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