bio

09-29-11

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reading assignment will be put on blackboard site

last day of lecture: prepare for Christmas to be ruined

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DR. U. Otto Knowbetter 2:

Biology, History, Climatology, and Culture

(Inexorably connected)

What's the deal?

- Saint Patrick's Day

-corned beef/cabbage/green beer

Saint Patrick =

-roman British, b. 387-460 ad

-captured/slave in Ireland

-returned to Ireland as priest

-accused of taking expensive gifts from 'rich women' and charging for baptisms

Roman Practice of Assimilation:

-(Roman Practice of Assimilation: assign roman significance to native customs, help with the foreigners becoming like citizens/lower resistance to roman control)

-2th c. A.D. - 700 years after dying

-became patron Saint of Ireland

-no mention of snakes (never had snakes)

**Questions:**

Why 37.5 million Americans have Irish ancestry?

-look at immigration statistics over the last century and a half

Why are there pockets of Irish ancestry?

(i.e. Boston, New York, Reno, Michigan/Minnesota/Wisconsin, Chicago)

**Causes:** (-geography-climate-biology-ecology-sociology)

-look at very long term indications of global climate changes

-went through global/climate maxima during the Medieval warm period

-followed by the Little Ice Age 1400's-1700's

-in Climate Maxima: lots of food = lots of kids = more labor = more food

-lots of protein, food preservation = year-round availability

-population explosion!

-ice sheets begin to melt/retreat, allows people to travel more northerly and across some more ocean

-can catch more fish!

-lengthened growing seasons, more people eating a "Mediterranean Diet"

-wheat, peaches/plums, grapes, legumes, olives/etc

-dedicate land to warm-weather crops, dedicate diet to it

-**THEN: LITTLE ICE AGE!**

-growing seasons shorten (colder/wetter/snow in every month/unpredictable weather!)

-Nrthrn/Cntrl Europe: can't grow those warm-weather crops anymore!

-food shortages = peasants starving (while rich/holy -get food) = revolutions

-**Agriculture Adapted**

-grow crops for colder climates/shorter growing seasons

-changes diet of people

-changes of harvesting, livestock, fishing, etc

-former crops were converted pasture land for cows/pigs

-grass easy to grow

-rise of cheese/yogurt (doesn't need refrigeration)

-and cows were harder to replace

-ate more pigs than cows

-reproduced easier, required less food than cows to grow

-preservation techniques advance (need to save more food for days w/o!)

-pickling, fermentation, salting, root cellars

-molds/funguses

-good for pickling/fermenting, etc

-bad for grain!

-ex. ergot on rye

-produces Lysergic Acid (root of LSD)

-causes Hallucinations when consumed

-common hallucination: St. Anthony's Fire

-seeing fire shoot out of your hands

-religious fervor was strong during this time

-lots of people were seen as witches for this, executed

(40-60k ppl executed over about 150 yrs)

-thus leads to meat/potatoes as food staples (instead of Med. Diet)

**Ireland (specifically)**

-great for potato growth!

-80% of daily calories were from potatoes

-Protista in soil!

-ruins potatoes

-No harvest of potatoes/no calories

(only rich/powerful were fed)

-poor starved or emigrated out of Ireland

-Ireland loses 25% of pop

-to starvation/emigration

-the immigration out of Ireland influenced the number and concentration of Irish in the US