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美国文明史英文教程

A Panoramic History of American Civilization for Colleges

魏啸飞 ◎编著

Howard B. Woods ◎审校

A Panoramic
History
of American Civilization
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For Blue-sky and Mira

Preface

As we all know, the process of language learning never takes place in a vacuum; nor is it confined to language acquisition itself only. Instead, it is learned and acquired in the context in which the language is used. Without a given context, neither the meaning of a word can be made explicitly clear, nor can the implication of any sentence be fully understood. For this simple but oftentimes not fully appreciated reason, most English textbooks in China tend to combine language learning with information about English-speaking countries, particularly information about the cultural and social life of the English world. Such an approach in compiling English textbooks has greatly facilitated the learning process of the English language by the Chinese students, helping them not only to acquire the language itself, but also broaden their horizon about the countries where English is the mother tongue.

In many ways, *A Panoramic History of American Civilization* by Dr. Wei is a similar attempt in the same direction. As the author indicates in the Postscript, the textbook, among other things, is also intended to help the Chinese students to acquire and improve their English language skills, not so much through the learning of English itself, but through the study of American civilization. What makes this textbook stand out among a pile of similar textbooks is not just the subject matter it deals with, but rather the way in which the author approaches his work—singling out the most important historical events and political figures in American history and discussing their contributions to the making of American civilization. The merit of such an approach is, at least, twofold. For one thing, it allows the reader to get the hang of American civilization almost at one go, leading him/her directly to the discovery of America's glorious but hard-won achievements in its civilization. For another, by piecing together all the key events that have helped shape the nation, the textbook manages to present before the reader a vivid picture of the nation's evolutionary process almost in its entirety—birth, growth, development and success. Anyone who takes a good look at it is sure to conjure up a clear mental map of American civilization right away.

Equally significant is the way the textbook is designed. If the book were merely intended to be informative about the civilization of a given country, people could have many other options to access it, be it printed matter or digital material. What is noteworthy about this particular textbook is that it successfully combines information dissemination with language learning. To achieve this end, the author, in my view, has been meticulously careful in the selection of words so as to make sure that, in using this book, students are not only acquiring useful knowledge, but also picking up right words and idiomatic expressions. In many cases, the author has even gone out of his way to accommodate the dual needs of language learning and historical information. Indeed, with its concise and clear layout as well as easy and smooth flow of ideas, the textbook has successfully rendered itself as a pleasant and informative reading.

For science students in China, this English-language textbook on American civilization probably has an additional dimension of importance. As is known to all, since 1959, when C.P.

Snow (1905—1980) pointed out the split between the two cultures in our society, educational system, and indeed intellectual life—the humanities on the one hand and the sciences on the other, a public debate has been going on in the media, sometime in a subdued tone, and sometimes in a raging fashion. While no immediate solution is in sight as yet, we certainly should not allow the gap between the two cultures to become unbridgeable. Indeed, amid the accelerating process of globalization, students of today should be equipped with not only the development of modern science and technology, but also the civilization of humankind as a whole. After all, it is from the civilization of yesterday that we have come to today, and it is from the civilization of today that we will move on to tomorrow. In order to make the civilization of tomorrow more brilliant, more beautiful and more sustainable, we need to prepare ourselves now—advancing sciences on the one hand and developing the humanities on the other. In this sense, *A Panoramic History of American Civilization* has made a worthy and timely attempt in the right direction, helping science students to acquire English language in the context of American civilization. I am fully confident that the author's effort in this respect will be appreciated, and indeed rewarded, by the users of this textbook, who will not merely be interested in improving their English language skills, but equally concerned with the breakdown of communication between the sciences and the humanities in our society. With this in mind, I sincerely recommend this particular textbook to all the university students in China who share the views with the author.

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Recommendation

I am pleased to recommend Matthew Wei's *Panoramic History of American Civilization* as a text for Chinese students. Wei has studied in the United States and has an excellent background in American studies, both in the literature and the history of the nation. He has mastered much of the secondary literature of American history and culture, and in his book has assembled it into an accessible form. His panorama gives the student accurate factual information but also synthesizes this information in a framework of national politics and cultural life. A *Panoramic History of American Civilization* makes easily available to Chinese students a full history of America from the first contacts by the Europeans in the 15th century, to the emergence of the United States in the 18th century, to the era of world power of the United States at the end of the 20th century. Wei's history covers the main figures and all of the most important events.

