

12: The Nature of Early Settlement: Native Americans, European Arrival and the Colonial Period

Prof. Anthony Grande
Geography Dept.
Hunter College-CUNY

Spring 2018

Lecture design, content and presentation GAFG 0318. Individual images and illustrations may be subject to prior copyright.

1

Human Geography of NYS

- ❖ We now add **people** to the physical landscape.
- Focus on people's perception of the lay of the land, settlement, land use, transport networks, economic development, and human impact, as well as toponymy – the naming of places.
- ✓ The **cultural landscape** is studied.

2

Studying Iroquois Culture

- ❖ **Optional Exercise 11:** either "for grading" or "for extra credit'
The Mohawk-Iroquois Village
based on the NYS Museum virtual display;
get links at the Course Home Page
- Also see the web sites of New York-based Native American nations compiled by the NYS Library at the end of the listing.
<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/reference/nativereref.htm>

3

Native American Tribes

4

Woodland Stage

Paleo-Indians came to North America c.14,000 yrs ago via land bridge from Asia.
They arrived in New York c.9000-4000 yrs ago.

Woodland Stage began c.3,000 years ago.
Emphasis was on **cultivation**.

Pre-Columbian Eastern Woodland Indians

- **Principal groups** in NYS were the **Iroquois** and **Algonquin**.
- They **cleared** the forests to create farmland. **HOW?**
- Principal food crops were maize (corn), beans, squash.
- They hunted and fished and along the coast engaged in whaling.

5

Generalized Time Line

c.1000 AD

- ☐ Period of natural **global warming**.
- **Iroquois tribes expanded north** into the St. Lawrence Valley, extending maize production to its northern limit.
- **Co-existed with the Algonquin tribes.** Ample food and living space. No competition for land.
- **Had a spiritual relationship with nature** which they believed provided for their **basic** needs.

6

Global Climate Change

Northern Hemisphere Temperatures last ~ 1000 years:
Compiled from historical, tree ring and ice core records.

7

Generalized Time Line

By the 1300s

- ☐ The tribes advanced beyond hunting and gathering and became **agriculturalists**.
 - **Plentiful food supplies**, both in the forests and fields.
 - **Villages grew in size** (as many as 1500 people may have lived in a settlement) and **became permanent**.
 - **Landscape alteration resulted** as residents searched their surroundings for food, water and wood.

8

Generalized Time Line

During the 1400s

- ☐ Period of natural **global cooling**.
 - Maize production was **reduced**.
 - **Local environments were strained** by the large villages.
 - **Villages had to move often. WHY?**

By the 1500s

- ☐ **Cooling trend may have triggered the more frequent warfare** among the Iroquois tribes.
 - **Competition for farmland and other strategic resources** (water, game animals and forest products).
 - **Iroquois society evolved** from a culture of sedentary agriculturalists to a culture of village-based warriors.

9

Generalized Time Line

In the 1500s

- ☐ **Iroquois adapted** to the higher population densities and crowded living conditions. **But, local resources were being used up.**
- **They developed rules of social order** and village councils were formed.
- **Different clans** of a tribe existed in the same village to **share resources**.

❖ **By coincidence, this was the time of the first planned European sailings to North America with coastal exploration:**

1498: Cabot sailed off the coast of Long Island.

1524: Verrazano entered NY harbor.

1535: Cartier entered the St. Lawrence river valley.

10

Tribal Areas

By the early 1600s the **Iroquois** and **Algonquin** were **confederacies**, formed to reduce tribal warfare and make the whole stronger than the individual units.

The strongest and most famous was the **Five Nations** or **Iroquois Confederacy** (Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida and Mohawk; Tuscarora joined in 1700s.)

Base map from Thompson, Geography of New York State

11

Iroquois Confederacy

❖ **The Confederacy posed the strongest threat to European colonization but also a threat to other Indian nations.**

- **Large population** (c.15,000-75,000 people) were **scattered** (low density) throughout the area.
- **Sedentary agriculturalists** (tied to the land) engaged in hunting, fishing, crafts, and trading.
- **Dominated the area** between New England, Virginia and the Great Lakes **by controlling trade routes**.
- Became a **major player** in European control of the northeast by selecting sides.

12

Known Sites of Indian Settlement

<http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/IroquoisVillage/>

Map from Thompson, Geography of New York State

13

European Inland Exploration

Champlain's Explorations

Voyage of Henry Hudson up the North River - 1609

- ❖ **Early 1600s** saw the arrival of the European explorers and the establishment of **European camps away from the coast.**
- **1603-15:** Champlain explored the St. Lawrence River and entered Lake Champlain from the north.
- **1609:** Hudson sailed inland up the North River from the south.
- **1624:** First Dutch settlement in New York Harbor.

14

Indians & Trade 1600-1760

Fur Trade:
The Dutch (West India Company) engaged the Iroquois by establishing fur trading posts along the Hudson River (1624).

European/Indian Alliances:

- French with Algonquin, Huron and other northern tribes.
- Dutch and English with the Iroquois tribes.

