**Colonization of the New World**

**Part One: Discovering a New World**

*The notion that Columbus discovered America is erroneous and absurd; the Indian slogan “ an Indian discovered America” is definitely unquestionable.*

**1. Early Contacts**

**1.1. Pre-history people**

The prehistory of the Americas refers to the period before the arrival of Europeans, during which the land was inhabited by indigenous peoples. This era is of great significance, as it encompasses the early human migrations to the Americas, the development of diverse cultures, and the utilization of natural resources. The prehistory of the Americas is a subject of ongoing research and discovery, with archaeological and anthropological evidence shedding light on the lives and societies of the indigenous peoples who inhabited the continent prior to European contact.

The prehistory of the Americas is characterized by the presence of various indigenous cultures and societies, each with its own unique traditions and social structures. The earliest inhabitants of the Americas are believed to have arrived via the Bering Land Bridge from Asia, with evidence of human presence dating back thousands of years. These early peoples adapted to a wide range of environments, from the Arctic regions to the tropical forests, and developed diverse ways of life based on hunting, gathering, and later, agriculture.

**Pre-history People:**

* Natives reached America from northeastern Siberia about 30000 BC by crossing

the Bering Strait to Alaska.

* Archeological and Anthropological studies: Polynesians, Egyptians, Chinese, Phoenicians, Arabs.

**1.2. Viking and Early Adventurers**

The Vikings were a dynamic and adventurous people who engaged in extensive exploration and settlement during the 8th to the 11th century. They were known for their raids, trade, and establishment of settlements across a large part of the world. The Norse peoples, also referred to as Northmen, Norsemen, Danes, Götar, and Svear, were initially not unified nations and were characterized by their rich mythology, tradition of storytelling, and fearless warrior culture. The Vikings ventured far from their homelands in Scandinavia, becoming the first Europeans to discover and establish settlements in Greenland, Iceland, and even North America.

* Eric the Red reached Greenland in the 10th Century and Vikings traveled between Norway, Iceland, and Greenland. His Son, Leif Ericson, sailed from Greenland to a place called “Vinland” early in the 10th century.
* In 1963, archaeologists uncovered the remains of a Viking settlement on the northern side of Newfound land, Canada. According to radiocarbon dating, it was occupied in about AD 1,000. Recent studies carry it further to the South. This was the first proof that Europeans had lived in North America before the arrival of the Spanish expedition of Columbus.
* A Danish expedition in 1476 reached Labrador-Which is Helluland in Norse Legends.

**2. The Drive for Exploration**

The main drives for exploration are multifaceted and encompass a variety of motivations and factors.

**2.1. Motives for Exploration**

Throughout history, the desire to explore has been fueled by a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic drivers, including curiosity, the pursuit of knowledge, economic incentives, technological advancement, and the quest for adventure and discovery.

* More interest in overseas trade urged by the profits of the crusaders
* Marco Polo’s trip to China opened wider doors on the riches and wonders of the outside World.
* Science contributed new knowledge about the world: Discoveries in Astronomy- science of the starts- helped seamen navigate better and the renaissance thinkers and philosophers revived ancient Greek beliefs that the earth was spherical.

**2.2. Trade Routes**

* Land routes: expensive and dangerous, Constantinople: situated at the crossroads of important trade routes, became unsafe passageway
* Sea routes: European merchants sought sea routes to import goods directly. For that, they financed sailing expeditions to find new routes to Asian markets.
* Monarchs defended the claims of their merchants to the discovered lands

**3. The Discovery of the New World**

**3.1. Columbus Sails West, 1492.**

* Christopher Columbus (1451-1506), a navigator from Genoa, Italy believed in the roundness of earth therefore the existence of a Western passage to Asia.
* The Spanish Court Financed his enterprise (Queen Isabella of Castile); Columbus sailed with three ships ( Santa Maria, Nina, and Pinta)
* He first landed in San Salvador, Bahamas and returned triumphant to tell about it.
* Firmly believing that he reached India, in Asia, he called the place Indies and the native population Indians.
* On the return voyage, he carried gold, strange animals and plants, some Indian clothes…etc.

**3.2. Further Exploration and Discoveries**

* Vasco Nunez de Balboa: Spanish adventurer, crossed the Isthmus of Darien (Panama) 1513
* Ferdinand Magellan: Portuguese, sailed along the South American Coast 1519, sailed into the ocean he named Pacific
* Americus Vespucius: Italian merchant

**Part Two: European Territorial Claims in the New World**

*The major European powers, Spain, Portugal, France, England, and others claimed immense lands in the New World.*

**1. The Spanish in America**

The Spanish took the lead in exploring and colonizing the New World. **Santo Domingo**, 1496 became the first European settlement and capital of New Spain.