The beginning student will especially be helped by a number of characteristics of this book. First, the comparative chronology that places American, European, and Chinese developments together allows the reader to reflect on the similarities and differences between Chinese and American history. Second, this textbook is manageable. Students will not be overwhelmed by material, as they are in the large volumes produced in the United States for American schools, but often used without changes in schools outside the United States. Finally, Wei's English is easy to understand without being over-simple. It will be useful not just to students who might want to learn American history, but also to Chinese students who want to advance their knowledge of English by reading about an important topic in that language.

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A Linguist's Note

It is a privilege to write this introduction for Dr. Wei's recent book of *A Panoramic History of American Civilization* which is meant for the use by the Chinese college students for the dual purpose of gaining a good understanding of the history of American civilization and improving their English proficiency. As a researcher in the field of second/foreign language education, I would like to make my observations on the significance of the publication of this book from the perspective of teaching and learning of English as a foreign language.

Almost all of us in the foreign language education community in China are aware that the existing model of college English teaching cannot satisfy the needs of training a large contingent of professionals who are highly competent both in their own professions and in English communication to meet the challenges in the post-WTO era. But what is the solution?

In her memoir of her life as a student and teacher of French, Alice Kaplan, Professor of Romance Studies and Literature at Duke University in Durham, NC, USA, succinctly outlines two fundamental problems of second/foreign language learning and teaching: "Whatever the method, only desire can make a student learn a language, desire and necessity. This is why some immigrants learn language so well—they have to" (*French Lessons: A Memoir* by Alice Kaplan. IL: University of Chicago Press 1993, pp.131-132).

We, college English teachers, researchers and administrators, have tried in one way or another to make our English teaching effective and efficient, but the result has been far from being satisfactory. This is largely because we have not paid sufficient attention to the problem of how to create a teaching and learning context in which students are highly motivated to learn the language. The above quotation from Kaplan addresses the language immersion education model, under which students are immersed in a sea of a new language to learn subject content which is also new to them. The language student feels "just off the boat" and has to take up the challenge of "sink or swim". In light of more than forty years of practice in Canada, this model has proved to work very well because the students are highly motivated.

In our college English teaching context, English is taught as an abstract subject, hence it is language-driven and examination-oriented. Texts are adapted or modified to suit the language teaching purpose and teachers have to spoon-feed the students to make sure the students understand every word and every sentence in the text so as to pass the exam. Consequently, college students do not feel the English class exciting, stimulating or challenging. Such being the case, the students would neither have the desire nor feel the necessity to learn the English language. This explains why our English teaching has been and still is time consuming and of low efficiency.

Since language is a vehicle for communication, it should be taught as such. This is the quintessence of the philosophy of communicative language teaching approach. When college students have attained a certain level of English proficiency, language learning can be made concomitant to content learning. A short while ago one of my Ph.D candidates, Mr. Pinghua

Yuan, observed the students taking Dr. Wei's course of the "History of American Civilization" for one whole semester. In the light of Yuan's longitudinal study, when the students were plunged, so to speak, into a sea of historical facts of American civilization, when they were immersed in a myriad of concepts and ideas, they displayed a strong desire and felt a keen need to learn the language well in the course of comprehending the subtleties and complexities involved in the evolution of American civilization and expressing and exchanging their views on the historical development of American history. As compared with the regular college English students, the students in this course gained higher motivation in learning English and employed the metacognitive strategies, compensation strategies and social strategies more frequently. In addition, they gained higher language proficiency, especially in receptive language skills, such as reading and listening.

The content-driven approach is called Content-Based Instruction (CBI). CBI can be at once a philosophical orientation, a methodological system, a syllabus design for a single course, or a framework for an entire program of instruction. It represents a new direction in College English teaching. Dr. Wei's course book has, among other things, made a significant contribution to the application of CBI in Chinese college English teaching context.

