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FALL 2010 RESEARCH SEMINARS ON CHINA

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Wednesday, October 27, 12:00 noon
Tokiokia Room (Moore Hall 319)

Literary Democracy or Literary Utopia: The Folk Songs Collection Movement in Yan'an (1944–1948)

Agnes Zhuo Liu

Visiting Lecturer, UHM East Asian Languages & Literatures

The paper talks about “Folk Songs Collection movement” promoted by the CCP in Yan’an after Mao’s talk at the Forum on Literature and Art in 1942. It used to be degraded as a provisional strategy in wartime, or a propagandic act of consolidating CCP’s rule in rural China. My argument is that the idea of Folk Song Collection movement is to bring more and more peasants into the literary and cultural production. It is quite different from the folk songs collection movement in the 1920s conducted by Peking University. Peasants are encouraged to participate in creating their own culture the same time when they become the master of land and their own lives through land reform movement in the late 1940s and early 1950s. It delves into the role of “*wengongtuan*” (League of Literary and Artistic Workers), and seeks to articulate how the folk songs collection movement was organized. Just as other mass mobilization branches inaugurated by the CCP, the folk songs collection movement was a democratic experiment in rural China which aimed to help peasants get “*fanshen*” culturally.

Agnes Zhuo Liu is an ABD student in the department of East Asian Studies at New York University. Her dissertation, titled “Culturally Fanshen: the Emergence of People’s Literature in Chinese Civil War Period,” examines the question of revolutionary literary production in the late 1940s in China. She is teaching here at University of Hawai’i as one-year replacement for Jiang Hui. Before coming to New York University, she studied in the Department of Chinese Language and Literature at Peking University, where she received her B.A. and M.A. degrees. Her research interests include modern Chinese literature and modern Chinese intellectual history.