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sull'Asia Orientale
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KYOTO LECTURES

Thursday, December 15th, 18:00h

Dick Stegewerns

SPEAKER

The Legacy of the Sun Postwar Japanese War Films

During the allied occupation of Japan a strong regime of media control was in force, under which the Japanese film world was directed to make films dealing with the wartime period or the aftermath of the war in a way that was in line with the American interpretation of a 'Pacific War' and the verdict of the Tokyo Tribunal. However, no sooner had the occupation forces left the country or the battle for the collective war memory of the Japanese people flared up. Films by leftist directors focusing on the grimness and cruelty of the war continued to be made, but they found a formidable foe in production companies such as Shin-Tōhō which started to portray the war in a more positive manner. This talk will analyze the main themes and settings, the historical and institutional background, and the impact of the large and continually growing body of Japanese re-enactments of the Second World War. It will concentrate on the post-occupation period, when the genre of war films was re-established, but will take the story up to this very day, by discussing this year's harvest of war films such as *A Man Called Fox – The Miracle of the Pacific*, *The Legacy of the Sun*, *One Postcard* and *Admiral Yamamoto – The Untold Story of the Pacific War*.

Dick Stegewerns is associate professor at the University of Oslo and visiting professor at Kyoto University. His present research projects deal with Japanese views of the outside world, democracy in Japan, *tōzai bunmeiron* and other visions of a unique position of Japan in the world, Japanese new wave cinema, and postwar Japanese war films. His writings include *Adjusting to the New World: Japanese Opinion Leaders of the Taishō Generation and the Outside World, 1918-1932* (2007) and *Yoshida Kijū: 50 Years of Avant-Garde Filmmaking in Postwar Japan* (2010).

This lecture will be held at the Institute for Research in Humanities (IRH), Kyoto University (seminar room, 1st floor).

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