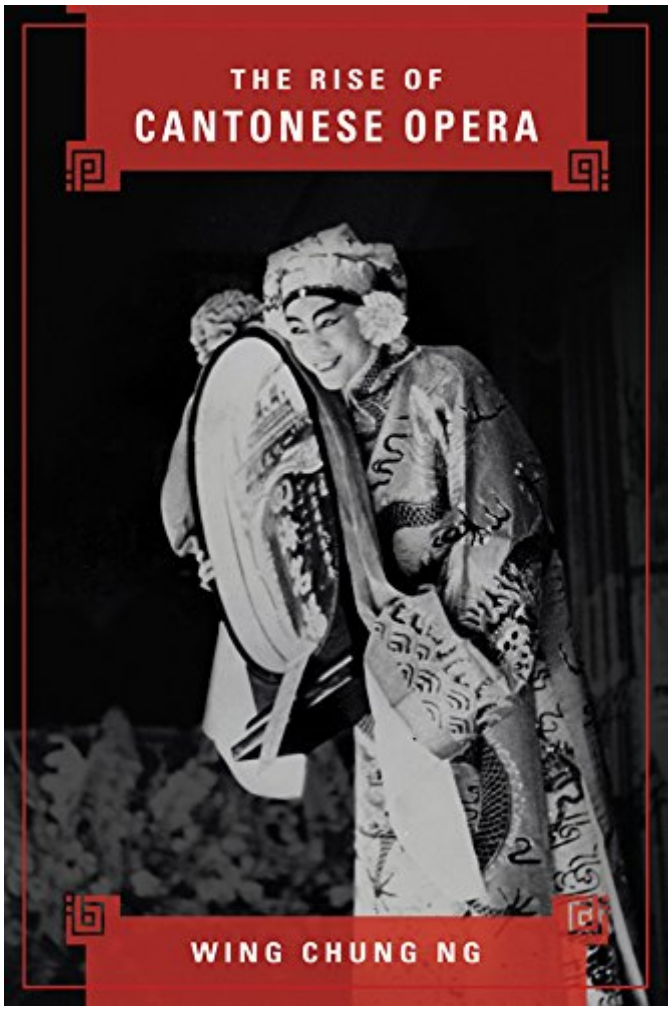
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The Rise Of Cantonese Opera



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Synopsis

Defined by its distinct performance style, stage practices, and regional and dialect based identities, Cantonese opera originated as a traditional art form performed by itinerant companies in temple courtyards and rural market fairs.Ã Â In the early 1900s, however, Cantonese opera began to capture mass audiences in the commercial theaters of Hong Kong and Guangzhou--a transformation that changed it forever. Wing Chung Ng charts Cantonese opera’s confrontations with state power, nationalist discourses, and its challenge to the ascendancy of Peking opera as the country’s preeminent "national theatre." Mining vivid oral histories and heretofore untapped archival sources, Ng relates how Cantonese opera evolved from a fundamentally rural tradition into urbanized entertainment distinguished by a reliance on capitalization and celebrity performers. He also expands his analysis to the transnational level, showing how waves of Chinese emigration to Southeast Asia and North America further re-shaped Cantonese opera into a vibrant part of the ethnic Chinese social life and cultural landscape in the many corners of a sprawling diaspora.

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Wing Chung Ng’s skillfully crafted narrative both entertains and informs. An insightful and brilliant

study of this fascinating subject.

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