

COMPARATIVE CULTURES 12 – Period 1: COURSE OUTLINE

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Welcome . . . Comparative Cultures provides students with an opportunity to develop a deeper appreciation and understanding of the world in which we live, by teaching us to critically examine the foundations, patterns, and legacies of key cultures and civilizations that are integral to the composition of our own. The study of ancient societies helps shed light on our present existence by placing us on a continuum of human development through the lens of experience. As the famous philosopher Søren Kierkegaard said “*Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forwards.*” By learning to better comprehend the “big picture” of human history and interaction within our natural and social environments, we are more able to develop into thoughtful, responsible and active citizens, better equipped to gather information essential when considering multiple perspectives, making reasoned judgements and informed decisions.

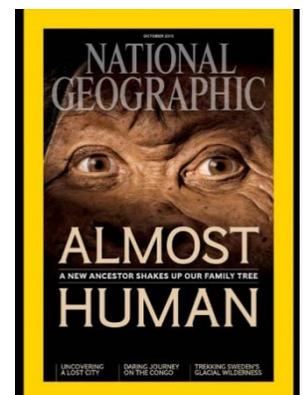


The Course . . . Comparative Cultures allows students to embark upon a journey through vast expanses of time and human history. Along the way students will visit the origins of modern humans and several of the keystone civilizations whose appearance contributed greatly to the cultural fabric that binds our incredibly diverse post-modern population together. These ancient, medieval and early-modern cultures propagated many of the ideas and beliefs we hold today, and profoundly contributed to the art, architecture, technology, language, religion, philosophy, economics, politics and laws of our “western” societies. These cultures are unique unto their time and place in history, but they also share a great many parallels: the circumstance, environment and often paradox of being human. There are numerous disciplines that study humans in their world, so aside from history we will utilize geographical, archeological and anthropological evidence to draw on both the past and present. In particular, our study of cultures from around the world will focus on making comparisons and investigating both commonalities and differences in their people’s relationship with the environment and in their cosmologies. In doing so, we hope to better place each culture’s and civilization’s characteristics, personalities and roles into the jigsaw of an interconnected world.



Possible Comparative Culture Units: * May vary as we will be incorporating both face-to-face instruction and utilizing remote learning opportunities via Microsoft Teams as circumstance necessitate.

- **Introduction - The Origin of Humans (5M BCE – 10,000 BCE)**
 - Chapter 1
 - Archeology & Paleoanthropology
 - Darwin & Hominin Evolution
 - Stone Age and Neolithic Revolution



- **UNIT I - Middle-Eastern Civilizations (10,000 BCE – 395 CE)**
 - Chapters 2 – 5
 - Mesopotamia
 - Egypt
 - Persia?

- **UNIT II - The Mediterranean World (1,500 BCE – 476 CE)**
 - Chapters 6 - 9
 - Greece
 - Rome

- **UNIT III – The Medieval World & Beyond (300 CE – 1600 CE)**
 - Chapters 10 – 16
 - Medieval Europe
 - Renaissance & Reformation
 - The Byzantine Empire
 - Islamic Cultures

- **UNIT IV – Early Asian Civilizations (4500 BCE – 1185 CE)**
 - Chapters 17 - 20
 - China
 - Japan
 - India?

- **UNIT V – Central & South America (600 CE – 1572 CE)**
 - Chapters 21 – 24
 - The Maya
 - The Inca
 - The Aztecs?



Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime. Mamonides



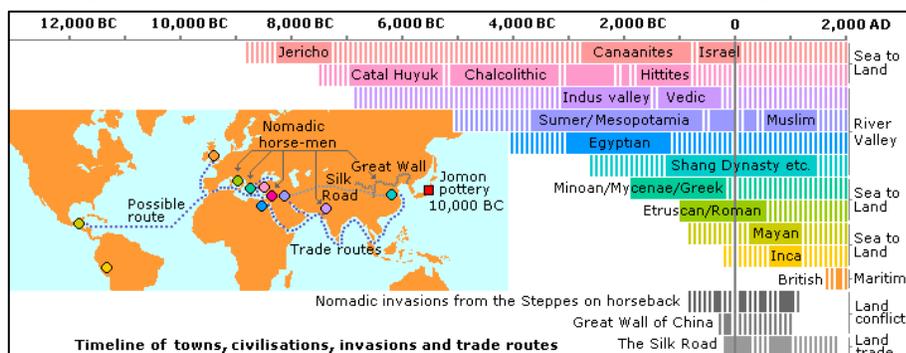
The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting. Sun Tzu

Assessment and Evaluation

- 40% = Testing: quizzes, formal tests and in-class essays
- 40% = Class work: worksheets, analyses, projects, presentations, inquiries
- 20% = Final Project: inquiry-based project and presentation

Materials and Supplies . . . Coming to class prepared is essential. You will need the following:

1. An **exclusive Comparative Cultures** two-inch binder with at least **five dividers**
2. Agenda planner, hopefully
3. Black or blue ink pens, a pencil, an eraser and a ruler
4. **World Civilizations: A Comparative Study** textbook & any assigned readings
5. Optional: highlighting markers and white out
6. **Not optional:** Please arrive with a thirst for knowledge and a yearning for understanding,



and full of questions, wonder, curiosity, inquisitiveness, eagerness, open-mindedness and enthusiasm for the subject. Our journey may take some unexpected and less-travelled paths.