

CHAPTER KEYS

TERMS ...

- archaeologist
- anthropologist
- artifacts
- nomadic
- habitable
- land bridge
- archaeology
- language family
- village
- society
- social classes
- chief
- nobles
- commoners
- slaves
- totem pole
- ceremonial mask
- cedar bark
- longhouse
- dugout canoe
- adze
- shaman
- council
- elder
- camas bulb
- pemmican
- tepee
- pit house
- sweat lodge
- regalia
- travois

PEOPLE...

- Clovis
- Kennewick Man
- Coastal Indians
- Plateau Indians
- Makah
- Ozette
- Quinault
- Chinook
- Nisqually
- Duwamish
- Spokane
- Nez Percé
- Cayuse
- Yakama

PLACES ...

- Alaska
- Bering Strait
- Old World
- New World
- Pacific Coast
- Celilo Falls
- Ozette
- East Wenatchee
- Kennewick

EVENTS ...

- migrational routes
- whaling
- fishing
- potlatch
- pow wow

CHAPTER 3

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This story begins as humans emigrated from the Old World - Africa, Europe, and Asia to the New World - North and South America. Currently anthropologists and archaeologists are conducting field research to answer the questions of who, what, when, where, why, and how humans migrated to the Western Hemisphere. The chapter emphasizes the indigenous American Indian and their unique culture, especially Washington's Coastal and Plateau Indians. The sedentary Coastal Indians inhabited the mild and moist climate areas west of the Cascade Mountains, while the nomadic Plateau Indians moved throughout the dry grasslands east of the Cascades. Historically, the description of the Coastal and Plateau Indians covers the past 14,000 years before the arrival of the whites in 1543 A.D. and the real influx in the 19th century. A detailed discussion identifies the differences between the Coastal and Plateau Indian cultures and way of life.

COASTAL AND PLATEAU INDIANS

VOICES

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When the world was new there was nothing but water. But above the sky was another world, such as this is now. There lived Silver-Fox and Coyote. Silver-Fox wished very much to find out what was down here. One day he sent Coyote on an errand. While he was gone Silver-Fox made a hole in the sky and looked down. He saw nothing but water, water everywhere. The next day Silver-Fox sent Coyote on an errand. While he was gone Silver-Fox climbed down through the hole he had made, and came to the hole and looked down. He saw Silver-Fox on the little island. Silver-Fox told Coyote to climb down. But the island was too small for them, so they stretched it on all sides. After that they made trees. Then they made animals to live on the island.

— Indian Legend of Washington
The Land Silver-Fox Made

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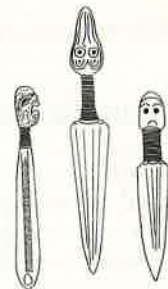
A Coastal and Plateau Indian.



▲ Traditional Dress



◀ Spear



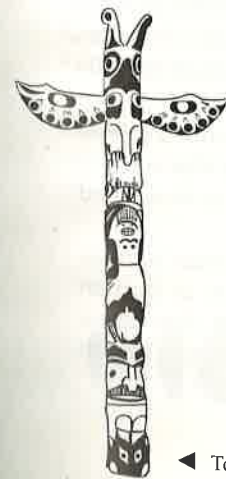
▲ Knives



Rattle ▶



▲ Fish



◀ Totem pole



▲ Coastal designs and two carved horns



▲ Woven Baskets



▲ Pestle and Mortar



▲ Carved Dish

Coastal and Plateau Indians



- ◀ Early man used many types of prehistoric tools, such as the spears shown in this illustration, to hunt big game.
- ▼ Louis Leakey, shown below studying a skull, was an anthropologist whose work contributed to our understanding of human origins.



▲ Archaeologists excavating artifacts at Marmes Rockshelter, a prehistoric site located in southeastern Washington.

The story of Coastal and Plateau Indians does not begin in Washington or North America. Rather, its origins are in Africa between 200,000 and 100,000 years ago. According to archaeologists and anthropologists, it is at this time that humans, called *Homo sapiens*, first appeared. Originally, *Homo sapiens* were a small population concentrated in parts of Africa. However, populations grew and many humans left Africa for lands outside of the continent about 100,000 years ago.

