Overview

This colloquium will examine selected aspects of the British Empire in Asia and Africa through a series of studies on the theme of the dialogic relationship between the constituent parts of the Empire. Rather than either a primarily British-centered or a primarily ex-centric (i.e., colony-based) perspective, the Empire will, for us, consist of an arena of interactions based on unequal power among its components. It is in these asymmetrical relationships that we will look for the dynamic of the British Empire.

The majority of the reading for the course will consist of primary source materials and works of analysis by Asians, Africans, and Europeans, provided in the required book and, Blackboard, and Reserve readings. In each case, the focus will be on the inter-relationships among different parts of the Empire. Each of these works has as its focus the identities of different peoples within the Empire. Each stresses the different roles played, or imposed on, social and economic groups, as well as cultures, genders, and ethnicities, within the Empire.

The other main concentration of the colloquium is not the work of other people but rather the work of the members of the colloquium ourselves. The first part of the semester has more extensive assigned readings. The second part has less extensive assigned readings and will concentrate on the presentation and analysis of the topics and research of the colloquium members. Each colloquium member will make a 10-15 minute presentation of her/his research and findings. Mr. Fisher will work with each of the colloquium members on their presentation.

The colloquium also requires three brief position papers on the assigned readings. Each Position Paper is designed to display the insights and synthetic capacities of each colloquium member. The grade on each paper will be reduced one grade for each day it is late.

The Role of the Colloquium Members

Each of the members of the colloquium brings a distinct body of knowledge and interest to the whole. Mr. Fisher's own areas of interests are the interaction between the peoples and polities of South Asia and the British. The other members of the colloquium have (or will develop) their own special knowledge of other topics related to the theme of the course. Through an extensive (5,000 word, circa 20 page) research paper and a presentation to the colloquium, each of the other members of the group will study and analyze a specific case study in the colonial process. These papers can deal with any part of the world and any aspect of British imperialism, the colonial situation, nationalistic responses to colonialism, or the post-colonial models developed by the "new nations."

The research paper counts 60%, class participation counts 15%, and the average for the three Position Papers (out of four assigned) counts 25% of the final grade for the course.

Research Paper guidelines:

Each person in the colloquium will select (in consultation with Mr. Fisher) a research topic. Mr. Fisher will assist in identifying and locating sources for this topic. Topics of special interest would include analytic biographies of Asians, Africans, or Britons who traveled or lived in a part of the British Empire not their own. As examples, there are good materials available, including autobiographical writings, for Oladudah Equiano, Samuel Crowther, Paul Cuffè, Ignatius Sancho, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, and Ms. Zilpha Elaw (all of African descent) which include descriptions of their lives in Britain. Each person will then proceed to research and write a 5,000 word paper with full and properly formatted foot/end notes and a bibliography. The full resources of Mudd Learning Center, including an excellent reference library staff, OHIOLINK, and Interlibrary Loan Office, are available for the extensive research required for each paper.
Further, each person will make a brief (10-15 minute) presentation of the essence and overall argument of this paper to the rest of the colloquium, scheduled as appropriate to the syllabus.

The following dates are important and non-negotiable:
3/1-7 Meet with Mr. Fisher to define your paper topic
3/4 Working statement of the topic and preliminary bibliography is due (by noon).
[Thereafter Mr. Fisher will be readily available for consultation on the outline and drafts.]
5/1 Penultimate version is due (by noon). This draft will be fully examined by Mr. Fisher. You should plan to meet with Mr. Fisher soon thereafter about his suggestions for revision.
5/20 (Saturday) at 7:00 PM as specified in final exam schedule: Final version of the paper due.
The grading is: A+ 100-97; A 96-93; A- 92-90; B+ 89-87; B 86-83; B- 82-80; C+ 79-77; C 76-73; C- 72-70; below 70 no entry.

Accommodation: If you have specific physical, psychiatric or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please let me know early in the semester so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. You will need to provide documentation of your disability to the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities in Peters G-27.

