

Protecting *the Weak*

Entangled Processes of Framing, Mobilization and Institutionalization in East Asia



Nanfeiyan's Forum Theatre Transformation: A Case Study on Theatre Practices of the Migrant Workers' Community in China

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Nanfeiyan (literally: wild goose flying southward) Social Work Centre is a grassroots NGO located in Foshan city, Guangdong province. The founder of Nanfeiyan is He Xiaobo, a former migrant worker who got injured on the assembly line and then lost his job in 2006. Since its founding in the mid-2000s, the organization has kept supporting migrant workers who were injured in the workplace by providing them with legal consulting and helping them to negotiate with their bosses for injury compensation. In 2009, Nanfeiyan initiated its forum theatre project on the theme of work-related injury and occupational disease. They have shown their productions at university campuses in Guangdong province and have spoken for injured workers. This study investigates how Nanfeiyan creates its forum theatre productions and uses theatre as a tool for civil education. It shows that Nanfeiyan's forum theatre practice is a transformation of Augusto Boal's definition of forum theatre. A discussion of this transformation will contribute to understanding the social situation of migrant workers in China.

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Campus Westend, seminar house, SH 2.105

ZHAO Zhiyong is associate professor at Central Academy of Drama, Beijing, China. His research focuses on theatre criticism, critical theory, and applied theatre. He is currently working on the migrant workers' community theatre in China. In addition, as a community theatre practitioner ZHAO has worked with a number migrant workers' theatre groups in Beijing and Shenzhen, hosting theatre workshops for them and helping them make their productions.

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