

APUSH Summer 2025 Assignment

Greetings, Young Historians! Thank you for undertaking AP US History. This is one of the most valuable, rewarding courses you can take before you graduate high school and enter society. Next school year, it will be my pleasure to travel with you from the establishment of Native American societies all the way to President Obama's second term.

Prior to the first full day of school on Thursday, August 14, you are required to complete two readings and associated work. Paper copies of these readings will be available outside 3508 starting on Monday, May 12 for students who prefer hard copy. PDFs are posted to the APUSH 2025-26 Summer Assignment Google Classroom with code **6nbzorv6**.

- **Read and respond to “History, Critical and Patriotic,” by Eliot A. Cohen (15 pts.)**
 - In an essay of *minimum* 250 words, preferably typed, summarize and respond to Cohen.
 - How does he describe and judge different styles of history?
 - What do you think Cohen wants for the future of the discipline?
 - Do you think he is right?Feel free to reasonably agree or disagree with Cohen. Intellectual diversity is a cornerstone of this class. Historians do not always agree with each other!
 - No heading is necessary—just your name.
 - This is due **hard copy** at the beginning of the first class.
- **Read and take notes over pages 1-16 (stop at the heading “The Challenges of Mutual Discovery”) of Chapter One of your textbook (15 pts.)**
 - Arrive to our first class with original **hard copy** notes, around 2-3 pages in length, from the chapter that reflect careful reading and comprehension.
 - Handwritten notes are preferred, because reading and writing on paper improves retention and conceptual understanding of new information.
 - I will provide feedback on this first set of notes, to help you begin growing as an APUSH student.
 - Refer to Google Classroom for awesome resources and supports, including an audiobook, chapter outline (which you can use to scaffold your notes), and answers to end of chapter review questions.

Study resources/practice questions for each chapter, note-taking tips, and tricks of the trade will be posted to Google Classroom and will be covered during the beginning of school. A full syllabus, including reading and assessment schedule, will also be posted over the summer.

You may start thinking about your National History Day project, too. **The theme next year will be announced soon!** Completion of a project is a major requirement for all APUSH students at Olathe West High School, and for many students, this is the most in-depth research project they complete during their high school years. Many students also choose to enter official competition with their projects, and **over 50 students** have qualified to attend national-level competition in Washington, D.C. in the history of our program! An idea for a topic will be due a few weeks after school begins. Visit www.nhd.org to learn about the theme and explore the five different types of projects you can complete. You may work alone or in groups of up to three, and any topic within United States history is allowed for the purposes of this course, so choose a topic that *really* interests YOU!

I will check and respond to school emails (jfboyd@olatheschools.org) periodically throughout summer. Don't hesitate to reach out to me with any questions or concerns!

Finally, I encourage you all to find a study buddy now. Set up a time with your fellow young historians to get together and go over the readings. Effective collaboration is one of many keys to AP success!

Best regards,
Jordan Boyd
Advanced Placement United States History
Olathe West Social Studies

HISTORY, CRITICAL AND PATRIOTIC

AMERICANS NEED A HISTORY
THAT EDUCATES BUT ALSO INSPIRES

WHEN MY MOTHER PASSED AWAY at the ripe old age of 90, several years ago, my brothers and I had the bittersweet task of emptying out the home she and my father had lived in for well over half a century, and where we grew up. We took various keepsakes and mementoes. I made a beeline for the books and magazines. While leafing through, I realized how much my picture of America had been formed by them and the tempered but patriotic history they conveyed. They reflected the middlebrow culture of mid-twentieth century America, which carried many of my generation through the turmoil of social change, war, and political crisis. And they reminded me of the need for robust history and civic education today.

The first collection of books I recovered was from when I was quite young. It was the Landmark series of histories for young people, conceived by Bennett Cerf of Random House and launched in 1948 with books by topnotch novelists like Dorothy Canfield Fisher, C. S. Forester, and Robert Penn Warren, and war correspondents like William L. Shirer, Quentin Reynolds, and Richard Tregaskis. It eventually ran to some 180 volumes and covered not just American history but everything from the pharaohs

by ELIOT A. COHEN

*Keep your eye on
the distinction between
these two
things!*



*Park Ranger Jim Hollister
leads a school group
at Minute Man
National Historical Park
in Massachusetts.*

JIM HIGGINS, COURTESY NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

When do you first
remember reading
about our past
(fiction or
nonfiction)?
What books/
authors?
I used to
love Ancient
Greece + Rome
not my cup of
tea any more,
but it's what
started my
love of history!

of ancient Egypt to the United Nations in war and peace. Although mainly out of print, they retain some appeal to home-schooling parents and are easy to find in used bookstores.

Next I found my old copy of Kenneth Roberts' historical novel about the American retreat from Canada in 1776 and the Saratoga campaign of 1777, *Rabble in Arms*. In it, Roberts turned my 12-year-old historical consciousness upside



down by making Benedict Arnold out to be a hero, by showing how Arnold's military skill accounted for the deferral of one British invasion of the northern United States and the defeat of another. Roberts described in terms more vivid than all but the best historians what it was like to fight a lake battle in upstate New York in late autumn, be inoculated against smallpox, and deal with the stupidities of legislative politics. Like his contemporaries Walter Edmonds (*Drums Along the Mohawk*) and Esther Forbes (*Johnny Tremain*), he made the colonial and revolutionary past live.

And then I discovered old copies of *American Heritage* magazine going back to the early 1960's. Once a minor publication by the American Association for State and Local



American Heritage magazine. "It wasn't fluff."

History, it was relaunched in 1954 as a handsome, 120-page hardcover magazine. The October 1961 issue was fairly typical. At the top of the masthead stood editorial director Joseph J. Thorndike, who after a stint at *Time* had been recruited to be the managing editor of *Life*. The senior editor was Bruce Catton, the prolific popular historian of the Civil War; the managing editor was Eric Larrabee, who later wrote one of the most thorough and accessible studies of Franklin Roosevelt as commander in chief. Assistant and associate editors included Richard Ketchum and Stephen Sears, excellent historians of the American Revolution and the Civil War. Authors in that issue included Hugh MacLennan, a prize-winning professor of English at McGill University writing about Canadian *voyageurs*; Mark Schorer, a University of



The Landmark series of histories for young people, launched in 1948 by Bennett Cerf of Random House, has since gone out of print.

During
2nd Red
Scare -
resurgence in
patriotism

fight against the United States Army in the 1870s. And the tales could include accounts of political corruption, ambiguous loyalties, and mayhem—patriotic history does not have to conceal any of that, nor need it ignore the ambiguities of the past. But the key was that this was my history, to own and to celebrate, even though my grandparents were immigrants.



Chief Joseph led his small tribe in a fight against the United States Army in the 1870s.

California, Berkeley professor and biographer of Sinclair Lewis on the writing of *Main Street*; and John Lukacs, one of the most original historians of twentieth-century Europe writing about George Bancroft, one of the fathers of American history. It wasn't fluff.

There was a progression here for a young person fascinated by the past and able to engage it at a number of levels, one which unquestionably played a role in shaping my attitudes, and not only mine, to politics. These were works of patriotic history, celebrating the American past and American heroes. They did not, nor did they need to, gloss over the stains and horrors. The heroes could be southern senators standing up to the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920's or Chief Joseph leading his small tribe in a

Speech
in 1877!

RICK JONES; FURMAN UNIVERSITY / AP PHOTOS (CERF)

ALAMY PHOTO

Particularly for Americans, patriotic history is a kind of glue
for an extraordinarily diverse republic.

A shared story

Particularly for Americans, patriotic history is a kind of glue for an extraordinarily diverse republic. Lincoln used a patriotic version of the nation's revolutionary past and founding generation to hold the Union together and provide meaning and redemptive hope after the slaughter of hundreds of thousands during the Civil War. The Gettysburg Address, after all, begins by recalling the Declaration of Independence and defining the meaning of the Revolution. And Lincoln in turn became a figure to inspire succeeding generations.

Yet patriotic history is more suspect these days than it was when I was its young student, 50 years ago. In 2014, Kenneth Pomeranz, completing his term as leader of the American Historical Association, chose as the topic of his presidential address, "Histories for a Less National Age." While grudgingly conceding that nations or states remain important because they have armies, and acknowledging that historians might do some limited good by teaching about the United States, he generally welcomed the shift to spatially and temporally broader history, sweeping across continents and centuries. It is striking that just as he gave that address the forces of nationalism—in Russia, China, western Europe, and most definitely the United States—gave a set of roars that indicated that they were very far from dead. It was an instructive error for an historian to make.

George Orwell famously observed in 1945 that nationalism is "the habit of assuming that human beings can be classified like insects," whereas patriotism is "devotion to a particular place and a particular way of life, which one believes to be the best in the world." In practice, however, modern academic historians, who are wary of nationalism for reasons good and bad, often conflate it with patriotism. And this is where some of the great divide between contemporary academic history and patriotic history has opened up. When the academy questions the very utility of national history, by necessity it

George Orwell, unlike some modern historians, distinguished between nationalism and patriotism.



ISTOCK PHOTO

Lincoln used a patriotic version of the nation's revolutionary past and founding generation to try to hold the Union together and provide meaning in the Gettysburg Address.

undermines the possibility of patriotic history as well.

Civic education requires students engage with their history—not only to know whence conventions, principles, and laws have come, but also to develop an attachment to them. And civic education is also inextricably interwoven with patriotism, without which commitment to the values that make free government possible will not exist. Civic education depends not only on an understanding of fundamental processes and institutions (for example, why there is a Supreme Court, or why only Congress gets to raise taxes or declare war) but on a commitment to those processes and institutions, and on some kind of admiration for the country that created them and the men and women who have shaped and lived within them. In a crisis, it is not enough to know how the walls were constructed and the plumbing laid out in the house that Madison, Washington, and Lincoln built. One has to think that the architects did remarkable work, that as their legatees we need to preserve the building even if we modernize it, and that it is a precious edifice like none other.

The triangular relationship among civic education, historical knowledge, and patriotism seems in our day to be broken. Survey after survey delivers



that improve it - to make our nation live up to its foundational ideals.

Key difference to know!

