World History II  
Research Assignment: DECOLONIZATION AND THE COLD WAR

WWII changed the political order of the early 20th century. Increased pressure to end the political and economic patterns of colonialism, along with increased nationalism in the colonies, led to a period of decolonization in Africa and Asia and “economic nationalism” in Latin America. These movements for decolonization began even before WWII commenced and accelerated after the war.

As the US and USSR became the two competing superpowers of the post-WWII world, a competition emerged between the two powers and their respective systems for political and economic power on a global scale. Western capitalism and democracy competed with Eastern communism and one-party rule; creating an “iron curtain” in Europe. Although the two nations fiercely competed with one another, they did not engage in military confrontation. Thus, this “war” was labeled a “Cold War.”

This competition between the US and USSR played itself out in the newly decolonized countries and created the grounds for civil wars, coups, and revolutions. These civil wars, coups and/or revolutions were fought by Communist and non-Communist factions supported by the USSR or the US. These conflicts had long-reaching consequences for both superpowers and more significantly for the new nations themselves.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:
- Why were newly decolonized nations targets for Cold War rivalries?
- What were the policy objectives (goals) for the US and USSR, respectively? To what extent were these achieved / not achieved? Why or why not?
- How did the US and the USSR achieve these goals? At what costs?
- To what extent were the “Communist” groups truly communist? What, if any, circumstances might account for the label?
- To what extent did imperialism of the 19th and early 20th centuries set the stage for the Cold War conflicts after WW II?

RESEARCH PAPER.
The focus of your research paper can be on any one of the following:
- CAUSES: The causes or factors which caused the conflict – evaluate the degree to which ONE factor (of your choice) caused the conflict
  Sample Research Question: How did (your chosen factor) bring about Cold War conflict in (your selected case study)?

- RESULTS: The consequences of the conflict – examine ONE or TWO major results from the conflict
  Sample Research Question: To what extent did the Cold War conflict in (your selected case study) result in (one or two main results)? How did this affect the country? OR How did the Cold War conflict in (your selected case study) lead to (one or two major results)?

- LEADERSHIP: The leadership of the movement – evaluate the success of the leadership of the movement in attracting or in “losing” the support of certain groups
  Sample Research Question: Why was (selected leader and /or group) successful or not successful in gaining support of the people of (your selected case study)?

- POLICY: the degree to which the U.S. or the U.S.S.R. met its policy objectives in the conflict.
  Sample Research Question: To what extent was the US / USSR successful in achieving (1 or 2 main policy objectives) in (your selected case study)? Why or why not? At what cost?
TOPICS / CASE STUDIES:

LATIN AMERICA:
- Cuban Revolution
- Nicaraguan Sandinista Revolution
- Civil War in El Salvador (1980s)
- Chile – Coup against Salvador Allende
- “Dirty Wars” in Argentina
- Guatemala – Coup against Arbenz
- Dominican Republic – Coup against Bosch
- Puerto Rico
- Mexico

AFRICA:
- Decolonization in Angola
- Decolonization in Mozambique
- South African government v ANC

SE ASIA:
- Vietnam: war for reunification
- Khmer Rouge in Cambodia

MIDDLE EAST / SW ASIA:
- Iran: coup v Mossadegh OR Revolution in 1979
- Egypt
- Turkey
- Israel / Palestine

GUIDELINES FOR THE PAPER:

- Length: 5-7 pgs.
- In-text citations REQUIRED. MLA format required. Papers without citations will receive a failing grade.
- Annotated Bibliography. MLA format required. Papers without an Annotated Bibliography will receive a failing grade.
- You should have at least
  - 5 secondary sources [at least 1 should be a book] and
  - 2 primary sources
- The final paper must be 1.5 or 2x spaced with 1 inch margins in Times New Roman font size 10 – 12.

DUE DATES

- **Wed., May 25:** Topic and Research Question with two annotated articles (25 points).
- **Wed., May 31:** Annotated Bibliography with primary source(s) (20 points)
- **May 31 – June 8** INDIVIDUAL MEETING WITH ME – mandatory (25 POINTS) – bring Introduction and Preliminary Thesis
- **MON., JUNE 13* (100 points):** FINAL PAPER, (100 POINTS) The paper, and all the steps above will count as the 4th quarter research project.
- The Final Paper alone will also count as your Final Exam (15% of the Year Average)