

20th Century World – HIST213 003 | Fall 2025

Instructor: Matthew Friedman | Email: mwf@njit.edu

Office Hours: Monday 1:00 – 2:00 pm

Class Time and Location: Tuesday-Thursday 11:30 am – 12:50 pm, Cullimore 110

Course Description

This course introduces students to some of the major, political, economic, cultural, and social developments that have shaped the history of our contemporary world. The course offers an interdisciplinary and comparative view of twentieth century world history. As the history of the world is too broad to do justice to over one semester, we will look at a range of events, processes, and developments of the twentieth century, through the analytical lenses of mass culture, the crises of modernity, and totalitarianism, from two world wars and economic troubles to the Cold War and globalization.

Course Objectives:

The students of the course will analyze historical events and movements of the 20th century through cultural and historical texts and assess their subsequent significance. Students will use critical thinking and problem-solving skills to analyze information in a collaborative research project and develop their writing skills in reflections and online discussions.

Learning Goals:

Upon completion of this course, students should specifically demonstrate knowledge of some of the fundamental concepts and theories of historical events and ideas related to the 20th Century World, evaluate global exchanges and perspectives in context of social, political, religious, and intellectual traditions, and read, analyze, organize and synthesize, evidence, historical problems, and interpretations connected to the history of the 20th Century World.

Required Texts:

Findley, Carter and Rothney, John Alexander. *Twentieth Century World*, 7th edition. Used copies of the fifth and sixth editions can be found at a number of used booksellers. You may use them, but be warned that the chapters do not align perfectly with the reading schedule of this course.

Arendt, Hannah, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. This book is available at the University Book Store and is widely-available used at many online booksellers. The Harcourt Brace Jovanovich edition is preferred, but the Penguin Modern Classics will do, as well.

Additional *required* readings are available on or through Canvas.

Assignments and Grading:

Participation: Everyone is both expected and required to participate in class discussions and, when relevant, in the online discussion forum. The participation grade will reflect the quality and quantity of your in-class participation.

Response Papers: Students will write reaction paper on *Night and Fog*, the Modern Music Playlist and the Global Pop Music Playlist.

Journal: Students will keep a journal putting Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism* in conversation with the course material and readings.

Attendance.....	10
Participation	10
Response Papers	15
Journal	20
Midterm Exam.....	20
Final Exam	25

Your grades are calculated as *the aggregate* of points for each assignment and assessment.

There will be no deadline extensions except in the most extreme circumstances.

Grading Scale:

A	90-100
B+	85-89
B	80-84
C+	75-79
C	70-74
D	60-70

Academic Integrity: An essential part of NJIT's policy of academic integrity is that students demonstrate honesty and integrity in their courses. It is also a policy that will serve you in good stead in the rest of your personal and professional life. Turning in a paper that includes plagiarism, was written by someone else and passed off as your own work, or cheating on an examination will result in a 0 for that assignment. All cases of suspected plagiarism/cheating will be reported to the office of the Dean of Students for investigation. If you're unclear on what constitutes an honor code violation, please see the university [policy on academic integrity](#).

The unauthorized use of ChatGPT and similar AI tools in an assignment is an academic integrity violation, and will be reported to the Dean of Students office.

Students with Disabilities or Special Needs:

Students who have disabilities or special needs should contact NJIT's [Student Disability Services](#) to help procure accommodations in completing coursework.

Other Resources:

There are several writing assignments both big and small for this course, and if you need them, the [Writing Center](#) can provide you with help on every part of the writing process. Also, please don't hesitate to drop by my office hours or send me an email if you're having difficulties. We all need a support network. If you need them, the [Center for Counseling and Psychological Services \(C-CAPS\)](#) in Campbell Hall, Room 205, is available to listen and to help.

CLASS SCHEDULE

SECTION I – Origins of the 20th Century

The Origins of Totalitarianism, Preface to Part I, Chapters 1-5

3 Sept – Class 1: Introduction and overview of the Twentieth Century

Readings: *Twentieth-Century World*: Chapter 1-2
Stefan Zweig, *The World of Yesterday* (excerpt)

8 Sept – Class 2: Introduction to Hannah Arendt

Readings: “The Antisemites’ Petition”
Emile Zola, “J’Accuse...!”