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A Panoramic History of American Civilization for Colleges

Chapter 1	The Discovery of America	1
1.1	Native American Civilization	3
1.2	Discovery of America (1492)	5
1.3	Spanish Adventures in the Americas (1500s)	8
1.4	The Spanish American Empire	10
1.5	The English Reformation (1534)	13
1.6	Raleigh's Roanoke Venture (1585)	16
1.7	Defeat of the Spanish Armada (1588)	18
Chapter 2	The British American Society	23
2.1	The First British American Colony (1607)	24
2.2	<i>Mayflower Compact</i> (1620)	27
2.3	A City Upon a Hill (1630)	30
2.4	<i>Halfway Covenant</i> (1662)	32
2.5	Founding of the Carolinas (1663)	36
2.6	Development of New York (1664)	38
2.7	The Holy Experiment of Pennsylvania (1681)	40
Chapter 3	The American Nationality	45
3.1	Dominion of New England (1686—1689)	46
3.2	Witchcraft Trials in Salem (1692)	49
3.3	The Great Awakening (1730s—1740s)	51
3.4	The French and Indian War (1754—1760)	55
3.5	The Proclamation of 1763	58
3.6	Repeal of the <i>Stamp Act</i> (1766)	60
3.7	A Distinctive American Nationality	62
Chapter 4	The Declaration of Independence	67
4.1	The Boston Massacre (1770)	68
4.2	The Boston Tea Party (1773)	71
4.3	Benjamin Franklin Dressed Down (1774)	73
4.4	The First Continental Congress (1774)	76
4.5	<i>Common Sense</i> (1776)	78

4.6	Declaration of Independence (1776)	80
4.7	American Advantages and Disadvantages	83
Chapter 5	The U.S. Constitution	87
5.1	The American Revolutionary War (1776—1783)	88
5.2	State Constitutions (1780s)	91
5.3	<i>The Articles of Confederation</i> (1781)	93
5.4	Shays's Rebellion (1786—1787)	95
5.5	<i>The Federal Constitution</i> (1787)	97
5.6	The Federalist v. Antifederalist Debate (1787—1788)	101
5.7	The First Secretary of the Treasury (1789—1795)	103
Chapter 6	Manifest Destiny	109
6.1	The Louisiana Purchase (1803)	111
6.2	The War of 1812 (1812—1814)	113
6.3	<i>The Missouri Compromise</i> (1820)	116
6.4	<i>The Monroe Doctrine</i> (1823)	118
6.5	<i>The Indian Removal Act</i> (1830)	121
6.6	Transcendentalism (1836)	123
6.7	The Annexation of Texas (1845)	126
Chapter 7	A House Divided	131
7.1	The Mexican War (1846—1848)	132
7.2	California Gold Rush (1848—1850)	134
7.3	<i>The Compromise of 1850</i>	137
7.4	<i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> (1852)	139
7.5	<i>The Kansas-Nebraska Act</i> (1854)	141
7.6	<i>The Dred Scott Decision</i> (1857)	144
7.7	The Lincoln-Douglas Debates in 1858	146
Chapter 8	The Civil War	151
8.1	The Secession (1861)	152
8.2	Causes of the Civil War	155
8.3	<i>Emancipation Proclamation</i> (1862)	157
8.4	Gettysburg Address (1863)	159
8.5	The Beginning of the Reconstruction (1863)	161
8.6	The End of the Civil War (1865)	163
8.7	<i>The 14th Amendment</i> (1868)	165
Chapter 9	The Gilded Age	169
9.1	The First Transcontinental Railroad (1869)	170
9.2	The End of Reconstruction (1877)	173

