Colonialism and Resistance
Expository Writing 20

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EXPOS 20, Sections 237/238
MW 12 PM/1 PM; CGIS-South S-003

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Course Description
In Shakespeare’s seemingly fairy-tale-like play, The Tempest, a god-like European magician tames an ugly monster on an island far removed from Europe. In Heat and Dust, a cross-cultural novel written centuries later by European author, Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, heroic British rulers save powerless widows in India from the monstrosity of being forced to burn themselves on their husbands’ funeral pyres. Yet European power over non-Eurocentric cultures does not go unchallenged: so, we find Shakespeare’s monster begin to plot revenge against the powerful European magician. And even more strikingly, in the hugely popular contemporary British movie, Bend It Like Beckham, a non-western teenaged girl—instead of being saved by English heroes—now starts dreaming of bending the soccer ball herself like the heroic David Beckham! In this course, we’ll explore some of the myriad ways in which creative voices from different times capture the phenomenon of colonialism, the process by which European nations systematically gained power over much of the non-European world, producing effects that reverberate globally to this day. At the same time, we’ll analyze how such narratives depict the equally significant ways in which non-European peoples resisted colonial power and continue to resist its ongoing legacy. We’ll begin by reading The Tempest, a fascinating tale of magicians, monsters, shipwrecks, and islands that raises profound questions about the establishment of European colonies in the New World. Does this English play represent the forceful strategies of the Europeans and the violent resistance of the natives in a manner that justifies the early colonial project as necessary for improving “lesser” peoples or that critiques it as unjustified in ousting locals? Our second course unit transitions to modern colonialism, the more full-fledged political, economic, and cultural domination of non-European nations. With the help of leading postcolonial theorist Edward Said, we’ll examine Heat and Dust as a window to understanding a complex form that colonial power and resistance to it can take: what happens, in other words, when those in power and those opposing it don’t use sheer force but rather ideas and language as their tools for empowerment? We’ll conclude the course by comparatively considering the movie, Bend It Like Beckham, alongside three short stories by Albert Camus, Sherman Alexie, and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie respectively, to evaluate avenues as varied as sports, religion, academia, and even recreational drugs through which today’s post-colonial populations across the globe engage in dismantling the colonial legacy. As we do so, we’ll also ask what kinds of role, if any, formerly colonizing European powers should play in such endeavors.

Course Materials
William Shakespeare. *The Tempest*. We’ll be using the digital text of the New Folger Ed. available at: <http://www.folgerdigitaltexts.org/html/Tmp.html#line-1.1.0>


While I will provide you all the other texts electronically, a significant amount of individual printing—as well as occasional photocopying—of course materials will be required throughout the course. **Please be adequately prepared to meet this requirement.**

**Course Goals and Design**
The primary purpose of this course is to teach you analytic argument and expository writing. It will help you engage seriously with texts and argue persuasively about the ideas generated by them. You will have the opportunity to hone these skills by examining a common body of texts with your peers, and by sharing your verbal and written responses with them. We will thus emphasize writing as a social process.

The texts that you and your peers write in conversation with the readings and each other will receive our greatest attention: the readings will only serve as a set of tools to help you compose strong arguments. You will write three academic essays, one for each of the three course units. Every essay will require you to undertake a series of steps—reading, analyzing, discussing, drafting, revising—that will teach you specific skills you will need throughout your time at Harvard. Each essay will also build on the previous ones, allowing you to refine these skills while you acquire new ones. You will be constantly encouraged to transform your own texts substantially by rethinking, revising, and rewriting your drafts. Moreover, you will be asked to respond critically—sometimes as an entire class and sometimes in pairs—to the early drafts of your peers’ papers, so that they too can transform their original texts in significant ways. The course, therefore, is designed to engage you in the challenging yet rewarding processes of academic writing, which will enable you to increase the power of your written words.

**Course Requirements**
This course is designed as a collaborative learning experience: you will need to attend every class meeting, well prepared and ready to contribute to verbal discussions and writing workshops. **In order to maintain a conversational mode crucial to a seminar-style learning environment, you will need to bring hard copies of materials required for class discussions and exercises, instead of focusing on laptop screens. I will request you to bring your laptops only on a few specific days when laptop use will be essential.** Missing class and/or not participating adequately in class will adversely affect your growth as a writer, as well as your course grade. Also, make sure to be punctual so as not to disrupt class activities.

