Not in Kansas Anymore: A *Superman: Red Son* Place-Based Pedagogy

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We all know the story: a young infant born on a dying planet was sent by his birth parents to live among the people of Earth, a planet that—because of its proximity to a yellow sun—will grant the child godlike powers as he soaks in the nearby star's radiation. This infant traveled the galaxy, arriving on Earth in a meteor-like fury, until his ship crashed in a small rural farm in communist Ukraine. The infant grows up to be a champion for socialist and communist ideals, and is used by the government as a literal iron fist of rule. Wait, what?

Mark Millar's 2003 three-issue DC Comics mini-series *Superman: Red Son* reimagines the life and story of Superman in the way described above. Rather than growing up in Kansas, the young alien child is raised in the USSR and becomes a pawn-like figure in the struggles of the Cold War. Because Superman's story is one that many of us know, even those with a limited interest in comics and comic stories and lore can recite much—if not all—of Superman's origin.

Fig. 1: *Superman: Red Son* MooMini Card

Red Son is a graphic novel that serves as an invaluable teaching tool in both literature and writing classrooms[1] due to the way that the story plays with the conventions of Superman—the reader sees the Superman that she or he knows and is familiar with, but that familiarity is tweaked just enough to make it something brand new and completely different. Besides the obvious "cool" factor that comes with teaching comics (I had three different students on syllabus day this past semester tell me how their friends were jealous that they were reading a comic book in my section of the Humanities Literature course), this Superman also introduces us to an immense number of additional invaluable teachable moments. From identity to xenophobia and to ideas of comics as both readable and writeable texts, *Red Son* allows us to start with a well-known story in Superman and delve into great, interesting topics that are often difficult to introduce in the classroom—either because of the fear of alienating students, or because touchy, political topics can

snowball out of hand quickly. Throughout the remainder of this essay, I explore the way that I have traditionally taught this text, while also introducing some other elements that may possibly improve what I have done and, at the very least, create some additional techniques that one might use to cater to specific classroom needs.

Background

I have taught this text during Humanities Literature courses at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Humanities Literature at this particular university is designed to cover a broad range of time periods and genres, as well as give students an opportunity to read works coming from a variety of voices of color, gender, and place. Beyond these common criteria, most faculty design their Humanities Literature courses around a particular theme or topic, often dealing with their personal research areas. My Humanities Literature course is no different in this regard. Because my research interests lie in ecocriticism and place-based studies, my courses tend to mirror those themes in ways that, I hope, get my students to think about not only the impact that they are having on their varying and various environments, but also the ways that those environments are impacting the students (often without their realization, thus the need for these types of place-based/place emphasis courses). Humanities Literature courses are capped at forty-five students and, accounting for a couple of withdrawals, enrollment in these courses consistently sits at or around that number. This text was taught in Tuesday/Thursday classes, meeting for one hour and fifteen minutes per class. I teach *Superman: Red Son* over two of these class periods, dividing the text in half, approximately, and covering each half over those two classes.

My syllabus includes one particular assignment that is geared towards—but not directly tied into—preparing my students for conversations about the texts that we read, including *Superman: Red Son*. This assignment is a weekly impacts journal. Weekly journals are a great way for students to write reflectively on the course—and the sometimes-challenging topics that I introduce—in a way that is relatively free from criticism or judgment. The additional element that I require from them in these journals, however, is that they also reflect on impacts. The term "impacts" I consciously leave nebulous, because it allows the students to reflect on all of the possible ways that they are impacting the world, the world is impacting them, that particular constructions of space impact a given situation, or even how our readings and discussions from the course have made them more aware of the particular ways that social constructions play out in day to day lives. I want students to write about anything that they wish to reflect on but ask that they pay special attention to the elements of place and space that are influencing their individual entries. Derek Owens explains, "an awareness of sustainability cannot exist without a developing awareness of the conditions and limitations of one's immediate environment" (36-7). I would add one simple addendum to his statement: that "an awareness of sustainability" is not enough, that—to paraphrase T.V. Reed's issues with early ecocriticism— the term "sustainability" has particular connotations that put

