



JF-GJS Fellow Talk Series # 12

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Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia, UTokyo

The Fantasy of Immunity to Speech: Literary Sinitic, Sound, and Voice in Japanese-Colonial Taiwan



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Moderator

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While Literary Sinitic structurally avoided attachment to specific speech forms, its adherents could develop a fantasy that it did not represent speech at all—a belief that enabled particular forms of cultural authority. In this talk, I examine the fantasy of what I call “immunity to speech” and the sonic dimensions of this process. I argue that this fantasy rested on a prior subscription to Literary Sinitic as a “writing system” rather than a “language,” which gave rise to complex cultural and colonial dynamics in Japanese colonial Taiwan. In particular, the sonic culture of traditional theater operated to invite non-literate masses into “ritualistic acoustic spaces” while suppressing their vernacular appreciation.

21 JULY 2026 TUE.

16:00-18:00 JST

**@Conference Room 1,
Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia,
Utokyo**



Please register here

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