

Imperialism and Education in Twentieth Century China in Contemporary Perspective

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As recently as two decades ago, it seemed quite unproblematic to speak of imperialism in Modern Chinese history, and of the extensive educational activities conducted by foreigners-most importantly missionaries-as one of the most important media in the production and consolidation of Euro/American cultural hegemony. Education in the hands of missionaries seemed designed to complete the job begun by gunboats. For nationalists in China as elsewhere, with their ideological investment in state-directed education as the most effective instrument of creating a homogeneous culture and loyal citizens, foreign involvement in education meant ideological subjugation and, consequently, compromise of national sovereignty.

It is remarkable how problematic this view of education as a tool of imperialism has become over the last decade. It is not that nationalist objections to foreign-sponsored education have disappeared, or that historians are no longer concerned with issues thrown up by the confrontation between nationalism and imperialism(or colonialism). "De-colonizing the mind" still appears as an urgent task to conservative as well as radical postcolonial intellectuals obsessed with unfinished national projects, and conservatives globally (including the US) contemplate with anxiety if not outright hostility any effort to introduce greater social and ethnic complexity to the writing of national histories, which they feel might weaken the nation ideologically. In the People's Republic of China itself, patriotic education is very much the order of the day, and the postsocialist regime finds in the reaffirmation of civilizational values a source of legitimation as a substitute for the waning faith in socialism.

Nevertheless, there has been a proliferation in recent years of doubts concerning the historical status of both imperialism and nationalism. What is most important in recent transformations, I would like to suggest here, is the challenge presented by the progressive blurring of the distinction between the inside and the outside that has been crucial over the last century to the sustenance of the seemingly unbridgeable opposition between the national and the colonial(or imperialist). The blurring of this distinction is not just ideological, but social in a very significant sense. Structural transformations in global relationships have endowed with a new significance social groups that are the products of two centuries of global interactions between colonizers and colonized, who long were objects of suspicion in nationalist ideology but find themselves valorized in new ways as they increasingly occupy a strategic position in the global economy. It is not very surprising that the education that

produced these groups is also subject to re-evaluation accordingly. As an intense desire for incorporation in global capitalism replaces in Communist Party policy the radical anti-imperialism of Maoist revolutionary socialism, it is not very surprising that we should be witnessing in the People's Republic of China a similar reevaluation of modern Chinese history, and of the role in it of imperialism, and its cultural legacies, including education.

In a provocative study of cultural imperialism published in the early 1990s, John Tomlinson argued the entanglement of cultural imperialism in issues of modernity, and urged that in the assigning of "blame" for the ills of domination, a distinction be made between "the critical discourse of modernity and the other discourses of cultural imperialism." He wrote,

"In the latter, some clear, *present*, agent of domination was identified: the mass media, America, multinational capitalists.

There was the idea that this agent was responsible—that criticism meant laying the blame at its door. But here we have to think of a

situation being to blame and this is less satisfying to the critical spirit. Thinking in terms of modernity seems to mean thinking in a rather different critical mode from that employed in the discourse of cultural imperialism. It seems to mean, for example, accepting

that our cultural discontents have complex multiple determinations that have arisen over time and thus that no *present* agent is

'responsible' in any full sense." 1

Tomlinson's substitution of modernity (a "situation") for cultural imperialism (an "agency") was informed by a further distinction he made in the unfolding of modernity through a period of imperialism to a present condition of globalization, beginning roughly in the 1970s. "Globalisation may be distinguished from imperialism," he wrote, "in that it is a far less coherent or culturally directed process....the idea of imperialism contains, at least, the notion of a purposeful project: the *intended* spread of a social system from one centre of power across the globe. The idea of 'globalisation' suggests interconnection and interdependency of all global areas which happens in a far less purposeful way." 2

I would like to bracket here for the moment the possibility that Tomlinson's questioning of "cultural imperialism" at the moment of the fall of socialisms and the global victory of capitalism is only one more example of an enthusiasm over a non-imperial globality that was characteristic of the 1990s, that since then has been rendered largely irrelevant by an intensified United States imperialism that may well be unprecedented in its urge to "spread...a social system from one centre of power across the world." The idea of an empire without center or boundary and, therefore, agency, would be argued even more forcefully by the end of the decade by Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt in their influential book, *Empire*.

