

Issue Number 6

Migration in World History -- the CD-ROM. Northeastern University's multimedia project on migration in world history, described in the previous issue of this newsletter, has entered a new stage. The Annenberg/CPB Project has now funded a full CD-ROM for a semester-long course on "Migration in Modern World History." Its innovative pedagogy puts the narrative and tutorial aspects of the CD into the context of eight types of exercises in historical analysis, and provides access to evidence in several media. The project, directed by Patrick Manning, relies on collaboration with WGBH, H-NET, and the University of Houston.

Several New England schools and colleges will be able to test the CD-ROM course in the summer and fall of 1997.

Teacher Training in World History.

Efforts to improve preparation for teaching of world history are popping up all over. The Hartford Humanities Alliance is conducting a project for teachers of 9th grade, on "Empires before 1500." It begins with the question: how does the way we study the empires that were founded after 1550 influence the way we study ancient empires? Alfred J. Andrea of the University of Vermont provides summer tutorials for high-school teachers of world history. At the March 1996 meeting of NERC (the Social Studies conference), Walter Lambert and Steven

June, 1996

Seto of the Boston Public Schools and Patrick Manning of Northeastern University led a discussion of teacher preparation in world history. And Northeastern, in its two-year MAT program in history, includes formal training in teaching world history.

World History on the Internet. Check out the NER-WHA web page! It lists our activities and officers, and includes texts of papers given at NER-WHA-sponsored sessions of the New England Historical Association. The address is:

<http://neal.ctstateu.edu:80/history/nerwha/index.html>.

The web page is maintained by Haines Brown of Central Connecticut State University. Haines Brown also edits the World History Association web page, for which the address is:

<http://neal.ctstateu.edu:80/history/WHA/index.html>.

Discussion lists on world history include H-WORLD (subscribe by writing "subscribe H-WORLD" plus your e-mail address to Listserv@msu.edu); World-L (similarly, write "subscribe WORLD-L" to Listserv@ubvm.cc.buffalo.edu); and WSN (World Systems Network: write "subscribe WSN" to Listserv@csf.colorado.edu).

The World History Seminar, which began with six presentations at Northeastern University during 1995-96, will expand to fourteen in 1996-97. The

seminar meets Friday afternoon 3:00-4:30, and is open to all in the Boston area. Alfred J. Andrea will give the opening seminar on October 18, speaking on "The Crusades as an Dynamic Force in Global History," on the occasion of the millenium of the first Crusade. Other presentations will be delivered by faculty members and graduate students from the Boston area and beyond.

A WORLD HISTORY Capsule

Gold and silver, among the earliest metals to be worked, have remained the most precious. Silver is more plentiful and lower in price, but price ratios have varied with time. Sources of these minerals are found on every continent, but unevenly: thus, Japan's silver mines balanced the gold mines of China. In medieval times, the African gold mines located in modern Senegal, Mali and Ghana were the richest. Mali's king (Mansa) Musa's expenditures in gold during his 1324 pilgrimage to Mecca allegedly inflated prices in Cairo for some time. The European forts along the coast of Ghana (or "the Gold Coast") were built to divert and then sustain the gold trade.

American gold, seized by the Spanish, added greatly to the supply. Ultimately, the mines of ***Announcement: On-line world history conference***

The New England Regional World History Association is planning an on-line world history conference for January 1997. This experiment will be fairly modest until we develop "sea legs." Tentatively, we plan only a single panel on "The Pursuit of Western Civilization." This could elicit such questions as the meaning of "Western Civilization" in contemporary historiography; whether the concept is only a curious artifact of Western European intellectual history or still useful in World Historiography; whether there

Mexico and Bolivia added more to silver supply than to gold. The flow of precious metals to the Eastern Hemisphere sustained a rapid rise in global prices in the 16th and 17th centuries. While much of the gold and silver flowed to Europe, the greatest demand lay in Asia: gold was hoarded in India, and silver in China, where it served as the monetary standard. Much of the silver crossed the Pacific from Acapulco to Manila.

The gold rushes have punctuating modern history include that of Minas Gerais (Brazil) in the 1680s; the California gold rush of 1848 was followed by the silver boom in Nevada. Artisanal gold rushes in Australia and Alaska gave way to industrial production of gold in South Africa in the twentieth century.

In the post-Napoleonic era of British domination of world trade, the gold standard allowed for a century of relative price stability, yet silver retained monetary importance in what was known as bimetallism. William Jennings Bryan's "Cross of Gold" speech, his 1896 plea for free silver coinage in the U.S., was a populist and nationalistic plea with global implications. The gold standard came to an end with the depression of the 1930s and World War II.

