

2020 Kyujanggak Booktalk Series: 8th Lecture

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Lecture

Date:

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Location:

Korea South

Subject Fields:

Asian History / Studies, Chinese History / Studies, East Asian History / Studies, Korean History / Studies, Japanese History / Studies

Dear All,

The International Center for Korean Studies, Kyujanggak, Seoul National University is hosting a booktalk series, which introduces a work in Korean studies to facilitate the exchange of views and information among scholars. We will have our 8th booktalk via ZOOM on October 18, 10AM (KST). If you would like to join, please register at <https://forms.gle/VTDhKDirudcxPV4b6>. Please write your full name and affiliation correctly on the Google Form. We will send you the details you need to log in one day in advance. Thanks in advance!

About the author:

Juhn Y. Ahn is Associate Professor of Buddhist and Korean Studies at the University of Michigan. He is the author of *Buddhas and Ancestors: Religion and Wealth in Fourteenth-Century Korea* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2018). Ahn's research focuses on the history of Chan/Zen Buddhism and also the history of wealth, weather, and the monastic economy in fourteenth and fifteenth-century Korea.

About the book:

Two issues central to the transition from the Koryŏ to the Chosŏn dynasty in fourteenth-century Korea were social differences in ruling elites and the decline of Buddhism, which had been the state religion. In this revisionist history, Juhn Ahn challenges the long-accepted Confucian critique that Buddhism had become so powerful and corrupt that the state had to suppress it. When newly rising elites (many with strong ties to the Mongols) used lavish donations to Buddhist institutions to enhance their status, older elites defended their own adherence to this time-honored system by arguing that their donations were linked to virtue. This emphasis on virtue and the consequent separation of religion from wealth facilitated the Confucianization of Korea and the relegation of Buddhism to the margins of public authority during the Chosŏn dynasty.

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