³ These questionings of “imperialism” have been accompanied, most importantly in postcolonial criticism, by questions concerning the relationship between nationalism and colonialism that further have called into question the utility of the concepts of colonialism and imperialism in understanding not only the present, but the past as well. In some contemporary works, the colonial and imperial pasts appear merely as stages of an inexorable globalization that has presently replaced an earlier modernization discourse as a paradigm for understanding the development of the modern world-of which Tomlinson’s own work provides one example.⁴

It is possible also to reverse the relationship here, as I will suggest below: that rather than the history of colonialism disappearing into a new teleology of globalization, globalization itself may be understood as the fulfillment of a modernity of which colonialism and imperialism have been constituent moments: colonial modernity. Contrary to Tomlinson, moreover, modernity is no more “just” a situation than the capitalism which dynamizes it, which has its own agencies. Colonialism has been a preeminent agency in the globalization of modernity. If we seem today to live in a world where colonialism has been superseded by a global modernity, in which the formerly colonized and dominated once again assert their own political and cultural claims to modernity, this global modernity is nevertheless one that has been marked indelibly by its origins in colonialism; as is quite apparent in its unevenness, as well as the uneven distributions of economic, social, political and cultural power that are the legacies to it of modern colonialism and imperialism, distinguished historically by their sources in capitalism and the nation-state.

I am concerned in this discussion not with some vague idea of “globalization,” but with intellectual shifts that have accompanied the emergence of the paradigm of globalization, most notably, shifts in the understanding of colonialism(or imperialism) and nationalism. First is the hybridization of colonialism in postcolonial criticism that has shifted attention from the irreducible divide in earlier nationalist thinking between the colonizer and the colonized to those “contact zones” where new cultures were forged, in which the colonizer and the colonized were partners, if not equal partners. If we are to imagine how ambiguous the discourse of colonialism may appear to future generations, we need look no further than postcolonial criticism as it has developed over the last decade or so, bringing to the surface fundamental contradictions in an earlier discourse on colonialism.⁵

The novelty of modern colonialism, and its effects on either the colonizer or the colonized, have been in dispute all along. Liberal and conservative development discourses, most notably modernization discourse, have for the most part dismissed colonialism as an important aspect of modernity, and where they have recognized its importance, have assigned to it a progressive historical role.⁶ Marxists have been more ambivalent on the question. Lenin’s interpretation of colonialism as an indispensable stage of capitalism was to play a crucial part in bringing colonialism into the center of radical politics globally. Still, while mainstream Marxism has condemned colonialism for the oppression and exploitation of the colonized, it, too, often has identified colonialism with a progressive function in bringing societies “vegetating in the teeth of time,” in Marx’s words, into modernity.⁷ Third World Marxists have shared in this ambivalence.⁸

Nevertheless, if colonialism as a historical phenomenon always has been in dispute, there was in an earlier period some consensus over the meaning of colonialism.⁹ Well into the 1970s, colonialism in a strict sense referred to the political control by one nation of another nation or a society striving to become a nation. Where a colony had already achieved formal political independence but still could not claim full autonomy due primarily to economic but also ideological reasons, the preferred term was neo-colonialism. These terms could be broadened in scope to refer also to relationships between "regions," as in the colonial or neo-colonial subjection of the Third to the First World. While there was some recognition, moreover, that colonialism was not a monopoly of capitalism because it could be practised by "socialist" states as well, the ultimate cause of colonial formations was installed in the structuring of the globe by capitalism, to which socialism itself was a response. Hence a common assumption that the way out of the legacies of colonialism lay with some form of socialism, which in practice meant the creation of autonomous and sovereign economies that could escape structural dependence on advanced capitalist societies, and set their own developmental agenda.

The issue of colonialism, in other words, revolved mostly around the issue of capitalism, and was in many ways subsidiary to the latter. To be sure, by the 1960s questions of the relationship between colonialism and racism were on the agenda of postcolonial discourses. This Third Worldism may be the most important source of contemporary postcolonial criticism. But in the immediate context of national liberation struggles, they appeared more often than not, not as problems in and of themselves, but as distinguishing features of capitalism in the setting of colonialism (the form class relations took in colonial capitalism, sort of to speak) that could be resolved in the long run only through the abolition of capitalism. Anti-colonial struggles derived their historical meaning primarily from their contribution to the long-term struggle between capitalism and socialism. V.I. Lenin, much more so than Karl Marx, was the inspiration behind this view of the relationship between capitalism and colonialism.