Before we can understand the Coastal and Plateau Indians of Washington, and how they came to the region, we must first understand the origins of humans as described by anthropologists and archaeologists.

Anthropologists are people who study human beings. Some anthropologists are dedicated to the study of human bones. From bones, these anthropologists can determine when a person lived, his or her gender, food, health problems, and many other important facts.



▲ The above map illustrates the division of the world into two classifications. The brown continents of Africa, Asia, and Europe represent the "Old World." Whereas, the green continents of Australia, North America, and South America represent the "New World."

Anthropologists are aided in their research by archaeologists. **Archaeologists** study human culture and society by examining the physical evidence left behind by past peoples. The things they study range from tools to weapons to buildings. Archaeologists call the items left behind by earlier peoples **artifacts**. All artifacts provide clues to how people lived in the past.

Anthropologists have determined that modern humans first appeared in Africa between 200,000 and 100,000 years ago. This conclusion is based on the study of bones. During this time, the first bones matching those of people living today have been found.

The first humans made stone tools, like spear points and knives, and lived by hunting animals and gathering edible plants, roots, nuts, and fruits. Early humans lived in family groups. They could be very **nomadic**, meaning that they would move often in search of food.

Archaeologists have discovered that the first humans did not remain in Africa for long. As early as 100,000 years ago, humans left Africa and migrated all over Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. For the sake of simplicity, scholars often refer to these lands as the "**Old World**." Archaeologists have charted the progress of humans throughout the Old World by finding places where they lived. These places were full of tools, animal bones, and other human artifacts.

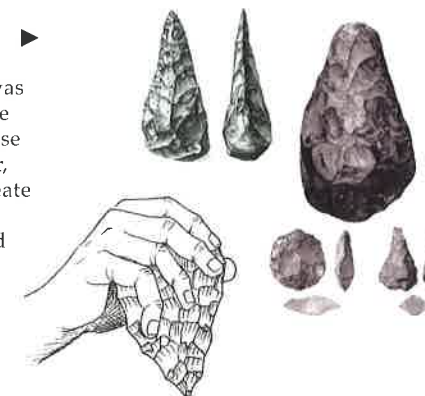


CONNECTING TO PREHISTORY

Types of Prehistoric Tools ...

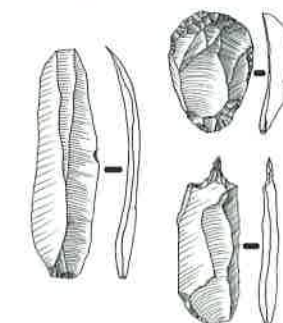
Hand axes ▶

Early man was unique in the world because of his, or her, ability to create simple tools such as hand axes.



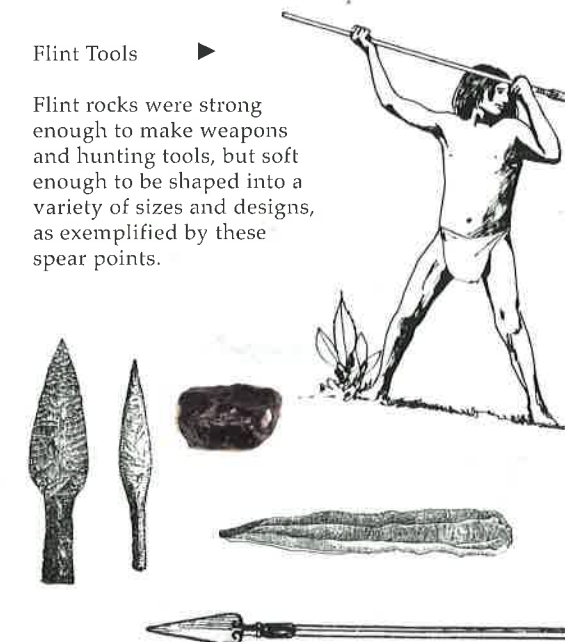
Stone Tools ◀

In addition to axes, early humans created other tools from rocks such as knives and picks.



