PURDUE UNIVERSITY

CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture
ISSN 1481-4374
Purdue University Press ©Purdue University

Volume 13 (2011) Issue 1 Article 1

Globalization, Pedagogical Imagination, and Transnational Literacy

Ezra Yoo-Hyeok Lee
Dongguk University

Follow this and additional works at: http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb

Part of the Comparative Literature Commons, and the Critical and Cultural Studies Commons

Dedicated to the dissemination of scholarly and professional information, Purdue University Press selects, develops, and distributes quality resources in several key subject areas for which its parent university is famous, including business, technology, health, veterinary medicine, and other selected disciplines in the humanities and sciences.

CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture, the peer-reviewed, full-text, and open-access learned journal in the humanities and social sciences, publishes new scholarship following tenets of the discipline of comparative literature and the field of cultural studies designated as "comparative cultural studies." Publications in the journal are indexed in the Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature (Chadwyck-Healey), the Arts and Humanities Citation Index (Thomson Reuters ISI), the Humanities Index (Wilson), Humanities International Complete (EBSCO), the International Bibliography of the Modern Language Association of America, and Scopus (Elsevier). The journal is affiliated with the Purdue University Press monograph series of Books in Comparative Cultural Studies. Contact: <clcweb@purdue.edu>

Recommended Citation

Lee, Ezra Yoo-Hyeok. "Globalization, Pedagogical Imagination, and Transnational Literacy." *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture* 13.1 (2011): <http://dx.doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.1705>

This text has been double-blind peer reviewed by 2+1 experts in the field.
The above text, published by Purdue University Press ©Purdue University, has been downloaded 1705 times as of 06/01/15.

PURDUE UNIVERSITY UNIVERSITY PRESS <http://www.thepress.purdue.edu>

CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture

ISSN 1481-4374 <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb>
Purdue University Press ©Purdue University

CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture, the peer-reviewed, full-text, and open-access learned journal in the humanities and social sciences, publishes new scholarship following tenets of the discipline of comparative literature and the field of cultural studies designated as "comparative cultural studies." In addition to the publication of articles, the journal publishes review articles of scholarly books and publishes research material in its *Library Series.* Publications in the journal are indexed in the Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature (Chadwyck-Healey), the Arts and Humanities Citation Index (Thomson Reuters ISI), the Humanities Index (Wilson), Humanities International Complete (EBSCO), the International Bibliography of the Modern Language Association of America, and Scopus (Elsevier). The journal is affiliated with the Purdue University Press monograph series of Books in Comparative Cultural Studies. Contact: <clcweb@purdue.edu>

Volume 13 Issue 1 (March 2011) Article 1
Ezra Yoo-Hyeok Lee,
"Globalization, Pedagogical Imagination, and Transnational Literacy"
<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol13/iss1/1>

Contents of *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture* 13.1 (2011)
<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol13/iss1/>

Abstract: In his article, "Globalization, Pedagogical Imagination, and Transnational Literacy," Ezra Yoo-Hyeok Lee explores the juncture of comparative literature, globalization and postcolonial studies as to how creative writers, literary critics, and cultural theorists respond to globalization and its challenges. Arjun Appadurai expounds that globalization has demanded new research conceptualization and invention in academia. Subsequently, Lee investigates methods through which educators and scholars in comparative literature take up such a demand. In turn, Lee proposes a transnational literacy which offers a responsible form of cultural explanation, through which to explore the interrelations between the national and the postcolonial or global paradigms, both emergent as frames of current cultural change. Lee also offers a close reading of critical works by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Diana Brydon, and David Damrosch to elaborate on the concept of transnational literacy and to consider ways of circumnavigating around Eurocentrism in comparative literary and cultural studies.

Ezra Yoo-Hyeok LEE

Globalization, Pedagogical Imagination, and Transnational Literacy

In this article I discuss how creative writers, literary critics, and cultural theorists respond to "globalization" and its relevant challenges (for recent studies on globalization and literary studies, see, e.g., Gunn; Kadir; Krishnaswamy, Li; O'Brien; Szeman; Spivak, *Death of a Discipline*). In "Grassroots Globalization and the Research Imagination," Arjun Appadurai exposes the two opposing sides of globalization: globalization from above and globalization from below. According to Appadurai, globalization as a colonizing force, or globalization from above, colonizes our imagination. Alternatively, globalization from below can serve to decolonize the mind. Appadurai gives particular attention to the role of the imagination in social life that can lead to an emancipatory politics of globalization, i.e. globalization from below. Appadurai explains that

> imagination is no longer a matter of individual genius, escapism from ordinary life, or just a dimension of aesthetics. It is a faculty that informs the daily lives of ordinary people in myriad ways: It allows people to consider migration, resist state violence, seek social redress, and design new forms of civic association and collaboration, often across national boundaries. This view of the role of the imagination as a popular, social, collective fact in the era of globalization recognises its split character. On the one hand, it is in and through the imagination that modern citizens are disciplined and controlled — by states, markets, and other powerful interests. But it is also the faculty through which collective patterns of dissent and new designs for collective life emerge. As the imagination as a social force itself works across national lines to produce locality as a spatial fact and as a sensibility, we see the beginnings of social forms without either the predatory mobility of unregulated capital or the predatory stability of many states. (6)