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dismal verdicts about what Americans know about the government under which they live. For example, in a recent survey by the Annenberg Public Policy Center, just two out of five respondents could identify the three branches of government

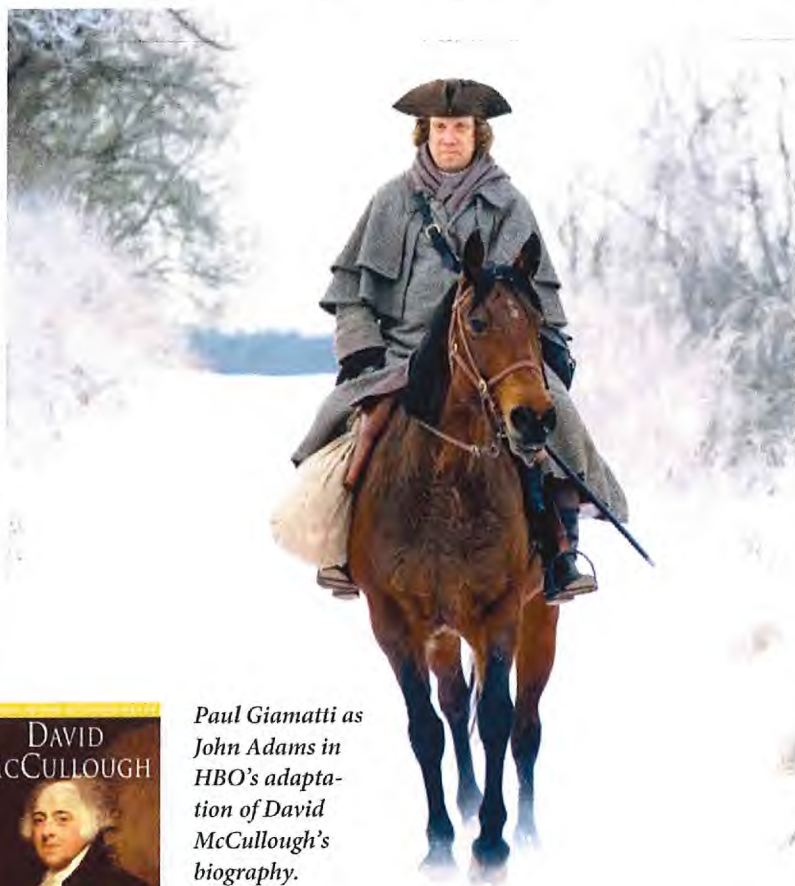
In a blistering article in the national security-oriented online publication, *War on the Rocks*, my colleagues at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies Francis Gavin and Hal Brands declare that the historical profession is “committing slow-motion suicide.” Able historians themselves, they point to studies showing a decline of 30 percent in history majors at U.S. institutions of higher education in the last 10 years alone—the steepest enrollment slide of any of the humanities. The brunt of their critique is that the discipline of history has walked away from some of the subfields that matter most to the shaping of engaged citizens—politics, statecraft, and war. Meanwhile, fellow historians Fredrik Logevall and Kenneth Osgood have found similar patterns in hiring in the profession; in looking at H-Net, the leading website for academic jobs in history, they found a grand total of 15 advertisements in 10 years for tenure-track junior historians specializing in American political history.

Members of the historical profession might, with reason, push back on this bleak picture, noting the robust health of organizations like the Society for Military History. But the truth remains that traditional forms of history—political, diplomatic, and military—have been increasingly pushed to the margins of the field; that departments of history have shrunk rapidly because students vote with their feet; and that churning out fewer history majors (who in turn are likely to be the future history teachers in middle and high schools) bodes poorly for the future of civic education. If, moreover, those fewer students who remain are themselves only barely familiar with the kinds of history that appeal to young people and can form

them as citizens, the cycle becomes a vicious one. If the nuts and bolts of American political and military history are not taught in universities, the chances that they will be passed to a younger generation yet diminishes.

Beyond the academy

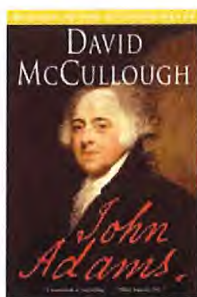
It is not the case that Americans in general have fallen out of love with their own past. Large numbers visit battlefields and museums—a million a year to Gettysburg, more than that



Paul Giamatti as John Adams in HBO's adaptation of David McCullough's biography.

and one out of five could not identify any branch of government. Nearly half thought that illegal immigrants have no rights under the Constitution. Another survey indicated that only one third of Americans would pass a U.S. citizenship test. 😞

The issue appears not to be a lack of civics courses per se, which are required in the vast majority of states. Rather, the issue seems to be the unmooring of civics from history, and in particular history in the curriculum at colleges and universities where the high school teachers of tomorrow are trained.



feature

TEACHING HISTORY COHEN

many to Mount Vernon, almost three quarters of a million to the National World War II Museum, and six-digit numbers even to more remote sites. Popular historians do well—David McCullough and Ron Chernow have repeatedly written best-selling historical biographies. On the whole, historical television series may not quite draw the 14 million viewers that Ken Burns' 1990 Civil Wars series did, but they have done respectably enough. *John Adams*, for example, attracted something like 2.5 million viewers.

The problem lies not in lack of interest, but in a tension between the academic historical community and both the reading public and popular writers. It is not enough to have best-selling books or television series about the American past, though those are welcome: there is a need for a general awareness of that past that has to be spread indirectly through college and university education and thence to middle and high schools. And while the history of the academy has to be somewhat different than the history of Netflix or the airport bookstand, they cannot be too far apart.

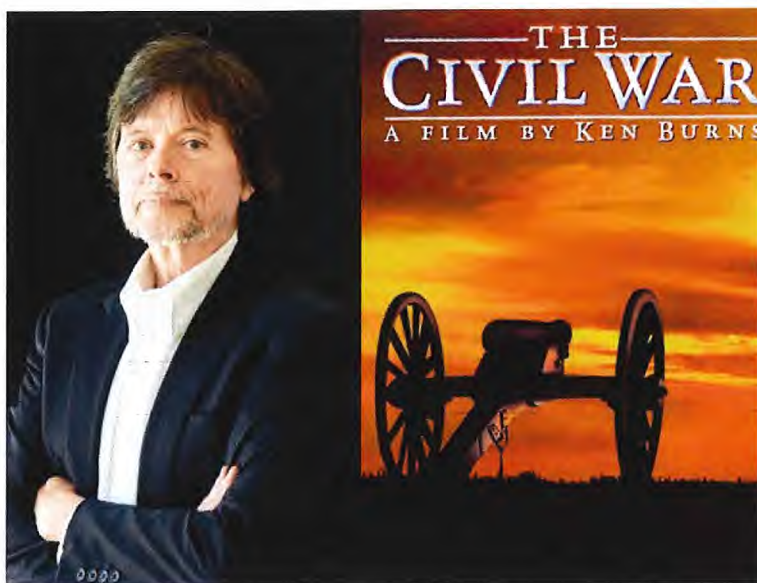
That gap has not always existed. It was possible, for example, for Allan Nevins, an enormously prolific writer about the Civil War and a biographer of Charles Fremont, John D. Rockefeller, and Henry Ford, to be a tenured professor at Columbia and president of the American Historical Association—without a doctorate degree in history. That would be unthinkable today. Yet a contemporary of Nevins who did

have a doctorate, Harvard University's Samuel Eliot Morison, was similarly popular, similarly prolific, and similarly influential.

The Morisons and Nevins of the previous century believed that they had a duty to illuminate the American past for their fellow citizens. They could be nuanced and critical while respecting the patriotic uses of history.

In current times, the weight in the academic historical profession has been, for some time, hostile to that and to anything that smacked of such an approach, making the case against such story telling with a purpose. In a critical review of David McCullough's biography of John Adams, historian Sean Wilentz of Princeton University lashed not only the author but what he described as the American Heritage style, "brilliant in its detail, evocative in its storytelling, but crushingly sentimental and vacuous," which he believed had infected Ken Burns' *Civil War* docu-series as well. Wilentz celebrated as an alternative Bernard DeVoto, a once well-known popular historian whose work painted a critical, fuller picture of the past and remains well worth reading.

These wars have continued. When in 2011 Harvard historian Jill Lepore published a book on the original Tea Party and its resonance today, she was taken to task by the dean of early American historians, Gordon S. Wood. "Americans seem to have



The *Civil War* documentary series by Ken Burns that aired in 1990 drew about 14 million viewers, a sign that Americans have an appetite for history.



Harvard historian Jill Lepore, once deplored by Gordon Wood as "an expert at mocking," became a patriotic historian, perhaps without even entirely recognizing it herself.

SUZANNE KREITER: THE BOSTON GLOBE VIA GETTY IMAGES

CHRIS PIZZELLO: INVISION/AP IMAGES

The issue appears not to be a lack of civics courses per se, rather, it seems to be the unmooring of civics from history, and in particular history in the curriculum at colleges and universities where the high school teachers of tomorrow are trained.



Doris Kearns Goodwin—a popular historian—gives a much more sympathetic and heroic account of Lincoln than does David Herbert Donald.

between the outlook of the modern analytic historian and that of the patriotic historian.

Searching for inspiration

Patriotic history involves, for example, heroes. Most academic historians who write biography (not the most popular genre in universities) specialize in the study of clay feet. Hence David Herbert Donald's biography of Lincoln depicts a president stumbling from decision to decision and yet somehow presiding over a triumphant Union. Doris Kearns Goodwin—a popular historian—gives a much more sympathetic account in *Team of Rivals*. Perhaps because she had had closer connections to the world of actual politics, her book is the more popular, and more admiring, one. One may even think it is in some ways the more essentially accurate portrait.

Americans need history that educates and informs, but also one that inspires. If, for example, one gives equal weight to John F. Kennedy's sordid sexual behavior and the soaring rhetoric of his inaugural speech; if one concentrates

BRYCE VICKMARK/REDUX

Do you agree or disagree?

a special need for these authentic historical figures in the here and now. It is very easy for academic historians to mock this special need, and Harvard historian Jill Lepore, as a staff writer for *The New Yorker*, is an expert at mocking," Wood deplored this disposition.

After criticizing Lepore for her contemptuous tone toward a political movement that she despised (the Tea Party), Wood argued that societies need memory and a useful and a purposeful past—in other words, heritage. Modern critical historical writing, he said, seeks simply to establish what happened. It is "all head and no heart," Wood wrote, and citing his own teacher, Bernard Bailyn, argued that it was important to understand that such history could not meet a society's needs, and something else is required.

This is the nub of the matter. Even if the academy generated more historians (like Wood, Wilentz, and Lepore, for example) who can write compellingly and lucidly for lay audiences, and even if they turned their attention to politics of the kind that citizens need and average readers find interesting, there is bound to be a tension



Americans need history that educates and informs but also that inspires, like the soaring rhetoric of John F. Kennedy's inaugural speech, delivered in 1961.

BETTMANN / GETTY IMAGES



Washington's crossing of the Delaware is the focus of a book by David Hackett Fischer that melds critical and patriotic history.

as much on the personal peccadilloes, inconsistencies, and mixed motives of the Founders as on the marvel that is the Constitution that they created; if the shameful relocation of American citizens of Japanese ancestry to concentration camps gets more play than the D-Day landings or Battle of Midway, history cannot serve that inspirational function. And then, in a crisis, you are stuck, because you have no great figures to remember, no memory of great challenges overcome, no examples of persistence and struggle to embrace.

