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The End of the (End of the) World

Silvana Carotenuto

where danger threatens
grows also what saves
– Friedrich Hölderlin

Today, a “tone” speaks the generalized culture of the apocalypse in the world:

... Hegelian eschatology... the eschatology of Marxism... the end of history, the end of class struggle, the end of philosophy, the death of god, the end of religions, the end of the subject, the end of man, the end of the West, the end of Oedipus, the end of the earth. Apocalypse Now, I tell you, in the cataclysm, the fire, the blood, the fundamental earthquake, the napalm descending from the sky by helicopters... and also the end of literature, the end of painting, art as a thing of the past, the end of psychoanalysis, the end of the university, the end of phallogocentrism and phallogocentrism...¹

In “Of an Apocalyptic Tone Recently Adopted in Philosophy,” Jacques Derrida is interested in understanding the “structure” of the “apocalyptic” discourse, which, as he greatly fears, might bear the extreme consequence of putting an end to all critical interpretation of the end of (the end of) the world. Aware of using the tone of/in his writing, the philosopher chooses two specific bibliographic references in order to analyze and deconstruct the complex question. First, it is the interpretation offered by Immanuel Kant in the pamphlet “Of an Overlordly Tone Recently Adopted in Philosophy” (1796), (whose title is “mimed,” “parodied,” “departed from,” and “deformed by” the Derridean essay); it follows the retracing of its Biblical origin in the discourse devoted to the “Apocalypse” by the apostle John.

Kant vindicates the concept of Reason against the use of metaphors that the “mystagogues” of his time adopted to announce the end of the world. Derrida accepts Kant’s appeal to vigil thinking, advocating, at the same time, the deconstruction of the binomy of “concept” and “metaphor” which is essential to the German philosopher’s analysis, if the latter is necessarily co-implicated with its other, and if both need to be valued in the overcoming of any simplistically negative interpretation of the apocalyptic discourse. Derrida thinks of the “conceptual metaphor” in full expression in the Biblical Apocalypse, through the composition of the scene in which John reports what Jesus prescribes to him on the end of the world. The “structure” of the scene is exposed to deconstructive reading: Jesus does not present himself to John but dictates his vision through the “tone” of his voice; in its turn, John’s task is to transcribe what Jesus’s tone dictates. “Absence”

frees the apocalyptic discourse from any identifiable address or destination, disseminating in the future-to-come of its reception. The proliferation and division of the tone advocates its difference from the presence of the subject; testimony is given as writing as writing appears as testimony; the whole scene inscribes the always-possible non-arrival of the letter. It is finally the injunction “Come”—*veni, veins*—that marks the spacing of the voice promising what, perhaps, one day, might save and protect from the—risk of the—end of the world. “Come” structurally says salvation from the apocalypse, in that—also explaining why Derrida adopts the apocalyptic “tone” in his writing—it refuses to be caught in any representative or categorical frame, materializing the “end” of the “end of the world”:

“Come,” opening the scene, could not become an object, a theme, a representation, or even a citation in the current sense, and subsumable under a category, whether that of coming or event...²

... the catastrophe would perhaps be of the apocalypse itself, its fold and its end, a closure without end, an end without end).³

In the contemporary time exposed to global catastrophe, the deconstructive analysis of the “structure” of the discourse on “the end of (the end of) the world” incises its tone in the scroll “Apocalypse” presented by the Chinese artist Bingyi at the Museum of Modern Art, in Istanbul, in 2016 (its creation dates the period 2011-2014), during the collective exhibition on art and ecology entitled “Till it’s gone.”⁴ The scroll consists of an immense silk-panel (2600 x 90 cm), painted in ink wash, which, in the artist’s vigilance on the generalized rhetoric of the end of the world, is not meant to reproduce any apocalyptic event, but rather to pay attention to/take care of the anxiety and fears of the ones exposed to the threat of the end of the world. In determination or sensitiveness, the scroll inscribes the deconstructive structure on/of the Apocalypse in its full composition.