As oppression and exploitation marked the political and economic relationships between the colonizer and the colonized, the relationship appeared culturally as a "Manichean" opposition between the two.¹⁰ There was all along a recognition of a structural dialectic between the colonizer and the colonized. Structurally, economic and political colonialism produced new practices and social formations, including class formations, that bound the two together; just as colonialism created a new native class that drew its sustenance from the colonizer, the task of colonization was rendered much easier by the collaboration of this class with the colonizers. Even where it was possible to speak of a common culture shared by the colonizer and the colonized in the "contact zones" of the colonies,¹¹ this common culture enhanced, rather than alleviated, the Manichean opposition between the two expressed most importantly in the language of race, leaving no doubt as to where each belonged economically, politically and culturally. In ideologies of national liberation, native groups and classes which were economically and culturally entangled with colonialism were viewed not as elements integral to the constitution of the nation, but as intrusions into the nation of foreign elements that would have to be eliminated in the realization of national sovereignty and autonomy. These ideas were spelled out most forcefully in the work of Frantz Fanon, who stands in many ways at the origins of a radical, critical and political postcolonialism.¹²

Contemporary postcolonial criticism is heir to this earlier discourse in reaffirming the centrality of the colonial experience, but also parts ways with it in quite significant ways, that ironically call into question the very meaning of colonialism. There were all along Third World voices dissatisfied with the containment of the colonial experience within the categories of capitalism, demanding a hearing for the psychological and cultural dimensions of colonialism to which racism was of fundamental significance.¹³ These are the voices that have come forward over the last two decades when there has been a distinct shift in postcolonial discourse from the economic and political to the cultural and the personal experiential.

The results where colonialism is concerned are quite contradictory. The shift in attention to questions of cultural identity in postcolonial discourse has been both a moment in, and a beneficiary of, a more general reorientation in Marxist thinking toward a recognition of at least the partial autonomy of the cultural from the economic or the political spheres of life. Introduced into the colonial context, this has resulted in a disassociation of questions of culture and cultural identity from the structures of capitalism, shifting the grounds for discourse to the encounter between the colonizer and the colonized, unmediated by the structures of political economy within which they had been subsumed earlier. The distancing of questions of colonialism from questions of capitalism has in some measure also made possible the foregrounding of colonialism, rather than capitalism, as the central datum of modern history.

This centering of colonialism, however, has also rendered the term increasingly ambiguous, and raises serious questions in particular about modern colonialism. In many ways, contemporary postcolonial criticism is most important as a reflection on the history of postcolonial discourses (a self-criticism of the discourse, in other words), bringing to the surface contradictions that were rendered invisible earlier by barely examined and fundamentally teleological assumptions concerning capitalism, socialism and the nation, but above all revolutionary national liberation movements against colonialism, the failure of which has done much to provoke an awareness of these contradictions. Recognition of these contradictions also renders the concept of colonialism quite problematic. Robert Young writes with reference to J.P. Sartre and A. Memmi that,

"Sartre's insight that the Manichean system of racism and colonization, apparently dividing colonizer from colonized, in fact generates dynamic mutual mental relations between colonizer and colonized which bind them in the colonial drama, was further elaborated by Albert Memmi in his demonstration that the dialectic also involved what Hegel had called the 'excluded middle': the spectral presence of the liminal, subaltern figures who slip between the two dominant antithetical categories. Sartre's response was to emphasize the dialectical aspect of his own account, suggesting that Memmi saw a situation where he also saw a system."¹⁴

The difference between Sartre and Memmi to which Young points may be symbolic of the shift that has taken place in postcolonial criticism over the last two decades, with Memmi having the last word—although contemporary postcolonial criticism arguably has gone beyond what appears in Memmi's work as a qualification and refinement of the concept through personal experience to an explicit repudiation of systemic understandings of colonialism. To the extent that colonialism has been disassociated from capitalism, the understanding of colonialism as system has retreated before a situational approach that valorizes contingency and difference over systemic totality. The "contact zones," which now appear as the paradigmatic locations for colonial modernity, were also to serve, in contemporary hindsight, as crucibles for the formation of a new global elite, and for struggles over modernity as modernity itself was globalized through the agencies of colonialism and imperialism.

