Intertextualizing the Petrarchan Sonnets and the Love Songs in Taiwan: old verses brought into modern life

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Abstract

Intertextuality as a current site on the concepts of literary influences and translation studies has been extensively discussed. As a literary marker, this term refers to extended textual relations built from an author's un/conscious creativity or from his socially involved experiences. In brief, the term indicates "a context of enlargement" (Clayton 4). Yet the concept of intertextuality as a teaching strategy or literary pedagogics has seldom reassessed from the perspectives of Taiwan's foreign language learning and reading world literature in higher education.

This paper is then to present an intertextualized teaching design by pertaining Francis Petrarch's sonnets to two love songs in Taiwan, "Become a Poet" (爲你寫詩), composed by Kenji Wu (吳克群) and "Faraway From Me" (千里之外), performed by Jay Chou (周杰倫) in 2008. Such a thematic link helps teachers to know the cultural forces that bear upon students' secular lives and the ways they identify their own feelings. This is, indeed, a secularized mode of postmodern self-reflection. As a form of literary language, desire and knowledge, the genre "sonnet" thereby encourages teachers to trace and turn the humanistic sources in the Italian Renaissance into a cultural study in classroom.

Key words: intertextuality, Petrarchan sonnets, humanism, cultural secularization

I, Multicultural Perspectives on teaching literature in English

In "World Literature in Context" (1993), Sarah Lawall indicated two main educational goals in teaching world literature: one is the development of individual minds (the "world of the mind"), and the other is a knowledge of other cultures (the world as geopolitical globe)(3). Each goal could be hardly fulfilled without good English translations and without acquaintances on the lives of authors (7). To teachers, it is not easy to learn about other cultural traditions in order to teach unfamiliar texts; therefore, a "good" literature course design is dependent on its dual role as mediator "between national and global culture, or between a world of experience beyond local norms and a newly-clarified sense of "Western" identity "(11).

Five years later, in her "Preface to the 7th Edition" of *Norton Anthology of World Masterpieces* (1998), Sarah Lawall indicated that both teachers and students throughout the new edition will encounter new writers, women and men, and more discussions of literature's cultural dimensions (xvii). Yet Lawall remained the same stress on "good [English] translation," which led its readers to access into anther period's emotional and intellectual horizons (xx).

J. Paul Hunter in "Facing Others, Facing Ourselves" showed a further concern on the globalized borders of language and culture by asking the question: what is "English" in the sense that we have "departments" of it? (19). He claimed that it is no longer enough to know about the Anglo-American tradition and the Greek, Roman, and Judeo-Christian traditions when teaching undergraduates, a training which emphasized on a particular literary history and habits, peculiar to a particular culture are to be demanded (24). In the end, he ensured that the English maternity and paternity comes not only from Homer, Sidney, or Johnson, but also Woolf, Lacan, Altusser, Bakhtin, and Foucault (28).[1]

Obviously, both Lawall and Hunter presented a stronger sense of multiculturalism than Anglocentric authorships in their literary classrooms. To them, the materials for teaching "world literature" should dig up "something more" under the western, male-oriented, or ethnocentric earth. Therefore, a "good" literature course design of "world literature" shall be first canonical or knowledgeable, and then be extensible and flexible so that the textual, pedagogical, or political spaces nourished from the classrooms can easily span the temporal and cultural milieux of the students.

Teaching world literature in English in Taiwan, nevertheless, is not only related to the field of "cultural studies" today but also needs to be given to the "applied" significance of intellectual Englishness for the newly-founded English departments since the last decade of the 20th century in Taiwan's academic field. In this particular situation, "Introduction to Western Literatures" (西洋文學概論) in applied English departments invites us to reexamine some unsolved assumptions as English-as-foreign-language instructors. For instance, what kind of cultural dialogue could a literature

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[1] As Eric Rothstein indicated in "Diversity and Change in Literary Histories," studying the history of world literature in English makes scholars and students receive its genres as their intellectual bequest. But nowadays the so-called world spirit (Zeitgeist) or society disappeared into certain historical figures like Descartes, Bentham or Foucault, which means: it is a world of expressive agents; call its operating principle Influence (114); and to understand the specifics of diversity and change, one needs to "understand how a text has constraints of transmission, and how the forces from outside the social environment enter it and become objectified within it" (117).

teacher make when facing English majors with little intention to study historically and academically? What could the classroom inform something literary if students can't read without putting their e-dictionaries aside? Like all student-oriented course designs, the "intertextualization" as the teaching strategy is one that, besides its careful adaptation of cultural studies and language as a constitutive force of a reader's subjectivity, challenges me to re-assess the educational goals and directions of applied English departments at technology universities in Taiwan.

To make "how to introduce the literary worlds to 'why-literature' English majors" as an experience-based discourse, so far, not only brings about the special role of Julia Kristeva's concept of intertextuality in classroom activity but also helps those "no-dictionary-no-reading" students to find out their own intellectual lives, by enabling them to see a self-worthy connection between authors and their own lives, between the readings and their practices. And with this teaching motif and concern, my teaching design is to explore the genre sonnet as a literary language, desire and knowledge, which inspires me to trace and turn the humanistic sources in the Italian Renaissance, and from the paradigm the sonnet offered[2] I try to find out some literary connections to the popular songs in our readings.[3]

To elaborate my intertextualization teaching approach, the English Petrarchan verses are significant in providing a modernized voice with Greek mythical stories in. English as our contemporary platform of "global village" thereafter produces an imaginary world. That is, the students, through Anglicized sonnets and the Chinese pop songs, produce self-conscious intertextual readers, and the source of sonnets and songs will then appear to be a cultural and social subject in terms of literary knowledge. The "literature" in English as well as in classroom is, furthermore, a mediator - since the voice of the student-reader is the very thing that a teacher is concerned about. He has to show his intellectual sensitivity via his power of language.