**a. Spanish Conquistadors:** The Spanish conquistadors were explorer-soldiers of the Spanish Empire during the 15th and 16th centuries. They played a significant role in the conquest and colonization of the Americas. The most famous conquistadors include **Hernán (Hernando) Cortés**, who conquered the Aztec Empire, and **Francisco Pizarro**, who led the conquest of the Inca civilization. Motivated by a desire for wealth and religious zeal, the conquistadors risked their lives to explore and conquer new territories, often leaving a trail of destruction in their wake. The term **“conquistador”** is derived from the Spanish word for “conqueror” and is often associated with the leaders of the Spanish conquest of America, particularly Mexico and Peru.

* **Also, Juan Ponce de Leon,** was an explorer and slave trader. While searching for the Fountain of youth, he landed on a new shore he called Florida in 1513 and claimed it for Spain.
* Another explorer, **Hernando de Soto,** traveled from the coast of Florida in 1539 to the Mississippi River.
* **Francisco de Coronado:** Spanish governor of a province in Western Mexico, explored what is today the Southwest region of the USA (deserts and rivers of Arizona, New Mexico, Texas & Oklahoma, Kansas)

**b. New Spain Settlement**

New Spain was the largest of the colonial Empires in the New World and Spain was the first of the European nations to colonize the American Continent; the others did not succeed in establishing settlements until after 1600. Spain claimed and settled **Florida** and the **Southwestern** region of the present United States.

* The Spanish colonial system submitted large territories to the authority of powerful conquistadors who enslaved the Indians and forced them to labor. The system resulted in a devastating extermination of the native population-mainly in South America.
* The number of Indians dropped in the 17 th century. This in itself resulted in an African slave trade to replace the decimated Indian labour force.
* **“The Black robes”** (Christian Priests) set to convert the Indians to Christianity. They established the educational institutions and religious missions and were successful with the mission tribes of the southwest.
* Spain’s colonies north of the Rio Grande were lost to USA in 19th C. Florida was given up in 1819, and war with Mexico brought the southwest territories, then Mexico provinces, under control of the US government in 1848

**2. The Portuguese**

**a. Treaty of Tordesillas, 1494:** Spain and Portugal disputed over discovered lands. They asked the Pope to settle the dispute. He drew a line of Demarcation, 1493 giving Spain discovered lands West of that line and Portugal those East of it. Supplemented by the Treaty of Tordesillas, 1494, the line was set 370 leagues west of the Cape Verde Islands to satisfy Portugal.

* **Pedro Alvarez Cabral**, a Portuguese seaman sailing to India, mistakenly sailed further west and reached the shores of Brazil in South America. Despite the fact that the land was situated west, he claimed it for Portugal according to the previous agreement

**b. Newfoundland:** the Portuguese made another important discovery in North America. In 1501, **Gaspar Corte-Real** reached Newfoundland. Shortly after, however, the Portuguese gave up expeditions to the north and concentrated their efforts on their East India empire and the colony of Brazil.

* **St Augustine 1565: the first European permanent settlement in North America**

**3. The French**

**a. Glovanni da Verrazano:** A navigator from Florence, was charged by the French King Francis I to find a passage to Asia. Da Verrazano reached North Carolina and then sailed north to Newfoundland in 1524. His report to the king contained the first description of the northeastern coast of North America and gave France a claim to those lands.

**b. Jacques Cartier St Lawrence** explored St Lawrence River between 1534-41 while he was looking for an Asia route. He sailed up the river until he reached an Indian village called Hochelaga and renamed it Montreal. He claimed a huge area to France.

* After Cartiers’ voyages, a series of religious wars at home stopped French attempts. France made attempts, however, to establish to colonies as refuges for the Huguenots (French Protestants). One Colony, in Brazil, was destroyed by the Portuguese. The other in Florida, was also destroyed by the Spanish.
* **Samuel de Champlain, often considered the father of New France founded “Quebec,” the first French permanent settlement in North America in 1608.**
* **Settlements were founded but the main interest remained commercial: fur trading became the basis of the French economic activities in the new world.**
* **Many permanent settlements were founded, including Detroit, St Louis, New Orleans, and Baton.**

France and England were frequently at war and France lost its North American colonial empire to England gradually.

**4. The Dutch**

The Netherlands was the last to begin exploration in the New World. For that, the Dutch formed the Dutch East India Company with exclusive monopoly of trade. The company recruited Henry Hudson, an English seaman, and sent him to search for a passage to the Orient.

