

Capitalizing on Korean Heritage: A Case Study of Mask Dance Drama Students*

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A mask dance drama preservation association (*bojonhoe*) is required, under heritage preservation policy, to transmit its art to students and perform regularly. In this article, I discuss a diverse group of students who learned the mask dance drama Bongsan Talchum at the Bongsan Talchum training center in a twice-weekly class. These students, who were training not to join the *bojonhoe* but acquire a set of skills they could strategically capitalize on, demonstrate the complex motivations for the study of Korean traditional performing arts in the twenty-first century. I explain how knowledge of Bongsan Talchum is transmitted within the context of this paying course, introduce the students in the class, and argue that these students' major motivations are to engage in "entrepreneurship of the self" and cosmopolitan striving. I carried out research for the article over several years of participant observation in this class, including a twelve-month period in 2010–2011, which is the focus of the research presented here.

Keywords: Mask dance drama, heritage preservation, Korean dance pedagogy, entrepreneurship of the self, cosmopolitan striving, Korean theatre

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