In order to create her work, Bingyi goes back to the originary tradition of the Song-dynasty, the period when, as she greatly appreciates, poetry and painting come together. Positioning her art in this historical aesthetic setting, what motivates her artistic engagement is not an individual will or the subjective decision to deal with the apocalypse, but the desire to respond to an “injunction.” In 2008, while working on an installation in the area of Sichuan, Bingyi witnesses a terrible earthquake followed by massive flooding: “I did not anticipate it, nobody could; I was just working there ... I did not go to the earthquake site, the earthquake come to me.”⁵ The “coming” of the injunction resounds like the raising of Jesus’s voice here translating “tone” into *tonos*: “... the tight ligament, cord, rope when it is woven or braided.”⁶ Bingyi responds to the injunction that comes from the catastrophe by bringing testimony thought her “writing,” *l’oeuvre* that weaves, braids, ties together eight parts, movements, phases or poetic “sentences”:

1. Shattered earth, crumbled heaven (it is the world wide open and the observation of the

coexistence of humans and nature);

2. An earthquake petrifies the world (like a fossil);
3. Lost souls and wandering ghosts (it is the earth that rumbles underneath the magnificent continent);
4. Knotted trees (the wood grows into a knotted forest);
5. A thousand mountains under water (in an instant, mountains and seas collapse);
6. Drifting wood (logs, chips and splinters in their drift);
7. A grave for the masses (in one pit lies the burial of the dead);
8. A secret garden (seven years later, the cells of the trees remake a garden).⁷

“Apocalypse” is the “compositional allegory”—because “visually-driven”—which writes on its silk scroll a series of explosions, homeless spirits, fairies, strange creatures and fantastic forms, human and superhuman shapes. Its intricate textile shows gigantic mountains, caves, ghosts and faces, inviting the viewer to ceremonies of burial where gigantic flowers transform into fireworks. The scroll is “apocalyptic” in that, by unfolding/opening from right to left, it discloses, uncovers, unveils, displays, and allows seeing (*donne à voir*) the terrible destruction, and, in the same coup, the event of its overcoming. Its unfolding reveals, in the end, which is a beginning, the act of nature which re-appropriates the site of the earthquake and the flood, seven years after their happening, by producing “a secret garden,” as recites the last sentence of the poetic textile. Will this natural image provide the assurance of safety and protection from the catastrophic threat? Indeed, the “dissemination” of its “Festivity” (at the end of the artistic tour, the scroll, which has proved apt for agile transportation, shows, in the exposure to the usury of time, the finite materiality of its tatters and “ruins”) unfolds its new vision to the eye and the mind:

Is the earthquake the same for humans and for insects? Could it not be that, from the “point of view” of the bugs, it liberates from obstacles and difficulties so as to sign a Festivity? Should we not deconstruct the centrality of (the stance, the point of view of) the human so as to allow the “come” of the natural world?⁸

If, for the benefit of the scroll, “Come” rises from the natural world, it signs for Bingyi the arrival of the art of painting. The uncanny scroll unravels the unanticipated encounter of thinking and practice, given in singularity and concentration, resonance and fluidity, beyond all individual perspectives, as the emergence of their co-existence in the journey which, in its destinerrance, opens the apocalyptic “Come” to the secret of “happiness.” Bingyi states her welcoming address to the art of painting in this long poetic passage:

I could not imagine your arrival, neither its time nor its place.

I could not imagine your fierceness, your speed, your quietude, your mystery, your nuance, your agility, your existence. I could not even imagine your form. Your appearance could not be

anticipated, just as we can never predict a flood. A flood eradicates all intelligent life, but it also creates the greatest opening for myriad things to flourish. A flood is nature's mutation.

My painting! ...

How far I traveled in life before our encounter! The solitude and insecurity of this experience, and the patience and attention it demands, only those who have gone through it can know. Because of your singularity, I realized that I could only sense your presence in complete concentration. Only when my world was void, only when I was in the deepest and most unforgiving state, could I feel your peace. You emptied yourself completely to give my contemplating mind the only possible space for resonance.

So you needed me to be quiet, pure, lucid. I could not be moved by anything else. In this way you became the only fluid form in my world. All time and space was still. You--like a flood, like a wild beast — consumed me whole.

