

SUFFOLK COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
COURSE OUTLINE

INSTRUCTOR: Nicholas Antonucci

DEPARTMENT: Social Science

CATALOG NO.: HIS 102

COURSE: Western Civilization II

REACTION PAPERS TOPICS

Directions: **Choose three (3)** of the following reaction paper topics and write a typed reaction paper. Each reaction paper should be approximately 2 pages and must answer the chosen questions. Full credit will be given to students whose papers demonstrate satisfactory reading, writing and comprehension skills. In addition, each paper must be turned in with a signed plagiarism statement. **Please be aware that I will not accept late reaction papers (even if you are absent from class on the date the paper is due).** In an **emergency** you may email your reaction paper on or before the date it is due.

#1 Reaction Papers 17-21 **Due: 10/17** | #2 Reaction Papers 22-26 **Due: 11/19** | #3 Reaction Papers 27-30 **Due: 12/10**

Chapter 17: The Scientific Revolution (Due 10/17)

Reason on Trial

Copernicus took a huge step toward the demolition of the medieval vision of the universe by moving the sun to the center of the solar system. However, he retained significant elements of the Ptolemaic system. He believed in the existence of crystalline spheres and, most important, he maintained a strict division between earth and the heavens. Earth was a place of change, corruption, and imperfection. The heavens were changeless, pure, and perfect. Galileo challenged these basic assumptions, positing a universe in which all matter obeyed the same laws. Research Galileo's *The Starry Messenger* and his sketches of the phases of the moon. When you're done, write a short essay explaining the significance of Galileo's insights. What did he accomplish? What was left undone? Why was he so threatening to church authorities?

Chapter 18: The Age of Enlightenment (Due 10/17)

Reason and the Reformation of Society

With few exceptions, *philosophes* put their faith in one crucial concept: reason. Reason was the weapon that could win all battles. Through the application of reason, the *philosophe* could come to understand the workings of society, diagnose its ills, and develop remedies. There was no area of human action that could not be improved through the imposition of rational principles. Examine paintings of a **Freemason's ceremony**, the prints depicting the tortures of the **Inquisition**, the title page from Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, and the illustrations from Diderot's *Encyclopédia*. When you're done, write a short editorial dealing with a specific social problem, written from the point of view of a *philosophe*. Your editorial should define the problem, propose a solution, and explain the advantages of the solution.

Chapter 19: The French Revolution (Due 10/17)

Rights, Privileges, and Reform

The French Revolution began as a call for reform. When the Estates General convened in 1789, the representatives of the Third Estate did not call for the overthrow of the monarchy. Rather, they argued for the development of a constitution that provided a rational framework for French law and government. Examine the writings of Abbé Sieyès (passages can be found in your text) and the painting depicting the formation of the National Assembly. When you're done, write a short pamphlet for or against the creation of a constitution, written from the point of view of a delegate to the Estates General. Be sure to include biographical details in your pamphlet that make it clear which Estate you represent.

Chapter 20: Napoleon (Due 10/17)

From Monarchy to Empire

Napoleon used all the tools at his disposal to reinforce his power and authority. Under his rule, churches, schools, and the press all spoke with a single voice, the voice of Napoleon. Read the catechism and the excerpts

illustrating Napoleon's views on religion found in your text (or search for it online). When you're done, write a short essay for or against the proposition that more power was concentrated in the hands of Napoleon than had been in the hands of the kings who preceded him.

Chapter 21: The Industrial Revolution (Due 10/17)

Living in a Mechanized World

While historians debate the relative misery Europe's poor experienced before, during, and after the Industrial Revolution, all agree that, for the individuals who went through it, the experience of moving from an agrarian to an industrial society was a wrenching one. The shift from the farm to the factory, from the village to the city, required workers to adjust to new attitudes towards time, new kinds of work, and new concepts of community. Examine the image of woman working at a spinning jenny found in your text (or search for it online), the image of London row houses found in your text (or search for it online), and the government report on Leeds found in your text (or search for it online). When you're done, create a journal describing the experience of factory life written from the point of view of a recently hired worker. What surprises you the most? Which adjustments do you find the most difficult? Is your life better or worse than it was in the country?

Chapter 22: Thought and Culture in the Early Nineteenth Century (Due 11/19)

The Problem of the Poor

Nineteenth-century thinkers gave a great deal of thought to the nature and causes of poverty. Some believed that the poor were responsible for their own unhappy condition. Others saw the poor as victims of the cruelty and greed of their social superiors. Research the writings of Thomas Malthus, from the writings of David Ricardo, and from the writings of William Cobbett. When you're done, construct a debate between a supporter of Malthus and Ricardo and a supporter of Cobbett. Be sure to consider the following questions as you create your debate. What were the basic assumptions behind the liberal and radical views of poverty? What kinds of solutions did each side suggest?