10 Sept – Class 3: Colonial Foundations

Rudyard Kipling, “The White Man’s Burden”
Edward D. Morel, “The Black Man’s Burden”

15 Sept – Class 4: Gathering Clouds

Reading: Modris Eksteins, *Rites of Spring*, Chapter 1
F.T. Marinetti, Futurist Manifesto
Listen: Igor Stravinsky, *Sacre du Printemps*, Arnold Schoenberg, *Pierrot Lunaire*

17 Sept – Class 5: World War I

Readings: *Twentieth-Century World*: Chapter 3
Kaethe Kollwitz, Diary Excerpts
War Poetry selection

Deadline: Response Paper 1

22 Sept – Class 6: After Versailles

Reading: Robert Musil, “Anschluss”
Mohandas Gandhi, *The Story of my Experiments with the Truth* (excerpt)
The Sykes-Picot Agreement

SECTION II – Between the Wars

The Origins of Totalitarianism, Preface to Part II, Chapters 5-9

24 Sept – Class 7: The Age of Revolutions

Readings: *Twentieth-Century World*: Chapter 4
V.I. Lenin, April Theses
V.I. Lenin, Speech on the Dissolution of the Constituent Assembly
Rosa Luxemburg, “What Does the Spartacist League Want??”

29 Sept – Class 8: The Idea of the Nation

Ernest Renan, “What is a Nation?”
Theodor Herzl, “A Solution to the Jewish Question”

1 Oct – Class 9: The End of the Liberal Order

Readings: *Twentieth-Century World*: Chapter 5

6 Oct – Class 10: Fascism

Readings: *Twentieth-Century World*: Chapter 6
Adolf Hitler. Excerpt from *Mein Kampf*
Eric Hobsbawm, “Interesting Times”
Benito Mussolini, “The Political and Social Doctrine of Fascism”

8 Oct – Class 11: Imperial Legacies and Colonial Modernities

Readings: *Twentieth-Century World*: Chapter 7
Eva Peron, “History of Peronism”

13 Oct – Class 12: Dying Empires

Readings: *Twentieth-Century World*: Chapter 8-9
Mohandas K. Gandhi, “Letter to Lord Irwin”

SECTION III – The Catastrophe

The Origins of Totalitarianism, Preface to Part III, Chapters 10-13

15 Oct – Class 13: Mass Man

Reading: Hans-Ulrich Thamer, “The Orchestration of the National Community”
Ernst Junger, *Storm of Steel* (excerpt)
Screen: *Triumph of the Will*

20 Oct – Class 14: In Peace and War

Readings: Bertrand Russell, “The Future of Pacifism”
David C. Lukowitz, “British Pacifists and Appeasement”
Romain Rolland, *Above the Battle* (excerpt)

22 Oct – Class 15: World War II

Readings: *Twentieth-Century World*: Chapter 10 (“World War II: the final crisis of European global dominance”)
The Nanking Massacre

27 Oct – Class 16: The Holocaust

In-Class Screening: *Night and Fog*
Readings: Primo Levi, *If This is a Man* (excerpt)
Christopher Browning, *Ordinary Men* (excerpt)

29 Oct – Class 17: The Cold War and Decolonization

Readings: *Twentieth-Century World*: Chapter 11
The Long Telegram
Ho Chi Minh: Vietnamese Declaration of Independence
Frantz Fanon “Excerpt from *The Wretched of the Earth*”
Screen: *The Atomic Café*

Deadline: Response Paper 2

Online Midterm Exam

SECTION IV – New World Order

3 Nov – Class 18: The Neo-Liberal World Order

Readings: *Twentieth-Century World*: Chapter 12
The Rome Treaty

5 Nov – Class 19: Post-Colonial Latin America

Readings: *Twentieth-Century World*: Chapter 13
Fidel Castro, “On the Export of Revolution”

10 Nov – Class 20: Post-Colonial Africa

Twentieth-Century World: Chapter 14
Jomo Kenyatta, Madaraka Day Speech

12 Nov – Class 21: Asia and the Middle East Since World War II

Readings: *Twentieth-Century World*: Chapter 15-16
Jawaharlal Nehru, Speech to Bandung Conference Political Committee, 1955
Gamel Abdel Nasser, Denouncement of the Proposal for a Canal Users' Association, 1956

17 Nov – Class 22: 1968, Rebellion and the World

Readings: Situationist International, "On the Poverty of Student Life"
Enoch Powell, "Rivers of Blood" Speech
Mexico 68 Documents
Ludvík Vaculík, "Two Thousand Words that Belong to Workers, Farmers, Officials, Scientists, Artists, and Everybody"

SECTION V – The Postmodern World

19 Nov – Class 23: End of the Cold War

Readings: *Twentieth-Century World*: Chapter 17
Ronald Reagan. "Address to the National Association of Evangelicals"

THANKSGIVING RECESS

1 Dec – Class 24: The Post-Modern Condition

Readings: Jean-Jacques Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*, "Introduction"
Listen: Pop music playlist.