Flint Tools ▶

Flint rocks were strong enough to make weapons and hunting tools, but soft enough to be shaped into a variety of sizes and designs, as exemplified by these spear points.



HUMAN MIGRATION

Archaeologists believe that by 50,000 to 30,000 years ago, humans had spread to most of the **habitable** areas of the Old World. They use the term habitable because at the time, Earth was experiencing its most recent ice age and thick continental glaciers covered much of the northern lands in Europe and Asia. Humans could not live in areas covered by these glaciers.

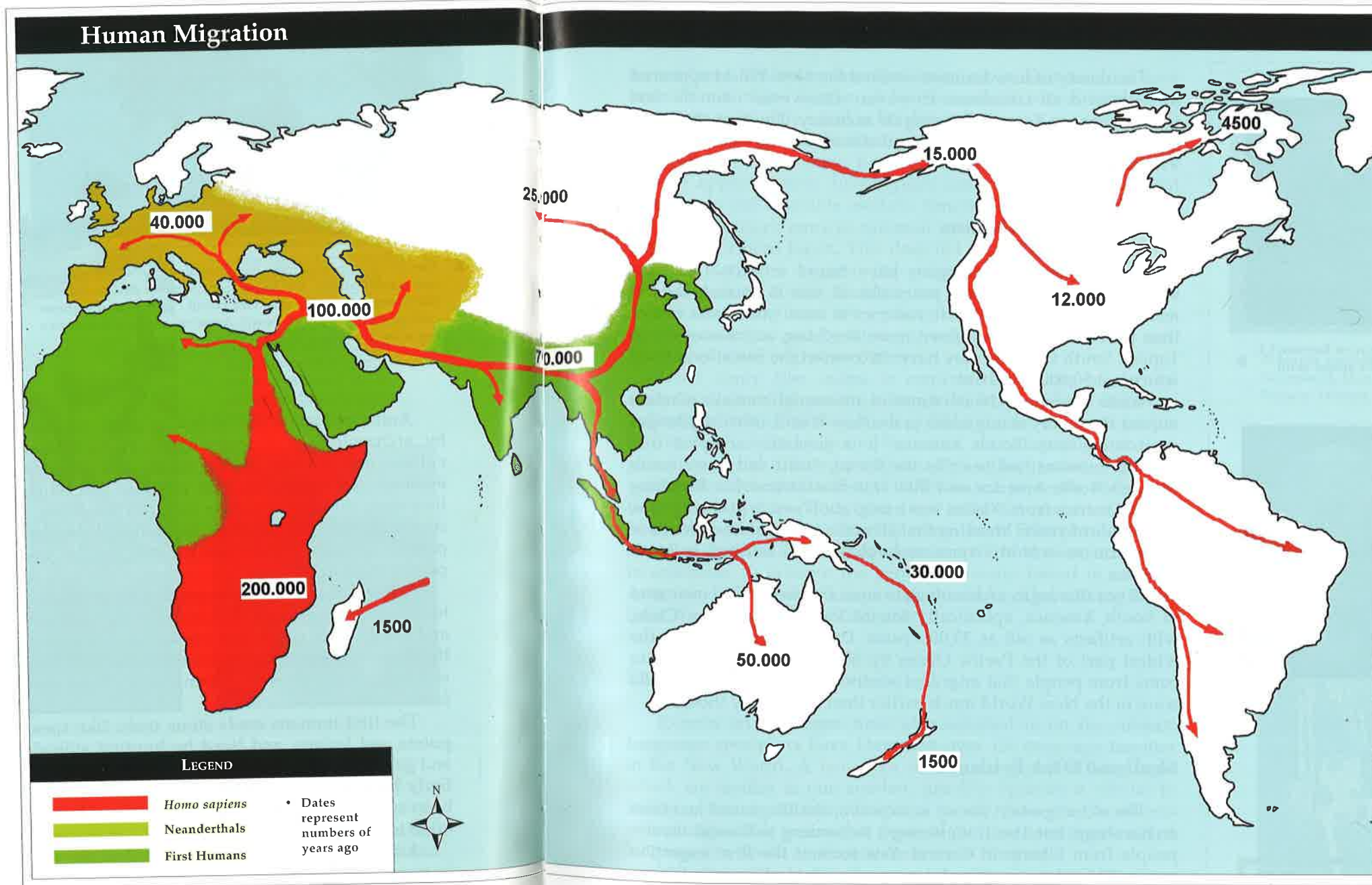
However, North and South America, called the **"New World,"** remained to be settled. For years, when and how people came into North and South America puzzled scholars and ordinary people alike.

