

Fall 2004
History 218

The World in the Twentieth Century

(www.uncg.edu/~jwjones/world)

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Office Hours: M 10-11:00; W 2-3:00; F 11-11:50; & by appointment

Course Description

This class will examine global issues in the contemporary world, focusing mainly on the post-World War II period, from the dropping of atomic bombs on Japan in August 1945, to the complex, high-tech, evolving world of today. We will view this history from the point of view of those living it, including students in the class themselves. Everyone has an “historical consciousness,” an understanding of the way the world became what it is today, and the main purpose of this class is to introduce students to alternative ways of interpreting history by weighing the merits of differing points of view.

We will examine the world by regions with a number of themes in mind: the Cold War; the rise & fall of communism; nationalism; the rise of terrorism; de-colonization/neo-colonialism; the international economy; racial, ethnic, & religious conflict; gender; class; & environmental issues.

Goals & Objectives

By the end of the class each student will understand, firstly, that history is not just the memorization of dates and facts, but rather the interpretation of the past; and, secondly, that we tend to see the world through a number of basic assumptions that are not always accurate. Students will take from the class the skills to critically appraise varying historical arguments and to clearly express their own interpretations.

Readings:

- *When Heaven & Earth Changed Places*, Le Ly Hayslip
- *Baghdad Diaries: A Woman's Chronicle of War & Exile*, Nuha Radi
- *Matigari*, Ngugi wa Thiong'o
- *I, Rigoberta Menchu*, Rigoberta Menchu & Elisabeth Burgos-Debray
- E-Reserve & online material identified below
- Optional Text: *The World Since 1945: A Brief History*, 2nd ed., Daniel Brower

Course Web Page: The extensive course web page at www.uncg.edu/~jwjones/world/ has class notes and readings; Video and Audio Archives; Maps; Visual Tours; a directory of web pages (Internet Resources); and Internet Assignments.

Assignments: Two 3-4 page papers	15% each
Mid-term Exam	20%
Participation	30%
Final Exam	20%

Papers: There are two papers for the course (3-4 pages, double-spaced, 12-point font) that are worth 15% each. The first is a set topic at the beginning of the semester (see the assignment below), while the second allows for a choice of possible topics and is due at any time over the course of the semester but *no later than Friday, November 19*. Refer to the Paper Guidelines for these assignments. All essays will be graded on the basis of these criteria:

- 1) Level of analysis/argumentation. Present a thoughtful argument and interpretation, not a mere summary of facts. (**Note:** it does not matter which side of an issue one argues, only how well or how poorly one makes the argument).
- 2) Use of evidence. The material you select to support your thesis must be relevant and must clearly back up your argument.
- 3) Clarity of communication. You must present the evidence and express your argument in a clear, comprehensible manner.

A = excellent performance on all three points.
B = above average on all three, or excellent on some tempered by flaws in others.
C = average across the board, or above average in part but with significant flaws.
D = below average overall performance.

Participation: The 30% participation grade consists of in-class quizzes, Internet Assignments, and Reaction Pieces (1-2 pages, double-spaced) to the readings designated below. These are intended to be your reaction to or opinion of the readings, not a summary. Students who miss quizzes can make them up with a legitimate reason. Inform me beforehand if you know you have to miss an announced in-class quiz and we will schedule a make-up.

Exams: There is a midterm and a final (both worth 20%); the exams cover *only* the part of the course for which they are designated so they are not cumulative.

Grading: Grades are compiled on a point system. For example, if you make a 90 on the 1st paper (13.5/15) + an 80 on the 2nd paper (12/15) + 84 on the Mid-term (16.8/20) + 90 on participation (27/30) + 82 on the Final (16.4/20), your Final Grade = 85.7 = 86 or B

Lecture & Assignment Schedule:

Monday, August 16. Introduction: The Study of History & WWII

****1st Paper Assignment: In your opinion, what were the main reasons US President Harry Truman decided to use atomic bombs on Japan in August 1945? Do you agree or disagree with his decision?** Required Sources (on e-reserve or online): Paul Fussell, "Thank God for the Atomic Bomb;" William Blum, "Hiroshima: Needless Slaughter, Useful Terror;" *Extra!* Update, "Media to Smithsonian: History is Bunk;" Government documents (Stimson's diary entry and President Truman's meeting with advisers); and the course web page readings *Basic Information on the Bomb*; *Second Guessing Hiroshima*; "Hiroshima: Was it Necessary?" by Doug Long; A Petition to the President of the United States; and "The Decision That Launched the *Enola Gay*" by John Correll. Optional sources: web pages from the course web page directory and additional sites or material you identify. Refer to the Paper Guidelines for this assignment. **Due: Friday, September 3**

Wednesday, August 18. The Holocaust & the Origins of the Cold War

Friday, August 20. The Origins of the Cold War (cont'd)

