

June, 2011

Dear Student,

I hear that you have signed up for the AP European History course this fall! While AP Euro tends to be a very challenging AP history course, it is incredibly enriching. Whether you pursue science, math, business, or humanities-based study in college, the information you learn from this course will significantly enhance your understanding of all fields. Our studies this year will range from discussions of religious conflicts, power struggles, and the strengths and weaknesses of different political systems (such as absolute and constitutional monarchies, democracy and dictatorships), to the exploration of revolutionary ideas in the realms of art, economics, science, and politics by men like Leonardo da Vinci, Adam Smith, Copernicus, Marx, Freud, and Nietzsche. In all cases, the social consequences of these ideas, both good and bad, will be examined.

In order to get the most out of this course and to prepare adequately for the exam, we will rely on a fair amount of reading that goes beyond textbook accounts. If you are eager to get a head start on outside reading that we *might* cover in class, or if you simply want to read books that will improve your understanding of the material, I have included several interesting, representative books down below. The boldfaced headings indicate the historic time period to which they relate. BE SURE TO HIGHLIGHT AS YOU READ IN CASE WE REFER TO THESE BOOKS LATER IN THE YEAR.

*Machiavelli, The Prince **The Renaissance**

*Sir Thomas More, Utopia **The Renaissance**

Voltaire, Candide **The Enlightenment**

Charles Dickens, Hard Times or A Tale of Two Cities
**The Industrial Revolution/
The French Revolution**

George Orwell, Animal Farm
Illustration of Economic Theories

Lytton Strachey, Queen Victoria **Biography of Queen Victoria**

Barbara Tuckman, Guns of August **World War I**

George Orwell, Homage to Catalonia **Spanish Civil War**

Michael D. Richards, Paul R. Waibel. Twentieth-Century Europe: A Brief History

While many of the readings that I mentioned are purely optional, **you are required to read Machiavelli's The Prince, or Sir Thomas More's Utopia.** *Because The Prince and Utopia often make several time-specific references that you will likely not know, it is important to keep in mind that you are sifting through these works in search of new insights about the past that you had previously not known. You won't be experts on the works but you will take something away from them.* **This assignment will be due our first class meeting of the second week of class.**

If you plan to read Machiavelli, you will need to answer the following questions and write at least a 250 word response to question #7. All questions will be turned in that second week of class. No sources outside of the textbook should be used for this assignment. All responses should be supported by specific references to the book and their corresponding page numbers when necessary.

1. Why did Machiavelli write The Prince?
2. Describe the role of armies according to Machiavelli.
3. Why does Machiavelli say that it is better for a prince “to be both loved and feared?” Is it possible for a prince to be both? Explain.
4. In Chapter 20, what three bits of advice does Machiavelli give the prince?
5. According to Machiavelli in Chapter 21, what must a prince do to be esteemed?
6. List and describe ten characteristics of a Machiavellian ruler.
7. **As you perceive it, describe what a state might be like under a Machiavellian ruler.**

If you prefer to read Sir Thomas More’ Utopia, you will need to answer the following questions and write at least a 250 word response to question #6. While both books (Book I and Book II) need to be read, Book II is a considerably more meaningful read. You might have to skim through Book I to get through it. No sources outside of the textbook should be used for this assignment. All responses should be supported by specific references to the book and their corresponding page numbers when necessary.

1. Describe the geography of Utopia. What role does geography play in the way Utopian society developed?
2. Describe the economy of Utopia.
3. Define the following terms by consulting a dictionary: capitalism, socialism, communism. Based upon the definitions of these terms, what elements of each are present in Utopia?
4. Choose any five of the following topics and describe their role in Utopia: cities, community life, economy, education, artisans, agriculture, philosophy, religion, law, foreign relations, or slavery.
5. What does Utopia tell us about More’s view of humans and humanity?
6. **Would it be possible to establish a community like Utopia? Why or why not?**

In addition to reading one of these works, I would like you to come to class that first day with a general understanding of what modern Europe is like today. Feel free to **scan the newspapers** for any mention of contemporary Europe. Keep an eye out not just for political events, but also any mention of European culture, economics, geography, etc. **An understanding of the European Union and the “Euro” would also be helpful.** Happy reading and I look forward to our first day of class!

Enjoy your summer,

Derek McBaine