Seeds of Liberty, Justice, Peace, and Democracy in Early America

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Contributions of William Penn

By

Satish Sharma

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Dedicated to,

My True Teacher,

My Spiritual Master

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FOREWORD

The Enlightenment created a perennial transformation in philosophy, science, and technology. Humanities evolved as a process of liberation, replacing the age-old structures of darkness. Nietzsche's declaration about the death of God turned philosophy upside down. The radiance of enlightened 'reason' thus inflamed the hunger for innovative ideas and revolutionary values in search of truth. Destruction preceded deconstruction. Those formulative observations duly contextualized the central ideas which wise people surmised.

The paradox of the Enlightenment was a dreaded bliss with the suggestion that we should enslave science before it becomes our master. I have assayed this dilemma many times elsewhere. "Regulate AI before it regulates us," alerted Harari. Alas, it is too late now. The dialectic of freedom and unfreedom is well known to all critical minds. However, old habits of thought die hard.

The author of this book once again offers a brilliant exposé of one of the prodigious thinkers who wrote about art and ethics in search of truth and liberty. It is commendable that those values are still in our subconsciousness at a juncture when democracy is in the throes of insurrection in its own 'motherland,' i.e., the United States of America. On the other side of the Atlantic, Britain is preparing for the coronation of King Charles III. The Stone of Destiny from Scotland will be there to celebrate the royal monarch.

Authoritarianism is no longer in the back seat of governance. The war in Ukraine, not to mention the horrors of the pandemic, raises the specter of global insecurity and human extinction. Russian and NATO missiles debunk Fukuyama's oversold prophecy about "the end of history." Homo sapiens invoke chimeras of survival, hope, and hubris. The third rail of pacifism and its ideological allies further deepens a sense of helplessness amidst dystopian nihilism and despair.

In Gandhi's land, atavistic nationalism fiercely enforced an exclusionary manifesto unabashedly promoted by Hindutva under reactionary rule. "Narendra Modi is retrofitting his country's past to control the future," commented Banyan (*The Economist,* April 15-21, 2023:34). A reverse revision of history is violence and fraud against marginalized people. Liberty, justice, and peace are pillars of democracy.

The world's two great democracies—the US and India—are endangered by fascist thugs and bigots. What can be done to encounter falsification of truth, wanton destruction of secular institutions, the lingering remnants of global capitalism, and the tide of religious fundamentalism? Culture wars and tribal pungency eclipse the basic issues—equality and justice—that embolden the democratic climate, which breeds the seeds of liberty and peace.

The author Satish Sharma has an uncanny academic zeal to pursue liberty, justice, peace, democracy, and nonviolence amidst the fog of authoritarianism and war. A Gandhian scholar in his own right, he has enshrined hope and wisdom by reading, writing, and teaching about the seeds of freedom, liberty, justice, and democracy. Seeds of justice breed fruits of liberty and peace. On the heels of his previous two books on Quakerism (2017) and Feminist Pioneers (2021), he signifies William Penn and his undying legacy embodied in the "holy experiment." Again, The focus is on Quakerism and other topics related to the conditions and thinking of the times. The search for freedom—the human condition devoid of unfreedom—is a noble journey. Students, teachers, reformers, and practitioners will find this book riveting, inspiring, and useful. My congratulations to you, Dr. Sharma; keep the flames of hope and progress alive!

Dr. Brij Mohan,[1] Dean Emeritus
Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, USA

PREFACE

In all ages and all parts of the world, philosophers, thinkers, and visionaries have thought of better living conditions for people and societies and offered their ideas to indicate how that goal could be accomplished. Examples of such philosophers, thinkers, and visionaries in the Western world were Plato, Aristotle, Aurelius, More, Bacon, Harrington, Swift, and others. However, no matter how lofty or useful their ideas were, very few of them took the pains to put their ideas or the ideas offered by others into practice. William Penn was a visionary of a different kind who tried to put into practice his thoughts and ideas of making the world a better place for all by conducting his "holy experiment" in Pennsylvania, America. That way, he wanted to show the people in Britain, Europe, and elsewhere in the world that liberty, justice, peace, and democracy in societies were still possible goals even in very difficult conditions if intentions were right and proper efforts were made. Whether or not his experiment brought forth the desired results was another matter, but the fact was that he at least tried and thereby set an example for many others who wanted to tread similar paths. For that fact alone, he became known as a champion who tried to sow the seeds of liberty, justice, peace, and democracy in early America for the first time.[1]

