

# Other Epistemologies Online Lecture Series 2.0

Semester Focus: Innovative Approaches to Gender and Genre: Literature and Women Studies



## Gendering National Sacrifices: The Making of New Heroines in China's Counter-COVID-19 TV Series

14:00-15:45 (CEST) / 20:00-21:45 (GMT+8), Thursday, 12 October 2023

The lecture will take place via Zoom. Please register here: <https://www.aoi.uzh.ch/registration>

**Online Lecture by Assoc. Prof. Yunyun Zhou, University of Oslo**

From February 2020 to the end of 2021, China's state-controlled media focused on creating its "victorious" narrative of combating the COVID-19 pandemic. Focusing on two high-profile and COVID-19-themed TV series that aim to rewrite the collective memories of the Wuhan lockdown as part of state's affective governance strategies, this lecture will examine the gendered nature of state narratives by dissecting the representation of national heroines of the pandemic. It demonstrates the centrality of heterosexual families and gender performances in romanticizing individual sacrifices and mass suffering. Unlike the socialist-era role models, the personal weakness and emotional flaws of China's new heroines are tactically displayed to enhance emotional authenticity and resonate with contemporary audiences. Yet these state narratives reflect only stereotypical depictions of femininity within a hierarchical gender order in post-reform China, where moralized womanhood is imbued with a sacrificial attitude that serves to discipline China's female citizens.

**Dr. Yunyun Zhou** is a feminist researcher, a political sociologist, and Associate Professor at the Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages, the University of Oslo. She positions herself as a fieldwork-based researcher working at the intersection of political sociology, gender studies, and cultural studies. Her current research projects cover a range of topics concerning the latest development of Chinese politics and society, such as Chinese women's reproductive choices and discourses, gender lobbying, and women's political representation. She is the author of "Theorizing Illiberal State-Feminism," "Coalition-based Gender Lobbying," and "Being a Good Daughter of the Party."

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