

History 597 Critical Issues of the 20th-Century World

Winter 2005

Assoc. Prof. Childs

HI 031 MTW 12:30-1:18

Discussion sections Thurs 12:30-2:18 (see link below)

Note: This syllabus and all future additions to it (assignments) will be posted at:

<http://people.cohums.ohio-state.edu/childs1/HIS597wi05syl.htm>

"We have been on something of a rollercoaster ride."

Immanuel Wallerstein describing the 20th Century in
"The Twentieth Century: Darkness at Noon?,"
Boston College, 3.24.2000.

Course Description

From a global perspective, this course will survey important issues that dominated major changes in the world from 1914 to the 1990s. Several themes underlay the evolution of world systems during the 20th century: European imperialism, resistance to imperialism, and decolonization; the emergence of communistic and totalitarian nation states and mass movements; the reluctant participation of the United States in the world arena until the mid-20th century; the Cold War, nuclear age, and the growing power of the United States; and, the complex reactions of undeveloped and developing nations to the spread of western-capitalistic values through globalization.

We will first outline the international systems of the late 19th century, which were dominated by western European industrialism, expanding world trade, and colonialism. We will then investigate the run-up to and the experiences and aftermaths of three major "war" experiences that punctuated the history of the 20th century world. The era of World War I undermined the European colonial system and began to shape a new system of international relations. This new system, constrained by the collapse of the pre-World War I international trading system, included struggles against colonialism and the rise of totalitarian mass movements. The Great Depression undermined further European imperialism and ushered in intense economic nationalism. Between World War I and World War II, Japan expanded colonialism to Asia, the Soviet Union industrialized, and Latin America experimented with various attempts to industrialize. In large measure because of economic nationalism and tensions associated with the expanding world economy, World War II broke out as totalitarian governments in Italy, Germany, and Japan rose to power. This war brought into the world system the growing influence of the United States, which began to dominate world trade and politics in ways different from the previous European-dominated colonialism. The aftermath of World War II involved a perceived bi-polar world, which led to the third of the 20th century wars, the Cold War. Here, the forces of socialism and communism (led mostly by the Soviet Union and China, although rarely in concert) battled the forces of democratic capitalism (led mostly by the United States and former European colonial powers, although again not always in concert) to gain ideological, economic, and political control over nation states around the world, many of them the same countries that had been battling European and Japanese colonialism. Hanging over this

struggle was the threat of nuclear war between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. With the collapse of the Soviet Union in the late 20th century, the emergence of the United States as an apparent singular power, and especially the acceleration of “globalization,” the international world struggled to control various economic and cultural tensions among the world’s nations. This struggle in part harkened back to the pre-World War I era, included an on-going nuclear threat, and brought to the forefront Islamic radicalism and other resistance to globalization.

In the last decade of the century, the threat of non-state-specific terrorism created what some have labeled a “fourth world war.” How much of this fourth “war” can be seen as a continuation of the previous three world wars? Is it a “war” in the same way that the previous three wars were “wars”?

Throughout the 20th century, nation states in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East were drawn-in to the various struggles over values and power, sometimes resisting, sometimes trying to take advantage. We will study selected examples from each of these regions, usually through analyzing primary sources, to help us understand important issues of the 20th century.

Course Objectives

The past is prologue to the present and future. If students come to class, take and study their notes, participate in discussion sections, and prepare their assignments, they should have gained knowledge of the basic conflicts of the previous century that have shaped the various issues facing the 21st century. In introducing students to some of the key ethical issues of the past century, the course should help them better understand (and perhaps spur them to investigate further) the conflicts facing citizens of the world today. Students should also improve their reading comprehension and writing abilities.

Please note: This course fulfills the GEC Issues of the Contemporary World requirement. It is also an upper division course and can be used for the History Major to fulfill Group A or B, post-1750. It cannot be double-counted on the History Major and the GEC or on the History Minor and the GEC.

This course meets MTW for lecture and on Thursdays for 2 hour discussions (except for one Thursday when we will meet in the lecture hall).

All students must be officially enrolled in the course by the end of the second full week of the quarter. No requests to add the course will be approved by the Chair of the Department after that time. Enrolling officially and on time is solely the responsibility of the student.

