

PURITAN NOTES:

Rise of Puritanism & Moral Liberty:

- **Purity of Religion:** rejected Catholic structures, practices, and doctrines of religious authority retained in the Anglican church, such as archbishops, bishops, and priests, and sale of indulgences (Protestant Reformation)
- **Congregationalists:** embraced independent local congregations that chose their own clergy, determined their mode of worship, and often listened to sermons and personally studied the bible
- **John Calvin's theology:** (predestination) the Puritans followers believed God had pre-destined different groups of people, the "elect," to be saved from damnation; no amount of good deeds or good works could save those not among the elect
- **Religious Freedom:** Emigrated to America in order to fully practice their Protestant faith away from the influence and control of the Anglican church and the English government that enforced its rules; did not tolerate other religions
- **Massachusetts Bay Colony, John Winthrop, hoped to create "a city set upon a hill,"** where Puritans would reject "natural" liberty, or action without restraints he believed typically practiced by the Irish, Indians and bad Christians, for a "moral" liberty to do "that only which is good," in which Puritans became free by accepting severe restraints on speech, religion, and personal behavior

Pilgrims at Plymouth 1620

- **Pilgrims:** Separatists (can't purify existing church, must separate from it completely), settlers to America, left the Netherlands in 1620
- **Proprietary Colony:** financed by private investors interested in establishing a trading base in North America
- **Mayflower:** The Pilgrims wanted to settle in Virginia, but their ship, the *Mayflower*, was blown off course and landed in Cape Cod
- **Mayflower Compact 1620-** before the survivors of the journey established the Plymouth colony, they drew up an agreement in which all adult male colonists agreed to obey "just and equal laws" enacted by representatives of their own choosing - majority rule to manage colony (town meetings)
- **William Bradford:** chosen to be governor
- **Royal Colony:** 1691, this independent colony became an official crown colony of England
- **1st Thanksgiving (1621)** - 44 of 102 survived the winter of 1620 - 1621 / Fall 1621: local Indians helped Pilgrims by sharing food (Squanto); Economy: fur (beaver), fish, lumber

Massachusetts Bay Colony 1629

- **Massachusetts Bay Company:** London merchants initially financed about 1,000 mostly Puritans to start colony
- **Piety and Profit:** further the Puritan cause and profit by trading with the Indians
- **Geography:** north of Plymouth

Great Migration - 1620's - 1642

- 21,000 Puritans had flowed to Massachusetts Bay Colony (Catholicism undermined the relationship between God and the individual through rituals/sacraments administered by a powerful hierarchy, holding Latin to be the only language of religion, sacraments could be bought)
- Compared to colonists in the Chesapeake, New England settlers were older, more prosperous and religious
- Families: women were just as numerous as men, leading to more families than in the southern colonies

Puritan Family

- **Patriarchal Family:** adult men controlled the labor of women and children in a farming society without large numbers of slaves or indentured servants.
- **Women** were held to be spiritual equals to men, and could become full members of the church, women were legally subservient to male authority in the home
- **Children:** most New England woman married young, gave birth seven times, and spent most of her life bearing and raising children

Government and Society in Massachusetts

- **Conformity:** Puritans feared excessive individualism and social disorder
- **Town** - small and compact, self-governing towns, centered on a Congregational church and schools, surrounded by small houses and farming lots for individual families
- **Education:** learn to read the Bible, high literacy for time, publically supported schools to oppose Satan; Harvard founded in 1636 to train ministers
- **Government:** Bible Commonwealth, religious and social vision centered on the Bible; John Winthrop was the 1st Governor and served for about 19 years (author of City Upon a Hill)
- **General Court:** 1634, The Massachusetts Bay' Company's shareholders transformed their commercial charter into a government document and created this government body which acted as a legislative and judicial body; deputies elected by freemen (landowning church members) constituted a single legislature
- **Bicameral Legislature:** 1644, company officers and elected deputies were divided into two legislative houses, and unlike in Virginia or Maryland, freemen were able to elect their governor
- **Theocracy:** The principle of consent was central to all of Puritan life, including church and state, but Puritan democracy, especially voting in colony-wide elections, was limited to members of the church, an ever-smaller number as the colony grew over time (limited democracy)
- **Half-Way Covenant:** as the Puritan experiment began to wane in favor of a merchant elite who wanted to seek profit even if it wasn't for the common good, religious devotion also began to diminish in the 3rd generations as commercialism grew and piety declined; 1662 Half-Way Covenant was issued to help grow church membership based on ancestry to those from the Great Migration, not religious conversion in order to increase membership in the congregation

Puritan Liberties

- **Not Egalitarian:** inequality was seen as an expression of God's will, and while some liberties applied to all, separate lists of rights were made for freemen, women, children, and servants
- **"Body of Liberties"** : 1641, issued by the General Court, outlined the liberties and responsibilities of Massachusetts colonists; inequality was part of God's plan and reinforced in law/custom: rights based on social class (ordinary people were "goodman" or "goodwife" / superior people were "gentleman" or "lady", wear garb of gentlemen), allowed but not reliant on slavery (1st slave in 1640), churches must be established in towns, levy taxes to pay ministers, enforce religious devotion, death penalty for witchcraft
- **Theology:** Church and State were closely intertwined - each town was legally required to have a Congregational church and tax residents to support it
- **Freedoms:** rights of free speech and assembly, and equal protection of the law to all in the colony, but also prescribed the death penalty for worshipping a non-Christian god, witchcraft, and blasphemy.

Intolerance: error must be opposed and driven out

- Puritans persecuted and expelled Baptists (opposed to child baptism) and killed Quakers (such as Mary Dyer) for preaching "inner light" doctrines and opposing any religious authority (no ministers or sermons).

Anne Hutchinson: persecution and expulsion by 1638 ([Video](#): Tom Richey)

- Criticized ministers for not preaching covenant of grace
- Held religious meetings in her home
- Challenged the political and religious leadership of Massachusetts Bay

Roger Williams: expelled for "new and dangerous opinions" (1638)

- Preached complete separation of church and state; the state should have no influence over a person's conscience
 - Religious groups should be supported by voluntary tithes, not taxes
 - Indians should be paid for lands.
 - Settled Rhode Island and established complete freedom of religion (including Jews, Catholics, and Quakers)
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ACTIVITY:

Making Generalizations: For each set of 5 concepts below, think about the capitalized Topic and write 1 sentence for each using all of the words associated with that Topic. You should have 5 sentences when you are done.

1. PURITANS: Religious Purity / Religious Freedom / Great Migration / Predestination / Massachusetts
2. PILGRIMS: Pilgrims / Plymouth / Mayflower Compact / William Bradford / Thanksgiving
3. MASSACHUSETTS BAY COLONY: Patriarchal Family / Inequality / Conformity / Education
4. MASSACHUSETTS BAY COLONY: Towns / Congregationalist / Bible Commonwealth / Government
5. INTOLERANCE & DISSENT: Anne Hutchinson / Roger Williams / Rhode Island