OLD THEORY

Gradually, archaeologists began to construct a scientific theory for the arrival of the first humans in North and South America. Archaeologists learned from artifacts that humans were in the New World around 12,000 years ago. Furthermore, they knew that humans lived in Siberia, in the northeastern part of Asia, at the same time. The northeastern tip of Asia is only a few miles from the coast of Alaska. Thus, scholars felt that they had the answer. They had people living in Asia, only a few miles from Alaska, at the same time humans appeared in North America. Now, archaeologists only needed to figure out how people crossed the **Bering Strait** into Alaska.

Geology seemed to provide the answer. Geologists discovered that during the ice ages the ocean levels dropped, revealing a **land bridge** between Siberia and Alaska that existed between 15,000 to 10,000 years ago. Thus, humans could have walked from Asia to North America. Archaeologists speculated that they did so out of necessity, following the animals which they hunted. Once in Alaska, the new immigrants traveled to the rest of North America through a gap in the continental glaciers that ran north to south through Canada.

Therefore, through a combined knowledge of geology and **archaeology**, scholars felt confident that they had solved the question of when and how the first people came to North America. It was a theory which fit the archaeological evidence and seamlessly matched the geological understanding of the ice ages.



◀ This map illustrates the spread of humans across the globe. The first humans, known as *Homo sapiens*, appeared in Africa 200,000 years ago. They later migrated across the globe. Between 100,000 and 35,000 years ago a type of *Homo sapiens*, the Neanderthals, lived in Europe and Central Asia. The Neanderthals disappeared with the appearance of *Homo sapiens sapiens*, also known as Cro-Magnon Man. *Homo sapiens sapiens* are considered our modern ancestors. Modern man soon spread across Africa, Europe, Asia, Australia, and the Americas. Originally it was thought that humans did not reach America until 15,000 to 12,000 years ago.

OLD WORLD AND NEW WORLD

- The terms Old World and New World date back to the 1500s during the age of European exploration. Until 1492, most Europeans did not know that North and South America existed. Therefore, these two continents were a "New World" to them and they called it such to distinguish between the known lands of Africa and Asia.

AN EARLIER MIGRATION

- Some archaeologists and scholars want to push the date of human migration to the New World to 100,000 years ago. If such a date could be proven, it would forever alter our understanding not just of the New World, but of the Old World as well.

THE LAND BRIDGE

- Scientists have named the land bridge that connected Asia and North America Beringia. The name is derived from the water now covering the land bridge, the Bering Strait.

HABITABLE

- Habitable is simply a word that means a land has the resources, such as food, water, and materials, to support humans living there. It is important to note though, humans can change a land to habitable through the use of technology. Thus, the requirements for habitable can change over time.

QUICK FACTS

CHALLENGES TO THE OLD THEORY

The theory of how humans reached the New World appeared to withstand all criticisms. However, discoveries over the last thirty years are now challenging its accuracy. The first challenge has come from new archaeological discoveries in Pennsylvania, Virginia, and South Carolina.

Archaeological Evidence

At dig sites, archaeologists have found artifacts that they believe are at least 20,000 years old. If this is correct, then it means humans were in North America at least 5,000 years earlier than previously thought. Even more shocking, archaeologists in Topper, South Carolina may have discovered the remains of tools which are 50,000 years old.

While the finds in North America are enough to make scholars rethink the theory of migration to the New World, other challenges are coming from South America. It is generally accepted that the first humans had to cross the Bering Strait and move south through North America and then into South America. Reaching South America from Alaska was a migration which probably took thousands of years. Meaning that all archaeological discoveries of early humans in North America should predate findings in South America.