A notable recent work of scholarship, Richard White's account of Reconstruction and the Gilded Age, *The Republic for Which it Stands*, is something of a warning. It is a volume in the excellent series produced by the Oxford History of the United States, which also includes James McPherson's *Battle Cry of Freedom* (on the Civil War) and Wood's *Empire of Liberty* (on the early republic). Like the other volumes, it is lucid and masterly in

its scholarship. But its relentless depiction of an irredeemably sordid past, blotted by the oppression of the African American population of the South, massacre of Indians, despoiling of the environment, horrors of tenement life, and political cupidity, leaves the reader thinking that perhaps the only good thing to be said about the United States during this period is that by contrast, it makes today's America look good. One could write a history that acknowledges all those things—yet somehow also celebrates the great works of literature and engineering from Mark Twain to the Brooklyn Bridge, or the extraordinary political achievement of the reunification of a country that had experienced four years of unremitting bloodshed, or the heroism (quiet in one case, noisy in the other) of Booker T. Washington and a young Theodore Roosevelt.

Wood recognized in his review of Lepore's book about the Tea Party that [the two forms of history—critical and patriotic—can only coexist, but rarely if ever coincide.] Some particularly gifted historians can pull it off, such as David Hackett Fischer, in his magnificent books *Paul Revere's Ride* and *Washington's Crossing*. But for the most part, the two forms of history have different purposes and tap different skills and sensibilities.

Worth celebrating: Booker T. Washington (right) and young Theodore Roosevelt.



Patriotic history involves heroes. Most academic historians who write biography (not the most popular genre in universities) specialize in the study of clay feet.

The challenge is the management of their coexistence, and in particular the recognition by scholars that both are necessary.

Popular and patriotic historians may grumble at reviews of their work by their academic colleagues but in truth, pay them little heed. For academic historians, however, the sentiments can be more acidic. Jonathan Zimmerman, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, put it sharply in a guarded defense of Ken Burns: "It's called sour grapes. Put simply, Burns has managed to engage a huge public audience. And that makes him suspect among members of our guild, who write almost entirely for each other. We pretend we don't envy his fame and fortune, but of course we do. We're like high-school kids who don't get asked to the prom, then say they never wanted to go in the first place." *Haha!*

Zimmerman had begun his career as a high-school social studies teacher, closer to the real needs of the American public for historical education. He noted that writing for lay audiences often counts against a young historian and deplored the guild mentality of a history profession that too often looks down on public engagement. In so doing, he made a point that cannot be put too forcefully. Unless history departments, and university administrators behind them, begin to weight public engagement as a useful academic function, they are likely to pull their discipline further into bitter irrelevance.

A reversal of this trend is not inconceivable, particularly for those faculty members who have tenure, but also have to deal with tight-fisted college administrations in an era when higher education itself is being turned upside down, and when it is becoming harder to sustain departments that do not pay their way with student seats in classrooms. History departments' disdain over the last few decades for both popular history and the historians who engage the American public may not survive provosts unwilling to hire more expensive professors teaching fewer courses to fewer students.

APWH is no stranger to drama!
Moreover, the educational establishment itself has, on occasion, changed its approach to history. After a series of critiques, the College Board revised its course framework for Advanced Placement History. "AP United States History," in its 2017 version, is both sophisticated and sober, but offers plenty of opportunities to explore learning objectives like "explain how ideas about democracy, freedom, and individualism found expression in the development of cultural values, political institutions, and American identity."

And then there is politics itself. In 2016, the political tide turned. Instead of a desperately unhappy conservative opposition

to a liberal president turning to history for inspiration and consolation and meeting the scorn of liberal history professors, it was the liberals who found themselves looking for a usable past. They saw a president they believed to be a potential tyrant, and a Republican party that seemed to be mastering the legislative and judicial branches of government. They now needed the heroes and the inspiring moments from the past to convince themselves that the country could get through difficult times.

Interestingly enough, it was Jill Lepore who found herself doing in a different way what she had disparaged the Tea Party movement doing. In 2018 she published an ambitious and engrossing one-volume history of the United States, *These Truths*. It is filled with patriotic sentiment. "The United States rests on a dedication to equality, which is chiefly a moral idea, rooted in Christianity, but it rests too, on a dedication to inquiry, fearless and unflinching," she writes. The book concludes with the old metaphors of the ship of state in a storm, with Americans called upon to fell majestic pines and "hew timbers of cedar and oak into planks" to rebuild the ship. Depending on one's literary tastes, the language is either florid or evocative, but it was clear that in the profound crisis Lepore saw in the Trump presidency, history had to come to the rescue. Possibly without recognizing it, she too had become a patriotic historian. *oh, how the turntables*

History's road ahead

What, then is to be done?

We can begin by recognizing that although America's renewed focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education for K-12 has had some beneficial effects, it is vital to pay heed to supposedly softer subjects—history foremost among them. Evidence suggests that recent focus on STEM as well as on standardized tests in reading and math (and therefore preparing for tests) has come at the expense of civics, social studies, and history. Educational reformers should realize that the time may have come to rein in the obsession with formal testing and to restore some balance to curricula. *Do you agree? What has your education been like?*

While little can be done in the short run about what has happened to history as a discipline, or how history teachers are trained in universities, there is a lot that can be done in summer workshops or through creative forms of part-time education, particularly online. If many conventional universities do not offer adequate instruction in history for teachers, entrepreneurially minded competitors can do so, and with national reach by virtue of online education. All of these are opportunities for

Be thinking to
possible History
Day topics &
project ideas!
Theme of
Debate &
Diplomacy!

ALAMY PHOTOS (BOOKS AND CONSTITUTION)



A few of the books in Thomas Jefferson's library, as displayed at the Library of Congress. The Constitution is at the National Archives.

creative grant giving and philanthropy.

The federal government's role is one to be approached with care. Part of the strength of the traditional American educational system has been that it has been decentralized and competitive, and one can argue that attempts to create standardized tests and standards do as much damage as good. Moreover, particularly in the field of history, the temptations for ideological fiddling are too great to make conservatives, in particular, feel comfortable. But there are two areas in which there is good to be done.

The first is through the National Endowment for the Humanities, which has sponsored historical work to include workshops for teachers as well as original productions of videos and the like. The second, and even more important, is the role of the Federal government in properly funding and sustaining national historic sites to include battlefields, monuments, and historical homes, but also the Library of Congress and National Archives with their magnificent collections of historical documents. These offer many opportunities for the millions of Americans who are interested in engaging their past to do so.

There is also a role for entrepreneurship and philanthropy to play. For example, organizations can support bringing back some of the older material discussed at the beginning of this paper and creating new sources of such work. Further, they might expand opportunities for students to learn history through experiences outside of the classroom. While patriotic history may be imbibed inside a school, it can also be found by singing along to the *Hamilton* score (see "Hamilton Goes to High School," *features*, Summer 2017), while camping on the



nately, there are many ways of mitigating and even reversing it.

Patriotic history is a sensitive topic. (It can take false and even dangerous forms.) The Lost Cause narrative of the Civil War, for example, masked the reality of slavery as the central cause of the bloodiest conflict in American history. But if done well, as many historians, museum designers, and custodians of national parks, public, semi-public, and private institutions have shown, it can both educate and inspire. And it is, in any case, inescapable. Without civics, our political institutions are reduced to valueless mechanisms. Without history, there is no civic education, and without civic education there are no citizens. Without citizens, there is no free republic. The stakes, in other words, could not be higher.

Eliot Cohen is the Dean of Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies. This essay is adapted from the forthcoming book, *How to Educate an American*, published by Templeton Press.

Creating a “New World” in the Americas

1491–1607



Chapter 1: Making a “New” World, to 1588

Chapter 2: A Continent on the Move, 1400–1725

By the time Europeans and others in the late fifteenth century became aware of the “New World,” it was in fact a very old world. For thousands of years, Native Americans had been transforming the land and themselves as they spread throughout the Western Hemisphere. In response to changing environmental conditions and their own needs and abilities, they invented new technologies, agriculture, and rich, complex lifestyles. What scholars call “culture areas” gradually emerged, regions that had similar economic, social, and political systems. Within and across these different regions, Native American groups engaged in near-constant exchange, creating dynamic and cosmopolitan networks.

Stumbling upon this world in 1492, Christopher Columbus ushered in a new era for the Western Hemisphere and its residents. Even before Europeans began to settle in the Americas, their presence shook the foundations of the Native American world. The first shock came in the invisible form of bacteria and viruses to which local populations had no immunity, and fatal disease spread rapidly from group to group. Intentionally and unintentionally, Europeans also brought new plants and animals that changed local ecologies. At the same time, they carried back plants, animals, and microorganisms that produced changes back home. This process, called the “Columbian Exchange,” helped to merge the two worlds together; neither would ever be the same again.

Driven by a complex mix of religious zeal, economic opportunism, and rising nationalism, European states pushed ever deeper into the North American world. Pioneered by the Spanish, who adapted land- and labor-use strategies from the Iberian Peninsula, patterns began to emerge by which various European nations penetrated native societies and pressed their own goals. Where Native American culture areas had once stood alone, different European settlement zones emerged: New Spain, New France, New Netherland, and eventually a New England. This created a complicated situation as each European power engaged—sometimes peacefully and sometimes not—with Native American societies and also, not usually peacefully, with each other. And into this complicated mix was inserted another group of former outsiders, Africans involuntarily pressed into labor to augment the labor of Native Americans, and who would become a permanent part of the evolving story.

In this conflict-riven environment, some groups adapted well and thrived, at least for a time, while others declined, withdrew, or ceased to exist. It was a world filled with uncertainties on all sides as religious, cultural, and racial assumptions that had reigned for centuries came increasingly into doubt and new ideas sprang into existence. No one could have ventured to guess where all this would lead.

PERIOD 1: 1491–1607

Key Concept 1.1

As native populations migrated and settled across the vast expanse of North America over time, they developed distinct and increasingly complex societies by adapting to and transforming their diverse environments.

