Intersecting Gender and Race in Globalization:

Beyond the Evolution from Cultural Imperialism to Cultural Hybridity

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Abstract

Contemporary trans-cultural flow negates the dominant-subordinate binary scheme suggested by early cultural imperialism. Indeed, it is a complicated, ambiguous, and multilateral process. This essay explores how the theories of global trans-cultural influence have evolved in the realm of communication research since the 1960s. It first examines how the discourse of globalization has historically moved from cultural imperialism to cultural hybridity. It then attempts to intersect such evolution with issues of gender and race.

This essay is theoretically grounded in the intersection of cultural hybridity and postcolonial feminism. Further, it owes its empirical approach to feminist ethnographers who try to encompass the diversity of women all over the world. Such scholarly frameworks can be intertwined in terms of their overarching concern, i.e., cultural hybridity, feminism, and ethnography strive to empower the powerless, such as women and the Third World, while criticizing the unequal distribution of power.

I seek to grasp a "backward" global flow, i.e., subversive engagement of indigenous people with global media empowered by cultural hybridity and postcolonial feminism. More specifically, as an Asian feminist who is studying in the United States, I desire to de-Westernize the discourse on subaltern women and let them speak.

Prologue: Standing on the Edge of Globalization

"Pop culture no longer moves simply in a single direction, from the West to the rest of the world. Instead, it's a global swirl, no more constrained by borders than the weather,"

(Walsh, 2006, p

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The excerpt above comes from the 2006 issue of *The TIME 100: The People Who Shape Our World*, eulogizing *Rain*, a Korean singer, as a pan-Asian popular cultural idol. Likewise, contemporary trans-cultural flow negates the dominant-subordinate binary scheme suggested by early cultural imperialism. Indeed, it is a complicated, ambiguous, and multilateral process. Nonetheless, some argue that global culture always transmits from the center to the periphery. Refuting such a unilateral approach, this essay explores how the theories of global trans-cultural influence have evolved in the realm of communication research since the 1960s. It first examines how the discourse of globalization has historically moved from cultural imperialism to cultural hybridity. It then attempts to intersect such evolution with issues of gender and race.

Dealing with the trans-cultural nature of the contemporary world, many scholars have involved in the discourse of globalization (see for example, Hall, 1997; Iwabuchi, 2002; Kraidy, 2005; Shim, 2005; Tomlinson, 1991&1999; Waters, 1995). Waters (1995) defines globalization as "a social process in which the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements recede and in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding" (p. 3). In like manner, Tomlinson (1999) presents the concept of "deterritorialization" as the cultural condition of globalization. I argue that globalization is an ideological trope mirroring hierarchal structure on the globe and revealing political, economic, and cultural power relations between nations. My disbelief in unilateral trans-cultural flow does not mean that I overlook the global hierarchy. On the global scene, there are more powerful countries, mostly former colonizers in the West, vis-à-vis less powerful countries, mainly previous colonies in the East. Even today, the former continuously wield postcolonial power over the latter.

For this reason, Kelsky (2001) emphasizes the significance of "the postcolonial optic":

> The postcolonial optic … is one that permits us to attend to the continuing adjustments and permutations of colonial power relations in the contemporary era; it requires us to analyze the ways that the power differentials embedded in older colonial projects still exert their effects even when the formal colonial relationships is gone (p. 25).

According to her argument, those countries that had colonial or pseudo-colonial relationships in the past continue it at present. My homeland Korea, for instance, was colonized by Japan in the early twentieth century and later aided by U.S. troops during the Korean War in the 1950s. Such historical encounters allow Japan and the United States now to exercise postcolonial power over Korea. This postcolonial relationship becomes more complicated, for Japan has been heavily influenced by the West, revealing its ambivalent position. Japan is "the only non-Western First World power and an economic leader whose populace and practices yet seem shrouded in veils of 'Oriental' inscrutability" (Kelsky, 2001, p. 29). Such situational contradiction places Japan in between its developed economic power and marginalized Asianness.

Noting that even former colonial power Japan cannot be free from Western influence because of its ambivalent cultural location, I agree with Waters (1995) that globalization is a European model. He states that the discourse of globalization has been "to justify the spread of Western culture and of capitalist society" (p. 3). Most specifically, Hall (1997) proclaims that "the new kind of globalization is not English, it is American" (p. 27). Globalization has been spurred by the rapid development and establishment of Western capitalism as the world-system (Hall, 1997). Western culture owes its transnational expansion to capitalism, given that Western media

conglomerates transcend the geographical territories and display their capitalistic power all over the world, which is enabled by transnational communication technology. Consistent with the notion of cultural economy, cultural imperialism focuses on "forces operating beyond human control that are transforming the world" (Waters, 1995, p. 3).

By contrast, cultural hybridity sheds lights on human agency while simultaneously taking the structural issues into account. Since hybridity shows its ambivalent nature in many ways, Kraidy (1999) calls it "an intermediary approach." Hybridity, associated with its etymology, is a hybrid offspring of cultural imperialism and the active audience paradigm. As a "post-imperialist" discourse, it has the potential to bridge the chasm "in international communication research between 'dominance' and 'pluralism' perspectives" (Kraidy, 2005, p. 4). Therefore, Kraidy (2005) does not discard the term for its ambiguity but seeks to grasp "the more nebulous aspects of hybridity" (p. 3). Although it is a vague, controversial notion, García-Canclini (1995) eulogizes its "oblique powers" to negotiate and resist the global cultural domination. After all, hybridity empowers a marginalized view and encourages multilateral global flows.

