

The discovery of america



The discovery of America is one of the most argued and controversial issues discussed today by historians and different groups of interest. Many people think that Columbus deserves the praise for the discovery of America while, others believe that he deserves no credit because when he landed on the Island there were already natural inhabitants there who had been living there for centuries. Certainly, historical scriptures show that Columbus was not the first one to step on the new world. There were other people who expedited to America, some with the aim of finding a new world and some for discovering other places. However, still in today's "new world" much acknowledgment is given officially to Christopher Columbus for discovering their place without recognizing that other people who visited before the new land have set the prerequisites for Columbus to continue with his search. Thus, before Columbus made the giant leap on the new world, there were already existing footprints of the Vikings, Leif Erikson, and Prince Madoc of Wales.

The Vikings society is known in the history as first notated discovery proving that Columbus wasn't the first to discover the New World. The Vikings were the oldest and largest Dark Age re-enactment society in the United Kingdom, and probably the world. Columbus discovery occurred in 1492 but, the discoveries from the Vikings go all the way back to the period of 790 to 1066. The truth about Vikings' colonization of North America was uncovered in 1961 at L'Anse-aux-Meadows, Newfoundland, by a team of archaeologists lead by Helge Ingstad. They unearthed the remains of a Viking settlement dated to around 1000 AD. " By 1973, archaeologists had uncovered the remains of seven Viking houses, a blacksmiths shop, and a host of medieval

artifacts, including rusty nails, fragments of iron, a small piece of smelted copper, a stone lamp, a Norse cloak pin and a spindle whorl for making wool. Radiocarbon tests dated the at least a dozen objects to about AD1000, plus or minus 70 years" (Fulton, 41). Viking rune stones have been discovered in Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island Minnesota, Oklahoma and Massachusetts. " And a rusty though perfectly good battle axe at Rocky Point, Cape Ann" (Fulton, 41). Thus, it is argued that the Vikings were among the first to step on the new world that made a major impact on European history through trade, travel and, many advances in art and family life.

In addition, Lefi Erikson played an important role in discovering America. To begin with, the earliest documented claim for the discovery of America belongs to a Norse Captain named Bjarni Herjolfsson. Professor Samuel Wilson of the University of Texas writes of Bjarni, "...sailed from Iceland for Greenland in search of his father. During his journey he ran into bad weather and was blown off course to a coast that did not fit the formidable mountains and glaciers of Greenland."(18). Only wanting to find his father, Bjarni corrected his course and sailed for Greenland without landing on these new shores. Gerald Parshall writes, " When Bjarni finally reached Greenland, he reported the flat wooden country he had sighted to Erik the Red." (3). Erik was the Norwegian explorer who discovered and colonized Greenland and the father of Leif Erikson. When Leif heard the story of the lands to the west, he bought Bjarni's boat and sailed west to explore this newfound land. As he sailed, Leif explored " and named three countries: Helluland (flat stone land), a rocky and barren land, probably Baffin Island, Markland (woodland), a low forested coast, most certainly Labrador or Newfoundland." (Wilford, 4). Leif

continued south along the coast perhaps as far as New England and named these lands Vinland (grassland). Many scholars believe that Columbus learned of this discovery as a young sailor on one of his voyages to Iceland on the 1460s.

Finally, the late 12th century has yet another explorer claiming the discovery of a “ new world”. In 1170, Prince Madoc of Wales made two trips to North America after the death of his father, the king of North Wales. On his second trip, he returned to the New World with ten shiploads of settlers. “ The most popular theory is that Madoc’s colonists intermarried with the Indians and eventually migrated to the Dakotas, they were known as Mandan Indians, Mandan being the corruption of Madagwys, as the followers of Prince Madoc were called” (Jackson, 78). “ President Thomas Jefferson, no less, told Lewis and Clark to keep an eye peeled for those Welsh Indians when he sent the explorers out in 1804. And Meriweather Lewis later reported that he had found the tribe” (Parshall, 3). “ George Catlin, the American artist who lived with the Mandans for part of 1832, was persuaded that they were Madoc’s people by their fair complexion, blue and gray eyes, language parallels, and similarities in the round wicker boats favored by both the Mandan and Welsh tribes” (Jackson, 78). The story was considered as fact in many American book and also different events and memorials were built on this chronicle.

To conclude, the discovery of America can be attributed to many different explorers. It was the combination of explorers and discoveries that resulted in the development of the Americas. Each of these explorers deserves to be celebrated and honored for their accomplishments. Without their combined efforts the American continent may never have become the place it is today.

America was never undiscovered or forgotten as some of the Columbus supporters claim. Columbus used his knowledge of the earlier discoveries to continue previous attempts to colonize America. To attribute the whole discovery of the now promised land is not right and accurate historically. As shown above, facts tell us about discoveries of the land made before Columbus. Therefore, the history and the people should recognize all of those who contributed to the eventual creation of the new world.