

The Pedagogical Implications of Teaching Atatürk’s “Address to the Youth” for Global Public Rhetorics and Civic Action in the U.S. Writing Classroom

Elif Guler,
Longwood University
& İklim Goksel,
Indiana University
Purdue University
Fort Wayne

This essay focuses on the pedagogical implications of teaching Atatürk’s “Address to the Youth” for a more inclusive and diverse understanding of global rhetorics in the U.S. writing classroom. We propose that the public work of rhetorical instruction includes helping students develop as global citizen leaders by allowing them to explore and critically become aware of various national cultures and rhetorical traditions across the world. Integrating non-Western public rhetorics into the U.S. writing classroom challenges students in this context to write outside of the classical conventions of rhetoric and affords students to mobilize a new discourse for civic action.

George Kennedy once famously noted, “some might argue that rhetoric is a peculiarly Western phenomenon, a structured system of teaching public speaking and written composition developed in classical Greece” (2-3). Since then, various scholars including Kennedy have challenged the “Western” nature of rhetoric as they addressed the wide diversity of experiences and assumptions in composition and communication studies. For example, in their

efforts to recover non-Western rhetorical traditions, Laura Gray-Rosendale and Sibylle Gruber asked critical questions to effectively move towards alternative historical accounts of rhetoric:

Although we recognize that no historical account is without a complex system of motives ... [we seek] to explore alternative historical accounts, accounts that push against ready answers for questions such as the following: What are the historical origins of rhetoric? In what ways do we need to revise the traditional, canonical views of the history of rhetoric we have received? ... We need to ask questions of context, ethics, and power: In what context is this history or rhetoric produced and normalized? Whom does it benefit? (15-16)

To further challenge an Aristotelian, Western approach to rhetoric even in the examinations of its treatment in other cultures, Lu Ming Mao argued, “the central question to ask is not “What is rhetoric in/for these other cultures?” but “What does the other do in/with rhetoric, and how does the other do it?” (450). To this day, rhetoric and composition scholars have tackled these questions by providing rich accounts of the discursive acts and practices of ethnic minority groups and cultural enclaves within the U.S. or across nations (see Baca; Bernard-Donals and Fernheimer; Donahue; Foster; Ouyang and Wui; Swearingen and Mao). However, scholarly discussions on pedagogical experiences of integrating alternative rhetorical traditions—for example, non-Western rhetorics understood as rhetorical perspectives and practices originating from cultural contexts other than those of Greek and Anglo-American ones—into the U.S. writing classroom are still limited (for a rare example, see Sharma’s published course plan on “World Rhetorics”). Any such discussion on pedagogical integration of cross-national, non-Western rhetorics do not specifically delineate how students could use their newly acquired rhetorical knowledge for *civic action*—deemed of essence to contemporary rhetorical instruction with a responsibility to train what Chase Bollig calls “critically thinking, public-minded citizen-workers” (169).

This limitation is particularly problematic in a time when scholars continue to seek new insight and resources to be able to turn the

writing classroom into places of public rhetorics where writing is transformative and a social action (see Bollig; Ackerman and Coogan; Welch). In his foreword to *The Public Work of Rhetoric* (Ackerman and Coogan), Gerard Hauser points out the essential nature of rhetoric courses to developing citizen leaders and the need to shift the focus in rhetorical instruction:

Required rhetoric courses in public speaking and writing are often the only exposure most students receive to those skills necessary for them to function as effective change agents. In these required courses, as well as in courses that emphasize writing within the discipline, the main attention usually is on the demands of academic writing over the needs of our communities, which need future civic leaders who are both informed and capable. (xii)

Furthermore, Nancy Welch criticizes the field's ongoing lack of tools to engage students in public argument and participate in civic life. In her "Living Room: Teaching Public Writing in a Post-Publicity Era," Welch calls for models and lessons for creating a space in the writing classroom where students could channel their rhetorical knowledge and skills to more freely and meaningfully voice their own struggles. She herself employs as a model the twentieth century U.S. working-class struggles characterized by rhetorical action against war, oppression, and exploitation.

To follow up these conversations, we propose that the "public work" of rhetorical instruction also entails helping students move beyond the traditionally accepted rhetorical strategies—which, in the contemporary U.S. national context, is understood primarily as the classical Greco-Roman or Anglo-American traditions—and become internationally-acclimated, global citizen leaders who are equipped with the knowledge and tools of rhetorical traditions across nations and cultures.¹ This essay aims to advance the efforts in this regard by

1 The idea of globalism has previously been discussed as a western enterprise and a form of neocolonialism with western origins (for example, see Sartre or Chomsky and Herman). Our reference to the term "global citizenship," however, does not connote the adoption of a particular culture or assimilation into it; it rather connotes an awareness that other forms of rhetorical practice exists globally and that becoming a global citizen is about an awareness of the existence of these practices.

exploring the pedagogical affordances of employing influential texts from non-Western rhetorical traditions as alternative models in the U.S. writing classroom.

