

Negotiating the Land: Perceptions of Land, Property and Environment in 17th Century Colonial New England



Lecture by Dr. Gleb Aleksandrov
National Research University - Higher School of Economics, Moscow

ABSTRACT

The relations between Native Americans and the European settlers of New England were complex and multi-layered. Attempts at peaceful cooperation often gave way to violent conflict. During the 17th century, both indigenous and colonial era communities underwent dramatic transformations. While the devastating impact of colonial expansion on Amerindian communities is well known, the changes in the colonial worldview, driven by the contact with distinctly different indigenous cultures, are often overlooked. Those changes, new ideas and new perceptions largely determined the ideological and political evolution of the colonies in later decades. Land was, of course, one of the key sources of conflict between Native Americans and colonists. But in many cases, the roots of these conflicts went deeper than simple competition over resources. Often, what led to conflict was a lack of understanding of culture-specific views regarding fundamental concepts such as property, labor, and/or human-environment relations. For example, traditional Amerindian notions of land ownership were very different from English notions of property. Additionally, colonial notions of land ownership, that would emerge in the 17th century, would differ from both English and Amerindian notions. This situation contributed to the growing perception that Native Americans were “inferior” or “uncivilized” and it fostered the emergence of a social hierarchy that linked certain types of natural resource utilization to status. The lecture will discuss this phenomenon along with other important events that transpired in New England throughout the 17th century.

WHEN: Monday September 20, 2021 from 4:00 to 5:00 pm.

WHERE: Dina’s Place (DiGiorgo Campus Center) at Winthrop University, SC.

This is an approved Cultural Event. This event is free and open to the general public.
For more information contact Dr. Rick Chacon: chaconr@winthrop.edu or (803) 323-4656