Penn was born in 1644 in England, twenty years after the founder of Quakerism, George Fox, was born and two years after the start of the English Civil War. Three years after Penn's birth, Fox had his first revelation while wandering in the moors of Yorkshire and Leicestershire, and five years later, he founded Quakerism, of which Penn also became a part and which changed his life. Later Penn also became a co-partner, co-preacher, and close friend of Fox and other early founders of Quakerism and contributed much to the Quaker movement and tits literary base.[2]

Penn's father was an admiral in the Navy, and he had close connections with the monarch and his brother, the Duke of York. Therefore he also wanted Penn to make something of himself and have a lofty career in the monarch's court. But despite the impressive family background and his father's connections with royalty, Penn turned out to be a rebel early on when he protested against the policy of Oxford University regarding compulsory attendance of students at the university chapel services. In 1660 the Puritan heads at Oxford University were

forced to resign, influenced by the Church of England, and Anglican heads replaced them. Penn thought it was unfair and protested against that move at the university too. Penn was expelled from the university for those and other non-conformities when he was seventeen. Later in 1667, he also converted to Quakerism under the influences of Thomas Loe and George Fox, and for that activity drew considerable wrath from his father. Penn was kicked out of his home, but he remained a Quaker and served the causes of his newly found faith for the rest of his life. His determination added much to his character and what he chose to do in his future life.[3]

Renaissance and Enlightenment ideas were common in those days. Thinkers and reformers talked about liberty, justice, peace, democracy, egalitarianism, tolerance, acceptance, and a proper education for everybody. The rights, privileges, and freedom of organizations and institutions in society, the roles, responsibilities, obligations, and functions of the state, the church, society's day-to-day affairs, the needs of the people, and creating a suitable environment for them were also discussed. Rationality in all affairs and all walks of life was being emphasized, old values, beliefs, traditions, customs, norms, behavior, and workings were being challenged, and suggestions were coming for changes. That also applied to state and church affairs. There were talks about more power and authority for the people, families, and communities vis-à-vis the organizations, institutions, state, and church. Those conditions and circumstances rapidly developed around Penn.[4]

Overall, times during Penn's days were rough, even though inventions, discoveries, and explorations were made all over Europe. People felt excited about the new developments and desired to adventure and travel. But there were many frustrations and desperation, and one factor for that was the ongoing rivalries and clashes among the kings and princes, which rendered a lot of chaos, turmoil, instability, and uncertainty. Rivalries and clashes were also there among the Catholic, Protestant, and Anglican churches vying for greater power and more sway among the people, thus adding to the existing chaos, turmoil, instability, and uncertainty. Most rulers were also parties to those rivalries, clashes, and struggles. Social, political, and religious conditions were changing fast; the old was being pitched against the new; fresh organizations and institutions were emerging rapidly, and people struggled for balance. Then there were natural calamities, disasters, and diseases that were wiping out a substantial portion of the population every year and causing population shifts, economic downturns, urban-to-rural migration, labor shortages, low agricultural production, and an urge among the people to move to safer and more comfortable places where life could be more stable, productive,

and peaceful. Punitive laws were also stringent, and harsh punishments were being meted out for minor to major offenses. Thus, people were frequently fined, beaten, tortured, and imprisoned, and their property and possessions were confiscated. Capital punishment was prescribed for almost one hundred and fifty minor to major digressions and transgressions. Religious and political intolerance was high, and people were being tried and persecuted rampantly. Most people wanted to escape those conditions and circumstances and were willing to take risks. Class struggles arose as the upper classes monopolized power, authority, and privileges, and the lower classes were in subservient positions where they felt powerless, hopeless, and helpless. Penn was aware of those conditions and circumstances in England and elsewhere and wanted to bring relief and solace to the unfortunate people.[5]

Penn's father had raised himself through the ranks in the navy, became an admiral, and developed close relations with the monarch and his family. He, thereby, became one of the most powerful men in the country. He also wanted his son to follow his path in life and become an important and prosperous person by utilizing his impressive family circumstances. Penn, however, had different ideas about his life and living influenced by the Renaissance and Enlightenment ideas and his conversion to Quakerism, to which he was truly dedicated. Moreover, his education also had been in two liberal institutions in England and France, and he had an altruistic orientation, being aware of the miserable conditions and circumstances of the people in the country. He wanted to make something of himself, but not what his father wanted. He also felt that the monarchy and the Catholic, Protestant, and Anglican churches were all interested in their welfare by maintaining power and sway over the people, and they were not genuinely interested in the needs, desires, and plight of the people. Accordingly, they did nothing practically to improve their conditions and circumstances. He, therefore, wanted to amend that situation and bring relief and solace to the people he felt for greatly. He also wanted to change the attitudes and operations of the monarchy and the churches and make them more caring and responsible. His strategy was to protest against the policies and operations of the government, the churches, and their subsidiaries at different levels and preach Quakerism's noble values, principles, and practices to them. His first battleground for that was Oxford University, where he had started as a young boy; he protested against the university policies regarding compulsory attendance of students at the university chapel services and actions taken by the authorities to replace the Puritan heads with the Anglicans. Later Penn broadened the scope of his fight by attending forbidden Quaker meetings