I draw attention to two points: 1) the role of the imagination as a popular, social, collective fact in the era of globalization and 2) how the imagination as a social force works across national lines so as to generate transnational communities, which pervades and protrudes the boundary of the nation-state. The global spread of images in recent anti-governmental demonstrations in Iran and Tibet, or U.S. soldiers' torture and abuse of Iraqi prisoners in the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, constitute several examples that demonstrate relevant roles of visual images. These images could have brought about and fostered the imagination as a popular, social, and collective fact that hugely and immediately impacted on the public on a global level (see, e.g., Giroux). Appadurai refers to the term "international civil society" to exemplify a transnational social form. The examples I have included above also illustrate how a transnational civil society can become organized. I am particularly concerned with how the engagement of literary studies with globalization can serve in a similar way to bringing about and fostering the imagination as a popular, social, and collective fact which can contribute to forming what Appadurai calls international civil society. He highlights the concept of research as "a special practice of the academic imagination" (6), as re-search, as he suggests, can generate thinking and imagining otherwise. I relate research as practice of the academic imagination to the classroom, which is a basic and essential part of the academy, in order to consider how thinking and imagining otherwise can become possible in the formal learning environment, i.e. education as a way of encouraging responsible mind-changing. According to Diana Brydon, decolonizing the mind closely relates to decolonizing the classroom (80; unless marked otherwise, my quotes from Brydon are from her article "Cross-Talk, Postcolonial Pedagogy, and Transnational Literacy"). In brief, the two main points I discuss and elaborate on in this paper are transnational literacy 1) as a critical research tool and 2) as a pedagogical methodology.

English as an international language becomes another factor for my engagement with this project. Despite our intentions, the status of English as a global language increasingly strengthens and solidifies. I have become well aware of debates on the English language as the colonizers' language, as well as its role of colonizing the mind in the so-called Third World during not only the colonial but also the postcolonial period. The debate on this issue between Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Chinua Achebe is a widely quoted classical one in postcolonial studies. *English, Colonialism in My Heart* is a collection of intriguing and engaging articles on the same issue in the South Korean situation. The former is the debate in relation to former

British colonies where English plays a significant role in the postcolonial period, whereas the latter is a case of the debates which shows the hegemonic role of English in many parts of the world, which were not former British colonies, in the postcolonial period after World War II until the present time.

Regarding English as an international language, I suggest that we must acknowledge the hegemony of English towards not only people in former British colonies but also people in non-English speaking regions and, subsequently, we need to determine pathways for resistance and subversion to English within such a given situation. One effective way of resistance and subversion to the hegemony of English is undertaking the project of cultural translation by effectively transforming English into "english," as suggested in *The Empire Writes Back*. Two examples of such cultural translation are 1) literary works produced in English in former British colonies, which are commonly known as postcolonial writings and 2) translingual writers, such as Ha Jin, who produce their literary works in an adopted language (for literary translingualism and transnationalism, see Kellman; Seyhan). These are two cases which exemplify the struggles of turning a language of colonization into a language of decolonization.

The term "literatures" (written or translated) in English (I want to draw attention to its plurality) encourages us to explore ways of deconstructing the fixed ideas of English literature and US-American literature in which certain works often written by white, male authors become canons, while other works become marginalized. Postcolonial literary studies have contributed significantly to reversing this hierarchical order by allowing literatures produced by minority writers such as African American, Asian American, and others to be taught in colleges and universities in North America (U.S. and Canada). Yet the hierarchical order between literature produced by dominant white writers and literature produced by other minority writers still remains steadfast. We as scholars and teachers in and from the so-called third world can have much more critical and pedagogical freedom in terms of what to teach and how to teach rather than following what has often been considered canonical (usually implying "better") works: a decolonization of the mind and the classroom. How to achieve this goal becomes an issue of how or whether our postcolonial "appropriation" of English, as well as literatures written in English, can reach the stage of postcolonial "abrogation" (for a full discussion on "abrogation" and "appropriation" as the two textual strategies in postcolonial writing, see Ashcroft, Griffiths, Tiffin 38-77). Ngugi wa Thiong'o, who suggested the repeal of departments of English at African universities, now lives and teaches in the United States after residing in London. In this situation, however, he writes prolifically to produce literary works, first in his native tongue and then translating them into English. His inevitable political decision to exile himself to England and the USA mirrors the movements of many dissident writers. To investigate his exile and his subsequent literary activities, we should acknowledge the political turmoil in which he involved himself in his home country Kenya. His struggle with languages, both his native language Gikuyu and English, supports the argument of how to transform English into "english." His postcolonial struggle with the two languages demonstrates the way in which he engages with the two textual strategies of postcolonial writing, as Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin suggest. His exile to English speaking countries and his indefatigable literary, as well as social, engagement in close relation with postcolonial situations in Africa provide wide pathways for considering transnationalism and cultural translation, a process which may occur in various contexts.

In her article "Teaching for the Times," Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak first suggested and elaborated the concept of transnational literacy, which she has since used and developed throughout her career. I pay particular attention to her proposal of a transnational literacy in her recent book *Death of a Discipline*, attracting extensive scholarly attention. Of significance becomes that although Spivak discusses the death of comparative literature as a discipline, the urgent need of a new direction and reformation of comparative literature, rather than its "death," becomes central to her work. To surpass what she has seen as often regarded as a major limitation of comparative literature — Europe-centered curriculum and literary studies — she argues that we need to develop a new comparative literature that combines with area studies, which can help foster understanding "not only of national literatures of the global South but also of the writing of countless indigenous languages in the world that were programmed to vanish when the maps were made" (*Death of a Discipline* 15). This transnational literacy, she also argues, can suggest a new mode of critical and pedagogical methodology through which we grasp contemporary global cultural phenomena, termed globalization and transnationalism. Spivak explains the historical backdrop of her suggestion of transnational literacy: "*We* [i.e.,

