Title: Reading Response 4

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About: This piece is the first “Manifesto” regarding our final DH project for the semester. It is 617 words in length.

Firstly, I would like to thank Andrew, Jeff, Tina, Trey, Angela, Akua for the mini-group discussions we had in classes, and all of my other classmates for the in class discussions, the conversations I had with them helped formulate the thoughts and decide on the themes I would like to work on for the major project. Andrew deserves a special mention as he put together the bullet points of the topics we discussed in class, which he gracefully shared. The themes I would like to incorporate for the project are: Colonialism and its imposition through language, internalization of colonialism as both represented through the collections found within DH project websites, as well as how DH may be used to perpetuate such knowledge formations, accessibility, and world literature(s).

A lot of the materials we went through in One More Voice, are works produced or collected during the several colonial projects that the western nations undertook. One of the most prominent ways in which the colonizers imposed their supposed "superiority" is through imposition of their language on all "official" matters regarding the colonized nation, essentially creating a stratified barrier between themselves and the colonized people. I think it is important to look at the different ways in which the imposed language (I will specifically be looking at English) was used as a tool by the colonizers to reinforce their complete control over a colonized people. A lot of the materials we went over in one more voice bring out the theme of internalization of the colonial ideology by members of the colonized people, I wish to talk about the different routes this internalization takes, and the different institutions these are channeled through. The most prominent ones that I could find in OVM, were the institutions of religion specifically Christianity, the English language and its grammatical structure, capitalistic profitability, and imperialist science and enlightenment rationality. These themes are very prominent in the OVM DH project, and I wish to talk about how these themes need to be explored and related to the present, as they are still present, maybe in forms or iterations that are different to their original ones, as aspects of neo-colonialism.

I also want to explore the themes of how digitization of knowledge in general and DH in particular has the scope to undo or provide alternatives for a lot of these colonial models, by centering their ideologies or agendas in themes of accessibility and decentralization, as has been discussed in some of the assigned readings. I also wish to explore the proverbial other side of the digital coin and explore how digitization also perpetuates colonial models because of its assimilated nature within the institutional and capitalist structures. One of the most prominent fields in which digitization and DH in particular have been of immense importance is in the fight against the Eurocentric and colonial centralization of English as the "world language" and the gatekeeping and exclusivism that comes with the notion of there being proper and improper use the language. In this ongoing fight for accessibility to language, it is important to note that the accessibility to the DH world is paramount to be able to meaningfully contribute to the expansion of ideas surrounding what it means to truly incorporate the "world" into world literatures. This accessibility, as we have seen in the assigned readings and class discussions is barricaded for both individuals as well as potential DH programs at institutions, behind paywalls, lack of sources of funding, institutional and governmental agendas, and questions of sustainability, all of which I think need to be addressed in some capacity if DH is going to be the leading avenue in the fight against colonialism and its various iterations.