

(Download) The Courtesan's Arts: Cross-Cultural Perspectives Includes Companion Website

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From Oxford University Press : The Courtesan's Arts: Cross-Cultural Perspectives Includes Companion Website before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Courtesan's Arts: Cross-Cultural Perspectives Includes Companion Website:

0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Good Condition, Interesting ReadBy JahsmiIt pulls from a lot of different resources. I had it for a class and did not read the whole thing, but I learned some things from it and thought parts of it were well written.16 of 17 people found the following review helpful. Insightful and well writtenBy SubbuThe power of the Indian wife was (and perhaps is) her sexual purity. She was neither expected nor permitted to indulge in fine arts or education of any kind. This was reserved for ganikas who were supposed to be well-versed in 64 arts! The writer makes a distinction between the different types of women and the roles they played in the structured caste based society of ancient India.You learn this and more in this excellent book of essays about courtesans across the ages, in different countries. I was particularly impressed by the write-up on Geishas, Chinese courtesans and the Indian ganikas.I was surprised to learn that Japanese men were supposed to marry only for procreation. To love one's wife was actually considered low. Like with the Greek civilizations, the Japanese men derived greater pleasure from young boys. Prostitutes served for their pleasure. And slowly, women versatile in arts evolved into Geishas. On the other hand, Chinese women were judged on the basis of their ability to sing. This book certainly provides insights that explain the status of women in society today.I give this book 4 stars as there seemed to be an imbalance in the

geographical coverage of courtesans, with an emphasis on the European ones. Bottomline: Informative and engaging. Definitely a must read. 3 of 25 people found the following review helpful. bleh. By E. Drenthe This book sucks. I'm sorry, but the whole thing is nothing but an over-written college essay. The author seems to have collected nothing but un-descriptive, dry, unopinionated facts from other documents and simply thrown them together with no bearing on flow or feeling within the pages. The author jumps from one unrelated subject matter to the next, introducing names and events that have no bearing on the point of the chapter. There is continuous overuse of elaborate vocabulary as to keep focus on the author's wit intelligence of such words, instead of simply focusing on describing the subject at hand. It is a perfect example of a waste of a tree.

Courtesans, hetaeras, tawaif-s, ji-s--these women have exchanged artistic graces, elevated conversation, and sexual favors with male patrons throughout history and around the world. Of a different world than common prostitutes, courtesans deal in artistic and intellectual pleasures in ways that are wholly interdependent with their commerce in sex. In pre-colonial India, courtesans cultivated a wide variety of artistic skills, including magic, music, and chemistry. In Ming dynasty China, courtesans communicated with their patrons through poetry and music. Yet because these cultural practices have existed primarily outside our present-day canons of art and have often occurred through oral transmission, courtesans' arts have vanished almost without trace. The *Courtesan's Arts* delves into this hidden legacy, unveiling the artistic practices and cultural production of courtesan cultures with a sideways glance at the partly-related geisha. Balancing theoretical and empirical research, this interdisciplinary collection is the first of its kind to explore courtesan cultures through diverse case studies--the Edo period and modern Japan, 20th-century Korea, Ming dynasty China, ancient Greece, early modern Italy, and India, past and present. Each essay puts forward new perspectives on how the arts have figured in the courtesan's survival or demise. Though performative and often flamboyant, courtesans have been enigmatic and elusive to their beholders--including scholars. They have shaped cultures through art, yet their arts, often intangible, have all but faded from view. Often courtesans have hovered in the crevices of space, time, and practice--between gifts and money, courts and cities, feminine allure and masculine power, as substitutes for wives but keepers of culture. Reproductively irrelevant, they have tended to be ambiguous figures, thriving on social distinction while operating outside official familial relations. They have symbolized desirability and sophistication yet often been reviled as decadent. The *Courtesan's Arts* shows that while courtesan cultures have appeared regularly in various times and places, they are universal neither as a phenomenon nor as a type. To the contrary, when they do crop up, wide variations exist. What binds together courtesans and their arts in the present-day post-industrialized world of global services and commodities is their fragility. Once vital to cultures of leisure and pleasure, courtesans are now largely forgotten, transformed into national icons or historical curiosities, or reduced to prostitution.

"The *Courtesan's Arts: Cross-cultural Perspectives* presents a remarkably rich and wide-ranging view of the social significance and cultural resonance of that most ambivalent yet seductive of women, the courtesan. Without forcing parallels among the various cultures and periods they consider, the essays in this volume illuminate one another in fascinating ways. Moving from the more familiar realm of sixteenth-century Italy back to the world of ancient Greece and forward to modern India and Japan, they reveal both universal and culturally specific aspects of courtesanship."--Ellen Rosand, Professor of Music, Yale University, author of *Opera in Seventeenth-Century Venice: The Creation of a Genre*, *Monteverdi's Last Operas: A Venetian Trilogy* (forthcoming), and authority on the seventeenth-century Venetian singer and composer Barbara Strozzi. Feldman and Gordon take a daring leap to consider the courtesan less for her sexuality than for her creativity. In this sumptuous collection of essays, illustrations, and musical examples on CD, the courtesan's beauty is no longer dangerous but expressive. Like the courtier, she crafted herself as 'many things to many men' and integrated multiple arts in her craft. From ancient Greece to Italy and India, this book features fascinating discussions not only of music, but also of dance, costume, and verse."--James Grantham Turner, author of *Schooling Sex* (OUP, 2003). About the Author: Martha Feldman is Professor of Music and the Humanities at The University of Chicago. She is author of *City Culture and the Madrigal at Venice* (1995), *Opera and Sovereignty: Sentiment, Myth, and Modernity in Eighteenth-Century Italy* (forthcoming, 2006), and is currently at work on *The Castrato as Myth: Symbolic Economy and Life Writing in Early Modern Italy*. She was also a volume editor in the series *Sixteenth-century Madrigal* (1989-91) and general editor of the series *Critical and Cultural Musicology* (2000-2002). In 1998-99 she was appointed a Getty Scholar and in 2001, the Dent Medal was conferred on her by the Royal Musical Association, in collaboration with the International Musicological Society. Bonnie Gordon is Assistant Professor of Music at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. She has published on the female voice in early modern Italy and on contemporary female singer/songwriters and her book *Monteverdi's Unruly Women: The Power of Song in Early Modern Europe* was published in 2004. She has received awards from the American Association of University Women, the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, and the Mellon Foundation.