critics and scholars working in the United States originally from Third World countries] are caught in a larger struggle where one side soldiers to exploit transnationality through a distorting culturalism and the other knows rather little what script drives, writes, and operates it. It is within this ignorant clash that we have to find and locate our agency, and attempt, again and again, to throw the clashing machinery out of joint" ("Teaching for the Times" 7; emphasis in the original). Here, Spivak exposes two ways in which the academy in the United States misunderstands and distorts others' literatures. Critics and scholars from Third World countries working in the United States must accept the challenge of finding a way to overcome both a temptation of exploiting transnationality through distorting culturalism, as well as an attitude of remaining ignorant of others. This challenge, according to Spivak, can provide an opportunity for such critics and scholars to develop their agency in U.S. academy. As she indicates, "indeed it is the new immigrant intellectual's negotiable nationality that might act as a lever to undo the nation-based conflict that killed the Second International" ("Teaching for the Times" 18). Further, Spivak suggests that the new immigrant intellectuals need to consider their political position "from opposition to the perceived dominant" (Teaching for the Times" 3). Here she underlines the shift of the epistemological positionality of these critics and scholars in US academy. For how they position their transnationality will assist to indicate the orientation of their political agency: whether to remain in the position of marginalized opposition or to become the perceived dominant. Hence, their position toward/within transnationality can place them at an advantageous point from which to read "transnational" literary texts situated in between the paradigm of the national and the global in a more critical and engaging way. Here I find that this concept of transnational literacy is similar to the concept of world literature advanced by David Damrosch. Among his threefold definition of the concept of world literature, the third one is that "world literature is not a set canon of texts but a mode of reading: a form of detached engagement with worlds beyond our own place and time" (*What is World Literature?* 281).

The new immigrant intellectuals' position may also contribute to the same mistake of exploiting transnationality through a distorting culturalism. Canadian postcolonial cultural scholar, Diana Brydon, has criticized Spivak for exoticizing the tribal women in India in *Imaginary Maps* by Indian writer Mahasweta Devi (personal comments, McMaster University 17 July 2009). Devi's *Imaginary Maps* provides an effective way to engender talk concerning the transnationality of a text. This follows from that *Imaginary Maps*, a collection of three local stories, has become a transnational text, largely influenced by the translation and promotion of Spivak. Brydon's critique of Spivak's position as a "Native informant" reminds us of the difficulty of a postcolonial critic maintaining an objective and critical distance when dealing with others' texts, in order not to make the same mistakes, such as exploiting transnationality through distorting culturalism. This becomes an enduring theme that Spivak tackles, for example, in the third story of *Imaginary Maps* and her (in)famous article "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak?" is perhaps the most widely read and misunderstood article she has ever written. For a better understanding of her argument, I suggest it is worthy of reading Spivak's *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason* and "Subaltern Talk: Interview with the Editors," where she adds the revision and defence of her argument).

With regard to transnational literacy as a reading and pedagogical strategy, Spivak exposes the following two points so that they call attention inside and outside of the classroom. First, Spivak discusses how to effectively read a variety of textual voices created on both national and global levels: "Learning this praxis [i.e. transnational literacy], that may produce interruptions to capitalism from within, requires us to make future educators in the humanities transnationally literate, so that they can distinguish between the varieties of decolonization on the agenda, rather than collapse them as 'post-coloniality.' Literacy produces the skill to differentiate between letters, so that an articulated script can be read, re-read, written, re-written. It allows us to sense that other is not just a voice, but that others produce articulated texts, even as they, like us, are written in and by a text not of our own making. It is through transnational literacy that we can invent ground for an interruptive praxis from within our hope in justice under capitalism" ("Teaching for the Times" 16). Spivak relates the postcolonial period to global capitalism. Broadly speaking, colonialism and the process of the growth of capitalism in the West intertwine (for the globalization of capitalism, see Dirlik, *Global Modernity*). Spivak emphasizes the "overlapping territories and intertwined histories. (Said, *Culture and Imperialism* 3) of capitalism and the postcolonial period in which the various forms of decolonization in the Third World easily become categorized as a single postcoloniality rather than receiving critical atten-

tion as multiple postcolonialities overlapping with neo-colonialism. Spivak thus suggests that transnational literacy can provide us with a critical perspective through which we can instigate the homogenizing force of global capitalism and introduce different varieties of decolonization to a proper investigation. As phrases such as "interruptions to capitalism from within" and "an interruptive praxis from within our hope in justice under capitalism" imply, Spivak's transnational literacy interestingly becomes generated within or under the auspices of global capitalism. She intends to engender change in the established order of global capitalism from within, not from without: the overlapping of decolonization and deconstruction in their applicability in Spivak's engagement with transnational literacy. This critical strategy appears to become quite appropriate and useful where owing to the rapid intensification of globalization since the time of the demise of the Soviet bloc, no outside of global capitalism has made itself apparent (for a full discussion on this issue, refer, for example, to *Empire* by Hardt and Negri).

Spivak proposes that transnational literacy that can assist us to read a variety of textual voices created on both a national and a global level, can also assist us to read well-recognized literatures by Western academy, as well as many other less known literatures — for example, literature from Bangladesh and works produced by a non-Christian tribal Indo-Anglican fiction writer in English — unknown to readers in the West. "Transnational literacy," Spivak writes, "allows us to recognize that we hear a different *kind* of voice from these [and many other] countries, especially from singular women, from Mahasweta, from Assia Djebar" ("Teaching for the Times" 19). Although Spivak focuses on writers and books produced in the Subcontinent in her article, the list can extend to include a variety of global voices of the postcolonial world. I will elaborate this point later in this paper as I discuss issues such as how and why such a list can extend, as well as what texts can constitute such a list. As Spivak suggests her idea of transnational literacy in the context of the US academy, it requires further development and adjustment in and to various contexts.

