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Carl Sagan – The Cosmic Calendar

Mr. Rhinehart AP World History

1. What is the Cosmic Calendar? What happened on January 1st in the Cosmic Calendar? _____

2. What date on the Cosmic Calendar was the Milky Way (our galaxy) formed? _____

3. What date on the Cosmic Calendar was the solar system we live in formed? Earth? _____

4. When did human life start on the Cosmic Calendar? _____

Modern Civilization? _____ Columbus's arrival in America? _____

5. What value does looking at the Cosmic Calendar have? How does it depict human existence in the history of the Universe? _____

6. What is your opinion of this type of "Big History" perspective of world history? Is this useful in understanding humanity? Why or why not? _____

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Questions for Jared Diamond's, *To Farm or Not to Farm*:

1. According to Diamond how did agriculture develop as far as its pace and rate of adoption is concerned?

How long did the shift from hunting and gathering to sedentary agricultural production take? Why?

2. Did all groups adopt agricultural food production strategies if they came into contact with them? What did some groups do? What are some examples? _____

3. List and explain the five main factors that Diamond identifies as leading to widescale adoption of agriculture in many areas of the world.

#1: _____

#2: _____

#3: _____

#4: _____

#5: _____

5. How do these factors explain the question of why agriculture developed where it did in the world? _____

Read the following passage from Peter Stearns, *World Civilizations: The Global Experience*

The initial development of agriculture—that is, the deliberate planting of grains for later harvest—was probably triggered by two results of the ice age’s end. First, population increases, stemming from improved climate, prompted people to search for new and more reliable sources of food. Second, the end of the ice age saw the retreat of certain big game animals, such as mastodons. Human hunters had to turn to smaller game, such as deer and wild boar, in many forested areas. Hunting’s overall yield declined. Here was the basis for new interest in other sources of food. There is evidence that by 9000 B.C.E., in certain parts of the world, people were becoming increasingly dependent on regular harvests of wild grains, berries, and nuts. This undoubtedly set the stage for the deliberate planting of seeds (probably accidental to begin with) and the improvement of key grains through the selection of seeds from the best plants.



The Spread of Agriculture

6. How do Stearns reasons for the adoption of agriculture differ from Diamond’s? Who do you believe has the better argument? (please create a thesis statement for this answer and suggest some elements of support for each point)

Thesis: _____

Reasons for support: _____

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Questions to Jared Diamond's answer to Yali's question:

1. What are the four reasons that according to Diamond, Eurasian people came to dominate the world as far as relative power is concerned compared to African and Native American peoples?

#1: _____

#2: _____

#3: _____

#4: _____

2. Critics have said that Diamond relies too heavily on ecological determinism – i.e. the idea that a region's geography and resources determines human behavior and interactions – and the idea that people cannot innovate and overcome limitations of their surroundings. Do you agree that Diamond is too ecologically deterministic? Why or why not? _____

3. For centuries Europeans argued that the reason western civilization dominated the earth was due to racial superiority (i.e. Eugenic explanations that Europeans are superior, therefore they rule the world). How does Diamond's analysis refute those claims? _____

Questions for Peter Stearns, *The Idea of Civilization in World Historical Perspective*:

1. How did the following groups of people demarcate the difference between "civilized" & "barbarian"?

Chinese? _____

Mesoamericans? _____

Greeks/Romans? _____

2. How did Europeans come to associate or define civilization based on race (i.e. what did the racial hierarchy look like? Why was it used?) _____

3. What did Europeans use their racial conception of civilization to justify? Why? _____

4. Based on our study of World History up to this point were the European conceptions of the origins of civilization correct? Why or why not? _____

5. What do you believe would be an appropriate definition for civilization? Suggest at least 3-5 characteristics _____

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Hammurabi's Code

Mr. Rhinehart AP World History

1. What type of punishments does Hammurabi's Code prescribe for different offenses?

-- Stealing from a Free Man? _____

-- Destroying the eye of a member of the aristocracy? _____

-- Destroying the eye of a commoner? _____

-- Destroying the eye of a slave? _____

2. In general, how would you characterize the types of punishments meted out by Hammurabi's Code?

3. How do punishments differ based on class, race and social status? Why might Hammurabi have

structured punishments in this way? _____

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The Epic of Gilgamesh

Mr. Rhinehart AP World History

1. Who was Gilgamesh? What was the Epic of Gilgamesh about? _____

2. What does this selection tell you about the ancient Mesopotamians relationship with their Gods? Why?

3. How does this story relate to the story of Noah and the flood in the book of Genesis? What does this suggest about the links between Mesopotamian and Hebrew religions, given the fact that the Epic of Gilgamesh was written over 1000 years prior to the earliest story of Noah in the bible?

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What Came 1st Religion or Civilization? – Charles Mann, *The Birth of Religion*
Mr. Rhinehart AP World History

1. What is Gobekli Tepe? Where is it located and when was it built? _____

2. What was human society like when the temple was built? Why would it have been difficult to build the structures at this point in history? _____

3. According to Mann, 20 years ago what was the traditional archaeological/historical narrative about how the Neolithic Revolution occurred? _____

4. What type of civilization built Gobekli Tepe according to archaeologists? Why do they think that and how does it change historians view of these people? _____

5. What was the prevailing view about the reason and timeline for the emergence of religion in human societies before the discovery of Gobekli Tepe? _____

6. How did Gobekli Tepe change ideas about religion's role in civilization?

7. Does Schmidt believe that for humans there was one concrete path to civilization? Why? _____

8. According to Schmidt what came 1st, religion or civilization? Overall, what does the article suggest about the interconnected nature of historical inquiry and analysis & archaeology? _____

3 Foundational Religions

Mr. Rhinehart AP World History

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Hebrew Monotheism

(pgs 26-29)

Vedic Religion (pgs 50)

Zoroastrianism (pgs 34)

*Area of
world/Civization*

Main God(s)

*Major
beliefs/ideas*

Holy Book/scriptures				
Founder/major figures				
Afterlife?				
Influences on later religions				