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## **HIS 270-01: Making the Modern World: Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century** **Final Paper Assignment**

### **Overview**

This paper is the culminating assignment of this class. It serves as an opportunity to put the critical reading and writing skills you have been building all semester to work in service of a unique historical argument. In these prompts, you are asked to place our sources in dialogue and draw your own, evidence-based conclusions about what they reveal about 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe. These topics are designed to be open-ended and allow you to approach them in your own way. You may choose one of the topics below or create your own. If you create your own topic you must get my approval by Tuesday, October 27. Be bold and have fun!

### **Requirements**

- **Length**: Your paper must be **2500 words long**, *not including* your bibliography. I will allow a maximum of 200 words deviation.
- **Formatting**: Include your **name and title** on the first page. **Number** your pages. You must use **12-point font, double spacing, and 1-inch margins**.
- **Citations and Bibliography**: In the body of your paper, you may use either **internal citations** or **footnotes** (not both). You must also attach a **Works Cited** as a separate page at the end of your text. Both your Works Cited and your footnotes should be formatted using the *Chicago Manual of Style* (available online through the Library's website). If you do not have the complete bibliographic information for a source, you can find it on **WorldCat**, which is also available on the Library website.

### **Instructions**

Choose one of the following topics (or create your own, with my approval!) and respond to it using **only** the texts we have read in class. You must formulate a **thesis statement** (an argument in response to the topic), which should appear in the first paragraph of your paper. Your argument should be based on your interpretation of the texts and be backed up by properly cited quotations. Remember to explain your interpretation! The main question for each topic is in **bold**. That is the part you must answer. The rest is suggestions to help you think through your topic. You do not have to address every point in the prompt.

This assignment is scaffolded into three steps:

**1) Introduction + Outline.** Choose a topic and write a one-paragraph introduction, which includes your thesis statement. You should also write an outline for the rest of your paper. The Outline should include three main points that build on each other to argue for your thesis statement. This will create a roadmap you can use for writing your paper. You must submit your Intro + Outline as a single document on Sakai by **Sunday, October 25 at 5pm**.

\*Remember to check out the **HIS270-01 Writing Handout and Writing Lesson** for advice on Introductions and Thesis Statements! They are on the course website under Writing Resources.

I will **meet with each of you** individually for 15 minutes to talk through your Intro + Outline. These meetings will take place on **October 27 and 28**.

**2) Rough Draft.** The rough draft should consist of the first three pages of your paper. That includes your **introduction** and part of the **body**. Our goal is to practice the distinct skills at work in these sections. The introduction should set up the problem, preview the argument, explain the stakes, and articulate the thesis statement. The body should use direct quotations from your sources as evidence for your argument.

We will workshop our rough drafts together in class on Tuesday, November 10. To make that possible, you must email your draft to me and everyone in your group by the due date.

**Due: Sunday, November 8 at 10pm.**

You must read your group members' drafts before we meet on Tuesday! You will only be able to give your colleagues useful advice if you read their work carefully. I will hand out further instructions before our peer critique day.

**3) Final Draft.** Your completed paper will be due on **Wednesday, December 2 at 10pm**, submitted via Sakai. Late papers will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade per day. I cannot accept late papers after December 8.

\*\*\*\*\*In case you missed it before, here is my policy on **plagiarism**: Don't do it! Plagiarism is a very serious offence, which can destroy your academic career and professional prospects. If you plagiarize, **you will automatically fail my class**. I am all-seeing and all-knowing, and I *will* catch you. Please, save us both a lot of time and worry: don't even try it. If at any time you have questions about how to avoid plagiarism, feel free to ask me.

I will do my best to be available to meet with you as often as you like. I will read partial drafts up until November 30.

**Good luck!!!! Please let me know if you have any questions!**

## Paper Topics

### Topic One:

Nationalism played a major role in European thought over the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A variety of thinkers from the French Revolution to the eve of WWI conceptualized the nation in different, often conflicting ways. Consider the definitions of the nation proposed by at least two of these thinkers and answer the following question: **Was European nationalism a greater force for unity or disunity?** How do the theories you have chosen bring people together? How do they exclude outsiders? How did nationalism evolve over time? Do these theories create a model for international stability or conflict? In what ways do they challenge or redefine the idea of empire on the European continent? How are they influenced by Romanticism or Realpolitik?

### Topic Two:

Socialism arose in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century in response to industrialization and evolved alongside it over the course of the century. Taking Engels' *Condition of the Working Class in England* as your starting point, consider the social and political challenges created by industrialization and answer the following question: **To what extent did socialism provide a solution to the effects of industrialization?** How did socialists explain the harm done by industrialization? How did they seek to preserve its economic benefits while mitigating this harm? How did radical socialists justify calls for revolution or even terrorism? How did moderate socialists justify non-revolutionary solutions? In what ways were the solutions they proposed realistic or utopian? How did they draw on the trend of mass politics, and how much faith did they put in the masses?

### Topic Three:

Europe's 19<sup>th</sup> century is often framed as a century of progress and enlightenment, but many groups remained marginalized. Select the case of one group—women, Jews, or people of African descent—and answer the following question: **How does the experience of minorities highlight the limits of European progress in the 19<sup>th</sup> century?**

For women: How did feminists advocate for inclusion and equality? What elements of their arguments evolve or remain constant over time? How did feminists use liberalism or socialism to bolster their claims, possibly in conflicting ways? How did developments in science, society, and culture add to or restrict their rights and ability to control their lives?

For Jews: What issues structured the debate about whether to grant Jews legal and social equality? In what ways did nationalist frameworks allow for the inclusion or exclusion of Jews from the national "self"? How did the rise of Jewish nationalism (Zionism) respond to and complicate the question of Jews' inclusion in European society?

For people of African descent: How did people of African descent argue for equality in the French Revolution? How did European imperialism in Africa reflect and perpetuate prejudices not overcome at the start of the century? How did Europeans use Darwin's scientific theory of evolution to justify oppressing Africans? How does the African perspective, conveyed via Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, challenge such prejudices in new ways?

**Topic Four:**

Liberalism was one of the most complex political philosophies to emerge in 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe. Liberals embraced the ideal of freedom in social, political, and economic affairs, yet they also believed the government had a regulatory role to play. **How did liberals in 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe balance the competing claims of liberty and government?** When did they believe government ought to step in and when step back? In what ways did they rely on society to regulate itself? Was such reliance reasonable? How did they make use of Enlightenment values like free speech, rationality, and the common good to create and limit the government's role? How did they advocate for liberalism as a superior alternative to both socialist revolution and conservative tyranny? What rights did they claim for citizens, and how did such influence concepts of citizenship and nationalism? How did their theories help or hinder the inclusion of minorities?

**Topic Five:**

In 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe, the arts evolved in tandem with political, economic, and social trends, highlighting and even shaping their essence. **How did the arts and culture in the 19<sup>th</sup> century reflect the hopes, dreams, fears, and tensions within European society?** How do trends in painting like Romanticism, Realism, Impressionism, and Modernism demonstrate Europeans' changing values and priorities? How do such paintings soothe or agitate social and political concerns? What insights do fictional works like Hoffmann's "The Sandman" or Zola's *The Ladies' Paradise* provide into European politics and society at the extremes of the century? How do changes over time in artistic works reveal the trajectory in Europeans' thinking?