

Dear AP European History Students,

5/29/2009

I am looking forward to teaching and learning Modern European History with you in the fall. In preparation for our studies, you will be required to read **two books over the summer** and prepare written essays.

- 1) **A Distant Mirror** by Barbara Tuchman (ISBN 0-345-34957-1)
- 2) **Empires of the Sea; The Siege of Malta, the Battle of Lepanto and the Contest for the Center of the World** by Roger Crowley (ISBN:978-0-8129 7764-6)

Both books are available on-line (Amazon.com and Barnes and Noble. Com) or in your library.

I will expect to hear from you by e-mail as soon as you get this assignment to confirm your knowledge of it. (colistra@lschs.org). Get in touch with me over the summer if you need help on any parts of the work. I'm in school every day in the morning Monday thru Thursday until July 24th. I'll be back in touch with you as soon as you communicate with me.

The first work, A Distant Mirror is an attempt to trace the calamitous 14th century and the effects on society of the most lethal disaster of recorded history-that is to say the Black Death. The account is written through the narrow focus of a particular person's life- Enguerrand de Coucy VII 'the most experienced and skillful of all knights of France.

The result is a beautifully written award winning work of scholarship, wit and wisdom. On the one hand are the glittering images of crusades, castles, cathedrals and chivalry; on the other are the guilty passions, political assassinations, sea battles and sieges underlying the stark fear that the world was about to come to an end.

While you certainly can read and enjoy the entire work, I recommend the following chapters:

Part One:

Chap 1-2 -5-6-7-8-9 -13-14-15-16

Part Two:

Chap 19-23-24-26-27-

Epilogue

- 1) **Your first task is to thoroughly explain and assess the validity of the following generalization:**

"The Hundred Years War, like the crises of the Church in the same period, broke apart medieval unity. Between England and France, the war left a legacy of mutual antagonism that was to last until necessity required alliance on the eve of the guns of August 1914."

This explanation must include direct quotes and proper citations from the book and be in the form of a five paragraph essay.

In your writing, it is best to use simple citations when quoting the authors or paraphrasing their ideas (it is plagiarism NOT to do so!) e.g (Tuchman p.13) or (Crowley p.12).

DO NOT USE FOOTNOTES OR ENDNOTES. These are unnecessary and tedious.

To complete any research outside the actual work itself, use the citation method and be sure to include a *proper bibliography*. It is very important that your paper be grammatically correct and contain no misspellings.

2) **Then, choose two (2)** of the following questions to answer in the same format as above.

- a) Draw a family portrait of the lineage of **Enguerrand VII** which includes his grandparents as well as his children and their heirs. Then assess the validity of the following generalization:

“**Coucy** was distinct from most in his time..as he saw his role steadily, accepted responsibility, remained sagacious in judgment, cool and capable in performance and in commanding the respect of all associates...he had many of the qualities of George Washington. Enguerrand did not innovate nor rise above his time; he went with it, served it better than most and died of its values. It was reduced by his going.”

- b) Tuchman makes note of at least two glaring, almost insurmountable obstacles which confront any historian of any age: “contradictions, empty spaces and overload of the negative”.

Of the first she says, “Knights talk of honor and turn brigand; extravagance and splendor were never more extreme amid depopulation and disaster; starving peasants live in hovels alongside prosperous peasants in featherbeds. Contradictions are part of life, not merely a matter of conflicting evidence. No age is made of whole cloth.”

- Analyze the meaning of this generalization and point out three examples of these contradictions in Tuchman’s work. Does this apply to our age?

- c) Regarding ‘empty spaces’, Tuchman says; “Despite the wealth of information, the problem is not contradictory information but no information. To bridge this gap, {the historian} must make use of what seems the likely and natural explanation – using ones’ imagination -which accounts for the proliferation of ‘probably’ and ‘presumably’ –annoying but unavoidable in this work.

*Point out three examples of this attempt to ‘bridge the gap’. Is Tuchman” successful”.

- d) As for ‘overload of the negative’ consider Tuchman’s Law: “The fact of being recorded multiplies the apparent extent of any deplorable development by five to ten fold.”

History is exactly the same as reading the daily newspaper. The normal does not make the news. ..’the good clerics do not count beside the perverse men’. History is made by documents that survive, and these lean heavily on crisis and calamity and crime and misbehavior.

However, disaster is rarely as pervasive as it seems from recorded accounts. One can come home in the evening without having encountered a terrorist or rapist or mugger or a power failure or stalled train of a broken water main-on a lucky day.

* Point out three examples of the ‘**the normal making history**’ in this period. Carefully explain why these are examples of the ‘normal’. How does this apply to our age?

This work must be completed and post-marked by Monday, July 14th.

You may choose to e-mail your work to me as an attachment. (Be sure to put your name on the body of your work as well as to identify your e-mail . Otherwise I will not open it!) (colistra@lschs.org)

Or you can mail it to me at LaSalle.

