

Ho-chunk and Ethnic Studies

Parallel Journeys

Recall our earlier discussion about changing our perspective of history from “Facing West” to “Facing East.” This timeline correlates with Unit 2 (Contact to Treaty Era: 1634-1816) and places the history of the United States within the context of Ho-chunk history. The two “journeys” are intertwined.

The Ho-chunk Journey		The United States Journey	
1634	Oral history tradition tells of the Frenchman Nicolet encountering Ho-chunk people near Green Bay – this is the first contact between the Ho-chunk and people from Europe.	1607-1630s	The first established settlements by the English occur in Jamestown (Virginia) and in the New England region.
Late 1630s	A small pox epidemic hit the Ho-chunk very hard – estimated that the population was reduced by 2/3.	1630s-40s	Large scale slave labor system is established in the West Indies. Slavery is coming into the tobacco culture of the southern colonies.
1639-1640	The Illini attack the Ho-chunk on Doty Island in Lake Winnebago, again causing significant population losses.		
1640-1701	The Beaver Wars A series of brutal conflicts between the Iroquois Confederacy and the French (and native allies of the French including the Huron, Algonquins, and Mohicans). Eventually these wars spilled into the Great Lakes region and refugees came into Wisconsin causing warfare between the Algonquin tribes and the Ho-chunk. Eventually, however, Ho-chunk people began intermarrying with the Algonquin refugees in Wisconsin and this helped them recover from huge population losses.	1607-1733	The 13 original British colonies are established in North America. The colonies exist within the economic system known as mercantilism and essentially exist for the benefit of the mother country. At the same time, the colonies are granted a fair amount of autonomy over their political affairs.
1660s	The Ho-chunk begin actively trading with the French via the fur trade and will continue that practice for more than a century.		
1712-1733	The First and Second Fox Wars These wars pitted the Fox Indians against the French and lasted off and on for over 20 years. The Ho-chunk became involved, as did other Wisconsin tribes. Generally, the Ho-chunk were supportive of the French against the Fox and the fighting was primarily over control of the Fox River, vital link between Lake Michigan and the Mississippi River.		
1728	A split in the Ho-chunk tribe occurs and results in the movement of one		

	group south to the Rock River area (Rock River Band).		
1755	Ho-chunk warriors fight alongside other tribes (and the French) against the British in “Braddock’s Defeat” in the Monongahela Valley in Pennsylvania (part of the French and Indian War).	1754-1763	The French and Indian War is fought (called the “Seven Years War” in Europe) between England and France for control of North America.
1763	The Ho-chunk join with Chief Pontiac and also befriend the English at Green Bay. “Pontiac’s Rebellion” is an attempt by the Ottawa Chief to expel the British from the Ohio Country. The rebellion ultimately failed, but convinced the British that they needed to stabilize the western frontier region.		The end of the French and Indian War results in British control of all territory from the east coast to the Mississippi River. At the conclusion of the war, the British government begins to tax the colonials more heavily, in part to pay for frontier protection. The colonial people eventually revolt.
1775-1783	The Ho-chunk side with the British during the American Revolution. The American Revolution causes division among various tribes – some fought for the British and other for the colonials.	1775-1783	The colonials fight for their independence from Great Britain and ultimately are successful.
1783	Inter-tribal warfare develops due to fur trade competition – fighting erupts between the Ho-chunk and the Chippewa.	1781-1789	Sometimes called the “Critical Period,” the fledgling government of the US attempts to establish itself under the Articles of Confederation, a government that eventually proved to be very weak. It was replaced by the US Constitution. The Land Ordinance of 1785 and the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 promote westward expansion. The area we live in is referred to as the “Northwest Territory” at the time and there are provisions within the Ordinance that ban slavery from this region and indicate that Native people will not be removed.
1793	Spoon Decorah, eldest son of Glory of the Morning and Savrevoir Dekaury, establishes a settlement on the Wisconsin River (near Portage).	1790s	The US Government is established with George Washington chosen as the first President of the United States. Under the new Constitution, Indian Nations are viewed as sovereign, although they continually face pressure from the US Government to “assimilate” or leave their land.
1794	Ho-chunk warriors are among those defeated at the “Battle of Fallen Timbers” in Ohio.		
1806	Over 300 native people representing the Ho-chunk, Fox, and Sioux, participate in a LaCrosse tournament at Prairie du Chien.	Early 1800s	Thomas Jefferson is America’s 3 rd President and he commissions Lewis and Clark to explore from Missouri to the west coast. Jefferson is fascinated by the native people, but essentially
Early	The fur trade begins to decrease with		

1800s	more and more Euro-Americans moving into Wisconsin. The Ho-chunk begin to feel more pressure concerning their land. At this time there were 30 or more Ho-chunk villages extending down the Rock River almost to its mouth on the Mississippi, along the Fox and up the Wisconsin, and on over to the Black River and then on down the Mississippi.		carries out the removal policies that were initiated under George Washington. Expansion into the west is viewed as central to the nation's future. There is also a growing tension between the young United States and Britain during this period. It primarily involves trade and shipping, but also involves the perception by Americans that the British are inciting the native people against American settlers in the west.
1809-1811	The Shawnee Tecumseh travels west from Prophetstown and meets with Ho-chunk and Sac people along the Rock and Mississippi Rivers. 50 Ho-chunk warriors eventually join Tecumseh and his brother the Prophet, in Tippecanoe (Indiana). They are attempting to unify the various tribes to hold off white incursion into the region. The Ho-chunk established a village near Tippecanoe in Indiana (Village du Puant).	1809-1814	James Madison becomes President and takes the nation to war against Britain (the War of 1812). The War is largely a maritime war, but there are battles in the frontier as well. Eventually, the two nations fight to a draw, even though the Americans view the war as a victory. Andrew Jackson becomes the great hero from the war for his actions in the Battle of New Orleans. Jackson leaves his mark on American history as an "Indian fighter" and becomes popular with many different groups of people.
November 1811	The Battle of Tippecanoe takes place in Ohio and hundreds of Ho-chunk warriors are involved.		
1812-1814	During the War of 1812, the Ho-chunk side with the British against the United States. They are involved in a number of battles during the war, including the capture of Fort Mackinac on Mackinac Island and battles in the Prairie du Chien area.		
1814	The Treaty of Ghent is signed ending the War of 1812. The fate of the Woodland tribes is now in the hands of the US Government. At the time of the Treaty, Ho-chunk territory is a triangle shaped region with Green Bay, north central Illinois, and LaCrosse as the three points.	1814-1816	The post-war period is called the "Era of Good Feeling" in American history, owing to the fact that there was very little political division in the country from roughly 1816-1824.
1816	A Treaty of Peace and Friendship is signed between the Ho-chunk and the Federal Government. This is the first of 11 such treaties, the last one signed in 1865.		