You Should Be Able To:

- ★ Explain how and why the spread of maize cultivation in the Americas supported economic development, settlement, advanced irrigation, and social diversification. (Key Concept 1.1.I.A)
- ★ Explain how and why the native peoples of the Great Basin and Great Plains developed largely mobile lifestyles. (Key Concept 1.1.I.B)
- ★ Explain how and why Native Americans in the Northeast and Mississippi River Valley developed mixed agricultural and hunter-gatherer economies, which favored permanent villages, while tribes in the West and Northwest leveraged ocean resources for survival. (Key Concept 1.1.I.C-D)

Key Concept 1.2

Contact among Europeans, Native Americans, and Africans resulted in the Columbian Exchange and significant social, cultural, and political changes on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

You Should Be Able To:

- ★ Explain what motivated Europeans to establish colonies in the Western Hemisphere. (Key Concept 1.2.I.A)
- ★ Explain how the Columbian Exchange impacted the lives of Native Americans and Europeans. (Key Concept 1.2.I.B)
- ★ Explain how new economic developments (e.g., joint-stock companies) and technological improvements fueled the development of the Americas. (Key Concept 1.2.I.C)
- ★ Explain the demographic, economic, and social impact of disease on native and European people. (Key Concept 1.2.II.A)
- ★ Explain how the *encomienda* system structured labor around plantation-based agriculture and led to a caste system that impacted Europeans, Africans, and Native Americans. (Key Concept 1.2.II.B, D)
- ★ Explain how and why African slavery was developed in the Americas and the impact it had on Africans, Europeans, and native peoples. (Key Concept 1.2.II.C)
- ★ Explain how cultural, economic, religious, and political misunderstandings between Native Americans and Europeans led to conflict, cooperation, and competition. (Key Concept 1.2.III, A–C)
- ★ Explain how European and Native American divergent worldviews impacted religion, gender roles, family, land use, and power. (Key Concept 1.2.III.B)

AP® History Disciplinary Practices and Reasoning Skills

Causation... Historians are likely to analyze the factors that led to the growth of the Atlantic slave trade. They might answer questions such as “What were the long-term and short-term factors that caused Europeans to turn to African slavery in the New World?”

Analyzing Historical Evidence... Historians might ask: “Why does this period begin with the year 1491 instead of 1492? What makes this date a significant turning point in the history of the Americas?”

Contextualization... Historians try to place specific historical events in broader contexts. They might ask: “What was the political and economic climate of Europe in the late fifteenth century? Why was it suited for overseas expansion?”

1

Making a “New” World, to 1588

CHAPTER OUTLINE

- A World of Change
- Exploiting Atlantic Opportunities
- The Challenges of Mutual Discovery
- **INDIVIDUAL VOICES:** *Native Americans' View of the World: “Powhatan’s Mantle”*
- Study Tools

Making connections to thematic learning objectives:

GEO-1.0 Explain how geographic and environmental factors shaped the development of various communities, and analyze how competition for and debates over natural resources have affected both interactions among different groups and the development of governmental policies.

In this chapter, you will see how...

Both northern and western Indians adapted their economic and social arrangements to the environmental and climatic conditions they found (page 8).

INDIVIDUAL CHOICES

Wahunsunacock (The Powhatan)

Things were bad, and getting worse, for the people who lived along North America’s eastern shore. For generations they had lived peacefully in their largely self-sufficient villages on the corn that the women grew and the game that the men hunted. Warfare was infrequent, and famine all but unknown. But around six hundred years ago a long-lasting change in the weather made corn production less dependable, and the people were forced to hunt and gather more wild foods. As hunters from individual villages roamed

deeper into the forests looking for food, they encountered others who, like themselves, were desperate to harvest the diminishing resources. Conflicts became common.

The Powhatan people decided that collaboration with neighbors for both defense and expansion of resources was the best solution. Oral testimony suggests that in around 1550,



The Granger Collection, NYC

Wahunsunacock (The Powhatan)

six village-based groups whose territories occupied about 25 square miles near what is now Richmond, Virginia, formed an alliance and placed a hereditary chief-tain (*weroance*) in charge of coordinating their mutual efforts. At about the same time, a child was born in one of those villages who would become a great figure in the confederation's future. We do not know what his childhood name was, but as an adult he was called Wahunsunacock or sometimes just The Powhatan.

Throughout Wahunsunacock's life, conditions for the people got continuously worse. In addition to the bad weather, other neighboring groups had also begun to consolidate into local confederacies, and brushfire conflicts were common. But what was more troubling was the increasingly frequent appearance of odd-looking strangers who arrived in ever greater numbers along their shores. Most times these strangers seemed just to be looking around, exploring the coastline and various river inlets. Other times they seemed interested in trading often wonderful things for items that the Indians traditionally traded among themselves. But sometimes they took away women and children, who were never to be seen again. And even worse, shortly after each time these strangers appeared, people in the villages became sick and a great many died.

When Wahunsunacock reached adulthood, he became the *weroance* of the six-village confederacy into which he had been born. He decided that, in light of worsening conditions, the limited scope of his little alliance system was not adequate to ensure the continued safety and prosperity of his people. He then made a consequential decision: his political state must either expand or die. Calling upon support from the five to six hundred fighting men who lived in the six villages, Wahunsunacock launched an effort to restructure the region's political makeup.

Over a period of twenty years or so, Wahunsunacock and his followers used a combination of diplomacy, intermarriage, and brute force to pull other little confederacies and isolated villages into a larger confederation, as depicted on Powhatan's Mantle, shown in the Individual Voices feature at the end of this chapter. Eventually the six-village alliance grew to nearly thirty villages that occupied some 8,000 square miles and could field between fifteen hundred and two thousand armed soldiers.

As remarkable as Wahunsunacock's story is, his experience was not entirely unique. Faced with changing conditions, natural ones at first and then those brought by invading Europeans, Indians throughout the Americas struggled valiantly and creatively to restructure their societies and their lives. Sometimes the effort brought success, but often at the cost of war and great sacrifice. Wahunsunacock and his contemporary visionaries succeeded in reshaping America, crafting what Europeans naively—but in this one sense quite correctly—called the New World. And in the process, they helped shape the entire Atlantic world, where the making of America would soon take center stage.

For nearly a thousand years before the Powhatans formed their confederacy, a combination of natural and human forces truly global in scope was having a profound impact throughout the Atlantic world. For example, in 632, a vibrant new religion swept out of the Arabian Peninsula to conquer much of the Mediterranean world. At the same time, climatic changes encouraged expansion by Viking warlords out of Scandinavia southward into the European mainland and westward to Iceland and Greenland. Together these expansive societies introduced new technologies and knowledge of distant and mysterious worlds that would generate an atmosphere of restlessness throughout Europe.

One of those mysterious worlds lay to the south of the forbidding Sahara Desert in Africa. There, as in both America and Europe, people had been dealing with changing conditions by crafting societies and economies that made the most of varying environments. When trading caravans began penetrating this region in the eighth century, they found highly developed cities that could draw on massive populations and natural resources to produce goods that were in great demand throughout the evolving Atlantic world. Like Native Americans, Africans too would be drawn into the restlessness that characterized this dynamic age.

A mere fifty or so years before the Powhatans united, Christopher Columbus, a Genoese navigator in Spain's employ, rediscovered the **Western Hemisphere** while trying to find the hidden and distant worlds known to Islamic traders. Columbus's accident brought two historical streams together, and from that point onward, the history of each helped to form the future of both. On a global scale, this event launched a new era in human history. On a more local scale, it began a process we call *Making America*.

A WORLD OF CHANGE

- ★ *How did environmental changes influence the development of various societies in North America during the millennia before the emergence of the Atlantic world?*
- ★ *What forces came into play in the centuries before 1500 that would launch Europeans on a program of outward exploration?*
- ★ *What factors in sub-Saharan African history helped lead to the development of the slave trade?*

Christopher Columbus's accidental encounter with the Western Hemisphere came after nearly a thousand years of increasing restlessness and dramatic change that affected all of the areas surrounding the Atlantic Ocean. As **Muslims** gained a foothold in southern Europe, word spread of the finery they obtained through trade with Africa and Asia, and enterprising

individuals began looking for ways to profit by supplying such luxuries to European consumers. At the same time, northern European **Vikings** were extending their holdings throughout many parts of Europe. Then after Columbus, **millennia** of relative isolation for the Western Hemisphere ended, and the natural and human environments in America were opened to the flow of people, animals, and goods already circulating in this dynamic new system.

American Origins

It might be said that the process of Making America actually began about 2.5 million years ago with the onset of the Great Ice Ages. During the height of the Ice Ages, gigantic glaciers advanced and withdrew across the world's continents. During periods of glacial advancement, so much water was frozen into the glaciers that sea levels dropped as much as 450 feet. Migratory animals found vast regions closed to them by the imposing ice fields and ventured into areas exposed by the receding sea. One such region, Beringia, lay between present-day Siberia on the Asian continent and Alaska in North America (see Map 1.1). Now covered by the waters of the Bering Sea and Arctic Ocean, Beringia during the Ice Ages was a dry, frigid grassland—most recently between seventy thousand and ten thousand years ago, it was a perfect grazing ground for animals such as giant bison and huge-tusked woolly mammoths. Hosts of predators, including large wolves and saber-toothed cats, followed them.

What was true for other species may also have been true for humans. Each of the indigenous peoples who continue to occupy this hemisphere has its own account of its origins. Some of those origin stories involve migration; others do not. The most recent biological evidence suggests that the majority