In this work, my theoretical position is rooted in cultural hybridity to examine global trans-cultural influence. For its application, I am interested in the cultural interaction between the two Eastern countries, Korea and Japan. While numerous studies have critiqued the nature of cultural flows between the West and the East, few have focused on one within Asia. Iwabuchi (1998, 2001, & 2002) stands unchallenged in the research of the relationship between Japan – the (presumed) center of Asian culture, and other Asian countries. My standpoint is different than his in that I hold a more marginalized perspective as a scholar whose nationality belongs to a former

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colony. As an Asian feminist who is studying in the United States, I also argue that hybridity must be revisited with more clear focus on gender. I note that scholars, with a few notable exceptions (Darling-Wolf, 2003a&b, 2004a&b; Kelsky, 2001; Parameswaran, 1999), have paid relatively little attention to the gendered dimension of cultural hybridity.

In sum, this essay is theoretically grounded in the intersection of cultural hybridity and postcolonial feminism. Further, it owes its empirical approach to feminist ethnographers who try to encompass the diversity of women all over the world. I find that such scholarly frameworks can be intertwined in terms of their overarching concern. As MacKinnon (1982) puts it, they belong to the "theories of power and its distribution: inequality" (p. 516). In other words, cultural hybridity, feminism, and ethnography strive to empower the powerless, such as women and the Third World, while criticizing the unequal distribution of power. Therefore, these disciplines give a voice to the silenced and let them speak for themselves.

Evolution of Cultural Imperialism

To discuss the theoretical evolution in the discourse of global trans-cultural influence, this essay first addresses the early theories of cultural imperialism. According to Tomlinson (1991), the term 'cultural imperialism' emerged in the 1960s to widely examine the unequal power distribution among countries in the world. Cultural imperialism, as a critical approach, inherits the tradition of political economy of the Frankfurt School. Because of its descriptive comprehensiveness encompassing a broad range of transnational hierarchy, it was criticized as lacking theoretical rigorism (Kraidy,

2005). For this reason, Tomlinson (1991) calls it "a generic concept" (p. 3). Its

theoretical concept was neither clarified nor agreed.

The most popular definition, for instance, was introduced by Schiller in 1976:

> The concept of cultural imperialism today best describes the sum of the
> processes by which a society is brought into the modern world system and how
> its dominating stratum is attracted, pressured, forced, and sometimes bribed into
> shaping social institutions to correspond to, or even promote, the values and
> structures of the dominating center of the system (p. 9)

Kraidy (2005) charges such a definition confuses a socioeconomic process with a

cultural one. As Tomlinson (1991) points out, the complexity of cultural imperialism most

likely derives from the combination of two problematic words – 'culture' and

'imperialism.' The term culture is broadly defined as 'the way of life,' and imperialism is

originally concerned with political and economic systems. Since the term contains two

complicated concepts, it is not easy to clearly understand and theorize cultural

imperialism. Thus, Tomlinson proposes "to look at the way the term has been used in a

variety of discursive contexts" (p. 8).

At the initial stage, in the sense of European colonialism, cultural imperialist

scholars focused on the political economic issues regarding culture as subordinate. In

the past, Western countries colonized Asian, African, and Latin American countries with

their military power and established the dominant-subordinate relationship politically and

economically. Given the situation, Wallerstein (1974) raises the notion of a world-

system. He argues that the West became the core of the world, while others became

the periphery or the semiperiphery. The world-system exists to benefit only the core.

Schiller (1976) also states, "In the modern world economy, the developmental process

is viewed and applied as the means by which the class structure of the core is

replicated in the periphery" (p. 14). Modernization is thus equated with the Westernization in the Third World. According to the dependency theory, formerly colonized countries must depend on the dominant countries economically, politically and culturally (Tomlinson, 1991). Belonging to the neo-Marxist tradition, this theory still emphasizes the economic power of the core and the material dependence of the periphery.

In the late twentieth century, the paradigm of cultural imperialism shifted. Cultural domination became differentiated from economic and political domination. Theorists began to focus on culture itself. Especially, they noted the function of mediated texts to spread the dominant ideology. Tomlinson (1991) writes that "the great majority of published discussion of cultural imperialism place the media – television, film, radio, print journalism, advertising – at the center of things" (p. 20). Among various cultural institutions, the media are considered as the most powerful means for expanding and establishing the cultural domination. Cultural imperialism and media imperialism are often used interchangeably. Tomlinson, however, indicates that people's media experience is within larger cultural contexts, so media imperialism must be viewed as "a particular way of discussing cultural imperialism" (p. 22).

Cultural imperialism believes that cultural domination is indirect and subliminal, so can be more powerful and detrimental than economic and political domination. The early cultural imperialism were hence media-oriented and Western (strong, dominant countries)-oriented approaches, without researching the interpretation of audiences and the context of the East (weak, colonized countries). To take an example, Dorfman and Mattelart (1975) analyze the American imperialist ideology hidden in presumably

innocent Disney comics. They argue that the medium reinforces the American consumer-capitalist value and naturalizes the idea to the audience of colonial countries that the American way of life is a norm. They assert that juvenile literature is the best place to disguise cultural imperialism, for "the imagination of the child is conceived as the past and future utopia of the adult" (p. 31). Their analysis seems problematic, however, for it does not consider the interaction between text and audience.

