

Spring 2003
History 218

The World in the Twentieth Century

www.unc.edu/courses/hist018b/

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Office Hours: M 11:00-11:50; W 2:00-3:00; F 1:00-2:00

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.

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 and Earth Changed Places*, Le Ly Hayslip
- ?? *Strangers in the House*, Raja Shehadeh
- ?? *Matigari*, Ngugi wa Thiong'o
- ?? *I, Rigoberta Menchu*, Rigoberta Menchu and Elisabeth Burgos-Debray
- ?? E-Reserve and online material identified below
- ?? Optional Text: T. E. Vadney, *The World Since 1945*

Course Web Page (access information): There is an extensive web page for the course at www.unc.edu/courses/hist018b/ **Username: hist018b; Password: abcde**. The page has class notes and readings; Online Lectures; a Video Archive; Maps; Visual Tours; a directory of web pages (Internet Resources); basic information on countries covered in the course (Country Files); 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 the day of the final exam*. 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 (including Online Lectures) 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 and Assignment Schedule:

Monday, January 13. 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;" and *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: Monday, January 27**

Wednesday, January 15. The Holocaust & the Origins of the Cold War

Friday, January 17. The Origins of the Cold War (cont'd)

Wednesday, January 22. Truman & the Bomb: Discussion of Readings for the 1st Paper
?? Reading for next class: speech by Soviet leader Andrei Zhdanov and the Truman Doctrine

Friday, January 24. Stalinism & the Soviet Union

Monday, January 27. Stalinism & the Soviet Union (cont'd); **FIRST PAPER DUE**
?? Reading for next class: “Russia Is Finished” by Jeffrey Tayler in *The Atlantic Monthly*

Wednesday, January 29. Post-Soviet Russia & Eastern Europe

Friday, January 31. Eastern Europe Since 1945

Monday, February 3. Yugoslavia & War in the Balkans
?? Reading for next class: Material on the Wars in Yugoslavia

Wednesday, February 5. Yugoslavia & Conflict in the Balkans (cont'd)

Friday, February 7. Traditional India

Monday, February 10. 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, February 12. India & Neighbors Since Independence

Friday, February 14. India, Pakistan, & the Conflict over Kashmir
?? Reading for next class: Material on the War in Afghanistan

BEGIN READING Le Ly Hayslip, *When Heaven and Earth Changed Places*; ****Reaction Piece** to this reading due in class Wednesday, March 5

Monday, February 17. Afghanistan: A Country in Turmoil

Wednesday, February 19. 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, February 21. China: from Confucianism to Communism

Monday, February 24. The People’s Republic of China
?? Reading for next class: CCP Report on Rising Social Tensions

Wednesday, February 26. The PRC Today

Friday, February 28. The Origins of the Vietnam War

Monday, March 3. The Vietnam War & After

Wednesday, March 5. Discussion of Hayslip, *When Heaven and Earth Changed Places*

Friday, March 7. Japan Since 1945

ONLINE LECTURE: The Pacific Rim

March 8-16: SPRING BREAK

Monday, March 17. **Mid-term Exam** (to be held **IN THE EVENING 6:00-7:30**); Optional Review Session during regular class time

BEGIN READING Shehadeh, *Strangers in the House*; ****Reaction Piece** to this reading due in class Friday, April 4

Wednesday, March 19. Iran: From Secularism to Fundamentalism

Friday, March 21. Iran: From Secularism to Fundamentalism (cont'd)

Monday, March 24. The Gulf War

Wednesday, March 26. The Gulf War & the Origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict

Friday, March 28. Origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict (cont'd)

Monday, March 31. The Arab-Israeli Conflict (cont'd)

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

Wednesday, April 2. The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Discussion of Readings

Friday, April 4. Arab-Israeli Conflict: Discussion of *Strangers in the House*

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

Monday, April 7. West Africa: Ghana

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

Wednesday, April 9. Ghana (cont'd) & Kenya

Friday, April 11. Kenya: Discussion of *Matigari*

Monday, April 14. South Africa: The Rise & Fall of Apartheid

****Internet Assignment: “Apartheid on Trial” due by Monday, April 21**

Wednesday, April 16. South Africa: The Rise & Fall of Apartheid (cont’d)

?? Reading for next class: short stories “City Lovers” and “Country Lovers by Nadine Gordimer

Monday, April 21. Truth & Reconciliation in South Africa

BEGIN READING Menchu, *I, Rigoberta Menchu*; ****Internet Assignment: “Rigmarole over Rigoberta” due by Monday, May 5**

Wednesday, April 23. South America: Populism, Dictatorship, and Democracy

?? Reading for next class: “Argentina’s Crisis, IMF’s Fingerprints” by Mark Weisbrot

Friday, April 25. South America (cont’d): Argentina

Monday, April 28. South America (cont’d): Chile

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

Wednesday, April 30. South America (cont’d): Discussion of Readings

ONLINE LECTURE: Nicaragua & the Caribbean

Friday, May 2. Central America (cont’d): Guatemala

Monday, May 5. Guatemala (cont’d): Discussion of *I, Rigoberta Menchu*

Tuesday, May 6. To be Announced

Wednesday, May 7. Reading Day: Optional Review Session during regular class time

Final Exam: Friday, May 9, Noon-3:00; 2nd Essay due no later than day of the exam