* **Henry Hudson**

Hudson reached the Hudson River in 1607. His Ship the *Half Moon* sailed up the river that bears his name today until he reached the site of Albany, New York. The Hudson exploration gave the Dutch a claim to the surrounding area.

**5. Russia in North America**

Czar Peter the Great also competed with other European nations for colonization and power in the New World. The expansion of **the Siberian Fur trade** motivated the explorations that eventually resulted in the discovery of **Alaska.** He asked **Vitus Bering** to find a land passage between Siberia and North America. In 1741, Bering reached Alaska.

**In 1857, Russia sold Alaska to the United States for the sum of 7.2 million**

**6. England Enters the Race for Exploration**

England also entered the race for exploration. Like the other powers, England was aspiring for the riches of the New World but also a place among the powerful. 1497, John Cabot, a Genoese sea captain, explored for Henry VII lands west on the way to Cipango (Japan and India). Like the other powers, England was looking for a shortcut to Asia.

* John Cabot reached the St Lawrence River, Canada in 1497 and in a second trip in 1498, he sailed to the Chesapeake Bay, USA. Disappointed as no gold could be found, he returned to England, but his voyage gave England its later claim to North America.
* Between 1547-1558, England showed no interest in exploration as religious disputes, at home and in Europe, raged. England had to wait for the Elizabethan era to re-launch exploration of the new World.
* Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603) established trading companies and supported pirates and slave Smugglers like John Hawkins and Francis Drake
* Sir Walter Raleigh (1554-1618): 1st expedition 1584 Virginia, 2nd 1585 Roanoke Island (the lost colony)
* Tobacco leaf: profitable agriculture in the southern English colonies, Tobacco industry by John Rolfe, and 1st slaves arrived in 1619
* **John Smith: 1st permanent settlement Jamestown 1607**

**Part Three: Colonization**

England successfully colonized many areas throughout the New World. The most important colonies, however, were the 13 colonies established between 1607 and 1732 along the Atlantic coastline of North America. Those communities, weak and poor at first, grew and developed to become the 13 original states that declared independence from Britain in 1776 and formed the USA.

**1. The Organization of Settlement**

Under English Law, all territory claimed in America belonged to the crown. Hence, all the English enterprising interests turned into the Crown for grants of land and powers of government. The Crown grants took two forms:

1.1. **Charter/ Cooperation**

Grant of specified rights (territory and governing rights) made by the Monarch to a corporation. The charted companies founded colonies and enjoyed property, commercial, and governing rights.

**1.2. Patent/ Proprietary**

Exclusive right given usually to one or two persons. The settlers in the proprietary colonies share in the making of local laws; therefore, they enjoyed certain liberties

**2. Motives of Settlement**

* **Political:** extend power of England
* **Economic**: Make money through trade, land sales, mining precious metals.
* **Religious**: Establish religious liberty for the persecuted settlements
* **Humanitarian**: give chance to the poor to work and prosper

**3. Categorization of the British Colonies in North America**

**The British colonies in North America may be divided into three types:**

**3.1. The Chesapeake Colonies in North America**

* The Chesapeake Colonies in North America, specifically Virginia and Maryland, were characterized by their reliance on tobacco as the mainstay of their economies.
* The settlements grew rapidly due to tobacco profits, with large plantations being established along natural waterways for ease of transportation.
* The majority of early settlers were male immigrants from England, and the emphasis on indentured labor led to the importation of large numbers of English workers, mostly young men who came as indentured servants.

**3.2. The New England Colonies: Massachusetts 1630, Connecticut 1635, Rohde Island 1636, New Hampshire 1679**

* Generally speaking, these colonies were characterized by their focus on religious freedom and the pursuit of a more pure and reformed Christian society.
* The settlers, including the Pilgrims and Puritans, sought to create communities based on their religious beliefs and values.
* The New England Colonies were known for their strong emphasis on education, trade, and a largely homogeneous society.
* The economy was based on fishing, shipbuilding, trade, and small-scale farming, as the rocky soil was not as conducive to large-scale agriculture as the Southern Colonies.

**3.3. The Restoration Colonies**

The Restoration Colonies were a group of colonies established or supported by King Charles II during the Restoration period in England. These colonies included the Carolinas, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. They were initially proprietary colonies, granted by the king to trusted individuals or groups. The Carolinas, for example, were given to eight proprietors in 1663, with the intention of establishing English control in the area between Virginia and Spanish Florida. The Restoration Colonies played a significant role in the resumption of English colonization in North America