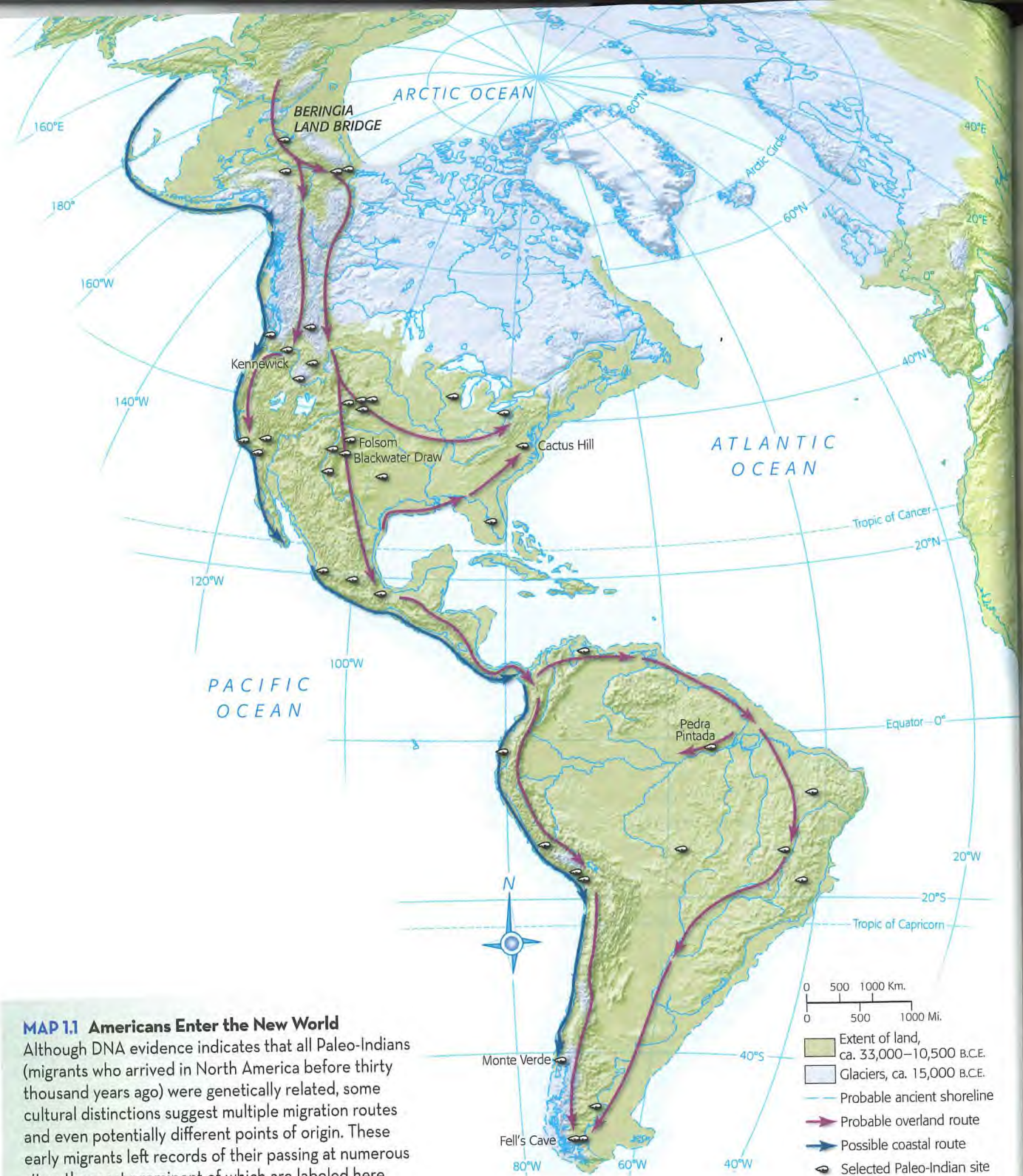
■ **Western Hemisphere** When discussing the world longitudinally (lengthwise), geographers often divide the globe into two halves (hemispheres). The **Western Hemisphere** includes North America, Mexico, Central America, and South America; the **Eastern Hemisphere** includes Europe, Asia, and Africa.

■ **Muslims** People who practice the religion of Islam, a monotheistic faith that accepts Mohammed as the chief and last prophet of God; born ca. 570 on the Arabian Peninsula, around 610 Mohammed began having religious visions, which were recorded as the Qur'an, the sacred text that is the foundation for the Islamic religion.

■ **Vikings** Medieval Danish, Swedish, and Norwegian groups who responded to land shortages and climatic conditions in Scandinavia by taking to the sea and establishing communities in various parts of western Europe, Iceland, Greenland, and North America.

millennia The plural of *millennium*, a period of one thousand years.

Terms above marked with ■ will be found in the Study Tools at the end of this chapter.



■ **Paleo-Indian** The first group of migrants from Asia to the Western Hemisphere, presumed to have begun arriving before thirty thousand years ago.

of Native Americans did migrate here and are descended from three genetic lines. The first of these, so-called **Paleo-Indians**, probably made the migration more than thirty thousand years ago, and their population spread throughout North and South America



Paleo-Indians left a wide variety of tools as evidence of their movements throughout the Americas. These spear points are but a few examples of the materials they used in their various economic activities and speak to these people's craft skills and aesthetic values.

(see Map 1.1). Then for a period stretching to about sixteen thousand years ago, a sheet of ice more than 8,000 feet thick covered the northern half of North America and prevented further migration. After that a second migration of what are called the **Na-Dene** people began arriving, to be followed ten thousand or so years later by a third group, the **Eskimo-Aleut** people. DNA evidence indicates that these three groups intermingled, creating the variety of Indians that Europeans encountered when they arrived many millennia later.

Beginning about nine thousand years ago, temperatures warmed, leading to the extinction of the large Ice Age animals. As these **staple** meat sources disappeared, people everywhere in North America abandoned big-game hunting and began to explore newly emerging local environments for new sources of food, clothing, shelter, and tools. In the forests that grew up to cover the eastern half of the continent, they developed finely polished stone tools, which they used to make functional and beautiful implements out of wood, bone, shell, and other materials. There and along the Pacific shore, people hollowed out massive tree trunks, making boats from which they could harvest food from inland waterways and from the sea. During this time incoming migrants brought domesticated dogs into North America. With boats for river transportation and dogs to help carry loads on land, Native American people were able to make the best use of their local environments by moving around to different spots during different seasons of the year, following an annual round of movement from camp to camp—perhaps collecting shellfish for several weeks at the mouth of a river; then moving on to where wild strawberries were ripening, and later in the summer



This sixteenth-century engraving illustrates the variety, abundance, and importance of agriculture in pre-Columbian and post-contact America. The product of centuries of genetic engineering, crops like corn, squashes, and other vegetables supported large settled communities in much of North America. *Collecting Food for the Communal Storehouse, from 'Brevis Narratio...', engraved by Theodore de Bry (1538-98) published in Frankfurt, 1591 (coloured engraving), Le Moyne, Jacques (de Morgues) (1533-88) (after) / Service Historique de la Marine, Vincennes, France/Bridgeman Images*

relocating to fields where they could harvest maturing wild onions or sunflower seeds.

Although these ancestors of modern Native Americans believed in and celebrated the animating spirits of the plants and animals they depended on for survival, they nonetheless engaged in large-scale environmental engineering. They used fire to clear forests of unwanted scrub and to encourage the growth of berries and other plants they found valuable. In this way they produced vegetables for themselves and also provided food for browsing animals such as deer, which increased in number while other species, less useful to people, declined. They also engaged in genetic engineering. A highly significant example comes from north-central Mexico where, beginning perhaps seven thousand years ago, human intervention helped a wild strain of grass develop bigger seedpods with more nutritious seeds. Such intervention eventually

■ **Na-Dene** The second group of migrants from Asia to the Western Hemisphere, presumed to have begun arriving around fifteen thousand years ago.

■ **Eskimo-Aleut** The last major group of migrants from Asia to the Western Hemisphere, who probably began arriving around five thousand years ago.

staple A basic and reliable food source.

It Matters Today

Native Americans Shape a New World

It may be hard to imagine why understanding the original peopling of North America and how native cultures evolved during the millennia before Columbus could possibly matter to the history of the United States or, more specifically, to how we live our lives today. But without this chapter in our history, there likely would have been no U.S. history at all. Europeans in the fifteenth century lacked

the tools, the organization, the discipline, and the economic resources to conquer a true wilderness—such a feat would have been the equivalent of our establishing a successful colony on Mars today. But the environmental and genetic engineering conducted through the millennia of North American history created a hospitable environment into which European crops, animals, and people could easily transplant themselves. And while the descendants of those Europeans may often suppose that they constructed an entirely new world in North America, the fact is that they simply grafted new growth onto ancient rootstock, creating the unique hybrid that is today's America.

- As an exercise in “counter-factual” history, describe what life would have been like for European colonists in the New World if no Indians had been present. For example, what if Columbus had found no gold or French fishermen had found no one to trade with? What if there had been no tobacco or corn for colonists to grow and market?
- In what ways are the Indian heritages of America still visible in our society today?

transformed a fairly unproductive plant into an enormously nourishing and prolific food crop: **maize**.

Maize (corn), along with other engineered plants like beans, squash, and chilies, formed the basis for an agricultural revolution in North America, allowing many people to settle in larger villages for longer periods. Successful adaptation—including plant cultivation and eventually agriculture—along with population growth and the constructive use of spare

time allowed some Indians in North America to build large, ornate cities. The map of ancient America is dotted with such centers. Beginning about three thousand years ago, the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys became the home for a number of **mound builder** societies whose cities became trading and ceremonial centers that had enormous economic and social outreach. Large quantities of both practical and purely decorative artifacts from all over North America have been found at these sites. Then, about eight hundred years ago, midwestern mound builder sites fell into decline, and the people who once had congregated there withdrew to separated villages or bands. No single satisfactory explanation accounts for why this happened.

Change and Restlessness in the Atlantic World

During the few centuries following the death of the prophet Mohammed in 632, Muslim Arabs, Turks, and **Moors** made major inroads into western Asia and northern Africa, eventually encroaching on Europe's southern and eastern frontiers (see Map 1.2). During these same years, Scandinavian Vikings, who controlled the northern frontiers of Europe, began expanding southward. They also began colonizing Iceland and Greenland. Over the decades that followed, Vikings

maize Corn; the word *maize* comes from an Indian word for this plant.

■ **mound builder** Name applied to a number of Native American societies—including the Adena, Hopewell, and Mississippian cultures—that constructed massive earthen mounds as monuments and building foundations.

■ **Moors** Natives of northern Africa who converted to Islam in the eighth century and carried the Islamic religion and culture both to southern Africa and to the Iberian Peninsula (Spain and Portugal), which they conquered in the eighth century.

■ **Reconquista** The campaign undertaken by European Christians to recapture the Iberian Peninsula from the Moors, accomplished in 1492.

■ **Ferdinand and Isabella** Joint rulers of Spain (r. 1469–1504); their marriage in 1469 brought together the rival kingdoms of Aragon and Castile and united Spain.

established several outposts on the North American coast from present-day Maine to Newfoundland.

By about the year 1000, then, the heartland of Europe was surrounded by dynamic societies that introduced Europeans to a much broader world. Although Europeans resented and resisted both Viking and Islamic invasion, the newcomers brought with them tempting new technologies, food items, and expansive knowledge. These contributions not only enriched European culture but also improved the quality of life. For example, new farming methods increased food production so much that Europe began to experience a population explosion. Soon Europeans would begin turning this new knowledge and these new tools against the people who brought them.

