

Anthropology



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Three origins of Native Americans are the Beringia " Land Bridge" route, a coastal route along the Pacific route, and sheets of ice during the Ice Age. Humanity origins can be traced back to Africa. The European continent spread out of Africa. The problem becomes how did Native Americans arrive in America? A consensus is hunters and tribes migrated from the European mass before Columbus. The three possible ways are from a land bridge that connected Siberia and Alaska, a Pacific coastal route, and an ice sheet. If forced to chose, Beringia and the ice sheet would be more probable than a coastal route.

The first theory of a land bridge between Siberia and Alaska has been around for awhile. If an individual places a map of the world on a table, the continents look like they can fit together. The earth's crust and upper mantle have plates. These plates slide and move. The moving of these plates cause earthquakes and tsunamis. It also causes land to break apart. Another factor is the ice age. When the great meltdown occurred a land bridge could have been submerged. This land bridge, Beringia, would have connected Siberia and Alaska. If that connection was made, then it is possible that the Native Americans migrated from Siberia. After reaching North America the Native Americas would have migrated south.

Another theory is the coastal migration. The Native Americans would have sailed in canoes from Siberia to Alaska. Then the Native Americans would have migrated south to South America. Both continents would be populated before Columbus arrived. This theory would depend on the migrants knowing about the route. The passage would have to be during the summer, or when ice chunks were not present. This is the least likely of the scenarios.

The final scenario is migrants came across the giant ice sheet. If an ice age

was in full force, migrants might go south for a warmer climate. The trail would have gone toward westward and southward. If the ice shelves were as scientist think, than the ice would have melted without a trace.

All three theories depend on one same element...food. Prehistoric people hunted for food and warmth from the furs. If the herds of caribou, woolly mammoth, or whatever was around at the time left, the hunter would have gone to search for prey. In the northern parts of Siberia planting a garden to provide for food year round is not an option. The hunters would have had to follow the food. As the animals' natural instinct led them south, the hunters would have followed. Not only would the hunters have followed, but move their families along with them. As each area grew in population, others would move to other areas. The food factor is probably a major factor for the Native American migration.

The land bridge and ice sheet theory are the two explanations that make sense. Making a foot trip is more probable than in a canoe. Since prehistoric man was hunters, it makes sense that they tracked their prey on land. For coastal migration a stronger vessel than a canoe would have had to been crafted. No evidence of this is available. The land bridge and ice sheet cannot be proven or disproven. The land would sink into the sea and the ice would have melted. A coastal migration would have left shipwrecks, ships on land, or some kind of evidence would have been found. The land theories make more sense.

Native Americans migrated to North America before Columbus or the Vikings arrived. This is a known fact. What is not known is exactly how the first migrants came from the European continent. Given the technology of the time a land crossing would probably have been more likely than a sea or

coastal route. If one theory had to be narrowed down, the choice would be the land bridge. The ice would have been too treacherous. The theory that all the continents were connected makes more sense than a sea or coastal journey.

Biography

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