"Still Hear the Wound": Art, Affect, and Post-Colonial Memory in Japan

Multi-Media Workshop at Cornell University

Friday March 6, 2015
9:00am - 4:30pm
374 Rockefeller Hall
“Still Hear the Wound”:
Art, Affect, and Post-Colonial Memory in Japan

Today’s workshop extends a collaborative project in which faculty and graduate students at Cornell University and Seika University in Kyoto, Japan, translated essays and artist interviews collected in the volume, 殘傷の音: アジア、政治、アートの未来へ (Zanshō no Oto: Aia, Seiji, Ato no mirai e) edited by Lee Chonghwa (Iwanami Shoten, 2009). An English-language volume, Still Hear the Wound: Toward an Asia, Politics, and Art to Come, will be published in 2015 as one product of this collaboration. The original Japanese volume is based on a series of meetings that brought literary and cultural critics face-to-face with artists who presented their work in stone, wood, and fabric, or in the media of musical, performance, video, and installation art. All these works sought to address legacies of colonial violence—wounds that persist unhealed from a now unreachable past—through acts of imagination, poesis, and the sensuous forms of art. While artists’ works were often ephemeral, critics’ responses comprise the essays contained in the volume. We are delighted to feature at the workshop the CNY Humanities Corridor Lecture on songs of survivors of the “comfort women,” which resonates in so many ways with our project.

Just as the original Japanese dialogues between artists and critics might be seen as a process of translation that (in the Benjaminian sense) created new meanings while extending the lives of the art works themselves, we envision the discussions at this workshop as another phase of translation, generating yet new meanings that enable us to “still hear the wound.”

We are indebted to Seika University in Kyoto, Japan, for publication support, and to the Cornell East Asia Program Translation Studies Initiative and the Central New York Humanities Corridor for sponsoring today’s events.

Morning Session - Friday, March 6, 9:15 am

Welcome Brett de Bary (Cornell)
“Asia, Politics, Art” in Translation Rebecca Jennison (Seika University, Kyoto)

9:30am Panel One: Poetics of Testimony and the Former “Comfort Women” Issue
Presentations on Lee Chonghwa’s Murmurs as Political Thought: In Search of a Way to See the Mourning, and Things Hidden (喰きの政治思想—求められるまなざし、かんじみへの、そしてひめられたものへの)
Moderator: Brett de Bary
Speakers: Mizutamari Mayumi (Hokkaido University), Paul McQuade (Cornell University), Naoki Sakai (Cornell University), Lee Chonghwa (Seikei University, Tokyo).

11:15am Panel Two: CNY HUMANITIES CORRIDOR LECTURE BY JOSHUA PILZER (University of Toronto)
Lecture: “On the Thresholds of Language and Music: Song as a Resource in the Lives of Survivors of Former Comfort Women”
Moderator: Meera Lee (Syracuse University)

Afternoon Session - Friday, March 6, 1:30 pm

1:30pm Panel Three: On Still Hear the Wound and Arts of Post-Colonial Memory in Japan
Moderator: Ellie Choi (Cornell University)
Speakers: Rebecca Jennison, Andrew Harding (Cornell University), Brett de Bary
Screening: Artist Interview by Soni Kum

3:15pm Panel Four “Not Letting Death Die”: Art, Asia, Commemoration
Moderator: J. Victor Koschmann (Cornell University)
Readings: “Words for a Preface” to Still Hear the Wound
Japanese Reading Lee Chonghwa / English Reading Rebecca Jennison
Screening of Interviews with Artists, Still Hear the Wound
(Kinjō Mitsuru, Ito Tari, Yamashiro Chikako, Oh Haji)

Concluding Roundtable, Pedro Erber (Cornell), Richard Calichman (CCNY), Arnika Fuhrman (Cornell)