

## **Asian Performance: Gender, Intercultural Performance, and Historiography**

### **Course Description**

Gender has always been a critical category for accessing theatrical traditions around the world. Whether it be in the capacity of performers on stage, spectators in the house, readers of drama texts, characters in the play, or the role types performers have to master, being male or female is to operate within the specific limits of gendered identity appropriate for the given social norms. Bodies, in this context, become instruments by which we reenact the norms of gender we have acquired through social interaction. However, theatre performance has not always been a docile institution by which a given society reinforced the ideal norms of gender. Theatre as a social institution has been constantly challenging the limits of gender boundaries in drama texts and performance traditions in various forms of allegory, satire and parody throughout history.

This course explores the shifting boundaries between the notions of male and female, and the ways such gendered identities and performance interact with the ideas of cultural differences in the most crucial moments of theatre history of China, Japan and Korea from antiquity to contemporary times. These three countries share a long common tradition of Confucianism, which mandated ideal codes of gendered body, behavior, and linguistic practice. Theatrical traditions, on the one hand, embody the long living conventions of Confucianism, but on the other hand, theatre found illusive ways to obviate or even subvert the rigid worldview of Confucian patriarchy. Starting from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, the relatively well-defined gender norms of China, Japan and Korea begin to be dismantled with the advent of the Euro-American ideas and practices, which were quickly conflated with social progress and modernity. East Asia undergoes one of the most radical gender reforms in its history, and the political order and the common cultural block that existed in the region become a part of the past. In the aftermath of the two World Wars and the Socialist Revolution, traditional family life, which had served as the basic unit for educating proper gender roles and moral values, becomes fragmented in the ever-fluctuating state. East Asian nation-states now has to reconcile with the idea that dismantling the patriarchal structure—a practice many perceived as originating from the West—is the moniker of enlightenment that will lead toward modern statehood. With the advent of Socialist movement in the 1920s and the foundation of the Communist government in 1949, China becomes a unique terrain, distinguished from Japan and South Korea, as it sought radical gender reforms outside the models of modernity based on industrial capitalism. In Mainland China, the ethos of women's liberation was pursued as a part of the Socialist Revolution, which indeed allowed the collective emergence of female workers, soldiers, and peasants. On the other hand, as a result of rapid industrialization and expansion of consumerist culture in Japan and South Korea, patriarchal authority became subject to simultaneous processes of reinforcement and dismantling.

Throughout the quarter, we will look at the correlations between gender and performance as a question not only being limited to immediate theatre environment, but also as being deeply rooted in historical events and social practices, such as marriage customs, family structure, semiotics of space, and the notions of the West and modernity in East Asia.

### **Course Aim**

At the end of the course, students are expected to have

1. Read and seen key performances of East Asia and critical writings on performance analysis.
2. Developed an ability to establish a connection between gender studies, East Asian performance, and their own research.
3. Formulated skills to raise thought-provoking research questions and responses.
4. Written an original research paper demonstrating creative thinking and analytical ability.

### **Course Requirements and Evaluation**

1. Presentation: **20%**
2. Syllabus **20%** (due 1/20; optional rewrite due 3/17)
3. Midterm paper **20%**
4. Final paper **40%** (due 3/17 by 5:00pm)

1. Two presenters will be chosen each week. Presenters will collaborate with each other and respond to issues raised in online discussions in a 15-minute presentation. Creative format incorporating acting or emulating talk shows is highly encouraged for your presentation.

2. Everyone will devise and submit a syllabus for either an undergraduate or a graduate course, which addresses any aspects of Asian performance. Potential topics include but are not limited to intercultural theater, gender and performance, global theater, and historiography. You are encouraged to develop a syllabus, which you will actually use in the future. Please make sure to include the following items:

- Course title, level, and description
- Weekly schedule
- Reading and assignment list
- Evaluation method/grading rubric
- Recommended bibliography
- Any additional information

3. Midterm paper is due May 12<sup>th</sup>. Choose any of the videos and analyze The topic is to analyze

4. The topic of your prospectus should touch on the intersections of gender, intercultural performance, and East Asia. You must demonstrate solid knowledge of reading materials covered in this class. Your final paper is an expansion of your mini-prospectus. Either expand your mini-prospectus significantly into a full-blown prospectus (approximately 20 pages double spaced), or write a research paper based on the questions you raised in your mini-prospectus

(approximately 15-20 pages double spaced). Consistent and correct use of either MLA or Chicago citation style is accepted.

## Reading and Viewing

### 1. Books

The following books are available at the UCSB Bookstore for purchase.

