

COM 210
The Courtesan in Literature
Spring 2011
Wed 3-6 pm
822 Sproul

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Office Hours:
Monday 1-2 pm
Tuesday 3-4 pm

This course focuses on the figure of the courtesan and her representation in literature. The approach is cross-cultural and interdisciplinary. The first half of the course will focus on courtesan cultures in South Asia.

Required Readings

1. Acharya, Diwakar. Trans. *The Little Clay Cart*. Shudraka. New York: New York University Press, 2009.
2. Feldman, Martha and Bonnie Gordon. *The Courtesan's Arts: Cross-cultural Perspectives*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.
3. Kannabiran, Kalpana and Vasant Kannabiran. Trans. *Web of Deceit: Devadasi Reform in Colonial India*. New Delhi: Kali for Women, 2003.
4. Matthews, David. Trans. *Umrao Jan Ada*. Mirza Muhammad Hadi Rusva. New Delhi: Rupa & Co, 1996.
5. Premchand. *Bazaar-e-Husn*. Trans. Amina Azfar. *The Courtesan's Quarter*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.
6. Readings uploaded to Smartsite

Requirements

1. Weekly discussion questions circulated prior to class.

Each student will contribute at least one question on the reading. These should be received by the class participants by 6 pm on Tuesday (the day prior to our regular class meetings). Please print the questions out in preparation for class, and come prepared to discuss them.

2. Your Readings

All students will contribute one short primary reading on courtesans. We will discuss these readings in the final 2 weeks of the class. You must decide on your reading by the second week, so that we have time to secure the sources, and make them available to the class. In addition, you will also choose one article from *The Courtesan's Arts* to present alongside your source. You

will be responsible for leading discussion on your materials. We will have four presenters for every class. Each presenter will have approximately 35-40 minutes for their selected topic.

3. Final Paper (20-25 pages)

Your final paper will be due on **Wednesday, June 8**. Please submit a hard copy of the paper to me. Please do not email your paper to me. Your final paper will be based on the readings you select to present on in the final two weeks of class.

Reading Schedule

Week 1: Wed, March 30

1. Feldman, Martha and Bonnie Goldman. "Introduction" *The Courtesan's Arts*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006. pp. 3-25.
2. Bor, Joep. "Mamia, Ammani and other Bayaderes: Europe's Portrayal of India's Temple Dancers." *Bharatanatyam: A Reader*. Ed. Davesh Soneji. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2010. pp. 13-39. (**Smartsite**)

Week 2: Wed, April 6

Primary Source:

1. Sudraka. *The Little Clay Cart*. (Sanskrit Drama)
2. Martha Selby. Selections from. *Grow Long, Blessed Night*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. (**Smartsite**)

Secondary Source:

1. Doris Srinivasan. "Royalty's Courtesans and God's Mortal Wives: Keepers of Culture in Precolonial India." *The Courtesan's Arts*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006. pp. 161-181.
2. Orsini, Francesca. "Introduction: Śṛṅgāra, 'Ishq, Love: The Many Meanings of Love in South Asia." *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (Feb., 2002), pp. 99-102. (**Reader**)

Week 3: Wed, April 13

Primary Source:

1. Ruswa, Mirza Hadi. *Umrao Jan Ada* (Urdu)

Secondary Source:

1. Quereshi, B. Regula. "Female Agency and Patrilineal Constraints: Situating Courtesans in Twentieth-Century India." *The Courtesan's Arts*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006. pp. 312-331.

2. Oldenburg, Veena Talwar. "Nawabi Dastaan." *Shaam-e-Awadh: Writings on Lucknow*. New Delhi: Penguin India, 2007. (**Smartsite**)
3. Oldenburg, Veena Talwar. "1857-58: The City as Battlefield." *Shaam-e-Awadh: Writings on Lucknow*. New Delhi: Penguin India, 2007. (**Smartsite**)
4. Oldenberg, Veena. "Lifestyle as Resistance: The Case of the Courtesans of Lucknow." *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 2, Speaking for Others/Speaking for Self: Women of Color (Summer, 1990), pp. 259-287. (**Smartsite**)

GUEST SPEAKER: PROF. RAJIV SAXENA, JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY, NEW DELHI

Week 4: Wed, April 20

Primary Source:

1. Premchand. *Bazaar-e-Husn*. (Urdu)

Secondary Source:

1. Amelia Macszweski. "Tawa'if, Tourism and Tales: The Problematics of Twenty-First-Century Musical Patronage for North India's Courtesans." *The Courtesan's Arts*. New York: oxford University Press, 2006. pp. 332-351.
2. Amelia Macszweski. : Multiple Voices, Multiple Selves: Song Style and North Indian Women's Identity." *Asian Music*, Vol. 32, No. 2 (Spring - Summer, 2001), pp. 1-40. (**Smartsite**)

Week 5: Wed, April 27

Primary Source:

1. Ramamritammal. *Dasigal Mosavalai* (Tamil)
2. Muthulashmi Reddi, S. "Why Should the Devadasi Institution in the Hindu Temples be Abolished?" *Bharatanatyam: A Reader*. ed. Daves Soneji. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2010. pp. 115-127. (English) (**Smartsite**)
3. Madras Devadasi Association. "The Humble Memorial of Devadasis of the Madras Presidency." *Bharatanatyam: A Reader*. ed. Daves Soneji. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2010. pp. 128-138. (English) (**Smartsite**)

Secondary Sources:

1. Anandhi, S. "Representing Devadasis: 'Dasigal Mosavalai' as a Radical Text." *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 26, No. 11/12 (Mar, 1991), pp.739-41+43+45-46. (**Smartsite**)

Week 6: Wed, May 4

Secondary Sources:

1. Peterson, Indira. V. "Rewriting Cultural History Through the Novel." *Performing Pasts: Remaking the Arts in Modern South India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2008. pp. 252-280. (**Smartsite**)
2. Peterson, Indira. V. "Saiva Religion and the Performing Arts in a Tamil Novel." *South Indian Horizons: Felicitation Volume for Francois Gros*. Ed. Jean Luc Chevillard and Eva Wilden. Pondicherry: French Institute, 2004. pp. 85-106. (**Smartsite**)

GUEST SPEAKER: PROF. INDIRA VISWANATHAN PETERSON, MT.HOLYOKE COLLEGE

Week 7: Wed, May 11

Primary Source

1. TBA

Secondary Source:

1. Soneji, Daves. "From Salon to Cinema: The Distinctly Modern Life of the Telugu *Javali*." *Bharatanatyam: A Reader*. ed. Daves Soneji. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2010. pp. 87-111. (**Smartsite**)

GUEST SPEAKER: PROF. DAVESH SONEJI, MCGILL UNIVERSITY

Week 8: Wed, May 18

Primary Source

1. Selections of poems by the Italian courtesans Gaspara Tampa, Gaspara Stampa, Tullia d'Aragona, Veronica Franco and the French courtesan, Louise Lapa. (**Smartsite**)

Secondary Sources:

1. Gordon, Bonnie. "The Courtesan's Singing Body as Cultural Capital..." *The Courtesan's Arts*. *The Courtesan's Arts*. New York: oxford University Press, 2006. pp. 182-193.
2. Rycke de, Dawn. "On Hearing the Courtesan in a Gift of Song: The Venetian Case of Gaspara Tampa." *The Courtesan's Arts*. New York: oxford University Press, 2006. pp.124-143.

GUEST SPEAKER: PROF. JULIANA SCHIESARI, UC DAVIS

Wed, May 25

Seminar Participant readings and presentations

Wed, June 1

Seminar Participant readings and presentations