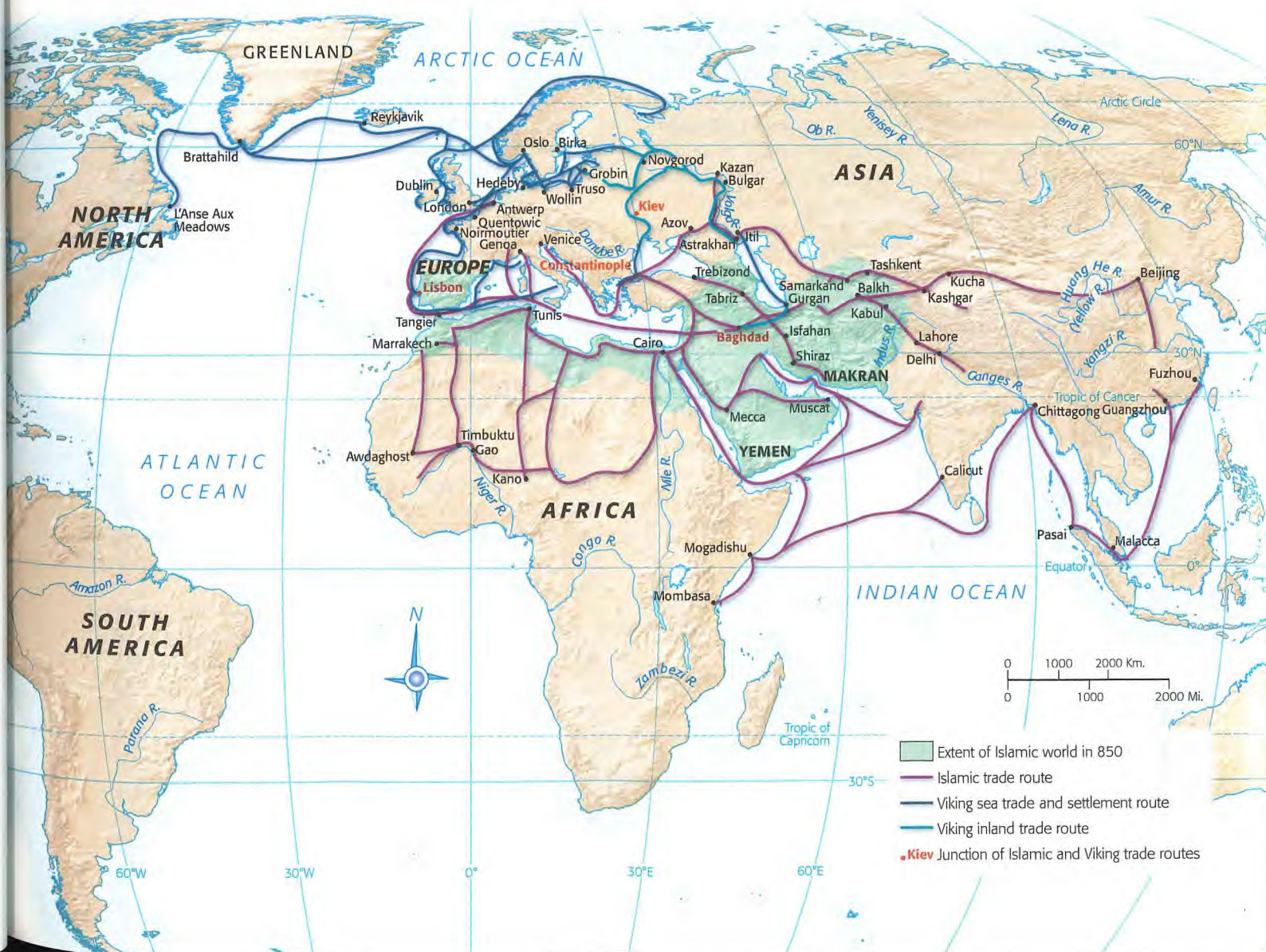
Iberians launched a **Reconquista**, an effort to break Islamic rule on the peninsula. Portugal attained independence in 1147, and by 1380 Portugal's King

John I had united that country's various principalities under his rule. In Spain, unification took much longer, but in 1469 **Ferdinand and Isabella**, heirs to the rival thrones of Aragon and Castile, married and created a united Spain. Twenty-three years later, in 1492, the Spanish subdued the last Moorish stronghold on the peninsula, completing the Reconquista.

Dealings with the Vikings in the north took a somewhat different turn. Although experts disagree about the exact timing, it appears that at some time between 1350 and 1450 a significant climatic shift called the Little Ice Age began to affect the entire world. In the Arctic and subarctic, temperatures fell, snowfall increased, and sea ice became a major hazard to navigation. This shift made it impossible for the Vikings to practice the herding, farming, and trading that supported their economy in the North Atlantic. Finding themselves cut off from a vibrant North Atlantic empire, Viking

MAP 1.2 Europe and Its Neighbors, ca. 1000

During medieval times, Viking and Islamic empires surrounded western Europe, and their trade routes crisscrossed the region.





In the Wider World

Polynesians Populate the Pacific

At the same time that Native American populations were settling into their new environments, another great migration was taking place on the opposite side of the world. Some six thousand years ago, from a starting point somewhere near the modern island nation of Taiwan, people in sail-rigged canoes began taking well-planned voyages toward the Philippine Islands. Setting up residence there, they continued to island hop until around 1200 B.C.E., by which time they had established populations in a chain all the way to the Solomon Islands, east of New Guinea. From there, they continued moving eastward, setting up residence in Fiji, Samoa, and Tonga. During the next thousand years, such voyages continued until these Polynesian people occupied, in the words of Jared Diamond, "every habitable scrap of land in the vast watery triangle of ocean whose apexes are Hawaii, New Zealand, and Easter Island." And while there is little physical evidence of their voyaging to the west coast of the Americas, it was certainly within their technical and navigational abilities, and some speculate that they may well have.

settlements in the British Isles, Russia, France, and elsewhere merged with local populations.

Like Native Americans at the same time, these Viking refugees often joined with their neighbors in recognizing the value of large-scale political organization. Consolidation began in France in around 1480, when Louis XI took control of five rival provinces to create a unified kingdom. Five years later in England, Henry Tudor and the House of Lancaster defeated the rival House of York, ending nearly a hundred years of civil war. Tudor, now styling himself King Henry VII, cemented this victory by marrying into the rival house, wedding Elizabeth of York to finally unify the English throne. As in Spain and Portugal, the formation of unified states in France and England opened the way to new expansion activities that would accelerate the creation of an Atlantic world.

The Complex World of Indian America

The world into which Vikings first sailed at the beginning of the second millennium and into which other Europeans would intrude half a millennium later was not some static realm stuck in the Stone Age. Native American societies were every bit as progressive, adaptable, and historically dynamic as those that would invade their homes. In fact, adaptive

flexibility characterized Indian life throughout North America. Scholars have tried to make the extremely complicated cultural map of North America understandable by dividing the continent into a series of culture areas—regions where the similarities among native societies were greater than the differences (see Map 1.3).

In the southeastern region of North America, peoples speaking Siouan, Caddoan, and Muskogean languages formed vibrant agricultural and urban societies with ties to exchange centers farther north as well as to traders from Mexico. At places like Natchez, fortified cities housed gigantic pyramids, and farmland radiating outward provided food for large residential populations. These were true cities and, like their counterparts in Europe and Asia, were magnets that attracted ideas, technologies, and religious notions from the entire continent.

Farther north, in the region called the Eastern Woodlands, people lived in smaller villages and combined agriculture with hunting and gathering. The Iroquois, for example, lived in towns numbering three thousand or more people, changing locations only as soil fertility, firewood, and game became exhausted. Each town was made up of a group of **longhouses**, structures often 60 feet or more in length.

A tradition that may go back to the time when the Iroquois lived as nomadic hunters and gatherers dictated that men and women occupy different spheres of existence. The women's world was the world of plants, healing, nurturing, and order. The men's was the world of animals, hunting, and war. By late **pre-Columbian** times, the Iroquois had become strongly agricultural, and because plants were in the women's sphere, women occupied places of

longhouses Communal dwellings, usually built of poles and bark and having a central hallway with family apartments on either side.

pre-Columbian Existing in the Americas before the arrival of Columbus.

A Deeper Understanding of History

It's the Weather, Stupid: Climate and Culture

History is often written as though it happens in a vacuum, ignoring that our species, like all others, lives in a dynamic physical environment: the earth under our feet changes (geology), the water that supports all life changes (hydrology), and vast changes in climate also affect us (climatology). And these changes all interact in complicated ways. History, in part, must study how we have responded to this physical world in our constant quest to survive. The graph below shows the average of various reconstructions of global average temperatures between 1000 and 1800.

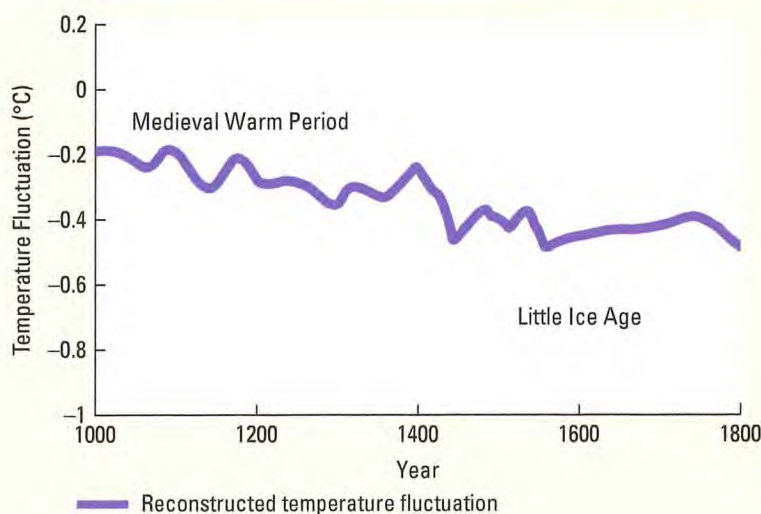
Noting that the zero line on this graph represents the normal modern temperature, it is apparent that during the time period covered by this and several of the chapters that follow, things were a lot colder than usual. There is no consensus among climatologists as to why this happened. Different theories suggest orbital cycles, decreased solar activity, increased volcanic activity, and altered ocean current flows or some combination of these. Some even

think that inadvertent human contributions may have been responsible for the changes: that population declines due to medieval plagues may have led to increased forestation, which in turn decreased carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

This four-hundred-year cooling trend had different impacts on different societies. Hunting/gathering societies, like many in North America, found that they had to expand their territories to compensate for diminished resources. Agricultural societies often found that usually reliable crops could no longer sustain local populations. In both the Old and New Worlds, there was a tendency to create larger and more complicated political organizations to even out the ill effects. Interest grew in new technologies that might help people to compensate for the changes they were experiencing. Europeans expanded trading networks into the Middle East and Asia. From there they borrowed navigational tools that permitted them to expand even more, finally all the way to North America. There, Native

Americans borrowed European technologies to enhance survival. And side by side with these trends, conflict, war, and subjugation of populations increased as self-interested societies sought to improve their own conditions irrespective of the impact on others.

It is easy, then, to look back at this period in human history and point fingers at the nearly constant violence and selfishness that seem to characterize it, but taking a rapid, radical, and sustained change of climate into consideration forces us to reassess and perhaps temper our judgments. It also forces us to think a little more broadly about what causes history to happen the way it does.



Source: Based on Robert A. Rohde, Global Warming Art project.