Tomlinson (1991) warns of the danger of such a simple "assertion of the manipulative and ideological power of the media" (p. 38). In former colonies, childhood memory seems to romanticize the postcolonial power working at a personal level. Conducting an ethnography in postcolonial India, Parameswaran (1999) observes that "nostalgic conversations about childhood reading [of the Western literature] were some of the most animated, lively, and loud debates, punctuated with many interruptions, screams, and laughter" (p. 89). Consistent with her observation, Japanese comics evoke from Korean adult audience groups a passionate nostalgia for their childhoods (Ahn, 2001). This is an interesting, somewhat self-contradictory, situation. Koreans have an antipathy towards Japan for its holding colonial power over Korea in the past, yet the Japanese texts conjure up memories of the good old days. Cultural imperialism, however, fails to explain such complex media experiences of the local audience.

Critiquing the limitation of cultural imperialism, Kraidy (2005) contends that "though 'cultural imperialism' was the reigning thesis since the 1960s and the 1970s, numerous critics have since the 1980s alleged that it no long reflected the complexity of intercultural relations" (p. 4). Darling-Wolf (2000), for instance, argues that cultural influences are not imposed one-way but mutually exchanged between countries,

because of "the role played by both the audience and the cultural environment" (p.136). Media penetration cannot be equal to cultural domination. She writes, "When a text is exported into a different cultural environment composed of a different pool of cultural resources, it might not produce the expected interpretations" (p.137). By the same token, Garcia-Canclini (1995) sees the notion of cultural hybridity as a "manner of adopting foreign ideas with an inappropriate meaning" (p. 49).

As discussed, cultural imperialism, as an heir of political economy, was mainly interested in the material condition of global cultural flows. As the focus of researchers moved from economic and political domination to cultural domination, however, the discursive power of mass media in a global context came to the center of their academic inquiry. Thus, it was natural for communication scholars to be intrigued by the discourse of globalization. Interestingly, the evolution of theories of global trans-cultural influence is parallel with the transition of media effects study, i.e., the shift from an all-powerful media tradition to an active audience paradigm. Echoing with cultural imperialism, media imperialism in particular, the early media effects research assumes the omnipotent influence of media. Like cultural imperialism, it is accused of its unwillingness to study real audiences. Turning to an audience-centered research, media scholars come to recognize the importance of empirical audience analysis.

In response to the critiques of early cultural imperialism, theories of global trans-cultural influence no longer advocate unilateral cultural flow from the core to the periphery. In other words, theorists do not believe in the one-way street cultural domination led by the First World. As Hall (1997) states, "One of the things which happens when the nation-state begins to weaken, becoming less convincing and less

powerful, is that the response seems to go in two ways simultaneously. […] It goes global and local in the same moment" (pp. 26-27). Global influence of mediated texts is negotiated and resisted by indigenous people. Moreover, transnational media have to go through the cultural adaptation in order to effectively appeal to a local audience. Such reality requires a paradigm shift of globalization, and the notion of cultural hybridity has been raised as an alternative response to cultural imperialism.

Emergence of Cultural Hybridity

Hybridity is a pervasive but evasive term for cultural debates in a glocalized world (Kraidy, 1999). Despite popular use of this term, its definition has not always been clear. Still, Kraidy (2005) advocates the term hybridity, for it is an umbrella concept to embrace other equivalent terms referring to cultural mixture, such as *creolization*, *mestizaje*, and *syncretism*. Young (1995) explains that "hybridity" literally refers to "human parents of different races, half-breed," which has its Latin etymology meaning "the offspring of a tame sow and a wild boar" (p. 6). Likewise, hybridity was originally a physiological concept. In the eighteenth century, it emerged as a word for interracial encounter led by Western colonization. Back then, hybridity did not yet theorize multilateral cultural flows; however, like globalization, it was used "to justify ideologies of White racial superiority and to warn of the danger of interracial breeding described as 'miscegenation' and 'amalgamation'" (Kraidy, 2002, p. 319).

Later, however, hybridity has achieved a positive designation evoked by decolonization movements, thus liberating and empowering the subaltern. Against a Eurocentric national identity, for instance, Latin Americans try to build up their new, hybrid identity, *mestizaje*, by combining an indigenous (colonized) identity with a

Spanish (colonizing) one (Kraidy, 2002). In like manner, Hannerz (1997) uses the term, *creolization*, "to describe the ongoing, historically cumulative cultural interrelatedness between center and periphery" (p. 126). The notion of hybridity has come to encompass the "postcolonial cultures in Africa, Latin America, Asia, and the diaspora in the West" (Kraidy, 2002, p. 319). Even in the former Empire, globalization brings up neither unitary nor homogenous identity (Hall, 1997). Thus, hybridity transformed into a cultural phenomenon in the twentieth century (Young, 1995).

Hybridity is useful to explore the contemporary trans-cultural phenomena, in which "increasing volumes of people move from one place to another, create new cultural and sociodemographic spaces and are themselves reshaped in the process" (Luke, 2003, p. 379). As a result, cultural borders between nations and regions have been blurred. Hybridity refutes the essentialist notion of culture and advocates the intercultural mixture (Young, 1995). As Said (1993) states, "All cultures are involved in one another; none is single and pure, all are hybrid, heterogenous, extraordinarily differentiated, and unmonolithic" (p. xxv). Morris (2002) affirms that "there is no such thing as a 'pure' culture" (p. 278). In fact, it is questionable whether the authentic cultural forms or indigenous traditions have ever existed. The concept of national culture emerges in the recent development of national media, followed by "increasingly hybrid and deterritorialized cultural forms" (Darling-Wolf, 2000, p. 138).

