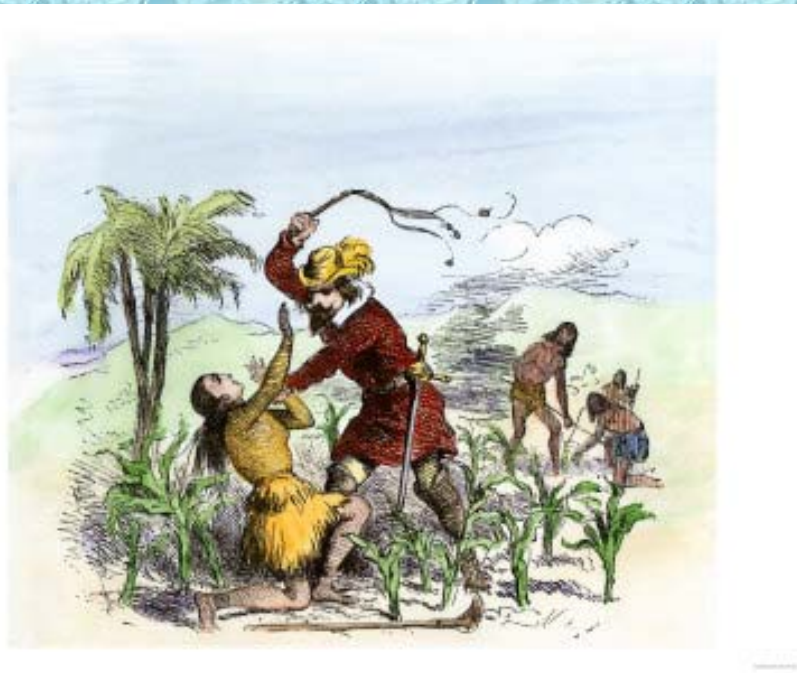


The Europeans in the Americas

THE EARLY MODERN WORLD (1450 – 1750)



- The Spanish were the first to dominate the Americas (they had the advantage of the Treaty of Tordesillas, and Columbus). They administered their New World empire by establishing two viceroyalties: New Spain and Peru.



- The Spanish created a class structure in the New World that affected political and social life.
- Top to bottom:
 - Peninsulars: People born in Spain, living in the New World
 - Creoles: People of pure Spanish blood, born in the New World
 - Mestizos: mixed European & Amerindian descent
 - Mulattoes: mixed European & African descent
 - African slaves
 - Indians: (Although indigenous groups had a class system in place, the Spanish grouped elites and commoners together as “Indians.”). Some indigenous elites attempted with mixed success to hold on to some power.

- The Catholic Church (for both the Spanish and the Portuguese) became the driver of introducing Christianity, along with European language and culture to natives.
- Although thousands of baptisms were taking place not long after the initial conquest, many natives secretly retained their old belief structures (As a result, some church officials resorted to torture and executions).
- Some saw the benefits of blending Christianity with traditional native rituals.



- A priest named Bartolome de Las Casas became an early defender of Amerindians during the colonial period.
- His work helped bring about legislation that outlawed the enslavement of Amerindians.



- Economically, the Spanish greatly benefited from the silver deposits of South America, which helped support farming, textile production, and ultimately urbanization in the Americas. (The large influx of silver into the Americas actually affected European money supply).
- Amerindians were exploited under the encomienda system, which forced them to do labor or provide goods in exchange for being “looked after” by the Spanish.



- The Portuguese focused their attention on the trade routes in Asia and Africa. However, they did benefit from their sugar plantations in Brazil.
- Sugar dominated Brazil's economy and although originally carried out by Amerindian slaves, the massive loss of life caused the Portuguese to rely on slaves from Africa.



- In contrast to the Iberian countries, England began its colonization much later and was often done by private companies as opposed to strict government sponsorship.
- After a few failures (ex: Roanoke), the English established their first permanent settlement at Jamestown, Virginia. Although large numbers of people died in its early years (80%), the colony prospered from growing tobacco.



- Indentured servants (someone unable to pay their passage to the New World would enter a contract where they would repay their debt by doing labor for someone) had made up about 80% of English immigrants coming into Virginia and surrounding colonies, but planters soon realized it was cheaper to pay a high initial cost for a slave and have them work for their entire life.
- Over time, English colonies from Virginia down to Georgia would benefit from tobacco, indigo, and cotton plantations worked by slaves (slaves did occasionally revolt: Stono Rebellion).

- Instead of commercial interests, early English settlers in New England came for religious reasons and often brought their whole families.
 - In 1620, the Pilgrims established Plymouth Colony as a way of “separating” from the Church of England.
 - In the following decades Puritans (who wanted to purify the Church of England) crossed the Atlantic via joint-stock companies.



- New England had no opportunity to grow cash crops like tobacco, therefore a plantation social class never emerged.
- At first there was some success from timber, fishing, and furs, but the region became most profitable by providing commercial shipping services between the South and Europe.
- Also, because whole families came to the region, the population increased much faster than it did in the South.



