"Pragmatic Confucian Democracy"

Moderator: A/P Sooyeon Kim
Wednesday, 12th Dec 2018
2.00pm to 3.30pm
PS Staff Meeting Room, AS1, #04-01
National University of Singapore
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ABSTRACT
This talk explores a normative Confucian democratic theory that justifies democracy both as a political system and as a way of life on pragmatic grounds in East Asia with special attention to Confucianism, a dominant cultural tradition in the region, as well as to value pluralism and moral conflict that increasingly characterize the circumstances of East Asian politics. It presents "pragmatic Confucian democracy" as a fresh normative framework that can help (1) identify the social circumstances that require a democracy as a political system in a Confucian society, (2) explain the internal connection between two dimensions of democracy that are commonly presented in political science as being at odds with each other, and (3) make sense of the value of democracy coherently with reference to its two dimensions.

BIO
Sungmoon Kim is professor of political theory at City University of Hong Kong where he is also director of the Center for East Asian and Comparative Philosophy. Kim received a Ph.D. in political science from the University of Maryland at College Park and taught previously at the University of Richmond. Kim’s research interests include democratic and constitutional theory, comparative political theory, Confucianism, and history of East Asian political thought and his research has appeared in the journals such as American Political Science Review, Journal of Politics, British Journal of Political Science, Contemporary Political Theory, Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy, History of Political Thought, Journal of the History of Ideas, and The Review of Politics among others. Kim is the author of Confucian Democracy in East Asia: Theory and Practice (Cambridge UP, 2014), Public Reason Confucianism: Democratic Perfectionism and Constitutionalism in East Asia (Cambridge UP, 2016), and Democracy after Virtue: Toward Pragmatic Confucian Democracy (Oxford UP, 2018). He also (co-)edited three books.