***FAILURE TO MEET THIS DEADLINE WITH ACCEPTABLE WORK WILL RESULT IN YOUR REMOVAL FROM AP EUROPEAN history**

***Your second work will be due upon return to school in September. Bring your finished work to the first class.**

Empires of the Sea:

The Siege of Malta, the Battle of Lepanto and the Contest for the Center of the World

by Roger Crowley

From the dome of **Saint Sophia**, it was easy to see why **Constantinople** once ruled the world. On the afternoon of May 29th, 1453, **Suleiman Mehmet II**, sultan of the Ottoman Empire took the city by storm in fulfillment of **Islamic prophecy**. His armies routed the Christian defenders, wrecked and looted the city, ransacked the churches, roped together long lines of wailing men, women and children and left the city 'despoiled and blackened as if by fire.'

The moment marked the emphatic end of one imperial empire and the rise of another by right of conquest and holy war; payback time for the **Crusades**. The 'Turks', nomadic, tribal people from the heart of Asia had now consolidated the presence of Islam on the shores of Europe. Suleiman was about to create 'one empire, one faith and one sovereignty in the world' and declared himself the 'sovereign of two seas' – the White and the Black.

Yet even as Mehmet's visions of another Roman empire took shape, the Catholic kings of Spain set their own imperial ambitions at the Western end of the Mediterranean Sea in retribution for the humiliation. **Madrid and Istanbul** were as yet distant mirrors reflecting the same sun. Soon the Hapsburgs of Spain and the Ottomans of Istanbul would converge on the dot which pinched the Mediterranean world into two distinct seas with **Malta** sitting midstream.

By 1453, the Mediterranean Sea became the epicenter of world war; one of the fiercest and most chaotic contests in European history. The struggle for the center of the world between Christianity and Islam was a drawn out affair that rolled across the water for well over a century and still laps at the shorelines. The battlegrounds were water, islands, and shores; the key weapon was the oared galley.

War broke out in earnest in 1521 and reached its climax between 1565 and 1571; six years of unparalleled bloodshed between the two heavyweights of the age-the Ottoman Turks and the Hapsburgs of Spain- each holding up the battle standards of their faith and fighting to the death.

.....and it all began with a letter

A. First you must analyze the content, motive, author and the intended audience of this letter to see its significance to this study. How did this letter (and a second follow up) **set the stage for the holy war that was to come?**

B. Secondly analyze and explain the context and meaning of the following quote by **Don Juan of Austria**,

" I spend my time building castles in the air, but in the end all of them, and I, blow away in the wind."

Explain the context and meaning of the quote and apply it to this study.

*Your work should take the form of 2 separate **five paragraph** essays, using **specific page citations** and references to the work.

C. Thirdly, pick **one(1)** of the following questions to complete in the same format:

- 1) 'The key to Europe was Malta, the key to Malta was Saint Elmo'. Explain and assess the validity of this generalization.

- 2) Compare and contrast **Charles V of Spain and Suleiman the Sultan** of the Ottoman empire in terms of their personalities, their ruling style, the extent of their empires and the influence they had on the history of Europe
- 3) Define the Order of the Knights of Saint John , known as Hospitallers, and their leaders Philip de L'Isle Adam and Jean Parisot de La Valette and analyze their roles in the battle of Rhodes and the siege Malta.
Why were these men and those battle of such significance to the history of the clash of Islam and Christianity?
- 4) 'Kill. Kill! Pay for Saint Elmo you bastards!' 'The startled man was burned alive to the screams of the crowd.' 'All the prisoners were taken from their dungeons and burned alive.' 'The grotesque head was mounted on a lance, and with its eyeballs still glaring defiance was processed throughout as proof of death.' 'The renegade was caught, tied to a horse's tail and beaten to death by children with sticks.'
The question on everyone's lips at the time was why was such **cruelty** necessary in the waging of the wars of the Mediterranean? Give specific examples of this cruelty and reach your own conclusion? How do you explain the fact that Catholic Mass was said on every ship, rosaries were handed to soldiers and the janissaries carried the Koran along with their arquebus?
- 5) What did the **strangulation of Atahualpa**, the last king of the Incas have to do with the Spanish expedition against Barbarossa? What was the relationship of the New World to the Old World in this period of history?
- 6) Describe the methods and the role of **slavery and 'man taking'** as imperial policies of both Ottoman and Christian empires. What was its relationship to the **oared galley**. What was to become of this weapon of war?
- 7) The final ghastly moments of the **battle for Malta** were played out on the shores of Saint Paul's Bay. Malta had survived through a combination of religious zeal, irreducible willpower and luck. It turned out to be unfinished business that lacked a conclusion. Southern Europe had escaped by the skin of its teeth." Explain each clause of this generalization.
- 8) '**Lepanto was Europe's Trafalgar**'. Analyze the meaning and significance of this generalization. Compare it to another moment in world or European history.