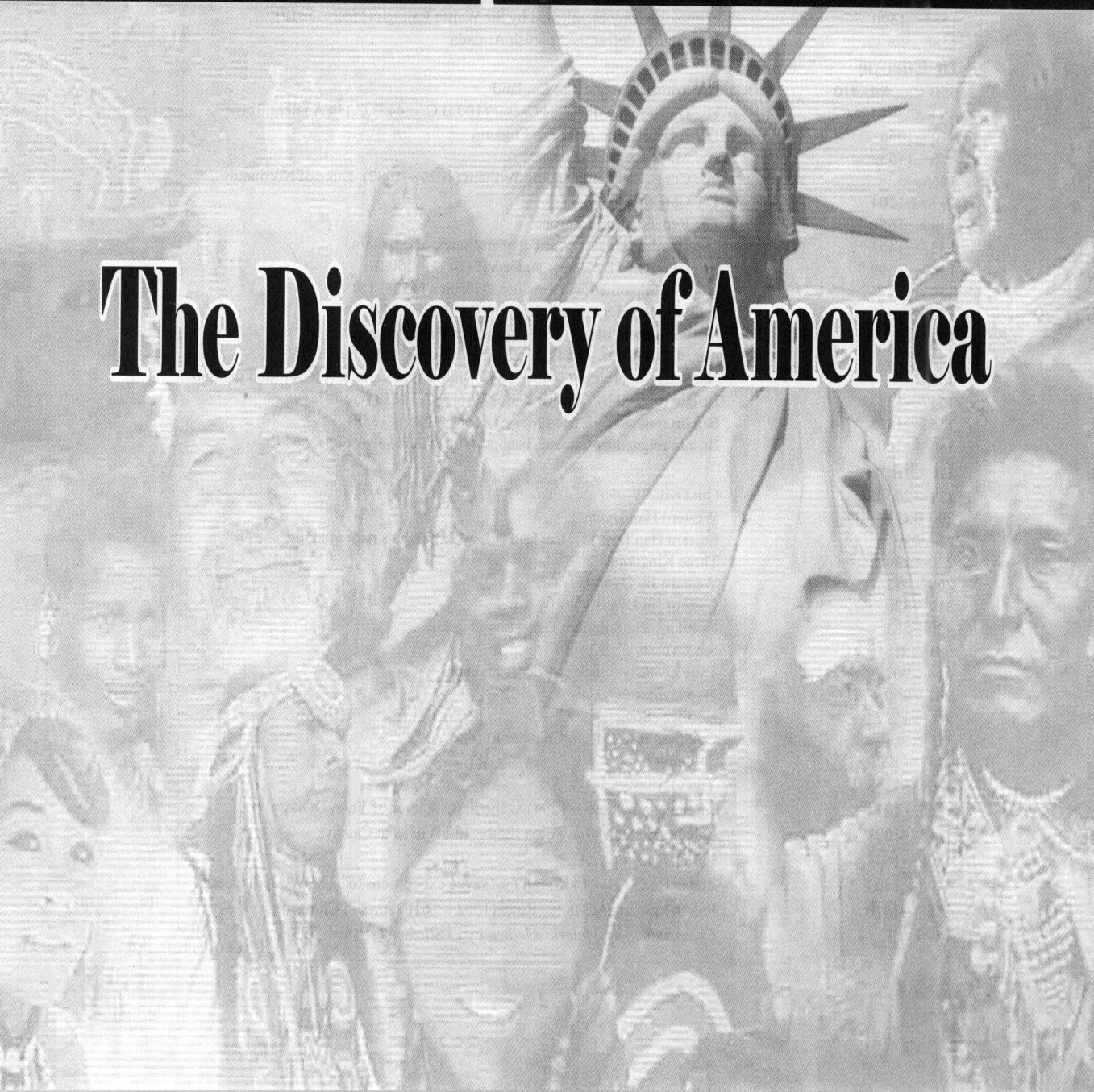
A Panoramic History of American Civilization for Colleges

9.3	The First Great Trust (1882)	176
9.4	<i>Chinese Exclusion Act</i> (1882)	178
9.5	<i>Dawes Severalty Act</i> (1887)	180
9.6	<i>Plessy v. Ferguson</i> (1896)	183
9.7	The Spanish-American War (1898)	186
Chapter 10	The First World War	191
10.1	<i>Roosevelt Corollary</i> (1904)	193
10.2	World War I (1914—1919)	195
10.3	<i>Treaty of Versailles</i> (1919)	198
10.4	Prohibition (1919)	201
10.5	<i>The 19th Amendment</i> (1920)	203
10.6	The Roaring 20s (1920s)	205
10.7	The Monkey Trial (1925)	208
Chapter 11	The Great Depression	213
11.1	The Great Depression (1929)	214
11.2	Hoover's Remedies (1932)	217
11.3	FDR's New Deal (1933)	219
11.4	Roosevelt's Alphabet Soup (1933)	221
11.5	The Second New Deal (1935)	223
11.6	Opposition to the New Deal	226
11.7	End of the New Deal (1938)	228
Chapter 12	The Second World War	233
12.1	<i>Neutrality Acts</i> (1935—1937)	235
12.2	The Blitzkrieg (1939)	237
12.3	Pearl Harbor Air Raid (1941)	239
12.4	The Manhattan Project (1942)	241
12.5	D-Day (1944)	245
12.6	Hiroshima & Nagasaki (1945)	247
12.7	Legacy of WW II	250
Chapter 13	The Cold War	253
13.1	The Iron Curtain (1946)	255
13.2	The Korean War (1950—1953)	257
13.3	Army-McCarthy Hearings (1954)	260
13.4	<i>Brown v. Topeka</i> (1954)	263
13.5	Montgomery Bus Boycott (1955)	265
13.6	Students for a Democratic Society (1962)	267
13.7	Cuban Missile Crisis (1962)	270