Second, Spivak argues that transnational literacy can promote connections between a literary and textual engagement, and a social engagement. Employing and fostering such a transnational literacy demands ethical and political responsibility so that one should not fall into the fallacy of either a distorting culturalism or a complete misapprehension of others influenced by sociocultural misinformation. The reading that leads to a responsible global literacy, according to Spivak, should assist us to "expand the definition of literature to include social inscription" ("Teaching for the Times" 18). Here arise some questions such as do literary texts alone possess social inscription? Or do we need to read certain, or all, literary texts with a certain political intention, in order to engage with them to contemplate on social and political issues? This emerges as an enduringly debatable topic on the relationship between literature and sociology. The outcome of such debate can vary depending on how one defines the boundary between aesthetics and politics. This politics of connection has become an important topic in postcolonial studies requiring further investigation. For example, how postcolonial texts generate from the tension between the aesthetic and the political, and how postcolonial critics should responsibly engage with these two sides equally emphasized both become two difficult and enduring topics (on this issue, see, e.g., Yeager). Regarding the relationship between literature and its social engagement, I posit that we need to develop a politics of reading which emphasizes the tension between the aesthetic and the political, rather than a bias. This becomes influenced by the fact that the social inscription of a text can often become explicit or implicit according to how we read it, although the social inscriptions of certain texts may become more or less explicit than others, largely due to writers' aesthetic and political intentions. I hope this politics of reading will be made clearer as my discussion on transnational literacy further unfolds in this paper.

As the afore-mentioned long quote (from Spivak's "Teaching for the Times") suggests, transnational literacy as a reading closely interconnects with pedagogical strategy. Encouraging future educators in the field of humanities to develop a transnational literacy, Spivak argues, assists them to develop competence in transnational literacy which enables both a critically competent textual engagement and an ethical and political responsibility. Spivak, however, only briefly mentions the nature of texts requiring inclusion in her article "Teaching for the Times." She does not elaborate on specific pedagogical issues in relation to adopting a methodology of transnational literacy in the classroom except that "we have to *learn* inter-disciplinary teaching by supplementing our work with the social sciences and supplementing theirs with ours" (14; emphasis in the original). This suggestion of an interdisciplinary teaching closely relates to the issue of contextualized literary study (connecting literature

to society or the aesthetic to the political), for example, as Masao Miyoshi argues in his article "Turn to the Planet: Literature, Diversity, and Totality": "Literary and cultural critics must look out at the world and interconnect all the workings of political economy and artistic and cultural productions. We must keep reminding ourselves that the "global" economy is not global at all, but an exclusionist economy. We must discover the sense of true totality that includes everyone in the world" (295). Miyoshi critiques neoliberal globalization which aims to be inclusive and global in its scope but which in actuality selects and imperializes. He proposes an alternative globalization that can offer us not only a critique of neoliberal globalization but also an alternative perspective which can lead to the sense of true totality that includes everyone – both every human being and every other creature — throughout the world. Miyoshi's critique of neoliberal globalization is different from what Appadurai calls globalization from below, on the grounds that the former seems to suggest a utopian and universal alternative to the present trend of globalization in order to go against the "universality" of neoliberal globalization, while the latter seeks to offer an opposing and parallel order of globalization from below that can stand against globalization from above. Although Miyoshi's suggestion contains utopian elements, it at least directs us at this age of imperialist and ecologically unfriendly globalization (see, for example, Shiva and Harvey). Miyoshi's conception of literary texts and the role of cultural and literary critics in close relation to the world, in which both remain situated, becomes similar to Edward Said's concept of worldliness. In "The World, the Text, and the Critic," Said argues that "the point is that texts have ways of existing that even in their most rarefied form are always enmeshed in circumstance, time, place, and society — in short, they are in the world, and hence worldly. Whether a text is preserved or put aside for a period, whether it is on a library shelf or not, whether it is considered dangerous or not: these matters have to do with a text's being in the world, which is a more complicated matter than the private process of reading. The same implications are undoubtedly true of critics in their capacities as readers and writers in the world" (35). Said highlights the ultimate worldliness of a text or a critic regardless of whether a text or a critic engages positively or not with the world. Transnational literacy serves as a research and pedagogical methodology through which we can examine the worldliness of literary texts and critics and also think about and foster the ethical and political responsibility of literary texts and critics.

In her article "Cross-Talk, Postcolonial Pedagogy, and Transnational Literacy," Brydon discusses transnational literacy in close relation to postcolonial pedagogy. Brydon appropriates Spivak's concept of transnational literacy, suggested in her book *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*. Brydon further extends Spivak's argument by suggesting that transnational literacy can summon "cross-talk" and "postcolonial pedagogy" in the classroom, two intriguing concepts of her own. Since her practical teaching experience in the context of the Canadian academy for an extended period of time generates her argument, her specific and detailed discussion on three key terms, such as cross-talk, postcolonial pedagogy, and transnational literacy, strongly assists further contemplation of adopting, developing, and practicing transnational literacy in the classroom. I find Brydon's article useful as it includes the deficiency in Spivak's argument — a pedagogical application of transnational literacy — in her "Teaching for the Times," *Death of a Discipline*, and *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*. Brydon uses her main pedagogical methodology as cross-talk in her classroom in the process of cultivating postcolonial pedagogy and transnational literacy. By cross-talk Brydon intends engaged conversation among participants in classroom discussions so that not only can they confirm what they know, but more importantly they strongly encourage themselves to share their mistakes and ignorance. This cross-talk can encourage "emotional as well as intellectual reactions" (Brydon 70) since Brydon's classroom becomes characterized as a space of dynamism and unexpectedness. Brydon thus summarizes: "Classroom work must be more than a conversation; it must become collaborative work dedicated to concentrated learning and unlearning, and to engagement with the issues of the times as they present themselves. My ideal classroom would provide a space where learning and unlearning could happen through dialogue based on mutual respect" (79). In this classroom which acts as a democratic pedagogical space, both teacher and students become learners, albeit at different levels of (un)learning, as learning emerges as a process focused not merely on reaching an answer but more significantly on that process of (un)learning itself. The collaboration among participants — including the teacher — of class discussions by means of cross-talk becomes an essential component of Brydon's postcolonial pedagogy. Brydon highlights her postcolonial pedagogy as the one which stands against a nationalist pedagogy. This emerges from that "a nationalist pedagogy does not work through the cross-talk" but "smooths it

over, silences it, or stereotypes it, and refuses it the patient attention it deserves" (82). A nationalist pedagogy becomes a pedagogy which emphasizes the top-down hierarchical order, whereas a post-colonial pedagogy becomes a horizontal relationship in the classroom just as the term cross-talk implies.