environment in a particular realm of discourse (the natural, the wild) that ignores the complexities of spatial constructions by setting it apart from humanity, culture, and politics. In developing these skills that Owens speaks of, then, sustainability is just one goal of environmental justice criticism, but "what is left out, of course, is human beings as connected to nature not only as appreciators but as destroyers. To privilege the first without dealing seriously with the second is a recipe for continued ecological disaster" (Reed). If we solely focus on sustainability as a goal of place-based studies, it can be easy to overlook the other ways that we interact with our environments. These journals provide opportunities for the students to practice unpacking apparently simple ideas and topics into the pieces and parts that lie below the surface. Additionally, it encourages them to ultimately deconstruct whatever space they find themselves in.

I also teach this text at the very end of the semester. I do this for several reasons. First, it is a lighter, less complex (on the surface) text being read when students already have enough on their plates with finals and papers and the stress of the end of the semester. Secondly, many of the topics and ideas that I bring up with my students in relation to talking about *Red Son* are offshoots of topics and ideas that we have been discussing throughout the semester. I like the idea of giving them a text that, again, on its surface, appears trivial and not very "deep." It's important letting students use the knowledge and skills they have learned previously to tackle a graphic novel and to see that deeper meaning can be found in those places and texts that we often overlook, thinking they contain little or no meaning. Compared to a complex, strange, and challenging film like David Lynch's *Eraserhead*, which I also teach in this course and which defies simple explanation, students often see a comic book assignment as something much more easily comprehended, if only in terms of plot, characters, and major themes. The trick is getting them to think as deeply about *Superman: Red Son* as they are forced to do with *Eraserhead*.

Pre-Textual Pedagogy

In order to teach this text effectively from a place-based perspective, a couple of things must happen in the classroom prior to the actual assigned readings of *Red Son*. The first, and most important of these developed skills, from an ecocritical/environmental standpoint, is getting students to understand that when we talk about *environment* we are not simply talking about nature or wilderness. This is reflected in Reed's criticisms of early ecocritical thought, as well as in the many ways that ecocriticism has evolved into a rich and complex theoretical field, covering intersections with Marxist, Feminist, Queer, and Postmodern Theories. Environment and environmental criticism takes shape within a myriad of places—from the urban to the rural, from the confined to the open, from the classroom to the dorm room. Within these criticisms we are often discussing the social constructions of space—how space is "designed" to influence particular behaviors, how different spaces have particular rules (including who belongs where, or is allowed to travel where), how the physical constructions (the way a building, or city, or classroom

is designed, for example) also establish individualized limits to how we act within them. These social constructions, as Timothy Cresswell argues, merge and blend with ideology, until "Society produces space and space reproduces society" (12). Students learning within a place-based pedagogy should understand ideas such as these if they are to begin to learn how to "read" space in the same way one reads a novel or film or comic, for "places are meaningful and because we always exist and act in places, we are constantly engaged in acts of interpretation" (Cresswell 13).

Prior to reading this text, students must also learn how to read a comic book. As comic readers we often take for granted the ease with which we devour book after book, but reading comics involves a particular set of reading skills that many students might lack. In the same way that we must give students skills to read a poem or a film, we must also spend the same amount of time teaching them to read a comic if we wish for them to succeed in analyzing one. There are a couple of ways to approach this type of lesson. One is to simply show the students how to read comics through examples on an overhead projector. The idea here is to go panel by panel and demonstrate the proper way to read dialogue (I have found one of the biggest issues for students is often the order to read dialogue bubbles if more than two characters are talking within a panel), to talk about what is happening physically within a panel (what are the characters actually doing), and discuss the idea of reading "between the panels" (much like reading between the lines, as readers we must infer what happens in the gaps between panels; the better we can do this, the more fluid our reading experience). I am sure there are many more skills that would help new readers get more out of comics, but if students can handle these three, they can at least get through the comic without much headache. Doing an introductory lesson like this—what boils down to the teacher demonstrating the correct action—is effective, particularly if you are devoting time to more than one comic or graphic novel in your semester or if you are planning on spending a significant amount of time on just *Red Son*. The best source, and one that most of us within comic studies are familiar with, is Scott McCloud's *Understanding Comics*. With enough time to spend on teaching student's reading and understanding comics, McCloud's book is a perfect supplement to go along with the actual comics being read, especially in the ways it teaches the literacy of the more complex understandings of comics—temporality and the space within versus the space between panels, for example.

