

# The British Atlantic World

## Chapter 3 1660–1750

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### ANNOTATED CHAPTER OUTLINE

The following annotated chapter outline will help you review the major topics covered in this chapter.

#### **I. Colonies to Empire, 1660–1713**

##### **A. The Restoration Colonies and Imperial Expansion**

###### **1. The Carolinas**

- a. Charles II gave the Carolinas to his aristocratic friends and gave the Dutch colony New Netherland to his brother James, the Duke of York.
- b. James took possession of New Netherland, renamed it New York, and ruled by decree.
- c. The Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina (1669) legally established the Church of England and prescribed a manorial system, with a mass of serfs that were governed by a small number of powerful nobles.
- d. Poor families in North Carolina refused to work on large manors, chose instead to live on modest farms, and expressed their resistance to the nobility by rejecting several taxation attempts.
- e. South Carolinians, many of them migrants from Barbados, established a hierarchical slave society and prospered by raising cattle and food crops for export to the West Indies.
- f. By 1700, rice became South Carolina's primary cash crop, grown in the swampy estuaries of the coastal low country.
- g. Slaves soon outnumbered whites and made up two-thirds of the population by 1740.

###### **2. William Penn and Pennsylvania**

- a. Pennsylvania, designed as a refuge for Quakers persecuted in England, developed a pacifistic policy toward the Native Americans and became prosperous.
- b. Quakers believed that people were imbued by God with an "inner light" of grace or understanding that opened salvation to everyone.
- c. Penn's Frame of Government (1681) guaranteed religious freedom for all Christians and allowed all property-owning men to vote and hold office.
- d. Ethnic diversity, pacifism, and freedom of conscience made Pennsylvania the most open and democratic of the Restoration Colonies.

##### **B. From Mercantilism to Imperial Dominion**

###### **1. The Navigation Acts**

- a. In the 1650s, the English government imposed mercantilism via the Navigation Acts, which regulated colonial commerce by requiring that colonials could ship goods only on English-owned ships, export sugar and tobacco only to England, and import European goods only through England.
- b. The Revenue Act of 1673 imposed a "plantation duty" on sugar and tobacco exports and created a staff of customs officials to enforce the mercantilist laws.
- c. In commercial wars between 1652 and 1674, the English drove the Dutch from New Netherlands and ended their supremacy in the West African slave trade. The English also dominated North Atlantic commerce.
- d. Many Americans resisted the mercantilist laws as burdensome and intrusive. To enforce the laws, the Lords of Trade pursued a punitive legal strategy. In 1679, they denied the claim of Massachusetts Bay to New Hampshire's territory, eventually creating New Hampshire as a separate colony. In 1684, they annulled Massachusetts Bay's charter.

###### **2. The Dominion of New England**

- a. When James II succeeded to the throne, he wanted to establish stricter control over the colonies and create a more centralized imperial system in America. He targeted New England in particular for reform.
  - b. In 1686, the Lords of Trade merged Connecticut and Rhode Island colonies with those of Massachusetts Bay and Plymouth to form the Dominion of New England, a new royal province.
  - c. Two years later, New York and New Jersey were added to the Dominion.
  - d. Sir Edmund Andros, governor of the Dominion, had the authority to rule by decree. He abolished the existing legislative assemblies, advocated public worship in the Church of England, and invalidated all land titles.
- C. The Glorious Revolution in England and America
1. In 1688, James's Spanish Catholic wife gave birth to a son, raising the prospect of a Catholic heir to the throne.
  2. To forestall such an event, Protestant parliamentary leaders carried out a nearly bloodless coup known as the Glorious Revolution.
  3. Mary Stuart, James's Protestant daughter by his first wife, and her husband, William of Orange, were enthroned.
  4. Queen Mary II and King William III agreed to rule as constitutional monarchs loyal to "the Protestant reformed religion" and accepted a bill of rights that limited royal prerogatives and increased personal liberties and parliamentary powers.
  5. Parliamentary leaders relied on John Locke's *Two Treatises on Government* (1690) to justify their coup. Locke rejected divine-right theories of monarchical rule.
  6. Locke's celebration of individual rights and representative government had a lasting influence in America.
  7. Rebellions in America
    - a. The Glorious Revolution also sparked colonial rebellions against royal governments in Massachusetts, Maryland, and New York.
    - b. In 1689, Puritan leaders shipped Governor Andros back to England. The new monarchs broke up the Dominion of New England but did not restore Puritan-dominated government; instead, they created a new royal colony of Massachusetts, whose new charter granted religious freedom and gave the vote to all male property owners (not Puritan church members only).
    - c. The uprising in Maryland had both political and religious causes; Protestants resented rising taxes and high fees imposed by wealthy, primarily Catholic proprietary officials.
    - d. In New York, the rebellion against the Dominion of New England began a decade of violent political conflict.
    - e. The uprisings in Boston and New York toppled the authoritarian Dominion of New England and won the restoration of internal self-government.
    - f. In England, the new constitutional monarchs promoted an empire based on commerce; Parliament created a new Board of Trade (1696) to supervise the American settlements. The overall result was a period of lax administration and colonial autonomy.