- Brandon, James. The Cambridge Guide to Asian Theater ((ISBN-10: 0521588227 | ISBN-13: 978-0521588225)
- Brownell, Jeffrey and Wendy Wasserstrom, eds. Chinese Femininities, Chinese Masculinities (CFCM) (ISBN-10: 0520221168 | ISBN-13: 978-0520221161 |)
- Robertson, Jennifer Takarazuka: Sexual Politics and Popular Culture in Modern Japan. (ISBN-10: 0520211510 | ISBN-13: 978-0520211513)
- Tang, Xianzu. Trans. Catherine Swatek. The Peony Pavilion: Mudan Ting. 2002 (ISBN-10: 0253215277 , ISBN-13: 978-0253215277)

### 2. Articles

The rest of the shorter reading materials can be found on Gauchospace.

### 3. Video

Viewing relevant visual materials can assist your understanding of esoteric performing traditions of East Asia. The following materials are on reserve at the Davidson Library to assist your understanding of various traditions. I encourage you to see the assigned weekly viewing before reading the materials.

- *Onoe Baiko the seventh as The salt-gatherer* [kabuki performance], Media Shelf PN2924.5.K3 O56 1997
- *Kabuki techniques*, Media Shelf PN2924.5.K3 K23695 1995
- *The tradition of performing arts in Japan: the heart of Kabuki, Noh and Bunraku*, Media Shelf PN2921 .T733 1989
- *Acting techniques of the Noh Theatre of Japan*, Media Shelf PN2924.5.N6 A28 1980
- *Kabuki for western actors and directors*, Media Shelf PN2924.5.K3 K226 1980
- *Kyōkanoko musume Dōjōji* [kabuki dance] Media Shelf PN2924.5.K3 K96 2003
- *Kagamijishi* [kabuki dance] Media Shelf PN2924.5.K3 K34 2004
- An initiation "Kut" for a Korean shaman” Media Shelf BL2236.S5 I55
- *Mu dan ting [The peony pavilion]* Media Shelf PN 2875.J53 M82 2005

- *Sŏpyŏnje* [on training pansori performers], Media Shelf PN1997 .S633726 2006
- *Chunhyangdyŏn* [classical Korean tale in pansori performance], Media Shelf PN1997 .C49 2001
- *The Worlds of Mei Lanfang*, PN2878.M4 W67 2005
- *Dream Girls*, Media Shelf PN2924.D742 1994

## Class schedule

### Week 1      **Historicizing Gender and Performance in East Asia**

- 4-3            Course introduction
- Reading**      Li, Chenyang, “Confucianism and Feminist Concerns”  
[gauchospace]  
Mann, “The Male Body in Chinese History and Culture”  
Brownwell and Wasserstrom, “Introduction” to CFCM
- Recommended** Mann and Huffman, “Decentering of Second Wave  
Feminism”  
Case, “Feminism and Performance”

### Week 2      **Ming Kunqu: The Peony Pavilion**

- 4-10           **Presentation**
- Reading**  
Mann, “Grooming a Daughter for Marriage” in CFCM  
Tang, *The Peony Pavilion: Mudan ting*
- Viewing**  
*Mu dan ting [The peony pavilion]* excerpts [Davidson]  
Media Shelf PN 2875.J53 M82 2005

### Week 3      **Female Shamans and Healers**

- 4-17           **Presentation**
- Viewing**      Kendall and Lee, *An Initiation Kut* [on reserve]
- Reading**      Ortner, “Is Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?”  
Janice Kim, “Processes of Feminine Power”  
Tae-gon Kim, “Shamanism in the Seoul Area”  
Kendall, “Mugam: The Dance in Shaman’s Clothing”  
Kendall, “Korean Shamanism and the Spirit of Capitalism”  
Fenkl, “Dancing on Knives”

**Week 4      Female Ghosts in Kabuki**

**4-24**      **Lecture** Professor Satoko Shimazaki (USC)

**Reading** Tsuruya Namboku IV, “Yotsuya Ghost Stories”  
Morinaga, “The Gender of Onnagata”  
Wetmore, “Selling Kabuki to the West”

**Viewing**

*Kabuki techniques*, Media Shelf PN2924.5.K3 K23695 1995  
*Acting techniques of the Noh Theatre of Japan*,  
Media Shelf PN2924.5.N6 A28 1980

Syllabus due on Gauchospace by 4:00pm

**Week 5      Female Impersonation in Beijing Opera**

**5-1**      **Presentation**

**Reading**

Ko and Wang, “Translating Feminisms in China”  
Goldstein, “Mei Lanfang and the Nationalization of the Peking Opera”  
Butler, Introduction to *Bodies That Matter*  
Tian, “Male Dan: Paradox of Sex”  
Kim, “From Imperial Concubine to a Model Maoist”

**Viewing**

*The Worlds of Mei Lanfang*, PN2878.M4 W67 2005

**Week 6      Midterm paper discussion & lecture on the 20<sup>th</sup> century Asia**

**5-8**      **Discussion** Midterm paper  
**Lecture** Asia in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

Funding proposal due on Gauchospace by 4:00pm

**Week 7      Pansori**

**5-15**      **Viewing**  
*Sōpyōnje*, Media Shelf PN1997 .S633726 2006 and  
*Chunhyangdyōn*, Media Shelf PN1997 .C49 2001

