

## **“War and Society in the Twentieth Century”**

**HIST 3162**

**Spring 2019**

### **Assignment #2**

In his account of his passage through Auschwitz, Primo Levi suggests that life in the concentration camp was governed by a perverted system of rules and customs. Prisoners found themselves confronted with what Levi called “a new order” and they had to adapt to it immediately (Levi, 28). His book is an exploration and meditation upon this horrific world and the rules that governed it.

Write an essay that answers the following question:

*According to Primo Levi, what were the elements of the “system” that governed life in Auschwitz?*

This essay asks you to do a close reading of the assigned book in search of examples that Levi gives to make us see Auschwitz as a demented, monstrous “system.” Before you begin writing, re-read the text carefully looking for 3-4 overarching themes that seem illustrative of the “system” of control. Then, give concrete examples, drawn from the text, that help illuminate each theme.

As with any persuasive essay, your opening paragraph should summarize your overall argument.

Do not bring in any additional materials. For citing a direct quotation, simply use a parenthetical citation (i.e., Levi, 9).

Write an essay of **no more than 2,000 words** in length.

Give a printed, paper copy to Mina Lee in class on **March 25, 2019**.