Office Hours

I encourage you to visit me and the TA during our office hours in order to discuss course concepts, problems in writing, or whatever. The TA’s office hours will be posted soon. Please do not call the TA at home.

Dulles Hall 204 Office Hours: Tue & Wed 9-10:30; and by appointment. Phone: 292-7014 (with message machine); e-mail: childs.1@osu.edu

Reading

Students are required to procure the following books (available at SBX) and complete the reading assignments listed on the “Schedule of Topics, Readings, Assignments.”

1. James H. Overfield, *Sources of Twentieth-Century Global History*. Houghton Mifflin. 2002. 0-395-90407-2.
2. Arthur Koestler, *Darkness at Noon*. 1941, 1968. Bantam Books. 0-553-26595-4.
3. Truon Nhu Tang, *A Viet Cong Memoir*. 1985. Vintage Books. 0-394-74309-1.
4. Thomas L. Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization*. 2000. Random House. Anchor Books. 0-385-499934-5.
5. *Recommended but not required*: Michael Adas, et.al., *Turbulent Passage: A Global History of the Twentieth Century*. 2nd edition. 2003. Longman. 0-321-09769-6

The Overfield book presents short, solid overviews of material in the lectures as well as primary sources that present personal and/or specific group-oriented views of the central issues of the course. Koestler's novel is a classic look at the struggles faced by communists in the Soviet Union in the 1930s; the phrase, "darkness at noon," as the Wallerstein quotation above suggests, has become a multi-faceted metaphor of the 20th Century. Tang presents the views of an anti-colonialist and his disappointment in the results of revolution in Vietnam. Friedman's book is assigned for two reasons. First, it includes a lot of good material and ideas that university students should be aware of before entering the "real world." Second, some of it is based on presentism uninformed by historical analysis (although some of the historical analysis is pretty good). You will be asked on your final take-home exam to summarize Friedman and note how he might have written an even better book had he studied the material you have in this course!

Your Grade in This Course

Assignments

1. Take-home Midterm Exam (includes short answers and an essay assignment on *Darkness at Noon*). (30%)
2. A take-home essay on *A Vietnam Memoir*. (20%)
3. Take-home final exam. (30%)
4. Discussion class (20%). (The Teaching Assistants will assign "Discussion class" grades based on attendance, participation, and weekly quizzes). Please see this link for more description of the Discussion Sections: [Discussion Section guide](#)

The take-home Final Exam will have two parts: Part One will consist of short answer topics and Part Two will be a 4-5-page essay on *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*.

All assignments will be typed, double-spaced. More specific directions will be posted on the web site and discussed in Discussion classes on Thursdays.

I assign these out-of-class essays in order to give you time to develop arguments that are clearly and concisely presented and grammatically correct. If you do not set aside enough time to work on these essays, you will be defeating the purpose behind them.

The exam and paper due-dates are noted on the "Schedule of Topics, Readings, Assignments."

You are forewarned that I will pursue cases of academic misconduct to the appropriate University committee. See this web site for information on plagiarism and writing handouts:

<http://cstw.osu.edu/>

Special comments

1. Since the University does not record D- grades, a student earning a course average below 62 will receive an E in this course.
2. In order to pass the course, you must pass the Final Exam with at least a 62.
3. The TA and I reserve the right to consider improvement when determining final grades.

Grading Your Exams:

Most of your grade in this course will be based on how well you communicate in writing what you have learned. You should refer to my handout, "Guide to Writing Short Answers and Essays in History." In addition, I furnish below brief descriptions of how you will earn your essay grades:

"C" essays will include: an introductory paragraph that contains your thesis; a body of several paragraphs in which you offer evidence from the readings, lectures, and discussions to support your thesis; and a conclusion that reiterates your basic argument.

"B" essays will include: all of the above requirements for a "C" essay plus more relevant data and analyses than is found in an average essay.

"A" essays will include: all of the above requirements for a "B" essay plus more data and some indication of independent or extended thought.

As for "D" and "E" essays: usually, these essays do not include a viable thesis and/or they do not include very much information from the course.