Our study focuses on the pedagogical implications of teaching an influential example of oratory from the Turkish context: Turkey's founding father Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's "Address to the Youth"² (hereinafter referred to as "the Address"), which constitutes the final statement of Atatürk's *Nutuk* (*The Great Speech*) delivered in 1927.³ Atatürk (1881-1938), the revolutionary founder and the first president of the modern Turkish Republic following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, delivered *Nutuk* to the Turkish Parliament for an unconventional duration of thirty-six hours over six days from October 15-20 in 1927. *Nutuk* in its entirety provides Atatürk's first-hand account of the Turkish War of Independence (1919-1922) and Turkey's transition from an empire to a modern nation-state. In the conclusion of *Nutuk*, Atatürk addresses the Turkish youth (both the nation's young citizenry at the time of *Nutuk*'s delivery as well as the posterity), instructing them to take civic action in the face of adversity. The Address serves as an empowering framework through which the governmental authority or hegemonic powers can be questioned and challenged. While mediating an anti-colonial resistance rhetoric that is radically emancipatory, the Address also seeks to introduce civic consciousness to citizens within the political realm of a newly founded nation-state. Hence, the Address is a non-Western text that can serve as a pedagogical tool conducive to rethink the public work of rhetorical instruction.

The following sections first elaborate on The Address as a form of public rhetoric and then present our pedagogical experiences with integrating the text into the U.S. writing classroom. In an upper-level writing course at a midsize, four-year public university in the U.S., students were introduced to the Address as an influential example of a non-Western text. Students were then asked to work in groups in the process of analyzing the Address and composing with the rhetorical tools found in the text. By doing so, we explored how alternative rhetorical models could encourage students in the U.S.

² Turkish: *Gençliğe Hitabe*

³ A copy of the Address can be found on pages 740-741 of the 1927 edition of Atatürk's *Nutuk* translated into English.

national context to draw out discursive tools and genre conventions from non-Western contexts. We then encouraged students to use the rhetorical tools found in the non-Western text to argue about an issue related to their everyday lived experiences within the U.S. (i.e., the cost of higher education). Overall, the implications of this study emerge from the grouped-writing samples of thirteen students as well as the course instructor's observations and class discussion notes on the classroom activity. After we overview our findings from the two parts of our pedagogical application, we end this essay with a discussion of how introducing contextually influential examples of non-Western public rhetorics such as the Address can offer alternatives to teaching rhetoric in the U.S. context and help us consider different forms of public rhetoric as civic action. Our classroom application demonstrates the ways in which non-Western rhetorical traditions might enhance students' notions of rhetoric across cultures and add to their active citizenship toolbox in a U.S. context. We contend that such pedagogical applications not only facilitate interaction with lesser-known discourse communities in newly arranged unconventional patterns but also equip students with the added knowledge of non-Western, alternative rhetorical models for engaging in public argument.

THE ADDRESS AS PUBLIC RHETORIC

From October 15–20, 1927, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk—the founder and the first president of Turkey—delivered an unconventional speech to the Congress of the Republican People's Party (which constituted the Turkish Parliament of the time). Delivered over six days, the speech chronicled and justified in painstaking detail Atatürk's leadership actions during Turkey's transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic. Shortly after its delivery, the speech was entitled and published as *Nutuk (The Great Speech)* in Turkey. Originally in the Turkish language (which was then written in the Arabic script), the speech was also translated into several languages and sent to diplomatic missions and libraries throughout the world. Since then, *Nutuk* has been considered an exemplary text in Turkish political culture—not only for narrating the Turkish republican history and constructing a modern Turkish identity based upon values such as sovereignty, republicanism, and secularism but also in terms of its anti-colonialist rhetorical qualities. The speech presents a discourse that subverts

Western colonialism and sets the stage for a political movement against the 19th century western mandate systems and territorial expansion interests (see Atatürk). The conclusion of *Nutuk*, referred in this essay as the Address, reflects and emphasizes this discourse.

Directed essentially towards the Turkish young citizenry, the Address features a sequential narrative that is intentionally designed to move the audience through the historico-political space of an independence war. It encapsulates the civic consciousness necessary to the young Turkish Republic's continued existence and independence. It is about one page in length when transcribed and transliterated into the Latin-based Turkish alphabet and translated into English. The full script of its English translation is as follows:

O Turkish youth!

Your first duty is to forever preserve and defend the Turkish independence and the Turkish Republic.

This is the very foundation of your existence and your future. This foundation is your most precious treasure. In the future, too, there will be those at home and abroad who will wish to deprive you of this treasure. If one day you have to defend your independence and your Republic, you will not hesitate to weigh the possibilities and circumstances of the situation before taking up your duty. These possibilities and circumstances may turn out to be extremely unfavorable. The enemies nursing designs against your independence and your republic, may have behind them a victory unprecedented in the annals of the world. By violence and by ruse, all the fortresses of your beloved fatherland may have been occupied, all its shipyards captured, all its armies dispersed, and every part of the country invaded. And sadder and graver than all these circumstances, those who hold power within the country may be in error, misguided, and may even be traitors themselves. Furthermore, they may identify their personal interests with the political designs of the invaders. The country may be impoverished, ruined, and exhausted.

O Child of Turkey's future! Even in these circumstances it is your duty to save Turkish independence and the Republic. The strength you need is present within the noble blood in your veins.

