

## THEMES

The themes serve as the connective tissue of the course and enable students to create meaningful connections across units. These are broader ideas that become threads that run throughout the course. Revisiting them and applying them in variety of contexts helps students develop deeper conceptual understanding. The themes will SPIRAL through units and build upon each other. They are not isolated events and processes but rather interconnected web of history. These are the LONG-TERM takeaways.

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### **THEME 1 (Interactions): HUMANS AND THE ENVIRONMENT (ENV)**

The environment shapes human societies, and as populations grow and change, these populations in turn shape their environments.

- What are some of the specific geographic advantages and disadvantages of this societies' location? How well do they maximize advantages and minimize disadvantages?
- How do human actions affect the environment?
- How populous was this society? Did the population grow, or decline? Was it densely packed in urban areas or spread over a large territory? Were there large changes in population due to disease or migration?
- What was the level of technology available in the following areas? Did the society develop these technologies themselves or import or adapt them from somewhere else? Consider agricultural technology, transportation technology, metallurgical, industrial, etc.

### **THEME 2 (Culture): CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS AND INTERACTIONS (CDI)**

The development of ideas, beliefs, and religions illustrates how groups in society view themselves and the interactions of societies and their beliefs often have political, social, and cultural implications.

- What are the religious beliefs of the culture, and how do those affect their interactions amongst themselves and with other societies? Consider: role and importance of priests, view of gods/deities, holy books/scriptures, conversion efforts, views of sin/salvation?
- What purpose does religion or beliefs play in both individual salvation/leading a meaningful life AND social order/control/morality? In other words: How does religion/beliefs influence both realms of the individual and the social?
- What were the major ways of thinking? Was education highly valued, and if so, for whom? Did the society produce any major developments in philosophy, math, science, literature, or drama?
- How do people express themselves in the culture? What are the dominant forms of expression, and who are they created by and for? Are there any particularly famous works that show the artistic values of the society? Consider: visual arts, music, architecture.

### **THEME 3 (Political): GOVERNANCE (GOV)**

A variety of internal and external factors contribute to state formation, expansion, and decline. Governments maintain order through a variety of administration institutions, policies, and procedures, and governments obtain, retain, and exercise power in different ways and for different purposes.

- Who is/oversaw the society, and what political structures allowed power to be organized and distributed?
- Was the state highly centralized and unified, or was power more diffused?
- On what is/was power based, and how do the leaders justify their power? Was there a clear political ideology or were their competing ones?
- Are/were there significant wars? Laws, courts, or treaties during the period in question?

## THEME 4 (Economic): ECONOMIC SYSTEMS (ECN)

As societies develop, they affect and are affected by the ways that they produce, exchange, and consume goods and services.

- How do people meet their basic needs?
- How are goods produced, distributed and consumed, and how strongly is this controlled by the government?
- What kinds of luxury items were important in trade?
- What specific goods are traded within the society and what are the patterns or routes of trade with other societies?
- How strong of a role do merchants play in the society?
- What labor systems developed over time? How and why did these systems develop?

## THEME 5 (Social): SOCIAL INTERACTIONS AND ORGANIZATION (SIO)

The process by which societies group their members and the norms that govern the interactions between these groups and between individuals influence political, economic, and cultural institutions and organizations.

- What are the classes in this society? Are they strongly delineated or less so? Are they determined primarily through economic status, ethnicity/race, religious status, or some other category?
- How difficult is it to change in class or social status, in one own's life, through marriage, or over generations?
- What are the gender roles, and how do they differ across classes? What are the expectations for family life?
- Most societies are patriarchal-if so, what forms does patriarchy take in this society?

## THEME 6 (Technology): TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATIONS (TEC)

Human adaption and innovation have resulted in increased efficiency, comfort, and security, and technological advances have shaped human development and interactions with both intended and unintended consequences.

- How do people or societies apply knowledge to solve problems/
- What innovations were developed that assisted with improving their way of life?
- How does the adaption of an innovation lead to advances in society?
- What significant change has this innovation caused on the societies in and around where it was invented?

## Interaction with the Environment

### **How the environment changed humans:**

racess, diets, lifespans, migrations, spread of disease, demographics

### **How humans changed the environment:**

Irrigation, farming and sedentary lifestyles, land development, urbanization

The interaction between humans and the environment is a fundamental theme in world history, as the environment shaped human societies, but increasingly, human societies also affect the environment.

**EXAMPLE:** The early Indus River societies of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro are believed to have disappeared due to environmental degradation or natural disaster (flood, earthquake, or redirection of river).