II, Reading Sonnets in Modern English

Reading sonnets intertextually at Taiwan's technology universities can be equally, under the sense of English globalized, meaningful when we take pleasure in designing the Italian humanism with love songs in Taiwan. On sonnet as the individualized text of a poet and his constructing himself into

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[2] As Roland Greene illustrated in *Post-Petrarchism*, Petrarch's *Rime Sparse* in the 14th century was the first and the most compressive lyric sequence.

> [The patterns and devices] coincide with Petrarch's obsession with temporality as a cultural and epistemological problem, and represent perhaps an imaginative reworking of questions long familiar to him and his era of pause between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. (22)

Several "specifiers" make sonnets a new paradigm: a deictic and anaphoric phrase, a temporal and sacred sense of time, and a retrospective narrative, "putting its plot into segments," and rearranging them into start "in middle things" (24-27). In brief, the relation between love episodes and lovers' utterances characterizes this genre in a manner of digression and dialogue (28).

[3] As one of the overused (or even abused) terms, "reading" refers to practices of interpretation and analyses of texts and academic discourses, which has enforced an attitude and attention that "cultural and social world of a text is rather constructed than given. After Jonathan Culler's reader-response criticism (1982), "reading" has been informed with types of meaning produced by various kinds of literary works and expectations of a formal and semantic coherence. See his *The Pursuit of Signs: Semiotics, Literature, Deconstruction* for details.

his writing, many influential scholars in England and America have collected works either rich in their canonical dimensions for English-for-native-students, or heteroglossic (or polyphonic) from the comparative perspective in literature and English language teaching for English-as-Foreign-Language majors.[4]

Yet English, like Latin in the Roman Empire, is the very influential force in shaping our ideas of "literary canon" and "popular culture," from where the ongoing debates on literary materials and themes are evoked. Reading English texts as cross-social experience or learning English as a role/voice identifying process can be the other side of the teaching discourse. This is largely related to (post)modern views on English as a globalized voice, power, legacy or cultural competence, in media-crowded postmodern society. In consequence, a preoccupation of the course "Introduction to Western Literatures" is its readiness to involve a new value judgment as our pedagogic direction, a trend amply illustrated in Sarah Lawall's two educational goals that profile international and regional versions of teaching literature in English.

Obviously, comparative perspective in literature, English language teaching, and cultural translation are three fields with close ties to intertextualization as an embedded teaching skill (嵌入式教學) rather than cognitive poetics (認知詩學).[5] Embedded teachings such as reader-response criticism focus on the interactions of the reader and text in languages (gestalt), and by putting stress on the pleasure of the text through the act of reading, a reader-response theory is not *in* but acts out the reader-adapted text. Yet my idea of "intertextualization" as teaching method highlights on the reader's self-consciously displaying his cultural values as part of the text, and it is in this sense that an English major in university is performing a higher–level intellectual education. Reader-response practice, while making a spectacular advance on literary secularization, is actually more silenced as it is working on the cultural consciousness of the college readers.[6]

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[4] Books in this field are like A. H. Marckwardt's *The Place of Literature in the Teaching of English as a Second or Foreign Language* (Hawaii: East-West Center, 1978), Patricia Phelan's *Literature and Life: Making Connections in the Classroom* (Illinois: National Council of Teachings, 1990), Alan Carey-Webb's *Literature and Lives: a Response-based Cultural Studies Approaches to Teaching English* (Urband: National Council of Teachers, 2001), Wang Ning's *Globalization and Cultural Translation* (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish Academic, 2004); all are referential, useful, and applicable.

[5] Between the poetic language of an author and interpretation of a reader, cognitive poetics (innovated by Reuven Tsur in 1992) as an interdisciplinary discipline, also attempts to "combine the classical scholarly trivium of rhetoric, grammar and logic" and then to be "a radical re-evaluation" on the literary activities," and therefore become a way of arranging readers' thoughts systematically (Stockwell 5-8). Yet as Peter Stockwell also recognized, the "cognitive turn" might seem to be "no more than recasting the old ideas with new labels;" a radical re-evaluation suggests a reader who has a little knowledge of cognitive poetics (6). Stockwell made his view clear in his chapter "Prototypes and Reading." He started to explain that "the meanings of concepts lie in cognitive models which are cued up by words and which add rich and complex understanding in a communicative situation" (33). Later he took the word "bachelor" as example and claimed that if we know about the working practices of the personal relationships and its social ideology, then the word "bachelor" is two-layered, due to context dependency, in cognitive model and cultural model. In other words, expertness and authority decide the display of cultural model patterns (33), and from where socio-culturally patterns as cognitive matters are found in genre studies (34). Stockwell's illustration of text and its cultural contexts, reader and his personal interpretations, thereby, highlights more on a descriptive reading experience.

[6] Louise M. Rosenblatt (1978) mentioned that "part of the cultural equipment of a reader would

As the idea of "western world" has been tremendously subverted and reexamined under the (post)colonial discourses, a literary secularization asserts that a pure "western" (or European) reading is never existed, and the concept of literature is also widely opened up into a more hybridized poetics due to the current "postmodern phenomena."[7] English departments in Taiwan, if we make a reflection on how the Italian humanism made its own history and character, have homogenously achieved an education to fit a global mold and preserve a universal pattern over the years.

As a worldwide literature textbook, the *Norton Anthology* introduced that Petrarch's sonnets to be "a genealogy of the Gentile Gods, an encyclopedic compendium in Latin of pagan mythology designed as a guide to the ancient poets (253), yet the figure Petrarch, as a poet or a character in sonnet, is also highly myth-related and slightly anti-Christian, as introduced.