How then does Brydon relate her postcolonial pedagogy to transnational literacy? She emphasizes how globalization has affected every aspect of our life on a national level. Imre Szeman explains the total impact of globalization upon our life as follows: "Most generally, 'globalization' is the name given to the social, economic, political, and cultural processes that, taken together, have produced the characteristic conditions of contemporary (late twentieth-/early twenty-first-century) existence" (458). The paradigm that focuses too much on a national level, however, does not enable us to deal with changes occurring in our life at this age of globalization, when the global dynamically and dialectically interrelates to the national: "Holding too closely to older notions of national identity may not prove the most effective way to preserve the ability of Canadians [and others] to shape the decisions that affect their daily lives" (Brydon 74). She thus suggests that "we need some way to signify the reclamation of agency, a reclamation that can no longer be claimed at the national level alone" (Brydon 74). Postcolonial pedagogy, which fosters cross-talk and transnational literacy, she argues, can provide us with a new way to reclaim the agency of citizens under the influence of globalization.

"Trans" in transnational literacy, as suggested by Spivak and Brydon, does not signify "anti"-national or "beyond" the national. Instead, it focuses on the opposing yet dynamic and dialectical relationship between the national and the global. This national-global interstitial space shall allow us a discursive environment from which to contemplate critical imaginings generated from the dynamic and dialectical tension between the national and the global. Transnationalism, as suggested by Spivak and Brydon, directs towards what Jon Stratton and Ien Ang call "the promise of a flexible, porous, and open-ended national culture" (160). I now draw from a transnational paradigm fostered by Brydon and Spivak, namely a "critical transnationalism," which maintains a distinction from the transnationalism that articulates its paradigmatic frame as anti-national, or at least beyond the national. Unlike some scholars' suggestion of the postnation or postnationalism, spurred by the rise of globalization, nation-states still remain in the here and now, despite transnational and global institutions such as WTO occasionally exerting more power than the nation-state. The simultaneous, dynamic, and dialectical movements between flows and clashes feature the topography of contemporary globalization and transnationalism.

The ideas of Walter Mignolo's "critical cosmopolitanism," and Arif Dirlik's "critical localism" (1996) show strong similarity to that of critical transnationalism. These are loaded terms and require a detailed analysis. Here, I discuss their similarities rather than their differences. Dirlik writes: "The boundaries of the local need to be kept open (or porous) if the local is to serve as a critical concept. The contemporary local is itself a site of invention; the present is ultimately the site for the global" ("The Global in the Local" 42). Mignolo, however, notes that: "Today, silenced and marginalized voices are bringing themselves into the conversation of cosmopolitan projects, rather than waiting to be included. Inclusion is always a reformative project. Bringing themselves into the conversation is a transformative project that takes the form of border thinking or border epistemology — that is, the alternative to separatism is border thinking, the recognition and transformation of the hegemonic imaginary from the perspectives of people in subaltern positions. Border thinking then becomes a "tool" of the project of critical cosmopolitanism" (736-37). Both Dirlik and Mignolo highlight the way in and extent to which the divide between the local and the global as paradigmatic positions becomes blurred, and how these two meet and collide. This process can serve as a source of cultural invention, intervention, and transformation. This transnational paradigm also serves as a modus operandi of transnational literacy. As the title — "Teaching for the Times" — of Spivak's 1992 article implies, transnational literacy emerges as a critical literacy for our age of postcolonial globalization, which can assist in the critical engagement of a reading of the world in and through literary and cultural texts. This transnational literacy will also assist the humanities to critically engage globalization, and in particular what Frantz Fanon calls the two-fold emerging of culture: "it is at the heart of national consciousness that international consciousness lives and grows. And this two-fold emerging is ultimately the source of all culture" (199). Fanon's insight resembles my discussion in the above two paragraphs with regard to the transnational paradigm. This insight appropriates our making sense of contemporary modus operandi

of cultural changes, regardless of its publication more than four decades ago.

We face the challenge of how we set up a course which can help foster the transnational literacy as suggested by Spivak and Brydon. We cannot answer this question easily. As Brydon indicates, "It is hard to write about teaching. Each classroom dynamic is different; each class creates its own community. What works with one group fails with another. What works one day may fail another. The teacher must always be prepared to shift strategies, reconsider goals, adapt to the demands of an ever-changing present" (79). This reminds us that how to teach in the classroom becomes as important as establishing a better course plan in fostering a transnational literacy. How to engage in the task of a postcolonial pedagogy of transnational literacy will surely vary since each country must carefully assess its particular situation. As Brydon suggests, "comparative postcolonial contexts as well as pedagogical strategies may be employed to begin engaging in such work, but the task of elaborating the many dimensions of this challenge remain before us" (84). This project constitutes part of my own engagement with the task of postcolonial pedagogy pertaining to transnational literacy.

