



Monday, January 23th, 2012
1:00-3:00PM @
Thomson Hall Room 317

Part of the Center for Korea Studies' Visiting Scholar Colloquia Series at
The Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington



Dr. Suk-Young Kim

Twice Crossing: Performing Emotional Citizenship in the Korean DMZ

The Korean Demilitarized zone may be a small strip of land, but it must be counted among the most dramatic places on earth, having provided passage for defectors, spies, political emissaries, separated families, war prisoners, cultural troupes, environmental activists, and tourists alike. For both South and North Koreans, one of the reasons that the DMZ figures so prominently as a prime site of national trauma is that so few Koreans are able to cross it. Crossing the DMZ is never simply a neutral matter of traversing the border between North and South, but instead a high stakes performative act with consequences for the successful border-crosser, such as ideological reorientation, emotional deterritorialization and reterritorialization. Their acts have transformed this allegedly neutral space into a site for the reenactment of complex political and emotional affiliations.

This lecture looks into a specific kind of political border crosser who transgresses the most strictly guarded inter-Korean border not only once, but twice: the first time to the other side, and the second time to come back to the place of their origin by crossing the DMZ. Two case studies—Im Su-gyeong, a South Korean college student who visited North Korea in 1989, and Jo Chang-son, a North Korean prisoner of war who was imprisoned in South Korea for nearly 30 years—will be chosen for a comparative reading of how the act of double crossing reconfigures the notion of the border as an ideological demarcation line into a discursive forum where emotional citizenship creates an alternative system of community that is not entirely subject to the system of division. As captured in two documentary films *Praise Lim Su-kyong, the Flower of Unification* (Pyongyang, 1989) and *Repatriation* (Seoul, 2003), those who cross twice are subject to a special predicament, as they have to return to their place of origin to face the consequences of their twice transgression which foundationally alters how citizenship is construed within and outside the political confines of nation-states.

Suk-Young Kim is Associate Professor of Theatre at the University of California at Santa Barbara. She is the author of *Illusive Utopia: Theater, Film, and Everyday Performance in North Korea* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010), which explores how the state produced propaganda performances intersect with everyday life practice in North Korea. She is also a co-author (with Kim Yong) of *Long Road Home: A Testimony of a North Korean Camp Survivor* (Columbia University Press, 2009).

For more information, please call or email 206-543-4873 / uwcks@u.washington.edu

To request disability accommodations, contact the Disability Services Office at least ten days in advance of the event; 543-6450 (voice); 543-6452 (TDD); 685-7264 (fax); dso@u.washington.edu.