This shift in the valorization of colonialism has been accompanied by questionings concerning anti-colonial nation-building itself as a colonizing activity. Nation-building as colonizing activity may characterize the history of nationalism in general.¹⁵ Eugen Weber, who recognized the colonial aspect of nationalism, nevertheless viewed it positively as part of the civilizing function of the nation-state.¹⁶ For a variety of reasons, the civilizing function attributed to the nation-state has lost much of its plausibility over the years, drawing attention more to its colonizing aspects. The following statement, somewhat reductionist in its fundamentalism, nevertheless captures the colonial element in nationalism when seen from the perspective of those on the ground:

"It is not so much the pageant of imperialism that affects people's lives, or the restrictions on speech and political action, or the arrogance of foreign elites. The most direct involvement of ordinary people with imperial rule is when their hard-won food is removed from in front of them and taken right out of their family, their community, and often their country. As well as the loss of livelihood, there is the personal humiliation, the knowledge that they are being cheated, if not by the tithe collector than certainly by the regime. It makes no difference if the colonizer is a distant imperial power, a foreign landlord who has been given ownership of their village, or a central government supporting its bureaucrats and yes-men by sucking the peasants dry. They are all alien, external, and they all survive by extracting food and labour from their subjects. This is colonialism, as experienced by the great majority of people who lived under it."¹⁷

The questioning of the nation has a particular relevance in colonial societies, and Third World societies in general, where the nation is an import from the colonizers, and may be said in many instances to replay the policies inherited from the colonizers, sometimes as cruel parody. The universalization of the nation-form is itself a sign of the colonial restructuring of the globe. Anti-colonialism was historically anterior to nationalism, which itself was a product of colonialism. Recognition of the nation as a product as well as an agent of colonialism raises serious questions about the very idea of colonialism, which are exacerbated by the hybridization of colonialism, which further blurs the assumptions about colonialism in history. On the other hand, where nation-building appears as colonization of the local, or erasure of cultural and subjective diversity, the intrusion of forces from the outside may well appear to be liberating in its consequences.

What do these changes in perception imply for evaluations of cultural activity in general and education in particular across the boundaries that separated the colonizer and the colonized, or imperialists from imperial subjects? In the first place, while current scholarship has problematized the colonizer/colonized relationship, there is little reason therefore to abandon the concepts of colonialism or imperialism in explanations of the formation of the modern world. On the contrary, we need to think about what we may lose by way of explanation by abandoning these concepts. We gain in understanding by closer attention to “situations,” or “contact zones,” in understanding the local complexities of colonialism or imperialism, but appreciation of their long-term historical significance also demands that these situations be viewed in a perspective that includes the structuring (or de-structuring, as the case might be) forces emanating from larger configurations of political economy; in other words, to use the example from Robert Young, Memmi and Sartre both had something important to say about colonialism and imperialism, which is still crucial to understanding their historical significance. This also makes irrelevant concepts such as “semi-colonial,” which are not only marked by redundancy, but also ignore the hermeneutics of structure and situations, the whole and the parts, and totalities and constituents in grasping the dynamics of modernity. To recall the revealing metaphor that Joseph Levenson used in his *Confucian China and Its Modern Fate* to explain the consequences of the confrontation between China and the West, for Westerners the encounter forced a change of vocabulary, for Chinese, a change of language.¹⁸

