

Cultural Performances of Asia: Themes of the Class

Image of Crazy-A removed for
copyright reasons

Performance / Cultures / Asia

- What defines "Asia"?
- What is "culture"?
- How does "performance" give us a certain perspective on both?

Image of Bunraku
puppet
theater of Japan
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"Asia"

- Anything that stands for Asia or Asianness
- Japan, China, Korea, Taiwan, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Asian-American, etc.
- Is "Asian" always "non-Western"?
- But in this course, mostly Japan.

Image of Wu Wear, a clothing line by Wu Tang Clan (an American hip-hop group) removed for copyright reasons.

Which is more "Japanese"?

Image of Geisha (lit. "art person")
removed for copyright reasons

Image of Contemporary
photography removed for
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"Culture"

- What is culture?
- Humanist
 - Arts, theater, letters
- Anthropological
 - Meanings and lifeways
- Historical
 - Traditions, institutions

Image of Bunraku puppet theater removed for copyright reasons

Cultural anthropology

- Fieldwork
 - Participant-observation
- Ethnography
 - Communicate what it is like to live in another culture
- Theory
 - What does this tell about culture, society, and power
 - Professor Condry's research history . . .

Image of Kohel
Japan removed
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How Japanese is
Japanese hip-hop?

Performance

- popular entertainments
 - speech acts
 - folklore
 - political demonstrations
 - conference behavior
 - rituals
 - medical and religious healing
 - aspects of everyday life
- Elin Diamond (1996)
"Introduction"
Performance and Cultural Politics

Film Discussion

- What does the film “King of Masks” show us about the power of performance?
- To what extent can people escape their assigned roles? What are some of the limitations?
- Why does the King of Masks reject working with the opera star?
- What does the film say about “tradition”?