> The image of the labyrinth evokes Petrarch's tortuous experience of love and mental wandering: apparently fresh paths from turn into dead ends and avenues already traced in frustration. An allusion to the maze that the mythical Greek artist Daedalus created to contain the Minotaur, Petrarch's labyrinth also suggests that a threat lies at the center of the ingeniously crafted lyric collection.
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> A haunting moral presence in the *Rime Sparse* is St. Augustine, who in his *Confessions* describes his conversion under a fig tree. In *The Secret*, his fictional dialogue with Augustine, Petrarch defends his adoration of Laura to an understanding but disapproving Augustine.... Petrarch confesses that his love of her beauty is idolatrous, not idealistic.
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> Like Apollo, Petrarch also "translates" his beloved elusive body into the more tangible "figures" of rhetoric: her physical attributes reflect the style of his poetry and proclaim his triumphant glory.... The Ovidian lover in Petrarch can expect no transcendence, only repeated and uncontrollable metamorphoses of the mind (e.g., despair, hope, ecstasy). (1666)

Information that is more complicated turns out from the above comparative study of the sonneteer and the classical tradition in his poetics. Transparent as it has been, the Petrarchan narrative is composed of the Augustinian confession with some philosophical ideas, a courtly love situation.[8]

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usually be an awareness that he was reading a work produced in another era" (*The Reader, the Text, the Poem* 121). Yet this readerly "awareness" here means more the historical sense of the reader than Julia Kristeva's intertextualization and Roland Barthes' death of the author.

[7] Tons of statements and debates are found on "postmodernity" in 1980s, from Frederic Jameson (1984), Jean-Francois Lyotard (1984), to Terry Eagleton (1986), etc.. In this paper, what attracts me and my students is its concept on self-critical reading.

[8] The typical "courtly love situation," as Paul Oppenheimer stated, starts with a writing/creating consciousness since Roman times:

> If poets asked about their values, their being, their ontology, which the form seemed to require, would the results harmonize with Church teachings and what was generally known about the world? (*The Birth of the Modern Mind: Self, Consciousness, and the Invention of the Sonnet* 4)

In these questions, the poet's "distance" from his beloved, usually reinforced by her rejection, possesses a deeper attraction and affects on the later lyrics.

Petrarch, his literary work and its mythic structure, in this introduction, contain literary motifs less tied to politics and history than to culture and society. The focus and effort in reading English literatures drives students to be real literary readers, which at the same time, targets into the very heart of cultural study's claim for a dynamic readership.[9]

In essence, Kristeva's intertextuality has revised Mikhail Bakhtin's readership, by focusing on the Bakhtinian carnival parody; she treats Bakhtin's dialogism not in the genric categories (epic vs. novel), but re-signifies a reading motif from one text to another.[10] In this teaching case, the writing/reading distinction is less suitable because making a text meaningful implicates both: reading is *in* the reader as well as *in* the writing continuum, where student-readers project their social values in the act of reading, and they have to show the reading in their act of putting their readings into English words.

The concept of "readership" in literary criticism has, accordingly, also changed the way in which the meaning of teaching literature in English is to be conceived. In the ground, English as source language preserves "important aspects of a major artistic imagination," demonstrating the multifarious vitality of the contemporary students and teachers, whose purpose is to delight, captivate and challenge studies," as Lawell pinpointed (*Norton Anthology of World Masterpieces* xx). Yet literatures in English, in this writing/reading/teaching ground, illustrate the overlapping of the reader/poet/student distinction, too, because the concept of intertextuality explains both the involvement with the persona of a text, and its attachment with the culture of these student-readers outside the text, inside the classroom.[11]

So far, students' view of love as a link of sonnets and pop songs enriches my course, but on English as secularization of western literary traditions and sonnet as the hybridization of mythology

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> Many modern love songs, with their themes of rejection and a near-religious adoration of a beloved and often absent woman or man, echo the plaints, if less often the wit, of Provencal court performers. (5)

9 Peter Tomlinson (2008) declares that today our knowledge about teaching and learning through focusing on multiplicity and paradigm completion is fragmented and narrowly focused, and the reason lies in an increased worldwide attention to pedagogy both as "teaching activity" and "understanding teaching" ("Psychological Theory and Pedagogical Effectiveness" 508), which are also supported by educational institutions of many nations. In this educational paradigm, a useful and effective application needs to be accompanied by some psychological theories to pedagogical designs (509). For instance, a teaching shall interplay with learning outcomes, context and resources, and teaching/learning activity/process, and from there the notion of "teaching" as a "purposeful, situated interaction" leads to a successful learning potential" (509). And what' s better is: while teaching is a direct, explicit communication, it embodies itself learners' learning processes (521), which engages the deep/meaningful levels of mental models of the learners (522). With this concept, a "dynamic readership" (besides classroom discussion and peer tutoring) implies more teaching space for class design and thematic dialogue. And from this way, the "cultural study" emerges out as the second paradigm shift, meaning the western/dominant culture to be read as a kind of socially particular experience, as J. Hunter manifested.

10 As Julia Kristeva states in *Desire in Language*, an intertextual relation involves the "absorption and transformation" of a reading text, from where some uncanny, disturbing effects turn out unexpectedly (66), and "intertextuality is a ghost effect" (Clayton 54).

11 As Tilottama Rajan explicated, the aesthetics of intertextuality is to "disestablish themselves as sources of influence;" therefore, it is to, as a matter of fact, radically reconceive the hierarchical model of literary history as a sequence of repetitive confirmations in which authority is protected from any inscription in its own future" ("Intertextuality and the Subject of Reading/Writing" 61).

and poetics, my third discursive issue will lie in the matter of second language mastery. In "Second Language Mastery" (2001), Richard Clèment and Robert C. Gardner declare that second language acquisition needs to be involved of identification with an individual's very being and the community he belongs (491). Though it's hard to define "bilingualism," second language learning has to be used in the form of knowledge or skill (490) so that its dynamics can be displayed in how well and how quick an individual could learn another language (492). In the end, Clèment and Gardner stress that "positive benefits from language acquisition will only be achieved to the extent that the first language and culture are well established within the individual" (497). In short, one's affinity with community and culture is the key determinant of the outcomes of his second language acquisition.

