

Compare the evidence of a nordic presence in the americas

[Law](#), [Evidence](#)



Compare the evidence of a Nordic presence in the Americas before the arrival of Columbus with the evidence of a West African presence during that period. It has been said by historians that the Nordics and the West Africans were in the Americas before Columbus arrived in 1492. Though evidence, such as oral sagas, tracing routes which it was said they took, artifacts, skeletal remains, among others, have been found to prove that they could have been present; there are still debates as to whether or not they actually came to the Americas before Columbus.

Some believe that the evidence of the presence of the Nordics is more admissible than that of the West Africans. The Norse (also known as the Vikings) got their name from the language they spoke, ' Old Norse'. They were originally from Scandinavian countries. It believed that they came to the new world for several reasons such as; the fact that it had a rich supply of salt to preserve their goods, they were explorers, the country they lived in, Greenland, soon became over populated and they experienced a great famine in 975. It is also believed that there was a political unrest between the cans in Northern Europe.

There has been many pieces of evidence to support the theory that the Vikings were, in fact, present in the new world during the pre-columbian era. Some of the settlements of the Vikings were found, still standing, such as ' York' and ' Dublin'. There was not much written records on the Viking so most of their history was passed down orally through sagas, through which we first heard of their exploration into Europe and the Americas, there were two sagas which survived; these are the Greenlander's Saga and The Saga of

Erik the Red. The sagas claim that the Vikings interacted and traded with the native people that they found in the Americas.

The sagas led to the finding of some substantial evidence such as the archaeological remains found in ' Newfoundland' and there it was discovered that there was a Viking settlement in the town called ' L'Anse aux Meadows', in this town historians discovered that the Vikings did travel further south into the Americas and explored the land they spoke of in their sagas, Vinland. When they ventured further down into Vinland historians discovered butternut wood and butternuts, which were not native to the area so it is believed that the Vikings brought it there from further south (lands surrounding the Gulf of St.

Lawrence). Other artifacts such as architectural structures, woodworking items, boat rivets and personal items were found in the region, which historians dated back to about AD 1000 with the use of scientific method. Another hard piece of evidence found in ' Vinland' was a Norse coin which was found off the coast of Maine and was dated back to between AD1065-1080 which suggests that there was interaction of these people and the indigenous peoples. This gave historians physical evidence that coincided with the oral sagas. All this evidence pre-dates European arrival by as early as 500 years.

It is also believed that the West Africans came to the New World centuries before the arrival of Columbus. Ivan Van Sertima is one of many who argue that West Africans made contact with the new World before Columbus. According to Sertima the Africans travelled from the African coast from the

north to the west and crossed the Atlantic. According to the famous Egyptian Scholar, Ibn Fadi Al-Umari, in 1342, there were two large voyages across the Atlantic Ocean, before Columbus' voyage, both of these voyages were pioneered by one man, Mansa (king) Abubakari II. In the year 1311, Abubakari abdicated his thrown to Mansa Musa.

Not a son of his son but in fact his brother. He (Abubakari) equipped 1000 of his ships with the finest men, sorcerers, physicians, sailors and navigators. Every ship had supply ship attached to it. The number of ships totalled 2000. The other 1000 ships were loaded with foodstuffs, drugs, fruits and drinks to last his team for 2yrs. It was believed that Abubakari arrived on the other end of the Atlantic in the year 1312. Proof of the Malian expedition can be noted in the names given to places in Haiti as the Malians renamed places after themselves. Examples of such are Mandinga Port, Mandinga Bay and Sierre de Mali.

It is said that the African mariners that came to the western hemisphere were looking for trade and knowledge of what lied beyond their coasts. They brought with them flora and fauna, cloth, their scientific knowledge, technology and the arts. Modern experiments have shown that the ancient African boats could have made the journey across the seas to the new world as they were strong enough. Boat builders in Central Africa's Lake chad made a papyrus craft that was sailed from North Africa to Barbados in eastern Caribbean in 1969, there were similar journeys that showed that even the small boats could with have survived these crossings.

Some of the evidence that the West African's were in fact present in the region before Columbus' arrival are; the linguistic continuities in the region, an example of this is when it was recorded that the indigenous peoples referred to the Africans as ' guanine' which was the first piece of evidence that west Africans were in the region, it, however, was not seen as strong enough by many historians to hold up such a theory. There were no written evidence that they were there, it could be assumed that they could have been lost, or destroyed as it was seen that the Europeans were not always tolerant of these other cultures in their explorations.

History has recorded some incidents where the writings of natives and precious metals and gems were destroyed (in the case of the precious metals and gems, they were used or melted down) by the Europeans when they came to the land of the natives, as they saw some of these as pagan items. Another piece of evidence found by historians were the archaeological remains that were found, the age of these remains were dated back according to how deep the archaeologist had to dip for it.

The successive layers of dirt only built up over time, so the archaeologists knew the date of the dirt layer then the date of the artifacts to the layer which was found. Additional evidence that supported the thesis that both these cultures came in contact came from clear evidence of the facial features of the images and figures, which were done using various materials such as clay, gold and copper that were found in the relics which were dug up.

The images and figures found in the relics were unmistakably inspired by an African as the phenotypical and cultural characteristics were clearly of an African origin, this could be told by "...their colouration, the fullness of lip, prognathism, scarification, tattoo markings, beards, kinky hair, generously fleshed noses, and even in some instances, identifiable coiffures, head kerchiefs, helmets, compound earrings..." (Sertima 1976). " Also, there were huge head sculptures which were discovered in the Central and South America that also had African features.

Skeletal remains which belonged is believed to have belonged to Africans were found. Further evidence is seen in the religious rituals of the people in Mexico, as their gods and ceremonies are closely modelled to those of the African society. Also, the use of shells as currency rather than just symbolic items and also the botanical continuities such as the presence of species of African origin, for example; banana, jack bean, yam and others. Other evidence which came directly from the natives themselves when they explained to the Europeans that they " received an alloy called guanine' from the Africans", the alloy which they spoke of consisted of a mix of precious metals. It was also noted that some of the artifacts of the natives which Columbus collected, such as the cloths used by the natives closely matched the weave, colouration and style of cloths used by African communities in Guinea. An explorer, Balboa, also recorded that he came across scattered groups of people who looked very much like Africans in regions that he had ' discovered'.

This shows that the Europeans themselves came across Africans in the region. There is also the scientific evidence (oceanography) which points to the fact that the Africans were very capable of getting to the new world before Columbus, The Atlantic World's coastline was linked to the African coastline by the ocean currents which moved between the two areas, which meant that the Africans who were seen in the Americas would not have had any problems using these ways to make their way to the new world.

In both cases, as relating the presence of the Nordics and the west Africans in the western hemisphere before Columbus, the main problem is the fact that there are not much written accounts by the people themselves, and so it is easy to call the evidence inadmissible as in the world today facts are based on what is written in the books.

There is, however, more admissible evidence for the Nordics as it relates to how they got the western hemisphere as there route can be traced easily, though it is said that the Africans got to the western hemisphere using Pacific current known as the Kouro-Siwo and the Equatorial currents of the Atlantic Ocean. In both case, settlements were uncovered, and evidence of things they left behind such as flora and fauna, personal items among other things.

It can be said that though there was not much written accounts of their presence, there is sufficient evidence that they had, indeed, been present in the Americas in the pre-columbian era.

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