Levenson’s metaphors pertain to cultural change in general, including education. Those who sought to bring modern education (and, therefore, modernity) to China no doubt did so out of complex motives, as I will remark on further below. But in disentangling such complexities, we need nevertheless to keep in mind the structures or networks of power of which they were one component or node, which had important consequences both for their behavior, and the way they were perceived by the Chinese. The missionary enterprise in China was conceived by most missionaries and missionary organizations as part of a civilizational package that also included commerce, a new set of rules of international relationships (and hence a new language of modernity), gunboats, as well as claims to knowledge that promised to wipe out other ways of knowing. Unlike their Jesuit predecessors from two centuries earlier, the missionaries who sought to bring a new education to China had little respect for “local knowledge,” but viewed themselves as the bearers not only of a new scientific knowledge but also the superior moral values of a Christian civilization. And they had little patience with challenges to their authority, which derived at the time not from a hegemonic acceptance of their claims by the Chinese but from their relationship to structures of power emanating from Europe and North America. As historians of missionary activity such as Paul Cohen have demonstrated, missionaries did not hesitate to call on imperial political and military power when in trouble, and some of the major missionary educational activities in China, however laudable in their philanthropic goals, were made possible by the fruits of an emergent monopoly capitalism that benefited from imperialism abroad and class exploitation at home. Mary Bullock has documented for us the missionary enthusiasm over the opening of the Peking Union Medical College in 1921, which to some signalled the promise of Rockefeller munificence that might benefit the whole missionary enterprise in China.¹⁹ Rockefeller headquarters in New York sought over the years to retain control over the PUMC in Beijing, while administrators and faculty in the college resisted pressures for devolution of administrative and academic control into Chinese hands. Missionaries and other foreign educators involved in “civilizing” China also partook of the language of racism that was

integral to an emergent language of modernity around the turn of the twentieth century.²⁰ Missionaries also partook of the language of imperialism. A meeting of missionaries in Sichuan in 1898 “decided to divide the province into spheres of influence in order to avoid rivalry and duplication of efforts”; this at the same time that imperialist powers were considering dividing the Qing Empire into “spheres of influence,” which the Chinese referred to as “slicing the melon.”²¹

Within this overall perspective of structural relationships, there was nevertheless a history to missionary/educational activity, that points to variations of both place and time. Missionaries in remote Sichuan faced quite different circumstances than their counterparts in Peking or Shanghai. Some missionaries were more anxious than others in “domesticating” themselves in China. The West China Union University, like other medical colleges run by missionaries, was dedicated to training a Chinese elite medical corps educated in modern scientific medicine, but its school song stressed synthesis over domination, and its campus as the location (“the contact zone”) for such a synthesis: “Europe and Asia intertwine/Two cultures embrace...The sages in the East/And those of the West/Together can reveal the way.”²²

On the other hand, some missionaries/educators were also transformed by their experience. John Grant of Peking Union Medical College, who came to be known to his colleagues by the appellation “medical Bolshevik,” in the 1930s spearheaded the effort to establish public health programs in China. His efforts to make medical practice respond to local needs and make use of local resources led to the establishments of programs in the countryside that foreshadowed the acclaimed public health programs established during the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s and 1970s, with their famed “barefoot doctors” who represented the goal, since then abandoned, to bring medicine to all within the country.²³

John Grant’s contribution also draws attention to students trained by missionary medical schools, for it was one of his students, C.C. Chen, who played the instrumental role in the development of public health programs through Martin Yan’s Mass Education Movement in Dingxian, Hebei. Chen, who is described by Bullock as “the father of China’s rural health care delivery system,”²⁴ was quite “elitist” in his approach to medicine, having imbibed the lessons of PUMC which, modelled after the Johns Hopkins University medical school, stressed modern scientific training for the education of medical professionals. But he was, nevertheless, committed to public service, and recognized the importance of adjustment to local needs and learning. He wrote in a 1933 essay that, “instead of working out solutions of our health problems on the basis of experimental studies, we have drifted into an imposition of the Western pattern of private practice upon the millions of people whose social and economic conditions are entirely different from those of the West.”²⁵ Chen, like many others of his fellow modern physicians, was persecuted after 1949, and deprived of ability to conduct any health care activities other than teaching at West China Union University (he was originally from Chengdu). While he retained his commitment to rural health care, he was quite critical of the low-level of training of medical cadres in the countryside, but especially of the persistence of “traditional medicine.”²⁶

Chinese anti-colonialism appears in contemporary perspective as part of the process of nation-building, where anti-colonialism at the cultural level served as the ideological counter-part to the establishment of sovereignty at the political and economic levels. Cultural anti-colonialism could be motivated by a variety of reasons, ranging from the anti-Westernism of traditionalists to the anti-modernism of radical indigenists to the liberal search for political sovereignty. While all desired national cultural autonomy, their perceptions of the dimensions of such autonomy varied greatly. In most cases, nationalization of or national control over foreign institutions sufficed to fulfill the demands of national sovereignty, perceived mostly in political terms. Foreign resistance to nationalization would play no little part in the radicalization of Chinese politics, including the radicalization of those who were products of those very institutions.

