

Teaching Teachers About Teaching Asia-Pacific through a Globalized World Historical Geography Framework

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Abstract: In recent years, there has been a push to further integrate history and geography within a framework of K-12 teacher training in the United States. Yet, there has been relatively little engagement conceptually, as historians borrow geographic concepts, such as the world region Asia-Pacific, without considering what this means in their own communicative practices. We argue that educators committed to studying global interactions and exchange in the Asia-Pacific expand their use of geographic concepts to more overtly address the geographic nature of global historical change, thereby enhancing how we communicate about the global in regional context. In training future teachers, we can destabilize isolated regional analyses, while simultaneously rethinking how teachers (and students) conceptualize regions themselves. We can also complicate how teachers teach using the concepts such as scale, border, location, and diffusion, all of which are central to any geographic theory of global interactions. By further integrating history and geography into a world historical geography framework teachers can further conceptualize their histories in relation to the dynamic processes of climatic change, landscape morphology, various fluvial processes, and nature-society relations. Examining all of this through a rethinking of Asia-Pacific not as an isolated region but as a site of long term networks and flows of relations, we can begin to teach more globally about this dynamic region moving beyond an exceptionalist narrative of Asia-Pacific development in isolation. We can push theories of the global back in time and through a variety of regional spaces. This has serious implications not only for the training of teachers but for the future of a globalized set of educational practices that considers how we communicate in and about the Asia-Pacific and how this region has long been tied to other important global spaces, from Europe to Africa to the Americas.

Keywords: new world history, critical human geography, globalized pedagogy, world historical geography

Introduction

A conference organized around teaching in and about Asia-Pacific provides us a unique opportunity to consider how we talk about regions and regional dynamics in historical context. When, for example, did Asia-Pacific as an identity emerge? What are the historical implications of this particular regional formation? To what extent is this region based in a much longer historical narrative of Asia-Pacific in particular and Asianism more generally? And, what are the pedagogical implications of working through Asia-Pacific to understand a much broader set of globalized processes and practices? Asking questions about what this region means not only in historical and geographic context, but also in terms of our pedagogy as classroom instructors, suggests that we might take our critical analyses of regions and apply these to how we think about classroom dialogue and instruction. In this paper, we want to suggest that our rethinking of what we mean by Asia-Pacific within the context of a world historical geography framework, which we outline below, allows us to both reconsider how

we teach teachers how to teach about this region *and* how we think about our own position as instructors of Asia-Pacific in relation to the webs of social relations that link our classrooms to other places around the globe. Moreover, in thinking about how we might teach about the complex historical geographies of Asia-Pacific, we suggest that we can also put forward a globalized pedagogy that infuses our own instructional practices with the same conceptualizations of global relations as our world historical geography curricula, which tries to provide a broader conceptualization of Asia-Pacific in a global historical narrative of dynamic change. This paper is thus organized around the following: (1) a discussion of world historical geography as an organizational framework for discussing Asia-Pacific; (2) how this destabilizes any fixed notion of Asia-Pacific as a coherent region; and (3) what this means for how we train future teachers about Asia-Pacific and world historical geography more broadly.

A World Historical Geography Framework

World historical geography is based on the confluence of two distinct disciplinary moments: the emergence of a ‘new world history’ and a ‘critical human geography.’ Both World History and Geography have variegated historical and intellectual trajectories that come together conceptually in important ways. In short, world history began by challenging the presumptive notions that history should be thought of in either temporal or geographic isolation. In fact, World History as a distinct discipline emerges in the United States after the Second World War as a corrective to the narrowly written Euro- and American-centric histories that wrote about places in relative isolation with specific focus upon the history and agency of the nation state. Thinking comparatively, world historians opened up the possibility that the places we study are relationally constituted. They apply this not only to human-human relations but to human-environment relations as well. In thinking beyond the boundaries of the modern-day nation state, World History developed to account for and reflect the growing diversity of the post-war American classroom. Moreover, the declining significance and dominance of the nation in post-colonial historical scholarship opened new fields of historical inquiry once preserved for the orientalist and anthropology. Focus upon Western civilization became increasingly less appropriate and created another imperative for the development of World History. As such, the development of world history during this period reflected the circumstances of the time (Mann, 2003; Wolf, 1997). That said, much of the early development of world history was still heavily orientated toward explaining the role of the West within either a comparative or global context and portrayed much of the rest of the world as victims or subservient to western political and economic expansion in the past (W. McNeill, 1992; Wallerstein, 2004). During this period, a few historians attempted to create a more culturally empathetic and less Eurocentric world history; nonetheless these studies treated various cultures and regions in isolation from one another and served essentially as studies of comparative culture as opposed to world history.

