A geopolitical understanding of Medieval Europe

And what such an understanding will tell us about U.S. History
What is a “geopolitical” understanding?

✦ A geopolitical understanding requires us to learn about how **geography, ethnicity, and religion** - influence both the domestic and foreign politics of a nation.

✦ Thus, we are going to examine how the geography, ethnicity and religion of Europe in the 15th, 16th, and 17th Centuries influenced the domestic and foreign policies of developing European regions and nations.

✦ This examination will help us understand how and why Europeans immigrated to North America.
Geographical influences...

What do you notice about the geographical features of Europe in 1500?
How might the fact that there are many different political entities influence foreign policies?

What might be the consequences of such foreign policies?
If war is a constant denominator, how do you think the map of Europe will change?
Let’s see what happens...
Between 1500-1800, which political unions grew at the expense of the others? Which shrunk?
By 1900, which nations grew at the expense of the others? Which nations shrunk?
What might have motivated Russia to expand south - and to try to expand to the southwest?
Why do you think Spain, France, Portugal, and Great Britain failed to expand their European empires much between 1700-1900?
Ethnic influences...

What happens to people who were once sovereign, and then lose their sovereignty?
What happens to people who are confronted by challenges to their religious beliefs?
So, what does all of this have to do with U.S. History?

Europe in 1600, at the time of early English colonization efforts
In short...

The geopolitical nature - the geographical realities combined with the ethnic and religious traditions of a rapidly changing Europe in the 15th, 16th, and 17th Centuries - provide important clues as to why Europeans immigrated to North America.
To Review...

- What geopolitical realities contributed to European immigration to North America?
- What ethnic realities contributed to European immigration to North America?
- What religious realities contributed to European immigration to North America?