Monday, August 23. Truman & the Bomb: Discussion of Readings for the 1st Paper

Wednesday, August 25. Stalinism & the Soviet Union

- Reading for next class: speech by Soviet leader Andrei Zhdanov & the Truman Doctrine

Friday, August 27. Stalinism & the Soviet Union (cont'd)

- Reading for next class: "Russia Is Finished" by Jeffrey Tayler & "Don't Count Russia Out: A Reply to Jeffrey Tayler" by W. George Krasnow

Monday, August 30. Post-Soviet Russia & Eastern Europe

Wednesday, September 1. Eastern Europe Since 1945

Friday, September 3. Yugoslavia & War in the Balkans; **FIRST PAPER DUE**

- Reading for next class: Material on the Wars in Yugoslavia

Wednesday, September 8. Yugoslavia & Conflict in the Balkans (cont'd)

Friday, September 10. Traditional India

- Reading for next class: *Time's* Man of the Year for 1930: Mohandas K. Gandhi

Monday, September 13. India: The Struggle for Independence (cont'd)

- Reading for next class: excerpts from *Nectar in a Sieve* by Kamala Markandaya;
**Reaction Piece to this reading due in class

Wednesday, September 15. India & Neighbors Since Independence

Friday, September 17. India, Pakistan, & the Conflict over Kashmir

- Reading for next class: Material on the War in Afghanistan

BEGIN READING Le Ly Hayslip, *When Heaven & Earth Changed Places*; ****Reaction Piece** to this reading due in class Wednesday, October 6

Monday, September 20. Afghanistan: A Country in Turmoil

Wednesday, September 22. Afghanistan in the “War on Terrorism”

- Reading for next class: “Father is Close, Mother is Close, but Neither Is as Close as Chairman Mao” from *Wild Swans* by Jung Chang

Friday, September 24. China: from Confucianism to Communism

Monday, September 27. The People’s Republic of China

- Reading for next class: CCP Report on Rising Social Tensions

Wednesday, September 29. The PRC Today

Friday, October 1. The Origins of the Vietnam War

Monday, October 4. The Vietnam War & After

Wednesday, October 6. Discussion of Hayslip, *When Heaven & Earth Changed Places*

Friday, October 8. Japan Since 1945

Wednesday, October 13. **Mid-term Exam (to be held IN THE EVENING 6:00-7:30 in 028 McIver)**; Optional Review Session during regular class time

BEGIN READING Radi, *Baghdad Diaries*; ****Reaction Piece** to this reading due in class Friday, October 22

Friday, October 15. Iran: From Secularism to Fundamentalism

Monday, October 18. Iran: From Secularism to Fundamentalism (cont’d)

Wednesday, October 20. The Gulf War

Friday, October 22. The Gulf War: Discussion of *Baghdad Diaries*

Monday, October 25. Origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict

Wednesday, October 27. The Arab-Israeli Conflict (cont’d)

- Reading for next class: Material on the Arab-Israeli Conflict

Friday, October 29. The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Discussion of Readings

Monday, November 1. The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Is there hope for peace?

BEGIN READING Ngugi, *Matigari*; ****Reaction Piece** to this reading due in class
Monday, April 14

Wednesday, November 3. West Africa: Ghana

- Reading for next class: e-reserve excerpt from *Eye of the Family* by V. Harden

Friday, November 5. Ghana (cont'd) & Kenya

Monday, November 8. Kenya: Discussion of *Matigari*

Wednesday, November 10. South Africa: The Rise & Fall of Apartheid

****Internet Assignment: "Apartheid on Trial" due by Monday, November 15**

Friday, November 12. South Africa: The Rise & Fall of Apartheid (cont'd)

- Reading for next class: short stories "City Lovers" & "Country Lovers" by Nadine Gordimer

Monday, November 15. Truth & Reconciliation in South Africa

BEGIN READING Menchu, *I, Rigoberta Menchu*; ****Internet Assignment: "Rigmarole over Rigoberta" due by Friday, December 3**

Wednesday, November 17. South America: Populism, Dictatorship, & Democracy

- Reading for next class: "Argentina's Crisis, IMF's Fingerprints" by Mark Weisbrot

Friday, November 19. South America (cont'd): Argentina; **2nd essay due in class**

Monday, November 22. South America (cont'd): Chile

- Reading for next class: excerpts from *Child of the Dark* by Maria de Jesus & "The Causes of Hunger"; ****Reaction Piece** due in class

Monday, November 29. South America (cont'd): Discussion of Readings

Wednesday, December 1. Central America (cont'd): Guatemala

Friday, December 3. Guatemala (cont'd): Discussion of *I, Rigoberta Menchu*

Monday, December 6. To be Announced

Final Exam: Friday, December 10 Noon-3:00