### **Learning Objectives:**

- ◆ ENV-1: Explain how different types of societies have adapted to and affected their environments.
- ◆ ENV-2: Explain how environmental factors, disease, and technology affected patterns of human migration and settlement.
- ◆ ENV-3: Evaluate the extent to which migration, population, and urbanization affected the environment over time.
- ◆ ENV-4: Explain how environmental factors have shaped the development of diverse technologies, industrialization, transportation methods, and exchange and communication network.
- ◆ ENV-5: Evaluate the extent to which the development of diverse technologies, industrialization, transportation methods, and exchange and communication networks have affected the environment over time.

**EXAMPLE:** The map shows the diffusion of crops and diseases.

## Social Interactions and Organization (SIO)

### Relations among humans

Gender role  
Family and kinship  
Racial and ethnic constructions  
Social and economic classes

This theme is about relationships among human beings, how human societies develop ways of grouping their members, and norms that govern interactions between individuals and social groups. Additionally, this theme explores the processes through which social categories, roles, and practices are created, maintained, and transformed.



**EXAMPLE:** The visual to the right shows the social structure/caste system in India.

### Learning Objectives:

- ◆ SOC-1: Explain how distinctions based on kinship, ethnicity, class, gender, and race influenced the development and transformations of social hierarchies.
- ◆ SOC-2: Evaluate the extent to which different ideologies, philosophies, and religions affected social hierarchies.
- ◆ SOC 3: Evaluate the extent to which legal systems, colonialism, nationalism, and independence movements have sustained or challenged class, gender, and racial hierarchies over time.
- ◆ SOC 4: Explain how the development of specialized labor systems interacted with the development of social hierarchies
- ◆ SOC-5: Explain how social categories, roles, and practices have been maintained or challenged over time.
- ◆ SOC-6: Explain how political, economic, cultural, and demographic factors have affected social structures over time.

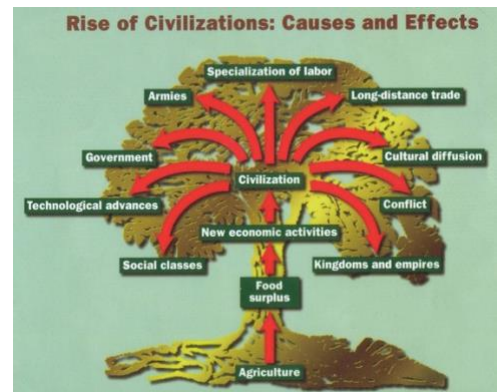
→ Different from “culture”

- Social is how we deal with each other
- Culture is how we deal with our world

## Governance: Political and State Building

Forms of government  
 Leaders / groups  
 State structures  
 War and conflict  
 Diplomacy / treaties  
 Courts / laws

This theme explores how hierarchical systems of rule have been constructed and maintained over time and the impact of these processes. This theme encourages the comparative study of different state forms (e.g. kingdoms, empires, nation-states) across time and place and the interactions among them.



**EXAMPLE:** How did governments develop out of early civilizations?

### Learning Objectives:

- ◆ SB-1 Explain how different forms of governance have been constructed and maintained over time.
- ◆ SB-2 Explain how and why different functions and institutions of governance have changed over time.
- ◆ SB-3 Explain how and why economic, social, cultural, and geographical factors have influenced the processes of state building, expansion, and dissolution.
- ◆ SB-4 Explain how and why internal and external political factors have influenced the process of state building, expansion, and dissolution.
- ◆ SB-5 Explain how societies with states and state-less societies interacted over time.
- ◆ SB-6 Explain the political and economic interactions between states and non-state actors over

## Economic Systems: ECN

Creation, Expansion, and Interaction of Economic Systems

Major transitions in trade: from bartering to regional, to interregional long-distance trade to modern globalization, currency, banking, joint-stock companies, global corporations, taxation

Economic systems: agricultural, pastoral, industrial, service, capitalism/consumerism, communism, socialism

Labor systems: forced/coerced (corvee, chattel slavery, serfdom, indentured servitude), free/wage labor, farming/peasantry, factory system/industrial capitalism

This theme surveys the diverse patterns and systems that human societies have developed to produce, distribute, and consume desired goods and services across time and place.

**Example:** Ancient Chinese coins dating back to the earliest Chinese dynasties. China was also the first to use paper money 1400 years ago.

### Learning Objectives:

- ◆ ECON-1 Explain how technology shaped economic production and globalization over time.
- ◆ ECON-2 Explain the causes and effects of economic strategies of different types of communities, states, and empires.
- ◆ ECON-3 Explain how different modes and locations of production and commerce have developed and changed over time.
- ◆ ECON-4 Explain the causes and effects of labor reform movements.
- ◆ ECON-5 Explain how and why labor systems have developed and changed over time.
- ◆ ECON-6 Explain how economic systems and the development of ideologies, values, and institutions have influenced each other.