AP® History Disciplinary Practices and Reasoning Skills

Continuity and Change over Time What other weather phenomena would impact history? How might a warmer globe have changed the settling of the New World prior to 1600?



MAP 1.3 Indian Culture Areas in North America

Social scientists who study Native American societies have divided them into a complex of “culture areas”: regions in which cultural similarities outnumber differences between resident groups. While there is some disagreement among scholars about the exact number, historical timing, and extent of the specific areas shown, this map provides a representative view of the various culture areas in North America.

high social and economic status in Iroquois society, ruling over domestic politics. Families were matrilineal, meaning that they traced their descent through the mother’s line, and matrilocal, meaning that a man left his home to move in with his wife’s family upon

marriage. Women distributed the rights to cultivate specific fields and controlled the harvest.

Variations on the Iroquois economic and social pattern were typical throughout the Eastern Woodlands and in the neighboring Great Plains and Southwest.

Having strong ties with agriculturalists in the east, Plains groups such as the Mandans began settling on bluffs overlooking the many streams that eventually drain into the Missouri River. Living in substantial houses insulated against the cold winters, these people divided their time among hunting, crop raising, and trade. By 1300, such villages could be found along every stream ranging southward from North Dakota into present-day Kansas.

In the Southwest, groups with strong ties to Mexico began growing corn as early as 3,200 years ago, but they continued to follow a migratory life until about 400 C.E., when they began building larger and more substantial houses and limiting their migrations. The greatest change, however, came during the eighth century, when a shift in climate made the region drier and a pattern of late-summer thunderstorms triggered dangerous and erosive flash floods.

There seem to have been two quite different responses to this change in climate. A group called the Anasazi expanded their agricultural ways, cooperating to build flood-control dams and irrigation canals. The need for cooperative labor meant forming larger communities, and between about 900 and 1300 the Anasazi built whole cities of multistory apartment houses along the high cliffs, safe from flooding but near their irrigated fields. In these densely populated towns, Anasazi craft specialists manufactured goods such as pots, textiles, and baskets for the community, while farmers tended fields and priests attended to the spiritual needs of the society.

Another contingent of southwestern Indians abandoned the region, moving southward into Mexico. One of these groups, the **Aztecs**, arrived in the Valley of Mexico soon after 1200, settling on a small island in the middle of a brackish lake. From this unappealing center, a series of strong leaders used a combination of diplomacy and brutal warfare to establish a **tributary empire** that eventually ruled as many as 6 million people.

Other major changes occurred in the Southwest after 1300. During the last quarter of the thirteenth century, a long string of summer droughts and bitterly cold winters forced the Anasazi to abandon their cities. They disappeared as a people, splitting



Kenneth Murray / Science Source

In the American Southwest, the Anasazi Indians built monumental cities of multistory buildings housing hundreds, sometimes thousands, of people. This community, called Cliff Palace on Mesa Verde in Colorado, is but one example. The name *Palace*, by the way, is misleading; there was no royalty among the Anasazi, and this was a dwelling for everyday farmers and craftworkers.

into smaller communities that eventually became the various Pueblo groups. At the same time, an entirely new population entered the region. These hunter-gatherers brought new technologies, including the bow and arrow, into the Southwest. About half of them continued to be hunter-gatherers, while the rest borrowed cultivating and home-building techniques from the Pueblos. Europeans who later entered the area called the hunter-gatherers Apaches and the settled agriculturalists Navajos.

In other regions agriculture was practiced only marginally, if at all. In areas like the Great Basin, desert conditions made agriculture too risky, and in California, the Northwest Coast, and the intermountain Plateau (see Map 1.3), the bounty of available wild foods made it unnecessary. In these regions, hunting and gathering remained the chief occupations. For example, the Nez Perces and their neighbors living in the Plateau region occupied permanent village sites in the winter but did not stay together in a single group all year. Rather, they formed task groups—temporary

■ **Aztecs** An Indian group living in central Mexico; the Aztecs used military force to dominate nearby tribes; their civilization was at its peak at the time of the Spanish conquest.

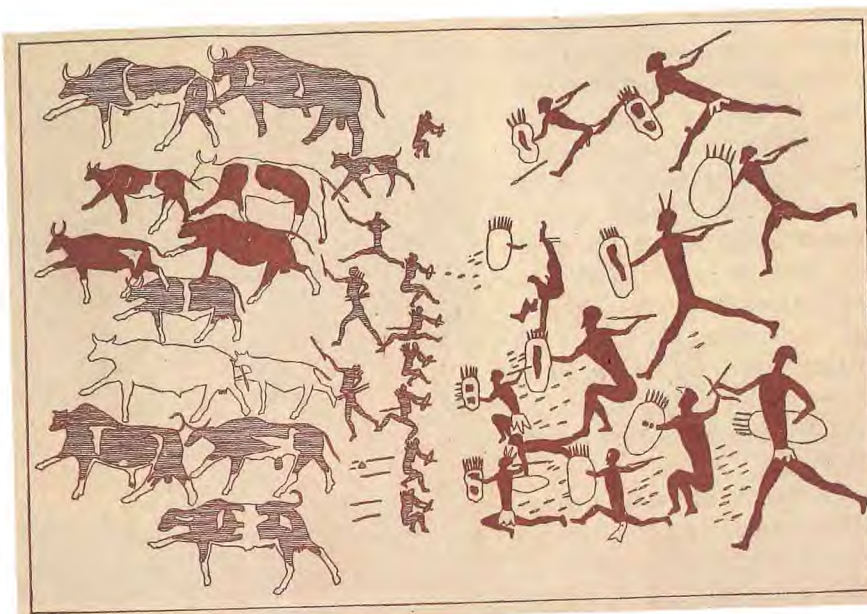
tributary empire An empire in which subjects rule themselves but are required to contribute goods and labor, called tribute, to an imperial government in return for protection and services.

villages that came together to share the labor required to harvest a particular resource—and then went their separate ways. These task groups brought together not only people who lived in different winter villages but often people from different tribes and even different language groups. In such groups, political authority passed among those who were best qualified to supervise particular activities. If the task group was hunting, the best and most senior hunters—almost always men—exercised political authority. If the task group was gathering roots, then the best and most senior diggers—almost always women—ruled. Thus among such hunting-gathering people, political organization changed from season to season, and social status depended on what activities were most important to the group at a particular time.

As these examples illustrate, variations in daily life and social arrangements in pre-Columbian North America reflected variations in climate, soil conditions, food supplies, and cultural heritages from place to place across the vast continent. But despite the enormous size of the continent and the amazing variety of cultures spread across it, economic and social connections within and between ecological regions tied the people together in complex ways. For example, varieties of shell found only along the northwestern Pacific Coast were traded to settlements as far away as Florida, having been passed from hand to hand over thousands of miles of social and physical space.

A World of Change in Africa

Like North America, Africa was home to an array of societies that developed in response to varying natural and



After being separated from the rest of Africa by the formation of the Sahara Desert, the Bantu people—aided perhaps by their mastery of iron-smelting technology—expanded throughout the sub-Saharan portion of the continent. This painting, rendered by non-Bantu Bushmen, records a battle between themselves and Bantus. Note the relatively huge size and menacing quality of the Bantus compared with the retreating Bushmen, an indication of how the newly dominant group was perceived by its neighbors. Individuals captured in such encounters might well be adopted into the captor's kin group as slaves.

historical conditions. But unlike contemporary Indian groups, Africans maintained continual if perhaps only sporadic contacts with societies in Europe and Asia.

In ancient times tendrils of trade tied the Mediterranean and **sub-Saharan Africa** together, but during the past five thousand years increasing desertification cut off most of Africa from the fertile areas of the Mediterranean coast. The people living south of the desert were forced to largely reinvent civilization in response to changing conditions. They abandoned the wheat and other grain crops that had dominated in earlier economies, domesticating new staples such as **millet**. They also abandoned the cattle and horses that had been common in earlier times, adopting sheep and goats, which were better suited to arid environments. Depending on immediate conditions, groups could establish large villages and live on a balance of vegetables, meat, and milk or, if necessary, shift over to a purely nomadic lifestyle following their herds.

Social organization tended to follow a similar adaptive strategy. The most common social structure was based on the belief that large geographically and linguistically related groups were descended from a common **fictive ancestor**. These larger organizations were then subdivided into smaller and smaller groups, each independent—as a modern nuclear family might be—but tied through an elaborate family tree to hundreds or even thousands of other similar groups.

sub-Saharan Africa The region of Africa south of the Sahara Desert.

millet A large family of grain grasses that produce nutritious, carbohydrate-rich seeds used for both human and animal food.

fictive ancestor A mythical figure believed by a social group to be its founder, from whom all members are biologically descended.

The status of each group was determined by seniority in the line of descent—those descended from the oldest offspring of the common ancestor were socially and politically superior to those descended from younger branches. This fundamental hierarchy created an organizational structure that permitted large-group cooperation and management when appropriate but also permitted each small band to function independently when conditions required. Within each group, seniority also determined political and social status: the eldest descendant of the common ancestor within each group held superior power.

Like many Native American societies, traditional African groups practiced various forms of bonded labor. Most often slaves in these societies were war captives, debtors, or criminals, and they frequently were treated like junior members of the fictive family into which they were adopted. It was not unheard of for such subordinates to earn their freedom or even to attain positions of honor and leadership.

Sometime between two and three thousand years ago, sub-Saharan groups appear to have discovered iron smelting. Craftsmen were able to make use of abundant raw iron deposits in southern Africa to produce tools, vessels, and weapons. Often, large cities with elaborate social hierarchies grew in neighborhoods where iron and other ores were particularly abundant. These would then become centers for trade as well as political hubs, the seeds from which later kingdoms and empires would sprout.

These trading centers became particularly important when Islamic expansion brought new, outside sources for trade into the sub-Saharan world. The first mention of trade between Islamic adventurers and African communities stems from the eighth century, and it seems to have developed slowly over the next several hundred years. Increasingly after 1100, iron, gold, precious gems, and slaves were carried across the desert by Muslim traders, who gave African middlemen silks, spices, and other foreign goods in exchange. This trade tended to enhance the power of African elites, leading to ever larger and more elaborate states.

EXPLOITING ATLANTIC OPPORTUNITIES

- ★ How did the Atlantic world change as a result of efforts to exploit new discoveries leading up to and following 1492?
- ★ How did Native Americans and Africans respond initially to European expansion?