Final Course-Grade Breakdown

A: 92.6 and above; A-: 89.6-92.5; B+: 87.6-89.5; B: 82.6-87.5; B-: 79.6-82.5; C+: 77.6-79.5; C: 72.6-77.5; C-: 69.6-72.5; D+: 67.6-69.5; D: 62-67.5; E: below 62

Attendance Policies:

Given the descriptions above with regard to what we expect on your assignments (evidence from the readings, lectures, and discussions), we expect you to attend all lectures and discussion sections. Very often material offered by students during discussions should be included in your answers. Attendance at Discussions will be part of your grade (see breakdown at the end of "Schedule of Topics, Readings, Discussions.")

Disability Services

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>

Schedule of Topics, Readings, Assignments

1) *The Department of History takes the position that note-taking makes an important contribution to enhancing the analytical skills necessary to perform good historical work. Thus,*

I have NOT authorized a "note-taking" company to take and sell notes from this class. In addition, I do not allow tape recorders in class. The TA and I will not lend students our notes; students who miss a lecture are responsible for getting the notes from fellow students.

2) Numerous web sites are available for 20th century world history. I have noted a few of those within the schedule. At the end of the schedule, I have listed some selected contemporary newspaper web sites. All of these represent supplementary material, and are not substitutes for attending class or reading the assigned books.

Week One Introduction

Lectures: [597Week1outlines](#)

Themes and Definitions

The World in the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries:

Industrialism, Imperialism, Colonialism, Globalization

[World Maps](#) [Imperialism map](#) [Ottoman Empire map](#)

[IndusNations](#)

Discussion sections:

Overfield, Prologue and 1-30; begin *Darkness at Noon*.

[Darkness guide](#)

Part One War, Revolution, Nationalism, and Economic Upheaval

Week Two World War I

Lectures: [597Week2outlines](#)

Entangling Alliances Lead to War

Wartime Diplomacy

Paris, 1919, the Treaty of Versailles, and the

Rise of Independence Movements

[WWI map](#) [Sykes-Picotmap](#) [WWIcasualties](#)

Discussion sections:

Overfield, 37-60, 73-74, 91-111.

World War I documents:

<http://www.lib.byu.edu/~rdh/wwi/>



Airplane of World War I

Week Three Aftermath and Revolution

Lectures: [597Week3outlines](#)

Monday, Jan 17th: No class—Martin Luther King Day

Independence Movements cont'd [Independencemap](#)

Revolution in Russia [Russiamap](#)

The Great Depression



Rivals for the Soviet Leadership

Discussion Sections: Overfield, 119-120; 126-142;

Darkness at Noon (Essay topics handed out.)

EssayShortAnswerGuide

MidtermExam

Week Four Nationalism and Economic Challenges

Lectures: 597Week4outlines

Responses to the Great Depression

Totalitarianism in Italy and Germany

Latin America Between the Wars

Latin America Maps

MODERN TIMES

Discussion Sections:

Overfield, 143-165; 167-191.

Short Answer topics posted on web site @

Midterm Exam above.

Part Two From World War II to the Cold War: Readjustment and Resistance

Week Five Towards World War II

Monday January 31: Turn-in take-home Mid-Term Exam

Lectures: 597Week5outlines

The Coming of World War II:

Tensions in Europe: From Appeasement to War

Tensions in Asia Asia map Europe World WW II maps

U.S. in the World Arena, 1919-1941

Discussion Sections: JeopardyQuestions

Overfield, 195-221; 229-256; begin *A Vietnam Memoir*

Guide Tang memoir

Here is an interesting recent article on Muslims in India, which relates to the readings for this week: <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2004/687/in1.htm>

Week Six World War II continued

Lectures: 597Week6outlines

Diplomacy Amidst Total War

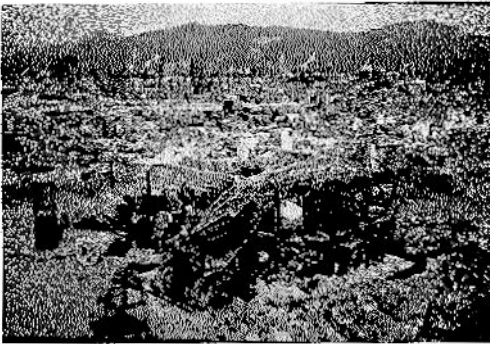
The Fight for Control of China, 1912-1949



The Yalta Conference, Stalin, Roosevelt, Churchill

The Yalta agreement:

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1945YALTA.html>



Ruins of Hiroshima, 1945

Discussion Sections:
Overfield, 221-229;
256-276

Week Seven The Cold War

Lectures: [597Week7outlines](#)

The Cold War in Europe and Asia.

