

INFLUENCE OF RELIGION ON BRITISH COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT

POLITICAL

New England

- Mayflower Compact
- political control in the hands of male church members
 - visible saints
- town meetings (theocratic)
- taxes used to support the Congregational Church



Chesapeake

- taxes supported the Church of England
- land ownership – prerequisite for political participation
 - House of Burgesses (elected assembly)
 - voting
- Maryland Toleration Act (1649)
 - guaranteed freedom of religion
 - passed in order for Catholics to worship freely



Middle Colonies

- William Penn's "Holy Experiment"
 - set up Pennsylvania as a refuge for Quakers and other persecuted people
- Frame of Government (1682-83)
 - guaranteed a representative assembly elected by landowners
- Charter of Liberties (1701)
 - written constitution
 - freedom of worship, unrestricted immigration



SOCIAL

New England

- social order and class as God given
- demand for religious conformity
- patriarchal
- Half Way Covenant
 - caused by declining Puritan membership
 - could become a partial member even if had not had "conversion"



- Education
 - literacy in order to read the Bible
 - Old Deluder Act (1647)
 - states that Satan tries "to keep men from the knowledge of scripture by keeping it in an unknown tongue"
 - intended to move educational responsibility from parents to town
 - mostly did not work



Chesapeake

- social order more based on economic factors rather than religious
- Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts
 - Church of England missionary organization
 - sent clergy and religious literature to the colonies
 - supported schools, new churches
 - counter to Catholic missionaries



Middle Colonies

- society marked by diversity and toleration
 - Anglicans
 - Quakers
 - Dutch Reformed
 - Lutherans
 - Puritans



- Quakers
 - members of the Religious Society of Friends
 - beliefs
 - equality of all men and women
 - nonviolence and resistance to military service
 - religious authority was found in a person's soul
 - not in Bible or through clergy
 - persecuted and jailed in other colonies for beliefs



CONFLICTS

New England

- Roger Williams
 - originally a respected Puritan minister in Boston
 - believed that a person's conscience was beyond the control of any civil or church authority
- Puritan leaders order banishment from Mass. Bay
- settles Providence (Rhode Island) – 1636
 - uniqueness
 - recognized rights of Indians
 - allowed freedom of religion



- Anne Hutchinson
 - questioned Puritan authorities
 - believed in antinomianism
 - faith alone is necessary for salvation
 - banished from Mass Bay
 - founded colony of Portsmouth (1638)
 - later migrated to New York, killed by Indians



THE GREAT AWAKENING (1730-1740)

Overview

- series of religious revivals aimed at restoring devotion and piety
- attempt to turn people back to God
- reaction to the Enlightenment
- Key Figures
 - Jonathan Edwards
 - George Whitefield



Causation

- feeling that religion had become dry and dull
- belief that religion should become more internal
- ability for people to read and interpret Bible for themselves



Characteristics

- "Fire and Brimstone" sermons
- large, emotionally charged crowds



Major Figures

- George Whitefield
 - reached all classes of colonists
 - preached that "good works" and "godly lives" would bring salvation
 - gave sermons in open air revivals



- Jonathan Edwards
 - epitome of "Fire and Brimstone"
 - "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God"



Effects

- birth of deep religious convictions in the colonies
- new churches
- "New Light" colleges to train men for the ministry
 - Harvard
 - Yale
 - Princeton
 - Dartmouth

- development of ideas of equality and right to challenge authority
- birth of charitable organizations



The Great Awakening	Puritanism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emotion as sign of true faith • emphasis on feeling • salvation by faith alone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • calm, serious, formal • emphasis on reason • a virtuous life

Significance

- brought independence from clergy
- increased "diversity" of religion
- encouraged a democratic spirit
- first mass movement in US history