Noting the hybrid nature of the contemporary world, Kraidy (2002) claims that "hybridity has become a master trope across many spheres of cultural research, theory, and criticism, and one of the most widely used and criticized concepts in postcolonial theory" (p. 316). Despite the widespread use of hybridity, however, communication

scholarship has not actively engaged in its discussion. Thus, he acknowledges "the need for a critical theorizing of hybridity in the context of communication theory" (p. 317). Kraidy (1999) posits hybridity as 'an intermediary approach,' coalescing rather than polarizing cultural imperialism and active audience paradigm. While scholars of the former contend "that international flows of media and cultural products were … dominated by a few media multinationals from [Western industrialized countries]" (p. 458), supporters of the latter believe in the subversive power of the local audience.

Cultural hybridity inherits "both power relations and audience activity in international communication processes" (Kraidy, 1999, p. 459). In other words, the theory of hybridity recognizes transnational power inequities as well as provides for the recognition of audiences' active engagement. Parallel with such an intermediary approach, García-Canclini (1995) illustrates the *interwoven* nature of power structures through hybridization, in which the prefix, inter-, allows us to investigate the global power relations *inter*changeably:

> The increase in processes of hybridization makes it evident that we understand very little about power if we only examine confrontations and vertical actions. Power would not function if it were exercised only by bourgeoisies over proletarians, white over indigenous people, parents over children, the media over receivers. Since all these relations are *interwoven* with each other, each one achieves an effectiveness that it would never be able to by itself (p. 259).

Here, bourgeoisies, whites, parents, and the media can be translated as "center," while proletarians, indigenous people, children, and receivers as "periphery," if applied to Hannerz's (1997) notion of *creolization*. The former have been considered as dominant power in contrast to the latter as subordinate, which is now refuted by *inter*relatedness between two opponents.

Ang (2003) pursues the way that we can live together-in-difference without falling into a pitfall of the old, Eurocentric essentialism. She sees hybridity as "the very condition of in-betweenness" (p. 149) forming multiple national/cultural identity, just as Bhabha (1994) owes to it creating the "third space," i.e., "the 'inter' – the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the *in-between* space – that carries the burden of the meaning of culture" (p. 38). Therefore, she concludes that we inhabit "a world in which the complicated entanglement or togetherness in difference has become the rule rather than the exception" (p. 153). According to Kraidy (1999), we need to recognize that "all contemporary cultures are to some extent hybrid" and understand that "hybridity is thus construed […] as a zone of *symbolic* ferment where power relations are surreptitiously re-inscribed" (p. 460, emphasis mine).

In the hybridized era, power relations establish a tension around symbolic practices. Shome (1996) proposes a discursive imperialism, i.e., "whereas in the past, imperialism was about controlling the 'native' by colonizing her or him *territorially*, now imperialism is more about subjugating the 'native' by colonizing her or him *discursively*" (p. 42, emphasis mine). In like manner, Mohanty (1991b), a Third World feminist, draws a line between "a discursive self-presentation" and "a material reality." While the latter is a physical entity, the former is a mental image, which is flexible and negotiable. That is why feminists show interest in discourse. She says, "If this were a material reality, there would be no need for political movement in the West" (p. 74). Just as feminists turn their attention to discursive power of masculinity over femininity, hybridity scholars scrutinize the power relations conveyed by discourses.

Such a discursive feature of power inequities recalls the significance of placing hybridity in the context of communication theory. In a globalized era, it is through mass media and communication technology that cultural discourses are mostly created and mediated. Symbolic globlization remains West-centered for it is driven by "Western technology, the concentration of capital, the concentration of techniques, the concentration of advanced labor in the Western societies and the stories and the imagery of Western societies," resulting in the global mass culture (Hall, 1997, p. 28). Therefore, Hall (1997) maintains that

> Global mass culture is dominated by the modern means of cultural production, dominated by the image which crosses and re-crosses linguistic frontiers much more rapidly and more easily, and which speaks across languages in a much more immediate way (p. 27).

The images mediated through global mass media literally and figuratively transcend the physical (national) borderlines and transgress the cultural boundaries. Moreover, the existence of cyberspace enabled by the Internet seems to realize the infinite "global village" coined by McLuhan (1964). Through global communication, the distinction between global and local terrains no longer exists but is intersected by hybridization of culture.

Unlike cultural imperialism, hybridity theory has been supported by empirical research, mainly by ethnography, ranging from examinations of earlier colonized countries in Latin America, Africa, Oceania and Asia (see for example, Kraidy, 1999; Luke, 2003; Noble, Poynting, & Tabar, 1999; Shim, 2006; Stolle-McAllister, 2004; Strelitz, 2004) to analyses of former colonizers in Europe, the Unites States and Japan (also see, e.g., Darling-Wolf, 2003a&2004b; Giraud, 2004; Gregoriou, 2004; Iwabuch, 2002; Kraidy, 2005; Naficy, 1995; Werbner, 2004). Although countries in Asia and Africa

were once believed to have a presumably monolithic ethnicity, they have been invaded by colonial power and thus have to negotiate and struggle with the hybridization of cultures. Apparently multiethnic countries like Australia, Mexico, and the United States have had an ongoing issue of dealing with hybrid and/or diasporic identities.

Yao (2003), a researcher of Asian American studies, contends that hybridity plays an important role in analyzing 'ethnic' and 'minority' cultural production. According to Ang (2003), diaspora now generically means "any group living outside its country of origin," though the term originated from "the historical dispersion of Jewish, Greek and Armenian peoples" (p. 142). While physically residing in non-native countries, the ethnic minority is culturally rooted in its ancestor's heritage along with dispersed offspring of an origin. Through transnational belonging, diaspora dismantles a homogenous perspective of the nation-state; however Ang (2003) warns against "the double-edgedness of diasporic identity" for it can paradoxically limit its own resilient potential "by drawing a boundary around the diaspora" (p. 142).