With this in mind, Robert E. Probst's viewing "correctness in classroom" is noteworthy. In his "Five Kinds of Knowing," Probst specifies the conception of literature posing "correctness" to be a problem for the classroom (59). To him, "correctness" might be a dangerous concept (echoing to Rosenblatt's response theory) because once we admit memories, personal experiences, feelings, images called into the minds of readers are unique and central part of the literary transaction, then the "legitimate modes of discourse resulting from literary experiences" makes the reading comprehensible (60). Yet to me, there raises a problem: if sonnet belongs to a literary paradigm and a cultural legacy, how can my teaching have nothing to do with the otherworldliness in the medieval Christian values?[12] How could it be possible for our students to understand lines such as:

> Pity the <u>abject</u> plight where I am found;
>
> Return my straying thoughts to a nobler place;
>
> Show them this day you were on <u>Calvary</u>. (sonnet 62)

> If it is indeed my <u>destiny</u> and <u>Heaven</u> exerts itself that Love
>
> Close these eyes while they are still weeping,
>
> let some <u>grace</u> bury my poor body among you and let my soul return naked to this its won
>
> > dwelling;
>
> death will be less harsh if I bear this <u>hope</u> to the fearful pass,
>
> for my weary spirit could never in a more restful port or a more tranquil grave flee my
>
> laboring flesh and my bones. (sonnet 126)(my emphases)

Many biblical references (Christ's Passion, the Pauline theological ideas of grace, hope, love) here turned into a very "domesticated " scenery,[13] whose only aim is to beg for a female pity, not the Divine

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[12] This is why Tolottama Rajan thinks Kristeva's failure lies in that she had to "hypothesize a reader so as to produce a new receptive positionality that will allow for a different articulation of the thetic ("Intertextuality and the Subject of Reading/Writing" 67-68). In other words, "reader" as a reading space is made for a possible creativity we might encounter when doing readings.

13 The word "domesticated" is originally mentioned from Roland Green's remark on the Petrarchan verses:

> Certainly most of us know the sensation of enacting a lyric utterance as if it were our own speech: such an imaginative operation precedes any interpretation, in fact creates the conditions for interpretation, and presumably allows us to expand the experiential dimensions of our selves by adding to a store of domesticated memories (*Post-Petrarchism*

salvation, and the thetic rupture needs to be further perceived.[14]

III, Humanism and Cultural Secularization

Humanism refers to the wide range of issues involving transactions between Greco-Roman myths and its later works in the Renaissance. In the 21-century, the Taiwanese readers can nevertheless hope to bring a fresh perspective on sonnet as a particular writing in the Italian Renaissance. But the first problem we encounter is how students in their twenties understand the brief introduction of Petrarch.

> Written in Italian and woven into a highly introspective narrative, the [*Rime Sparse*] lyric collection takes the poet himself as its object of study; the poems painstakingly record how his thoughts and identity are scattered and transformed by the experience of love for a beautiful, unattainable woman named Laura. ("Francis Petrarch" 1665)

Three important literary issues are interwoven here: the identity of lover/writer, the object of a poem, and the present/absent relationship between the poet and his beloved. In the literary terms, there involves the poetics, subject matter and poet as a calling (career), and all of which are man-centered (or humanistic) issues in contrast to the medieval otherworldliness.[15]

At the heart, I think of Petrarch's lament over his despair of narrating a female body that would *not* simply achieve a poetic salvation; rather, his sonnets helped express a modernized self, and along with the continuous sonnet sequences, some religious impulses in the medieval Christianity were invoked, repressed and transferred into something new for his future life in his personal pursuit of love. After all, "Love" as the medieval social practices could appear "divine" (or superstitious) to the Renaissance intellects.[16]

In this sense, Roland Greene's reading of sonnet as a "rite mode" shows that the intellectual root of the Italian humanism was not only built around the autonomy of individual consciousness but also

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[14] Kristeva's term "thetic rupture," borrowed from Edmund Husserl (1859-1938), signifies a poetic re-usage of the ordinary language: being capable of crossing the boundaries between the symbolic and the semiotic, and being able to re-place the traditional, established signs, the thetic rupture creates "an opening for new, polyvalent cultural meanings."

> All enunciation, whether of a word or of a sentence, is thetic. It requires an identification; in other words, the subject must separate from and through his image, from and through his objects. This image and objects must first be posited in a space that becomes symbolic because it connects the two separated positions, recording them or redistributing them in an open combinatorial system." (*Revolution in Poetic Language* 43)

[15] In *The Medieval Experience*, Francis Oakley pointed that the Christian Churches, the Celtic and Benedictine monasteries played the dominated role to impose the ideals upon the civilization of the era (69-71). By understanding a civilizing mission to reshape a wholly-new society, the idea of Christendom practiced the divine activity in the natural world, and the belief of Pelagius (c. 354-c. 418) that men's merit wins God's favor and makes themselves progress in holiness, showing the otherworldly encounter, and the divine grace in the process of salvation (59-60).

[16] As Mary Moore illustrated, that "the way Petrarch defines his reader reveals his moral purpose: he distinguishes levels of reliability or knowledge among his listeners ("The Complication of Subjectivity" 34); thereby, the "plethora" (fullness) of his first-person "I" is a pronoun exaggerating self-consciousness, magnifying self-reflection and self-division (36). The religious mood in Petrarch's sonnets, as Roland Greene evaluated, stood in his temporal deictics ("Founding Fiction: the Temporality of Petrarch's *Canzoniere*" 23).

around a Christian-theological discourse (*Post-Petrarchism* 7). That is, viewing sonnet/lyrics as "the most insidious of ideological discourse," Roland Green shows that the religion-rooted symbols of the Italian sonnets are translucent in pattern (8), wedding to a reversible immanence in our empirical world (11). With this recognition, the interpretative space sonnets have operated helps us to meet Vincent P. Pecora's "corporate identity" in the humanism in a global context.