If, however, your classroom time is already limited and, like me, you feel as if there is not much time to cover everything you want to cover in a given semester, (let alone setting aside time devoted to teaching a few basic skills of reading comics) another option exists. This is essentially tossing your students into the deep end in a figurative manner. When handled correctly, the students take part in constructing and creating their own knowledge and information, and, ultimately, the distribution of that knowledge to their peers. Part of my teaching philosophy is the belief that students can figure out basic skills on their own simply through trying. When I teach a film, the students watch the film on their own, and we then discuss that

film in class. Within those discussions, moments always arise in which I allow us to explore some of the more formal elements of the film—lighting, sound, *mise-en-scène*—that are essential to film criticism but which might overwhelm a student on the outset. Telling a student to look for a particular element often gives them tunnel vision (in other words, they miss other, just as important, elements or how the combination of those elements enrich the experience), and might also detract from any enjoyment they might derive from their experience as well. The same is true for when I teach a comic book. I see no added value from a learning standpoint if I tell them what to look for or how to read a particular comic. For one thing, some major goals of Humanities Literature (and most of my courses) are the development of critical thinking skills, adaptability in the face of new scenarios and situations, and gaining experiences that one might not otherwise get.

Of course, this does not mean that students are left to fend for themselves completely within this pedagogical approach. Rather, I spend the first chunk of our first class on *Red Son* having a conversation with my students about their reading experience: What did they like? What came easy? Was it a strange experience? Difficult? How and why? Within this conversation, a couple of things occur simultaneously. One is that students are able to reflect on a new reading experience. They can tell each other what worked or did not work for them and, in return, help in understanding that the text comes from their peers rather than myself. Another is that this discussion allows me to pinpoint and identify those three comic reading skills in a way that seems more organic and is in fact derived from their own reading experiences rather than a reading experience that was dictated by me ahead of time (in other words, me saying, "This is how you read a comic."). Lastly, this discussion gives the students the reigns in their learning. I might need to do some gentle prodding, but for the most part, these discussions are led by the students sharing how to read a comic with their peers . I only step in when they reach a moment in which an explanation is made, but the terminology is not in their vocabulary, to give them that. Beyond that, students teach themselves to read comics on their own. And, I *always* make sure to let the students know what they were able to do on their own, without me, during that class.

***Red Son* Pedagogy**

For the remainder of this essay I want to explore *Superman: Red Son*'s strongest themes from a place-based pedagogy as well as detail some particular activities that I use to get students to think about the text and their own lives and spaces in similar ways. This latter element—how they see it in their own lives—is most important to me and, I believe, to place-based pedagogy. It is one thing to get students to understand how a given text uses place, space, and environment to make its themes known. It is another thing altogether to get students to recognize how place plays out in a text like *Red Son* and then translate that analysis into their own lives and environments. This is foundational if we wish for place-based pedagogy to teach

them, as it should, more about their own world(s) than it does about the text they are reading.

There are two main activities that I use in teaching *Red Son*. One is an activity that I use throughout the semester, and the other is specific to *Red Son*. The former is a podcast[2], recorded by a small group of students (4-5) in front of the class, in which they are responsible for holding and sustaining a conversation about that day's text for 20-30 minutes (20-25 minutes for a group of 4; 25-30 for a group of five. It essentially works out to about 5 minutes per student in the group.). Those familiar with the Fishbowl Method[3] will also be familiar with how this podcast works. It is almost exactly the same thing, with the added element that I am recording the conversation. Additionally, I always give my students the option of not having their podcast posted onto the Internet; they simply have to let me know, and I will keep it off. For the most part, students are reluctantly responsive to the podcasts. It takes a few minutes until they are comfortable with the process and spotlight, but once they get going, it is sometimes difficult to cut them off.