In the late twentieth century, the study of world history was dramatically transformed to such an extent that it is often now referred to as *global history* or the ‘*new world history*.’ With the end of the Cold War, the spread of new information and communication technologies, and major increases in transcontinental migration and rapid economic growth, the unprecedented forces of globalization have significantly transformed the world (Mann, 2003). Increasingly, human society is impacted by transnational phenomena diminishing the impact of the nation state. World historians, not satisfied with current discussions of globalization as a modern-day phenomena, have continually pushed the idea of the global (as a set of interactions) back in time, increasingly concentrating upon transnational and cross-cultural contact and exchange in the past (Bentley & Ziegler, 2005; Christian, 2004; J. R. McNeill & McNeill, 2003). In doing so, the focus of historical study is upon the integration

and connections between cultures and states over time with specific emphasis on non-Western agency and the early pre-European origins of transregional contact and exchange. This focus upon cross-cultural and transregional interaction informs what world historians now call their 'global' approach to studying world history. This 'global approach,' based in cross-cultural and transregional exchanges are geographic by definition; they also call upon economic and anthropologic analysis for their understanding. Currently, world historians are also increasingly interested in environmental history, which in turn calls upon multiple forms of interdisciplinary analysis from the sciences and reflects greater contemporary concerns and understanding of the human impact upon the environment (Crosby, 2004; J. R. McNeill, 2000; Richards, 2003). Finally, world historians are still interested in comparative history, but less from an 'us against them' mentality. With the growing contemporary conceptualization of the world as a 'global village,' comparative historical analysis provides a greater understanding of what is common to humanity and the human condition across both time and space.

Geography, on the other hand, first emerged as a distinct discipline, in the modern sense, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Livingstone, 1992). At the beginning of the 20th century, geographers were mostly interested in physical processes, and many who worked on human processes did so within a framework of environmental determinism (Johnston & Sidaway, 2004). These early geographers argued that the physical world actually determined how a people might be both socially and culturally (i.e., hot climates produced angry, heated people). These early determinists were challenged in the 1920s by a school of cultural geographers and ecologists who argued that humans were not simply products of the physical world around them but rather that humans adapted to and modified the physical world to meet their needs (Mitchell, 2000). In this new model humans molded physical landscapes creating cultural, political, social, and economic landscapes of religious icons, governmental institutions, ethnic neighborhoods, and markets and trading networks. Over time, a new core of geographers argued that the key to geographic inquiry was in regional analysis and the study of areal differentiation (Hartshorne, 1939). Geographers, it was argued, should focus on how regions, areas of continuity and homogeneity, emerge, highlighting the physical and human geographic processes that make up these particular spaces. By the 1960s, geographers once again offered a new paradigm of geographic inquiry arguing that geography should develop geographic laws based in a positivist, empirical science of quantification and replicability. In this way, these new "quantitative geographers" argued that geography, both human and physical, should theoretically and methodologically mimic the "hard," natural sciences, such as biology, physics, and chemistry with their emphasis on experiment and the generation of laws governing the social world (Bunge, 1962; Schaefer, 1953). Central to many of these geographies were mapped representations of social relations as they operated and existed across space. Relationships between these spaces were measurable, mediated by distance between social objects and the density of those same objects in one particular space, for example.

Despite the ubiquity of quantitative approaches, which dominated much of geography in the 1960s, a number of 'critical' approaches emerged to challenge this hegemony in the 1970s, '80s, and '90s (Peet, 1998). One of the first most significant challenges was the theoretical development of the ideas of social space and the socio-spatial dialectic (Harvey, 1973; Soja, 1980). In this new formulation space was no long a backdrop to social relations – a flat, isotropic plane upon which social relations took place – it was part and parcel of those relations. Put simply, geographers became interested, for example, in how the spatial organization of a city might actually perpetuate differences – e.g., poverty or ethnic and racial difference – and facilitate the gendering of men and women (Mitchell, 2000). This