While some might insist that "culture" and "cultural criticism" come to oppose to each other (Theodorw Adorno's cultural industry, for instance),[17] others (like Edward Said's secular criticism)[18] may view them as a reflective bridge of individuality, authority and humanity, and Pecora, actually, expects to find a broadened "history of Europe" from a group of literary genres (such as novel, biography and even history), which "shadows global history," leading to secularization, modernization, individualism and the liberal traditions of the nation-state" (200). Therefore, he believes that a corporate identity helps to liberate an intellect from the unchallenged authority of tradition, so that "true knowledge of the material universe and of human beings alike would be possible" (196).

Intertextualizing the Petrarchan sonnets to the love songs in Taiwan and our departmental "applied" goals, consequently and inevitably, triggers a further knowledge of humanism and cultural secularization. Today's cultural study on secularization involves a self-sufficient individual whose inquisitive and acquisitive mind to think in and for itself ("Humanism and Globalization" 195). Yet with the concept of Kristeva's intertextuality, Pecora's "corporate identity" explains Petrarch's qusai-religious devotion of a lady after the age of Christendom, first related to Freud's concept of narcissism,[19] and second to Kristeva's "in the beginning was love."[20]

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[17] In many ways, popular culture refers to cultural products "for" (not "by") the mass, i.e., the consumers. To Theodor Adornor and Max Horkheimer (1979), it signifies a standardized production, whose the originality and cultural force of art can never be found (*The Cultural Industry* 12*)*. In our cyber-technological issues on concerning cable TV systems, digital imagings, DVD films and animations, etc., describe a highly commericalized mechanism to the nature and function of mass entertainment in the late capitalistic society.

[18] Famous for his "secular criticism" and "religious criticism" in *The World, the Text, and the Critic* (1983), Edward Said explicitly explains the idea of culture as "a systematic body of social and political as well as historical significance" (8). Culture, as stated, is like religion, which "furnishes us with systems of authority and with canons of order whose regular effect is either to compel subservience or to gain adherents" (290). To Said, a true cultural critic should make his discourse with "a healthy skepticism about the various official idols venerated by culture and by system" (290). This critical insistence meets with V. Pecora's term of corporate identity.

[19] The influence of Sigmund Freud on literary criticism is beyond notes! In his *Civilization and its Discontents* (1929), his concept of narcissism is a crucial source to learn one's sense of happiness and the basic social cohesion (46). By illustrating this self-preservative instinct, he introduced "death instinct" to libido, Freudian love and death is thereby a return, an inward, artistic creativity, thinking about the dilemma of human condition (79). Back to his "Creative Writer and Daydreaming (1908), Freud, by analogizing child's play to a writer's creativity, had stated that "everyman is a poet at heart" (712), and a writer's daydream or fantasy creates "a situation relating to the future which represents a fulfillment of [his] wish" (714).

[20] Kristeva's book *In the Beginning Was Love* (1987) is a dialogic and analytic work on psychoanalysis and faith, intertextualized with Sigmund Freud's view of religion as illusion, *Credo* (A. D. 325), some Catholic Christian views of Virgin Mary, and philosophical discussions of Augustine, Spinoza, Decartes, Nietzsche, and Heidegger. To her, word and flesh, like body and language, cannot be divorced (Jesus as Logos), and once a "speaking subject" is created through language, the Freudian unconsciousness, "with its representations of objects and semiotic traces of affects," remains "subsidiary to language and becomes real only in a relation of desire, of speech for the other" (8).

> Pity the <u>abject</u> plight where I am found;
>
> Return my straying thoughts to a nobler place;
>
> Show them this day you were on Calvary. (sonnet 62)

To the Freudian study, Christ's Passion on Calvary is translated as patricide of a child, going with his guilt/ wish to death, and the affiliations of father and son, tradition and influence, text and context of a structured civilization are equally reduced and de-mystified into a psychoanalytical, primitive, world of id and ego. If humanism in Petrarch's Italy referred to represent the states and actions of a unitary human self (Greene 14), then cultural secularization, as Charles Taylor revealed, needs to be recognized in a transcendent way (*A Secular Age* 16).[21] With these concepts, sonnets in our age are contextually to be read as de-mythologizing the mythical figures and symbols with our sense of cultural translation.[22]

> Pygmalion, how glad you should be of your statue, since you
>
> Received a thousand times what I yearn to have just once! (sonnet 78)
>
>
> She seems divine among the dreary folk
>
> Of earth. You say she is not so today?
>
> Well, though the bow's unbent, the wound bleeds on. (sonnet 90)

The myth of Pygmalion and Galatea synchronizes with Petrarch's enchanted love to Laura, whose image of hunter with bows and arrows makes the first-person "I" a pronoun indicating a classical but new way to perform an authentic selfness, and with the virgin archetype (Artemis/ Daphne), "she" clues that there underlines Petrarch's concept of language and desire.

> Petrarch's letters and his own dialogue with Augustine, the *Secretum*, make clear that erotic
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> desire is sinful even as both writers urge self-knowledge as the palliative for man's errors
>
> of desire. As poet, however, Petrarch must confront a paradox generated by the equations
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> desire equals error and desire equals languages: if desire is error, purging the sin of desire
>
> would also erase the pleasures of language. Desire must continue to produce poetry. In this
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> complicated sense, then, desire becomes an object of desire in Petrarch and in his imitators,

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[21] Charles Taylor, one of the most influential scholars in cultural studies, displayed the whole face of the Western ideas of "secularization" after the Enlightenment in *A Secular Age* (2007). To him, the great invention of the West was "that of an immanent order in Nature, whose working could be systematically understood and explained on its own terms," and this invention demands a transcendent God, or of Gods or spirits, or magic forces or whatever" (15-16). By tracing the origin of the Western Reason, he considered that the unbridgeable gulf between Christianity and Greek philosophy makes the Christian God "a mode of healing wounds and repairing the world" (17). In this historical continuum, the religious sacredness and cultural secularization indicates a condition and a civilizational site "in which our experience of and search for fullness occurs" (19).

