

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY OF BRITAIN:II

MODULE I-AGE OF TRANSITIONS

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

IV SEMESTER

BA ENGLISH COMPLEMENTARY PAPER

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- Also called United States War of Independence or American Revolutionary War (1775-83)
- Uprising by 13 colonies of British North America against their mother country.
- They won political independence and went on to form the United States of America.
- It was caused by british attempt to assert greater control over colonial affairs after having long adhered policy of salutary neglect.
- Most successful bourgeois revolution in the modern world



Hudson Bay

NEW FRANCE

Atlantic Ocean

Gulf of Mexico

LOUISIANA

L. Superior

L. Huron

L. Michigan

L. Erie

Detroit

St. Louis

Natchez

New Orleans

GEORGIA

SOUTH CAROLINA

NORTH CAROLINA

CHARLESTON

Savannah

St. Augustine

SPANISH FLORIDA

Williamsburg

Braddock's defeat (Aug. 9, 1755)

Ft. Duquesne (Jul. 3, 1754)

Ft. Necessity

Ft. Niagara (Jul. 29, 1759)

Ft. Frontenac (Aug. 27, 1758)

Montreal

Quebec

Ft. Oswego

Ft. Stanwix

Ft. William Henry (Aug. 9, 1757)

Ft. Ticonderoga (Jul. 8, 1758)

Ft. Beausejour

Port Royal

Albany

Boston

New York

Philadelphia

Ft. Louisbourg (Jun. 8 - Jul. 26, 1758)

Wolfe

Amherst





- The American revolution was a long drawn process having three main phases.
  1. First phase (1765-1775)- 10 years long resistance by 13 English colonies against the economic measures of mother country.
  2. Second Phase (1775-1781) colonies led Revolutionary war against Britain and achieved their independence
  3. Third Phase(1781-1789) internal revolution which led to creation of republican federal system.

# Background



- Basically a product of the British policy of colonial exploitation.
- An important result of the Seven Years War (1756-63) fought in Europe, India and the New World between England and France for colonies was the emergence of England as a great power.
- The Treaty of Paris allowed England to retain her conquests in India and America.
- English colonies in America were flourishing during this time.
- By 1763 a great many English speaking Americans regarded themselves as freemen.



- American colonists loved liberty more than anything.
- They had representative institutions- had more liberty and democracy than the English people.
- Each colony had an assembly of their own which enacted laws concerning local matters .
- The Seven Years war caused for great debt to Britain and the govt sought different sources for collecting revenue.
- As a result of that strict laws were enforced upon the colonies.



- The grumbles against colonial oppression grew.
- They first turned into resistance and then to revolt.
- Thus it was the colonial exploitation that planted the seeds of revolution in the minds of Americans.
- It was during the ten years period since 1763 that “The dormant potential” for American independence matured and came to a head.



- To recover from the public debt , Britain first began to strictly enforce the ***Navigation Acts*** with the help of the increased number of British officials and troops.
- The Navigation Acts were a long series of English laws that regulated English ships, shipping, trade and commerce between other countries and with its own colonies.
- The law also regulated and restricted foreigners participation in its colonial trade.
- It prohibited use of foreign ships and required the employment of English and colonial mariners for three quarters of the crews.
- It also prohibited the colonies from exporting specific, enumerated products to countries and colonies other than those British.



- They were forbidden to manufacture certain goods which would compete with those produced in England and forced to import them from England.
- After Seven years War Britain tried to impose these acts strictly.
- The navigations acts caused resentment in the colonies and contributed to the American revolution.

- Sugar Act of 1764



- The first act introduced was Revenue Act of 1764- generally known as Sugar Act.
- It increased the import duty on refined sugar and taxed imported items like wine, coffee, silk and linen.
- Though this law prevailed in England from 1733, the govt now implemented the Act strictly and so the colonist protested strongly.
  - Stamp Act 1765
- The colonial protest against Sugar Acts did not prevent the British government from passing another revenue raising act in 1765.
- This was the notorious Stamp Act, the first British Act imposing direct tax on American colonists.
- It required that all printed materials in the



- The colonial opposition to Stamp Act took several forms.
- The lawyers and editors came out with powerful writings questioning the very right of British Parliament to tax the colonists.
- In view of the non representation of the colonists in the Parliament, they raised the cry “ **Taxation Without Representation is Tyranny**”.
- The radicals and legislative men like James Otis in Massachusetts and Patrick Henry in Virginia led this type of protest at intellectual level.



- The Act gave rise to the emergence of secret bands known as **Sons of Liberty** in Colonial towns.
- They were organised by radical men like Samuel Adams who is often called the “father of American War of Independence”.
- The American opposition to the British colonial exploitation took its first organised form in the Stamp Act Congress which met in New York in October 1765.
- The Congress, attended by delegates from 9 colonies, drew up a petition to the British king in which it reiterated the slogan “ No Taxation without



- The anti stamp act movt had tremendous impact on Britain.
- The British manufacturers and merchants who suffered from the colonial non importation agreements pressurised the Parliament to withdraw the Stamp Act.
- Thus faced with opposition at home and in the colonies the British government repealed the objectionable Act in March 1766.
- But a Declaratory Act of same year asserted the right of Parliament to tax the colonies.