In recent years as globalization and transnationalism have intensified, scholars in comparative literature, as well as in the humanities in general have become engaged in the concept and practice of world literature anew. Such scholarly engagements appear predominantly theoretical (see, for example, Coopan; Damrosch; Gunn; Kadir; Kumar; Mufti; Prendergast; Spivak, *Death of a Discipline*; Tötösy de Zepetnek [while in principle of a similar approach and practice of non-Eurocentrism, he posits a radically different theoretical and applied framework and methodology in his own work, in the aims and scope of the journal *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture* he edits, as well as in the Purdue University Press monograph series of Books in Comparative Cultural Studies he is series editor of; see Tötösy de Zepetnek; Tötösy de Zepetnek and Vasvári]). At the same time, articles and books which deal substantially with pedagogical issues regarding teaching world literature in this age of globalization are rare. An exception is David Damrosch's 2009 edited volume *Teaching World Literature*, a collection of articles with not just useful theoretical issues but more significantly practical pedagogical issues resulting from pedagogical practice. This collection of articles can well assist anyone concerned with teaching world literature in response to challenges of globalization. Despite the book relating singularly to the U.S. academy, it provides us with many useful issues of a situated pedagogy, through which anyone outside of the U.S. academy can think about and develop an appropriate pedagogical methodology. As Spivak's term "planetarity" — proposed in *Death of a Discipline* — implies, locating effective pedagogical pathways to cover literatures produced throughout the world so that voices of diverse national literatures may surface in a more equal manner than before has long haunted scholars in the discipline of comparative literature. During the Cold War era, the need for planetarity in literary studies did not enforce as much urgency, largely influenced by political factors. Since the demise of the Soviet bloc, the planetarity of literary studies has become something inevitable. The almost instantaneous witnessing and experiencing of effects of the cultural, economic, environmental, and political changes engendered by people at distant locations facilitates the possibility in this topographical change in literary studies. This has already become an essential part of everyday life. Roland Robertson and Anthony Giddens succinctly describe the contemporary state of our globalized world: "the compression of the world and the intensification of the consciousness of the world as a whole" (Robertson 8) and "the intensification of world-wide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa" (Giddens 64).

Scholars in comparative literature have responded to this recent cultural phenomenon by proposing a new perspective of world literature, that is, "a view of world literature as a set of windows on the world," in order to supplement the classical and masterpiece approaches and to broaden their horizons, which have long received criticism as Euro-centric and not appropriate for this new era (Damrosch, "Introduction" 5) and Coopan argues that "world literature is not ontology but an epistemology, not a known but a knowing" (38). In brief, world literature does not exist as selective canons waiting to be found. How we approach literatures as world literature becomes central as new concepts demand our exploration into the worlds of world literature. This resembles an adventure into lesser known or unknown worlds. This influences Coopan's indication of an ethics of reading which considers "both an ethical obligation to imagine the other as the other and a historical obligation to locate the other in space-times not our own" (39). This ethics of reading, she suggests, can contribute to overcoming

what she calls "the mere domestication of other literatures, cultures, geographies, and histories," which becomes equivalent to "turn[ing] world literature into imperial knowledge" (37). Although the new mode of approaching world literature may contribute significantly to overcoming Euro-centrism in comparative literary and cultural studies, we must address how not to fall into such fallacy, as the project of world literature likely mimes the imperial certitudes of the West's (or self's) recognition of itself through its others (Coopan 37).

Coopan's suggestion of an ethics of reading reminds us of scholars' intellectual attitude in dealing with others' literatures and cultures. Furthermore, Damrosch exposes a practical obstacle in teaching world literature: the scope of world literature has expanded, whereas the length of the school year remains the same ("Introduction" 2). The task of what to teach and how to teach in the classroom becomes a vexing challenge for scholars. In this given situation, Damrosch draws a boundary through how much we should teach. "World literature courses," he writes, "need to be exploratory rather than exhaustive, creating a teachable progression of issues and works rather than striving after some impossible proportional representation or near-native cultural literacy in each region involved" (9). This task of teaching world literature offers us pedagogical spaces in which to imagine and explore multiple possibilities of "creative pedagogical work" (2).

I highlight several effective ways of teaching world literature from *Teaching World Literature*. C.A. Prettiman shares her experience of organizing a two-semester course according to themes. As she writes, "with so drastically selective a course, I abandoned much of my pretense of coverage. So I did units like 'Love in the Ancient World,' with readings from Ovid, Catullus, Sappho, Rumi – even *The Arabian Nights*, translated by the Iraqi American scholar Husain Haddawy" (382). Congruent with Damrosch and Coopan, Garry Harrison proposes

> dynamic, dialogic modes of reading in order to embrace the situated heterogeneity of culturally diverse writers and readers reaching across borders, whose practices challenge us to read world literature not as a static canon but as a dynamic and open-ended process — a kind of ever-shifting symphony of voices … An example from the twentieth century brings Chinua Achebe's criticism of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* ("An Image of Africa") together with George Washington Williams's "An Open Letter to His Serene Majesty Leopold II" and Mark Twain's "King Leopold's Soliloquy." While the first text attacks Conrad's apparent racism, the second two, published almost at the same time as *Heart of Darkness*, elicit the criticism of imperialism implicit in the novel by drawing a thicker description of the brutal consequences and hypocrisy of Leopold II's inhumane policies in the so-called Independent State of Congo. Bringing these multiple voices to bear on canonical texts such as *The Tempest* and *Heart of Darkness* helps students recognize the complex dynamics of identity and difference, history and art, at work in the literary texts, while also offering the perspective of the subaltern or postcolonial critic writing back to the empire. (210-13)

This "historical conceptualization helps students to recognize that their perspective and responses to a work are embedded in their own cultural-historical context" (Harrison 211). Having permission to access other different voices, students can expand their consciousness.

Marjorie Rhine and Jeanne Gillespie adopt a team teaching method. Since acquiring an equally high level of knowledge of all regions in our globe becomes difficult for one teacher, the teacher often finds difficulty in teaching literatures produced in and about those regions of which the teacher lacks confidence. This has increased as scholars in comparative literature attempt to develop a curriculum to remain informed of current events and styles. A community of team teaching practice can be a very effective pedagogical methodology influenced by that each teacher in team teaching would have the opportunity to cover literatures of the teacher's expertise. Naturally, this course would feature interdisciplinary or multi-disciplinary. Rhine and Gillespie, in their study, indicate that field trips proved very useful indicated by that students could directly see and experience what they learned in the classroom. John B. Foster Jr. also suggests that students enrolling in relevant courses, such as world history, international relations, and anthropology, etc. opened in other departments, effect a transition pedagogy (163), and hence facilitates integration. These emerge as some of the pedagogical engagements which teach world literature creatively in this age of globalization. These practical examples offer us some insights as we, scholars in literary studies, attempt to critically engage globalization. I am considering teaching a course on the "comfort women" issue. Documentation on that issue on a global level, including literary works, films, art works, and historical documents, has increased. As L. Hyun Yi Kang suggests, in comparison with "Holocaust studies," it is even possible for "Comfort Women Stud-