Given this logic, archaeologists were shocked to discover sites in South America, specifically Monte Verde in southern Chile, with artifacts as old as 33,000 years. Unless people crossed the widest part of the Pacific Ocean by boat, these artifacts had to come from people that migrated south from North America who were in the New World much earlier than previously thought.

Skull and DNA Evidence

The old migration theory is receiving challenges not just from archaeology, but also from biology. According to the old theory, people from Siberia in Central Asia formed the first migration group. This idea was based upon archaeological finds in Siberia which were not too far from the land bridge.

Biological evidence is calling into question this assumption though. If the theory is correct, then people living in Central Asia, where the original migrants came from, and those living in the New World, both in the ancient past and modern American Indians, should share similar bones and genetic information.

Bones and DNA tell stories about the people to whom they belong. For instance, the bones of someone who is from European ancestry are slightly different from someone of Central Asian descent. Likewise, the respective DNA from these two different peoples would be slightly different. The same is true for all ethnic groups.

Given these facts, scientists analyzing bones from ancient skeletons expected to see similarities between the skulls of the first immigrants, skulls of modern American Indians, and people

from Siberia. While very few skeletons from ancient America have been found, those recovered by researchers reveal interesting details. In particular a find in Washington State, **Kennewick Man**, has shed new light on the first immigrants.

Found in 1996 near Kennewick, Washington, Kennewick Man is approximately 10,000 years old. His skull and skeletal features do not resemble modern American Indians. Instead, he has features much more in common with the Ainu, a people who are from northern Japan. This does not mean Kennewick Man is an Ainu. Rather, it suggests that people did not only come from Central Asia to North America, but from other places as well. And if they came from other places, then they could have come at different times and by different ways. All of which calls into question the old migration theory.

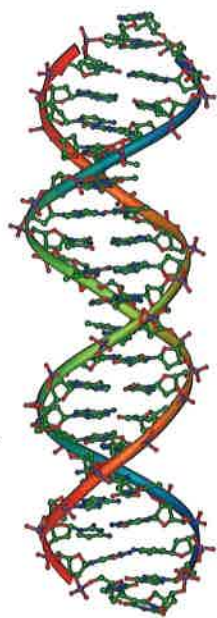
DNA study also seems to confirm the results of skeletal analysis. A study of genetic information from modern American Indians indicates that they do carry DNA similar to that of people in Central Asia and Siberia. However, a small portion of their genetic material differs from them. This other packet of genetic information has similarities to DNA found in south Asian and Polynesian cultures. Thus, from skull and DNA analysis, it seems likely that people did not only come from Siberia into North America, but also from other areas as well. Moreover, according to scientists, to achieve the genetic diversity found in modern American Indians would require people to have been living in the New World for at least 30,000 years.

The Linguistic Evidence

Experts on languages have also weighed in on the subject. Language specialists have identified over 150 language families in the New World. A **language family** is a group of languages which are similar to one another, just like Spanish is similar to Italian or French. Within a language family, there may be dozens of languages. This means that there might have been thousands of languages in North and South America in the past.

Languages do not develop overnight. The number of languages in a continent is usually quite small. But as people migrate to new areas, they become separated from other groups of people. When they do so, their language becomes unique. Eventually, over hundreds of years, the languages will become so different that they are no longer the same. To understand how this works simply look at England and the United States. Although both speak English, our geographic separation often makes it difficult to understand one another. Within a couple hundred years, we may not even be able to communicate at all, resulting in two new languages.

In this way new languages are created. It is not a short process but gradual. Language experts estimate that it would take between 30,000 and 50,000 years to create the number of languages found in the New World. Thus, the linguistic evidence seems to point to an earlier date for the arrival of man in North and South America.



▲ Above is an image of a DNA strand. DNA contains the genetic information of an individual.



▲ Picture of Kennewick Man's actual skull.



▲ An artist's recreation of how Kennewick Man may have looked.

QUICK FACT

DID PEOPLE CROSS THE PACIFIC?