The problem of sovereignty was far more complicated in the case of Marxists to whom economic and ideological sovereignty were prerequisites of political sovereignty, and who perceived a social dimension to the question of sovereignty that cut across divisions of inside and outside. Despite internal differences in their diagnoses of the problems of national development, Chinese Marxist analyses were uniformly inspired by V. I. Lenin's analysis of the contradictory role imperialism (understood as "the highest stage of capitalism") played in colonial and semi-colonial societies: that while imperialism was responsible for introducing into these societies the progressive forces of capitalism, it also created structural impediments to the realization of capitalist development as in Europe and North America.

There were two major aspects to these impediments. One was economic. Development in these societies resulted not from the logic of the national economy, responding to internal demand and needs, but rather followed the logic of a globalizing capitalist economy, the search of imperialist powers for markets for commodities and capital, as well as the conflict generated by the competition among them in this search. As imperialists had little or no interest in the national development of these societies, what development there was contributed not to national economic integration, and an economic structure that answered the various needs of the national economy, including subsistence needs of the population, but to a bifurcated economy, with a modern capitalist sector increasingly integrated to a global capitalist economy, and a much larger sector that remained mired in premodern economic practices, and was subject to the exploitative forces of the modern sector just as the national economy as a whole was subject to the exploitative forces of global capitalism. Spatially speaking in the case of the Chinese economy, this meant the lopsided development of coastal areas, and a few coastal cities such as Shanghai, and the increasing "underdevelopment" of vast areas of the interior and the populations therein. Economic bifurcation, needless to say, also undermined efforts to achieve integration at the political level.

The other aspect was social; the creation of a new class structure. As capitalism was introduced into China from the outside, the emergent Chinese bourgeoisie was itself a foreign product, aligned in its interests with the outside forces that produced it, and with little commitment to the interests of the nation as a whole. True, there was some distinction between an overtly "comprador" bourgeoisie and a "national" bourgeoisie that strove for autonomy within the structural context of imperialism. But even the latter were more closely integrated structurally with the forces of global capitalism than with the national economy,

and were condemned in their very activities, sort of to speak, to contribute to the deepening of the almost inevitable structural bifurcation of the economy. This was the major reason that any hope for national development had to be preceded by a social revolution that would transfer power to social forces that had an investment in the creation of a national economy; represented most importantly by the working class and the peasantry. Ultimately, as we are quite aware, this meant the creation of an autonomous state that could use political means to establish boundaries around the national economy, and the basis for national economic integration; an autonomous economy that answered to internal needs, in other words.

It is apparent in hindsight that this mode of analysis was applied also to foreign educators, missionary or otherwise, as well as Chinese products of foreign institutions. Marxism may have lent theoretical legitimacy in some cases to already existing popular prejudices, visible from the late nineteenth century-most notably during the Boxer Uprising-that Chinese might be tainted by association with foreigners. By the 1920s, when nationalist criticism of foreign cultural domination gained strength among a new intelligentsia, past activities against foreigners such as during the Boxer Uprising were endowed with a new significance as expressions of an incipient nationalism or popular anti-imperialism. But we should not lose sight of the novelty of Marxist theorization, which was most important in attaching cultural anti-colonialism not just to foreigners or modernity, but most emphatically, to capitalist modernity. This explains why Chinese products of foreign institutions, themselves often nationalists and social reformers, were nevertheless subjected to re-education after 1949, even as the new Communist government imported another foreign educational model from the Soviet Union, even as it shut down Euro/American educational institutions to and convert them into educational institutions after the new model. Further radicalization followed in the 1960s when the Soviet model itself was rejected, and a radical search was initiated through the Cultural Revolution for an indigenous path to socialism to be invented out of struggles against both capitalist and social imperialism, as well as the Chinese past itself. It is important to underline that this search for a Chinese socialism, that went back in its origins to the 1930s and 1940s, also stimulated a search for new ways of knowing, new kinds of knowledge, and new social and political practices, all of them required the overcoming of intellectual and cultural prejudices that were the legacies of colonialism and feudalism. Not very surprisingly, the inside/outside distinction was to acquire during the years of the Cultural Revolution the power of a Manichean distinction. And those who blurred the distinction-the intellectual products of a modern education, especially those who were products of foreign institutions-suffered for the cultural confusion they caused-or represented.

