Global History 1
Ms. Meyer
Civilization in Crisis: Group Project
Overview:

Throughout the year, we have examined some of the root causes on why some societies fail and others flourish. We have learned that some civilizations were able to achieve long-lasting golden ages where societies enjoyed economic stability, political peace, and cultural achievement. We have also learned that other civilizations spiraled into chaos where societies were plagued with economic depression, political upheaval, and fell into cultural obscurity. Last, we explored how certain societies confronted the challenges that they faced in order to survive.

The final project requires you to examine a “Civilization in Crisis” and fully address the specific problems that the civilization faced in order for that society to survive. Each group will be assigned a certain civilization that we have studied during this year that spiraled into disorder and disarray. Your group’s mission is to save the civilization by examining the key problems of that society and identifying specific solutions to confront those issues. Again, your goal is to save the civilization and to devise ways for the society to continue to grow and prosper.

The project consists of two parts – a group project and an individual essay. Each part is specifically outlined for your reference.

I. Group Project

Each group will be assigned a specific “Civilization in Crisis” describing a society that is on the brink of total collapse. In order to save this civilization, you must produce effective solutions and strategies to ensure its survival. Please note that each “Civilization in Crisis” reflects a specific civilization that we have studied throughout this year.

Each team MUST address each of the following components outlined below. In other words, EACH question outlined below must be addressed in order to receive full credit. Also, when presenting the solutions to specific problems you must reference at least two (2) strategies that other civilizations used that were successful. You must only reference civilizations or societies that were covered this year in class.

The solutions must also be reasonable and realistic! For instance, if your civilization is the Roman Empire, DO NOT offer the printing press as a solution. If you are presenting a solution that was used by another civilization, you must explain how your civilization acquired that knowledge (trade, cultural diffusion, territorial expansion etc.).

A. Geography + Environment: The project requires that you provide certain information detailing the civilization’s geography and environment. Please make sure that your group has provided comprehensive information on the geographic and environmental conditions of your specific civilization.
   - Where is your civilization located on the globe?
   - What were some geographic/environmental challenges that the civilization faced?
   - How did the people confront these challenges? How effective were their strategies?

Geographic/Environmental Problems: Please make sure to identify ALL possible geographic and environmental challenges that led to the downfall of this civilization.
   - What are the main geographic/environmental challenges that created a crisis?
   - To what extent did the society confront these specific issues? Why were these strategies so unsuccessful?

Geographic/Environmental Solutions: After identifying all of the geographic and environmental problems that need to be solved, please offer some specific solutions that could save this society.
   - How stable is the current environment? (think: natural disaster, climate change)
   - What are some immediate solutions that could be implemented to sustain the population? (think: irrigation systems, farming techniques, etc.)

B. Size of civilization/population: The project requires your group to provide information on a) the initial size and population of your civilization and b) if the civilization gained or lost territory and/or experienced an increase or decline in population.
   - How large was the civilization at its largest extent?
   - When the civilization was thriving, how large was the population?

Size of civilization/population problems: Please make sure to identify if the size of the civilization or its population led to its demise.
   - Did the civilization expand too quickly?
   - Should the territory be reduced?
   - Did the population of the civilization become too large?
   - How well did the civilization support the growing population?

Size of civilization/population solutions: After identifying all of the possible problems associated with the size of the civilization and its population, please offer some specific solutions to solve these problems.
Should your civilization scale back the amount of territory it controls? If so, how much land should be given up? Why?

If your civilization should remain the same size, how will you support your growing population? (think: infrastructure, public works, and food production)

C. Job specialization/social hierarchy: The project mandates that your group provide detailed information on a) the types of jobs available within your civilization and b) the social class system that the society embraces.

- Was the economy based on trade/commerce? Agriculture/Farming? Or was it a blend of both?
- What types of economic opportunities were available to the people?
- Were there opportunities to advance economically within this society? What were those specific opportunities?
- To what extent was the society social mobility or social stratified? Explain why.

Job specialization/social hierarchy problems: Please determine if the lack of social mobility or job opportunities led to the downfall of your civilization.