[22] As Homi Bhabha in his *Location of Culture* (1993) illustrated, "blasphemy as a transgressive act of cultural translation." It is the *medium* Rushdie uses to reinterpret the Koran that constitutes the crime, and "if hybridity is heresy, then to blaspheme is to dream" (226).

> [I]t is the dream of translation as 'survival' as Derrida translates the 'time' of Benjamin's concept of the after-life of translation, as *sur-vive*, the act of living on borderline.... The focus is on making the linkages through the unstable elements of literature and life – the dangerous tryst with the 'untranslatable' – rather than arriving at ready-made names. (226-227)

both male and female. ("The Complication of Subjectivity" 37)

In Moore's statement, Petrarch's classical intellect is interfaced with the theologian Augustine, by sharing sin, language, and sonnets as fallen but cathartic products, and by two equations of desire and error, desire and language, the authentic Petrarch with redemptive belief, formats the sonnet narrative.[23]

IV, Petrarch-related Classroom Practices

My teaching Petrarch's sonnets in May 2007 as the meaningful classroom experience, indeed, makes the mentioned issues form a dynamic readership between the students' projecting their views of love songs into the Petrarchan sonnets, and my reading their weekly practices.[24]

It is, to our Fooyin students, not so much the courtly love they are interested in, but in the individual psychology.

> I like sonnet 126 most due to Petrarch's passion towards Laura. He wrote that Laura "was born in Paradise" (lines 32-33), and her "divine bearing and her face, and her words and her sweet simile had so laden me with forgetfulness" (lines 34-35). This sounded like a fantasy to me. Her beauty makes Love both near and distant indeed. (student A)

Student A noticed the passionate sonneteer in a heaven-or-earth situation, which worked an alienation effect.

> To me, sonnet 126 focuses on a statue-like description of Laura (like Venus or Athena). In her body, a rich garment covered with her angelic breast (line 6), but at the same time, the poet's heart was opened by Love and closed due to his sorrowful dying words (line 7). I believe this emotion is real for love makes us blind, but not so blind.
>
> Also in this sonnet, Petrarch recorded his love towards Laura first, and then he stated how much he loved her (lines 9-15) and made a conclusion (lines 40-41), which are too logical to be a passionate lover as he did in sonnet 1. (student B)

Student B recognized a sonnet structure and the familiar tensions of love as oxymoron defined, and in this practice, he showed himself as a reader/critic; the Patrarchan love did access to the ambivalent effect, and that's why he needed sonnet sequences to tell how he felt. In the homework of Student C and Student D, they respectively compared "Faraway From Me" with sonnet 61 and "Become a Poet" with sonnet 1.

> Jay Chou's "Faraway From Me," rhymed with /ai/ (ㄞ), consists of two similar lines with

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[23] Similar to Mary Moore's reading, Paul Oppenheimer in his *Birth of the Modern Mind, Self, Consciousness and the Invention of the Sonnet* uses the concept of "distance" to indicate the Augustinian ethics of human knowledge and feelings, man and God in the medieval period. Both are understood as "the creative intelligence" of Petrarch(6), but this distance, bound to such ideas as abandonment and salvation, could be overcome through faith and loyalty (which Chaucer termed as *trouthe*)(7). As Oppenheirmer illustrated, statements like "In the beginning was the Word" were understood as "precise descriptions of the divine reality that had preceded creation and that continued into the present, the "middle age" (8).

[24] The practices adopted from the journals of my students are written mainly in Chinese, and some of them have been (under my author-oriented reading) revised and translated into English. See their Chinese versions in Appendix 1.

some different words, and a return to the first-line pattern.

我送妳離開 天涯之外 妳是否還在　琴聲何來 生死難猜 用一生 去等待

聞淚聲入林 尋梨花白 只得一行 青苔　天在山之外 雨落花台 我兩鬢斑白

聞淚聲入林 尋梨花白 只得一行 青苔　天在山之外 雨落花台 我等妳來

What can be ensured is the man loves (or loved) the girl he is waiting for, but how about the girl? Does she know his love or pretend that she knows nothing and feels nothing?

"Become a Poet" is a kind of statement to me. Stanzas 1 and 2 complete the whole structure of this lyric, and its rhythmic patterns are abb/ babc/ acb/ bab. This lyric first gave me an impression of woman as poetic inspiration but the speaker, in fact, thought what he had done was stupid (line 3). But I understand the feeling of being stupid and being in a "stopping" moment (為你靜止) when falling into love. He can do nothing but think of his lover! (student C)

In sonnets, the speaking "I" makes the description of the poet's love all but life-long obsession. Although Patrarch's love is struck by his passion for a woman he could never possess, it is worthy noting that "Faraway From Me" revolves around a lover who also reads. He textualizes himself into the work whose end/window is so unpredictable that it redirects himself into a black-white scene, as student D found.