The discourse of globalization expands beyond its European lineage, thanks to multilateral nature of cultural hybridity. Although a cultural flow between Asian countries like Korea, Taiwan, Japan, China, and other countries does not seem as active as the one between the East and the West nowadays, Shim (2005) declares that "there an indigenous structure of order did exist before the entry of Western imperialism" (p. 238). Back in the days, China was placed at the center, having Korea, Japan, and Vietnam as its periphery. Such a hierarchy of prestige became weakened as China was defeated in the Opium War in 1842 (Shim, 2005). Meanwhile, Japan's yearning to escape from Asia led the country to ally with Western imperialism. Annexing Korea in 1910, Japan did not

cease to sway its colonial power until the end of World War II. To understand the complicated relationship among Korea, Japan, and the West, the notion of cultural hybridity is most likely applicable for it "displaces our conception of clearly demarcated national/cultural boundaries" (Iwabuchi, 2002, p. 51).

Japan is often criticized for its 'hybridism' in contrast to hybridity (Iwabuchi, 1998). Iwabuchi (1998) defines hybridism as "a discourse in which the practice of Japanese strategic cultural assimilation of the foreign is ahistorically associated with a particular image of the Japanese nation: Japan as a great assimilator" (p. 71). This term denotes the pejorative attitude to Japan. Iwabuchi (2002) thus turns to the discourse of hybridity to capture the transnational nature of Japanese culture in the global cultural flow. Focusing on the trend that Japanese popular culture has been popularized in East and Southeast Asia despite Japan's imperialism in the past, Iwabuchi (2002) relocates Japan as a center of Asian cultural flow in the age of globalization. Since the late 1970s, Japanese cultural products encompassing animation, comics, characters, computer games, fashion, pop music, and TV dramas have been widely and routinely accepted by East and Southeast Asian audiences (Iwabuchi, 2002).

Korean scholars also adopt cultural hybridity to examine the recent transnational cultural flow, so-called "Korean Wave," that is, "an increasing amount of Korean popular cultural content – including television dramas, movies, pop songs and their associated celebrities – has gained immense popularity in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and other East and Southeast Asian countries" (Shim, 2006, p. 1). Shim (2006) argues that now Korea enjoys a 'sub-Empire' position in Asia, whereas it used to be marginalized in contrast to Japan. He acknowledges the popularity of Korean popular culture in Asia as

cultural hybridization, rather than uncritically announcing it as Korean cultural supremacy. He explains, for example, that Korean pop songs are originally influenced by Western and Japanese styles, but gain success for it is able "to touch the right chord of Asian sentiments, such as family values" (p. 39).

In like manner, rebuking that "most research on the Korean pop culture wave in Korea has had a tendency to emphasize the universal superiority of Korean culture or the economic effect of the phenomenon based on economism" (p. 183), Kim (2005) tries to study the Korean pop culture in Taiwan by conducting specific and empirical research. She notes that the sudden influx of Korean TV dramas in Taiwan is "due to the rapid expansion of globalized media such as cable TV, satellite, and the Internet" (p. 199). Compared to Japanese drama, which is always subtitled, Korean dramas are dubbed in the local language. Moreover, Taiwanese broadcasting stations prefer inserting Taiwanese songs over the original Korean soundtracks. Kim hence concludes that "Korean dramas are not considered 'perfect' cultural products and are being disturbed throughout Taiwan in a hybrid form that is the Taiwanese adaptation of Korean dramas" (p. 201). Likewise, Korean cultural products are glocalized in Taiwan.

In short, hybridity is not a simple process. As discussed, it is a pervasive but evasive concept (Kraidy, 1999). Hybridity intersects with and compromises tensions between center and periphery, between global and local, between the West and the East, and the colonizer and the colonized. Moreover, a critical theorizing of hybridity in the communication field resolves the irreconcilable polarization of cultural imperialism and active audience paradigm. Hybridity neither negates the subjectivity of indigenous people nor ignores power relations. Thus, Kraidy (1999) acknowledges hybridity "as a

process which is simultaneously assimilationist and subversive, restrictive and liberating" (p. 473). In sum, despite its ambiguity, hybridity deserves scholarly scrutiny for being a critical transnational condition.

Intersecting Gender and Race in Globalization

Before I more specifically intersect the evolution of globalization with issues of gender and race, I want to first problematize the presumed objectivity of academia. Just as "the personal is political," can the personal be academic? As a feminist scholar, I agree with Peskowitz and Levitt (1997) that we must "challenge the claim that any study is disinterested" and view claims of authority as problematic rather than desirable (p. 3). Given that every research has political implication, science relates to power. I concur with the feminist claim that presumed "objective" science empowers men while silencing women (Caplan, 1988). I do not believe in the existence of *the* universal, monolithic feminism, but advocate the development of diverse feminisms. To this aim, I also support "a multiple, shifting, and often self-contradictory identity […] made up of heterogeneous and heteronomous representations of gender, race, and class, and often indeed across languages and cultures" (de Lauretis, 1986, p. 9). I thus always interpret the world based on my identity within a particular context, and accept the fact that what I can grasp is always only a partial, situated truth (Abu-Lughod, 1990).