Since the “re-opening” of the PRC beginning in 1978, this situation has changed significantly, so that a foreign education has gradually become a highly-prized commodity. This has accompanied the incorporation of the Chinese economy in the capitalist world-economy(or vice versa, depending on perspective), culminating in China’s entry into the WTO. These developments have by no means eliminated friction between the PRC and the capitalist world dominated by the older powers, most notably the US, or between new social forces that are generated by these economic, political and cultural transformations. But the PRC as part of global capitalism once again witnesses a blurring of distinctions between the inside and the outside. And this blurring at the level of culture has corresponding to it the emergence of a new class, far broader in its constituency than ever before, that by education and culture(if only through remote communications)is part of a multiplicity of worlds. In this respect, the

PRC is no different from any other society in the contemporary world feeling the effects of global capitalism that the term “globalization” seeks to capture. The increased significance and power of this new class is evident in the ideological appeal of postcolonial criticism over the last decade, which has rendered “hybridity” from a term of racist opprobrium to a term of utopian subjectivity.

As we contemplate these changes wrought by globalization, we need to resist being carried away by the novelty of contemporary changes, and forget its origins, or the processes that brought them about. Neither modernity nor globalization are “natural” processes that somehow happen without human activity. Modernity itself may represent the product(s) of historical conjunctures in which many origins may be identifiable, but it took a recognizable form in Euro/America, was globalized through an imperialism and colonialism dynamized by capitalism, and became hegemonic as its premises and promises were internalized by the colonized and the subjects of imperialism. Some of the latter have become successful participants in capitalism, which, therefore, no longer appears merely European or American but global, bringing with it a global modernity which finds expression, unlike earlier, in a global multi-culturalism. The desire for traditions and alternative ways of knowing have by no means disappeared, but appear presently most importantly as “weapons of the weak” against marginalization in the global economy. These are all signs, in different contexts of globality, not of a clean break with the colonial past, but rather the normalization in global modernity of the political and social relationships that are the legacies to the present of a colonial past; in other words, of colonial modernity.

If the outside/inside distinction becomes highly problematic in the understanding of the question of coloniality, moreover, imperialism in education also needs to be re-evaluated, with due attention not just to the agents but also the content of education. How, for instance, do we evaluate an education which, though conducted by a native elite, is nevertheless complicit in the perpetuation of colonial modernity, against an education that promotes alternatives to colonial modernity, but is conducted by “outsiders?” This is an all-too-common problem these days, when recalling socialism or ideologies of liberation, appears as imperialism to elites of formerly socialist or Third World societies who in their rush out of earlier experiments with new social and cultural forms have embraced with the enthusiasm of new converts the promises of capitalist and colonial modernity. Nationalism, pliant before the demands of transnational capital, still serves as a strategy of ideological containment when it comes to radical challenges to the existing order of things, which in their very anti-colonialism now appear as a new form of imperialism. In such a situation, the major challenge that confronts a transformative pedagogy is how to achieve an anti-colonial radical transnationalism in education that resists confusion with the transnationalism of capital and the new transnational capitalist class.

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Notes

1. John Tomlinson, *Cultural Imperialism* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), pp. 168-169.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 175.

3. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000).

4. See, for example, the essays collected in A.G. Hopkins (ed), *Globalization in World History*(London: Random House, 2002). The volume offers a new periodization of world history in terms of four periods of archaic, proto-, modern and postcolonial globalization.

5. For a discussion of the transformation of postcolonial criticism from the 1960s to the present, see, Aijaz Ahmad, "The Politics of Literary Postcoloniality," *Race and Class* 36.3 (1995): 1-20.

6. For a recent example of a cavalier dismissal of colonialism, see, Gilbert Rozman, "Theories of Modernization and Theories of Revolution: China and Russia," in Institute of Modern History(Academia Sinica), *Zhongguo xiandaihua lunwen ji*(Essays on the Modernization of China)(Taipei: Academia Sinica, 1991), pp. 633-646.