夢醒來　是誰在窗台 把結局打開

那薄如蟬翼的未來　經不起誰來拆

我送妳離開　千里之外 妳無聲黑白

沉默年代　或許不該 太遙遠的相愛

The words like 對白(line 3)、黑白(line 7)、花白(line 11)、空白 (line 18) are paralleled to describe the male lover's emotion, altering as time goes by. In contrast to "Faraway From Me," the lover/singer in "Become a Poet" is a student, looking for links of his musical notes and his feelings. I prefer Chou's skills. (student D)

The voice of "Become a Poet" is rather a dramatic skill to me. Wu repeated "for your" (為你) for 10 times in stanza 2, and a short story about him and his girl divides him from "who I was" to "what I have done." Wu' s performance in DVD is less persuasive than Chou's. (student E)

It is also to be noted that in student F's practice, he thinks that Jay Chou's putting "Pu" (不) and Wai (外) in his lines makes the concept of "lover as prisoner" better portrayed. As the love-torturing figure "waiting," what's more, the speaker knows that he is playing with fictionality, waiting by the countryside for the "coming" of the swallow is like waiting for wind and the future to disappear.

屋簷如懸崖 風鈴如滄海 我等燕歸來

時間被安排 演一場意外 妳悄然走開

故事在城外 濃霧散不開 看不清對白

妳聽不出來 風聲不存在 是我在感慨

夢醒來 是誰在窗台 把結局打開

那薄如蟬翼的未來 經不起誰來拆

Most interestingly and finally, student F believes that Wu's lyric shares the same awareness of becoming a poet in the sonnet tradition; Chou's work shows the dialogical moment aroused by love as spiritual quest, and the poetic sense of eternity as existence. Both demonstrate a secular expression in treating love to be repressive and intensive feelings; both are associated with the composers' spiritual aspirations and earthly attachments. As an inspiring guide and earthly temptress, Wu's girlfriend has successfully aroused a child-like classmate love, by resonating with "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star."

With the above 6 practices of my students, the form and content of sonnet has been well perceived through their readings of two popular songs. It seems that two inscriptions coexist in the sonnet formation, and mutually adjust insofar as the one imbricated into the other. The love inscription counteracts the versified inscription, prolongs them (into sonnet sequences), makes them converge into the direct filiations of the beloved with the ideal, and the alliance of the beloved with words. In Petrarch's "thetic rupture," Laura's absence keeps the poet, poetry, and the later generation "worlding."[25]

> To her, I'm sick of living; that I'm blown
>
> By winds of grief from the course I ought to steer
>
> That praise of her is all my purpose here
>
> And all my business; that of her alone
>
> Do I go telling, that how she lived and died
>
> And lives again in immortality,
>
> All men may know, and love my Laura's grace (sonnet 333)

IV, Conclusion: the turn of teaching literature in English and learning English in literature

In the first two parts, I dealt with three discursive issues on teaching literature in English as a multicultural dialogue, a new cultural value involved, and a reading/writing relating to second language mastery. The students and the teacher are consequently included to be part of an enlarged context of readership, involving students' cultural lives, their views of love songs, their ways to express themselves in English. The sonnet class has been first focused on the introductions of Petrarch's motif

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[25] The word "worlding" is Vincent F. Pecora's term to describe the relationship of cultural criticism and secularization. As he wrote, the synonyms of "secularization" are translation, transformation, or simply some "negation of religious categories and relations" (*Secularization and Cultural Criticism* 1), and:

> To the extent that secular modern culture came to define itself as in some sense critical or oppositional in relation to an ever more secular official status quo, the apparent historical logic summed up by Weber's "disenchantment of the world" was bound to have profoundly paradoxical consequences where culture, which so depends on its ability to charm, was concerned. (18)

to write, the genric features of sonnet, and the poet's literary contribution on breaking the lines between the sacred and the secular, by linking them via and into a loving, desiring but never reaching female figure. This class, based on students' practices, has in this manner also represented a real life voice of students' value of love through their reflective readings and writings. From their practices, I see the readers move into the texts by their empirical, intuitive and dialogic ways. A literary teaching cannot be more meaningful when a teacher knows that the practices of her students have spontaneously associated their intellectual viewpoints with what they are instructed.

The turn of the teaching/learning is thereby comprehended in a mutual/reciprocal sense. First, the literature classroom where the intellectual learnings are produced is the place making the distinction between student and teacher no longer hard and strict one. Secondly, with the influence of Julia Kristeva's definition of poetic language due to its attacking denotation and meaning (*Revolution in Poetic Language* 68), the students' Chinese practices become noteworthy in learning sonnets in English.

In discussing the love relationship in our postmodern society, Ji Jien-zhi (冀劍制) noticed a "conceptual revolution" in cultural différence; he wrote that a "coupled" heterosexual love in our times have turned into a three-party tension. That is, between the boyfriends and girlfriends there lies a third party, or "bosom friend" (密友), a figure balancing a need to be in love with and a need to be out of love (2).[26] This might be the real face of student-lovers in our era, which is less rooted in the humanistic understanding of one's identity!

Perhaps the term intertextualization is the proper way to learn the love in the Renaissance and life in the postmodern time. While Julia Kristeva stated that the term intertextuality indicates the "result of a redistribution of several different sign-systems: carnival, courtly poetry, scholastic discourse" (*Revolution in Poetic Language* 59), it maybe now believe that every student' s practice is inescapably positioning in a tissue of literary selfhoods as well as his becomings in love.

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[26] 冀劍制。〈概念革命所導致的文化變革：以戀愛文化爲例〉。第十二屆儒佛會通暨文化哲學學術研討會。2009/3/28。

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周杰倫(Jay Chou)。〈千里之外〉。http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FOd1kFd8vzU.

吳克群(Kenji Wu)。〈為你寫詩〉。http://www.youtube.com/watch?gl=TW&hl=zh-TW&v=Tr1H4X-_6Tk.

冀劍制。〈概念革命所導致的文化變革：以戀愛文化為例〉。第十二屆儒佛會通暨文化哲學的理論與實踐。2009/3/28。

Appendix 1: Students' practices[27]

Questions for class practices and homework (in Chinese and in English)

1, What's a sonnet about? How's its form and structure?