Feminists have questioned "the traditional view [embedded in Western science] that something called an *objective* nature exists," and contended that "knowledge of the world is socially constructed and, within the world in which we live, gendered" (Farganis, 1989, p. 207). In 1952, Simone de Beauvoir (as cited in Farganis, 1989) proclaimed that a woman is not born, but is socially constructed. Farganis (1989) argues that

"individuals, men and women, are historically embodied, concrete persons whose perspective is a consequence of who they are; therefore, in a society divided by gender, women will see and know differently from men" (p. 208). By the same token, Abu-Lughod (1990) suggests a distinction between the true "objectivity" and the ideology of "objectivism." She claims that objectivism naturalizes the dominance of male power in the academic field. Feminist scholars note that male hegemony has been "objectifying" women. In other words, what is said to be "objective" privileges male subjects, while what is said to be "subjective" devalues female objects.

In contrast, feminism diminishes the distinction between the knower and the known, and rejects the association with masculine objectivity:

> Feminism does not see its view as subjective, partial, or undetermined but as a critique of the purported generality, disinterestedness, and universality of prior accounts. […] Feminism not only challenges masculine partiality but questions the universality imperative itself (MacKinnon, 1982, p. 537).

Formerly, I questioned if the personal can be academic, evoking the feminist concept of the personal as political. MacKinnon (1982) convinces me that the personal can be feminist scholarship, for a woman's knowledge is to be embodied through her personal, i.e., "private, emotional, interiorized, particular, individuated, intimate" lives (p. 535). Abu-Lughod (1990) also proclaims that feminists hold the situated view, which is "partial and from an embodied perspective" (p. 15), refuting the myth of an ungendered, objective view.

Given that feminism reclaims objectivity, I, as a woman of color, would like to emphasize that embracing the diversity of women all over the world is essential in feminist consideration. Abu-Lughod (1990) warns against the danger of feminist inclination for "white middle class heterosexual women in modern Western capitalist

society" (p. 23), excluding the women of other cultures. Since each feminist is situated in a specific context, she is not able to represent the whole reality but is only able to present partial truths. For this reason, the issues of global women are to be differently treated from diverse perspectives. There is no such thing as "faceless, raceless, classless category of 'all women'" (Rich, 1986, p. 219) presumed by early Western feminism. In response to charges of Western white middle class biases, feminists have been striving to develop a more inclusive perspective. I thus pay attention to the differences between/within women of various race, ethnicity, sexuality, class, and age.

Not many cultural hybridity scholars have taken gender into account. It is significant, however, to reexamine globalized cultural phenomena from a gendered perspective, for women and men experience globalization differently. Darling-Wolf (2000) argues that "different strata of society may not experience cultural imposition in the same manner" (p.138). Her statement implies that a view from a marginalized group, women, cannot be the same as one from a privileged group, men. Despite the scarcity of research intersecting feminism and cultural hybridity, conducting ethnography, Darling-Wolf (2000, 2003a&b, and 2004a&b) gives an insight into female gaze vis-à-vis male gaze in a globalized media experience. Postcolonial feminists also illustrate marginalize women's engagement with hybridized culture (see, e.g., Kelsky, 2001; Parameswaran, 1999; Parameswaran & Cardoza, 2005).

These feminists are mainly interested in so-called Third World like Japan (Darling-Wolf and Kelsky) and India (Parameswaran). Mohanty (1991a) contends that the notion of Third World is not geographical but socially constructed:

> Third world refers to the colonized, neocolonized or decolonized countries (of Asia, Africa, and Latin America) whose economic and political structures have

been deformed within the colonial process, and to black, Asian, Latino, and indigenous peoples in North America, Europe, and Australia (p. ix).

To explain the cumulative marginalization of Third World women, the intersection of world hierarchy and gender inequality needs to be examined. Mohanty (1991b) criticizes that the discourse of Third World women has been marginalized by Western eyes. While Western women are privileged as the norm or referent, the image of an "average third world woman" has been relatively victimized and objectified. Here, the basic assumption is that "the third world just has not evolved to the extent that the West has" (Mohanty, 1991b, p. 72).

Postcolonial feminists note that women and men in Third World countries have different interpretations on their postcolonial condition. Therefore, in the realm of cultural hybridity, feminist scholars seek to illuminate a gendered perspective. Noting the marginalization of China in the twentieth century, for example, Chow (1991) questions what "the events in China tell us about gender as a category, especially as it relates to the so-called Third World" (p. 82). Kelskey (2001) also illustrates a gendered trans-cultural phenomenon, in which Japanese women held a positive view to the West in the nineteenth century. While Japanese women, as a marginalized group, welcomed "the West/United States as a site of salvation from what they characterize as a feudalistic and oppressive patriarchal Japanese family system," their male counterparts, as a privileged group, regarded "the West as a threat to 'traditional' Japanese gender relations and the purity of the Japanese woman/nation" (Kelskey, 2001, p. 37). Japanese women leaned forward Westernization for they were less benefited from their own culture than men.

Nevertheless, it is not easy for Japanese women to be fully released from the shackle of patriarchal, imperialist discourses, for "women's agency in 'choosing' is always mediated by larger forces of attraction and repulsion that increasingly operate through the mechanisms of the global marketplace" (Kelsky, 2001, p. 10). Indeed, women's liberation and empowerment is not free from the world capitalist system. Riordan (2001) warns against the commodification of women's resistance and differentiates the commercialized, individualized empowerment from the feminist issue of agency. She notes that "the rhetoric of empowerment contributes to rearticulating dominant patriarchal and capitalist values, while not substantially disrupting power relations" (p. 282). Further, she emphasizes the importance of communication in the process of commodification, for media commodities "help shape consciousness through the circulation of ideological meaning" (p. 285). Again, ideological, discursive reality matters.

