

Megumi Hirota (Asian Studies), “Laughing at Authorities: Dialect and Comic Effects in Inoue Hisashi’s *Kirikirijin*.”

Inoue Hisashi’s *Kirikirijin* (The People of Kirikiri, 吉里吉里人) traces the rise and fall of a fictional country in northeastern Japan which has declared its independence from Japan. By humorously and ironically presenting its denizens’ worldviews and social practices, the novel criticizes the Japanese government’s arbitrary imposition of authority on the lives of ordinary people in postwar Japan. In this presentation, I will analyze the role of Kirikiri people’s dialects in creating comic and satirical effects, ridiculing political authorities and celebrating those who are marginalized by the national government.

Friday, February 16, noon to 1pm in 287 Dwinelle Hall

Hu Hsu (History), “Training Confucian Citizens: Wang Yangming’s Neo-Confucianism in the Nationalist Social Mobilization”

Wang Yangming (1472-1529), a scholar-official and philosopher, came to serve as the premodern source for individual agency in modern East Asia at the turn of the 20th century. This presentation nonetheless highlights the disciplinary characteristics of this cultural symbol by examining how the Nationalist Party employed Wang’s Neo-Confucian ideas and techniques of social control in its military campaign against the Jiangxi Soviet during the 1930s. This exploration of Wang’s Neo-Confucianism in the context of modern state-building challenges interpretations that predominantly views his philosophy through the lens of individualism.

Friday, February 23, noon to 1pm in 287 Dwinelle Hall

Giusi Tamburello (University of Palermo and Visiting Scholar, Center for Chinese Studies), “打工诗歌: The Poetry of those who do Manual Work”

After the launch of Deng Xiaoping’s Open Door Policy at the end of the Seventies, the migration of people from the less developed areas of China towards the coastal areas, where the SEZ (Special Economic Zones) were located, began. The numbers of this phenomenon were huge and the living conditions of these migrants very poor, so much so that they felt the need to describe their lives in poetry. In this talk an attempt will be made at linking the Chinese workers’ poetry to other voices from other similar experiences.

Friday, March 1, noon to 1pm in 287 Dwinelle Hall

Ryan Gourley (Ethnomusicology), “Territorializing Manchuria in Song: Popular Recordings, Touring Musicians, and the Russo-Japanese War”

"You fell for Russia, perished for Fatherland / Believe us, we shall avenge you / And celebrate a bloody wake!" (On the Hills of Manchuria by Ilya Shatrov). This talk explores the tours of popular musicians from the Russian Empire to the frontlines of the Russo-Japanese War in Manchuria and the role of the nascent gramophone industry in commemorating the conflict. Drawing on eyewitness accounts and archival recordings, this talk argues that the production and dissemination of popular Russian tunes contributed to the territorialization of Manchuria in song.

Friday, March 8, noon to 1pm in 287 Dwinelle Hall

Jin Qian (Japanese, EALC), “Pygmalionisme: Ball-Jointed Dolls in 1970s Japan”

“In the Year Showa 40, I was working part-time at a bar while making dolls nonchalantly, when a major turning point hit me.” So writes Yotsuya Shimon, reminiscing about the inception of his career as a ball-jointed doll artist: “... flipped open the new volume of ‘Shinfujin’ magazine... And there it was, a photo that changed the trajectory of my life. A photo of the doll created by the German surrealist Hans Bellmer.” In this talk, I will be exploring the conception and development of Ball-jointed Dolls as an art form in Japan, focusing primarily on the works of Yotsuya Shimon.

Friday, April 19, noon to 1pm in 287 Dwinelle Hall