## II. Imperial Wars and Native Peoples

### A. Tribalization

1. Between 1689 and 1815, Britain and France fought wars for dominance of Western Europe.
2. As the wars spread to the Americas, they involved a number of Native American warriors armed with European weapons.
3. Native Americans reacted to declining population, encroaching Europeans, and increased warfare with tribalization, or the creation of new or transformed political entities.
4. Native Americans empowered themselves during imperial wars between European powers. The Iroquois, for example, signed "aggressive neutrality" agreements with both France and Great Britain, promising to trade with both sides but refusing to fight with either side. In return they received diplomacy gifts such as guns, lead, and clothing.

5. The War of the Spanish Succession (1702–1713) pitted Britain against France and Spain and prompted English settlers in the Carolinas to arm the Creek people and attack Spanish Florida as a combined force.

#### B. Indian Goals

1. The Creeks took this opportunity to become the dominant tribe in the region. When Carolinians demanded trade debt payments in 1715, the Creeks revolted against their former allies and killed 400 colonists.
2. Native Americans also played a central role in the fighting in the Northeast; aided by the French, the Catholic Abenakis and Mohawks took revenge on the Puritans, attacking settlements in Maine and Massachusetts. New Englanders responded by joining British forces in attacks on French strongholds in Nova Scotia and Quebec.
3. Britain used victories in Europe to win territorial and commercial concessions in the Americas. In the Treaty of Utrecht (1713), Britain obtained Newfoundland, Acadia, and the Hudson Bay region of northern Canada from France, as well as access through Albany to the western Indian trade. The treaty solidified Britain's supremacy and brought peace to North America.

### III. The Imperial Slave Economy

#### A. The South Atlantic System

1. England and the West Indies
  - a. The South Atlantic System had its center in Brazil and the West Indies; sugar was its main product.
  - b. European merchants, investors, and planters garnered the profits of the South Atlantic System by following mercantilist principles; they provided the organizational skill, ships, and money needed to grow and process sugarcane, carry the refined sugar to market, and supply the plantations with European tools and equipment. However, it was the Atlantic slave trade that made the system run.
  - c. The English began plantation-style production in the Caribbean later than their European counterparts, but they created thriving colonies and attracted more settlers than the Chesapeake and New England regions combined.
  - d. Sugar, the most profitable crop grown in America and Europe, transformed Barbados and the other islands into slave-based plantation societies, run by an elite group of ruthless planters who owned the majority of land, servants, and slaves and ruled by instilling fear.
  - e. Sugar could be produced most effectively on large plantations, using expensive equipment and the labor of slaves who planted, cut, and processed sugarcane into raw sugar, molasses, and rum.
2. The Impact on Britain
  - a. As a result of the Navigation Acts, the re-exports of American sugar and tobacco accounted for half of all British exports by 1750.
  - b. The slave trade was also massively profitable.
  - c. The trade in sugar, tobacco, and slaves resulted in an economic boom in the British Empire by expanding the shipbuilding industry, stimulating construction of port facilities and warehouses, and increasing the manufacturing of textiles.