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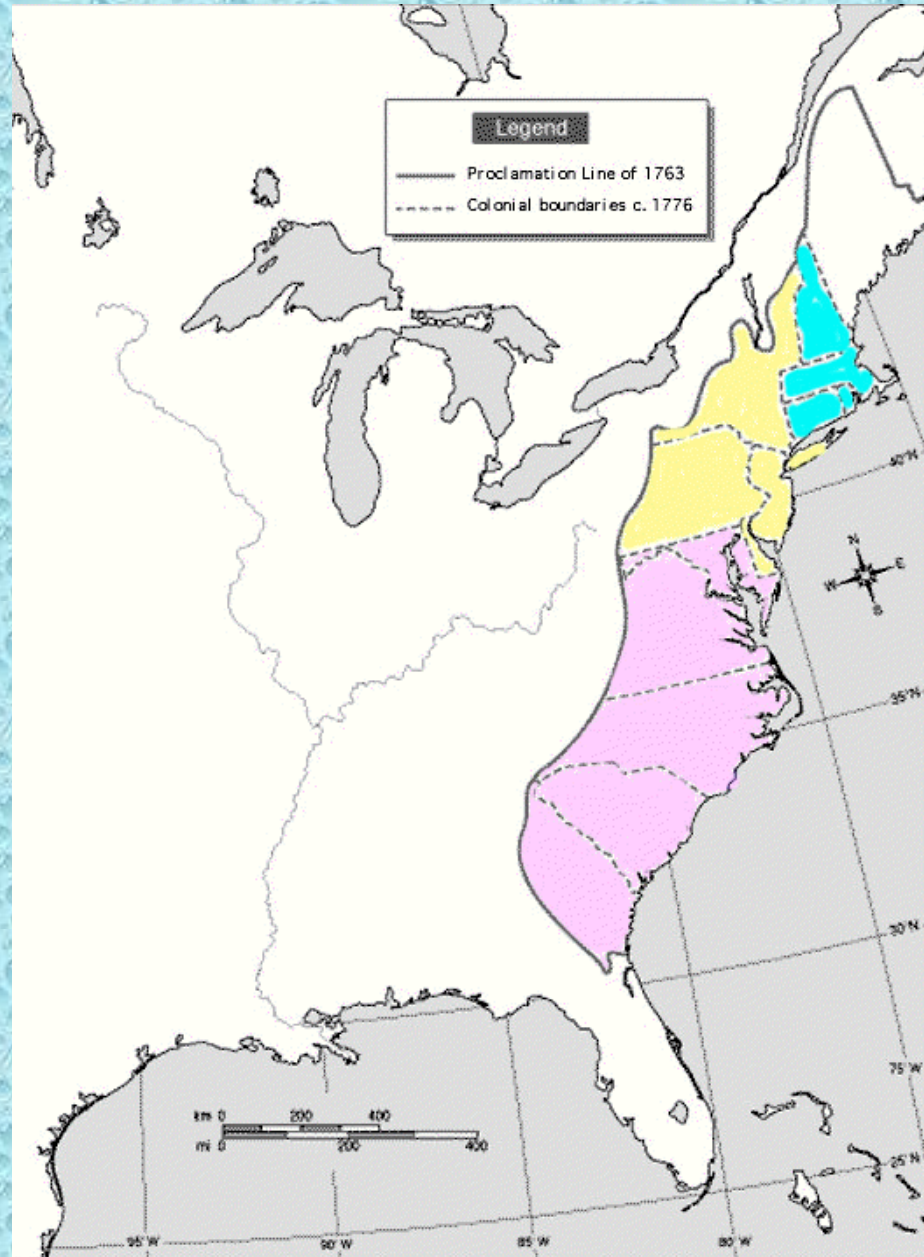


- In the Mid Atlantic region grew a number of colonies that were diverse (religions, peoples).
- There was a high degree of tolerance between Amerindians, immigrants from Europe, and blacks. (Slavery did exist but to a very small extent).
- Nicknamed the “breadbasket” colonies for the amount of grains grown and eaten (a pound a day).



- New York originally called New Netherland by the Dutch was taken over by the English and was renamed.
- Pennsylvania was founded by William Penn and became a refuge for Quakers. Penn had better relations with the Natives than did most of his English counterparts.

