**Chapter Outline**

to accompany

*Indigenous Peoples within Canada: A Concise History*, Fifth Edition

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**Chapter 3: The Invasions of the Americas**

This chapter describes the history of contact between the peoples of the North American continent and other peoples, specifically those of Europe . It looks at some of the ways these early interactions began to disrupt Indigenous Peoples across what would become Canada. Prior to documented dates of contact however, there is evidence which indicates the existence of earlier cultural exchange. The eastern Arctic was the place of first contact between Indigenous Peoples, namely Dorset (ancestors of modern Inuit) and Beothuk peoples. After this time, a succession of European explorers took the shock value out of these early contacts. Despite ongoing European presence in the form of whaling and fishing activities, there was little sustained contact until the demand for fur brought more European traders and settlers. The concept of colonialism, developed in Europe, would come to shape encounters with the First Peoples of North America.

There were differences in the ramifications of these early contacts for the various Indigenous groups involved. For the ancestors of Inuit, the first primary basis for involvement with Europeans was whaling activities, and in this regard, Inuit technology for deep sea whaling soon led to the growth of worldwide whaling. From an Indigenous perspective, some of the first trading encounters with the Inuit also revealed just how strong the European desire was for the fur clothing worn by the Inuit. It was along the Atlantic coast where more direct contact and subsequent conflict and hostilities arose as European trappers began to compete with Inuit people for fur and game resources; however, the Inuit were less susceptible to significant lifestyle disruption as the harsher Arctic environment was not appealing to the Europeans.

For the Beothuk of Newfoundland, their first interactions began with European fishermen off their coastal waters. The Beothuk were known to have been extremely wary of European explorers, a sentiment likely connected to the actions of Portuguese explorer Gaspar Corte-Real, who had taken 57 Beothuks and sold them into slavery. As European fishermen began to intrude into Beothuk fishing sites, hostilities erupted and continued to become increasingly violent, especially once the Beothuk began to aggressively defend against encroachment on their natural resources. As settlement grew, the Beothuk retreated inland, but the ongoing feuding resulted in open hunting being declared on their people. By 1829, the last known Beothuk had died.

The final sections of this chapter introduce the ramifications of the rapidly advancing fur trade. European diseases that travelled along the pre-existing trade networks decimated large numbers of Indigenous Peoples before the physical arrival of traders themselves. The chapter concludes by discussing key differences between Indigenous and European ethos, indicating that these differences would lead to misunderstandings between the two groups, and that these Indigenous groups did not have diplomatic measures in place that would have allowed them to unite quickly and prevent the takeover of their lands. Furthermore, because of their diversity, the fragmented nature of Indigenous nations would be manipulated by the newcomers as a tool for European domination.