

Adam Yaghi

Perspectives on the Humanities: Identity, Memory. . .

Requirement #4: Comparative Essay

Value: %25 (250 points) of the course grade

Due Dates: Please see the body of this assignment sheet

Date Distributed: Sept. 30, 2019

Introduction:

For this major assignment, you are free to choose and respond to just **ONE** of the following prompts. Just, please keep in mind, that excellent essays are those which do not restrict themselves to just talking about content or theme related issues, but rather are ones that, where needed and relevant, briefly draw attention to how genre and/or the social/political context enhance or limit the success of each of the analyzed texts at achieving its core thematic objective. Also, if and when relevant, name the theoretical lens (i.e. [postcolonial theory](#), [feminist theory](#), [new historicism](#), or [genre theory](#)), you are using in your attempt to demonstrate how each text works. When and where relevant, I encourage you to economically draw from the articles and essays we have covered so far to strengthen your core claim which you have to deposit in a clear, clean, focused, and arguable thesis statement.

Progression Breakdown:

This essay must follow the conventions of academic writing and must be between 1300 and 1450 words. I expect you to produce (1) a clean first draft which will be self-reviewed and later revised by you to produce your second draft of the essay, (2) a second more developed draft which will be peer-reviewed and necessary revisions will be made by you to produce the third draft, and (3) a final draft of the essay.

- 1- The first draft is due as an online submission on **Oct. 12 before 11:00 am to NYU Classes**.
- 2- **On Oct. 12** after you hand in the first draft, produce a reverse outline of that draft and make the necessary revisions and changes to generate your second draft of the essay.
- 3- Make sure to complete that self-revision work and submit the reverse outline and the second draft of the essay on **Oct. 14 before 11:00 am to NYU Classes**. We will later peer-review that second draft. Following that peer-review session, incorporate any relevant feedback and make the necessary revisions to produce your next draft.
- 4- **On Oct. 14 at 11:00 am** Shanghai Time, your second draft of the essay is due to NYU Classes for our guided peer-review session. I will organize the peer-review sessions and communicate to you what will happen and how it will take form. Completed peer-review forms and peer-reviewed draft must be submitted to NYU Classes on Oct. 15th before 11:00 am Shanghai time.
- 5- Revised third draft is due for marking on **Oct. 16 before 11:00 am to NYU Classes**.

It is imperative that each one of you meets these deadlines so we can proceed to the next stage and give and take constructive feedback. I will design revision forms to help you complete these progressions. Although I will not comment on your 1st and 2nd drafts, you are welcome to discuss any of them or your argument, thesis, and/or an outline with me during office hours.

Prompts: Here are **THREE** prompts. Choose and respond to only **ONE** of them.

- 1- By the date this assignment sheet is distributed, we should have read and discussed in class at least one related reflective/ analytical essay or theoretical article from the assigned reading list. In that context, think of the following prompt: in “Coming to America: Reflections on Hair and Memory Loss,” Ella Shohat writes, “As I was looking into Yamamoto’s work on the drudge labor of a laundress, I was wondering about our own work, hers and mine, as granddaughters of dislocated domestic laborers. A critic and an artist, in our new class spaces we continue rinsing, cleaning, and scrubbing, as it were, the misrepresentations that surround our hyphenated identities” (293). What does Shohat mean by “rinsing, cleaning, and scrubbing”? How does she perform these actions? And most importantly do you think Leila Ahmed in the chapter from her memoir *A Border Passage* and Maxine Hong Kingston in her hybrid memoir *China Men* engage in similar or rather different projects (by similar, I mean similar to Shohat’s acts of fighting back against misrepresentations or similar to one another’s project)? How so? What does each one of them do exactly?

In no more than 1450 words essay but not shorter than 1300 words, use Shohat’s statement as the lens through which you will provide a careful analysis of Ahmed’s AND Kingston’s projects. In the process, consider how their choice of genre and/or context advance their major objectives. You can identify a commonality and a difference between these authors or just a commonality and use it as the core of your argument (and that is just a suggestion). Make sure to have a clear, focused, and arguable thesis statement, provide enough evidence from the texts, and engage in selective close analysis where needed to back up your claims. Produce clear and clean writing. Cite your sources properly. Follow the conventions of academic writing.

- 2- The assigned readings for this course concentrate on a wide array of themes. Some texts, for example, reference significant events from the past and draw on the role of memory. So, examine the ways **TWO** of our major texts (think of Ahmed’s and Kingston’s memoirs) allude to history, or communal narratives, or national memory, and investigate how these allusions to past events confirm or rather reject a narrative of the inevitable present for the potential of a different present or even a utopic future. In your essay, you may also want to reflect on how the use of genre—if applicable—plays a role in facilitating their projects. Your essay should not exceed 1450 words but it should not be shorter than 1300 words. Have a clear, focused, and arguable thesis statement, provide enough evidence from the texts, and engage in selective close analysis where needed to back up your claims. Produce clear and clean writing. Cite your sources properly. Follow the conventions of academic writing.
- 3- Main texts like Kingston’s “No Name Woman” or *China Men* and Ahmed’s “Harem” or “The Struggle for the Future” show feminist elements and anti-hegemonic tendencies or positions. They are critical and often are critical of more than just one institution, group, or idea. Choose a single text by each author to investigate the validity of the above statement. You may strategically and economically allude to the other texts by these authors or texts by other authors from what we have covered so far. Be specific and selective in terms what each author (meaning Ahmed and Kingston) or text critiques and make sure to stay focused on task and produce a unified and systematic argument. Your essay should not exceed 1450 words but it should not be shorter than 1300 words. Have a clear, focused, and arguable thesis statement, provide enough evidence from the texts,

and engage in selective close analysis where needed to back up your claims. Produce clear and clean writing. Cite your sources properly. Produce fully developed paragraphs and closely follow the conventions of academic writing.

Grading Criteria:

The grade you receive will reflect how successful your essay is at offering . . .

- Proper and correct formatting,
- A clear, well-developed, and engaging introductory paragraph,
- Your arguable, focused, and specific thesis statement that engages the examined texts,
- Strong paragraphs with clear and focused topic sentences that relate back to and advance your thesis statement,
- Sufficient evidence and analysis of that evidence and close reference to the analyzed pieces in order to support your claims,
- Clear transitions within and between paragraphs,
- Effective and wise incorporation of direct quotes,
- Strong flow and elimination of wordiness,
- Avoiding plagiarism,
- A clear conclusion that reiterates the paper's main claim(s) or draw attention to a larger issue that needs further examination,
- Formal and objective style,
- Grammatical clarity and strong sentence structure,
- Correct in-text and end-of-text citations, and
- Punctuality and timely submission.

Happy Writing