In the Fishbowl Method, a small group of students sits in front of the class and holds a conversation. While that conversation is taking place, the remainder of the students in the room are responsible for taking notes and coming up with follow-up questions to ask the smaller group at the end of the recording of the podcast. In the past, I have let my students just do this on a scrap sheet of their own, but I found that giving them a handout with explicit instructions works better in ensuring that the rest of the class is actually paying attention to what the podcast group discusses. Especially in a class size of forty-five, it can be difficult to keep that many students focused on what a few of their classmates are saying, and the handout helps them key in on particular aspects of the conversation (see Figure 2). The other beneficial element of giving a handout like this is that you can also cater the instructions to a specific text. For example, in *Red Son* (see Figure 3), I ask them to write down what each of the podcasters says each time they mention the United States or the USSR or have them, instead of asking general elaboration or refutation questions, ask a

Podcast Form (Use Back if Necessary)

Podcast Date: _____

Podcast Text: _____

1. Write down 1-2 points that each podcaster is saying about the text.

_____:

_____:

_____:

_____:

_____:

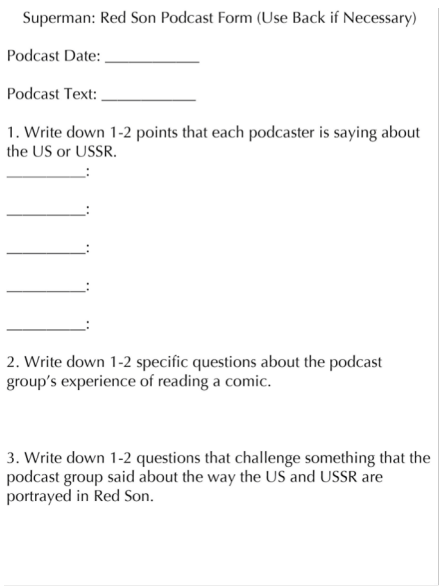
2. Write down 1-2 questions that you want the podcast group to clarify.

3. Write down 1-2 questions that challenge something that the podcast group said.

Fig. 2: Podcast Form

question specific to the genre of comics. This serves the purpose, stated above, of putting the how-to of reading comics into the students' hands. The podcast "audience" can generate questions that they had about their own reading experience (both struggles and successes) and ask the podcast group to explain and explore their own experiences to share with the class.

The other activity, the one directly related to *Superman: Red Son*, is having students write their own "origin" story in comic book[4] form.



Superman: Red Son Podcast Form (Use Back if Necessary)

Podcast Date: _____

Podcast Text: _____

1. Write down 1-2 points that each podcaster is saying about the US or USSR.

_____:

_____:

_____:

_____:

_____:

2. Write down 1-2 specific questions about the podcast group's experience of reading a comic.

3. Write down 1-2 questions that challenge something that the podcast group said about the way the US and USSR are portrayed in Red Son.

Fig. 3: Podcast Form for Red Son

Or, rather, *rewrite* it. In the same way that Superman's story was reimagined in *Red Son*, I ask my students to reimagine a story from their own lives if they had been born or raised in a different place. David Seelow lays out a similar plan in his essay, "The Graphic Novel as Advanced Literary Tool." Seelow asks students to "imagine Superman is born in modern day Iran, [and then] draw a 4 page comic depicting a scene from Superman's Rule as the new President of Iran" (61). Rather than forcing the impetus of learning about place and identity onto students' own lives and experiences, Seelow has students focus on another Superman reimagining. This can be effective, but if students are already reading *Red Son* as an example of an alternate Superman, why not spend more time getting them to focus on their own locales, to fulfill place-based pedagogy's desire that students become more in tune with their own surroundings—and to recognize the impact that those environments have on their lives and experience? Seelow acknowledges this when he writes, "This strategy for retelling a foundational story from a new perspective promotes students' critical thinking skills. Students are now able to imagine different possibilities arising out of a slight change in circumstances and imagine alternate histories" (61). Those "foundational stories" can create significantly more recognition on the impact of those changes—place/space in both *Red* Son and their own stories—if we utilize students' own histories. Those histories/stories can strongly signify how their own lives may have been completely different—for better or for worse—depending on where those stories from their past occurred. Focusing on spaces in which the students are familiar (their own hometowns), in conjunction with a place that stands in contrast to the familiar, can reinforce their relationship to their space,