... This is my message to painting: ... What painting needs is not a self-centered painter. What it needs is someone who knows how to live with it. To coexist with a flood and a wild beast is to transcend life. It is to embark on a journey to uncover an infinitude of beauty and potential--a journey distant, uncertain, without destination, without structure, but one that ultimately gives us utmost happiness.⁹

Notes

1. Jacques Derrida, "Of an Apocalyptic Tone Adopted in Philosophy," *Oxford Literary Review*, vol. 6, n.2 (1984), 20-21.
2. Derrida, 33.
3. Derrida, 35.
4. See http://www.istanbulmodern.org/en/exhibitions/past-exhibitions/till-its-gone_1743.html; and https://www.artforum.com/uploads/guide.003/id18941/press_release.pdf. For Bingyi's career, see Ink Studio, "Bingyi - Overview," <http://www.inkstudio.com.cn/artists/75-bingyi/overview/>. For an overview of her poetics, see also A. Majid, "Seeing the Unseen World: The Art of Bingyi," in *Yishu Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art* (14:6), Nov/Dec 2015.
5. See "Apocalypse: An Interview with Bingyi!" accessed on December 27, 2020. <http://www.inkstudio.com.cn/video/8/>.
6. Derrida, "Of an Apocalyptic Tone Adopted in Philosophy," 8.
7. For the details of the work's eight sentences, cf. "Bingyi: Apocalypse," trans. Alan Yeung, accessed on December 27, 2020, <http://www.inkstudio.com.cn/press/27/>,

8. From the transcript of an interview with Bingyi, see “Apocalypse: An Interview with Bingyi,” 2015, accessed on December 27, 2020, <http://www.inkstudio.com.cn/video/8/>.

9. Bingyi, “Painting is a Flood and a Wild Beast,” 2017, accessed on December 27, 2020, <https://www.inkstudio.com.cn/press/17-painting-is-a-flood-and-a-wild-beast/>.

The Love for Ruins

Silvana Carotenuto

...the end is beginning
– Maurice Blanchot

The apocalyptic scroll ends by revealing the joy of “a secret garden.” What will grow in its fertile earth? What will be produced by its soil? What is inaugurated in its enchanted survival? Might its germination be the flower, the flower of rhetoric, *flores retorici*, the metaphor of the flower? In *Glas*, Derrida reads Hegel’s “religion of flowers,” countersigning it with the “practical deconstruction of the transcendental effect” operated by Jean Genet, his name already consisting of flowers.¹ On the double page of the book’s textual event, the journey of the sun, burning on one side, as the heliotrope in its holocaust, meet and dialogue with the side of the cinders left on the earth, most proximate to the ground. *Glas, Cinders, Memoirs of the Blind*: in ideal semente, the metaphysics of the rhetorical flower turns into the ashes disseminating among the ruins of the earth. The flower of rhetoric descends towards the below, leaving its ruinous trace among rests, stops, dwellings, remains, residues, and vestiges.² For Derrida, the devoted poetics of the remains allows the gaze that originates the ruin, to mark its own ruinous origin: “In the beginning there is ruin. Ruin is what happens to the image from the moment of the first gaze.”³ What rests is the testimony that substantiates its possible love, the only possibility of love, by touching and being touched by the fragility and finitude of the flower, in its never-ending oscillation between birth and decay, the ruin as the rest of what was and is not any more, the image of ourselves in the face of our inescapable mortality.

Ruin is not a negative thing. First, it is obviously not a thing. One could write [...] a short treatise on the love of ruins. What else is there to love, anyway? One cannot love a monument, a work of architecture, an institution as such except in an experience itself precarious in its fragility: it has not always been there, it will not always be there, it is finite. And for this very reason one loves it as mortal, through its birth and its death, through one’s own birth and death, through the ghost or the silhouette of its ruin, one’s own ruin – which it already is, therefore, or already prefigures. How can one love otherwise than in this finitude?⁴

Born and dying in finitude, the love for the ruin does not search for an object, a theme, a representation or a sense, in order to express its affection. It just opens the eye to memory, beyond intention or finality, and signs the ultimate surge of “experience:”

The ruin is not in front of us; it is neither a spectacle nor a love object. It is experience itself: neither the abandoned yet still monumental fragment of a totality, nor, as Benjamin thought, simply a theme of baroque culture. It is precisely not a theme, for it ruins the theme, the position, the presentation or representation of anything and everything. Ruin is, rather, this memory open like an eye, or like the hole in a bone socket that lets you see without showing you anything at all, anything of the all. This, for showing you nothing at all, nothing of the all. “For” means here both because the ruin shows nothing at all and with a view to showing nothing of the all.⁵