developing ‘criticality’ in human geography was further perpetuated by the cultural turn in geography, through which geographers became even further suspicious of the objectivity presumed in representations of space (Jackson, 1989). This included Geography’s increasing skepticism of its own central representational identity, the map (Black, 1997; Crampton, 2001; Harley, 2001; Pickles, 1992; Wood, 1992). Maps are not simply representations of what is actually out there, they are also mediated social objects, subject to the decision-making of politicians and cartographers (map-makers). As historical objects, therefore, they can be ‘read’ (and deconstructed) for the ways in which power/knowledge is infused in them (Harley, 2001). Moreover, the mapped representations of the world are not benign objects, set outside social relations, they have been used to actually reorganized space and spatial relations (e.g., consider city planning in historical context). This cultural turn in cartography studies was complemented by the work of other geographers who were interested in deconstructing the social meanings and power relations embedded in landscapes, such as cities, and the natural world itself, which has been, in some places, brought ‘under control’ and ‘interpreted’ by human action in unique historically and geographically contingent ways (Cosgrove, 1984; Duncan & Ley, 1993). Turning their critical eye to a variety of lives spaces – for example public baths and gardens, parks, government institutions, villages, nation-states, or colonial holdings – critical human geographers began to think about how these socially constructed and cultural mediated sites, when analyzed critically for how they are constructed, both open up and close off dialogue between people of different classes, races, ethnicities, and genders. Moreover, these same geographers have turned their critical eye to traditional geographic concepts, such as location, movement and mobility, place, region, human-environment relations, investigating, conceptually, how these objects are ‘shot through’ with power relations and experienced differently and differentially by individuals occupying unique and variegated subject positions (Marston, 2000).

In the simplest sense, World Historical Geography brings together the key aspects of the disciplines of World History and Critical Human Geography in the study of how humans have adapted to and modified the world around them in different ways across time and space. World historical geographers draw from the breadth of primary and secondary data – written, visual, and oral – that constitute the archives of human history. The difference, primarily, between World History or Critical Human Geography and World Historical Geography is that the latter examines both the spatial and temporal context of and interaction between human activity and (physical and cultural) landscape change. World historical geographers remain true to the methodologies of both History and Geography, however. They operate under the assumptions of World History’s concern for global relations and the decentering of European models and narratives of history, and they try to understand how space and the spatial organization of society influences how social relations are enacted in historical context. World Historical Geography is always concerned with questions of cross-cultural exchange and contact (e.g., who can move where), diffusion of ideas and technologies (e.g., and the power/knowledge systems that inform these diffusions), and interests in thinking through larger global processes and their local effects in comparative context (e.g., examining how similar cultural or social systems, such as Buddhism, Islam, or Christianity, are rethought and reorganized in different places and locations). As such, contemporary world historical geographers pay particular attention to the dynamics of cultural diffusion across various spaces and borders with specific attention to human interactions along ‘borders’ – both social and material – and cultural frontiers. These interactions are more often than not both cause and consequence of trade, human migration, and the spatial expanse of states. All these concepts are indeed geographic as played out across time, these border spaces, in fact, produce new spatial organizations of society as cultural ideas and social systems are adapted

to new historical and geographic circumstances. In so doing, world historical geographers argue that in global context, movement and mobility, two of the central traditional objects of Geography, be considered as more than how people, ideas, or institutions, get from A to B, but how the very act of movement alter the very way in which we think about places and locations.

As we believe history and geography are evolving processes it seems silly to offer any substantive conclusions to our discussion. Rather, what we want to suggest is a few key theoretical and methodological questions that might help guide a world historical geography of, for example, Asia-Pacific. These are only examples, and you should be encouraged to expand on these and reflect on alternative ways to frame your own inquiries in world historical geography. These include: (1) What and how did the region Asia-Pacific emerge as a historic object (as different ‘civilizations’ have ebbed and flowed in *and* across this space over time?); (2) Where does Asia-Pacific begin and end and how do those boundaries differ depending on where (and when) you are?; (3) How, and in what ways, might we expand Asia-Pacific to include North and South America and the Indian Ocean, in historical and geographic context?; (4) How has Asia-Pacific, and its constituent parts, *always* been a site of global interactions that mediate social interactions in and across this diverse space?; and (5) What does Asia-Pacific mean to different people from different social positions over time and across space?

Operating Against the Presumptive Notions of Regional Fixity

Conceptualizing Regions

Regions and regional analysis have long been objects of analysis for geographers, many of whom are committed to area studies not only as an idea but also as an intellectual way to understand the world. Historians, in general, are also very regional in their approach, as most historians claim both a temporal and a spatial referent in their work (e.g., consider a historian of Ancient Rome or Colonial United States). A world historical geography framework, which operates through the intersection of new world history and critical human geography however, does not presume to start (and end) with the region. Put simply, regions, while conceptually valuable, when used in particular ways that reify them as ‘real’ is limited. We can mitigate against this limitation, however, if we take a global perspective to historical and geographic processes. It is not that we cannot talk about China or Asia as a region. Rather, it suggests that we need redefine the very meaning of region so that it works for our new world historical geography framework.