held in secret places in Ireland and practicing outlawed Quaker values, principles, and hegemonies within the purview of the public, where he also preached Quakerism declared illegal by the authorities. For those and other digressions, Penn was warned, imprisoned, and tried in courts several times, and his father had also pleaded with him to change the course of his life. But Penn remained determined and kept treading the path he had chosen for himself.[6]

Penn tried his opposition and reform efforts in England for some time but soon realized that the political and religious systems there were deeply entrenched, and it was not easy to change them quickly. Therefore he started thinking about his second favorite project of founding a safe place for all those people who were being harassed, persecuted, and punished for minor to major offenses or were otherwise not happy with their current conditions or circumstances. His preferred destination for that project was the new world of America, about which he had heard and read a lot. He aimed to establish a new colony where people of all orientations and backgrounds could come, feel welcomed, enjoy all sorts of freedoms, experience liberty, justice, peace, democracy, and equality, and live happy, productive, and satisfying lives. He was aware that King Charles II owed his father a large sum of money which was still outstanding.[7] Therefore, he approached him and asked for a charter to grant him a tract of land in America to find his envisioned new colony there. His request was granted, and Penn received a huge piece of land measuring almost 40,000 square miles or twenty-nine million acres located south of New York, north of Maryland, and bounded to the east by the Delaware River. Penn founded a new colony there in 1681, named "Pennsylvania," by King Charles II in honor of his father. That name meant "Forests of Penn." The details of the founding of that colony, its functioning, accomplishments, and non-accomplishments of Penn, the contributions Penn made in sowing some seeds of liberty, justice, peace, democracy, and equality in the Pennsylvania colony and through that in early America, and the lessons learned will be shared and discussed in the chapters to come.[8]

This work, like the earlier works by the author,[9] was also inspired by his deep interest in liberty, justice, peace, democracy, and equality in societies, and included in those inspirations were also the thoughts and philosophies of visionaries like Gandhi, Tolstoy, Ruskin, Thoreau, and others. The foreword to this work has been written by Dr. Brij Mohan, dean emeritus at the Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and the author has provided the preface. This work has seven chapters, related notes and references, a comprehensive bibliography, and two appendixes. The chapters bear the labels: Introduction; Historical Times,

Conditions, and Thought; Penn's Early Life and Orientations; Founding of A New Colony; Functioning of the New Colony, and Conclusion and Lessons. The appendixes are labeled Timelines and Historical Happenings and William Penn on Liberty of Conscience and Charter of Privileges.

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As in the cases of his earlier works, this work is also offered to the readers with the same sense of humility, devotion, and dedication as Gandhi always expressed to his esteemed audiences. Peace!

Satish Sharma
Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Liberty, justice, and peace have been preferred values in societies throughout history, and those values were also considered essential for a happy, harmonious, and satisfactory life. To those values, democracy has been added relatively recently. Contexts, meanings, scopes, and applications of those concepts have varied from one time to another and from one culture to another, but their core values have remained the same everywhere. The concepts also stayed multi-dimensional and multi-level and applied to individual, organizational, institutional, environmental, and societal matters and affairs. Domains were personal, social, religious, political, economic, psychological, and intellectual, and included in them were also traditions, customs, conventions, beliefs, orientations, relationships, dealings, and faiths.[1]

Like most other English terms, the concepts of liberty, justice, peace, and democracy were derived from their Latin counterparts, and accordingly, the emphases of the concepts have been Western, varying considerably from the emphases of the concepts in Eastern cultures.[2]