In its original transcription in Turkish, Atatürk begins the Address with the phrase, "Ey Türk Gençliği!" (O Turkish Youth!). The opening uses an exclamation word specific to the Turkic oratory, *Ey*—a rhetorical trope that has historically been used by Turkic communities to add emphasis to the opening of a direct address to an audience and get listeners' attention. This exclamation was evident especially in the 8th century Orkhon Inscriptions (the earliest Turkish texts available) found in the Orkhon valley of Mongolia.⁴ Given the lack of an exact translation for this exclamation word, some translations of the address begin directly with the phrase, "Turkish Youth," while others choose to begin as "O Turkish youth!"⁵ Atatürk's oratorical style in the opening of the Address is deliberate; by recovering the word, *Ey* from the Orkhon Inscriptions and using it to address his audience, Atatürk is making a direct allusion to the nation's Central Asian Turkic heritage. This move implies a transition from the Ottoman Empire's Islamically oriented political culture based on the principles of *umma* (religious community) to a nation of Turkish citizens grounded in its earliest Turkic origins. With this move, Atatürk also emphasizes the notion of a new Turkish citizenship in stark contrast to the Ottoman *ghulam* system—which refers to a servile system that essentially denied political agency to individuals within the empire (see Itzkowitz). In a sense, Atatürk's

4 Some examples of inscriptions that begin addressing audiences with "Ey" (transliterated in contemporary Turkish) are as follows: "Ey büyük Türk ulusu! Dört bir yerden taşçılar getirdim bu barkı yaptım. İçine dışına Cihan Kahramanı Gültekin'in uğraşlarını yazdım, resimlerini yaptım. Gönlümdeki dilekleri bu taşta kazıdım. Sen büyük bir ulusun, sana beni Hakan yapan Tanrıya bin alkış." "Ey Büyük Türk Ulusu! Bizden sonra gelenler bunu görsün, böyle bilin. Ölmez taş işledim, bu ıssız yere diktim. Üzerine her şeyi yazdım. Oku! Türk Ulusunun birleşmesi için sen de sırasında kanımı akıtmaktan korkma!" For more information on the Orkhon Inscriptions, see Ergin.

5 The official 1927 edition of Atatürk's *Nutuk* translated into English opens the Address with the phrase, "Turkish Youth!" The official website of Atatürk Society of America features a translation that opens with "O Turkish youth" (<http://www.Ataturksociety.org/about-Ataturk/Ataturks-speech-to-youth>). In our study, we used the latter version since we thought it better represented Atatürk's original oratorical choice.

strategic use of *Ey* grants political agency and civic responsibility to his audience at the very beginning of the Address.

Following this subversive move in his speech, Atatürk provides a list of extremely adverse conditions that the nation might potentially encounter as a result of the “ill wills” of its external or internal enemies threatening “Turkish independence and Republic” in the unforeseen future. He then calls the youth (and thereby, the Turkish nation) to concerted action when the conditions deem it necessary and concludes his address with the phrase ‘the noble blood in your veins’—used metaphorically as a statement of empowerment—suggesting a kind of power both rooted in Turkish history and ancestry and drawn from the critical thinking skills and civic rights that were newly granted to modern Turkish nationals. Hence, as a critical work that contemplates a national struggle against hegemony, the Address actively seeks to create thoughtful citizenship that is capable of independent thinking committed to democratic action (rather than submission to a corrupt government or colonialist ambitions of the powerful).

Representative of the genre of civic rhetoric in Turkish intellectual tradition, the Address, then, is an uncompromising oration composed to extend political agency and engaged citizenship to a people transitioning from the subjects of an absolute monarchical empire to independent citizens of a nation. With the purpose of teaching the rhetorical models at play in the Address, we introduced our students in the U.S. national context to the English translation of this non-Western text. In what follows, we discuss this pedagogical experience.

INTRODUCING THE ADDRESS INTO THE U.S. WRITING CLASSROOM

Our discussion draws upon the grouped-writing samples of thirteen students as well as the class discussion notes and observations of the course instructor (the first author) in an upper-level writing course taught at a U.S. public university in the fall semester of 2014.⁶ In general, this writing course allowed students to study a variety of English texts ranging from the classical Greek rhetorical tradition (e.g., English translations of Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*) to the prominent texts of American rhetoric (e.g., Lincoln’s “Gettysburg Address”). Throughout

6 IRB approval for this research was obtained from the institution where the pedagogical study was conducted.

the semester, students were asked to read the texts and then respond to them by participating in classroom discussions and writing activities. In doing so, students explored the theme of “social change” and were to achieve the following course outcomes: 1) develop an awareness of the discursive patterns that drive social change; 2) critique systemic levels of the communication process ranging from the intrapersonal to the intercultural; 3) and use a systematic methodology for guiding [their] actions as social change agents.

During a unit on non-Western rhetorics, students were presented with the English translation of the Address with the purpose of teaching the rhetorical models at play in the text. Students were asked to explore how the rhetorical models they identified helped the text’s rhetor succeed in becoming a social change agent. The student responses were gathered from the subsequent instructional activities that involved grouped reading, analysis, writing, and presentation assignments that were completed over three class periods during an instructional unit on non-Western rhetorics. The instructional unit had two goals. The first goal was to help students explore and critically become aware of non-Western national cultures and rhetorical traditions. The second goal was to invite students to use their newly-acquired knowledge as alternative rhetorical models of engaging in public argument and participating in civic life.

Part I: Implications of Analyzing the Address as a non-Western Text

In the first part of our assignment, students were asked to read the Address and then engage in a rhetorical analysis of the text by discussing it in groups of three or four. Students were to address the following prompts during the small group analysis:

1. What are the main arguments and topics covered in the speech? How are those organized?
2. What seems to be the purpose of the speaker in making this speech?
3. How does the speaker use language to persuade his audience? For example, what are the key words, concepts, and ideas

included in the speech, and what do they tell us about the beliefs and values embedded in the speech? How are those used to promote the speaker's goals?