I will schedule three twenty-five to thirty-minute conferences with each of you, during which we will address ways to improve your writing. As with class, you should come prepared to participate fully in these conferences: reflect, in advance, on the issues you
are confronting while working on a particular essay, and on potential solutions. *Please review your schedule carefully before signing up for a conference because my extremely tight schedule during any conference period makes moving around meeting times after sign-up very difficult. Note, also, that if you are a no-show at your scheduled conference, your conference may not be rescheduled.*

You will need to submit all assignments—short exercises, drafts, and final versions of essays—on time, according to course schedule. Unless I specify otherwise, **you should hand in every assignment to me as hard copy; consistently use a standard font style, ensuring that all your writing is in double-spaced 12-point font and retains one-inch margins on all sides.** Furthermore, you will need to use the MLA citation style for all formal writing assignments in this course, for which you should consult the “Citation Formats” section of the *Harvard Guide to Using Sources* at: http://usingsources.fas.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k70847&pageid=icb.page36322

Another excellent resource that provides useful guidelines for accurate MLA citation format is Purdue University’s Online Writing Lab at: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/02

*I use e-mail only for class-related announcements, and have a firm policy of not providing any writing-related feedback via e-mail as I find the latter ineffective.* Should you require feedback in addition to what I provide verbally in conferences and in writing on your assignments—for instance, if you feel a need to modify an essay thesis substantially after a conference—you will need to speak with me face-to-face and are always welcome to do so.

**Assignments**

You will write three major essays of increasing length (starting at 4-5 pages), one corresponding to each of the three course units. In preparation for these formal essays, you will also complete a series of required preparatory assignments, such as response papers and drafts. Brief descriptions of each essay follow:

**Essay #1: A Close Critical Analysis of a Single Literary Text that Responds to an Arguable Question**

You will identify an arguable question regarding the representation of the early colonial enterprise in Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* and then closely analyze evidence to advance an argument in response to that question.

**Essay #2: An Analysis of a Literary Text against a Critical Context (Lens Essay)**

This may be called a “lens” essay: it invites you to analyze a fictional text against a particular critical/theoretical context. More specifically, you will be analyzing the representation of the colonial and postcolonial encounters between the British and the Indians in Ruth Prawer Jhabvala’s *Heat and Dust* against theoretical concepts advanced about such representations.

**Essay #3: A Comparative Critical Analysis incorporating Secondary Sources**
The final project calls for an argument comparatively evaluating representations of contemporary resistance to the colonial legacy. In addition to two primary sources that you may select out of four options, you will also need to incorporate different kinds of secondary sources to construct a well-researched, persuasive argument.

Grade Distribution
Although I will read all your writing during the semester, I will only assign individual letter grades to your three formal, revised essays. At the end of the semester, I will also assign a letter grade for your class participation: this grade will be based on the overall quality of your in-class discussions and on a portfolio of your shorter assignments (e.g., response papers, peer responses, etc.). Your final grade for the course will be assigned as follows:

Essay #1 = 25%
Essay #2 = 30%
Essay #3 = 35%
Class Participation = 10%

Policy on Late Work
Response papers for each of the essays must be submitted on the due date specified for the relevant course unit: because I do not accept any late response papers, you will lose points for that exercise if you don't submit one on time. Please also note that because I do not accept electronic submissions of any assignment, if you’re absent on a day when an assignment is due in class, you cannot meet the deadline by emailing me that assignment: you’ll need to arrange with me in advance a way to get a hard copy of your assignment to me by the due time.

Should a serious need arise, I will grant one penalty-free extension—of a maximum of twenty-four hours beyond the specified due date—for either the first draft or the final version of the first or second essay or for the final version of the third essay (please note that this option will not be available for the first draft of the last essay). If you take any extension beyond your one penalty-free allowance for either a first draft or a final version, you will be graded down by at least a third of a letter grade on that essay.

