



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

EAST ASIAN STUDIES CENTER

18
NOVEMBER

**2022 THE INSTITUTE FOR
KOREAN STUDIES
PRESENTS:**

Friday
4:00-5:30pm
Denney 238

**"TOWARD IMMORTALITY: THE HERO
CH'OE CH'IWŎN AND A SILLAN
ODYSSEY IN A SINOCENTRIC
WORLD"**

SOOKJA CHO

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Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn (b. 857) was a literary genius and an honorable government official of both Silla Korea (57 BCE-935 CE) and Tang China (618-907). He was long celebrated as an iconic figure who fulfilled the dream of Sillan intellectuals. In Chosŏn (1392-1910) literature, Ch'oe then continued to evolve from a historical man into a legendary hero and a mighty god, embodying the longing of Koreans for a powerful protector to shield both their lives and their cultural integrity from the might of China. This development invites a new inquiry into Ch'oe's legacy among Chosŏn Koreans, suggesting the rise of a new side to the Korean heroic imagination, one which placed Ch'oe at the center of the intricate relationship between China and Korea. This talk introduces heroic qualities of Ch'oe in Chosŏn fictional narratives and examines what such herorization of Ch'oe reveals about Chosŏn people, their society and culture. The reincarnations and heroization of Ch'oe speak to a deep Korean desire for cultural ascendancy and political power. They evoke the subversive and, until Chosŏn times, the underrepresented perspectives on China concealed within Korean history and literature, bringing forth the plurality of China and of Koreans' attitude(s) toward it.



Free and open to the public

<https://easc.osu.edu/events/iks-lecture-sookja-cho-toward-immortality-hero-choe-chiwon-and-sillan-odyssey-sinocentric>

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