

Wilt Idema studied Chinese Language and Culture at Leiden University, the Netherlands. Following further study in Japan and Hong Kong he returned to Leiden to teach Chinese Literature there from 1970 till 1999. Since 2000 he teaches Chinese literature at Harvard. He has published widely on the vernacular traditions of premodern China, with an emphasis on early fiction and drama. He has also published on China's women's literature. His most recent publications are focused on China's rich heritage of popular narrative ballads. His publications in this field include *Meng Jiangnü Brings Down the Great Wall: Ten Versions of a Chinese Legend* (with an essay by Haiyan Lee, 2008); *Personal Salvation and Filial Piety: Two Precious Scroll Narratives of Guanyin and her Acolytes* (2008); *Heroines of Jiangyong: Chinese Narrative Ballads in Women's Script* (2009); *The White Snake and her Son: A Translation of the Precious Scroll of Thunder Peak with Related Texts* (2009); and *Filial Piety and Its Divine Rewards: The Legend of Dong Yong and Weaving Maiden with Related Texts* (2009). In 1991 he received the Martinus Nijhoff Award, the highest distinction for literary translations in the Netherlands, for his renditions of classical Chinese poetry.