Iroquois Confederacy:
Disrupted French/Indian trade. Allied with English. Controlled the area between New England, Virginia and the Great Lakes.

15

Consequences of the Fur Trade

1. **Indians' relationship with nature changed.** Now they took more from nature than was needed for survival.
2. **Animals (esp. beaver) became a resource of value,** not a blessing from God.
3. **Trade for weapons affected all animals,** not just beaver, so all animal populations decreased. (Related to warrior culture. See #6.)
4. **By 1700 the beaver in NY was nearly exterminated.**
5. **Disappearance of beavers changed the physical landscape; beaver dams** are no longer maintained and water drains away. >> **Meadows created.**
6. **Iroquois acted as middlemen,** interacting with other tribes and getting furs from outside their area to sell. **Control.** (See #3.)
7. **Indian deaths increased** as they interacted with Europeans. **WHY?** Spiritual crisis ensued (back to #1).

16

Dutch Settlement

The Dutch limited their settlement to areas along the North River (Hudson River)

- ✓ the harbor perimeter
- ✓ western Long Island east to Jamaica (Queens)
- ✓ tip of Manhattan island
- ✓ the Hudson valley waterfront to Fort Orange (now Albany)

WHY?

17

Dutch Settlement

- **New Amsterdam** (tip of Manhattan Is) was established in **1625** and became the seat of government.
- In **1626**, the Dutch West India Co. introduced African slavery to New Amsterdam as an alternative to providing indentured servants for the colonists.
- **By the 1630s** Dutch farmsteads were established in western Long Island.
- As the Dutch moved eastward on L.I., they encountered the English settlers from Connecticut who had settled in Suffolk County.

18

New Netherland

The image contains two maps. On the left is a historical map titled 'NOVABELGICA seu NIEUW NEDERLANDT' from 1656, showing the Hudson River valley and Long Island. On the right is a modern map of the Northeast United States with a red area indicating 'DUTCH COLONIZATION 1609-1664' along the Hudson River and Long Island. A legend identifies 'New Amsterdam 1660'.

Dutch Influence

- ❖ **Dutch established the basic framework of settlement in NYS.**
 - ✓ Sites of principal population centers: originally forts and trading posts.
 - ✓ **Hudson-Mohawk axis created:** hugs the rivers from NYC to Rome; rarely extends inland.
 - ✓ **Dutch interested in fur trade, not colonization.**
 - ✓ **Control of waterways important.**
 - ✓ Dutch **place names** remain today in Hudson Valley and on Long Island.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_place_names_of_Dutch_origin_in_the_United_States#New_York : List of Dutch-origin place names

Dutch and Swedish Claims 1640

Great Britain's North American colonies (New England and Virginia) were separated by the claims of Sweden and the Netherlands.

(NOTE: Dutch claimed land between Connecticut and Delaware rivers. French claims were to the north and Spanish claims to the south.)

The map shows the Hudson River valley with red arrows pointing north and south from the river, labeled 'North River' and 'South River'. It also shows 'NEW SWEDEN' and 'NEW NETHERLAND' territories.

English Plan

The purpose of English colonization of North America was settlement.

English settlers began to move into eastern Long Island from Connecticut and Rhode Island in early 1630s having received land grants from the British Crown.

The British now viewed Dutch outposts between the North River (Hudson R.) and South River (Delaware R.) as an impediment to British control of the east coast from Maine to Georgia.

Geopolitical Strife

- ❖ **Mid-1640s:** **Conflict** developed between the **Dutch and the Indians** in the Hudson Valley **and** between the **English, the Dutch and Indians** on Long Island.

WHY?

- The Dutch increased their fur trade north of New Amsterdam.
- English settlers expanded their ownership of land for farms on Long Island, moving westward.

- ❖ **Treaty of Hartford (1650)** was drafted (*but never ratified*) setting the **international boundary** between the English and Dutch colonies on Long Island at today's **Nassau-Suffolk line**.

Treaty of Hartford

The Connecticut Colony claimed all of Long Island even though they originally settled the eastern end.

The map shows Long Island with various colored regions representing different colonial claims, including the Connecticut Colony (1636-1776), Dutch outposts, and other territories.

Geopolitical Strife

- In **1660** King Charles II of England decided he did not want the Dutch colony in America.
- From **1660-1664 negotiations** attempted to remedy the situation.
- Finally in **1664** he sent the Royal Navy into New Amsterdam to demand surrender.
- The **Dutch colony** was given to the Duke of York, along with all of Long Island, **renamed NEW YORK**.

25

English Settlement

- ❖ **English take over New Amsterdam in 1664.**
 - ✓ English leave Dutch system of trade and land division in place (*legacy still exists*).
 - Interior settlement in NY colony lags behind other coastal colonies. **WHY?**
 - Agricultural settlement on Long Island drastically changes the natural landscape. **HOW?**
- Wars for world dominance between England and France spill over to North America: **1689-1763 French and Indian Wars** with battles fought in NY. (N. American counterpart of the 100 Years War in Europe.)