Dynamic forces in America, Europe, Africa, and beyond were drawing the disparate societies that occupied the Atlantic shore into a complex world of mutual



Introducing camels as draft animals made it possible for Arab and other traders to penetrate the forbidding Sahara Desert to open up a highly profitable trade with sub-Saharan states that were rich with gold, ivory, and other valuable commodities. This gold and diamond miniature (the sculpture is only about two-and-a-half inches tall) celebrates the riches that these animals carried out of Africa. *Indian, Mughal period, ca. 1800. Camel: gold enamel, diamond chips, ivory. Gr. H. 2 5/8 in. (6.7 cm.). L. 2 3/4 in. (7.0 cm.). Diam. 1 3/16 in. (3.0 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, N.Y., U.S.A. Gift of The Shaw Foundation, Inc., 1959 (59.44.1). Photograph © 1996 The Metropolitan Museum of Art/Art Resource, New York.*

experience. Generally seeking profits for themselves and advancement for their own nations, tribes, or classes, those who sought to exploit the emerging New World nonetheless had an enormous impact on the lives of all who occupied it. The process of outreach and historical evolution that helped launch the American experience grew directly from these efforts at exploitation.

The Portuguese, Africa, and Plantation Slavery

The first of the European states to pull itself together was also the first to challenge Islamic dominance in both the Asian and African trade. Portugal's John I encouraged exploration by establishing a school of navigation on his kingdom's southwestern shore; the school sent numerous expeditions in search of new sources of wealth. By the 1430s, the Portuguese had discovered and taken control of islands off the western shore of Africa and within thirty years had pushed their way to Africa itself, opening relations with various states. For centuries, traders in these states had shipped valuable trade goods across the Sahara by means of caravans (see Map 1.4). The Portuguese, however, offered speedier shipment and higher profits by carrying trade goods directly to Europe by sea.



MAP 1.4 Sub-Saharan Africa Before Sustained European Contact

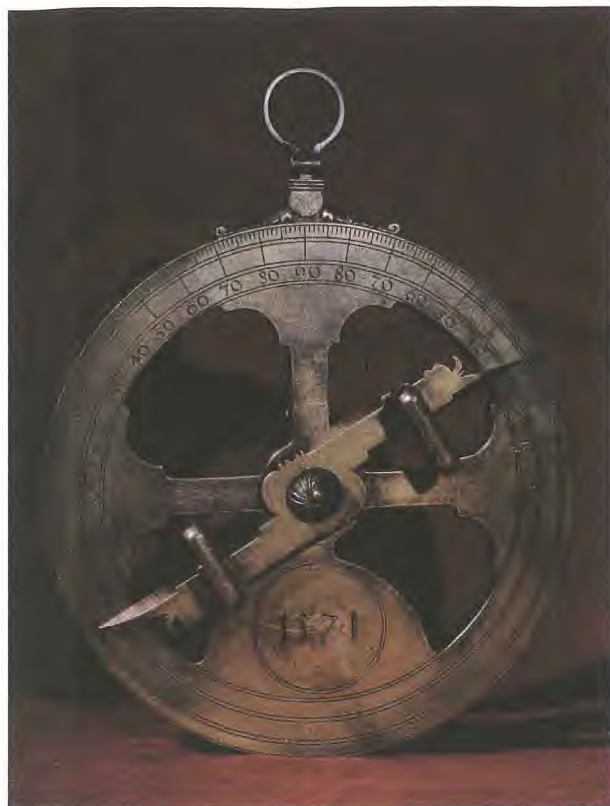
During the many centuries that followed the formation of the Sahara Desert, Bantu people expanded throughout the southern half of Africa. They and other groups established a number of powerful kingdoms, the capitals of which served as major trading centers among these kingdoms and for Islamic traders, who finally penetrated the desert after the year 750.

By the end of the fifteenth century, Portuguese navigators had gained control over the flow of prized items such as gold, ivory, and spices out of West Africa, and Portuguese colonizers were growing sugar and other crops on the newly conquered Azores and Canary Islands. Increasing contact with African societies led to growing awareness among Europeans of the traditional forms of slavery practiced by these groups. As early as the fourteenth century, African slaves began to be seen in southern Europe, but they remained largely a novelty. From the beginning of the sixteenth century onward, however, the Portuguese became increasingly involved in slave trafficking as the demand for labor on their Atlantic plantation islands increased. Having no sense of kinship, even fictive kinship, with Africans led to much harsher conditions for slaves under European ownership, though there is no indication that those African merchants who sold their slaves to the Portuguese understood what horrors these men and women would experience. And as plantations expanded throughout the Americas, the demand for labor led to an ever-increasing traffic in such unfortunates, which in their ignorance—or indifference—African merchants were more than willing to provide. By 1550, Portuguese ships were carrying African slaves throughout the world.

The Continued Quest for Asian Trade

Meanwhile, the Portuguese continued to venture outward. In 1487 Bartolomeu Dias became the first European to reach the **Cape of Good Hope** at the southern tip of Africa. Ten years later Vasco da Gama sailed around the cape and launched the Portuguese exploration of eastern Africa and the Indian Ocean. Because of its early head start, Portugal remained fairly cautious in its explorations, hugging the coast around Africa before crossing the ocean to India. As latecomers, other European nations could not afford to take such a conservative approach to exploration. Voyagers from those countries took advantage of borrowed technologies to expand their horizons. From China, Europeans acquired the magnetic compass, which allowed mariners to determine direction even when out of sight of land. An Arab invention, the astrolabe, allowed seafarers to calculate the positions of heavenly bodies and determine their latitude (their distance north or south of the equator). These inventions, together with improvements in steering mechanisms and hull design, made voyages much less risky.

A number of visionary navigators longed for the opportunity to seek new routes. One, an ambitious sailor from the Italian port city of Genoa, **Christopher Columbus**, approached several European governments to support a voyage westward from Europe across the Atlantic to the East Indies, but found no one willing to fund him. Finally, in 1492, Ferdinand



Album / Art Resource, NY

Astrolabes were one of the navigational tools that Europeans imported, in this case from Arabs, that helped them to find their way even very far from land. This example is from sixteenth-century Spain and demonstrates clearly how complicated, and often beautiful, these devices were.

and Isabella's defeat of the Moors provided Columbus with an opportunity.

Eager to break into overseas trading, dominated in the east by the Arabs and in the south and west by the Portuguese, Ferdinand and Isabella agreed to equip three ships in exchange for a short, safe route to the Orient. On August 3, 1492, Columbus and some ninety sailors departed on the *Niña*, *Pinta*, and *Santa Maria* for the uncharted waters of the Atlantic. More than three months later, they finally made landfall. Columbus thought he had arrived at the East Indies, but in fact he had reached the islands we now call the **Bahamas**.

Cape of Good Hope A point of land at the southern tip of Africa around which European mariners had to sail to reach the Indian Ocean and trade with Asia.

■ **Christopher Columbus** (Cristoforo Colombo) Italian explorer in the service of Spain who attempted to reach Asia by sailing west from Europe, thereby arriving in America in 1492.

Bahamas A group of islands in the Atlantic Ocean east of Florida and Cuba.

Over the next ten weeks, Columbus explored the mysteries of the Caribbean, making landfalls on the islands now known as Cuba and Hispaniola. He collected spices, coconuts, bits of gold, and some native captives. Columbus then returned to Spain, where he was welcomed with great celebration and rewarded with backing for three more voyages. Over the next several years, the Spanish gained a permanent foothold in the region that Columbus had discovered and became aware that the area was a world entirely new to them.

England, like Spain, was jealous of Portugal's trade monopoly, and in 1497 Henry VII commissioned another Italian mariner, Giovanni Caboto, to search for a sea route to India. John Cabot, as the English called him, succeeded in crossing the North Atlantic. Shortly thereafter, another Italian, **Amerigo Vespucci**, sailing under the Spanish flag, sighted the northeastern shore of South America and sailed northward into the Caribbean in search of a passage to the East. Finally, in 1524, Giovanni da Verrazano, sailing for France, explored the Atlantic coast of North America, quite possibly becoming the first of the strangers to visit Wahunsunacock's land.

A New Transatlantic World

At first, European monarchs greeted the discovery of a new world as bad news: they wanted access to the riches of Asia, not contact with some undiscovered place. As knowledge of the New World spread, the primary goal of exploration became finding a route around or through it. Yet even before Verrazano, ambitious adventurers from western Europe began exploring the fertile fishing grounds off the northern shores of North America. By 1506, such voyages became so common that the king of Portugal placed a 10 percent tax on fish imported from North America. But these voyages did more than feed the European imagination and the continent's appetite for seafood. Europeans, even relatively poor fishermen, had many things that the Indians lacked: copper pots, jewelry, woolen blankets, and hundreds of other novelties. For their part, the Indians provided firewood, food, ivory, and furs. Apparently the trade grew quickly. By 1534, when Jacques Cartier made the first official exploration of the Canadian coast for the French government, he was approached by party after party of

Indians offering to trade furs for the goods he carried. He could only conclude that many other Europeans had come before him.

The presence of explorers such as Verrazano and Cartier and of unknown numbers of anonymous fishermen and part-time traders had several effects on the native population. The Mi'kmaq, Hurons, and other northeastern Indian groups approached the invading Europeans in friendship, eager to trade and to learn more about the strangers. In part this response was a sign of natural curiosity, but it also reflected some serious changes taking place in the native world of North America.

As we have noted, the onset of the Little Ice Age had far-reaching effects. The deteriorating climate made it more difficult for groups like Wahunsunacock's villages to depend on their corn crops for food. Forced to rely more on hunting and gathering, they had to expand their territory, and in doing so came into conflict with their neighbors. As warfare became more common, groups increasingly formed alliances for mutual defense—systems like the Powhatan Confederacy. And Indians often found it beneficial to welcome European newcomers into their midst—as trading partners bearing new tools, as allies in the evolving conflicts with neighboring Indian groups, and as powerful magicians whose **shamans** might provide explanations and remedies for the hard times that had befallen them.

Stop reading HERE for the Summer Assignment! (the rest is posted to GC)

THE CHALLENGES OF MUTUAL DISCOVERY

- ★ How did Native Americans and Europeans respond to increasing contact with each other?
- ★ What global changes occurred through the process called the Columbian Exchange?

Europeans approached the New World with certain ideas in mind and defined what they found there in terms that reflected what they already believed. American Indians approached Europeans in the same way. Both of these groups—as well as Africans—were thrown into a new world of understanding that challenged many of their fundamental assumptions. They also exchanged material goods that affected their physical well-being profoundly.

A Meeting of Minds in America

Most Europeans had a firm sense of how the world was arranged, who occupied it, and how they had come to be where they were. The existence of America—and even more the presence there of American Indians—challenged that secure knowledge. In the first stages of mutual discovery in America, most Europeans were

■ **Amerigo Vespucci** Italian explorer of the South American coast; Europeans named America after him.

shamans People who act as a link between the visible material world and an invisible spirit world; a shaman's duties include healing, conducting religious ceremonies, and foretelling the future.