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21H.912 The World Since 1492
Fall 2004

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THE WORLD SINCE 1492

Description:

This class offers a look into the last five hundred years of world history. Rather than attempt an exhaustive chronology of everything that has occurred on the globe since 1492—an impossible task for a lifetime, let alone a single semester—we will be focusing on certain geographic areas at specific times, in order to highlight a particular historical problem or to examine the roots of processes that have had an enormous impact on the contemporary world.

In order to lend structure to such a wide-ranging exploration, the class will orient around four central themes: Colonialism and imperialism; political and social revolution; industrialization; and the rise of consumer society. While any of these themes could provide the basis for a class in-and-of itself, we will look to the ways in which these themes interact—for example, how the history of imperialism relates to the course of industrialization. Finally, in this class we will engage with a range of different types of readings, from primary sources (writings from the times), to historical narratives, to historiography (debates about history), to works of fiction. In this way, the class will also allow a glimpse into the ways in which history itself is constructed and continually re-written.

Organization of the Class:

In general, we will have an intensive discussion session every week addressing a specific book or group of essays. Other class meetings, meanwhile, will be a blend of informal lecture, question and answer, and discussion. Discussions will therefore be the single most significant element of this class. This is reflected in the calculation of the final grade, which can be broken down as follows:

Four 5-page papers:	15% each
Discussion/Participation:	25%
Final Exam:	15%

There may be short (1 or 2 page) written responses to the readings assigned intermittently; these will be factored into the discussion grade.

In addition to discussion, the criteria for a HASS-D subject include twenty pages of written assignments. These papers will draw from the assigned readings, lectures, and discussions over the course of the class: no additional or outside research will be required for the papers. The four 5-page papers are due **Oct. 4**, **Oct. 25**, **Nov. 10** and **Dec. 1**.

You can revise and resubmit at least one of these papers. Please talk to me first before rewriting a paper; revisions must be returned, *along with the marked original and comments*, **within two weeks** of receiving the corrected original.

Please note: Plagiarism of any kind—that is taking another's words and/or ideas from a book, another student, or from the internet without full and complete citation—will not be tolerated regardless of the circumstances, and will result in an "F" for the final class grade.

Books for Purchase:

Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Equiano*. New York: Modern Library, 2004. ISBN: 0375761152.

Kenneth Pomeranz & Steven Topik, *The World that Trade Created*. Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1999. ISBN: 0765602490.

Chinua Achebe *Things Fall Apart*. London: Penguin in association with Heinemann African Writers Series, 2001. ISBN: 0141186887.

Paul Cohen *History in Three Keys*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1997. ISBN: 0231106505.

Slavenka Drakulic, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed*. New York: HarperPerennial, 1993. ISBN: 0060975407.

Additional readings will appear on the course Website or handed out in class.

Class Outline:

Week 1

Sept 8 (Wed.): Introduction to class and requirements

Week 2

Sept. 13 (Mon.) Transatlantic Contacts and Indian Ocean Encounters

Discussion: Letter from Columbus (45pp)

Letter from Columbus (45pp)

Begin: Pomeranz & Topik, *The World that Trade Created*
(esp. 21-23 & 53-55)

Sept. 15 (Wed.) Conquest and Colonization in the New World

Read/Discussion: Sepulveda and Las Casas

Sepulveda and Las Casas

Week 3

Sept. 20 (Mon.) Discussion: Pomeranz & Topik, *The World that Trade Created*, 3-178

Pomeranz & Topik, *The World that Trade Created*, 3-178

Sept. 22 (Wed.): Racism I: New World Slavery

Week 4

Sept. 27 (Mon.) Discussion: Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Equiano*

Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Equiano*

Sept. 29 (Wed): Centralizing the State, Inventing the Nation:

The Ottoman Empire, and Western European Peculiarity

Week 5

Oct. 4 (Mon.) Revolution in France

***First paper due**

Oct 6 (Wed.) Discussion: excerpts of Hunt, *The French Revolution and Human Rights* (online)
excerpts of Hunt, *The French Revolution and Human Rights*

Week 6

Oct. 11 (Mon.) No Class: "Columbus" (!) Day

Oct. 13 (Wed.) Revolution in Haiti

Discussion: Readings and documents on Toussant L'Overture
(from Censer & Hunt *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity*) (online)
Readings and documents on Toussant L'Overture
(from Censer & Hunt *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity*)

Week 7

Oct 18 (Mon) European Industrialization

Discussion: Pomerance & Topik, *The World that Trade Created*, 179-213
Pomerance & Topik, *The World that Trade Created*, 179-213

Oct 20 (Wed.) Social Implications of Industrialization:

Discussion: Documents on work and social conditions of industrialization
Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels *Communist Manifesto*
short excerpt from Marx, *Capital*
Documents on work and social conditions of industrialization
Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels *Communist Manifesto*
short excerpt from Marx, *Capital*

Week 8

Oct 25 (Mon.) The New Imperialism and the Scramble for Africa

Oct 27 (Wed.) Discussion of Chinue Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (entire book)
Chinue Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (entire book)

***Second paper due**

Week 9

Nov. 1 (Mon.) The Culture of Technology and the "Science" of Race

Excerpt from Michael Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men*
Short excerpt from de Gobineau

Nov. 3 (Wed.) From the Opium Wars to the New Imperialism in the Far East

Discussion: Paul Cohen *History in Three Keys* "History" pp. 3-56
Paul Cohen *History in Three Keys* "History" pp. 3-56

Week 10

Nov. 8 (Mon.) Discussion: Paul Cohen *History in Three Keys*
Paul Cohen *History in Three Keys*
"Experience" pp. 59-208 "Myth" pp. 211-288

Nov. 10 (Wed.) The Metropolis, the "Masses" and the Origins of Mass Culture
***Third paper due**

Week 11

Nov. 15 (Mon.) Discussion: Raymond Williams *Advertising: The Magic System*
T. Jackson Lears, "From Salvation to Self-Realization"
Raymond Williams *Advertising: The Magic System*
T. Jackson Lears, "From Salvation to Self-Realization"

Nov. 17 (Wed.) The World Wars

Week 12

Nov. 22 (Mon.) State Socialism in the Soviet Union & China
Begin reading: Drakulic, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed*

Nov. 24 (Wed.) Meeting with Instructor/TBA

(Thanksgiving vacation begins Nov. 25)

Week 13

Nov. 29 (Mon.) Discussion: Drakulic, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed*
Drakulic, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed*

Dec. 1 (Wed.) Decolonization
Discussion: Short excerpt from Frantz Fanon *The Wretched of the Earth*
Short excerpt from Frantz Fanon *The Wretched of the Earth*
***Fourth paper due**

Week 14

Dec 6 (Mon.) From the Cold War to Globalization

Dec 8 (Wed.) Film: *Cannibal Tours* (1988, 70 m.)
Discussion of *Cannibal Tours*
Cannibal Tours (1988, 70 m.)

Dec. 13-17 **Final Exam** period