The “treatise on the love for ruins” would need a space and time of reading different from what is allowed here. Yet, its page might, possibly, inscribe the singularity of the visual poetics of Cai Jin, the Chinese artist who dedicates her entire activity of creation to the series “Beauty Banana Plant,” the four hundred and more paintings of Meirenjiao, the Chinese word for “canna genus,” the plant or phyein that, insistently, as an obsession, haunting process or state of trance, shows its floral decay.⁶ From the beginning, the flower comes to Cai Jin’s aesthetic world in the intoxicating materiality of its “gamey odor.” Originally, she is struck by a nameless sensation, which continues in the following days, intoxicating her with uncertainty and unpredictability. The sensation tells of its involuntary flow: “... something familiar was coming out of me when the sticky paint began to move, invading the canvas of its own accord.” In another statement, Cai Jin insists on the permeating ‘odor’ that comes from the red paint:

The color red drives me insane. Whenever I use it, I wield my brush with extraordinary sensitivity. This is a matter which dominates my experience... the red on my brush gives off a gamey odor which pervades my mind and my sense. The odor flows from my brush, and even more so, from my mind, and congeals in my paintings.⁷

The “cinder/incense” comes out of the painted flower from what Derrida, in *Glas*, associates with “coloring, smearing, gluing you, making you sensitive, transforming you.”⁸ In Cai Jin’s experience of life, the color red is reminiscent of her adolescence spent during the Cultural Revolution. More generally, the red belongs to blood and to its global vicissitude;⁹ in creation, it corresponds to the splash of matter. History, the body, and art, all appear in ruin; under the spell of their remains, the artist’s passionate love goes to the painting of the same and unique flower, transforming, insisting, and repeating hundreds of images that are then obsessively glued on canvas, cushions, cycles paddles, found objects of all sorts. The flowers sometimes remain within the limits of their inscription; some other times, they overflow the confines of the “mattress” which absorbs, surfaces, and, at the same time, disseminates its bleeding flow....¹⁰

Is the repeated flower rhetorical or metaphorical? Does it make a sacred religion of its semence? In truth, the sumptuous and encrusted matter of the hundred paintings reveals no transcendence,

but materially inscribes the “experience” of the ruin representing “nothing at all,” “the nothing of the all.” The eye is simply allowed to see, growing and grafting its gaze in the act of seeing. In Cai Jin’s carrier, gradually, slowly, inexorably, the “efflorescence” of the banana plant expands, glues and transforms the insistence of the “Beauty” series into the future of “Landscapes,” the recent work that incorporates the colored blossom of the red flower by chancing, developing and enlarging the form of its ruining matter into the future of new visions-to-come.¹¹

Notes

1. Jacques Derrida, *Glas* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 105b. The philosopher continues his sentence by adding that the practical deconstruction of the transcendental effect “is at work in the structure of the flower, as of every part, in so much as it appears or grows as such.” For the name of Genet, the philosopher explains: “Genet/ginestra is the name of a plant with yellow flowers (*sarothamnus scoparis*, *ginestra*, *genette*, *genet-à-balais*, *poisoning and medicinal...*)” 191.

2. Derrida, “White Mythology,” in *Margins of Philosophy* (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1982); Derrida, *Cinders* (Minneapolis: U. of Minnesota Press, 2014); Derrida, *Memoirs of the Blind: The Self-Portrait and Other Ruins* (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1993). On “cinders,” see my “Derridean Cinders/Sacred Holocausts,” in *Darkmatter*, in the *Ruins of the Empire* “Impossible Derrida,” edited by S. Carotenuto, May 2012, <http://www.darkmatter101.org/site/2012/05/18/deriddean-cinderssacred-holocausts/>. On “ruins” in female contemporary art, see my “A ‘Treatise on Ruins: The Loving Work of Lida Abdul” in *Re-enacting the Past: Museography for Conflict Heritage* (Siracusa, Italy: Lettera Ventidue, 2013).

