

Alaska's Heritage

CHAPTER 2-6 CULTURES MEET AND MIX

Trade between Alaska Natives warns them of the existence of foreign cultures

Long before the eighteenth century the Native groups of Alaska traded with one another. Sea shells found at archaeological sites far inland suggest that Athabaskans had contact with Southeast Alaska groups. Whale-tail amulets made by Bering Sea people have been found at sites on Kachemak Bay in Cook Inlet. Awls made of Interior Alaska copper have been found in Southeast Alaska. The Native people realized that beyond their own boundaries were other groups with different ideas and different material belongings. Aspects of nonNative cultures were influencing Alaska Naives. They knew of iron and beads. Subsistence patterns changed as needed to have goods for trade for the new luxuries. Nonetheless, they were unprepared for the Russians and other Euroamericans when they arrived in the 1700s.

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