> where they might come to see ways in which their needs and desires reflect the condition of those communities, and…begin to think of their local environments not as separate, incidental landscapes but as extensions of themselves. (Owens 75)

For this reason, I allow my students to choose any story from their past that they wish to write about, but I encourage them to try and select an event that was moderately important to them—something that was at least somewhat life-altering and/or foundational from their own past—that they would also feel comfortable sharing with their classmates and myself.

There are two different ways to approach the details of this assignment, and—similar to my thoughts on teaching students how to read comics—they depend on how much time is going to be devoted to *Red Son* and their own comic reimaginings. The first, and the only one I have actually used thus far, is best utilized in classes that do not have as much time to dedicate to the text. For this manner of doing the comic, I let the students pick any location where they wish to relive their past experiences. I do this, knowing that they will not have much time to research a particular location to know the details about how their situation might truly have played out. Because of this, students often slip into generalizations or media-influenced portrayals about places that border on the offensive. It is important during the discussion that occurs while sharing their reimagined events to step back and have a meta-moment and talk about *why* they are doing this assignment, and to make sure they are aware that while it is okay for our purposes to imagine what life might be like in another place, we cannot ever assume to know what that experience is like completely, nor can we assume that *all* experiences within that space are identical. Indeed, as Elizabeth Ervin warns, echoing Graham Huggan, "[imaginative acts such as these]—when unchecked—inevitably replicate and perpetuate the very inequalities that are being addressed" (46). I repeat, then, that it is imperative that the students discuss the purpose of the assignment because that discussion allows them to embrace the benefits of said assignment without drafting a location, region, or group of people into parody and, thus, perpetuating the same issues that the assignment seeks to eradicate. But, the simple act of imagination used here can increase awareness and empathy for a group of people within a particular space and can force students to engage with their own biases, to confront their uses of stereotypes, and to embrace the ideologies of place that Timothy Cresswell discusses. This is all possible provided that we, as educators, are willing to break the fourth wall and let students explore the reasoning behind the assignment.

Once the students have chosen their location for their alternate life, they should come up with the story and draw it out in comic book form[5] using 1-2 pages of panels to tell their story. Reassurances about quality (i.e., stick figures are perfectly okay) are a must, and encouraging the students to really have fun with the assignment helps to get them excited about doing it. Because we spend the first day of *Red Son* doing the podcast and talking a bit about comics as a genre, I ask students to keep those conversations in mind as they

write and draw their own pieces. Drawing their own comics out helps to reinforce some of those terms that were learned before: panels, dialogue, action, etc. They should bring their comics in for the other class period devoted to *Red Son*, and I recommend starting with those before moving into discussions of the text. I think it is important to acknowledge the work that I have asked them to do, and if we move right into the discussion of *Red Son*, we often have little to no time left to cover the text and sufficiently discuss their own comics. Also, talking about how their own situations and lives might have played out differently were they born somewhere else can help situate them in a place-based mindset for not only our discussion of *Red Son* but also for the way that we come full circle in talking about what *Red Son* can tell us about our relationships to space and place and how place (where we are born, for example) can significantly influence the way our lives play out.

