Center for East Asian Studies, University of Chicago: Maghiel van Crevel Lecture (Webinar)

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"China’s Battler Poetry and the Hypertranslatability Of Zheng Xiaoqiong"

Coming from a place where poetry is a firmly rooted social practice, China’s battler poetry (dagong shige) highlights the cruelty of precarious labor regimes spawned by global capitalism. So it makes sense that there is plenty of foreign interest in this writing. Yet, this interest has overwhelmingly focused on just two authors, Zheng Xiaoqiong (b. 1980) and Xu Lizhi (1990–2014). Xu Lizhi’s high visibility was triggered by his suicide, and the low visibility of other authors than Zheng and Xu is explained in part by the natural delay of national canon formation in translation. But this does not make Zheng Xiaoqiong’s ubiquity in foreign work on China’s battler poetry any less remarkable. What explains the hypertranslatability of Zheng Xiaoqiong?

Maghiel van Crevel is Professor of Chinese language and literature at Leiden University. His research draws on ethnographic fieldwork, as documented in Walk on the Wild Side: Snapshots of the Chinese Poetry Scene.

* While the attendance is free and open to the public, registration is required. Please register via the following link: Webinar Registration - Zoom

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