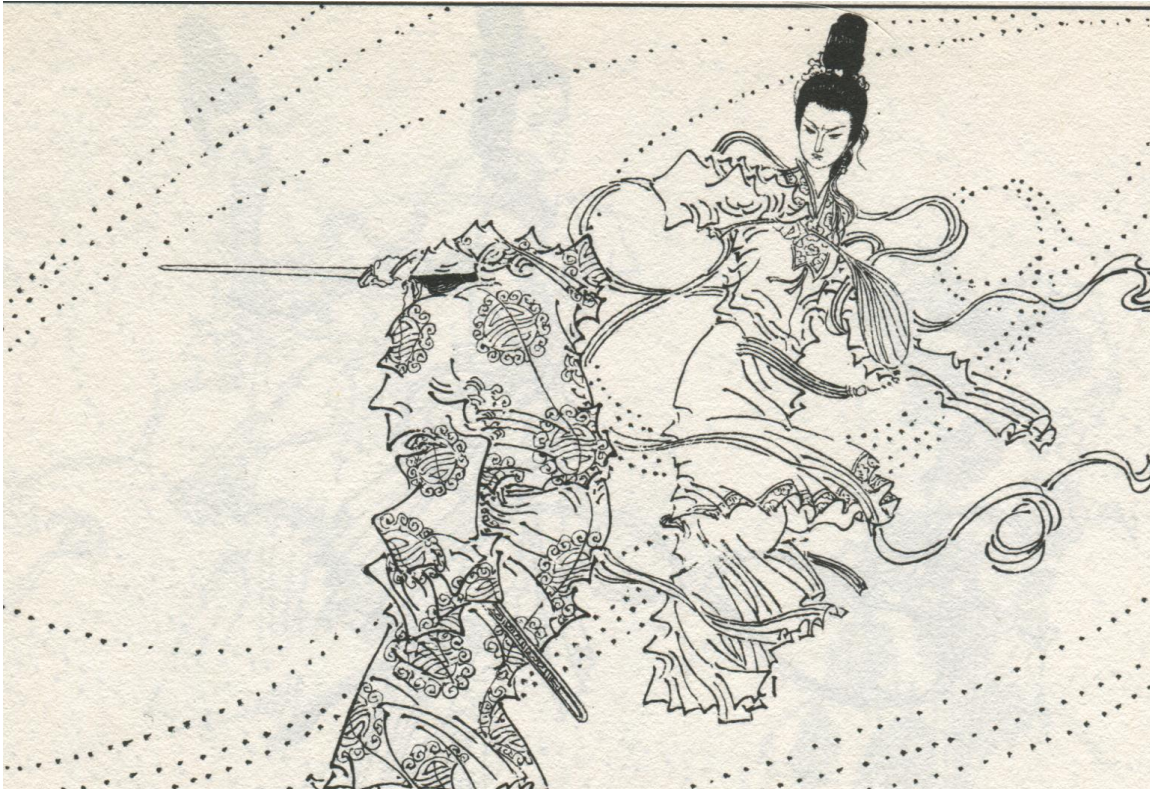


China Research Seminar Series (Lent 2021)  
FAMES, University of Cambridge

# *Resisting Spirits*

**Drama Reform & Cultural Transformation  
in the People's Republic of China**

**Dr Maggie Greene**  
(Montana State University)



**5pm (London time), 17 March, 2021 (Wednesday)**

Please register in advance for this seminar:

[https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJUqfuytqDMpG9Xyhj2DVOLM6xTXYwIoOv\\_w](https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJUqfuytqDMpG9Xyhj2DVOLM6xTXYwIoOv_w)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the seminar.

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**Abstract**

In this talk, Greene will discuss her recent monograph, *Resisting Spirits: Drama Reform & Cultural Transformation in the People's Republic of China*, a study of the role of traditional culture and cultural reform in Maoist China. Combining archival documents with a variety of rare manuscript materials, *Resisting Spirits* explores the debates over the role of traditional Chinese theatre (*xiqu*), particularly the celebrated genre of ghost opera. Challenging perceptions of what cultural production in the high socialist period looked like, *Resisting Spirits* shows the lengths to which artists and writers went in trying to reform beloved popular culture for new political contexts, as well as the political ramifications of artistic experimentation and debate. Greene also shows how integral the debate over ghosts was to shifting political tides, particularly the lead-up to the Cultural Revolution. Greene will also discuss the relevance of Mao-era cultural regulation and reform to the contemporary PRC.

**Speaker**

Maggie Greene is an Associate Professor of History at Montana State University. She is the author of *Resisting Spirits: Drama Reform and Cultural Transformation in the People's Republic of China* (University of Michigan Press, 2019). Her research explores cultural transformation in China across time and space, and the relationship of cultural production to politics. She has published articles on subjects ranging from opera, to *mahjong* in the late Qing and Republican periods, to the cultural and political 'performance' of Chinese expeditions to Mt. Everest in the high socialist period. Her second project considers the role of global popular culture, from American children's books to Japanese videogames, in post-Mao China, and the ways in which cultural workers and fans have reworked and reused global pop culture within a Chinese context.