Traditionally, geographers, more so than historians, have struggled with what a region is and/or regional analysis should be. We want to suggest that it is valuable to push past what has traditionally become regional analysis in Geography. To do so, we have to briefly outline how geographers have conceptualized the region and what challenges our world historical geography framework brings to bear on these conceptualizations. Richard Hartshorne (1939), defined geography as the study of areal differentiation or regionalization. Areal differentiation can be based on both the development of formal and functional regions. Formal regions are typically defined as having some clearly demarcated or *de jure* boundary, such as a modern nation-state, while functional (or nodal) regions are constituted through spatial interactions or organization. Regions often have a core where a particular set of attributes is most strongly concentrated, such as religious practices. As one moves from the core toward the periphery, it is possible to identify both a domain and a sphere, the former of which is defined by a strong sense of a particular geographic attribute while the sphere contains only a marginal sense of that same attribute. Conceptually, one could think of a

core-domain-sphere as a set of concentric circles with the core being the most intensely homogenous and the sphere the least homogenous (Marston, Knox, & Liverman, 2005). In reality, the geographic pattern is often much more irregular, mediated by social networks and physical geographic features, such as mountains, rivers, and other large bodies of water. Moreover, these patterns are infused with meaning, suggesting that different spaces and spatial relations create nested layers of patterns and processes that are contradictory to and in conflict with the homogeneity of any one particular region (Jones, 1998). The problem with this particular conceptualization of the region is that, when mapped across space, it presumes a certain level of homogeneity. More insidiously, when the region is laid out across a map it often reifies the boundaries of the region: the map literally creates homogeneity where their might be much more complication.

That said, regions may provide some basis for analysis, although we must not think of each region as a distinct, independent space separate from the larger, global flows of social and spatial relations. First, regions are, like histories, human constructs. As such, we must begin by complicating the assumptions that underpin any regional representation. Second, they ebb and flow over time and are differentially defined based on local power relations and broader cross-cultural contact. This means that we might want to consider a much more dynamic set of cartographic practices that represents this dynamism. This might take place through a much more interactive map, which, through animation, can represent these differences over time (Harrower, 2002). Third, while we often like to draw boundaries around particular places and regions, particularly in our history and geography textbooks, those markings tend to be, at best, estimations and simplifications of much more complicated processes, including the emergence of syncretic (blended) systems of exchange and cultural relativism at the boundaries of sometimes competing empires, peoples, and societies. Regions, therefore, should be thought of as ‘touchdown’ points where various global relations and locally based social relational practices are articulated (Massey, 1993).

When pushing toward a world (or global) historical geography, therefore, we are often presented with a challenge as to what to do with the region. And, because both geographers and historians often fix regions in space and time, these constructs present a somewhat conservative way of representing the world. But, if we conceptualize regions as fluid and always in the process of becoming, then we can turn our attention not to the region as a fixed set of points in space but as a dynamic process defined by a constantly evolving *regionalization*. Moving from a regional approach to a regionalization approach, we can push our theories of the global through different regions by focusing on regions as sites of networked relations, where regions are actually conceptualized not as totalities but as punctuated and incomplete spaces. Moreover, we can begin to trace how regional identities that circulate, like other discourses, are made real through practice (regional identities are not natural but born out of the development of similar languages and understandings of space and spatial relations). We can thus compare how different global processes, such as the diffusion of cultural practices or technologies, are mediated by the different socio-cultural and political-economic configurations of various regions across space. Put simply, if regions are theorized as dynamic and always in process then we can begin to consider the ‘big picture’ of how global forces change regions and become changed by people working through those regions. The ‘local’ in this case becomes the context for exploring the ‘big picture’ questions of any world historical geography, such as how we might create periods that have some continuity across differing contexts and experiences.

