Proseminar: The Empire Writes Back

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History 497A
Fall 2011
Location: SH 184
Class #11928

Description: During the late-nineteenth century, increasing numbers of Indians traveled to Britain. Some, like Gandhi, would become famous; others have largely disappeared from history. But all of them grappled with what it was like to be a colonial subject in the world’s largest empire. What did Indian travelers make of the sprawling London metropolis? How did they position themselves within the British Empire? Why were some travelers grateful for the opportunities that being a part of the British Empire afforded, while others were destitute in the street as outcasts of Empire? What did Britain look like to an “outsider”? How did they view the British? Thanks to a generous donation by a former CSUN history major, the Oviatt Library recently purchased a microfilm collection called “The Empire Writes Back: Indian Views of Britain and Empire” that makes available seventeen memoirs recording the views and experiences of Indian visitors to Britain. Many of these works are extremely rare; most were published only in India. Using these and other sources, students will write research papers on the nineteenth century British Empire focusing on Indian (or other colonial) travelers to Britain. Warning! This class is not for the lazy or faint of heart. If you are not a good writer or committed to improving your writing, or are not prepared to work consistently and diligently, you should enroll in a different section. Prerequisite: successful completion of History 301.

Objectives:
• To produce an original, well-written, properly-documented, 15-page research paper on a historical topic relating to colonial travelers to Britain
• To demonstrate the ability to locate and analyze primary and secondary sources and to situate them in a historiographical context
• To learn to revise a first draft in order to produce a polished final draft
• To think theoretically about the experience of travel
• To consider the experience of Asians in Britain

Required Books: (Available at Matador Bookstore and Online)
• Rozina Visram, Asians in Britain: 400 Years of History (2002)
• Kate L. Turabian, A Manual for Writers, 7th ed. (2007)

Empire Writes Back Collection: http://www.ampltd.co.uk/digital_guides/empire_writes_back_part_1/Detailed-Listing.aspx
Normal hours are M-Th 8 am-10:45 pm, F 8 am-4:45 pm, Sat 12-4:45 pm, and Sun 12-7:45 pm.
Graded Assignments:

- A 3-page description and analysis of a neighborhood or location that you have never been to. Watch. Listen. Smell. Navigate. Experience. Reflect. Due Sept. 14 (10%)
- A 3-page summary and analysis of Rozina Visram, *Asians in Britain*, due Sept. 21(10%)
- A “Brainstorm” in which you write down and make brief comments about at least five quotes/passages drawn from each of two travelogues in *The Empire Writes Back*, due Oct. 5 (10%)
- A 3-page summary and preliminary analysis of one of the travelogues in *The Empire Writes Back*, presumably one that you will be using for your paper, due Oct. 19 (10%)
- The first 3-4 pages of your research paper, due Nov. 2 (10%). This must include an introduction and thesis paragraph, and also a bibliography of at least five secondary sources relating to your topic or to aspects of it.
- First Draft, due Nov. 16 (15%). This must be a complete draft including footnotes and bibliography. It will be returned to you with suggestions and corrections on Nov. 30, giving you two weeks to make revisions.
- Final Paper, due Dec. 14 by noon (25%)
- Active, informed, engaged, thoughtful, respectful participation in class discussions (10%)

**Attendance:** Since this class meets only once a week – and not even every week – it is important and expected that you attend every session having done the assigned reading and prepared to talk about it in a thoughtful, well-informed manner. I understand that an occasion may arise that makes it impossible to come to class. However, more than one absence for any reason other than your own hospitalization will result in a failing grade for the course, regardless of your grades on the written assignments. You are expected to arrive on time, and since arriving late is disruptive, I reserve the right to lower the grade of anyone who arrives late repeatedly. Needless to say, please turn off your cell phone when you enter the classroom.

**Workload:** This is an intensive class. You are expected to do at least 3-4 hours of work outside class for every hour you spend in class. That means you should expect to do 9-12 hours of work per week. During the first few weeks, most of this time will be spent on the assigned reading, with some time devoted to library research to find and develop your topic. During the middle third of the semester, your 9-12 hours per week will be spent researching and reading. During the final third of the semester, most of your time will be spent writing and revising, with some time allocated for additional research and reading as needed. The key to success in this class is consistency. Since you are writing a term paper, not a “last-two-weeks-of-the-semester paper,” your final product should reflect a semester’s worth of work, and will be evaluated accordingly.

**Late Policy:** All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the specified due date. Late assignments will be accepted for one week after the due date, but will be marked down one-third of a grade (e.g., from an A to an A-) per day. Missed assignments will be entered as a zero. All assignments must be printed out and, if more than one page, stapled.
Plagiarism: Any student caught plagiarizing (copying someone else’s words or ideas, whether on paper or from the internet, without crediting them fully) will receive a failing grade for the course and be referred to the Office of Student Affairs for disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion. Since plagiarism is always obvious and easily caught (I know how to Google too), it is better to hand in your own work and get a C than someone else’s and receive an F. If you are unsure what plagiarism is, consult with me before turning in an assignment.

Grading: You must get at least a C in this class to graduate with a history major. To me, “A” means excellent, “B” means good, “C” means acceptable. A “C-range” paper meets the basic requirements for this course, but typically lacks a clear thesis or offers one that is not disputable. It presents some evidence, but features a writing style that is often marred by grammatical and/or typographical errors. A “B-range” paper has a clear, disputable thesis, with a coherent argument that uses appropriate evidence in support of its points, and is for the most part well-written and proofread. An “A-range” paper offers an insightful and/or original thesis; presents evidence that is carefully chosen and deftly handled; features a nuanced argument; and is gracefully written and carefully proofread. In short, your final paper should offer a clear thesis adequately supported with evidence; it should also be carefully and thoroughly researched, well-organized, properly documented, and clearly written.

Formatting: All footnotes and bibliographies must be formatted using the Turabian style elucidated in A Manual for Writers.

Mohandas Gandhi  Dadabhai Naoroji  Cornelia Sorabji
Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

Readings denoted with an asterisk (*) are available on Moodle

August 31  Introduction

Sept. 7  Theories of Travel Writing


Sept. 14  Asians in Britain

Rozina Visram, *Asians in Britain*, ch. 1-6
Neighborhood Reflection Due

Sept. 21  Asians in Britain, con’t

Rozina Visram, *Asians in Britain*, ch. 7-11
Visram Summary and Analysis Due

Sept. 28  No Class: Rosh Hashanah

Oct. 5  Asian Travelers to Britain

Brainstorm Due

Oct. 12  No Class: Individual Consultations
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<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 19</td>
<td>Preparing to Write</td>
<td>Summary and Analysis of a Travel Narrative Due</td>
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<td>Kate L. Turabian, <em>The Craft of Research</em>, ch. 3-7</td>
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<td>Oct. 26</td>
<td>No Class: Library Research</td>
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<td>Nov. 2</td>
<td>First 3-4 Pages and Bibliography Due</td>
<td>Kate L. Turabian, <em>The Craft of Research</em>, ch. 15-17, 25</td>
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<td>Nov. 9</td>
<td>No Class: Library Research</td>
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<td>Nov. 16</td>
<td>No Class: First Draft Due by 2 pm</td>
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<td>Nov. 23</td>
<td>No Class: Thanksgiving</td>
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<td>Nov. 30</td>
<td>Finishing Touches</td>
<td>Kate L. Turabian, <em>The Craft of Research</em>, ch. 9-12, 20-24 as needed</td>
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<td>Dec. 7</td>
<td>No Class: Optional Individual Consultations</td>
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<td>Dec. 14</td>
<td>Final Paper due by 12:00 noon</td>
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