

## SOUTH AFRICA: CONTESTED TRANSITIONS

### Analytic Essay 2: Instructions

The first analytic essay, focused on a provocative column by Steve Biko, encouraged you to read critically: identifying and criticizing the assumptions (stated or unstated) authors make; identifying and criticizing the data authors use; evaluating the logical elaboration of authors' arguments; and setting those arguments in a larger context.

Since the underlying assumptions and structure (as contrasted with the more visible content) of Biko's argument turned out to be less straightforward than they initially appeared, and since many seminar participants are especially interested in identities, race, and ethnicity, it seemed useful to focus the second Analytic Essay on another prominent South African's analysis of these issues. Like the first, the second Analytic Essay is designed to permit you to refine your skills of analysis and criticism and particularly to develop your ability to use a reading to stimulate a broader and more comprehensive understanding of the topic discussed.

The second Analytic Essay begins with a paper by Neville Alexander, "Nation and Ethnicity in South Africa," published in *Sow the Wind: Contemporary Speeches* (Johannesburg: Skotaville Publishers, 1985), pp. 41-56.

You are to:

1. *Read Alexander's argument carefully.*
2. *Indicate, in a brief paragraph, Alexander's major argument.* (You should not say what the article is about, but rather you should summarize the point(s) the author is trying to make.)
3. *Indicate and criticize the major assumptions and unsupported assertions (both stated and unstated) this selection includes.* (Every author takes some things for granted--s/he assumes them to be true and does not explain or defend them. What are they? Are they in fact true? What theoretical framework(s) does Alexander take for granted? Be careful to distinguish between the *assumptions* on which the argument rests and the *unsupported assertions* that are part of the argument.)
4. *List and criticize the types of data used.* (What sorts of sources does the author rely on? Are the data that are presented accurate? Are the data presented relevant to the argument? Have any relevant sorts of data been omitted? What sorts of evidence would make this argument more persuasive?)
5. *Comment on the logical development of Alexander's argument.* (Do the conclusions follow logically from the assumptions, the data, and the analysis?)

[Instructions 2-5 should be answered in no more than 3 pages.]

6. *Write a brief essay (no more than 2-3 additional pages), drawing on your work thus far this Quarter and on other material you find relevant, and incorporating material from films and class discussions, comparing Biko's and Alexander's analyses of identity, race, ethnicity, nation, and class in South Africa.*  
 Note that both Biko and Alexander are criticizing the analyses and policies of the African National Congress. Hence, as you review critically the major arguments raised in these articles and develop your own thinking, you might find it useful to review the ANC's perspective (among others, Harold Wolpe, Joe Slovo, and Pallo Jordan have developed forceful statements of the ANC's understanding of and commitment to nonracialism).  
 Whatever its major themes, your essay should draw on relevant readings, for which you must provide clear citations.

Post your essay on the course web site (Course Materials | Class Papers | Analytic Essay 2).

**DUE: 2:15 pm, Tuesday, 24 February 2009**