

### **III. Where Did Our World Come From?**

#### **A. How did our *interconnected* world come to be?**

1. The story of the United States *of America* in an *interconnected world* begins with the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus in 1492.
  - a) Although there were people living in the Americas before that, the Americas were isolated continents until 1492.
  - b) After 1492, Europeans began to explore the Americas, and connect them to the rest of the world.
  - c) Soon, European settlers began to make new lives for themselves in the Americas, creating a permanent connection between America and Europe. Now people speak the European languages of Spanish, Portuguese, and English in America.
  - d) Without Columbus's discovery of 1492, there simply would never have been a United States of America. *Everything in American history, including the world we live in, ultimately connects back to this event.*
2. Referring back to this event will always be helpful in understanding the story of America and how the world we live in came to be the way that it is.

#### **B. How did the America-centric world we live in come to be?**

1. The United States of America is by far the most important country in the world today.
  - a) It is the *richest* country in the world.
  - b) It is *by far the most powerful* country in the world.
  - c) It is the most *culturally influential* country in the world.
    - i) America movies, music, and television are the most popular in the world.
    - ii) American restaurants and foods, such as MacDonalds and Coca-Cola are the most popular in the world.
    - iii) People admire America as a symbol of liberty, as represented by the statue of liberty.
2. For these reasons and more, people say that the world is "America-centric." America is not literally in the center of the world, but it is the "center" of world trade, the "center" of the military "balance of power", and "center" of attention in the world's culture.
3. The rise of America as this unique country in the world began on the 4th of July, 1776—*Independence Day* (America's "birthday".)

C. But where does America fit in the “big picture”?

1. Where does the story of *America* fit in the story of the whole *world*?
2. History stretches back over 5000 years! Since we live around 2000 AD, if we subtract 5000 from that, we end up with 3000 less than “zero.” When dates this far back are written to show this, the dates are marked “BC.” (We will see why soon.) Also, when we don’t know a year for certain, the year is written with a “c.” in front of it, which stands for “circa.” “Circa” is an ancient Latin word that means “about” or “approximately.”
3. C.3000 BC the first key event in recorded history occurred. The country of Egypt was first brought under the rule of one man, a pharaoh (king) named Menes/Narmer. (I use this strange way of writing his name because the legends about him call him “Menes,” and the best kept records in history call him “Narmer.”)
4. So here we are living in an *interconnected, globalized, America-centric* world five thousands years after the beginning of the story of recorded human history.