ies" to be established sooner or later largely owing to the growing literature on comfort women since the 1990s (43). In a course such as this, I would approach the comfort women issue not only as a (South Korean) national but as a transnational (and global) issue as well. Indeed, stories of comfort women serve as travelling memories which have enabled creative writers, activists, and scholars not only in South Korea but also in the United States to engage with them creatively and critically (for discussions on the comfort women issue in the U.S., see Choi and Chuh). By encouraging students to access to a variety of materials and voices on that issue, they will broaden their horizons, particularly considering different positions of the same issue. This approach will also "help create citizens who can think critically and who acquire an ability to occupy cultural positions different from their own" (Komar 109).

Although developing and convening a course of world literature as suggested above requires much work and tremendous efforts, far greater advantages emerge from increasing the global consciousness of literary studies and assisting students and teachers in the humanities to become transnationally literate. As Foster indicates, "world literature can promote a more intimate understanding of specific cultures, catalyze insights into underlying similarities and differences, and sharpen awareness of communication among cultures. It can also illuminate the intercultural dynamics through which these cultures are shaped and transformed in the first place. In general, it can give more substance and depth to a worldwide perspective on human experience" (163). Foster adds that our emphasis on teaching world literature never suggests that national literature could become marginalized. Instead, he suggests that it becomes absolutely necessary for us to read both national and world literature in conversation. This stems from that one national literature and culture has become shaped not in isolation but in "interactions on a global scale" with other national literatures and cultures (Foster 163). This transnational literacy emerges as a critical epistemology and literacy which can assist us to make sense of our times.

I have not enumerated specific texts here which can possibly constitute a course of world literature. We now know that doing that opposes a characteristic of world literature: reading world literature as a dynamic and open-ended process. The question not of what but of how matters. How we scholars and teachers in literary studies should accept and manipulate challenges of globalization still remains before each of us. Responses may vary. Yet, it is in this engagement with challenges of globalization that literary imagination can dynamically respond to one of our current era's urgent questions — how best to engage globalization critically through discourse with/narratives by scholars in the humanities — and that the transnational imaginaries which can facilitate our transcendency from bounded thinking — and hence a decolonization of the mind — become sites of contestation which we can creatively foster.

Note: This work was supported by a grant by the National Research Foundation of Korea (KRF-2009-32A-A00139).

Works Cited

Achebe, Chinua. *Morning Yet on Creation Day: Essays*. London: Heinemann, 1975.

Appadurai, Arjun. "Grassroots Globalization and the Research Imagination." *Public Culture* 12.1 (2000): 1-19.

Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin. *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures.* London and New York: Routledge, 1989.

Brydon, Diana. "Cross-Talk, Postcolonial Pedagogy, and Transnational Literacy." *Situation Analysis* 4 (2004): 70-87.

Choi, Chungmoo, ed. "The Comfort Women: Colonialism, War, and Sex." Special Issue *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* 5:1 (1997).

Chuh, Kandice, ed. "On Korean 'Comfort Women'" Special Issue *Journal of Asian American Studies* 6.1 (2003).

Cooppan, Vilashini. "The Ethics of World Literature: Reading Others, Reading Otherwise." *Teaching World Literature*. Ed. David Damrosch New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2009. 34-43.

Cooppan, Vilashini. "World Literature and Global Theory: Comparative Literature for the New Millennium." *symploke* 9.1-2 (2001): 15-43.

Damrosch, David, ed. *Teaching World Literature*. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2009.

Damrosch, David. "Introduction: All the World in the Time." *Teaching World Literature*. Ed. David Damrosch. 2009. 1-11.

Damrosch, David. *What is World Literature?* Princeton: Princeton UP, 2003.

Devi, Mahasweta. *Imaginary Maps*. Trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. New York and London: Routledge, 1995.

Dirlik, Arif. *Global Modernity: Modernity in the Age of Global Capitalism*. Boulder: Paradigm, 2007.

Dirlik, Arif. "The Global in the Local." *Global/Local: Cultural Production and the Transnational Imaginary*. Ed. Rob Wilson and Wimal Dissanayake. Durham: Duke UP, 1996. 21-45.

Fanon, Frantz. "On National Culture." *The Wretched of the Earth*. Preface by Jean-Paul Sartre and Translated by Constance Farrington. Middlesex: Penguin, 1967. 166-99.

Foster, John Burt, Jr. "Cultural Encounters in Global Contexts: World Literature as a One-Semester General Education Course." *Teaching World Literature*. Ed. David Damrosch. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2009. 155-64.

Giddens, Anthony. *The Consequences of Modernity*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1990.

Giroux, Henry. "Education After Abu Ghraib: Revisiting Adorno's Politics of Education."*Against the New Authoritarianism: Politics After Abu Ghraib*. Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing, 2005. 109-74.

Gunn, Giles, ed. *Globalizing Literary Studies*. Special issue *PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 116.1 (2001): 16-188.

Hardt, Michael, and Negri, Antonio. *Empire*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2000.

Harrison, Gary. "Conversation in Context: A Dialogic Approach to Teaching World Literature." *Teaching World Literature*. Ed. David Damrosch. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2009. 205-15.

Harvey, David. "What's Green and Makes the Environment God Round?" *The Cultures of Globalization*. Ed. Fredric Jameson and Masao Miyoshi. Durham: Duke UP, 1998. 327-55.

Kadir, Djelal, ed. *Globalization and World Literature*. Special Issue *Comparative Literature Studies* 41.1 (2004): 1-184.

