucian values, such as filial piety and the accompanying ancestor rites, that are celebrated by many Koreans today. And of course, from a contemporary nationalist perspective, Korean Catholics could in some cases be argued to be traitors who violated the laws of the nation and supported foreign imperialism. And even Korean Catholic martyrs against whom no such charges could be made still represent Koreans being killed by other Koreans, an uncomfortable memory, particularly considering the internecine conflict of the Korean War and ongoing division. This presentation will therefore ask what is being remembered about these persecutions and how

is it being remembered? Through an exploration of the life of Saint Father Andrew Kim Taegŏn, the first Korean Catholic priest and recognized “patron” of UNESCO and his associated holy sites, and the history of Haemi Holy Site, which is celebrated as a place of “nameless” martyrs, this presentation will help us to better understand the realities of anti-Catholic persecution during the Chosŏn dynasty and how that history of religious persecution is being presented positively in a contemporary context by minimizing criticism of the Chosŏn people who were responsible for the persecutions, while exalting Korean Catholic martyrs as good subjects of the state, responsible members of society, and pioneers of the transition from the Premodern to the modern.

◇ **SPEAKER**



**FRANKLIN RAUSCH** received his PhD from the University of British Columbia and is an Associate Professor in the History and Philosophy Department at Lander University in Greenwood, South Carolina. His research focuses on Korean religious history, particularly Catholicism. He has published on such subjects as voluntary martyrdom, Fr. Emil Kapaun (an American Catholic chaplain who died in a POW camp during the Korean War), the Korean Catholic archives, and has contributed two articles on Korean Catholicism to *The Palgrave Handbook of the Catholic Church in East Asia*. His recent translation, carried out with Dr. Jieun Han, *An Chunggŭn: His Life and Thought in His Own Words*, was published by Brill in 2020, and has published an article comparing An Chunggŭn’s thought with that of American abolitionists Frederick Douglass and John Brown. He is currently conducting work on Korean Catholic responses to Covid-19 and Korean Catholic historiography.

◇ **MODERATOR**



**JISOO M. KIM** is Korea Foundation Associate Professor of History, International Affairs, and East Asian Languages and Literatures. She currently serves as the Director of the Institute for Korean Studies and the Co-Director of the East Asia National Resource Center at GW. She also serves as the Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Korean Studies*. She is a specialist in gender, law, and emotions in Korean history. Her broader research interests include gender and sexuality, crime and justice, forensic medicine, literary representations of the law, history of emotions, vernacular, and gender writing. She is the author of *The Emotions of Justice: Gender, Status, and Legal Performance in Chosŏn Korea* (University of Washington Press, 2015), which was awarded the 2017 James Palais Prize of the Association for Asian Studies. She is also the co-editor of *The Great East Asian War and the Birth of the Korean Nation* by JaHyun Kim Haboush (Columbia University Press, 2016). She is currently working on a

book project tentatively entitled *Sexual Desire, Crime, and Gendered Subjects: A History of Adultery Law in Korea*. She received her M.A., M.Phil., and Ph.D. in East Asian Languages and Cultures from Columbia University.

*This event is on the record and open to the public.*