Following the analysis activity, the instructor led a class discussion to elicit students' oral responses regarding the text's rhetorical characteristics. Before the small-group analysis or during the class discussion, the instructor did not provide any details about the cultural or historical context for the Address, except its orator's name and professional identity, the country of its origin, and the year of the text (i.e., the Address was delivered by M. Kemal Atatürk, the founder and first president of Turkey, in 1927). The reason for this decision was to allow students to consider the non-Western text with a naked eye without the risk of swaying their opinion with the knowledge of the contextual factors that might have shaped this text. The following sections discuss, based on the course instructor's observations and class discussion notes, our experiences with the pedagogical integration of the Address into a U.S. writing classroom.

Three phrases related to the rhetorical elements of context, audience, and purpose could characterize the students' reception of the Address as a non-Western text: contextual struggles, an audience-related uneasiness, and a purpose-driven openness. The first and foremost challenge students faced during the analysis resulted expectedly from the contextual nature of rhetoric. Having anticipated this possibility, both before and during our pedagogical application, one of our main concerns with integrating a non-Western text into the U.S. writing classroom was to determine how much contextual background information to provide without influencing students' perceptions and opinions about the text's rhetorical features. We often hear rhetoric or communication teachers talk about how difficult it can be for students to actually grasp the concept of context; in our study, students' contextual challenges in engaging with the Address proved to be an opportunity to develop new insights around issues of context in rhetorical instruction. For example, students' strategies to overcome their struggles in analyzing and understanding the Address without much context included interrupting the group analysis to ask the instructor questions about the text's social, political, and historical background. Although they were not necessarily allowed or asked

to do so, some students tended to reach out to their smart phones or other mobile devices in order to research the text's historical time period. Engaging with a non-Western text, then, did not only help these students more automatically and naturally grasp the notion of context, but the analysis turned into an activity that resembled solving a puzzle—which also helped the previously disengaged students adopt a new meaningful purpose in the classroom. The 'new experience' quality to analyzing a non-Western text engaged more students than usual in a rhetorical analysis.

In this process, the lack of contextual information led students to also experience an audience-related uneasiness, which was reflected in hesitating to share all of their responses to the text. For example, before the discussion, some students voiced their concern about the "political correctness" (i.e., avoidance of comments that might exclude, marginalize, or insult groups of people from different cultures) of their contributions to the class discussion about the Address—given the reasonable doubt that the instructor might evaluate the responses based on her own cultural identity, worldview, or political agenda. Once the instructor assured students of the actual vitality and expectation of freely expressing ideas in their responses, many students elaborated extensively on the discourse strategies of the Address and actively engaged in articulating its rhetorical qualities.

When students' uneasiness turned into a purpose-driven openness to analyzing and understanding the non-Western text, some of the students' findings indicated that in their analysis they tended to revert back to their earlier knowledge of classical, Aristotelian rhetorical concepts (e.g., Atatürk's use of pathos/emotional appeals, such as invoking a fear of the enemy or giving hope through a promise of the future). However, the Address also attributes knowledge of history as essential for one's national existence, and students were able to recognize this principle as a requisite for rhetorical agency in the Turkish context. Another rhetorical feature the students recognized based on an earlier frame of reference was the text's omission of religious discourse in favor of promoting national sentiment. Students noticed that this rhetorical model posed as a radical shift from the rhetorical and contextual choices students had previously studied in other texts, such as in Martin Luther King's 'I Have a Dream'

speech where appeals to religious sentiments were repeatedly made. Students were also able to observe through the Address, for example, the ways in which the notions of patriotism and sense of pride for one's country are rhetorically expressed in another national culture.

As Michael Bernard-Donals and Janice W. Fernheimer note, while doing work in the history and theory of non-Western rhetoric and rhetorical practices, there could be something lost or it can also be dangerous to try “to understand and interpret all rhetorical practices through the Greco-Roman lens” (xiv). It is helpful to consider rhetoric as a practice but not as a systematic study of a discipline in non-Western contexts—including the Turkish case. Once the students were encouraged to share any observations made in the Address without a rhetorical frame of reference, the students were able to recognize additional elements that could be attributed to the Address, such as the notion of social responsibility (evident in the phrase, “first duty”) as essential for rhetorical action, in forms that are unique to the Turkish case; and yet, the students could not fully point out why or how these forms were different due to their ongoing contextual-struggles. In our class exploration of non-Western rhetorics, this made the students pay further attention to the conditions and contexts in which non-Athenian rhetorics were practiced—which in and of itself served as a learning outcome and was later to be enhanced upon providing the students with more historical context.

