

The Moral Economy of Chinese Working Nuns

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2nd Floor Library Apse

2:00p.m.-3:30 p.m



This talk explores the phenomenon of Catholic women's religious labor in the context of post-socialist China. Drawing from Chinese Catholic nuns' stories of trial and struggle, this talk argues that the nuns engage in a dual form of labor. Drawing from scholarship on moral economy, the growing discourses among Catholic women religious regarding unjust working conditions, and Julia Elyachar's concept of "phatic labor," this paper develops the concept of "phatic exploitation," calling attention to the category of thankless work that Chinese Catholic nuns perform to make their religious labor for the Church recognizable, legible, and remunerable.



George Wu Bayuga is a PhD candidate in the Department of Anthropology completing a dissertation on the transnational infrastructure for training Chinese Catholic nuns in the Philippines. Prior to beginning his study at Yale, he completed an M.A. in Food Studies at NYU. Bayuga will be joining the UCCS Department of Anthropology in Fall 2020.



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