Settlement

English colonial settlement stretched along the **Atlantic coastal plain and tidal inlets** from Maine to Virginia, with **inland penetration** only along the Connecticut and Hudson rivers.

➢ **Notice the shape of the New York Colony in 1685!**



27

European Claims in the Early 1700s

By the end of the 1600s, **France and Great Britain were the major players in North America.**

Dutch and Swedish claims were abandoned and the Spanish stayed closer to Mexico (Florida/Texas/California)



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_place_names_of_French_origin_in_the_United_States#New_York : List of place names of French origin

28

Settlement of New York English Colonial Period

- ❖ In the New York colony, **settlement moves slowly north** along the Hudson River and then along Mohawk River.
 - Still limited to **water frontage**. **Why?**
- ❖ **Head of Mohawk Valley settled in 1740s.** Important link to the Great lakes via the **Oneida Carry** (a portage between the Mohawk River and Lake Ontario drainage basins).
 - Beyond this point were the villages and hunting grounds of the **Iroquois Confederation**.

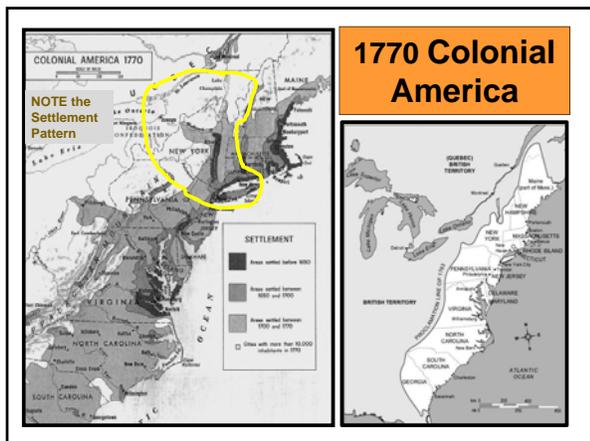
29

Colonial Period: French and Indian Wars

- **Final chapter of the French and Indian Wars takes place from 1754-1763.**
- **Numerous battles in New York between French, English and Indians.**
 - Iroquois sided with England
 - Algonquin and Huron sided with France
 - Hostilities discouraged settlement away from the main rivers. **WHY?**



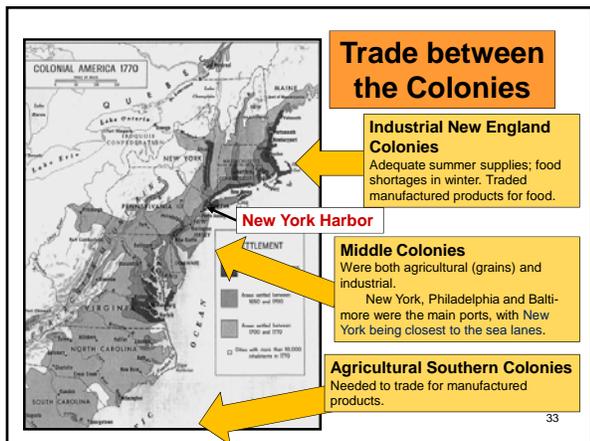
30



Colonial Economies

- The mid to late-1700s sees the New England, Middle and Southern colonies develop different economies.
- By the early 1770s the difference in agricultural output between the colonies was evident.
 - New England Colonies had trouble producing enough food to feed the residents.
 - But the shorter growing season (longer non-farming period) lead to the development of cottage industries and manufacturing.
- ❖ **New York colony has a central location.**

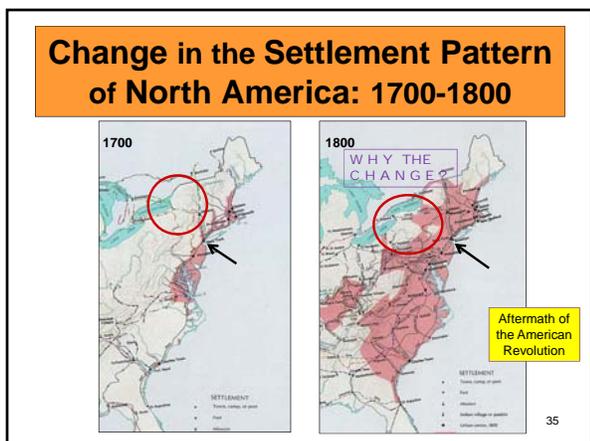
32



Focus on New York

- ✓ Settlement still limited to the Hudson-Mohawk Valley and Long Island.
- ✓ **Ethnic groups** begin to **concentrate** their settlement.
- ✓ **New York City** became the **focus of the trade** in the early 1770s, because of its central location and large protected harbor.
- ✓ **The strategic location of the New York colony with its harbor and transportation corridors** makes it the site of numerous battles in the American Revolution.

34



NEXT

Military Geography and the Strategic Nature of New York

36