After the initial analysis and discussion, we reinforced the significance of the element of ‘context’ for exploring rhetorical action in non-Western contexts by supplementing the Address with historical artifacts, including a treaty (the Sevres Treaty of 1920 that the Allied Powers of the West imposed on Turkey for the colonial partition of Ottoman territories upon the conclusion of World War One) and a documentary in the English language (Wertebaker's 1958 production, *The Incredible Turk*, which includes a narrative of how Atatürk stood up against the Sevres treaty to prevent Turkey's partition). In the final debriefing, one of the students' overall findings was that the rhetorical activity in the Address aligns language less with eloquence and more with a formal search for an ontological relation that can be established with the audience. While the students

did not directly use the term “ontological,” they commented on Atatürk’s desire for the inclusion of all Turkish people—including the young citizenry—in a new active citizenship movement. Indeed, this kind of a rhetorical practice is well documented in the Address where language challenges and changes the Ottoman-Turkish forms of communication grounded in a servile system, which still bore its effects on the Turkish people in the young Republic of 1927. The Address, after all, was delivered in a context where the idea of citizenship had yet to be instilled in ‘a people’. On the whole, students seemed open to a cultural change in course texts, and learning about a non-Western context in this process was an additional practical outcome for the students who want to grow academically and socially as internationally-acclimated citizen leaders who are familiar with the rhetorical tools and strategies across different national cultures.

Part II: Practicing Public Rhetorics for Meaningful Social Action

One of the primary tenets of our study was to make the endeavor more meaningful, practical, and relevant to students. Therefore, the second part of our pedagogical application asked student groups to practice rhetoric by applying the rhetorical models discovered in the Address to their own context. We asked students to work in groups to compose a short text (350 words) to argue against the high cost of college education (an issue related to many students’ everyday lived experiences in the U.S.), addressing their piece to a contemporary U.S. audience (no further specification was provided). The writing prompt was as follows:

Using some of the rhetorical tools and strategies we found in Atatürk’s speech, write a short piece (~350 words) to protest or argue against rising college tuition and fees (or another student issue). Address your text to a contemporary U.S. audience.

Once the student groups completed this activity as an in-class writing assignment and presented their text’s implications for civic action, their responses were collected (students were asked not to include their names in their texts). We examined the texts composed by the students for their rhetorical structure in order to gain an understanding of the ways in which the new rhetorical models in the Address helped students establish civic ethos and demonstrate public engagement.

The most interesting part of the activity was to observe what kind of an approach the students would decide to take in their responses to the prompt and the ways they would combine their own understanding of how rhetoric works with the structure of the speech they had just studied. To highlight student outcomes in terms of the fruitfulness of this approach, we offer three examples of student groups' responses—each representing specific learning outcomes in terms of students' productive engagement with the text.

One student group's composition mirrored the structure of Atatürk's speech to address the 'Board of Visitors', instructing them about high tuition rates at their university (the name of the institution was denoted by the letter X for anonymity):

O Board of Visitors!

Your first duty is to provide an exceptional and affordable education to all students who attend X University.

While this institution's preservation relies on its students, they cannot be expected to withhold its principles alone. To attain a brighter future, students rely on leaders to provide an affordable learning experience. Tuition steadily rises each year. If tuition keeps elevating, then students will be forced to dissociate from this university or to rebel against the authorities created to protect them. There may come a day when scholarships are limited and students have exhausted all their financial resources. At this point, students will no longer be able to give sufficient payment for the education and materials they so desire, and as a result they will not attend and preserve X University's unique culture. And sadder and graver than all of these circumstances, X University and Virginia will revert back to a state where only few, select, elite can afford the luxury of higher education and benefit from its esteemed accolades. Furthermore, potential students may instead align with those who are against the educational system and those who have been betrayed by the system of higher education.

Even in these circumstances, it is your duty to remain aware of your actions' influence on higher education as a whole. Simply being affiliated with this great university empowers your ability to defend the educational and cultural experience that so many treasure and that so many have yet to treasure.

Students' discursive move of addressing their audience as "O Board of Visitors!" illustrates their interest in the non-Western text's oratorical style as well as a willingness to take on its authoritative tone to emphasize their own civic responsibility to engage a powerful group of audience members—the Board of Visitors. Students then adopt an instructional tone reminding this audience of their 'primary educational duty' towards students. The rest of the piece also follows the rhetorical model adopted from Atatürk's original Address, as students provide a list of potential adverse effects of insufficient financial resources for students' higher education experience. Students end their piece with a metaphor of empowerment, equating the educational and cultural experience at their university with something to "treasure." The piece, on the whole, encapsulates the grave importance of the issue for college students.

Another student group's piece addressed their fellow college students:

Dear [nickname adopted from the name of the athletic team representing the college],

We have a Call to answer. A Call to lower tuition rates in the Commonwealth of Virginia. A Call to redefine what higher education means. A Call to take action.

The people need to recognize that the high cost of tuition is creating a challenge for us to pursue higher education. This high cost leaves the students unable to cope with all of the financial responsibility of attending college by requiring us to depend on our parents or guardians who may or may not wish to honor our wishes. Our independence is being taken away from us little by little. We need to be prepared for what matters in life: the late nights of studying, preparing for those comprehensive exams,

finding our soulmate, and facing the harsh realities of being an adult. But, it can be too much all at once.

We don't need those loans. We don't need the mounds of student debt. We don't need the wrinkles of worrying about how to make ends meet, making us old before our time.

Like those politicians, the Bourgeoisie of modern American society. They say that keeping the cost of education high makes the whole experience more worthwhile; lowering the cost of bachelor degree is going to break the system. We the Proletariat do not have time for this hogwash. The price of education is rising like the price of McDonald's fries; pretty soon, we are going to be looking for another restaurant to eat at.

We take pride in the hard-work we will accomplish. We will have the strength; the blood will pump through our veins with the intensity to reach the goals which may seem unobtainable. We will finish strong, even if we are paying off our loans into our Social Security days without the guarantee we will even receive the compensation.