- How were the lower classes treated by their society?
- How were women treated?
- How were certain minority religious and ethnic groups treated?
- Did the society provide economic and job opportunities to the lower classes? What jobs were available?
- How could people advance in this society?
- Did the civilization experience economic problems? If so, what were the main problems with its economy? (think: lack of trade opportunities, inflation, poor crop production)

Job specialization/social hierarchy solutions: After examining some of the problems associated with the economic/job opportunities and social class system of the civilization, please offer some effective solutions to appease the people.

- How could economic opportunities be increased for the lower classes?
- How could wealth be distributed in a more equitable way?
- What economic system will be implemented to help the civilization grow and thrive? (think: educational opportunities, jobs for women, job opportunities for the lower class, establishing a middle class)
- How could a middle class be established in this civilization?
- How could the economy be restored to generate the wealth it needs to prosper?

Please note that you do not need to necessarily promote social mobility and more equitable wealth distribution. You could make the case that social stratification and a rigidly controlled economic system would be more beneficial to help save this civilization! Perhaps ensuring that the people are controlled could lead to more efficiency and productivity (think: Legalism).

D. Government: Please make sure to explain the type of government and the laws that this civilization had in place.

- Was it a monarchy or an empire?
- Was it a direct or indirect democracy?
- Was it an oligarchy or an aristocracy led government?
- What were the legal codes of the civilization? Were they recorded?
- What rights did certain people have within this society?

Government problems: Please determine if your government or legal codes contributed to the civilization’s demise. Discuss how the government led to possible corruption and created a politically unstable environment.

- How effective was government leadership?
- How were the government officials selected?
- Was there a succession plan in place?
- What were the requirements to become a leader or government official?
- How well did the government support a growing empire or population?
- Did the people have a role in government?
- How well did the laws support the people?
- How did the legal codes affect the living conditions of the lower classes?
- How were women represented under the law?
- Did the laws cater more to the upper class members of society?
- Did the government show religious intolerance?
- How were other ethnic and minority groups treated by the government?

Government solutions/reforms: Please explain how the government and legal codes could be reformed to stabilize the civilization and provide a detailed rationale supporting your proposal.

- Should the leader be overthrown/replaced?
- Who should lead the new government?
Should the type of government be changed? If so, what is a better type of government to support the civilization?

What laws should be changed? Why?

What should be the new laws/government policies? Why?

Were the government officials qualified to lead the government? If not, who should replace them? Why?

Did the government have a strong bureaucracy to support the civilization? If not, should the number of officials be increased to support the government and the people?

Should the government adopt a policy of religious tolerance? How should the policy be implemented?

How should the rights of women and other minority/ethnic groups be supported by the government?

F. Public Works, Technology, and Education: Please explain the types of public works, advancements/technologies, and educational opportunities your civilization possessed.

Did the government provide its people with public works? If so, what specific public works were provided?

Did the society have certain technological advancements and achievements?

How effective was the technology/ advancements to the civilization?

Were there educational opportunities offered to the people? If not, who could have access to education?

Public works, technology, and education problems: Please explain how the lack of public works, technology, and limited access to educational opportunities could have contributed to the chaos of this society.

Who could access the public works? Were they reserved only to certain members of society?

How well did the society preserve its public works and infrastructure?

Was there a decline in learning and education? Explain why.

Was there a sharp decline in technological and scientific advancements? If so, how did this impact the society?

Public works, technology, and education solutions: Please explain how the civilization could improve (and possible salvage!) its public works, access to education, and number of advancements and technological achievements.

How could the public works and infrastructure be rebuilt or repaired? Who will be responsible for funding and building these projects?

Should the society ensure that people have access to education and learning? If so, how could society give its people more access to knowledge?

How could you make sure that society makes certain advancements and technological innovations? (think: should the society increase its trade opportunities to acquire more ideas and knowledge)

Please make sure to discuss and describe the three (3) most important public works projects that your civilization will implement and the three (3) most important technological advancements that will help save your society.

F. Military: Please address the type of military and system of defense your civilization supported.

Who could participate in the military?