3. Derrida, *Memoirs of the Blind*, 68.

4. Derrida, “Force of Law,” in *Acts of Religion* (London: Routledge, 2002), 278.

5. Derrida, *Memoirs of the Blind*, 69.

6. See the catalogue of the exhibition “Against the tide” organized by The Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1997, with the participation of Lin Tienmiao.

7. Cited in Patricia Eichenbaum Karetzki, “Time and Love: Cai Jin’s New Work,” *Yishu. Journal of Contemporary Chinese art*, nov-dec. 2013, vol.12, n.6, p.47.

8. Derrida, *Glas*, 105b.

9. Among the themes of life, death, spirit, glory, the proper of man, for the Deriddean “*history of blood*” that is at the centre of *Glas* and that reemerges in The Death Penalty Seminar, see Michael Naas, “Derrida Floruit,” in *Derrida Today* 9.1, 2016.

10. See Carol Archer, “Womanly Blooms: Cai Jin’s Beauty Banana Plant Paintings,” *n.paradoxa. International Journal of Feminist Art*, vol.30, n.48, 2012.

11. See Chambers, “Beijing: Cai Jin,” *Art in America*, October 2013, www.chambersfineart.com/. See also J. Goodman, “Cai Jin: Return to the Source,” Chambers Fine Art, Beijing, 2013.

The Call for Future Oeuvres

Silvana Carotenuto

...rose
bitter
semence ...
The mirror in pain
– Jacques Derrida

Gradually, slowly, inexorably, the “events of thought” crossing Deconstructive reading with Chinese female practice of art, reach the “landscape” of their final grafting. After having thought the ‘end’ of “the end of the world,” and expressed his love for the experience of ruins, Jacques Derrida thinks of the (im)possible future for the world which survives the apocalypse and grows out of its disseminated rests. In 2001, following his interpretation of the apocalyptic Biblical text and the “blind vision” of drawing, the philosopher turns his inspirational attention to the work of art. The word and the meaning of *oeuvre* stays at the core of his 2001 speech “The University without Condition,”¹ where his thinking deals with the future of critical thought, the task of the Humanities-to-come, the idea of academia in the time of its mundialization.

Jacques Derrida’s deconstruction is simple and complex at the same time, inspired and informed by aesthetic practice. According to his reading, the university is and must be unconditional, without conditions. Even if we know that this is not true, due to the rule of times, our task is to vindicate the ‘as if’ or profession of faith in its absolute unconditionality. The “as if” of literature, fiction, creation, imagination, signs faith in the unconditionality of thinking, of critical thought, and of the deconstructive praxis. For Derrida, the future of intellectuality lies, nowadays more than ever, in the praxis of absolute belief in the freedom of literature to say everything and the contrary of everything. This gift inspires our responsible engagement in “affirmative” and “performative” yes of Deconstruction, overcoming dialects, refusing the separation of thinking and praxis, translating the privilege of *phoné* into intervening acts, creating, both in thinking and in action, and beyond all horizons of expectation, certainty, control or sovereignty, the just conditions for the event to come.

The legacy of this interpretation rises from the historical critique of the canonical “Work,” passing through the redefinition of the “text” offered by the science of semiology in the sixties, calling now for the production of oeuvres within the order of *faire la vérité*, “make” the truth. Specifically, Derrida refers to the Anglo-Saxon custom of inviting artists and resident writers within the academic premises, asking them to produce works of art during their residency. For the philosopher, the practice might inspire the responsible call of the unconditional, affirmative,

and performative “as if” of creation into the invention of the Humanities-of-the-future, where to celebrate the coming of oeuvres of unforeseeable “thinking” and “making.” This promise has no assurance of success, no guarantee of safety, and it can possibly remain only inspirational; in truth, Derrida himself is uncertain of the “event” of his own discourse:

I especially do not know the status, genre, or legitimacy of the discourse that I have just addressed to you. Is it academic? Is it a discourse of knowledge in the Humanities or on the subject of the Humanities? Is it knowledge only? Only a performative profession of faith? Does it belong to the inside of the university? Is it philosophy, or literature, or theater? Is it a work, une oeuvre, or a course, or a kind of seminar?²

In Derridean uncertainty, what stays on is the notion of writing as a textile, the weaving of marks, signs and traces on the page of their inscription. In “A Silkworm of One’s Own,” devoted to the text “Savoir” by his friend Hélène Cixous, both included in *Veils*, Derrida refers to some nuances of his philosophical enterprise: the obsessive presence of veil, the “unveiling” of truth, the memory of his taillih, the desire for the textual embroidery’s to diminish its stitches...³ This infinite work of weaving finds its Chinese Penelope in Lin Tianmiao, the “apartment” artist working in Beijing in the ’70s, who emigrated to New York in the ’80s, and who came back to China in 1995.