Liberty

The term liberty came from the Latin word *libertas* meaning freedom to think, work, behave, act, function, and possess as per one's will without restrictions, restraints, or controls, including those from the state, the church, and their representative authorities.[3] The term started in Greek culture, where slavery existed in ancient times, and liberty meant "having no master" and the "ability to do as one liked." But the concept applied to free men only, not enslaved people or women. Romans took the concept from the Greeks but applied it only to the nobility and not to common people. Those uses of the concept continued in Western cultures for a long time, and only much later, during the Renaissance and the Enlightenment periods, the meanings and the applications of the concept broadened, and the concept was also applied to common people. However, controversies, contradictions, and anomalies about the concept continued, and its full

meaning, scope, and applications remain a subject of debate. Some of those discussions were also related to the rights of people versus those of organizations and institutions and included the state, the church, and their representative authorities. Those discussions gave rise to some individualistic theories emphasizing freedoms for people, and social contract theories emphasizing freedoms for organizational units, the state, and the Church. The central content of the concept did not change and stayed as the freedom to think, behave, plan, perform, act, and possess without restrictions, restraints, or controls. The concept also applies to the satisfaction of the people, the organizational units, the accomplishment of goals, desires, and aspirations at those levels, and choices made concerning the ways and means to accomplish the goals and functions. Customs, traditions, circumstances, resources, and resource distribution were intervening factors; domains were individual, social, economic, commercial, religious, political, intellectual, and psychological. Implementation strategies were also to be free of restraints, restrictions, and controls, and rules, regulations, and policies for planning and actions were to be collectively decided in advance and agreed upon. Thus in individual, social, psychological, political, religious,[4] and intellectual domains, liberty refers to an environment of openness, straightforwardness, sincerity, honesty, and integrity concerning ideas, opinions, expressions, expectations, behaviors, actions, relationships, and deeds and absence of fears, threats, manipulations, and coercions. The same applies to economic, commercial, and other activities of the people and the organizations. With those perceptions, the concept pointed to a democratic and egalitarian life where the satisfaction of all people was possible and a clear path for the whole social order's growth, development, and prosperity. People in those circumstances cooperated, respected their own and other people's opinions and views, set aside differences and diversities, shared abilities and resources, and lived honorable and meaningful lives. They also cared for one another's interests and welfare, and those sentiments later found the expression of "liberty, equality, and fraternity," "greatest good of the greatest number of people," "live and let live," "life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness by all," and "government of the people, by the people, and for the people."[5]

Ideal conditions were never possible in societies for different reasons, and therefore from time to time and in all parts of the world, people have complained about their liberty in various ways. Issues have been numerous and varied, and unlimited liberty in any shape and form was never considered desirable in societies for fear of uncontrollable anarchy on the one hand and despotic totalitarianism on the other. To avoid those

circumstances and to make the social order run smoothly, rules, regulations, policies, and laws have existed in all societies where customs, traditions, times, and cultures have played parts. Those rules, regulations, policies, and laws were fair, just, and well-serving. At the same time, those rules, regulations, policies, and laws were not to be confining, controlling, or coercive. The goal was to create a social order where workability, productivity, efficiency, and manageability were possible so that the social order could function in disciplined, consistent, orderly, and predictable ways. People were to recognize, accept, and obey those rules, regulations, policies, and laws, and that way, fewer problems were expected to emerge which could be handled with relative ease. People were also expected to fulfill their duties, responsibilities, and obligations conscientiously and remain responsive to one another's needs, desires, and wishes. That way, in times of difficulty, they could help one another creatively and resolve problems and issues together. But that kind of ideal situation has rarely been possible in societies, and more often than not, contradictions and inconsistencies have led to agitations, struggles, and clashes among various units of the social order. Such were the conditions in Europe before, during, and after the Renaissance and the Enlightenment periods when religious wars and political clashes were common, and the whole continent was in great turmoil.[6]

Another issue relating to liberty was the imbalance between ordinary people's duties, responsibilities, obligations, and freedoms versus those of the state, the church, and the elites. The whole system was tilted in favor of the latter, and ordinary people were at a great disadvantage regarding their authority, power, and control over their lives and management of problems and issues. Therefore they felt miserable, helpless, and frustrated. That situation started changing partly during the Renaissance and the Enlightenment periods when old traditions, customs, relations, institutions, ways of life, and behavioral patterns were challenged, and thinkers, philosophers, and visionaries started talking about the rights and privileges of ordinary people. Thus came on board some individualistic theories, which advocated better positioning ordinary people in societies and more rights and privileges for them. Those arguments were challenged by other philosophers, thinkers, and visionaries who favored the status quo in societies and recommended only gradual changes. They also emphasized ordinary people's duties, responsibilities, and obligations toward the state, the church, and the elites without the reverse being true. Those two competing positions continued for a long time, imbued by the hegemonies and systems of government in societies, and middle-path solutions were difficult to find. Questions also pertained to the rights and

privileges of one person or group to satisfy their own needs, desires, and aspirations in self-determined manners and similar rights and privileges of other people and groups, including the state and the church, to do the same. Thus confusions and tensions were abundant, and conflicts and clashes were frequent. A focus also had to be on the suitability and fairness of the ways and means to create liberty in societies and the rules, regulations, and controls applied for that purpose. Those ways, means, rules, regulations, and controls had to be just, considerate, conscientious, flexible, adaptable, and in concert with people's needs and desires. Tolerance of differences, opinions, and views was also to be there, and so was room for negotiations, compromises, and conciliations. Liberty, thus, was a comprehensive, multi-dimensional, multi-level, and dynamic concept indicating freedoms and flexibilities of all kinds.[7]