Chapter 14	The Vietnam War	275
14.1	I Have a Dream (1963)	276
14.2	The Beginning of the Vietnam War (1964)	279
14.3	The Woodstock Festival (1969)	282
14.4	Détente with China (1972)	284
14.5	<i>Roe v. Wade</i> (1973)	287
14.6	The End of the Vietnam War (1973)	290
14.7	The Resignation of Nixon (1974)	292
Chapter 15	The End of the Cold War	297
15.1	<i>Bakke v. Regents of the UC at Davis</i> (1978)	299
15.2	Iran-Contra Affair (1986)	301
15.3	The End of the Cold War (1990)	305
15.4	The Impeachment of Clinton (1998)	308
15.5	9.11 Terrorist Attacks (2001)	310
15.6	The Iraq War (2003)	314
15.7	Hurricane Katrina (2005)	316
Vocabulary		321
Postscript		362
Bibliography		366
Index		370

Chapter 1

The Discovery of America



Chronological Landmarks



In America

c.40000—10000 B.C.

c.10000 B.C.

c.5000 B.C.

c.100 B.C.—A.D.1150

c.700—1300

1492

1513

1519

1532

1539

1540—1542

1585—1590

1588

Paleo-Indians begin migrating from Asia to North America

The Ice Age ends

First domesticated plants grown in Western Hemisphere

Anasazi culture in Southwest

Mississippian culture in the Mississippi Valley

Discovery of America by Christopher Columbus (1451—1506)

Spanish penetrates Panama and discovers the Pacific Ocean

Hernando Cortés (1485—1547) begins conquest of Aztec Empire in Mexico

Francisco Pizarro (1475—1541) begins conquest of Peru

Hernando De Soto (1496—1542) begins exploring Southeast North America

Francisco Vázquez De Coronado (1510—1554) explores Southwest

Roanoke colony established by Sir Walter Raleigh (1552—1618)

The English defeat the Spanish Armada

In Europe

55B.C.—A.D.410

46 B.C.—44 B.C.

410—1066

476—1453

1066

1096—1204

1300—1650

1337—1453

1485—1509

1506

1509—1547

1517

1534

1514

1547—1553

1553—1558

1558—1603

The Roman Conquest of England

The Dictatorship of Julius Caesar (100 B.C.—44 B.C.) in Ancient Rome

The Anglo-Saxon period in England

The Middle Ages in Europe

The Conquest of England by William (1027—1087), Duke of Normandy

The Christian Crusades

The Renaissance in Europe

The Hundred Years' War between France and Britain

Britain reigned by Henry Tudor VII (1457—1509)

Mona Lisa painted by Leonardo Da Vinci (1452—1519)

Britain reigned by Henry Tudor VIII (1491—1547)

Martin Luther (1483—1546) advocates Protestantism

Henry VIII (1491—1547) establishes the Anglican Church

Nicolaus Copernicus (1473—1543) claims that Earth revolves round the Sun

Britain reigned by Edward Tudor VI (1537—1553)

Britain reigned by Queen Mary Tudor I (1516—1558)

Britain reigned by Queen Elizabeth Tudor I (1533—1603)

In China

221—206 B.C.