2, Which sonnet do you like most? Explain in detail. If possible, can you compare one of the sonnets with one or two popular songs in Taiwan? Tell me your feelings about them.

3, Are the feelings of Petrarch (and Wu and Chou) ambiguous or ambivalent to you? Whose expression is more classical than modern?

4, Can you recall some mythic stories after listening to the two pop songs?

4, How will you keep your love as an important record in your life? Or will you write a poem for your lover? What kind of love will make you a poet?

5, Will you marry Chou or Wu, both of whom are handsome composers and singers? Will he be a good "husband" in your life of marriage?

Student A

我選第 126 首來唸，詩人對 Laura 的愛表達的很明顯。在第 32-33 行，他說 Laura 出生在天堂，她是個仙女，她的臉、她的話，還有她的笑容讓自己只覺得遺憾。我倒認為 Petrarch 太誇張了，但他的重點只要寫女性的美吧！這種美讓愛情忽遠忽近。

Student B

Sonnet 126 把 Laura 寫得像希臘神話中的維納斯或是雅典娜，很神像，但一點都沒有神的感覺，因為竟然寫她的身體，她的胸部吹垂著一條昂貴的外衣。這是寫女人! 但詩人也寫自己，寫自己的"心"： 愛讓他開心，但悲傷也使他的心門緊閉。我想這種寫法真是邱比特的瞎，但又沒有那麼瞎啦！另外，我注意到他先陳述他的 Laura 的愛，再說他愛得很理性，覺得和他在第一首的那種神魂顛倒太不像了!

Student C

周杰倫"千里之外"，押"ㄞ"的韻，歌詞中間的部份有重複，但有一些字是不同的。看了 DVD，我真懷疑這個女的愛他嗎？還是在裝傻？裝癡情？吳克群的"為你寫詩"應是一種平鋪直述，聽完第一段與第二段的歌詞就可以掌握全首歌的韻律了，他押 abb/ babc/ acb/ bab。對歌手而言，這個女孩應對他很有啟發性，但他自己卻覺得自己像傻瓜(第三行)。我很能了解"為你靜止"這種麻木、呆滯的感覺。這是身為戀人的下場。

Student D

整首詞看得出用字有篩選過： 對白、黑白、花白、空白，好像要寫出自己"白白等待"的感覺。"為

你寫詩"的男主角是男同學仰慕同班女生的純純之愛，他寫的詩就表達了對她的愛。在技巧上，我比較喜歡周杰倫的。

Student E

"為你寫詩"太誇張，太戲劇化了！就是很"假"啦！一下就唱了 10 個"為你"，好像很深情，但這只是一個男生愛女生的故事不是嗎？如果說有特別之處，就是這個男的變得不一樣了，由之前只會打架鬧事的小男孩，變成眾女愛慕的對象；由不會作詞彈曲，便成了會譜詞寫曲。吳克群的 DVD 沒啥說服力！

Student F

周董用了很多「不」和「外」的概念，來加強愛的感覺(「千里之外」反而很像受困在鳥籠中的愛)。主角是個等愛的人，寫愛、會愛寫成小說的那種人。不懂什麼是「故事在城外」，但「愛」似乎有預謀、搞曖昧，才能作文章！吳克群和 Petrarch 比較像，都是為「愛」而變成寂寞奮鬥的人，但周杰倫的愛情比較像是在追尋一種默契的感覺，他還願意一直等，但那個「未來」卻「薄如蟬翼」！這是他的修辭，但表示他很在乎那個曾經擁有吧！但這二位「大賣」的流行歌手賣的愛情都很商業化，很流俗、裝可愛、裝執著。周杰倫在 DVD 用了戰爭逃難的場景，吳克群的配樂還有"小星星"。情場、商場、戰場的愛不就是為了錢？

Appendix 2: Two popular songs

I, 爲你寫詩　作詞：吳克群　作曲：吳克群　編曲：鴉片丹

愛情是一種怪事　我開始全身不受控制

愛情是一種本事　我開始連自己都不是

爲你我做了太多的傻事　第一件就是爲你寫詩

愛情是一種怪事　你的笑容是唯一宗旨

愛情是一種本事　我在你心裡什麼位子

爲你我做了太多的傻事　第一件就是爲你寫詩

爲你寫詩　爲你靜止　爲你做不可能的事

爲你我學會彈琴寫詞　爲你失去理智

爲你寫詩　爲你靜止　爲你做不可能的事

爲你彈奏所有情歌的句子　我忘了說　最美的是你的名字

我什麼都能忘記　但唯一不忘是你的名字

我什麼都能忘記　但唯一不忘是你的樣子

II, 千里之外 詞:方文山 作曲:周杰倫　合唱：費玉清, 周杰倫

　屋簷如懸崖　風鈴如滄海　我等燕歸來

　時間被安排　演一場意外　妳悄然走開

　故事在城外　濃霧散不開　看不清對白

　妳聽不出來　風聲不存在　是我在感慨

　夢醒來　是誰在窗台　把結局打開

　那薄如蟬翼的未來　經不起誰來拆

　我送妳離開　千里之外　妳無聲黑白

　沉默年代　或許不該　太遙遠的相愛

　我送妳離開　天涯之外　妳是否還在

　琴聲何來　生死難猜　用一生　去等待

　聞淚聲入林　尋梨花白　只得一行　青苔

　天在山之外　雨落花台　我兩鬢斑白

　聞淚聲入林　尋梨花白　只得一行　青苔

　天在山之外　雨落花台　我等妳來

　一身琉璃白　透明著塵埃　妳無瑕的愛

　妳從雨中來　詩化了悲哀　我淋濕現在

芙蓉水面探　船行影猶在　妳卻不回來
被歲月覆蓋　妳說的花開　過去成空白
夢醒來　是誰在窗台　把結局打開
那薄如蟬翼的未來　經不起誰來拆