Policy on Collaboration
This course allows you to develop, rethink, and refine ideas in conversation with other students, and through peer review of written work (including feedback from Writing Center tutors). Should you want to acknowledge the impact someone had on your essay, please do so at the end of the essay, immediately before your "Works Cited" list. As stated in the Student Handbook, “students need not acknowledge discussion with others of general approaches to the assignment or assistance with proofreading.” However, all written work submitted for this course must be your own: writing response papers, drafts, or revisions with other students is expressly forbidden.

Harvard College Writing Program Policy on Attendance
Because Expos has a shorter semester and fewer class hours than other courses, and because instruction in Expos proceeds by sequential writing activities, your consistent attendance is essential. If you are absent without medical excuse more than twice,
you are eligible to be officially excluded from the course and given a failing grade. On the occasion of your second unexcused absence, you will receive a letter warning you of your situation. This letter will also be sent to your Freshman Dean and to the Dean of the College, so the college can give you whatever supervision and support you need to complete the course.

Apart from religious holidays, only medical absences can be excused. In the case of a medical problem, you should contact your preceptor before the class to explain, but in any event within 24 hours: otherwise you will be required to provide a note from UHS or another medical official, or your Freshman Dean, as you will also be required in the case of protracted or repeated illness. Absences because of special events such as athletic meets, debates, conferences, and concerts are not excusable absences. If such an event is very important to you, you may decide to take one of your two allowable unexcused absences; but again, you are expected to contact your preceptor beforehand if you will miss a class, or at least within 24 hours. If you wish to attend an event that will put you over the two-absence limit, you should contact your Freshman Dean and you must directly petition the Expository Writing Senior Preceptor, who will grant such petitions only in extraordinary circumstances and only when your work in the class has been exemplary.

Harvard College Writing Program Policy on Completion of Work
Because your Expos course is a planned sequence of writing, you must write all of the assigned essays to pass the course, and you must write them within the schedule of the course—not in the last few days of the semester after you have fallen behind. You will receive a letter reminding you of these requirements, therefore, if you fail to submit at least a substantial draft of an essay by the final due date in that essay unit. The letter will also specify the new date by which you must submit the late work, and be copied to your Resident Dean and the Dean of the College. If you fail to submit at least a substantial draft of the essay by this new date, and you have not documented a medical problem, you are eligible to be officially excluded from the course and given a failing grade.

Policy on Academic Integrity
In this Expository Writing course, we will work on the proper use of sources, including how to cite and how to avoid plagiarism. You’ll learn why it is crucial to the academic enterprise that we all clearly distinguish our own work from that of our sources, and you will systematically use the MLA citation style, which is one of the citation methods by which scholars acknowledge their sources. You should always feel free to ask me questions about this material. All the work that you submit for this course must be your own, and that work should not make use of outside sources unless such sources are explicitly part of the assignment. Any student submitting plagiarized work is eligible to fail the course and to be subject to review by the Honor Council, including potential disciplinary action.

Please also pay particular attention to the following statement from the Harvard College Policy on Plagiarism and Collaboration (excerpted from the Student Handbook):
“It is expected that all homework assignments, projects, lab reports, papers, theses, and examinations and any other work submitted for academic credit will be the student’s own. Students should always take great care to distinguish their own ideas and knowledge from information derived from sources. The term “sources” includes not only primary and secondary material published in print or online, but also information and opinions gained directly from other people. Quotations must be placed properly within quotation marks and must be cited fully. In addition, all paraphrased material must be acknowledged completely. Whenever ideas or facts are derived from a student’s reading and research or from a student’s own writings, the sources must be indicated.

And:

“The responsibility for learning the proper forms of citation lies with the individual student. Students are expected to be familiar with the Harvard Guide to Using Sources, which is available at http://usingsources.fas.harvard.edu. Students who are in any doubt about the preparation of academic work should consult their instructor and Resident Dean before the work is prepared or submitted.

Students who, for whatever reason, submit work either not their own or without clear attribution to its sources will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including requirement to withdraw from the College. Students who have been found responsible for any violation of these standards will not be permitted to submit a Q evaluation of the course in which the infraction occurred.”