**Reading**

Conquergood, “Performance Studies”

Von Kleist, "On the Marionette Theatre"  
<http://www.southerncrossreview.org/9/kleist.htm>  
Um, "New Pansori in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century"  
Killik, "Jockeying for Tradition"

**Week 8**      **Takarazuka**

**5-22**      **Presentation**

**Viewing**

*Dream Girls*, Media Shelf PN2924.D742 1994

**Reading**

Robertson, *Takarazuka*, Ch. 1-3  
Robertson, "Japan's First Cyborg"

5:00-6:00pm Workshop on writing prospectus

**Week 9**      **Revolutionary Theater: China and North Korea**

**5-29**      **Presentation**

**Viewing**

*Red Detachment of Women* and *The Morning Sun*  
[@Kerr Hall]

**Reading**

Min, *Red Azalea*  
Honig, "Maoist Mappings of Gender" in CFCM  
Perry and Dillon, "Little Brothers" in CFCM  
Bonnell, "The Peasant Woman"  
Evans, "Comrade Sisters"  
Chen, "Dressing for the Party"  
Kim, "Dressed to Kill"

Mini-prospectus due on Gauchospace by 4:00pm

**Week 10**      **Round Table Discussion**

**6-5**      **Bring the first version of your final paper**

**Reading**

**Week 11**      **Exam Week**

**6-12**      **Final paper due on Gauchospace by 5:00pm**

## Bibliography and Recommended Reading

### Background Reading

- Barlow, Tani. "Theorizing Woman: Funu, Guojia, Jiating (Chinese Women, Chinese State, Chinese Family)." *Genders*. No. 10 (1991).
- Barlow, Tani, ed. *Gender Politics in Modern China*. Durham; London: Duke university Press, 1993.
- Brownell, Susan and Jeffrey Wasserstrom, eds. *Chinese Femininities, Chinese Masculinities*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002.
- Dikotter, Frank. *Sex, Culture, and Modernity in China*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1995.
- Ebrey, Patricia. "Women, Marriage, and the Family in Chinese History." *Heritage of China: Contemporary Perspective on Chinese Civilization*. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1990: 197-223.
- Furth, Charlotte. *A Flourishing Yin: Gender in China's Medical History 960-1665*.
- Gilman, Christina. *Gendering the Chinese Revolution*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.
- Goodman, Lizbeth and Jane de Gay. *The Routledge Reader in Gender and Performance*. London; New York: Routledge, 1998.
- Johnson, Kay Ann. *Women, the Family and Peasant Revolution in China*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.
- Mackie, Vera. *Feminism in Modern Japan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- The Modern Girl Around the World Research Group. *The Modern Girl Around the World: Consumption, Modernity and Globalization*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008.
- Morris, Andrew. *Marrow of the Nation: A History of Sport and Physical Culture in Republican China*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004.
- Laderman, Carol and Marina Roseman, eds. *The Performance of Healing*. NY; London: Routledge, 1994.
- Lee, Leo Ou-fan. *Shanghai Modern*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999.
- Rofel, Lisa. *Other Modernities: Gendered Yearnings in China after Socialism*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.
- Sato, Barbara. *The New Japanese Women: Modernity, Media, and Women in Interwar Japan*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.
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- Tyler, Carole-Anne. *Female Impersonation*. London; New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Xu, Xiaoqun. "The Discourse on Love, Marriage, and Sexuality in Post-Mao China." *positions* 4: 2 (1996): 381-414.

## China

- Chen, Xiaomei. *Acting the Right Part*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002.
- Finane, Antonia. *Changing Clothes in China: Fashion, History, Nation*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008.
- Hwang, David Henry M. *Butterfly*. New York: Penguin, 1988.
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- MacDougall, Bonnie, ed. *Popular Chinese Literature and Performing Arts*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984.
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- Riley, Jo. *Chinese Theatre and the Actor in Performance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Shen, Grant. *Elite Theatre in Ming China, 1368-1644*. London and New York: Routledge, 2005
- Tian, "Male Dan: the Paradox of Sex, Acting, and Perception of Female Impersonation in Traditional Chinese Theatre." *Asian Theatre Journal*. 17:1: 78-97.

## Japan

- Arnott, Peter. *Theatres of Japan*. London, Macmillan; New York, St. Martin's Press, 1969.
- Brandon, James. *Chūshigura*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1982.
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## Korea

- Cho, Oh-kon. *Traditional Korean Theatre*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988.
- Killick, Andrew P. "Jockeying for Tradition: The Checkered History of Korean Ch'angguk Opera." *Asian Theatre Journal* Vol. 20, No. 1 (Spring, 2003).
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