Justice

Justice, like liberty, was also a multi-dimensional, multi-level, comprehensive, and dynamic concept derived from the Latin word *justilia.* It was a precursor, a co-relation, and a result of liberty as the concept included a sense of justice, and the concept of justice carried the sense of liberty. In its form and application, justice came in many kinds and levels, too, like godly justice, natural justice, religious justice, social justice, political justice, and psychological justice based on the godly, natural, religious, social, political, and psychological values, norms, principles, laws, and procedures. Domains also ranged from individual to family, community, region, nation, and international community. Contexts were social, political, religious, psychological, and intellectual, where conditions, circumstances, and times played parts. Other correlations of justice were ethics, morality, customs, traditions, institutions, and hegemonies at different levels of the social order. The concept meant right, fair, congenial, productive, beneficial, supportive, and equitable, resulting in harmony, cooperation, and goodwill among the people and societies. Growth, development, progress, and prosperity also resulted from the presence of justice, and its absence led to struggles, tensions, agitations, clashes, chaos, and turmoil in societies. In cases of deviance from the norms, policies, laws, and practices, justice gave rise to punishments ranging from rebuke and shaming in public to fines, beatings, tortures, imprisonments, taking away property and possessions, and even death sentences in extreme circumstances. Some thinkers tried to give the concept more particular meanings. John Stuart Mill, for example, suggested that justice meant all that led to the best outcomes for the

greatest number of people. Some other thinkers suggested that justice means honest, fair, sincere, equitable, and beneficial when distributing goods, services, and resources. Other thinkers suggested that justice means openness, frankness, flexibility, and accommodation in relationships, dealings, behavior, and actions at different levels of the social order. Another suggestion was responsible governance and functioning of societies within the contexts of monarchy, democracy, socialism, communism, and capitalism. Thus, the concept of justice also covered all relating to lives, but its forms, contents, and applications varied in different periods and parts of the world.[8]

Peace

Peace is also a multi-level, multi-dimensional, comprehensive, and dynamic concept derived from the Latin term *pax* and the Anglo-French term *paix*. It embodies tranquility, harmony, calmness, stability among people and societies, and lack of disturbances, hostilities, violence, conflicts, and wars. Peace also means freedom from uncertainties, anxieties, worries, and fears. Correlations of peace are kindness, consideration, respect, tolerance, conciliation, and goodwill, and in some cultures, peace is also a form of salutation, greeting, and admonishment to tell someone to stay quiet or stop quarreling. In Eastern cultures, the concept carried some further connotations of the serenity of the heart and mind that led to noble thoughts, behavior, and actions and created an environment for being good to oneself and others. In another sense, peace means liberation from worldly attachments, anxieties, and worries and attaining *moksha,* or *nirvana.* Applications of the concept of peace are at the individual, family, community, regional, national, and international levels, and domains are personal, social, political, religious, psychological, and intellectual. Peace is indicated in thoughts, words, behaviors, actions, expressions, lifestyles, relationships, dealings, operations, traditions, customs, conventions, attitudes, values, beliefs, orientations, faiths, and institutions. Peace creates congeniality, cooperation, and cohesiveness among people and societies, and its absence encourages competition, struggles, contentions, hostilities, conflicts, and wars. Suitable satisfaction also occurs under the conditions of peace, further promoting the growth, development, and prosperity of people, societies, and various organizational units. Thus perceived, conceived, and understood peace serves many positive functions in the social order and includes the proper functioning of the organizations, institutions, and governing systems.