- Many people wonder if the first humans could have come to the New World by sailing across the Pacific Ocean. While it is not impossible, it is highly unlikely. Crossing the Pacific would have required an understanding of navigation, ocean currents, weather, and simply knowing that there was a continent to be reached.



▲ Museum specialists analyzing the skeleton of Kennewick Man at the National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C.



▲ The skeleton of Kennewick Man.

THE NEW PICTURE

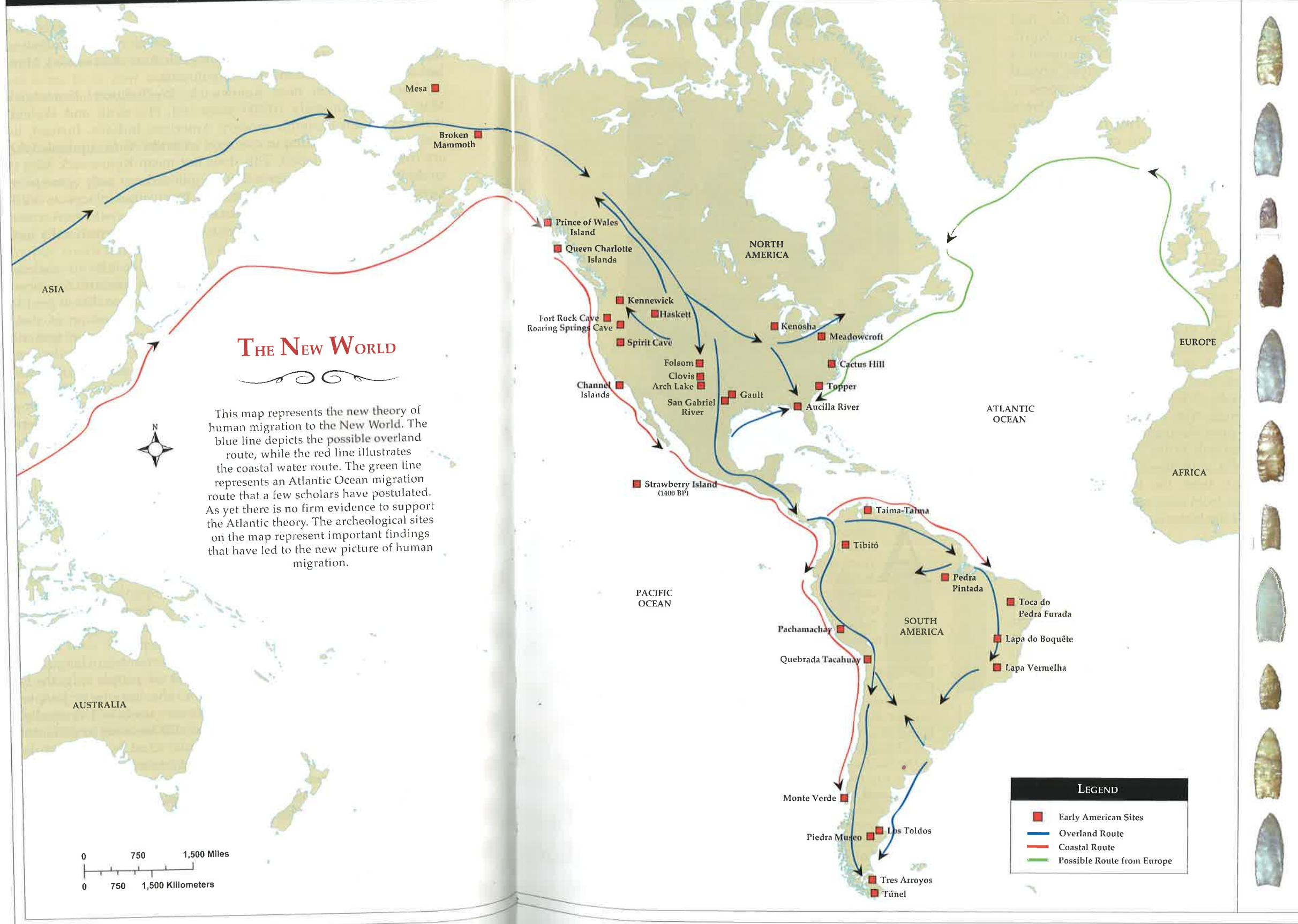
Given the startling discoveries of the last thirty years, a new picture of migration to the New World emerges. It is highly probable that the first people arrived in North America between 20,000 and 35,000 years ago, maybe even earlier. These new people did not all come from Central Asia, but also South and East Asia. Since they came from different places in the Old World, the first migrants most likely did not come at one time, but in numerous migrations over thousands of years.

