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**HL2036: Virgins and Vixens:
Global Women in “Long” Eighteenth-Century Contact Zones**

Spring 2018

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Time: Wednesdays, 9:30am-12:30pm

Location: HSS Seminar Room 4

Course Aims

1. You will analyze the diverse representational options for (and limitations of) women in the Anglophone world of the British Empire in the period 1660-1832
2. You will chart the historical and formal developments of Anglophone literature as they intersect with the representation of women in this period
3. You will furnish yourself with a toolkit of theoretical terms and concepts that will enable you to analyze the resistance to, accommodation of, and complexity of women’s place(s) in the contact zones of a globalized “long” eighteenth-century world

Content

We will study the role of women in the various movements of globalization extending across space, time, and commodities beginning with the desire for territory and Christendom in the Mediterranean, the desire for gold in the “New World,” the desire for textiles and spices in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asian regions, and the desire for sugar and slaves in the transatlantic trade. We will consider how women negotiated not just the virgin/vixen binary but how they did so within a globalized context. We will thus explore how women in various relations to the metropolitan center of the British Empire wrestled with the problems of place and cartography, the history of exploration and the genre of travel writing, contact zones, marginality, colonialism, empire, hybridity, subalternity, creolization, and double colonization.

Books to Purchase

****Please purchase on your own through Book Depository, OpenTrolley, or AbeBooks.com, etc.**

Margaret Cavendish, *The Blazing World* (Penguin) (Text is also available for free online in the *Early English Books Online* database (via NTU Libraries), but the seventeenth-century typography makes it harder to read than the modern edition)

Anonymous, *The Woman of Colour* (Broadview) (If you prefer, you can purchase a less expensive e-copy of this text at the Broadview website)

Introduction

Female Bodies as Contact Zones: Creolization and Complicity from La Malinche to Safie

Week 1

Introductions

Please read ahead of first class meeting: postcolonial theory terms; Carmen Tafolla, “La Malinche”; excerpt from *Frankenstein* (NTULearn)

Mediterranean/Christendom

Week 2 – Travel Writing

Excerpts from Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, *Turkish Embassy Letters* (NTULearn)

Week 3 – Exploration, Discovery, and Mission

Margaret Cavendish, *The Blazing World*

New World/Gold

Week 4 - The Black Legend and the Ottoman Mediterranean – The First Globalization

Excerpt from Bartolome de las Casas; Excerpt from *Atlas Maritimus* on Asia vs. America and Africa; Excerpt from *Robinson Crusoe* on conquistadores and cultural relativism; Excerpt from *Gulliver’s Travels* on empire and colonialism (NTULearn)

Week 5 - Contractions of Body, Space, and Time

Penelope Aubin, *Noble Slaves* (1722) – available in *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online* (ECCO) database

Indian Ocean/Textiles and Spice Trade

Week 6 - Nation, Empire, Luxury, and Exclusion

Jane Barker, *The Lining of the Patch-Work Screen* (1726) (NTULearn)

Week 7 – Colonial Anxiety and Exoticism

Excerpts from Thomas De Quincey, *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* (1821) (NTULearn)

Midterm Recess

Transatlantic/Sugar and Slaves

Week 8 – Creole Degeneracy

William Pittis (?), *The Jamaica Lady* (1720) – available on ECCO

Week 9 - Marriage, Miscegenation, and Independence

Anonymous, *The Woman of Color* (1808)

Week 10 – Slavery and Abolition

Excerpts, Mary Prince, *The History of Mary Prince, A West Indian Slave* (1831), excerpted from Signet Classics edition (NTULearn)

Writing Back to Empire

Week 11 – Pacifism and Protest

Anna Letitia Barbauld, “Eighteen Hundred and Eleven”; Phillis Wheatley, “On Being Brought from Africa to America,” “To Maecenas,” and “A Letter to Reverend Samson Occum”; Felicia Dorothea Hemans, “The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in New England”

Week 12 – Postcolonial Bricolage
Olive Senior, excerpts from *Shell* (NTULearn)

Week 13 – Semester Review

Final Essays Due: TBA

Extensions will only be granted for documented cases of medical or family emergencies or for students with FYP projects confirmed by the Division of English (please contact me if you are an FYP student).

Learning Outcome

By the end of the semester you will have learned about the diverse representational options for (and limitations of) women in the period 1660-1832 alongside the economic, legal, political, and social issues that informed choosing among those options. You will have a firm grounding in the historical and formal developments of English literature as they intersect with the representation of women in the period 1660-1832 and you will have a toolkit of terms to use in evaluating intersectional concerns in Anglophone literature.

Student Assessment

- In-class writing exercises/group work: 10%.
- Midterm Project/annotated bibliography + evaluation of the scholarly conversation (750-1000 words): 10%. Choose one primary text. Select three works of scholarship (at least one of which must have been published in the last ten years) that focus on your primary text. Summarize the argument of each scholarly work (at least a paragraph for each source) and then briefly evaluate the “scholarly conversation” through the lens of one or more of our postcolonial theoretical terms (What do scholars typically analyze about this text? Are there areas of broad agreement? Are there strong disagreements among scholars? What gaps are there in the conversation from a postcolonial—or other—perspective?). The assignment must include a Works Cited page and be formatted according to MLA conventions.
- Final Essay (2000-2500 words): 30%. Must be in MLA format, must focus on at least one full text (not an excerpt) and must incorporate at least three secondary sources (at least one of which must have been published in the last ten years). You may choose the same primary text and secondary texts you used for your midterm if the primary text is not an excerpt.
- Final Essay Exam: 50%