7. Karl Marx, "History of the Opium Trade," in K. Marx and F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol.16(New York: International Publishers, 1981), p.6. It is interesting that in his "keywords" of modernity, Raymond Williams has no entry for colonialism although there is one for imperialism. See, Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*(New York: Oxford University Press, 1976). For a defense of imperialism as progressive, see, Bill Warren, *Imperialism, Pioneer of Capitalism*(London: New Left Books, 1980).

8. See the discussions of capitalism and imperialism by Chinese Marxists in the 1920s and 1930s in, Arif Dirlik, *Revolution and History: Origins of Marxist Historiography in China, 1919-1937* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1978), especially chapter 3.

9. My description here of the understanding of colonialism that prevailed during the two to three decades after World War II will be familiar to most who lived through or study that period. A cogent illustration of the various points I make may be found in the recent English language publication of essays on colonialism by Jean-Paul Sartre, who was one of the preminent critics of colonialism during the period in question. These essays, mostly written in the late fifties and early sixties, were first published in French in 1964. See, Jean-Paul Sartre, *Colonialism and Neocolonialism*, tr. From the French by Azzedine Haddour, Steve Brewer and Terry McWilliams(London and New York: Routledge, 2001). Sartre's views were informed by, and in some ways derivative of, the writings of postcolonial intellectuals such as Frantz Fanon with whom he had an intimate personal relationship.

10. Abdul R. Jan Mohamed, "The Economy of Manichean Allegory: The Function of Racial Difference in Colonialist Literature," *Critical Inquiry* 12(Autumn 1985): 59-87.
11. I borrow "contact zones" from Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York: Routledge, 1992).
12. Chinese Marxists, for example, argued that national autonomy and development could not be achieved without a simultaneous social revolution that would eliminate the classes, bourgeois or "feudal," who were allied to imperialism in their interests. See, Arif Dirlik, "National Development and Social Revolution in Early Chinese Marxist Thought," *The China Quarterly* #58 (April/June 1974): 286-309.
13. As Aime Cesaire put it, "Marx is all right, but we need to complete Marx." Quoted in Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*(London: Routledge, 1998), p. 133.
14. Robert Young, Preface to Jean-Paul Sartre, *Colonialism and Neo-Colonialism*, tr from the French by Azzedne Haddour, Steve Brewer and Terry McWilliams(London: Routledge, 2001), p.xiv. See also, Sartre on "Albert Memmi's *The Colonizer and the Colonized*," in Sartre, pp.48-53, p.51n
15. I should note here that I am not one of those who celebrate the demise of the nation in the name of globalization. I think that the nation is still important in resistance to imperialism. Equally importantly, despite a great deal of abstract talk about "global civil society" or "diasporic public spheres," democracy is still inconceivable without reference to the nation. Recognition of the colonial moment in nation-building points to a fatal flaw at the very origins of democracy. The colonial(and class)character of the nation-state has been exacerbated in recent years as states have allied with transnational capital, which has also required the deterritorialization of the state from the nation, exposing the post-national state in its colonial guise. This recognition points also to the urgency of placing on the agenda of radical politics the recovery of democracy, which is crucial to the struggle for social, economic and environmental justice.
16. Eugen Weber, *Peasants Into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914*(Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1976)
17. Michael Given, *The Archaeology of the Colonized*(London: Routledge, 2004), p.3. I am grateful to my student, Ana Candela, for bringing this work to my attention.
18. Joseph R. Levenson, *Confucian China and Its Modern Fate: A Trilogy* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1968), Vol.1, pp.156-163.
19. Paul Cohen, *China and Christianity: The Missionary Movement and the Growth of Chinese Anti-Foreignism, 1860-1870*(Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), and, Mary Brown Bullock, *An American Transplant: The Rockefeller Foundation and Peking Union Medical College*(Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1980).
20. Bullock, p. 21. Chapter three discusses at length struggles over control of the college.
21. Karen Minden, *Bamboo Stone: The Evolution of a Chinese Medical Elite*(Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), p.28

22. Ibid., pp.49-50

23. Bullock, chapter 6.

24. Ibid., p.163

25. Quoted in Bullock, p.163.

26. C.C. Chen, *Medicine in Rural China: A Personal Account*(Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1989), chapters 6 and 7.