Further correlations of peace are liberty and justice, and the three conditions assure the well-being and welfare of people and societies.[9]

Democracy

Democracy, like the other three concepts described earlier, is a multi-level, multi-dimensional, comprehensive, and dynamic concept that expresses orientation and concern for the people in all matters and affairs at all levels. In the Western world, the concept first appeared in ancient Greece and was labeled as *demokratia,* which meant rule by the people directly (direct democracy) or indirectly through their representatives (representative democracy). In a direct democracy, power, and authority are vested in the people, and they directly create legislation and operations in several forms. In a representative democracy, that task is performed by the chosen or elected representatives of the people. Who should participate in the democratic processes and how much power and authority is to be shared between the people and their delegates varies from time to time and from one society to another. But more and more, the trend is to involve greater and greater participation of the people in the democratic processes and as many of them as possible. The fundamental rights of democracy are freedoms of assembly, association, speech, religion, property rights, and rights to life, liberty, justice, and happiness. Other correlates of democracy are inclusiveness, equality, citizenship, consent in governmental matters, voting rights, and safety from coercion or arbitrary treatments. From its initial beginnings, the concept expanded from the first notion of direct democracy applicable to small or medium communities to representative democracy applicable to small or big nation-states. In recent times, two prominent examples of the latter were the parliamentary democracy in Britain and the presidential democracy in America, where all representatives were voted in, and decisions were made through majority or supermajority votes. Inclusiveness is one expectation of the democratic process for broader legitimacy, and balancing powers and functions is a requirement guided by a written constitution. Governmental functions were distributed among three legislative, executive, and judiciary branches. Other governing and operating systems are monarchy and dictatorship (power and authority vested in one person) and aristocracy, oligarchy, and theocracy (power and authority vested in a group of people).[10]

Settling of America

This work pertains to the times and conditions of the late seventeenth to the late eighteenth century America when migration from Europe was still in the early stages, even though the area had been discovered by the Italian explorer Christopher Columbus in 1492. However, the earliest to come to that region were many hunting, gathering, and fishing people from Asia who were divided into different tribes and had crossed over some 13,000 years ago in various waves of migration. After their arrival, they spread over North and South America and settled near the coastal areas or inland where water sources could be found. Some of those people were: the Navajo, Sioux, Cherokee, Iroquois, Erie, Honniason, Huron, Seneca, Oneida, Leni Lenape, Munsee, Shawnee, Susquehannock, and more. Common among them were the tribal elements, but otherwise, they were diverse people with their languages, beliefs, customs, traditions, and work. All of them were not exactly friendly toward one another, but within the tribes, they were quite cohesive. After they migrated, there appears to be a huge gap of thousands of years of no migration to North and South America, but we do know that Viking explorers from Europe started coming to the continent in about 870 and explored it. After their explorations, the phenomena of visits to the new land became a regular feature, but the colonization did not start till some explorers started claiming the areas they had discovered for the rulers of their homelands. Examples of such explorers were Christopher Columbus, Pedro Alvares Cabral, Francis Drake, Walter Raleigh, and others (see: Appendix A). Most of the earlier explorers were Italian, Spanish, or Portuguese, but later those were joined by the Dutch, English, French, Swedish, Finnish, and other explorers, many of whom attempted to found their settlements which were being called the “new world” by then. But the results of those attempts remained temporary. The first lasting settlement was founded by the Spanish admiral and explorer Pedro Menendez de Aviles at St. Augustine, Florida, in 1565. After that, lasting settlements did form, particularly near the east coast and to the south belonging to people from different nationalities.[11]

Once the migration process to the new world started, its flow remained continuous and incremental during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. First, people migrated in hundreds or less, then in thousands, and even more. The reasons for the migration were as diverse as the people and the conditions in their native lands. The main factors were disease, natural disasters, climate change, economic downturns, unemployment, population shifts, political turmoil, religious persecution,

and instability.[12] Then there was the spirit of adventure among the people, which excited them, and the news of positive happenings came from those who had already gone. Some people were also business-minded and imagined the economic and commercial opportunities and their chances of quickly becoming affluent there. Thus there were as many reasons to migrate as were the variety of their desires, aspirations, ambitions, and circumstances. The people and even the empires were thinking and feeling similarly to explore, expand, and develop their economic and political fortunes quickly. Accordingly, they, too, were financing and supporting expeditions to create favorable conditions for themselves that also included the founding of new colonies in the new world.[13]

13 English Colonies

In 1606, King James I issued charters to two English companies, the Plymouth Company, and the London Company, to establish new colonies in America for the crown. The London Company founded the Colony and Dominion of Virginia in 1607 in Jamestown, becoming America's first successful permanent English settlement. The Plymouth Company founded the Popham Colony on the Kennebec River but did not survive for long. However, the Plymouth Council sponsored other colonizing efforts, one of which was successful and thus came into existence, the Puritan Plymouth Colony in New Britain in 1620. By then and before, Spanish, French, Dutch, Italian, Swedish, and Finnish people had already founded their lasting colonies; in that regard, the English were latecomers. All those new colonies competed with one another for sway, power, and resources, and rivalries were there. The English colonies gradually increased in numbers, prominence, and power and took control of other European colonies. The only main competitor left for the English colonies was the French.[14]