We say in America that education is a way to a brighter future. Education is the key to success. But how are we supposed to open that door if you take away the key? How are they to journey forward if the path is overcome with the tangled growth of student loans? How can you tell a child that they will never be able to go to college because they don't have enough money? How is an adult supposed to begin a successful life after graduating if they are buried under the weight of their student debt? Students leave school, fresh with knowledge, a yearning to advance their financial situation, and an eagerness to enter the real world. Yet their back is broken, weighed down by the oppressive and foreboding loans, that creep ever closer after graduation. They do not become homeowners or productive members of society, out of fear that the weight will increase far past what they may carry. When in college, we fill their brains with information and broken promises that what they learn will help them succeed. Yet, they are doomed from the start.

Tuition in the United States is at an all-time high, and only continues to rise. High tuition fees not only affect the students paying them, but America as a whole. Soon, only the wealthy will be able to afford to go to college, creating a society in which the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. Is this a picture of what you want America to look like?

The students of America are traveling down a long and cumbersome road with no relief in sight. We must ease their burden, lift the weight, and strengthen their crippled backs with promises of a better education system, one that focuses on the future success of its students, not their bank accounts. Progress can never be made; success can never be achieved, as long as the value of education comes with a costly price tag.

In this piece, students follow the example of Atatürk's Address by addressing their fellow students who constitute predominantly a young population with a responsibility to address the issue at hand. They also seem to place an additional emphasis to the opening section of the piece by capitalizing the letter 'C' in the word "Call." This move, which would obviously only be evident in the written version of the piece, is a rhetorically strategic one as it once more emphasizes the grave importance of the issue and the students' related call for action. The following sections of the piece provide a rich discussion of the effects of higher education costs on students, including various metaphors inspired by the Address (e.g., "the blood will pump through our veins with the intensity to reach the goals which may seem unobtainable"). Students' elaborate discussion of the issue both pleasantly surprised us and demonstrated that when given the chance, students make use of the new rhetorical models to show their capabilities in producing successful texts to be used for public and civic action.

Of course, students will not always be likely to adopt over a few class periods the different kinds of rhetorical strategies they observed in a non-Western text. In the following response, we see students using conventional phrases that are likely to appear in texts from Western cultures, such as "we are gathered here to..." The rest of the response also follows more of a linear logic that we would tend to see in Greco-

Roman rhetoric. Perhaps in an attempt to apply certain rhetorical features observed in the non-Western text, students provide a list of possible outcomes of lower tuition rates. However, the structure they employ still seem to follow the conventions they are used to such as in providing a list of reasons to support their argument:

Welcome. We are gathered here to discuss the drawbacks of high college tuition. It is our duty as the future of the country to be as educated as possible but administrators and the government are making that difficult. Instead of focusing on giving us an education, they are focused on making money off of us. We are not in control of our education. If we continue on this path it will only lead to further destruction of the economy because we will not have the opportunity to be financially independent from our parents and the government. Our duty is to improve the country but how can we do that if we are so far in debt that we can't even get jobs? Decreasing the cost of college would lower the number of people in debt in the country. It would also make college an opportunity that many people don't have because of the cost. With more people educated, more advances could be made in medicine and technology. Those changes could then lead to the growth of the nation and the economy. Current students are the future of the country and education is the foundation of a strong country. Providing an education for its future leaders is the logical thing to do. We need to stop letting others decide our future. We need to take our education into our own hands and be the ones to say that everyone deserves better. Now is the time to change. There is no time to wait for things to work out because they will only get worse. And if we continue to do nothing, we will only have ourselves to blame. Only we have the power to incite change and it is our duty to do so.

As a result, the students did not passively read and discuss the non-Western text; they also offered their own versions of a public argument. Their arguments included calls for action on an issue that carried a local and national significance and that could directly impact their own lives. The strategies they recognized in an unfamiliar, non-Western text prompted them to reflect upon their own exigencies and lay them out in detail. An awareness of

the rhetorical strategies in the non-Western text led students to construct a different kind of argument.

Like any other classroom application, the results might vary across student groups; some participated to their fullest in the analysis and production of texts, while some might have been less willing to participate. In this particular classroom experience, however, even the previously disengaged students wanted to participate. When given the chance, students made use of the new rhetorical models found in a non-Western text to show their capabilities in producing successful texts to be used for civic action in their own contexts. What the experience demonstrated, at least to us, is that students are open to learning about the public discourses of the world and enact change in the light of the globally diverse meanings associated with rhetorical action. In the next section, we explore the implications of these findings.

DISCUSSION

Our classroom application confirmed that engaging with cross-national texts can be a valuable experience for the contemporary writing student in the U.S. national context. The goal of the first part of our pedagogical application was to expose students to non-Western ways that rhetoric can be practiced. In an advanced rhetoric and writing course at a midsize public university, student groups analyzed a translation of the Address—an excerpt from *Nutuk* commonly known as Atatürk's *Great Speech*. In its original context, the address rhetorically empowers citizens to take action in the face of adversity. In our pedagogical use of the text within the U.S. writing classroom, we found that the particular way students engaged with the elements of *context*, *audience*, and *purpose* within their rhetorical analysis of a cross-national text highlights the rhetorical nature of writing that is essential to civic action—which deserves attention particularly in the globalizing contemporary world. First, students experienced challenges engaging with the text resulting from the *contextual* nature of rhetoric. Second, the lack of contextual information led students to cast *audience*-related doubts onto the text. Still, solving the rhetorical puzzle of the text (with virtually no knowledge of its historical context) provided students, even the

previously disengaged ones, with a new purpose of discovery in a rhetoric and writing course.

