MISREADING THE POLITICS OF CHINESE FICTION: THE CASE OF YAN LIANKE’S "CHILD"

As an internationally influential Chinese writer, Yan Lianke is mostly known to Western readers for his “political narrative”, while his writing style, which he names, “mythorealism”, has received much less scholarly attention. However, it is this lack of attention that probably results in a misreading of the politics of Yan’s writing. This talk aims to offer an alternative reading of Yan Lianke by focusing on one character in his 2011 fiction The Four Books. It argues that by incorporating the elusive religious dimension into his narration of realistic events, Yan has created an obstacle for any conventional perception or straightforward interpretation of the character Haizi (the Child), a politically-charged concept in the context of modern Chinese history.

6 November, 12p.m. to 1p.m.
Telus Centre, 131

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