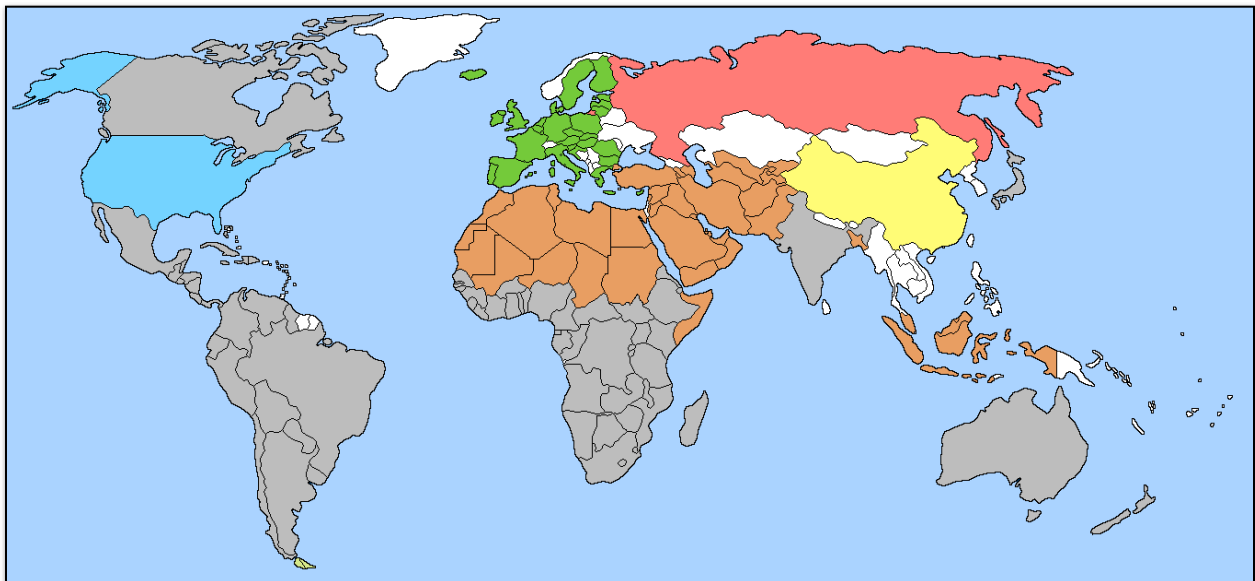


## **II. Preparing to Study Asia and Africa as *Parts of the World***

### A. One More Step: Identifying the Cardinal Cultures

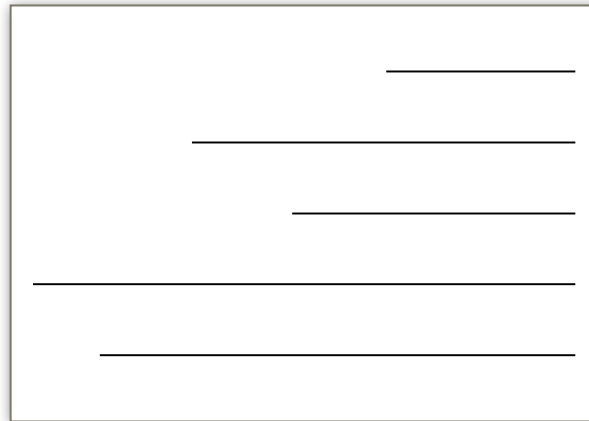
1. There are *ten* major cultural blocks, but which ones matters *most of all*?
2. The world's most important cultures can be called "cardinal" cultures. (The word "cardinal" means "of prime importance." It comes from the Latin root word "cardo," meaning "hinge.")
3. The *United States* is the country with the most military power, the largest economy, and the greatest cultural influence on others. It is in a leadership role in the world.
4. The other cardinal cultures (of lesser, but still cardinal influence) are the *European Union*, *China*, *Russia*, and the *Islamic World*.
  - a) Europe's culture is the reason why European languages are spoken around the world, and why European forms of government are in use in countries as different as America and China.
  - b) China is a cardinal culture because just about everything seems to be "Made in China" today.
  - c) Russia is the only country other than the United States that has a powerful military and it usually acts as an enemy of America.
  - d) The Islamic World is the only cultural block in the world defined by a religion. It is also a *cardinal* culture because of the presence of terrorism within its culture.



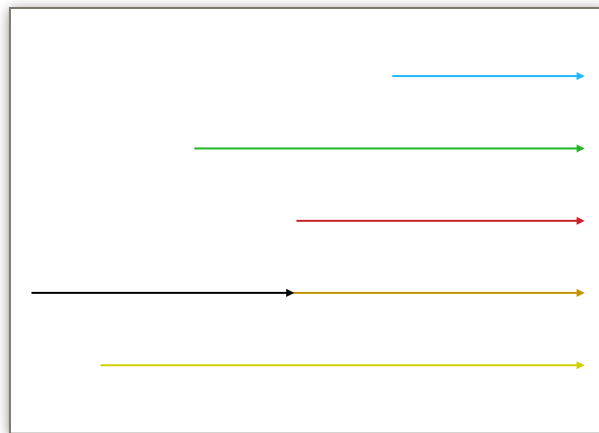
The United States (blue), the European Union (green), Russia (red), China (yellow) and the Islamic World (brown) play an indispensable role in shaping the history and are thus "cardinal" cultures.

B. A Model of the History of the World

1. The final step in preparing to study the major cultures of Asia and Africa to see how they fit into the world is to create a timeline of world history based on the cardinal cultures.
2. Here is the basic diagram as it looks on a standard 8.5"x11" page turned on its side:



3. Using almost the same colors as we do on the map, we can draw these lines as arrows.



4. From top to bottom, the timelines of the diagram represent: the *United States*, *Europe*, *Russia*, *Islamic World*, and *China*. The arrows point from the past to the present (and the future).
5. The timeline of the Islamic World is split basically into two parts, because ancient Egypt & Mesopotamia came before.