The earlier date for the first people in North America means that the first migrants could not have used the land bridge across the Bering Strait because it did not exist between 20,000 and 30,000 years ago. Thus, people probably crossed in rafts and small boats. Such a feat is not impossible. Early humans made a similar journey 50,000 years ago to reach Australia from Indonesia. The distance between Alaska and Asia is much shorter.

Once in Alaska, migrants could have traveled by land through a gap in the continental glacier and reached the Great Plains in the present day United States. Alternatively, people may have chosen to journey by boat, hugging the coast and porting in small bays and inlets during the night. Archaeologists believe that early humans used both methods to move south into North and South America.

The importance of this new picture of early human migration to the New World cannot be understated. Instead of viewing the migration as an isolated event that occurred once 10,000 years ago, it is now understood that this was part of a global process of human migration across the planet. Also, it was not an isolated people who migrated to the New World, but an ethnically and geographically diverse group of humans. These people came in multiple, not one, migrations. The new arrivals were in a sense pioneers, discovering and adapting to different lands and challenges.

The New Migration Theory



Arrival in Washington

Once in the New World, the first immigrants spread throughout North America. People arrived in Washington at least 10,000 years ago, and maybe several thousand years earlier. The early people in Washington behaved much as other humans across the planet did. They hunted using stone tools and weapons, created shelters, and gathered edible plants and fruits. In short, these early peoples attempted to adapt and survive in their new homelands.

Archaeologists often classify the first people living in the United States as Clovis. The name Clovis comes from an archaeological site in New Mexico. **Clovis** is a name archaeologists use to describe a group of people who shared a common culture, such as similar stone tools, weapons, and other artifacts. There have been several important Clovis sites found in Washington, the most recent occurring in East Wenatchee.

Gradually, Clovis culture gave way to new cultures. The process was slow and occurred over thousands of years between the first arrivals in the New World and the coming of Columbus to America in 1492. During this time, the people transformed themselves from emigrants to the American Indians of the historic era.

American Indians

In 1492, Europeans made the first permanent settlements in the New World. In doing so, they did not encounter an empty continent, but one full of millions of people and thousands of different cultures.

It is important to emphasize this last point. American Indians are not all the same. In the United States alone, there were 10 to 15 different culture groups, depending on which expert you ask. No two culture groups were alike.

For instance, Indians in the lower Mississippi Valley were farmers, living in permanent villages. By contrast, Indians across the Great Plains did some farming, but were primarily hunters and often moved frequently in search of food. In Washington, two distinct culture groups emerged: the Coastal and Plateau Indians.