Born as a textile designer, Lin Tianmiao supported her exile with embroidery work, gradually turning her craft into art. Today her exhibitions are seen at the Asia Society Museum and the MOMA in New York, and in other prestigious institutions in Europe and in China.⁴ Among her performative creations, “Bound/Unbound” is the piece presented in her first solo at the Asian Society, an immense work consisting of threads and strings, white silk weaving and sewing, embroidering and embossing. The work has, at its core, the word of “lace,” evoking rarefaction, absence, and permeation, that here turns into the concrete matter of covering up million balls of different size with thick covers of wrapping. The color is given by the infinite layers of white, washed so thinly as to be rendered vaporous, tenuous, and transparent, producing a figure so fine in its threads as to open its spectacular weaving to a true “aesthetics of lightness.”

What is extraordinary is that the work’s light, tenuity and rarefaction go together with the strength of their flowing out of the bare, hollow and black hole at the origin or at the end of the work. Who will ever be sure if the cascade of threads “go to” or “return from” the void center of ‘Bound/Unbound’? The oeuvre remains, stays on/in/to/from the empty space of its centrality, simply enjoying its infinite “series,” the word that, as Derrida reminds us, comes from the Greek *seira*, meaning “cord, chain, lasso, knotted cord, that which interlaces, a lineage.”⁵

Framing Events of Thought

In the philosophy of Derrida, some “events of thought” practice the gathering of thinking and praxis, the ideality and the materiality of writing, that proves relevant to sensitive concerns of the global present.⁶ These “thinking events” are associated with the philosopher’s reflection on “the

end of the world,” with his love for the “ruins,” and with his deconstructive—inspirational and prophetic—thinking of the “future.”

The Apocalypse, rests and relics, the call for future oeuvres: Derrida is interested in the structure of apocalyptic discourse, producing intense reflections on the human love for the remains, and engaging his responsibility in indicating critical perspectives to confront l'à-venir. These interests, reflections, and engagements are not the outcome of abstract reasoning, but emerge always-already in specific acts of deconstructive reading. In “Of an Apocalyptic Tone Recently Adopted in Philosophy,”⁷ Derrida interprets the Biblical text by the apostle John. In *Memoirs of the Blind: The Self-Portrait and Other Ruins*,⁸ his writing is exposed to the ruins historically rendered by the *teknè* of drawing; in his late text “The University without Condition,” he finds inspiration for his thinking of the future in the singularity of art....

Here, it will be the question of the singularity of Chinese female art. What follows would try to prove that the visions or inventive poetics signed by some female Chinese artists materialize, today, on the scene of national and international art, the “events of thought” that are resonant with the Derridean interpretation of the “apocalyptic tone” spreading through the globe, crossing their love for ruins with the intimate passion expressed by the philosopher, announcing, in their way, which is the way of art, their call for future oeuvres. In the milieu of experimental art in contemporary China, the works calling back at Deconstruction identify here with the scroll “Apocalypse” realized by Bingyi, the series “Beauty Banana Plant” painted by Cai Jin, and “Bound/Unbound,” the installation that Lin Tianmiao’s mesmerizing insistence on weaving and embroidery constructs as oeuvre of the future par excellence.⁹

Future and Female Art

Derrida dedicated three important essays to the aesthetic puissance (un)contained by the works of art of Colette Deblé, Michaela Heinich, and Camilla Adami.¹⁰ Supported by the critical insights of his reading of these female oeuvres, connecting them with his deconstruction of “the end of the world,” his love for the ruins, and his thinking of l'à-venir, this article reads the artistic practices of Bingyi, Cia Jin, and Lin Tienmiao as the countersignatures—in terms of resonances, points of intensifications, and echoes of inspirations—of the thought of the event, the eventful thinking, the “Events of Thought” whose invention, as their art testifies, is urgent and necessary—for China, for the globe, for the planet.¹¹

