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Internationalism and Transnational Literacy

Internationalization is China's future. It is both a stated national goal and a simple inevitability. To become international requires transcending national borders (both geographic and mental). For people in more developed countries, which have been at the center of internationalization movements, their close interaction and experience with “others” has largely rendered invalid the conventional binary oppositions of “Us and Them”—including that of West and East. Whereas in more newly developed countries, such as China, these international movements have provided some with similar transnational possibilities beyond the binary, for others, in bringing the foreign closer, the movements have vivified the “other” and perhaps allowed them to construct a new, more identifiable “self/us” in contrast with that “other.”

This paper intends to examine this phenomenon in the context of the university classroom, and to explore how we can help students build a transnational literacy that dismantles binary oppositions while not blocking them from developing their personal and national identities based on their own interaction with and response to their international encounters.