An examination of the contemporary use of Asia-Pacific from a regionalization as opposed to regional approach brings many of these aforementioned issues into sharper focus. The representation of Asia-Pacific as a region is in itself a recent world historical geographic product. Conventionally recognized as a group of nations and cultures that extend from Australia through parts of Southeast Asia (notably Singapore and Vietnam) to East Asia (notably China, Taipei, Japan and South Korea), regionalization is of recent historical origin and informed both by the integration of these economies along the 'Pacific Rim' and some broadly shared characteristics of economic and industrial development. In a contemporary sense, Asia Pacific as region is then constructed mainly in economic terms – its utility as a 'region' becomes much more problematic in political and cultural terms where integration and shared trajectories are far more difficult to construct and sustain. However, even in a contemporary economic sense, the representation of Asia-Pacific as region is problematized when applied within a world historical geographic approach. To what extent are the patterns of economic development and integration in the late twentieth century explained and contained within the 'region' of Asia-Pacific? To what extent are these patterns informed by the larger global shifts and restructuring of American and Western European economies from industrial to postindustrial? And, to what extent is Asia-Pacific also constituted by North and South American states, which are intimately tied into pan-Pacific economic cooperative agreements? Moreover, can we think about how Asia-Pacific is further complicated by the extent to which 'Asia' is already in North and South America (e.g., the Chinese in the United States or Mexico and the Japanese in Peru)?

Indeed, the use of Asia-Pacific as region becomes more difficult from a world historical geographic context when applied further in the past. For example, recently historians have attempted to apply and historicize Asia-Pacific in the early modern period as a useful counter to Eurocentric (and for that matter Atlanticist) representations of the global impact of the Columbian Exchange. Rather than focus upon the transatlantic and European significance of the flow of silver and foodstuffs from the Americas, these historians have stressed the global dominance of the Asian-Pacific flow of silver to China and the diffusion and demographic impact of American foodstuffs in Asia Pacific (Flynn & Giraldez, 1995). On the other hand, other world historians have countered this spatial representation arguing that up until the end of the eighteenth century the impact of Europe in Asia was limited and that traditional cultural and interaction between East Asia and South Asia was far more significant – that is the Indian Ocean had far greater import than that of the Pacific (Gunder Frank, 1998; Pomeranz, 2000). Moreover, regions are always punctuated and partial; empires often fail to fully occupy all the space (in either material or social terms) in any given region. An approach focused on regionalization, therefore, would examine how empires functioned through sets of networked relations. So, in the case of the Mauryan Empire in modern-day South Asia, when traced archaeologically and cartographically, illustrates a rather incomplete space of networked relations; they simply never controlled the entire region as most world historical maps might suggest (Smith, 2005). Moreover, if we globalize this picture of a punctuated and partial map of the Mauryans, we would see that this empire, while limited in its control of the South Asian region, was fully involved in the dynamic networks of, for example, the Silk Roads (Christian, 2000), which not only brings it into contact with Asia-Pacific but also suggests that the Mauryans, through trade and exchange, was intimately part of the evolution of other states in Asia-Pacific (e.g., through the expansion of, say, Buddhism). Hence, in both a modern and early modern context, the representation of Asia-Pacific as a region is 'contested' in a world historical geographic sense, and indeed it is this interpretive and discursive nature of the 'region' that should be the focus of our teaching

because it brings our students closer to understanding the perspectives and authentic thinking of our disciplines.

On a Globalized Pedagogy and the Dialogic Classroom

In thinking about how we might teach teachers about the shifting nature of Asia-Pacific regional(ized) geographies, therefore, we argue for a globalized pedagogy and the development of a set of instructional practices that are congruent with the content of our teachings. That is, we want to open up a sense of relationality in our curriculum and in our instructional approach as we begin to re-imagine how we teach and talk about Asia-Pacific historical geographies. Beyond this moment based in context, then, we want to push our broader theoretical impetus into our classroom practices.

Re-imagining curriculum requires in-depth reflection on the way we talk about Asia-Pacific. Talk is a local and contextualized process, but it is also shaped by broader global processes (Erickson, 2004). As Erickson suggests: “The local and global ecologies within which talk takes place – many aspects of which are themselves expressed, invoked, and referred to within the talk itself – provide a set of affordances by which talk can be done and by which the local conduct of talk can influence and be influenced by the wider social world” (ibid., p. 107-108). Thus, training future teachers about an Asia-Pacific imagined as a dynamic and relational set of practices and environments, and not as fixed regions with rigid borders, requires a focus on our own instructional talk. In considering classroom talk as always *and* already global (ibid.) – influenced by own experiences of complex, cross-cultural interactions – language becomes much more than a set of grammatical rules fixed in particular regional contexts; it is a system of styles that shape particular social spheres of human activity (Bakhtin, 1986), such as the classroom. In a Bakhtinian sense, then, a new language of regions and regionalization is a collective event that is shaped by previous communications with others. In conceptualizing language in this way, as a phenomenon far beyond syntactic choices, we can begin to imagine how our instructional interactions and discussions about the partial and contested narratives of Asia-Pacific with future teachers will be carried into their classroom engagements with their own students. Teachers, in short, through communicative practices become empowered to introduce multiple views and voices in an ongoing conversation about Asia-Pacific as a space of complexity and a site of global flows and interactions.

