

2020-21 School of Chinese Online Seminar

**The Power of Invisibility:  
The Making of a Martial Goddess in Daoism and Chinese  
Vernacular Fiction**

隱身術的威力：道教與中國白話小說對一位軍事女神的塑造

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**Date 日期: May 10, 2021 (Monday)**

**Time 時間: 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon**

**Venue 地點: via Zoom**

**Language 演講語言: English 英文**

<https://hku.zoom.us/j/94302780557?pwd=U3pOQXJUSUIqU3JEcFAwcTVLN0kxQT09>

**Zoom Meeting ID: 943 0278 0557**

**Password: 247022**

**Abstract:**

Concealing a hero's body and helping him defeat enemies, the Mysterious Woman of the Nine Heavens is a powerful goddess in Daoism and Chinese vernacular fiction. Her divine power and military wisdom invite us to investigate her identity and the process of her creation. In this talk, Dr. Liu takes an interdisciplinary approach to these issues, using textual and visual evidence to show how Daoism and the Ming (1368–1644) novel *Water Margin* perpetuated the Mysterious Woman's role as a warrior protectress. As Dr. Liu shows, during the Tang and Song periods, a set of Daoist texts strengthened her role as a warrior protectress by giving prominence to her magic of concealing the body and to magic concerning the worship of the Northern Dipper; a Daoist ordination ceremony in the Ming imperial court elevated her status and turned her into a tutelary goddess of the state; against this background, *Water Margin* popularized esoteric Daoist knowledge pertaining to the Mysterious Woman, making this female divinity's story accessible to common readers and preventing her from falling into oblivion.

九天玄女在道教文本和白話小說中是一位極具威力的女神。她隱藏主人公的身體並助其擊退敵人。她的神聖力量和軍事智慧啟發讀者探究她的真實身份及其塑造過程。在此次演講中，劉博士將採用跨學科的研究路徑，利用文本和圖像證據來展示道教經典和白話小說聯手塑造九天玄女戰爭保護神形象的過程。劉博士指出，唐宋時期的道教文獻突出玄女的隱身術和北斗法；明代皇室的一次受籙儀式提升了她的地位，把她變成國家保護神；在這樣的背景下，小說《水滸傳》將跟玄女有關的道教神秘知識通俗化，使玄女的故事易於為大眾理解並接受。

**Bio:**

**Peng Liu** is an assistant teaching professor in the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures at Rutgers University. Dr. Liu received his first doctorate in Buddhism and Medieval Chinese Literature from Fudan University and his second doctorate in East Asian Languages and Cultures from Columbia University. His current book project investigates how late imperial Chinese fiction popularized Daoist goddess cults that would otherwise have been marginalized or forgotten.

劉鵬博士現任教於羅格斯大學亞洲語言與文化系。他先於復旦大學獲得博士學位，研究方向為佛教與中古文學；後又於哥倫比亞大學獲得東亞語言與文化博士學位，專攻道教與明清小說。他目前的專書項目探討明清時期的白話小說如何將道教女神（玄女和素女）的形象戲劇化、通俗化。

***ALL are welcome***