Was the military comprised of volunteer soldiers? Or was there a standing army?

How was the military maintained? Did the government fund the military?

What types of military technologies were used by the soldiers?

How well were the troops trained for battles? Did the military use certain military strategies?

Military problems: Please elaborate on how certain military and defense strategies could have made the civilization more vulnerable to attack.

How well were the soldiers trained?

How competent were the military commanders? Could the generals successfully lead their troops in battle?

How were the soldiers treated? Were they rewarded for their service?

Did the civilization lack certain military technology?

Military solutions: Please explain how the military could be improved in order to better defend the civilization.

How could the training of the soldiers be improved?

Should there be a standing army? If so, how should the army be funded?

Should there be certain requirements to be eligible to participate in the military? Explain the requirements that would be necessary.

Should the military have better leadership? How should commanders be selected?

How should the soldiers be rewarded for their service? Should they receive land? Money? Positions of power?

Explain the rationale for your selection.

How could the troops gain access to better military technology?

Group Assignments: Please see the details below on specific group member assignments based on the size of your group.

If you are a group of 3:

Group member 1: Geography + Environment + Size of civilization/population
Group member 2: Job Specialization/ Social Hierarchy
Group member 3: Government

If you are a group of 4:

Group member 1: Geography + Environment + Size of civilization/population
Group member 2: Job Specialization/ Social Hierarchy
Group member 3: Government
Group member 4: Public Works, Technology and Education OR Military

If you are a group of 5:

Group member 1: Geography + Environment + Size of civilization/population
Group member 2: Job Specialization/ Social Hierarchy
Group member 3: Government
Group member 4: Public Works, Technology and Education
Group member 5: Military

Civilizations in Crisis: Each group will pick a number at the beginning of class. The number you selected corresponds to the civilizations in crisis below.

1) Capture of Egypt by Alexander the Great
2) Sack of the Western Roman Empire by the Germanic tribes
3) Collapse of the Caliphate by the Mongol invasion
4) Demise of the Song Dynasty by Kublai Khan
5) Descent of the Byzantine Empire by the Ottomans
6) Fall of the Greek City-States by Philip of Macedon
7) Ruin of the Inca Empire by the Spanish Conquistadors
8) Fall of the Yuan Dynasty by the Ming rebellion

Requirements of the Project: Each group must submit a guidebook on how they plan to confront the challenges of their specific civilization. Essentially, the guidebook should read as an instruction manual on how to save your “Civilization in Crisis.” Simply put, the reader should be able to determine the key problems of this civilization and learn how to implement the solutions you are proposing. The guidebook should be well-organized into sections based on the details provided above (Geography, Job Specialization, Government, etc.). Again, please make sure that your guidebook includes all of the elements and fully addresses all of the questions that have been detailed.

Due Dates: Please be prudent and plan ahead! In order to make sure that each person is carrying their weight, please generate a Google Document and share with meyer@bxscience.edu. When you create the Google document, please name the file with your full names so that way I can keep track of your projects. That way, I can track your progress and ensure that each group member is held accountable.

Please note that if a group member is not making any contribution whatsoever to their project, they will be required to work independently and complete the entire project on their own!!

Rough Drafts: Friday May 27th, 2016
Final Drafts: Friday June 3rd, 2016

Page Length: 15-20 pages (no more than 20 pages will be read)
Font: 12 point
Spacing: Double

If you would like to include outside sources/information please include a works referenced page using MLA Style (in order to generate citations, please use easybib.com)

II. Individual Reflection

After completing the group project, you must submit an individual reflection addressing the following question:
Based on the solutions that you have proposed to save your civilization, what is the likelihood that your civilization will survive long-term?

Essentially, you are required to reflect on the societies we have examined throughout the year and recall certain reasons why they either flourished or failed. You need to make a clear determination if your civilization will either thrive and prosper OR fail and perish based on the information learned throughout the year. Please include a clear rationale to fully explain your position.

Due Date: Monday June 6th, 2016
Page Length: 1-2 pages (no more than 2 pages will be read)
Font: 12 point
Spacing: Double