## Cultural Developments and Interactions-CDI

Development and Interaction of Cultures

*Spreading of beliefs, actions, and knowledge between and within societies:*

Religion, philosophy, and belief systems

Art, music, literature

Architecture

Technology

Education

**Diffusion:** spread of culture from one society to another

**Syncretism:** resulting from diffusion; blending/merging of different cultural beliefs, practices, languages, and/or traditions to form something new or unique.

This theme explores the origins, uses, dissemination, and adaption of ideas, beliefs, and knowledge within and between societies and how the processes of adopting and/or adapting new belief and knowledge systems are complex and often lead to syncretic (fusion of) cultural forms and practices.

**Examples:** The ancient Egyptians were polytheistic-believing in many gods who controlled nature and the universe; the conversion of “pagan” peoples to Christianity and incorporating the solstice and equinox celebrations into Christianity as Christmas and Easter festivals; the creation of the language of Swahili-fusion of Arabic and Bantu local languages.

### Learning Objectives:

- ◆ CUL-1 Explain how religions, belief systems, philosophies, and ideologies originated, developed, and spread as a result of expanding communication and exchange networks.
- ◆ CUL-2 Explain how religions, belief systems, philosophies, and ideologies affected political, economic, and social developments over time.
- ◆ CUL-3 Explain how cross-cultural interactions resulted in the diffusion of culture, technologies, and scientific knowledge.
- ◆ CUL-4 Explain how technological and scientific innovations affected religions, belief systems, philosophies, and ideologies over time.
- ◆ CUL-5 Explain how the arts are shaped by and reflect innovation, adaptation, and creativity of specific societies over time.
- ◆ CUL-6 Explain how expanding exchange networks shaped the emergence of various forms of transregional culture, including music, literature, and visual arts.

## Technology and Innovation

**Technology**-making and using tools to change the natural state of the environment-isn't an instant global event. Innovation and technological development tends to happen independently in different regions and then is spread along trade routes from their place of origin. This theme will likely focus on the effects of technology on societies over time.

**Key Vocabulary for the year per theme:**

**ENV:**

Nomad  
Pastoralist  
Agriculture  
Natural resources  
Demographics  
Domestication of animals  
Irrigation  
Overgrazing  
Metallurgy  
Deforestation  
Desertification  
Disease/Plague  
Diaspora  
Crop yield  
Migration  
Urban/Urbanization  
Rural  
Columbian Exchange  
Agricultural Revolution  
Green Revolution  
Epidemic/pandemics

**SDI:**

Hierarchy  
Stratification  
Caste system  
Kinship  
Ethnic construction  
Egalitarian  
Diversification  
Elites  
Aristocracy  
Middle class/Bourgeoise  
Merchant class  
Working class  
Patriarchy  
Matriarchy  
Filial piety  
Guilds  
Social mobility  
Minority group  
Meritocracy  
Social Darwinism  
Feminism



**GOV:**

Civilization/complex society  
City-state  
Nation-state/nation  
Divine right/absolutism  
Agrarian  
Autocracy  
Theocracy  
Monarchy  
Constitutional democracy/liberal democracy  
Kingdom  
Empire  
Colonialism  
Imperialism  
Communism  
Fascism  
Bureaucracy/bureaucrat  
Civil service exam/civil servant  
Law code/legal code  
Codified  
Diplomacy  
Caliphate  
Nationalism  
Internal and external pressures (domestic and foreign policies)

**ECN:**

Hunter-forager  
Sedentary  
Herder  
Subsistence farming  
Cash crops  
Specialization of labor  
Luxury goods  
Bulk goods  
Sea lanes  
Merchants  
Artisans  
Coerced labor  
Free/wage labor  
Chattel slavery  
Corvee system  
Military obligation/conscription  
Industrialization/industrial capitalism  
Mercantilism  
Export commodities  
Capitalism  
Socialism  
Communism  
Liberalism  
Markets  
Command economy  
State-sponsored modernization

**CDI:**

Religion  
Belief systems  
Philosophy  
Ideology  
Polytheism/monotheism  
Theocracy  
Monumental architecture  
Ancestor veneration  
Reincarnation  
Monasticism  
Animism  
Diffusion  
Syncretism  
Schism  
Ethnic enclaves  
Government propaganda  
Pop culture

**TEC:**

Textiles  
Fire  
Surplus/scarcity  
Irrigation systems  
Record keeping  
Monsoon winds  
Saddle/stirrup  
Caravanserai  
Gunboats  
Trade lanes  
Rents  
Gunpowder  
Astrolabe  
Caravel  
Dhow  
Compass  
Paper  
Conduits  
Scientific revolution  
Raw materials  
Industrialized  
Antibiotics/vaccinations  
Nuclear weaponry