Eventually, the number of English colonies grew to 13, which were put into three categories: the New Britain Colonies, the Middle Colonies, and the Southern Colonies. Starting in 1660, all those colonies came under the rule of the English crown through the Board of Trade and Plantations in London. Those colonies fell into three ownership categories: the provincial or royal colonies, the proprietary colonies, and the contract colonies. The crown directly supervised the provincial or royal colonies through a commission created at the king's pleasure. That commission appointed a governor and his council (like the Upper House in Britain). The governor, in turn, arranged an elected assembly (like the Lower House in Britain). Freeholders and planters within the province participated in the elections

to choose their representatives for the assembly. The governor's power in legislative matters and in running the province's affairs was absolute through the veto power. The assembly created the laws and ordinances, and the council and the governor approved those. But those laws and ordinances were not to contradict the same laws and ordinances in England. In practice, however, that was not always the case, as assemblies also wanted their power and authority vis-à-vis those of the governor and the commission.

Thus there were some limits to that flexibility as the laws and ordinances created by the assembly could be reviewed by the English Privy Council or the Board of Trade and Plantations. The colonies of New Hampshire, New York, Virginia, North Caroline, South Carolina, and Georgia were provincial or royal. Massachusetts also joined that group later on. Proprietary colonies were similar to the provincial or royal colonies with the difference that not the king, but lord proprietors appointed the governor and his council. Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, and Maryland were proprietary colonies. Finally, in charter colonies, the province's governing was contracted to a political corporation that guaranteed control of the land, power of legislation, and authority to run the province's affairs as per provisions in a constitution, and governmental functions were divided into legislative, judicial, and executive. Massachusetts, Providence Plantation, Rhode Island, Warwick, and Connecticut were charter colonies.[15]

Regarding common characteristics among the colonies, all had particular individual interests and considerable leeway in fulfilling those interests through day-to-day dealings, operations, and functioning. Another important feature among them was a concern for stability and growth of the provinces, and in that equality, liberty, justice, and peace among people mattered less, and as such, those were not the original goals of the colonies, though gradually, those became parts of their mission. Power, authority, and clout were tilted to favor the people with means called persons of "interest" in society. "Interest" meant ownership of land or property. Those who could not own land or property (like women, children, bonded laborers, and enslaved people) could not participate in the democratic processes of the province as they were not counted among the people with interest in society. Also, only people who owned land or property could vote, and only they could send their representatives to the assembly or the locally contested positions. Emphasis was there on voter participation, and people were encouraged to take part in the elections.

In some states, like Connecticut and Rhode Island, people even voted for the position of the governor. Only notable people stood for elections

and fought for the available seats. Generally, only one person stood for one seat, so voting in those cases was a mere formality. There were no political parties then, so people only emphasized their strong points for the elections. But when a particular seat was contested, the candidates did ask for votes. For that, they also formed coalitions of family members, friends, neighbors, and other community members who canvassed on behalf of the candidates. People gathered at the election site on election day, including people from rural communities. But their main aim was merry-making, eating, drinking, socializing, and having fun, and the voting process was secondary to their mission. The voting rates were low, like 20 to 30 percent of the eligible voters, though the voting rates were higher in some provinces like Pennsylvania and New York, particularly during the local elections. Overall, candidates' personalities mattered for the elections, not policies, performance, or issues. All 13 English colonies had well-established election systems.[16]

The economic systems of the 13 English colonies in America were in various stages of development but connected well with the economics and commerce of the British Empire, where a mercantile system prevailed. The emphasis, therefore, was to keep the merchant class happy, comfortable, and prosperous by supporting them in any way possible. Accordingly, trade barriers were removed, regulatory measures were eased, subsidies were provided, exports were encouraged, imports were discouraged, and illegal trading and smuggling were controlled. The expectation was that if the merchant class was kept happy, comfortable, and prosperous, that would also provide economic and political strength to the British Empire. But merchants everywhere were not treated the same way the merchants in the homeland enjoyed, including in the 13 English colonies. Merchants in the 13 English colonies were to do business with the provinces in the British Empire only and not with any other country or empire. That way, the activities of the merchants in the 13 English colonies could be controlled, which hampered the economic and political strength of the colonies. Later, that and other political issues would become a bone of contention between the American colonies and the British Empire and lead to a "declaration of independence" in 1776 and the American Revolution, which started on April 19, 1775, and lasted to September 3, 1783.[17]