Vietnam: War for National Liberation and the Cold War

Discussion Sections:

Overfield, 277-314; 364-370; *A Vietnam Memoir* (Essay topics handed out.)

597 Paper Topics

Week Eight The Cold War continued

Lectures: [597Week8outlines](#)

Decolonization and Independence Movements

Exporting Capitalism

Discussion Sections: Thursday February 24:

Meet in lecture hall.

Film, *The Corporation*; Begin *Lexus and the Olive Tree*

Guide Corporation

Guide to Lexus and Olive Tree



North Vietnamese Workers rebuild
a road after a bombing raid,
Nghe An province, 1967

Part Three Acceleration of Globalization and Resistance

Week Nine Return to 1914?



Turn in essay on *Vietnam Memoir* Monday
February 28

Lectures: [597Week9outlines](#)
Globalization During the Cold War: Western Europe; Rise
of Japan;
Middle East Oil

Thai Buddhist Monk Using Computer



Discussion Sections:
Overfield, 322-338, 347-364, 371-394
**Note: Two reading quizzes, one on the reading
above, the other
on Parts 1 & 2 of *Lexus and Olive Tree*.**

Her Majesty Queen Rania at the opening of the first
Arab International Society for Prevention of Child Abuse
and Neglect regional conference on Monday, February 23,
2004 (*Jordan Times*)

Week Ten 1990s: Revolution, Anti-Westernism, and Terrorism

Lectures: [597Week10outlines](#)

Cold War Globalization cont'd: Collapse of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe; Latin
America

The Lexus and the Olive Tree

Towards the 21st Century

Expansion of Trade

Barnett's TheGapMap

World's Population Free

<http://www.zapatistarevolution.com/index.html>

<http://www.eco.utexas.edu/faculty/Cleaver/zapsincyber.html>

Discussion Sections:

Overfield, 339-346; 403-432; *Lexus and the Olive Tree*

**Final Exam: Posted on web site here: Final Exam
*Due during regularly scheduled final examination time [Wednesday,
March 16 11:30-1:18] to the Teaching Assistants in their offices.***

Reference Links:

CIA Fact Book: <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/bm.html>

U.S. State Department: <http://www.state.gov/>

International on-line newspapers in English:

The selections below are illustrative and not definitive. For other newspapers/magazines see:
<http://www.newsdirectory.com/>

International Herald Tribune: <http://www.iht.com/>

Africa:

Daily Nation (Kenya): <http://www.nationmedia.com/dailynation/>

The Guardian (Nigeria): <http://www.ngrguardiannews.com/>

The Namibian (Namibia): <http://www.namibian.com.na/>

The Mail & Guardian (South Africa): <http://www.mg.co.za/>

Asia:

Japan Times: <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/>

Korean Times: <http://times.hankooki.com/>

People's Daily (China) <http://www.people.com.cn/english/>

Singapore: <http://straitstimes.asia1.com.sg/home/0,1869,,00.html>

India (several links): <http://www.samachar.com/>

Pakistan: <http://www.jang.com.pk/thenews/>

Milliyet Daily (Istanbul) <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/e/>

Turkish Daily News (Ankara): <http://www.turkishdailynews.com/>

Europe:

The Guardian (London): <http://www.guardian.co.uk/>

L eMonde Diplomatique <http://mondediplo.com/>

The Prague Post (Czech): <http://www.praguepost.com/index.php>

Warsaw Voice (Poland): <http://www.warsawvoice.com.pl/>

The Middle East:

Al-Ahram (Cairo): <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/> (Weekly; Thursdays).

The Gulf News (Dubai): <http://www.gulfnews.com/>

Iraq Today: <http://www.iraq-today.com/>

Jordan Times (Jordan): <http://www.jordantimes.com/Mon/>

(Note: You have to click the current day on the left side to get the most recent issue.)

Tehran Times (Iran): <http://www.tehrantimes.com/>

South America:

Buenas Aires Herald (Argentina): <http://www.buenosairesherald.com/>

(You need to sign up for a guest pass to see all of the articles.)

Central America:

<http://www.ticotimes.net/>