Kang, L. Hyun Yi. "Conjuring 'Comfort Women': Mediated Affiliations and Disciplined Subjects in Korean/American Transnationality." Special Issue *Journal of Asian American Studies* 6.1 (2003): 25-55.

Kellman, Steven G., ed. *Switching Languages: Translingual Writers Reflect on Their Craft*. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 2003.

Kellman, Steven G. *The Translingual Imagination.* Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 2000.

Komar, Kathleen L. "Teaching World Literature in a Microcosm of the World." *Teaching World Literature*. Ed. David Damrosch. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2009. 101-09.

Krishnaswamy, Revathi. "Toward World Literary Knowledges: Theory in the Age of Globalization." *Comparative Literature* 62.4 (2010): 399-419.

Kumar, Amitava, ed. *World Bank Literature*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2003.

Li, David Leiwei, ed. "Globalization and the Humanities." Special issue *Comparative Literature* 53.4 (2001): 275-461.

Mignolo, Walter D. "The Many Faces of Cosmo-polis: Border Thinking and Critical Cosmopolitanism." *Public Culture* 12.3 (2000): 721-48.

Miyoshi, Masao. "Turn to the Planet: Literature, Diversity, and Totality." *Comparative Literature* 53.4 (2001): 283-97.

Mufti, Aamir R. "Global Comparativism." *Critical Inquiry* 31 (2005): 472-89.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o. "The Language of African Literature." *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*. London: James Currey, 1986. 4-33.

O'Brien, Susie, and Szeman, Imre, ed. *Anglophone Literatures and Global Culture*. Special issue of *South Atlantic Quarterly* 100.3 (2001): 603-854.

Prendergast, Christopher, ed. *Debating World Literature*. London: Verso, 2004.

Prettiman, C.A. "'Literature That Changed the World': Designing a World Literature Course." *Teaching World Literature*. Ed. David Damrosch. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2009. 377-84.

Rhine, E. Marjorie, and Gillespie, Jeanne. "Finding the Global in the Local: Explorations in Interdisciplinary Team Teaching." *Teaching World Literature*. Ed. David Damrosch. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2009. 258-65.

Robertson, Roland. *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*. London: Sage, 1992.

Said, Edward. *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Vintage, 1994.

Said, Edward. "The World, the Text, and the Critic." *The World, the Text, and the Critic*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1983. 31-53.

Seyhan, Azade. *Writing Outside the Nation*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2000.

Shiva, Vandana. *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology, and Development*. New Delhi: Kali for Women, 1998.

Spivak, Chakravorty Gayatri. *Death of a Discipline*. New York: Columbia UP, 2003.

Spivak, Chakravorty Gayatri. *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present.* Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1999.

Spivak, Chakravorty Gayatri. "Subaltern Talk: Interview with the Editors." *The Spivak Reader: Selected Works of*

Gayatri Chakrabarty Spivak. Ed. Donna Landry and Gerald Maclean. London: Routledge, 1996. 287-308.

Spivak, Chakravorty Gayatri. "Teaching for the Times." *The Journal of the Midwest Modern Language Association* 25.1 (1992): 3-22.

Spivak, Chakravorty Gayatri. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Ed. and with an Introduction by Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg. Urbana and Chicago: U of Illinois P, 1988. 271-313.

Stratton, Jon, and Ien Ang. "Multicultural Imagined Communities: Cultural Difference and National Identity in the USA and Australia." *Multicultural States: Rethinking Difference and Identity*. Ed. David Bennett. London: Routledge, 1998. 136-62.

Szeman, Imre. "Globalization." *The Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism.* Ed. Michael Groden, Martin Kreiswirth, and Imre Szeman. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2005. 458-65.

Tötösy de Zepetnek, Steven. "From Comparative Literature Today toward Comparative Cultural Studies." *Comparative Literature and Comparative Cultural Studies*. Ed. Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek. West Lafayette: Purdue UP, 2003. 235-67.

Tötösy de Zepetnek, Steven. "The New Humanities: The Intercultural, the Comparative, and the Interdisciplinary." *Globalization and the Futures of Comparative Literature*. Ed. Jan M. Ziolkowski and Alfred J. López. Thematic Section *The Global South* 1.2 (2007): 45-68.

Tötösy de Zepetnek, Steven, and Louise O. Vasvári. "The Comparative and Contextual Study of Literature and Culture and Globalization." *The Cambridge Companion to Comparative Literature and Comparative Cultural Studies.* Ed. Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek and Tutun Mukherjee. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2012. Forthcoming.

Yeager, Patricia. "Editor's Column: The End of Postcolonial Theory? A Roundtable with Sunil Agnani, Fernando Coronil, Gaurav Desai, Mamadou Diouf, Simon Gikandi, Susie Tharu, and Jennifer Wenzel." *PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 122.3 (2007): 633-51.

Yoon, Ji Gwan, ed. *English, Colonialism in My Heart*. Seoul: Dangdae, 2007.

Author's profile: Ezra Yoo-Hyeok Lee is teaching in the Department of English and participating in the Transnationalism and Cultural Translation Research Project at Dongguk University. His fields of interests in research include postcolonial global literatures and cultures, globalization and transnational cultural studies, Asian North American literatures, modern British and Irish literatures, and comparative, interdisciplinary, and transnational research and pedagogical methodology. He is working on a book-length project in which he examines the issue of translingualism and cultural translation in such writers as Ha Jin, Eva Hoffman, Chang-rae Lee, Andrew Lam, and Ariel Dorfman. Lee's publications include "Globalization, Ideology, and Narratives of the East Asian Financial Crisis," *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture* (2005) and "Racism Masquerading as Nationalism: Wars, Japanese-Americans, and Arab-Americans," *Interrogating Race and Racism* (Ed. Vijay Agnew, 2007). E-mail: <hyeok25@yahoo.com>.