206 B.C.—A.D. 25

25—220

220—280

265—317

317—420

420—581

581—618

618—907

907—960

960—1127

1100s

1127—1279

1206—1368

1264—1294

1275—1291

1368—1644

1405—1433

1583—1610

1596

Qin Dynasty

Western Han Dynasty

Eastern Han Dynasty; Cai Lun (61—121) invents papermaking

Three Kingdoms

Western Jin Dynasty

Eastern Jin Dynasty

Northern and Southern Dynasties

Sui Dynasty

Tang Dynasty; black powder is invented

Five Dynasties

Northern Song

Compass spread from China to Europe

Southern Song

Yuan Dynasty

Kublai Khan (1215—1294) as the first emperor of Yuan Dynasty

Italian traveler Marco Polo (1254—1324) lives in Cathay

Ming Dynasty

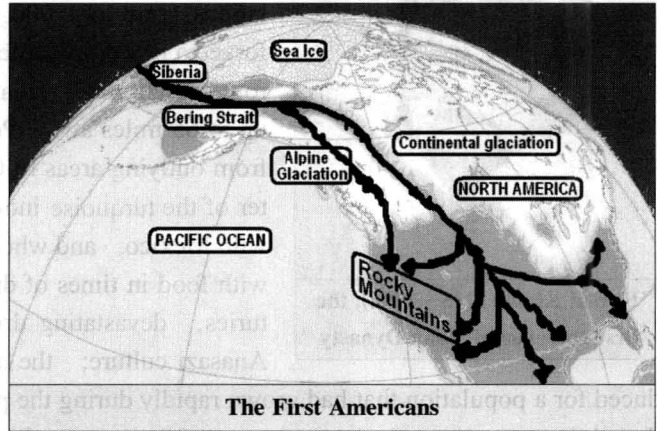
Zheng He (1371—1435) initiates seven expeditions to "The Western Ocean"

Italian missionary Matteo Ricci (1552—1610) stays in China

Compendium of Materia Medica by Li Shizhen (1518—1593)

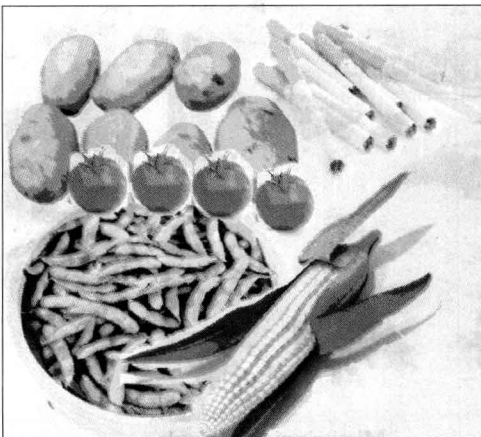
1.1 Native American Civilization

The American Civilizations began in the Ice Age, approximately 40,000 years ago. At that time, waves of paleo-Indian migrants from Asia crossed a land bridge that then connected Siberia and Alaska and later submerged under the Bering Strait. These early American immigrants were searching for game, and their search took them through corridors created by towering walls of blue ice. The continent was vast and unpopulated prior to the arrival of these people. As they emerged from the glacier-covered north, they discovered a hunter's paradise. Giant mammoths, bison, caribou, and moose roamed the continent, innocent of the ways of human predators. In this bountiful world, the ancient Indians and their successive generations



fanned out, migrating southward from the Arctic Circle to the southern tip of South America. About 10000 B.C., the Ice Age approached its end, the ice melted, the sea rose up, the land bridge disappeared, and the Native Americans were cut off from the rest of the planet. As climatic warming continued, the glaciers receded northward, glacial runoff filled the Great Lakes, the Mississippi River basin, and other waters. Treeless plains and evergreen forests yielded to deciduous forests in the East, grassland prairies on the Plains, and desert in much of the West. An immense range of plants and animals covered the landscape.

For thousands of years, these Stone Age hunting bands lived nomadic lives. About 5000 B.C., people in the highlands of Central America began growing America's first domesticated plants such as beans, squash, corn and tobacco. That changed everything. After thousands of years, these first part-time farmers finally began to live close to their fields in semi-permanent settlements,



Beans, corn, tomatoes, tobacco, potatoes

each with a small population seldom exceeding 300. They started to enjoy seasonal food procurement and made pottery to store their surplus. Villages based on kinship came into being, and corn became the foundation of a new, more complex civilization. The men spent their time making tools and hunting for game, while the women grew crops such as corn, beans and tobacco. A few Indian tribes had developed more complex cultures and societies in which thousands lived and worked together. Among them, the Anasazis (c.100B.C.—A.D.1000) in Southwestern America and the Mississippians (c.700—1300) in the vast forests of the Mississippi Valley pro-