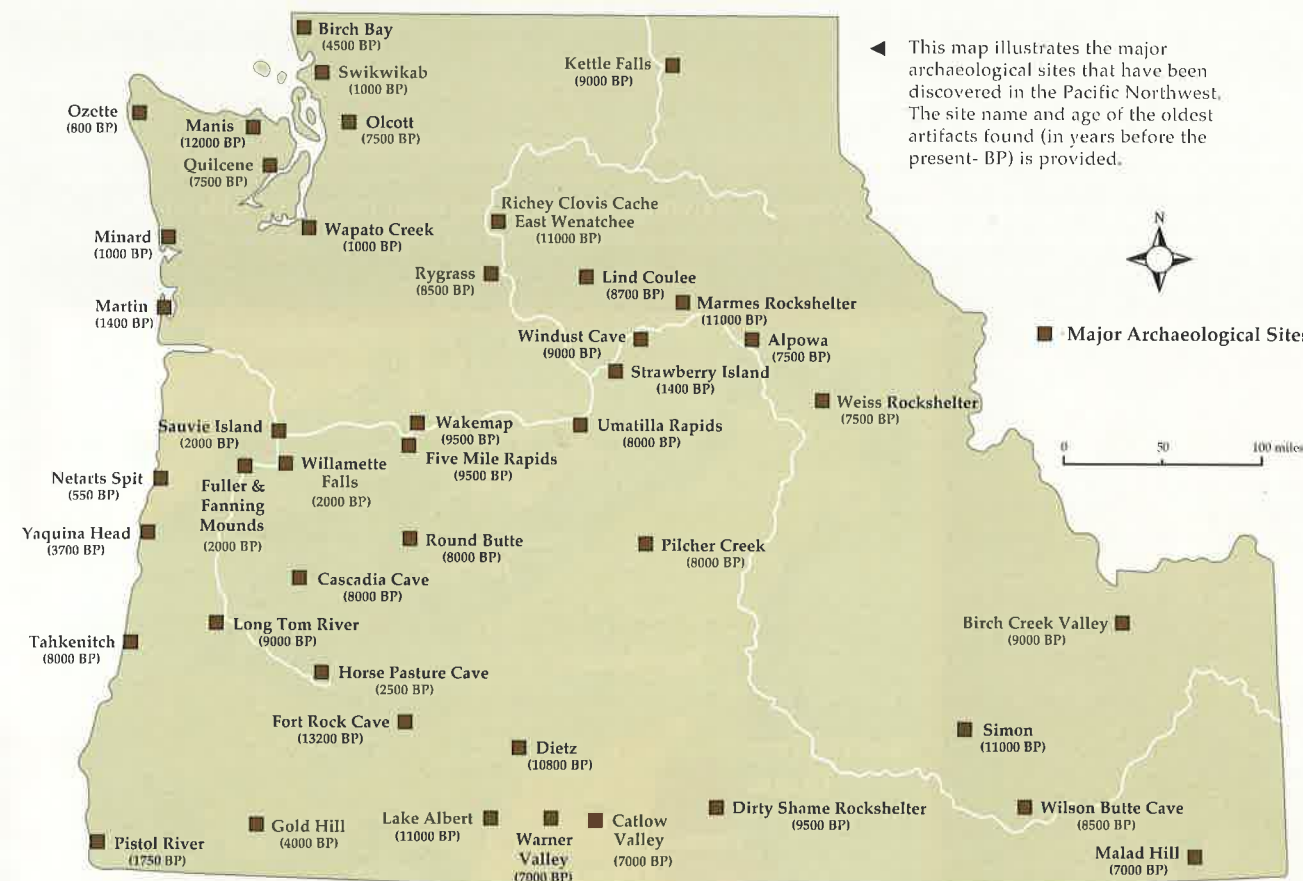
CONNECTING TO PREHISTORY

The Prehistoric Pacific Northwest ...



Archaeological evidence suggests that humans lived in the Pacific Northwest as early as 10,000 years ago. In fact, some archaeological sites indicate that humans may have arrived in the region 17,000 years ago. Regardless of the exact date, humans have lived in the Pacific Northwest for thousands of years. The earliest known people in the area practice what archeologists have called the Clovis culture. Clovis culture, named after a site in New Mexico, was based on hunting and gathering. Clovis people made large spear points and used them to hunt game, such as deer, elk, buffalo, and possibly mastodons. Clovis people also hunted smaller animals and fished in rivers and streams. They gathered whatever edible plants were available.

Throughout the millennia and centuries, human culture in the Pacific Northwest changed. East of the Cascades, Clovis culture evolved into hunter-gatherer societies. These societies were semi-nomadic; they moved between specific places, following the seasonal food offerings. West of the Cascades, the abundance of food, especially seafood, allowed for a more sedentary existence. Eventually, over thousands of years and further migrations to the region, these differences between life east and west of the Cascades would result in the Coastal and Plateau Indians.



▲ Dig site at the Richey Clovis Cache in East Wenatchee, Washington.



▲ Clovis points from the Richey Clovis Cache in East Wenatchee, Washington.



▲ Artistic representation of an ancient American hunter-gatherer.