Chapter 23: Europe, 1815-1848 (Due 11/19)

The Legacy of the French Revolution

Charles X and his aristocratic supporters wanted to pretend that the French Revolution was just a bad dream. In their vision of France, power and prestige were concentrated in the hands of the aristocracy and the church, the press existed to promulgate official propaganda, and bourgeoisie quietly paid taxes, playing no role in shaping the policies those taxes went to support. Examine Delacroix's painting "Liberty Leading the People" found in your text (or search for it online). When you're done, write a short essay analyzing this painting. Who are "the people"? What did Delacroix and the supporters of the Revolution of 1830 mean by liberty? How did they connect their actions to the events of 1789?

Chapter 24: Thought and Culture in the Mid-Nineteenth Century (Due 11/19)

Real, Ordinary, and True

The realists sought to depict life and society as it was. They saw themselves as literary scientists, reporting their careful and highly detailed observations to the reading public. Research the writings by Émile de Vogüé and George Sand and Emile Zola's thoughts of the experimental novel. When you're done, write a short essay comparing the realist and romantic vision of the individual and his or her relationship to society. Be sure to discuss both groups' understanding of the purpose of art and literature in your essay.

Chapter 25: The Surge of Nationalism (Due 11/19)

Race, Nationalism, and War

For extreme nationalists, a nation was a fact of nature, a natural expression of the folkish-racial spirit that bound a people together. Nations were not defined by common laws and institutions, but by common feelings shared by members of the same race. Research the expressions of liberal nationalism and the descriptions of extreme nationalism during this era. When you're done, write a short essay comparing liberal nationalism and extreme nationalism. Be sure to discuss each side's vision of the state, the citizen, and the international community.

Chapter 26: The Industrial West (Due 11/19)

Backwards and Falling Further Behind

By 1900, Russia's economy had fallen far behind the economies of the other European powers. While the second wave of industrialization had resulted in unprecedented levels productivity in Britain, Germany, and France, Russia struggled to compete in a modern world with an eighteenth-century economy. Examine Witte's memorandum to Nicholas II. When you're done, follow up on Witte's diagnosis by suggesting a number of steps Nicholas might have taken to improve Russia's situation. In your follow up memorandum, be sure to acknowledge the challenges that faced proponents of reform in turn-of-the-century Russia.

Chapter 27: Western Imperialism (Due 12/10)

The White Man's Burden

The supporters of late nineteenth-century imperialism put forward a number of different arguments in favor European domination of the globe. Some stressed political factors. Others focused on economic issues. Still others saw it as the duty of European Christians to bring progress to "backward peoples." Examine the photograph of missionaries in Madagascar during this era and the drawing of Leopold II of Belgium, both can be found in your text (or search for them online). When you're done, write a letter to the editor making an argument in favor of imperialism, written from the point of view of a late nineteenth-century middle-class European. What gave Europeans the right to rule the rest of the world? What sort of future might such a writer see for colonized peoples?

Chapter 29: World War I (Due 12/10)

A Much Desired War

In 1914, few people saw the outbreak of World War I as a disaster. On the contrary, a majority saw the war as welcome relief from a "rotten peace." Read a survey of French students and the writings of Friedrich von Bernhardi and research the popular opinion at the onset of war. When you're done, write a short essay explaining popular enthusiasm for war in 1914. Why were so many Europeans dissatisfied with peace? What role did governments play in shaping public opinion?

Chapter 30: An Era of Totalitarianism (Due 12/10)

Building a New Society

The creation of a socialist state in the Soviet Union involved more than the abolition of private ownership of the means of production. In Lenin's view, the most important, and most profound, revolution would take place in the minds of the people. If socialism were to succeed, Soviet workers would have to act as one, equating without question the will of the Communist party with the will of the people. In this context, Lenin demanded subordination, discipline, and ceaseless labor. Research Lenin's comments on the need for discipline, the propaganda poster "Forging Socialism", and the photos of forced labor in a Soviet gulag found in your text (or search for it online). Pay particular attention to the similarities and differences between the propaganda poster and the picture of a gulag. When you're done, write a short editorial on Soviet industrialization, written from the point of view of either a committed party member or a critic of Lenin's regime.

Chapter 32: World War II (Due 12/10)

The Final Solution

The extermination of 6 million Jews was a difficult and complicated task involving the participation and cooperation of thousands of people and the coordination of significant resources. Moreover, such an effort would not have been made if large numbers of people were not committed to the ideology that explained and justified genocide. Read the excerpt from an SS tract on page 851, the picture of camp survivors on page 852, and the descriptions of the camps on page 853. When you're done, write a short essay exploring the issue of responsibility for the Holocaust. In your opinion, is it more accurate to say that "the Nazis carried out the Holocaust" or that "the Germans carried out the Holocaust"? What are the implications of this distinction?