Darling-Wolf has presented prolific research dealing with Western influence on Japanese media and women (see for example, Darling-Wolf, 2000, 2003a&b, 2004a&b). She explores "how Western cultural texts are adopted, adapted, and interpreted within the Japanese popular cultural environment" (Darling-Wolf, 2000, p.134). Through her experience as a white feminist conducting research in Japan, she witnesses the "intrusion of Western imagery into the Japanese media" (p.134), but observes that Japanese women are not dominated or overwhelmed by Western culture. Rather, they admire and enjoy the foreign and different aspects of it "within the context of the highly hybrid nature of the Japanese culture in general, and of the Japanese media in particular" (p.151). This finding connects to the notion of cultural hybridity.

Darling-Wolf (2003a) emphasizes that Japanese women negotiate Western media not only through race but also through class, geographical location, and age. First of all, she declares her identity, i.e., "a French woman married to a Canadian and living in the US" (p. 155). Based on such "honest recognition of the multiple selves the researcher embodies," she tries to obtain "thicker descriptions of the context in which [her] informants evolve" (p. 156). In conclusion, she claims that Japanese women "particularly struggled to negotiate their Asian racial identity in the face of Westernized (white) representations of attractiveness promoted throughout the Japanese media" (p. 169). More specifically, she finds that binary opposition of the East and the West is too simple to fully explain much complicated, ambiguous, and alienated experiences of Japanese women in a larger context. As researcher's multiple identity encounters informants' transcultural identity formation, she notes that Japanese women's resentment toward Western imagery contradicts their admiration for Western physical traits.

Eastern women's complex interaction with Western texts is also found by Parameswaran (1999). She examines the social construction of Western romance novels as English-language media in postcolonial India. Her ethnographic findings dismantle the existing dualism between global and local. Young Indian women consume Western romance novels in their localized contexts, so their reception is different from that of Western female readers. It is notable that Indian readers are urban, English-educated, middle-class, elite women. These women are more marginalized than women in the first world and more privileged "than poor and working-class people in India and in many other parts of the Third World" at the same time (p. 101). They try to rationalize

that romance novels are an educational venue for learning English skills. By reading romance novels, they express a class privilege that is "more modern and cosmopolitan" (p. 97). Romance reading allows them to possess "cultural capital," which in turn shows that class identity plays an important role in Indian women's media consumption.

Research of Parameswaran and Cardoza (2005) is distinguished from other research in that it focuses on symbolic illustrations of Indian comics. They try "to go beyond the binary of White/non-White to pose new questions on the representational politics of skin color in national contexts that seemingly have homogenous 'brown' racial communities, namely, India." Based on feminism and semiotics, they find that "the symbolic power of Whiteness is a source of privilege and social capital for citizens of non-Western nations" even in a country where people have non-White skin colors, and that "the privilege of skin color thus travels within and among the social structure of caste, region, class, and gender in international contexts." Further, they conclude that women are more marginalized in the indigenous texts, i.e., dark skin has the most damaging influences on the representations of femininity.

Postcolonial feminist studies derive from researchers' own political, historical, and intellectual locations. They get into the field not as disinterested scientists but as biased subjects. As they have ambiguous identities, they are neither complete aliens nor homogenous fellows of their subjects. Kelsky (2001), for instance, is an American wife of a Japanese man. Because of her "native" Western identity, she found herself playing "another role – that of therapist, or confessor, to American men involved with Japanese women" (p. 242). Darling-Wolf (2003a) is not perceived as any foreigner but as "THE *gaijin*" by Japanese. She notes that her multiple selves are continually in-and-

out in the interaction with her informants' relative identities. Parameswaran and Cardoza (2005), who grew up in India and studied in the United States, declare that their "project evolved out of [their] own personal and previous research experiences," i.e., both of them "had encountered prejudice and discrimination related to [their] dark skin color." Noting the limitation of their personal experiences as middle-class women, however, they push their academic inquiry beyond middle-class femininity and take masculinity, class, race, religion, region, caste, and race into account in their analysis.

Hall (1997) notes that ethnic identities are always formed in conjunction with other ethnicities, that is, identity is relational and plural. He exemplifies that "to be English is to know yourself in relations to the French, and the hot-blooded Mediterraneans, and the passionate, traumatized Russian soul" (p. 21). Even presumably "pure" English identity is not genuine. Identities are to be inherently hybridized. Likewise, feminist ethnographers are conscious of their floating identities. Declaring their multiple identities and locations, they try to grasp "a biased, interested, partial, and thus flawed" picture of the world of globalization, as Abu-Lughod (1990) suggests (p. 9). Such accounts can be obtained only through qualitative research, as hybridity theory has been accompanied by ethnography. More specifically, postcolonial feminists and feminist ethnographers believe that feminist theory requires feminist methods (see, e.g., Abu-Lughod, 1990&1991; MacKinnon, 1982). Theory gains its explanatory power only when it is compatible with empirical evidence. Therefore, Abu-Lughod (1991) names feminist ethnography an "ethnography of the particular" based on researcher's positionality.

Epilogue: Getting into the Field

As discussed in the prologue, I am standing on the edge of globalization. Because of my marginalized positionality, my perspective is compatible with cultural hybridity. My scholarly location is also consistent with Mohanty's (1991a). As she professes,

> I also write from my own particular political, historical, and intellectual location, as *a third world feminist trained in the U.S.*, interested in questions of culture, knowledge production, and activism in an international context. The maps I draw are necessarily anchored in *my own discontinuous locations* (p. 3, emphasis mine).