Common languages in the new colonies in America were Spanish, German, Italian, Dutch, French, English, Native Indian dialects, and some others. The main religions represented in the new colonies were Protestantism, Catholicism, Judaism, and Native Indian religious traditions. Preponderant was the Protestant religion brought to the new colonies by the Germans, Dutch, British, and some other people. Then

there were Catholics, Jews, and others. Some reformed traditions like Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Continentals were also there, and French Huguenots had their congregations. The Dutch Reformed Church was viable in New York and New Jersey, and Lutheranism was prevalent among the German people who had also brought some forms of Anabaptism, like the Mennonite varieties. Jews were prominent in the port cities, and Catholics were numerous in Maryland, New York, and Pennsylvania. Quakers were well established in Pennsylvania and Rhode Island.[18]

Education was given a high priority in the new colonies, and it was abundantly available in the north to boys and young men through established educational institutions. One popular goal there was to become a Protestant minister. The oldest-founded colleges were New College (now Harvard), The College of New Jersey (now Princeton), Collegiate School (now Yale), King's College (now Columbia), and the College of Rhode Island (now Brown). Later colleges were College of Philadelphia (now the University of Pennsylvania), Queen's College (now Rutgers), Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, and the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia, where most lawyers were trained. In the southern colonies, boys and young men received their education at home mostly through privately engaged tutors brought to America from England, or the boys and young men were sent to England for their education. Only New Britain supported publically funded schools and colleges. Girls were educated at home or in privately opened schools, but college education at par with the boys was unavailable. Physicians and lawyers mostly trained themselves for those professions by taking apprenticeships with well-established physicians and lawyers.[19]

Most people in the new colonies worked as farm workers, plantation workers, workers on the docks and other shipping facilities, shopkeepers, traders, and house servants. Among them were free laborers, contracted laborers, independent business owners, and a population of enslaved Black people brought from African countries or through the international slave trade. Slavery was legal in all 13 English colonies, and people kept enslaved people if they could afford them. Enslaved women worked mostly in homes and did all kinds of chores. Enslaved men normally worked in business settings, on farms, tobacco, rice, indigo, and sugarcane plantations. Work for the enslaved people was hard, and they were poor. As the slave trade increased internationally, the number of enslaved people in the new colonies also increased, and their high birth rate and lower death rate were also factors.

Like the changing numbers of enslaved people, the new colonies' overall population and population mix also changed. A report issued by the Federal Census Bureau in 2004 indicated that only 350 people had migrated to the new English colonies by 1610, and one reason for that was that there were not many colonies established by that time to migrate to. Awareness was also lacking about the performance of the new colonies and what those colonies had to offer to the immigrants. Fears of the unknown, natural hazards, difficult conditions, and challenges were also factors. But the number of migrants increased to 26,634 by 1640, 111,935 by 1670, 250,888 by 1700, 629,445 by 1730, 1,593,625 by 1760, and 2,780,369 by 1780. Thus, by the time of the American Revolution, about 2.7 million people had settled in the new colonies. In terms of the population mix in 1700, about 80 percent of the population in the 13 English colonies was English and Welsh, 11 percent African, 4 percent Dutch, 3 percent Scottish, and 2 percent from other parts of Europe. In 1755 that population mix changed to 52 percent English and Welsh, 20 percent African, 7 percent German, 7 percent Scots-Irish, 5 percent Irish, 4 percent Scottish, 3 percent Dutch, and 2 percent from other parts of Europe. In 1775 that population mix further changed to 48.7 percent English and Welsh, 20.0 percent African, 7.8 percent Scots-Irish, 6.0 Percent German, 6.6 percent Scottish, 2.7 percent Dutch, 1,4 percent French, 0.6 percent Swedish, and 5.3 percent from other parts of Europe. That trend of changes in the population and population mix kept on moving further into the late eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries.[20]

Tensions and Frustrations

During the initial stages of establishing the new colonies, the settlers and the rulers had considerable freedom in their religious, commercial, economic, and political matters. However, gradually the English crown kept increasing its grip over the colonies to draw more advantages from them. But still, the settlers and the rulers in the colonies remained loyal to their homeland and did whatever they could to help it meet its needs and ambitions. One example was the French and Indian War (1754–1763), where people from the colonies participated shoulder-to-shoulder with the English soldiers but realized they were not getting the same respect and recognition as them. That attitude on the part of the homeland surprised them because they felt that "Englishmen were Englishmen" no matter where they resided, and there was no reason to treat them differently. Otherwise, the English crown kept England's needs, desires, interests, wishes, and ambitions at the forefront, and similar concerns or interests