In the second part of our application, our aim was to prompt students to think about how those strategies can function at a local level with an issue that can be personally relevant to many of them. Using the same discourse strategies of the Address, students composed texts to protest college tuition hikes at their own university. Introducing an anti-colonial text that was written in a non-Western context presented the students with a new set of rhetorical conventions. The text prompted students' thinking in such a way that it allowed them to bring out their own rhetorical abilities. The new language they learned from the non-Western text challenged them to write outside of the rhetorical conventions they were used to and allowed them to mobilize a new discourse for inquiry and public action necessary for a critical citizenship.

As Madeleine F. Green points out, global citizenship and internalization allow students to make connections between the local and the global, and to have cultural empathy, and to be able to "identify with the universality of the human experience" (2). As part of the vision to promote global citizenship, institutions of higher education in the U.S. and around the world participate in student exchange programs, which aim to cultivate cultural and emotional intelligence among students; the Stanford University Cross-Cultural Rhetoric Project further expands these efforts by connecting students and faculty from different parts of the world to promote competency in global communication and collaboration (O'Brien). Hence, our classroom application offers a platform amenable to teaching students about the multiplicity and diversity of global rhetorical practices. In doing so, our efforts also address Christiane Donahue's idea that "denaturalizing" the writing conventions in the U.S. context can help us move towards internationalizing composition work so that our students can recognize the writing conventions outside of their own contexts to be aware of the larger global literate practices and communities ("Internationalization" 232).

For a pedagogy of global rhetorics and civic action in the writing classroom, student resources need to be constantly expanded to

support our efforts in providing our students with meaningful social action. Instructional activities that build on cross-national texts enable the writing classroom to function as a microcosm of larger contexts where public rhetorics are practiced. Such activities encourage students' engagement with cross-national cultures and rhetorical traditions and help them come to terms with contextual-knowledge constraints of a rhetorical situation as well as with the affordances of such situations for making meaning out of texts. Completing activities like this across multiple texts might result in far better student work and contribute students' developments as global citizens—both outcomes which we feel make this endeavor worthwhile. Contextually influential cross-national texts can provide guidance for instructors in a systematic introduction of rhetorics for civic action and change.

In our pedagogical experience, Atatürk's Address served as a source of inspiration for public rhetorics in the writing classroom because it promotes students' creativity—a skill necessary for critical citizenship; the text allowed students to explore alternative non-Western constructions of rhetoric and to understand how rhetorical practices can differ across national cultures. The Address is only one example of texts that could be used to integrate international public rhetorics into the U.S. writing classroom; a broad range of texts from Africa, South America, and Asia can be used to introduce cross-national public rhetorics into the U.S. writing classroom. Many of these texts, especially historically influential public addresses, are available in the English language (translation or original) and are accessible through the World Wide Web. Among them are Atatürk's Speech on the 10th Anniversary of the Turkish Republic (1933, Turkey), Prime Minister Nehru's speech on Indian Independence Day (1947, India), Indira Gandhi's speech on the Crisis in East Pakistan (1971, India), Madame Chiang Kai-Shek's Address to the Congress (1943, China), Vyacheslav Molotov's, "The Nazi Invasion of Russia" (1941, Russia), Nelson Mandela's "I am Prepared to Die" (1964, South Africa) and speeches on gathering support to abolish apartheid (1980, South Africa), and so on—which can all help students explore and critically become aware of different contexts and their alternative rhetorical traditions. Instructors may encourage their students to ask: What kinds of imagery and metaphors characterize these speeches? What relation do these bear to national and global

issues? How can students' experience with different kinds of global rhetorics get translated into an argument for civic action in a national site? A more advanced reflection on the experience of engaging with non-Western texts might also be possible through questions such as, "What happens when texts move into new contexts, taken up by audiences beyond the imagination of their producers, emerging from radically different social and discursive spaces?" (Edwards 454).

In terms of rhetorical instruction, introducing an anti-colonial text originating from a non-Western context presented the students with a new set of rhetorical conventions. Much of the student writing we see enacts rhetorical strategies acquired from the cross-national text. Students drew inspiration from the non-Western text, which helped them to deploy a rhetoric that touched the heart of their issues. The text also helped students to have a fuller grasp of the element of context in a rhetorical situation as well as a better understanding of audience awareness. Contemporary rhetorical instruction, especially as it pertains to practicing public rhetorics, can thus benefit greatly from non-western texts as they engage students in the analysis of history and, thereby, the context. Additionally, by focusing their efforts on local and national issues and audiences, our students as global citizen leaders can foster their abilities in transforming their socio-political contexts according to their own purposes. They can accomplish this by keeping in mind the cross-cultural and cross-national power of rhetoric.