According to her, I belong to the Third World "defined through geographical location as well as particular sociohistorical conjunctures," as one of "so-called minority peoples or people of color in the U.S.A." (p. 2). She also emphasizes the complexity of gender identity by arguing that "it is the intersections of the various systemic networks of class, race, (hetero)sexuality, and nation … that position us as 'women'" (p. 13). Therefore, I claim that my scholarly view is neither objective nor disinterested, as I am colored by my multiple identities.

My identity is that of a "yellow," middle-class, Christian, South Korean, and heterosexual woman. As Pellegrini (1997) argues, I experience my complex identities like race, class, religion, ethnicity, and sexuality "mutually construct – interarticulate – in a specific place and at a specific time" (p. 49). Encompassing my fluid identity and location, I pay attention to the dichotomy in the Western scholarship, such as, women versus men and the East versus the West. Such dualism forces us to evaluate that the one side is negative and powerless, whereas the other side is positive and victorious. Therefore, men and the West wield the greater power over women and the East. According to this, I am assigned to a cumulative marginal status as an Asian as well as

a woman. But I rather appreciate my marginality for its critical edge. Such position enables me to point out some pitfalls of Western-centeredness. Grounded in the intersected theoretical concerns of cultural hybridity and postcolonial feminism, my ultimate goal is to present empirical research of globalization by conducting ethnography.

Darling-Wolf (2003b) encourages ethnographers to "move away from the texts we study to focus more deeply on our informants themselves, and the larger environment in which they evolve" (p. 117). Given that cultural imperialism is charged with ignoring the audience in its discourse of global trans-cultural influence, *people* will be put at the center of my inquiry. While excited at a bottom-up perspective of ethnography, I am keenly aware of the potential pitfalls associated with the method. My multiple identities will color my perspective in the field, and I will have to deal with conflicts and contradictions deriving from them. That is, my ethnographic research will be a self-reflexive negotiation and intersubjective encounter with the fluid identities of myself and my informants. Abu-Lughod (1990) defines ethnography as a series of reflexive and intersubjective "interactions with particular individuals in specific social and cultural contexts" (p. 10). In other words, what an ethnographer can derive from her field is far from "facts." Instead, she has to handle "emotionally complicated and communicatively ambiguous social encounters in the field" (p. 10). The practice of fieldwork is embedded in power relations and hierarchical relationships, which are characterized as "the issue of Western knowers and representers, and non-Western knowns and representeds" (p. 11).

Traditionally, many different terms have been used to illustrate the polarized tension in ethnographic field between the researcher and those she claims to "represent": self vs. other, subject vs. object, Western vs. non-Western, White vs. non-White, insider vs. outsider, and ethnographer vs. informant (Abu-Lughod, 1990&1991; Chow, 1991; Darling-Wolf, 2003b; Masica-Lees et al., 1989; Spivak, 1988). In the field, an ethnographer, a nonnative outsider, tries to represent native people and their lives from an insider's perspective. In the process, ethnographers need to realize that they are simultaneously insiders and outsiders in multiple, complex ways. Conditioned in different time and places, identities are always relative and relational. Further, although an ethnographer tries to be "objective" in her fieldwork, "subjective" bias can occur from the fact that ethnography is a semi-literary genre (Abu-Lughod, 1990). In other words, she eventually needs to speak in her own language, to write her research, in order to communicate with her colleagues. Her findings cannot be shared without following Western scholarship. Again, representation of reality is not reality itself.

The matter of ethnographic representation gets more complicated if feminism engages in ethnographer's epistemology. Feminism reveals a tension between women and men, another social hierarchy. Parallel with MacKinnon's (1982) seeing feminism as a theory of power and its distribution in terms of inequality, Abu-Lughod (1991) argues that tension between races or sexes shows not only difference but also inequality. Thus, she notes that halfie ethnographers "may have experienced – as women, as individuals of mixed parentage, or as foreigners – being other to a dominant self, whether in everyday life in the U.S., Britain, or France, or in the Western academy"

(Abu-Lughod, 1991, p. 142). Such experience enables halfies to mediate and reconcile the tension between Western scholarship and non-Western experiences.

Besides, a gendered, subordinate position of a feminist scholar as a woman allows her to investigate women's lives more closely. As Abu-Lughod (1990) emphasizes, I believe that "whatever women writer do is women's writing" (pp. 22-23). Darling-Wolf (2003d), for example, sharing her experience conducting fieldwork in a Japanese rural village, writes that her pregnancy strengthened the bond between her informants and herself as women, despite her "exotic" race and ethnicity. Thus, empirical research that I am trying to conduct is a feminist ethnography – an 'ethnography of the particular' (Abu-Lughod, 1991). Inspired by Abu-Lughod's (1990) vision of ethnography, my desire is also

> to write in a non-dominating way, to write about everyday experience, to write about women's views of their society and their lives, to write about individuals bound up in relationships with others, to look at the particular and avoid generalization, to write with care and attachment rather than distance, to participate rather than remove myself (p. 22).

In conclusion, I seek to grasp a "backward" global flow, i.e., subversive engagement of indigenous people with global media empowered by cultural hybridity. I inherit the standpoint of postcolonial feminists and feminist ethnographers as well to de-Westernize the discourse on subaltern women and to let them speak. Darling-Wolf (2003a) warns of the dangers of Western feminist scholarship seeing "women from other cultural environments as less feminist and more oppressed than their Western counterparts" (p. 154). As a Third World feminist equipped with Western theory and methodology, I am consciously aware of Western influence embedded in my academic identity. Thus, I will get into the field carrying my in-betweenness.

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Walsh quote http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1187264,00.html