By the twentieth century a new set of relations among the continents had developed: the greatest sources of supply were in the Eastern Hemisphere (gold from South Africa and Russia), and the greatest demand and holdings of gold were in the Americas -- in the U.S. But with the sudden inflation of the 1970s, speculators turned again to gold as an alternative to other liquid funds, and its price rose from \$35 per ounce to over ten times that level. Silver and gold remained precious metals, but neither now served as money.

Patrick Manning

exists a consensus over its meaning; and whether "The West" is synonymous with "Western Civilization." We would appreciate your suggestions on how to refine both title and content. It is a little early for a formal call for papers, but not too early to begin planning for a project that is still very open ended.

One advantage of an on-line conference is that it facilitates international participation. For that reason, papers are particularly encouraged from non-Western sources, not necessarily from the ranks of NER-WHA.

The planning and eventually the conference itself will take place on the New England Regional World History Association's Internet list NER-WHA. The public announcement and call for papers will be accompanied by a request that all participants join that forum. To do so, send a command to: majordomo@lists.neu.edu. Type the following command as the first and only line of your message: SUBSCRIBE NER-WHA <your e-mail address>.

The papers will be made available by 6 January, 1997, and you will be able to download them by sending a GET command to majordomo@lists.neu.edu. Complete directions will be sent before that date to the subscribers of the NER-WHA list. After a week of discussion in which questions are directed to the paper authors, on 13 January a commentator will pull things together as the basis of an ongoing informal discussion on the list. The papers will also be archived on the NER-WHA's web page (see page 1 of this issue).

Your suggestions and questions can be sent to the NER-WHA list or directly to me as conference organizer (brownh@ccsua.ctstateu.edu).-Haines Brown

Teaching Resources: A Column for High School Teachers

by David Burzillo

Philip S. Khoury is currently a professor of history at MIT, where he has been teaching since 1981, and Dean of the School of Humanities and the Social Sciences. He served as director of the Middle East Studies Association from 1990-1992. His books include: *Syria and the French Mandate: The Politics of Arab Nationalism, 1920-1945* ; *Urban Notables and Arab Nationalism: The Politics of Damascus, 1860-1920* ; *The Modern Middle East: A Reader* ; and *Recovering Beirut: Prospects for Urban Reconstruction*. He recently returned from a trip to the Middle East, and I posed the following questions to him about recent scholarship in the field of early Islamic studies.

What are the most interesting

developments or trends in the study of the early history of Islam in recent years?

- New interpretations of the life of the Prophet Muhammed.
- New research on the role of women and gender in early Islamic society and politics.
- Instead of thinking of the Abbasid Empire in Baghdad as the core around which a series of lesser Islamic states revolved, the emphasis is on a group of regional Islamic empires, which blended local practices with Islamic practices. These empires existed in Delhi, Ghazna, Cairo, Cordoba, Baghdad, and elsewhere.

What are the most important things high school world history teachers can teach their students in a unit on the early history of Islam?

- How Islam as a religious, socio-cultural, and political system of ideas and practices compares with and differs from the two other great monotheistic systems that preceded it: Judaism and Christianity.
- How the Islamic world adopted, adapted, and transmitted scientific and philosophical learning from the ancient world to Europe.
- What tied the Islamic world together in its early centuries, up until the 13th-15th centuries, and what gave Islam its distinctive coloration in the different regions of the world in which it became lodged.
- How did Muslims come to accept/accommodate the various

non-Muslim religious communities which Islam came to govern.

What are some of the books about the early history of Islam that would be beneficial for high school world history teachers to read?

1. Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (Cambridge, 1991) parts 1-2.
2. Hugh Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates: The Islamic Near East from the Sixth to the Eleventh Century* (London, 1986).
3. Leila Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam; Historical Roots of a Modern Debate* (New Haven, 1992).
4. Ira Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies* (New York, 1988).
5. Malise Ruthven, *Islam in the World* (New York, 1984).

addresses of our members so that we can communicate with each other more efficiently. It will also allow us to hold on-line conferences of NER-WHA (see page 2). If you have an e-mail address already, please send it to Beimei Long at belong@lynx.neu.edu.

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Note to Members:

If you know of anyone who would be interested in joining NER-WHA (membership remains free), please let us know and we can send them a newsletter. Also, if you have any questions, comments, or ideas for future articles for the newsletter, please feel free to get in touch. You can reach us at (617) 373-4060.

With the development of NER-WHA, we have decided to build a list of e-mail

**New England Regional
World History Association**

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