**Final Written Assignment: Comparative Essay**

**(20% of the final grade, due via Canvas prior to the class meeting)**

This final assignment invites you to write about your two favorite texts, one from Gilgamesh to Pushkin and one from Baudelaire to el Charni. The expected length is 700-800 words.

It will be evaluated using the point distribution in the LAD based on 15 total possible points.  As with all assignments, academic honesty and integrity are expected, and the essay should be entirely your own work.

**Here is the prompt:**

It has been more than a year, but you are still not able to meet with your best friends.  All of you are looking for something to help you make sense of what it means to be a human being in hard times. You may have had to cope with a natural disaster, uncertain political times, and many other things in addition to the pandemic.  One of your friends, who is feeling disconnected, texts you about the readings you have done in your world literature class.  In order to take a break from reading all the bad news on line and feeling lonely, they would like you to recommend **two** texts for them to read which you think will give them insight and resilience, or maybe just a break from all the pressure and uncertainty they are experiencing.

Please choose **two** texts – one from earlier in the semester (from Gilgamesh to Pushkin) and one from the last third of the semester (from Baudelaire to el Charni). You may repeat texts which you wrote about before, but please be sure to submit new comments and not just to repeat what you have already written.

Please write **one** single brief essay (750 words approximately) about the **two** works, letting your friend know which texts you picked and explaining why you picked them.  Briefly describe the positive impact the two texts had on you and let them know why you chose them.

Please write in complete sentences and paragraphs.  Please do more than summarize the plot.  Please make specific references to the texts (plot, character, context, theme, ideology, style, etc.) as you present your analysis and remember to explain why your ideas are important.  You do not need to include exact quotations, and quoted text will not count towards the total 750-word count.

Please explain exactly why these **two** specific texts might make a difference to them.  The most successful essays will demonstrate not only knowledge of the texts and analysis of each one in its own terms.  In order to score 18-20 points, you will also need to connect the two texts to show why reading them together is even more impactful than reading either one of them in isolation.

Finally, do you think that your attempt to make your friend feel encouraged would succeed?  Why or why not?

Thanks in advance for completing this last assignment about empathy and understanding across cultures and communities, and please take care.