

Call for Chapters / Essays / Papers for an edited volume on:

Gender Fluidity in Japanese Arts and Culture (wt)

Editors: Dean Conrad, PhD and Sayuri Hirano / 平野早百合, MA.

Contract secured with McFarland & Company Inc., USA.

Contact

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Proposal deadline

31st January 2022

Brief

Abstract proposals are being sought from Japanese and non-Japanese scholars writing in English for a book exploring androgyny, 'cross-dressing', drag culture, trans-gender issues, sexual identities and other forms of gender fluidity that feature in Japanese arts and culture – past and present.

These may include, but are not limited to: male performances in female roles and plays on the traditional Kabuki and Nō theatre stages; in contrast to the modern Takarazuka Review, with its all-female company – a continuation of the traditional women-only companies that formed in response to restrictive, male-only theatre spaces. Modern pop-culture often inspires the fast-changing, gender-blending fashions of Harajuku with their unique play on media themes and icons. Those icons might in-turn include the androgynous manga and anime characters that seem to have inspired a generation of young film actors and J-pop idols.

Essays need not be confined to modern forms and 'popular' culture. Indeed, proposals are also encouraged from scholars offering historical perspectives on older arts, crafts and traditions. This may include religious stories, ancient myths and nature-based folklore – some of which gave rise to the hermaphroditic characters that have found their way, in one form or another, into those 21st century media. To what degree have these traditions served to disrupt a rigid society?

Proposals may draw on aspects of Japanese society by including forms of 'forbidden love' in poetry and literature, or the linguistic misunderstandings that can arise from non-gendered titles (san, sama, &c.) in an otherwise traditionally patriarchal society. There is evidence that the gender balance in Japanese society is shifting. As a result, proposals may make reference to the recent trend for non-gendered clothes, make-up and accessories, the proliferation of bars hosted by transexual and transvestite women and men, or the growing phenomenon of the house-husband or stay-at-home dad. Are these societal responses to gender fluidity in arts and culture, or are they themselves agents of change?

Through the interplay of arts and culture, this book aims to explore the history, richness and complexity of cross-gender representation throughout Japanese society. We are open to proposals that examine any aspect of gender fluidity as it relates to that society – and its influence elsewhere.

A note on contributors

We value perspectives from scholars working within and outwith Japan, so we welcome proposals from both. In order to ensure opportunity for all, and a wide range of view-points, our intention is to divide chapter slots as evenly as possible between Japanese and non-Japanese scholars.

Abstract and final chapter instructions

Initial abstract proposals should be around 500 words. Please send these, together with a 100-word mini biography, to: japanbook@deanconrad.com by 31st Jan. 2022.

Chapters should be 6,000-7,000 words, plus references and notes (the latter should be kept to a minimum), written in American English, using MLA style. These should be submitted by 31st Dec. 2022.

Timeline

31st January 2022: Abstract proposal and biog. (500 + 100 words) deadline;

28th February 2022: Decisions made and essay requests issued;

31st December 2022: Final chapters due.

Please send any comments or questions – in Japanese or English – to Sayuri Hirano and Dean Conrad at: japanbook@deanconrad.com