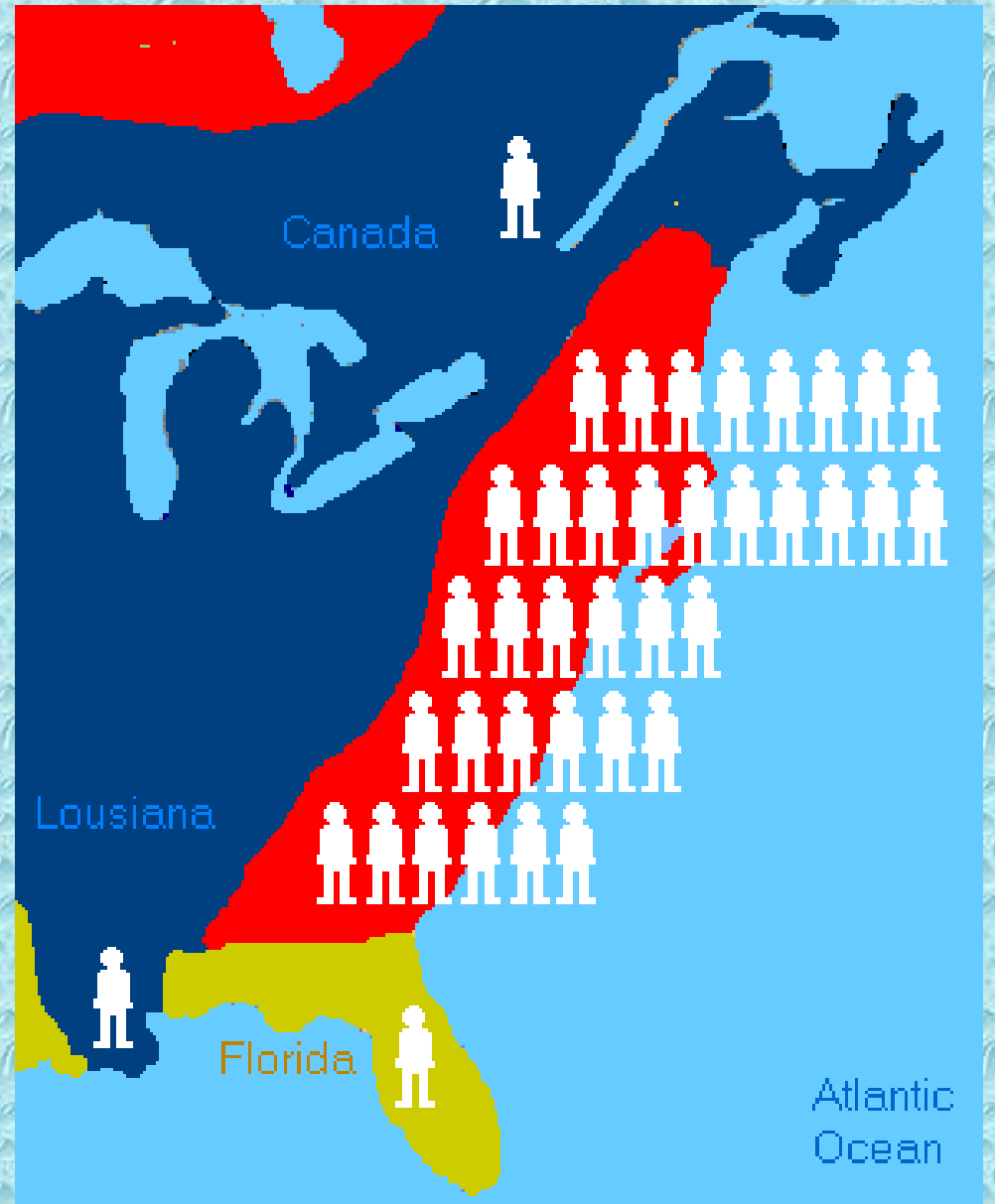




Colonial America, 1776
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- Like the English the French postponed settlements in the New World focusing on instead the fur trade.
- The demand for furs in Europe caused native groups and Europeans to exploit the resources of America.
- In general, the French developed much better relations with Amerindians than did other European colonists (because of the fur trade and French reluctance to come over in large numbers and build cities the Indians retained their lands).





- Confrontation between the French and English began over lands in the Ohio River Valley, this boiled over into the French and Indian War.
- The French and their Amerindian allies fought the English (who asked for help from the Iroquois, but refused) and the “American” colonists.



- After the English began to take French forts including the French capital Quebec, the war turned in favor of the British and the colonists.
- The French & Indian War (known as the 7 Years War in Europe) ended with a treaty in 1763 granting England all land east of the Mississippi.



The colonization of European nations:

- Similarities:
 - All used diplomacy and violence to subdue resistance
 - All hoped to extract wealth from the New World
 - All used slavery
- Differences:
 - E&F start colonization nearly 100 years after the S&P
 - E&F used private companies and had local political control, S&P tried to control trade their viceroys
 - Indentured servants were used by the English
 - The French had good relations with Amerindians
 - Location, location, location!

What happened to the Spanish?

- After years of dominating the New World Spain's power began to wane:
 - The Spanish Armada was defeated in 1588 signaling a decline in military prowess.
 - The Wars of Spanish succession (the Spanish king Charles of the Habsburg family died without an heir, opening a struggle for control of Spain and its colonies. the Bourbon family comes into power) disrupted politics at home.
 - Unlike other European nations, there wasn't much of a middle class in Spain (the English & Dutch middle classes was what was behind their economic growth).
 - Spanish colonies in the Caribbean began illegally trading with other European nations (also piracy was occurring).
 - Rising competition with France and Great Britain.
- On the bright side increased silver mining and the expansion of slavery was still bringing Spain wealth.

The British

- Following the French and Indian War the British made some changes in their colonial policies.
 - Limited colonial trading and production that competed with British manufactures.
 - Forbid colonists from settling further west as way of avoiding conflict with the French.
 - New taxes and less political power for colonists.

