

Culture, Memory, and Space on Stage:
The Construction of Female Hakka Contemporary Theatre in Taiwan

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Abstract

Theatre is a location of cultures, the reflection of our daily lives, the present moment we are living. This thesis focuses on studying performances of the Hakka Contemporary Theatre created by female directors (Hakka and Non-Hakka) in Taiwan to observe how they combine western modern theatre forms with Hakka traditional and cultural elements and further transformed the specifics of Hakka culture on stage and represented various images of Hakka women. Through applying theories in relation to diaspora discourse, the hybridity of post-colonialism and postcolonial feminism and theatre study as the foundation of academic research, I attempted to critically examine the hybrid forms and development of the Hakka Contemporary Theatre to explore in depth the meaning of Hakka culture represented in theatre.

In this thesis, I firstly offer performance analysis and draw on hybridity discourse and feminism in relation to post-colonial study to discuss three elements: the interaction and negotiated relationship between Hakka women (including female directors and the Hakka actresses), Hakka culture, and modern theatre forms. Furthermore, as part of my research, I critically reflect upon a practical performance project I have undertaken to illustrate how Hakka culture could be presented as subject and be constructed as the subjectivity of the Hakka ethnic group in post-colonial Taiwan. I hope that this thesis may encourage more Taiwanese to appreciate the value of Hakka culture and offer Taiwanese theatrical practitioners a practice of critical hybridity in associating ethnic and cultural issues of Taiwan in the future.

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