

Abstract: The Inner Lives of Tasan Chǒng Yagyong and Paul Chǒng Hasang

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Tasan Chǒng Yagyong and Paul Chǒng Hasang are important enough in nineteenth-century Korea history for Hahn Moo-Sook to construct an entire historical novel, *Encounter*, around them. As a novelist, she was entitled to delve into their inner lives, the emotions they felt as they confronted a bloody persecution of Korea's Catholic community and anyone connected with it. As a historian, I have to be a little more careful about what I say people in centuries past thought and felt. To try to understand how Tasan and Hasang reacted to the situations they found themselves in, I looked into what they wrote at the time. I conclude that written records allow us to identify with a high degree of probability at least some of the emotions they felt. There is enough of an overlap between those records and *Encounter* to conclude that Hahn, even from a distance of almost two centuries, constructed a plausible account of the inner lives of those two important individuals. She shows us a Tasan who is frequently sad and full of remorse. And she shows us a Hasang who is strong-willed and single-minded. Both portrayals are plausible enough that, when we read *Encounter*, we feel we have gained some insight into the emotions those two men felt at that difficult time.