

***Made-Up Asians: Yellowface during the Exclusion Era.*** By Esther Kim Lee. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2022. Pp. 262 + 23 figs. \$85 Hb; \$34.95 Pb.

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From seemingly innocuous Halloween costumes to flamboyant high fashion donned by celebrities at the Met Gala, racial impersonations can be prevalent yet undiscernible unless made 'known and knowable as a historical subject' (pp. 3–4). Against the backdrop of rising Asian hatred that has swept the US in the last few years is Esther Kim Lee's new book *Made-Up Asians: Yellowface during the Exclusion Era*, a timely revisiting of the tenacious yellowface phenomenon and an insightful examination of how theatrical technologies consolidate and perpetuate the debarment of citizenship to Asian immigrants. Weaving rich historical materials together, Lee elucidates many intricacies in yellowface's convoluted history and offers a much-needed addition to the current scholarship on yellowface and racial performances.

Although the book limits its scope to the US from 1862 to 1940, the Exclusion Era that Lee broadly brackets, it provides informative contexts and makes connections across time and continents. In doing so, the book firmly places the transfiguration of yellowface in a historical continuation of racial discrimination and historicizes yellowface, as promised. In Lee's application, technology exceeds its narrower sense of mechanical and scientific advancement and follows the Heideggerian sense of *techne* that brings forth 'something that was concealed or did not exist before' (p. 11). While she does not explicitly enter the conversation on performativity, such an interpretation nevertheless speaks to the performative aspect of yellowface. It reveals the reciprocal construction of stage representation and the legal status and political reality beyond the stage and helpfully points out that yellowface is not a theatrical tradition enclosed within theatre but a systematic detriment to a certain population.

After the Introduction, in which Lee articulates the theoretical framework and historical background, each of the five body chapters categorizes one unique yellowface practice: 'clown yellowface', 'scientific yellowface', 'private yellowface', 'cosmetic yellowface' and 'prosthetic yellowface'. The chronological arrangement does not point to the succession of one practice to replace a previous one, but rather highlights diversification and evolution that result from new social conditions.

Lee locates the origin of the stage Chinaman in British pantomime tradition and defines 'clown yellowface' as the humorous racial impersonation that dates back earlier than Chinese labourers' arrival in the US. Looking at British comedian Joseph Grimaldi and American actor Charles T. Parsloe Jr's stage creations, this chapter also traces how violence seeped into comedy from Kazrac to stage Chinaman.

The author captures 'scientific yellowface', a pseudoscientific attempt (prompted by 'race science' based on phrenology and physiognomy, among many others) to close the gap between the onstage representation of the Asian race and 'real' Asians, while in the meantime disconnecting these two even further and endowing white actors with unchallenged superiority for their abilities to portray a wide range of ethnic characters.

Later, the volume moves away from professional stages to amateur theatrical make-up guidebooks in the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth, which unequivocally embody the extensive reach of yellowface. By analysing the codified 'Chinese' or 'Mongolian' looks in those books, make-up boxes and other objects, Lee maps out a little-known route of how Chinese characters gained the essence or 'nature' of 'strange and unhealthy' (p. 104) in race science, which was conflated with 'the notion of "natural" in the world of acting' (p. 114).

Consequently, Lee delves into the cosmetic use of yellowface that is seen as less offensive or even celebratory by many. Comparing famous Japanese geisha Sada Yacco to American actress

Blanche Bates, who ascended to stardom by playing Cio Cio San, Lee keenly notes how white actresses used 'geisha' make-up to enhance their sex appeal and prove their versatility and effectiveness as performers while real Asian women were fantasized, sexualized and othered. She argues that cosmetic yellowface, albeit harmless on the surface, evoked 'the symbolic exclusion of the Asian woman' and showcased the white actress's 'prowess as a tragedienne' (p. 132).

These two points are particularly valuable as they both uncover how yellowface can disguise and disseminate the hazardous racial stereotypes in common discourses beyond stage representations and overt disparagement.

Finally, yellowface posed a special-effect challenge for professional make-up artists in the early film industry, yet again prolonged the 'deformed, grotesque, and monstrous' connotation in Asian characters, and the Epilogue touches upon casting as a continuation of yellowface's function as an 'enduring symbol of erasure' (p. 185). The book also includes an Appendix that catalogues yellowface instructions in theatrical make-up guidebooks during the Exclusion Era in striking detail.

Overall, Esther Kim Lee's concentration may have been confined to yellowface during the Exclusion Era, but her rigorous research and shrewd reading of the archival materials contribute to the larger conversation of racial fabrication in and beyond theatre. Every syllabus that intends to survey Asian-American theatre and performances thoroughly needs to include *Made-Up Asian*, and every scholar who wishes to educate themselves about an important and troubled history should have this book on their shelves.

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***The Cambridge Companion to the Circus.*** By Gillian Arrighi and Jim Davis.

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Hb; £22.99/\$29.99/₹2312 Pb.

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Circus is a form with a highly varied history that has recently developed as a distinct discipline within performance scholarship. The book covers a vast expanse of circus histories, aesthetics, performance and methodologies. Across its sixteen chapters it employs multiple modes of enquiry into circus – race and gender identity, performance analysis, animal and interspecies studies, education, mobility studies, cultural policy and more.

Gillian Arrighi and Jim Davis, the editors, embark on this journey with a succinct peek into the world circus timeline (1537–2018) and cover major circus events to set the tone of an inclusive and expansive approach from the very beginning. The sections following build on this focus on circus's origins and its evolution as a global phenomenon.

The book is divided into four sections discussing the transnational geographies of the modern circus, circus acts and aesthetics, circus as a constantly evolving form, and circus studies scholarship. Arrighi and Davis move beyond Europe, the UK, America and Russia – which are considered the primary centres of circus – and include essays on the circus in Australasia, Argentina and China. These essays on post-colonial histories of circus make important contributions to the field, reminding the reader that circuses from Africa, South Asia and Central Asia that worked within the same networks are yet to find similar ground in circus scholarship.

Arrighi's chapter recognizes not only the movement of circuses from the imperial centres to the colonies but also their circuits within the colonies. Ascribing various factors which caused these movements, she positions circus as a transcultural agent. Acknowledging circuses as hubs of cosmopolitanism, she notes that 'evolving circus arts ... were, by this time, influenced by ancient acts of physical skill from Japan, China, and India' (p. 59). This challenges the belief