

Selected Indian-European Interactions in North America, 980-1620

In looking at the early history of encounters between Native Americans and Europeans, we tend to jump from Columbus to the founding of Jamestown and Plymouth as if nothing happened in between. The implication of such historical visioning is that the Native people whom the first settlers met in the early 1600s had no prior knowledge of—or experience with—Europeans. This timeline seeks to dispel that impression by listing some of the key developments in North America in general (especially on the Atlantic coast), as well as in **New England (indicated in boldface)** during this little understood period. As you look it over, think about how these developments and interactions might have affected Native American peoples, their communities, and their cultures. How might they have shaped Native peoples' attitudes toward Europeans and their cultures? Why were some encounters peaceable and others hostile? How do the Narragansetts encountered by Verrazzano compare with their Wampanoag neighbors who met the *Mayflower* survivors a century later?

- c. 980s-1480s Inuits, Beothuks engage in friendly and hostile contacts with Greenland-based Norse
- 1492 Columbus' landfall among Tainos at Guanahaní
- 1490s Inuits, Beothuks engage in friendly and hostile contacts with English fishermen, explorers
- 1500-1520s Beothuks, coastal Mi'kmaqs and **Abenakis** develop procedures for dealing with both friendly and hostile western European visitors
- 1513, 1521 Spanish expeditions under Ponce de León, founder of colony at Puerto Rico, rebuffed by Calusas in Florida
- 1519-21 Spanish conquer Aztecs with aid of smallpox; establish of New Spain
- 1524 French expedition under Verrazzano explores Atlantic coast of North American mainland north of Florida; **peaceable encounters with Narragansetts, hostile encounter with Abenakis at Casco Bay**
**** Verrazzano's account of the New England encounters constitutes the primary source reading for this session ****
- 1525 Spanish expedition led by Estevan Gomez explores North American coast; **peaceable exchanges with Wampanoags at Cape Cod; kidnaps at least 58 Penobscot Abenakis**
- 1527 John Rut leads English expedition along North American coast from Newfoundland to Florida; no first-hand documentation survives
- 1534-42 Cartier leads three French expeditions attempting to explore, colonize in eastern Canada
- 1539-43 De Soto leads massive expedition throughout southeastern North America while Coronado does same in Southwest and central Plains; meet massive resistance from Native peoples and end in failure but spread epidemics and undermine Native communities

- 1540s-1600 Native Americans on lower St. Lawrence River, Gulf of St. Lawrence, Bay of Fundy; **northern Gulf of Maine** increasingly engaged in regular exchanges with French traders; more occasional exchanges as far south as Chesapeake Bay
- 1565 Spanish establish St. Augustine, first permanent European settlement on North American mainland in Calusa homeland
- 1565-1600 Native Americans force Spanish to abandon posts and missions north of St. Augustine as far as York River in later Virginia
- 1580 **John Walker, English mariner, raids Penobscot Abenaki village and steals over 300 moose hides; second English expedition also returns from New England with moose hides**
- 1585 English establish colony at Roanoke; colony “lost” by 1590
- 1598 Spanish establish New Mexico in Pueblo homelands
- 1602 **Bartholomew Gosnold expedition begins escalation of English activity in New England** (discussed by Alden Vaughan)
- 1605 French establish colonial outpost among Mi’kmaqs at Port Royal, Acadia (now Nova Scotia); **ally with several groups of northern coastal Abenakis; hostile encounters with Wampanoag communities on Cape Cod**
- 1606 **Abenaki-Mi’kmaq battle over trade ties with French**
- 1607-08 **English colonies planted among Abenakis at Sagadahoc** and among Powhatans at Jamestown; **Sagadahoc abandoned**; Jamestown barely survives
- 1608 French establish permanent colony at Quebec
- 1609 French-Algonkin-Huron war party defeats Mohawks at Lake Champlain; Henry Hudson leads Dutch expedition up Hudson River; contact with Mohicans and other Native peoples
- 1611-13 French Jesuit missionaries preach to Mi’kmaqs, **Abenakis**
- 1614 Dutch establish trade posts on Delaware, Hudson, **Connecticut rivers; begin regular trade with Narragansetts, Pequots, and other southern New England Native peoples west of Cape Cod**
Renewal of Abenaki-Mi’kmaq armed conflict
- 1620 **Arrival of *Mayflower***