3 Dec – Class 25: The Unravelling World

Readings: *Twentieth-Century World*: Chapter 18
Nigel Farage, "The Tory Wimps of Strasbourg"

8 Dec – Class 26: Wrap-Up and Review

Deadline: Response Paper 3

CITATION FAQ

What do you need to cite?

Any phrase, sentence or paragraph that you have taken from another source, even if it's a sentence fragment. For example, if you use the phrase "to be or not to be: that is the question," you *must* provide a citation to the relevant page in a published edition of William Shakespeare's play *Hamlet*. As a general rule, if you are using words that someone else wrote, you *must* cite. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism.

Any information that you found in another source (and isn't common knowledge), even if you paraphrase. For example, if you write something like "almost ten per cent of the adult males in the United States in 1924 were members of the Ku Klux Klan," you have to say where you got that information. If you don't, how do I know that you're not making it up?

You don't have to provide citations for information that we covered in class.

What happens if you don't cite?

It depends. A written assignment that does not reference any sources will receive an automatic zero grade. A written assignment that does reference sources but does not cite them will receive an automatic 50% grade penalty. If you don't know whether you should cite a passage, quote or information, err on the side of caution and cite it.

What do you need?

As a general rule, you will need a bibliography page, and footnotes or parenthetical notes in text for all of your references. Please use either the University of Chicago/Turabian citation style or the simplified citation style on the next page.

SUBMISSION POLICY

All written assignments must be submitted to the appropriate link on Canvas by the beginning of the deadline. No emails will be accepted by email. No assignments will be accepted after the deadline, *except with prior arrangement and in the most extreme circumstances*. Written assignments *must* be submitted to the appropriate Canvas link (that is, not to the assignment comments, etc.) to receive credit.

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SOURCES

Historians refer to primary and secondary sources. A primary source is a document, speech, or other sort of evidence written, created or otherwise produced during the time under study, or by a participant. Primary sources offer an inside view of a particular event. Secondary sources provide interpretation and analysis of primary sources. Secondary sources are usually (though not always) written by professional historians and are one step removed from the original event.

CITATION BASICS

As a rule, historians cite sources according to the University of Chicago style. If you plan to pursue further studies in history, you will find it advisable to acquire *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Eighth Edition: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers* by Kate L. Turabian. For the purposes of this course, you may use the simplified guide below. Note that bibliographic entries and footnotes references use slightly different formats. Use *either* footnotes *or* parenthetical references. These appear in-text.

Book

Bibliography:

Lears, Jackson. *Rebirth of a Nation: The Making of Modern America, 1877-1920*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2009.

Footnote First Reference:

Jackson Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation: The Making of Modern America, 1877-1920* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2009), 236.

Footnote Subsequent References:

Lears, 113.

Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation*, 113. (If you cite more than one work by this author.)

Parenthetical Reference: (Lears, 236)

Parenthetical Reference (if you use more than one source by this author): (Lears 2009, 236)

Periodical Article

Bibliography:

Rosenfeld, Sophia. "On Being Heard: A Case for Paying Attention to the Historical Ear." *The American Historical Review* 116 (April 2011): 316-334.

Note that you include the volume number of the journal or publication following the title.

Footnote First Reference:

Sophia Rosenfeld, "On Being Heard: A Case for Paying Attention to the Historical Ear," *The American Historical Review* 116, April 2011, 317.

Footnote Subsequent References:

Rosenfeld, 318.

Rosenfeld, "On Being Heard," 320.

Parenthetical Reference: As with books.

In the case of class readings where you do not have the book or journal title or publication information, or there is no stated author, simply cite sources with the information that you do have. If the source is a web page, cite the page number as "np." For example:

Elias Hill, "Testimony to Congress Regarding the Ku Klux Klan" (1871), 1., and Elliott West, "Land," 15.

"Sykes-Picot Agreement," np.

If there are no page numbers indicated in a PDF document, cite the PDF file page number.