#### B. Africa, Africans, and the Slave Trade

1. Africans and the Slave Trade
  - a. The slave trade changed West African society: it drained the land of people and wealth, as well as promoted centralized states and military conquest.
  - b. Many of these African kingdoms participated in the slave trade to gain wealth and power. Others, such as Benin, opposed the trade in slaves for over a century.
  - c. In many African societies, class divisions hardened as people of noble birth enslaved and sold those of lesser status.
  - d. The imbalance of the sexes that resulted from slave trading allowed some African men to take several wives, changing the nature of marriage.
  - e. The Atlantic trade prompted harsher forms of slavery in Africa, eroding the dignity of human life there and in the Western Hemisphere.
2. The Middle Passage and Beyond

- a. African slaves who were forced to endure the Middle Passage, the ship journey from Africa to the Americas, suffered the bleakest fate. Countless died from diseases, dehydration, suicide, or violent shipboard revolts.
  - b. Survivors began a life of endless work and relentless exploitation upon arrival in Brazil or the West Indies.
  - c. Planters often sexually exploited female slaves.
  - d. Because many planters worked slaves to death quickly and constantly purchased new ones, slaves maintained African languages, religions, and culture.
- C. Slavery in the Chesapeake and South Carolina
1. By 1700, planters in Virginia and Maryland took advantage of the increased British trade in slaves, importing thousands of slaves and creating a “slave society.”
  2. Slavery was increasingly defined in racial terms; in Virginia, virtually all resident Africans were declared slaves.
  3. Violence was part of daily life for slaves. Laws allowed even extreme punishments such as branding for runaways.
  4. Living and working conditions in Maryland and Virginia allowed slaves to live relatively long lives.
  5. Many tobacco planters tried to increase their workforce through reproduction, purchasing female slaves and encouraging large families.
  6. By the mid-1700s, slaves constituted over 30 percent of the Chesapeake population, and over three-quarters of them were American-born.
  7. South Carolina slaves were much more oppressed. Growing rice required work amid pools of putrid water, and mosquito-borne epidemic diseases took thousands of African lives.
  8. The slave population in South Carolina suffered many deaths and had few births; therefore, the importation of new slaves continually “re-Africanized” the black population.
- D. An African American Community Emerges
1. Building Community
    - a. On most plantations, slaves came from different regions in West and Central Africa and spoke diverse languages. Planters preferred ethnic diversity, believing that inability to communicate would deter rebellion.
    - b. Slaves initially did not regard one another as Africans or blacks but as members of a specific family, clan, or people.
    - c. Family life was precarious owing to the threat of sale or punishment.
    - d. A more equal gender ratio was necessary for the creation of an African American community and the passing on of knowledge from Africa to the American-born generation.
    - e. As enslaved blacks forged a new identity in America, their lives continued to be shaped by their African past, influencing decorative motifs, housing design, musical instruments, and religious patterns.
  2. Resistance and Accommodation
    - a. African creativity was limited because slaves were denied education and had few material goods or leisure time.
    - b. Slaves who resisted their rigorous work routine were punished with beatings, whippings, and mutilation, including amputation.
    - c. The extent of violence toward slaves depended on the size and the density of the slave population; a smaller slave population usually meant less violence, while predominantly African-populated colonies suffered more violence.
    - d. Slaves constantly challenged their owner’s authority by running away, working harder for extra food or clothing, working slowly, or stealing.
    - e. Although rebellions rarely occurred, slave owners nevertheless feared them.
  3. The Stono Rebellion
    - a. The Stono Rebellion (1739) in South Carolina was the largest slave uprising of the eighteenth century, but it was also a failure.

- b. Inspired by Spanish promises of freedom, 75 Africans revolted and killed several whites near the Stono River.
- c. White militiamen killed many of the Stono rebels and dispersed the rest, preventing a general uprising. South Carolinians reduced slave imports and intensified plantation discipline.

#### E. The Rise of the Southern Gentry

##### 1. White Identity and Equality

- a. As the southern colonies became slave societies, life changed for whites as well as blacks.
- b. Successful planters such as William Byrd believed their wealth would gain them acceptance in English society; the English gentry, however, rejected them as inferior.
- c. The planter elite exercised authority over black slaves and yeomen—the American equivalent of oppressed peasants and serfs of Europe.
- d. To prevent rebellion, the southern gentry paid attention to the concerns of middling and poor whites and gradually reduced taxes.
- e. By 1770, the majority of English Chesapeake families owned at least one slave, giving them a stake in the exploitative labor system.
- f. Poor yeomen and some tenants were allowed to vote.
- g. In return, the planter elite expected the yeomen and tenants to elect them to office and defer to their power.
- h. By the 1720s, the gentry took on the trappings of wealth, modeling themselves after the English aristocracy and practicing gentility, a refined but elaborate lifestyle.
- i. The daughters of planters likewise imitated the English elite way of life and in the process created the new ideal of the southern gentlewoman.
- j. The profits of the South Atlantic System helped to form an increasingly well-educated, refined, and stable ruling class.