A question finally resounds: could it be a “female” lineage that survives, flowers, and makes oeuvre? When interviewed on the “gendered” nature of her work, Lin Tienmiao states, “If the audience sees female traces through my oeuvre, it is because I am “une” artist and not “un” artist. It is natural.”¹² The women artists whose works have been read here as deconstructive “Events of Thought” are not necessarily feminists. Yet, through the scroll of allegorical writing, in the loving obsession of ruining insistence, threading handmade female passions, their works hear the apocalypse “tone” resonating all over the globe; witness the precious instances of survival and

growth with the techné of their artistic insistence and persistence; weave the urgent and necessary exposure to the intense materiality and resistance of their oeuvres.

These female artists are both creators and academics, scholars and inventors. Their aesthetic operations inscribe new thoughts on the scene of contemporary art, inside/outside/bound/unbound to the reception of global publics. Under the bliss of Deconstruction, the spacing of their writing with ink, color, and matter embodies, materializes and grafts in the eyes and in the minds of these audiences, the powerful invention of “Events of Thought”-to-come.

Notes

1. Jacques Derrida, “The University Without Condition,” in *Without Alibi*, Peggy Kamuf, ed., (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002). See also Derek Attridge, “The Humanities without Condition: Derrida and the Singular *Oeuvre*,” *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*, 2014, vol.13(1-2), pp.54-61.

2. Derrida, 237.

3. Derrida, “A Silkworm of One’s Own. Points of View Stitched on the Other Veil,” in Hélène Cixous and Jacques Derrida, *Veils* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).

4. See “Weekly Highlight: Chinese Female Artist @ MOMA – Lin Tian Miao” 專題：紐約現代藝術館的中國女畫家林天苗, October-2010, <http://carrieartdesignjournal.blogspot.it/2010/10/weekly-highlight-chinese-female-artist.html>

5. Derrida, “At This Very Moment in This Work Here I Am,” *Psyche: Inventions of the Other*, Volume 1, (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2007), 165.

6. In the interview “The Spatial Arts: An Interview with Jacques Derrida,” in P. Brunette and D. Will (eds.), *Deconstruction and the Visual Arts*, Cambridge, Cambridge U.P., 1994, the father of Deconstruction assigns his privilege to the word “gathering’ (in English), the being together, the assembly, the now, the maintaining together. Deconstruction does not consist of dissociating or dis-articulating or destroying, but of affirming a certain “being together,” a certain “*maintenant*.”

7. Derrida, Jacques, and John P. Leavey. “Of an Apocalyptic Tone Recently Adopted in Philosophy,” *Oxford Literary Review* 6, no. 2 (1984): 3-37, accessed December 28, 2020, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43973661>.

8. Derrida, *Memoirs of the blind: the self-portrait and other ruins*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

9. For Bingyi’s scroll, see <http://www.inkstudio.com.cn/press/27/>. For Cai Jin’s artistic career, see <http://www.artnet.com/artists/cai-jin/biography>. For Tienmiao’s oeuvre, see <http://asiasociety.org/new-york/exhibitions/bound-unbound-lin-tianmiao-0>.

10. Derrida, *Prégnances: Lavi de Colette Deblè. Peintures* (l’atelier des Brisants, 2004); *Mille e tre, cinq*:

Lignées par Michaela Heinich et Jacques Derrida (William Blake & Co, 1996); Camilla Adami and Jacques Derrida, *Primiati. Corpi che ti guardano* (La casa Usher, 2011).

11. For the ecological question that undermines the interest of this article, the critical movement from the “globe” to the “planet” finds its specific articulation in Gayatri C. Spivak, *Death of a Discipline*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), where the scholar proposes “the planet to overwrite the globe...the planet is in the species of alterity, belonging to another system; and yet, we inhabit it, on loan... When I invoke the planet I think of the effort required to figure the (im)possibility of this underived intuition.”

12. Lin Tianmiao, “An Interview: Bound Unbound,” Asia Society Museum, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9JyiY9J6bHY>, accessed December 28, 2020.