In *Red Son*, interestingly, these changes are not always drastic. Traditional Superman and the *Red Son* Superman share many things in common. Regardless of their respective affiliations, they will do what is best for humankind above the interests of their different nations. This is an interesting complexity that the students' own comic can help to tease out. Depending on the location that they pick, their stories might not change all that much. These can lead to great conversations about what makes particular places and spaces similar, especially when thinking about the social constructions that make up those spaces and how powerfully they influence our lives (as well as how the similarity between social-spatial constructions often remain hidden from our awareness, thus reinforcing a particular space's hegemonic allegiance, so to speak). Additionally, we can talk about the role that our own spaces have in impacting other spaces as well. In *Red Son*, part of the commentary is the way that the Cold War between the US and USSR, and the propaganda spewed by each, helped fuel the fervor and produce the sense of impending doom in each nation. In other words, how we behaved in the US during the Cold War impacted a space (and behaviors within that space) clear on the other side of the world, and vice versa. Getting students to understand that blame was had on both sides, which *Red Son* also does effectively through many of its characters' dual identities (for example, Lex Luthor's drive to both destroy Superman as well as Lex's ultimate role as a savior of humankind), is an important task in subverting national and spatial apparent identities which often appear monolithic and static: the US is always heroic; the USSR is the corrupting influence which must be kept out. These subversions can help students recognize the problematic role that space plays out in their own (often) unseen privilege(s).

Given more time in the classroom to talk about *Red Son* and comics as a genre, I have several changes that I would make to the students' comic assignment. This would also be an effective tool in writing classrooms, particularly those focused on genre-based learning and writing, because of the additional time spent on the project. Even beyond the genre of comics, this could also be an extremely fun and helpful way to teach students about biography/memoir, place-based narratives, and historical narratives (specifically those

about particular places). For these purposes, I will only cover how to use this to talk about comics as a genre, while also getting students to think even more deeply about the topics covered above with the more basic comic assignment.

The first item that I would change in this activity with more time to devote in the classroom/semester would be to have the students spend additional time researching their particular locations that their alternate identities would exist in, and thus also make their comics a bit longer (maybe 4-5 pages of panels, rather than the 1-2 of the shorter version). While not as extensively researched as a term paper might be, this expanded structure gives them more time to think about the social, economic, political, and cultural constructions that help make up the environment of that place. This will not only help them write better alternate versions of their own stories, it can also help curb some of the generalizations that unfortunately happen as a part of the shorter version of this activity. Again, the number of possible classroom goals that could easily be achieved through this assignment is encouraging. Beyond the research skills of exploring their respective places, students can also learn how to work with(in) several different genres. Obviously, the comics they are putting together allow them to understand the pieces and parts that make up a comic, and I even think it would be interesting to have them work together in an editing process that mimics actual comic book production (pencils, ink, lettering, etc.) to show them just how complex that production process is. Teachers can also use this activity to talk about personal narratives, memoirs, and biographies perhaps showing examples from *Maus* or *Persepolis* to engage in a conversation of why or why not the comic book medium is more effective than basic prose in telling these stories.

The additional time that they have to research their alternate spaces can also cause some problems, however. In the event that students begin researching and find that the place they are researching would have little to no effect on the outcome of their story slightly undermines the purpose of the activity (to get students to understand the ways that place is an influencer of culture and identity, and that they might have had vastly different experiences, depending on where those experiences happened). In order to prevent this, I suggest two possibilities. First, simply allow the student to choose another location. Ultimately, this creates more work for the student as they are now responsible for researching an entirely different location, and this might be an unnecessary stress for what can be an otherwise fun and enjoyable project. The other possibility is to have a pool of places prepared from which students can choose. In larger class sizes, it makes sense to let students double up on the same place, if they choose to, as this can also create a support group of sorts in the research project. Having a pool of places allows the teacher to know that the locations will provide ample opportunity for the students to have a relatively different alternate experience to write about. I recommend letting students still choose their locations if they know of a particular place not on the list that they would like to write about, but I would be sure to let them know that if they have trouble finding research that “changes” their event, they will have to choose another place.