Honor Code: The Honor Code applies to all assignments in this course. This means that any student found cheating, plagiarizing, turning in another person’s work as his/her own or otherwise violating the instructor’s explicit or implicit instructions will be subject to a hearing before the Student Honor Committee. To learn more about the Code, see the Rules and Regulations Section VI A and B in Fussers or the Student Handbook. (language courtesy of Susan Colley and the Student Honor Code Committee).

Required Book:
Achebe, Arrow of God
In addition, there are readings available on Blackboard and in the Reserve Room.

Historiography

2/8 The British Empire as an Arena: them and us?
Read: (from Attachment and Blackboard) Abu Talib "Vindication" (5 pp. Doc format)

2/14 (Tuesday) Position Paper One due by noon.
Read the Introduction to any of the five volumes in Louis, ed., Oxford History of the British Empire and read any scholarly book review of the series (or any volume in the series).
Write a brief (250-500 word) analysis of the book review you read. Be sure to assess the source and author of this review, as well as its assessment of OHBE.

2/15 Viewing the British Empire
Discussion of Louis, ed., Oxford History of the British Empire

2/21 (Tuesday) Position Paper Two due by noon.
Read (from Reserve) and analyze the Introduction and any one article from Levine, Gender and Empire or Morgan, Black Experience and the Empire or Wilson, New Imperial History

2/22 New Imperial History (?)
Discussion of Levine, Gender and Empire and Morgan, Black Experience and the Empire and Wilson, New Imperial History
Overview of British expansion in Asia

Confrontations/Collaboration among Asians, Africans, and Britons
3/1 Initial Confrontations: India and China
Read: (from Blackboard) European travelers and Chinese Emperor's accounts

3/1-5 Schedule/Meet about paper topic conference with Mr. Fisher, individual meetings to be held as mutually convenient

3/5 (Sunday) 6:00 PM you are invited to a dinner in my home, 241 Oak St. (775-1728).

3/7 (Tuesday) Position Paper Three due by noon.
Read: Gandhi, Hind Swaraj

3/8 M. Gandhi in England, Africa, and India (1869-1948)
Read: (from Blackboard) Gandhi, Hind Swaraj (60 pp.)
(note: you may wish to start reading Achebe, Arrow of God due next week.)

3/14 (Tuesday) Position Paper Four due on Tuesday, by noon. Discuss the roles and representations of either Africans or Europeans as presented by Achebe, Arrow of God, (all, 230 pages).

3/15 West Africa (early 20th century)
Discuss: Achebe, Arrow of God.

3/22 Mr. Fisher's Presentation: Asians in Britain: sources and strategies for study
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SPRING BREAK
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4/4 (Tuesday noon) Working statement of the topic and preliminary bibliography is due.

4/5 No class meeting (made up 4/13 or 4/14)

The Anti- and Post-Colonial Worlds

4/12 Nationalism and the Arts
read paper by Dr. K. Zitzewitz

4/13 at 4:30 in room TBA, K. Zitzewitz talk on "Modern Indian Artist as Citizen and Subject"

4/14 time TBA meet with K. Zitzewitz

4/19 Views of Imperialism
Read: (from Blackboard) Hobson, Lenin, Orwell, Steele, and Singh (40 pp.)

4/26 India
Discussion of Nehru or Visweswaran
from BLACKBOARD) Nehru, Discovery of India, Chapter "The Last Phase (1): Consolidation of British Rule and Rise of Nationalist Thought" (66 pp.)
Read: (from Blackboard) Visweswaran (39 pp.).

5/3 West Africa
Read: (from Blackboard) Nkrumah, "I Speak of Freedom" (28 pp), and/or Mba, "Kaaba or Khaki," (23 pp),
and/or Soyinka, "Towards a Sustainable Vision" (6 pp.)

5/8 (Monday) Penultimate version of your paper is due (by noon Monday).

5/10 Paper Presentations

5/20 (Saturday) at 7:00 PM: Final Version of the Paper is due.