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21L.007 World Literatures: Travel Writing
Fall 2008

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Revision/comparison essay

Due: 1 day after SES #20

Length: 7-9 pp.

Topic: you choose, but compare one text you have written about (in the first or second essay) to one you have not yet written about; include in the comparison one relevant media object.

Tutorial required before submitting the essay.

1. Identify a concept (and/or something more concrete) that connects a text you have already written about, in either of the first two essays, with a second text, one you haven't yet written about. Revise the existing essay to make it part of a larger comparative essay that includes one "media object" from outside the text.
2. Comparison should work both ways; ideally, setting two texts side-by-side will show you and your reader something new about each one. It can bring to light deep structures of ideas shared by texts and authors who may otherwise appear to be miles apart. It can also clarify what is specific and unique to each text.
3. The media object can be an image, a piece of information, a video clip, or a statement by the author. You might start by looking at objects posted on the wiki, on the website, or in the meta-media archive (note that a number of the meta-media objects are actually archives themselves; they are there for you to use in your research). Ideally, you will find a way to work with something that is not only verbal. Your object should have a role in the essay that is more than just illustration. For instance, if the portrait of Equiano was my object, I wouldn't just use it to show what he looked like; I could be commenting on his choice of posture and dress, or I might think about how having a portrait made relates to his appropriation of English print media for radical purposes.
4. It's up to you how much of the original essay to incorporate in the revision. You should be able to build on what you have, to the extent that it fits the new framework. However, any problems with the original essay -- from typos to implausible arguments -- should be fixed.
5. Each essay is going to look a little bit different, and this is a somewhat complex assignment. Accordingly, **part of the assignment is to meet either with me or with Nora** next week. Please sign up on the wiki if you haven't already done so, and let me know if you would prefer to meet earlier in the process, on Friday. I expect to return your second essays by the end of the week, but don't wait until then to start thinking about what you plan to do.