More than just *what* we say and the labels we utilize with regard to Asia-Pacific, shifting toward a globalized pedagogy also requires consideration of *how* we teach future teachers about Asia-Pacific. In a globalized approach, rethinking Asia-Pacific becomes an ongoing dialogic process of building mutual understanding (c.f., Nystrand, Gamoran, Kachur, & Prendergast, 1997), one in which conversation is central to the teaching and learning experience. This globalized pedagogy is based on the premise that both our histories and geographies are narrative and iterative processes, only partially constituted through our use of language. It also emphasizes conferencing and discussion with and among learners across contexts; and, it demands that we draw from sources (both traditional and non-traditional – documents and oral histories as well as maps that are both professional and popular) in our discussions about how we construct Asia-Pacific as a region. This approach, then, following Florio-Ruane (2001), emphasizes conversation and “the dialogic process by which we create and negotiate meaning” (p. 56). In teaching about Asia-Pacific in this fashion, knowledge of and about regions, such as Asia-Pacific, is translated through the on-going and dynamic process of collaboration and a co-creation: we make this region through the production of our own partial and incomplete representations of the past. Training teachers to thus think

critically about regions and regionalizations and the historical narratives that claim to know what has happened in these spaces, pushes them beyond the rather dry and stale narratives of the whens and wheres of historical and geographical ‘facts.’

In sum, in training future teachers we can enact globalized pedagogy by continuing to emphasize the socially constructed nature of regions and the historical contingencies that constitute these narrative and material constructs. This process begins with a focus on our language use and talk in classrooms. Re-imagining Asia-Pacific is also shot through our own pedagogy when training future teachers. By exemplifying how we might rely on dialogue as part of an ongoing consideration of Asia-Pacific, future teachers may be more apt to globalize their own classrooms, applying a much more complicated understanding of dominant historical narrative of regions, such as Asia-Pacific. Our curriculum thus becomes infused with a sense of historical and geographical situatedness and, at the same time, our instructional interactions allow for multiple voices and perspectives operating across temporal and geographic scales. Through this very process, then, we begin to dissect our own subjectivities as global citizens, pushing away from nationalist, jingoistic, and chauvinistic readings of our own histories and geographies.

Conclusions

In constituting a world historical geography, we are suggesting that we have to shift our lens away from any *a priori* assumptions about regions as somehow ‘real,’ ‘fix’ spaces. Instead, we must consider regions, such as Asia-Pacific, as historically and geographically contingent, subject to the flows of language and power that constitute other spaces, such as the ghetto, the city, or the nation-state (e.g., Thongchai, 1994 discussion of the making of Thailand’s ‘geobody’). Moreover, we fail to enact this new reading of Asia-Pacific if we do not push these theoretical reconceptualizations through our teaching. As such, we argue for a new globalized pedagogy as part of a broader world historical geography framework. We hope to move toward this new pedagogy by infusing our classrooms with a more cognizant sense of our own global situatedness and relation. This global pedagogy, like other critical pedagogies (Freire, 1999), is thus defined by a set of educational practices in which global and local voices contribute to ongoing dialogue about our relationship not only to a particular regional identity but also to a broader process of cross-cultural contact and interaction. Thinking this way, we can now teach of Asia-Pacific as a set of relationships that we *discover* through dialogue and learning. Like the historian or geographer or curriculum instruction expert, we understand that Asia-Pacific is always in the process of becoming (Gibson, 2001; Gibson-Graham, 2004). More than that contemporary moment, however, we can read through the narrative past(s) to consider how formations, such as empires, civilizations, and/or nation-states are themselves also in a state of becoming as we write, think, and talk about these places. Asia-Pacific tomorrow will be a new set of relationships as they are informed by our understandings today (Benjamin, 1968). This kind of ongoing conversation creates a renewed sense of awareness of how all that is historically geographic is also socially, culturally, and historically situated in our own communicative practices as teachers and learners.

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