WORKS CITED

- Ackerman, John, and David Coogan. *The Public Work of Rhetoric: Citizen-scholars and Civic Engagement*. University of South Carolina Press, 2010.
- Atatürk, M. K. Nutuk. A speech delivered by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, 1927. Istanbul: Ministry of Education Plant, 1963. (Original work published in 1927)
- Baca, Damian. "te-ixtli: The 'Other Face' of the Americas." *Rhetorics of the Americas: 3114 BCE to 2012 CE*, edited by Damian Baca and Victor Villanueva. Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.
- Bernard-Donals, Michael F, and Janice W. Fernheimer. *Jewish Rhetorics: History, Theory, Practice*, edited by Michael Bernard-Donals and Janice W. Fernheimer. Brandeis University Press, 2014.
- Bollig, Chase. "‘Is College Worth It?’ Arguing for Composition’s Value with the Citizen-Worker." *College Composition and Communication* 67.2 (2015): 150-72.
- Chomsky, Noam, and Edward S. Herman. *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism*. Black Rose Books, 1979.
- Donahue, Christiane K. "Negotiation, Translinguality, and Cross-cultural Writing Research in a New Composition Era." *Literacy as Translingual Practice*, edited by Suresh Canagarajah, Routledge, 2013.
- . "Internationalization and Composition Studies: Reorienting the Discourse." *College Composition and Communication* 61 (2): December 2009.
- Edwards, Brian T. "Logics and Contexts of Circulation." *A Companion to Comparative Literature*, edited by Ali Behdad and Dominic Thomas, Oxford: Blackwell, 2011. 454-472.
- Ergin, Muharrem. *Orhun Abideleri [Orkhon Inscriptions]*. Bo aziçi Yayınları: stanbul, 2008.
- Foster, David and David Russell, editors. *Writing and Learning in Cross-national Perspective: Transitions From Secondary to Higher Education*. NCTE, 2002.
- Gilyard, Keith, and Vorris Nunley, editors. *Rhetoric and Ethnicity*. Heinemann, 2004.
- Gilyard, Keith, and Victor E. Taylor, editors. *Conversations in Cultural Rhetoric and Composition Studies*. Davies Group, 2004.

- Gray-Rosendale, Laura and Sibylle Gruber. "Introduction: Moving Beyond Traditions: Exploring the Need for Alternative Rhetorics." *Alternative Rhetorics: Challenges to the Rhetorical Tradition*. State University of New York P, 2001.
- Green, Madeline F. "Global Citizenship: 'What are We Talking About and Why does it Matter?'" *NAFSA: Association of International Educators*. January 2012.
- Hauser, Gerard A. *Vernacular Voices. The Rhetoric of Publics and Public Spheres*. Columbia, U of South Carolina P, 1999.
- Itzkowitz, Norman. *Ottoman Empire and Islamic Tradition*. U of Chicago P, 1972.
- Kennedy, George A. *Comparative Rhetoric: An Historical and Cross-Cultural Introduction*. Oxford UP, 1995.
- Mao, LuMing. "Redefining Indigenous Rhetoric: From Places of Origin to Translingual Spaces of Interdependence-in-Difference." *Rhetoric and Writing across Language Boundaries*, edited by Suresh Canagarajah. Routledge, 2013.
- Mao, LuMing and Morris Young. *Representations: Doing Asian-American Rhetoric*. University Press of Colorado, 2008.
- O'Brien, Alyssa J. "Global Citizenship and the Stanford Cross-Cultural Rhetoric Project." *Journal of the NUS Teaching Academy* 1 (1): 32-43.
- Ouyang, Huining. "Rewriting the Butterfly Story: Tricksterism in Onoto Watanna's A Japanese
- Nightingale and Sui Sin Far's The Smuggling of Tie Co." *Alternative Rhetorics: Challenges to the Rhetorical Tradition*, edited by Laura Gray-Rosendale and Sibylle Gruber. State University of New York P, 2001.
- Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Colonialism and Neocolonialism*. Routledge, 2001. (Original work published in 1964)
- Sharma, Ghanashyam. "World Rhetorics." *Composition Studies* 44 (1): 2016.
- Swearingen Jan and Mao, LuMing. "Introduction: Double Trouble: Seeing Chinese Rhetoric through Its Own Lens." *Symposium: Comparative Rhetorical Studies in the New Contact Zone: Chinese Rhetoric Reimagined*, edited by C. Jan Swearingen and LuMing Mao. *College Composition and Communication* 60: 4 (June 2009): W32-W44.

- Welch, Nancy. "Living Room: Teaching Public Writing in a Post-Publicity Era." *College Composition and Communication* 56.3 (2005): 470–92.
- Wu, Hui. "Alternative Feminist Discourse of Post-Mao Chinese Writers: A Perspective from the Rhetorical Situation." *Alternative Rhetorics: Challenges to the Rhetorical Tradition*, edited by Laura Gray-Rosendale and Sibylle Gruber. State University of New York P, 2001.

Elif Guler is the Coordinator and an Assistant Professor of the Rhetoric and Professional Writing Program at Longwood University, Farmville, Virginia. She teaches courses and conducts research in the areas of cultural rhetoric, public and professional writing, and women's studies. She previously helped edit *Foundational Practices of Online Writing Instruction* and co-authored a chapter on using online tools for assessment in the writing classroom for *Collaboration, Literature, and Composition*.

Iklim Goksel is an independent scholar and an ethnographer in Anchorage, Alaska. She has a Ph.D. in Language, Literacy, and Rhetoric from the University of Illinois at Chicago. She is the author of the monthly column *Pearls á la Turca* in *Anthropology News* which addressed issues related to gender and sexuality in the Middle East and North Africa. Her scholarship integrates rhetorical studies with ethnography, gender, and Turkish studies.