These two additional steps can make this project a much fuller and rewarding one. In order to ensure that the project also remains directly connected to *Red Son*, it is an excellent idea to make sure that at least a couple of students research Communist Russia from the 1950s -1980s as part of their project. This will not only guarantee that they have a relatively drastic change in experience, but it will also give the classroom one or two "experts" on the location that will be invaluable during discussions on *Red Son*, particularly since almost the entirety of our classrooms at this point are made up of students born well after the Cold War ended. Having these students situate the historical context of *Red Son* is helpful, but it places the burden of that knowledge onto the students helping to reinforce the classroom as a student-centered environment.

Again, once the projects are completed, they should be used within the context of discussing *Red Son* to help generate conversations about differences of space and place and their impacts on identity and culture. Because one of the goals of teaching *Red Son* from a place-based perspective is to also break down and question the way our own spaces are constructed for us, these student generated alternate histories can also help students understand their own privilege (or even the lack thereof, depending on the stories they choose to tell) in the mirroring of this other space. In other words, how can reading another space help inform our understanding of our current spaces? *Red Son* has just as much to say—if not more—about American social and political identity during the Cold War as it does about Russian identity. Their alternate history comics can serve the same purpose in getting them to understand space in ways that are often overlooked by getting them to actually examine in detail their own lives from a different perspective.

Conclusion

Superman: Red Son, through its exploration of well-known, beloved characters and their alternate (yet still familiar) existence is a wonderful pedagogical resource that makes students aware of, and helps them to engage with, ideas of place and space that are sometimes overlooked and taken for granted within society. Because our perceptions of space, and the ideologies that sometimes construct those spaces, are often understood as static, monolithic, and unchanging, getting our students to recognize those ideologies can help them understand the ways that space and place influence our lives and the ways that we influence them. This can ultimately change it for the better, by deconstructing and undermining negative ideological foundations of space by seeing ourselves within the world rather than separate from it. The local is a place in which students have a familiar, almost expert, understanding of space, and it can be a tool to recognize the ways that "local socioecological conditions are constituted by larger-than-local historically contingent processes" (Ball and Lai 270). By embracing the local, and transforming it into the global, as the activities laid out here do, the students can make these connections between the local and larger-than-local. This newfound ability to find the connections and intersections found in space also establishes foundations of place-based understanding that allows

them to not only see the world but to also see the world in a new way. It is a way in which it is okay to question and to challenge the perceived static notions of ideology (both spatial and social), and to perceive the ways that we build space and space builds us.

Notes

[1]I should note that I will be writing about college classrooms, but I see no reason why what I am laying out here could not be used for high school courses as well

[2]For recent examples, visit pixelscholars.org/brandongalm/podcasts

[3]Adapted from *Collaborative Learning Techniques*, Barkley, Cross, and Major. Jossey-Bass, 2005. 145-9.

[4]Credit to Eliza Albert for encouraging me to embrace the comic medium, rather than simply having students write a narrative.

[5]See Figure 4 for an example of a student's work on this project. In this example, the student imagined her alternate self as having come from China. In many of this student's impacts journal entries, she also wrote about ideas of gender, both as they related to herself, as well as to Chinese cultural traditions, and did a great job of exploring and challenging both.

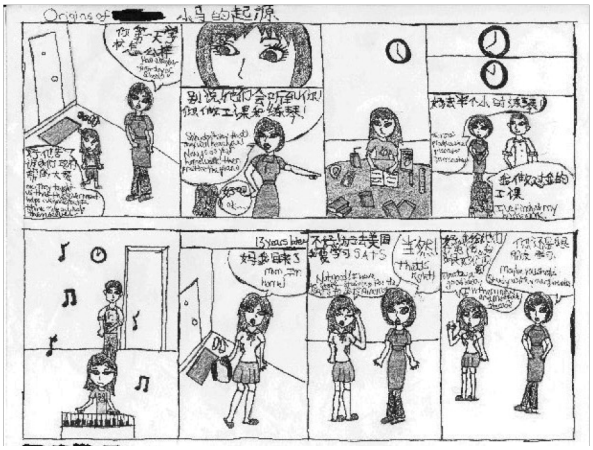


Fig. 4: Student Work

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