#### IV. The Northern Maritime Economy

##### A. The Urban Economy

- 1. The South Atlantic System tied the whole British Empire together economically in part through bills of exchange, a form of credit offered by London merchants, which was used by planters to buy slaves from Africa and to pay North American farmers and merchants.
- 2. West Indian trade created the first American merchant fortunes and the first urban industries—in particular, shipbuilding and the distilling of rum from West Indies sugar.
- 3. In the eighteenth century, the expansion of Atlantic commerce in lumber and shipbuilding fueled rapid growth in the North American interior, as well as in seaport cities and coastal towns.
- 4. Increase in commerce also impacted the interior as farm products traveled by small vessel or wagon to eastern seaports for export, and European manufactured imports made their way to backcountry farms along the same routes now donned with taverns, horse stables, and barrel-making shops.

##### B. Urban Society

- 1. A small group of wealthy merchants formed the top rank of the seaport society and practiced a genteel lifestyle.
- 2. Artisan and shopkeeper families formed the middle ranks of seaport society. Although wives and husbands often worked as teams and passed their skills on to their children, they labored hard to earn a modest living.
- 3. Laboring men, women, and children formed the lowest ranks of urban society.
- 4. Between 1660 and 1750, the South Atlantic System constantly fluctuated between cycles of growth and stagnation that created economic opportunity as well as uncertainty for merchants, artisans, workers, and farmers alike.

#### V. The New Politics of Empire, 1713–1750

##### A. The Rise of Colonial Assemblies

- 1. The triumph of the South Atlantic System changed the politics of empire; the British

were content to rule the colonies with a gentle hand, and the colonists were in a position to challenge the rules of the mercantilist system.

2. In England, the Glorious Revolution strengthened the powers of the House of Commons at the expense of the crown.
3. American representative assemblies also wished to limit the powers of the crown and gradually won control over taxation and local appointments.
4. The rising power of the colonial assemblies created an elitist rather than a democratic political system, although every property-owning white male could vote.
5. Neither elitist assemblies nor wealthy property owners could impose unpopular edicts on the people.
6. Crowd actions were a regular part of political life in America and were used to enforce community values.
7. By the 1750s, most colonies had representative political institutions that were responsive to popular pressure and increasingly immune from British control.

#### B. Salutary Neglect

1. Salutary neglect—under which royal bureaucrats relaxed their supervision of internal colonial affairs, focusing instead on defense and trade—was a by-product of the political system developed by Sir Robert Walpole, a British Whig.
2. Radical Whigs argued that Walpole used patronage and bribery to create a strong Court Party.
3. Landed gentlemen argued that Walpole's high taxes and bloated, incompetent royal bureaucracy threatened the liberties of the British people.
4. Colonists, maintaining that royal governors likewise abused their patronage powers, enhanced the powers of provincial representative assemblies.

#### C. Protecting the Mercantile System

1. Walpole's main concern was to protect British commercial interests in America from the Spanish and the French.
2. Walpole arranged for Parliament to subsidize Georgia in order to protect the valuable rice colony of South Carolina.
3. Resisting British expansion into Georgia and growing trade with Mesoamerica, Spanish naval forces sparked the War of Jenkins's Ear in 1739.
4. Walpole used this provocation to launch a predatory, but largely unsuccessful, war against Spain's American Empire.
5. The War of Jenkins's Ear became a part of the War of Austrian Succession (1740–1749), bringing a new threat from France.
6. The Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle (1748) returned the French naval fortress of Louisbourg to France after its capture by New England militiamen, but the treaty also reaffirmed British military superiority over Spain, effectively giving Georgia to the British.

#### D. Mercantilism and the American Colonies

1. English laws limiting manufacturing in the colonies could not prevent American merchants from controlling transatlantic trade.
2. The Molasses Act of 1733 placed a high tariff on imports of French molasses to make British molasses competitive, but sugar prices rose in the late 1730s, so the act was not enforced.
3. The Currency Act (1751) prevented colonies from establishing new land banks and prohibited the use of public currency to pay private debts. This act was in response to abuse of the land bank system by some colonial assemblies that issued too much paper currency and then required merchants to accept the worthless paper as legal tender.
4. In the 1740s, British officials vowed to replace salutary neglect with rigorous imperial control.