



Scuola Italiana di Studi  
sull'Asia Orientale  
ISEAS



École Française  
d'Extrême-Orient  
EFEO

CO-HOSTED BY



ecaf  
european consortium  
for asian field study

# KYOTO LECTURES

Wednesday, May 27th, 18:00h

Timothy Y. Tsu SPEAKER

## Bodies that Could Kill

Female Sexuality  
in 21st Century  
Anti-Japanese  
War Films of China

This talk will discuss female sexuality as a trope and spectacle—both thoughtfully deployed and crudely exploited—in Chinese films about the Anti-Japanese War (1937-1945). The recent prominence of female sexuality on the big and small screens, from feminine charm to nudity and sexual violence, is symptomatic of two tendencies in the representation of the war. On the one hand, female sexuality as a trope opens up new possibilities for critical examination of the complexity of the war in ways that have not been possible before. On the other, sexuality as spectacle allows war dramas to use the eroticized female body to titillate the audience, a development most evident on TV but not restricted to it.

As a conclusion, it will be argued that the current absence of a positively enforced official representation of the war combined with the powerful pull of commercialism and the constraints imposed by continuing political taboos have resulted in a polarized prominence of the female body. This has become a site for exploring the complexity and contradictions of the war. At the same time, more frequently, it has been paraded as voyeuristic spectacle under the pretext of purveying patriotic lessons. While the nationalist discourse during the Anti-Japanese War had monopolized it and denied its femininity, the market has now taken over the female body and demands extreme displays of sexuality.

**Timothy Yun Hui TSU** is a professor at the School of International Studies, Kwansai Gakuin University. Educated in Japanese and American universities, he has worked in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Australia before returning to teach in Japan. His academic interests include the Chinese in Japan, the Japanese in colonial Southeast Asia, Chinese food in Japan, Japan environmental and consumer culture, and world heritage in East Asia. His most recent publications are *Japanese and Chinese Films on the Second World War* (co-editor, Routledge, 2014) and *World Heritage in China, Japan, Taiwan, and Hong Kong* (co-editor, Chung Hwa, 2014, in Chinese). He is co-organizer of the following upcoming international conferences: "Fighting Women in Chinese Pop-Culture" (with Hong Kong Polytechnic University), "Masculinity and War" (with the Institute for War, Genocide, and Holocaust Studies, the Netherlands), and "Heritage and Hybridity in Contemporary East Asian Foodways" (with Hong Kong Shue Yan University).



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

**École Française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO)**  
29 Betto-cho Kitashirakawa, Sakyo-ku, Kyoto, 606-8276 Japan

**Italian School of East Asian Studies (ISEAS)**  
4th Floor, 4 Yoshida Ushinomiya-cho, Sakyo-ku, Kyoto, 606-8302 Japan

EFEO | T: 075-701-0882 F: 075-701-0883 E: efeo.kyoto@gmail.com

ISEAS | T: 075-751-8132 F: 075-751-8221 E: iseas@iseas-kyoto.org