

Summation of the NASSS International Graduate Students Literature and Culture Workshop, July 29, 2008

NAGAHATA AKITOSHI AND NAGASAWA TADASHI (SECTION MENTORS)

The International Graduate Students Literature and Culture Workshop was led by Professor Rey Chow. Nagahata Akitoshi served as the moderator in the morning session and Nagasawa Tadashi in the afternoon session. In addition to Dr. Chow and the moderators, Professor Dinah Roma-Sianturi and fourteen students from Japan, the United States, and the Philippines participated in the workshop.

In the morning session, six students presented papers on their work in progress. First, Mr. Xu Siwei, of Hitotsubashi University, presented a paper entitled “Justifying Diaspora—A Tactic of Writing in Ha Jin’s *The Crazy*.” Mr. Xu briefly summarized the novel’s plot, and then discussed Ha Jin’s attempt to resurrect the subjectivity of intellectuals in China, paying special attention to the theme of “madness” in the novel.

Ms. Anne Frances N. Sangil, of De La Salle University, then talked about her dissertation project, entitled “Mike after Ten: Authoring the Auteur.” Ms. Sangil first introduced Filipino film director Mike de Leon and the films he directed. Then she elaborated on the “auteurist approach” that she would adopt in discussing the director in her dissertation. Her approach, she argued, would not be simply understanding de Leon’s films through the director himself, but understanding the director “as a text” through his film texts.

The next paper, “A Search for Masculinity: Meaning of Masculine Male Bonding in the Beats,” presented by Mr. Mizushima Shintaro, of Doshisha University, dealt with the issue of sexuality in the Beat writers. Mr. Mizushima focused on the theme of male bonding in Jack Kerouac’s novels, such as *On the Road* and *Visions of Cody*, and explored what male bonding, and masculinity itself, meant to Kerouac and other Beat writers of the 1950s.

After a short break, the session resumed, and Ms. Anna Katie Egging, of the University of Kansas, presented a paper entitled “Blurring the Boundary between Home Front and Warfront: African American World War One Drama.” Ms. Egging first gave an overview of African American World War I Drama, or plays written by African Americans about World War I, and then she discussed Mary Burrill’s *Aftermath*, as an example. Pointing out that the pattern of Home Front being Warfront was repeated in the play, Ms. Egging argued that African Americans at the time were fighting not only a military war abroad but also a war

for democracy at home.

Ms. Hiranuma Kimiko, of Doshisha University, next presented her paper, entitled “Reexamining the African American Women’s ‘Sense of Community’: Ann Petry and Her ‘Community’ in *The Street*.” Focusing on the notion of “community” used by post-war African American female writers in their works, Ms. Hiranuma argued that this notion was often romanticized by numerous authors and critics. She then discussed Ann Petry’s *The Street*, as an example, and stressed the necessity of re-reading Petry’s work in an appropriate historical and social context.

The last speaker in the morning session, Ms. Alicia Gibson, of the University of Minnesota, then talked about her dissertation project, entitled “The End: Japanese and American Discourses of the Atomic Age.” Ms. Gibson said that this project would focus on “the experiences of American, Japanese-American, and Japanese in the atomic world” as expressed in “post-World War II literature, *manga* [...] and animation”; and that she would use the figure of the bomb as a way of understanding “the historical, political, and linguistic impacts of modernity [...] on our contemporary moment.”

The afternoon session started with the presentation titled “The Double Voices in *The Joy Luck Club*,” by Mr. Fujii Soh of Nagoya University. Mr. Fujii focused on the maternal discourse in the novel concerning the mother-daughter relationship, concluding that Ying-ying, the mother, regained her maternal body through dual processes of self-reflective discourse by Ying-ying herself and objectification by her daughter Lena. Some students suggested Mr. Fujii’s notion of “maternal body” should be more concrete and consistent.

The next presenter, Ms. Lauren Curtlight of the University of Minnesota, talked about her Ph. D project, entitled “Poe Mo(dernism): Image, Memory, and Reproduction in Gothic Adaptation.” Ms. Curtlight read E. A. Poe’s unrealistic, excessive and grotesque gothic works in relation to technology and magic, which might lead to new possibilities of reading Poe as a postmodernist.

Ms. Nagaishi Miwa of Nanzan University then read her paper, entitled “Reconsidering Charlotte Perkins Gilman: Her Feminist Ideas and Contemporary Japan.” Comparing Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s feminist ideas with contemporary representations of women in Japanese female magazines, Ms. Nagaishi argued that what Gilman criticized 100 years ago still persists.

After a 15-minute break, the session resumed with Ms. Tsuchiya Yoko’s presentation entitled “Is Carrie Really a Fallen Woman? : *Sister Carrie* and *Sex and the City*.” Ms. Tsuchiya analyzed the images of the “new woman” in Theodore Dreiser’s novel published at the beginning of the 20th century, along with the images of contemporary “new women” that appear in the television show. Some comments pointed out that she should take some other popular images of women into consideration to connect the two topics more smoothly.

The last presentation was made by Mr. Christopher Holmes of Brown

University. His paper, “What We Talk about When We Talk about America: Three Postcolonial Novels and the Problem of Translating Style,” explored, using the term “mistranslation,” the difficulties of filling the gaps between the representations and the represented.

At the end of the session, the moderator (Nagasawa) asked Professor Rey Chow, Professor Dinah Roma-Sianturi and Professor Akitoshi Nagahata to make some comments, and each of them made warm, suggestive comments to all students.