

Colonial Regions

THE "NEW WORLD"

VUS-2

Early European exploration and colonization resulted in the redistribution of the world's population as millions of people from Europe and Africa voluntarily and involuntarily moved to the New World.

Exploration and colonization initiated worldwide commercial expansion as agricultural products were exchanged between the Americas and Europe. In time, colonization led to ideas of representative government and religious toleration that over several centuries would inspire similar transformations in other parts of the world.

Why did Europeans settle in the English colonies?

How did their motivations influence their settlement patterns and colony structures?

In what ways did the cultures of Europe, Africa, and the Americas interact?

What were the consequences of the interactions of European, African, and American cultures?

Characteristics of early exploration and settlements in the New World

- New England was settled by Puritans seeking freedom from religious persecution in Europe. They formed a "covenant community" based on the principles of the **Mayflower Compact** and Puritan religious beliefs and were often intolerant of those not sharing their religion.
- They also sought economic opportunity and practiced a form of direct democracy through town meetings.

-The Middle Atlantic region was settled chiefly by English, Dutch, and German-speaking immigrants

seeking religious freedom and economic opportunity.

-Virginia and the other Southern colonies were settled by people seeking economic opportunities. Some of the early Virginia settlers were "cavaliers", English nobility who received large land grants in eastern Virginia from the King of England. Poor English immigrants also came seeking better lives as small farmers or artisans and settled in the Shenandoah Valley or western Virginia, or as indentured servants who agreed to work on tobacco plantations for a period of time to pay for passage to the New World.

-Jamestown, established in 1607 by the Virginia Company of London as a business venture, was the first permanent English settlement in North America. The Virginia House of Burgesses, established by the 1640s, was the first elected assembly in the New World. It has operated continuously and is today known as the General Assembly of Virginia.

Interactions among Europeans, Africans and American Indians

- The explorations and settlements of the English in the American colonies and Spanish in the Caribbean, Central America, and South America, often led to violent conflicts with the American Indians. The Indians lost their traditional territories and fell victim to diseases carried from Europe. By contrast, French exploration of Canada did not lead to large-scale immigration from France, and relations with native peoples were often more cooperative.
- The growth of an agricultural economy based on large landholdings in the Southern colonies and in the Caribbean led to the introduction of slavery in the New World. The first Africans were brought against their will to Jamestown in 1619 to work on tobacco plantations.

