

## Emergence and Evolution of Puritanism in America

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**Abstract:** *Puritanism in America arose from a reformation movement within the Churches of America, that had an ardent interest on the government, community, and morals of the Americans. Specializing in its impact upon the American values, this paper discusses the origin and therefore the tenets of Puritanism. The forming of American individualism and democratic thoughts were obviously, influenced by Puritanism in geographic region. Additionally, it shaped the diligent, cautious national mentality and gave people a strong feeling of purpose. Moreover, Puritanism contributed to the Americans on dedication to widespread education. Puritanism refers to a movement that arose within the Church of European country within the latter part of the sixteenth century. It sought after to purify, or reform the Church and establish a middle course between Catholicism and therefore the ideas of the Protestant reformers. This paper analyses the evolution and emergence of Puritanism in New England.*

**Key Words:** *Puritanism, Puritans, geographic region, yank values, Religious Culture.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION:

History shows that people have no way agreed unanimously upon the kind of organisation their society should have, and this is because of their different and varying generalizations and interests. These two depended on the people's sources of knowledge, their intellectual capacities, and struggle for survival. This was the case of the Bluenoses among numerous others in mortal history. Challenging the supremacy of the Catholic Church first and that of the Anglican one because of their misconstructions of the Bible and posterior practices, they had to settle far down from the European mainland and to struggle for the establishment of their biblically- grounded purified society. They took different measures to save their ideals and managed to express and propagate them in their own jottings. This was obviously the case of the first generations. still, given the inflexible change, progress in the intellectual world and frugality, Church monopoly over knowledge was radically put into question.

The Age of Reason or Enlightenment that characterized the end of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth century, produced rational thinkers besides some conservative bones who, though induced of their Puritanism, were incompletely told by the new trend of scientific substantiation. The ultimate came still an absolute criterion for explaining the workings of the macrocosm and organisation of the mortal society. The performing doctrine or gospel, known as empiricism, utilitarianism or indeed materialism came to disaccord with idealism. Both could present some satisfying arguments, which led a group of thinkers to produce another trend called Romanticism or Transcendentalism by the nineteenth century. similar changing doctrines were well expounded in philosophical and erudite jottings of colonizer and postcolonial America. The actuality and elaboration of New England colony was the object of multitudinous jottings from explorers, church, officers and men of letters.

The understanding of their jottings and influence of Puritan values thereon will bear first the explanation of similar values, and selection of both pens and their jottings. Focus will be on John Winthrop, Anne Bradstreet and Mary Rowlandson who could be considered as representatives of Puritan jottings and erudite stripes. The freedom of study and progress that characterized the Enlightenment Period of the eighteenth century produced a new type of pens challenging therefore the theologian's interpretation of the workings of the macrocosm.

The New England colony's progression and survival was the focus of immense writings from globetrotters, men from the church, philosophers and officials. The apprehension of their authority and writings on Puritan principles firstly needed the elaboration on such morals and of both writers and their works. Among the representatives of Puritan writings and literary genres were Anne Bradstreet, John Winthrop, and Mary Rowlandson. The predominant settlers of the seventeenth century always defended and embarked on Puritan values.

The Enlightenment Period of the eighteenth century was mainly distinguished by freedom of expression and progression. In turn it conceived new writers exacting the theologian's elucidation of the functioning of the universe. The presiding religion in Europe was Roman Catholicism; as an outcome, it organised many aspects of everyday life including politics, education, religion. The Pope in Rome was the leader of the worldwide Catholic Church, and strictly conforming to some sacraments, notably baptism, matrimony, confirmation, the Eucharist, penance, and anointing of the sick.

As a result of its financial independence, the Catholic Church was able to trade in olive and wine and own property, which contributed to its authority. Through its monastic schools, it controlled all cultural and educational endeavours. But other people began to doubt some of its practises and call for reform. These reformers were theologians, clergymen, and politicians like Wycliffe in England, Luther in Germany, and Calvin in France, whose writings helped to spark the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century. Although understanding the evolution of Puritanism through the history of reform movements is highly fascinating, it is beyond the scope of this memoire to study everything in depth. Our focus will be mostly on the history of Puritanism, the development of this denomination, and its influence on Europe and, more specifically, America later on.

## **2. PURITANISM'S BEGINNINGS AND GROWTH IN AMERICA:**

Puritanism is the name of a religious movement that developed in the Church of Europe in the latter half of the sixteenth century. It aimed to provide a medium ground between Catholicism and, consequently, the ideals of the Protestant reformers. It intended to purify or reform the Church. Puritans were those who supported Puritanism. The Puritans were the more severe Protestants at various points in the Church during the sixteenth century. They believed that the church's beliefs and organisational structure had not undergone a significant enough transformation as a result of the non-secular reformation in England. They wanted to purge any traces of Catholic influence from their national church. English Puritan leaders pleaded with King James, of the European nation, to approve more changes, including the elimination of bishops, in 1603 after James became the country's monarch. But he turned down the majority of their suggestions. Additionally, the church hierarchy and the English government also tightened their restrictions. Due to persecution, a number of Puritans were forced to flee to Europe and ultimately the New World.

Early in the seventeenth century, Puritanism made its way to North America. Additional Puritans migrated in 1620, and they established other colonies. In all of the colonies north of Virginia, the Puritans introduced strong non-secular beliefs. New England served as their defensive fortification wherever they attempted to establish a sanctified Commonwealth. Over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Puritanism remained the preeminent non-secular movement in this area. Puritanism had an immediate impact on all religious beliefs and cultural practises in America during the whole colonial period. Approximately 35 churches had been founded in the area by 1640. Ministers had significant political sway, while civil authorities had excessive control over church issues. The Half-Way Covenant's acceptance in 1662 made it significantly simpler for the majority of non-regenerate people in Massachusetts to join the church. The expansion of most recent European countries reduced the power of the clergy, which resulted in a gap of frontier communities packed with colonists who were capable, humanist, and involved in a very difficult fight to adjust to a harsh environment.

A successor charter was adopted in Massachusetts in 1692 to reflect the change from a religiously-restricted type of governance to a political, lay state. Although the Puritans as a political movement largely vanished during the seventeenth century, Puritan values and attitudes persisted and continued to have an impact on society. Self-reliance, frugality, industry, and vigour were virtues they formed and through them they had an impact on contemporary social and economic life. Their commitment for education was crucial to the growth of the United States, and as a result, the congregational democratic church government model was carried into the state's political history as a foundation for modern democracy.

## **3. PRESENCE OF PURITANISM IN NEW ENGLAND:**

The first settlers nor the first inhabitants were not the Puritans in New England. A number of voyages of discovery began with the Italian navigator Christopher Columbus, found the trail in 1491 by chance or by design to the coast that later called as America. These voyages lasted more than a century, but no manned voyages occurred until the 1580s, according to the British records. Until 1584 when Sir Walter Raleigh sent the British ships in order to check on the possibilities of conquering other countries. Another attempt began in 1606, where the energetic invaders found a settlement and named it Jamestown, Virginia after their Virgin queen.

However, the people in the settlements suffered from various disasters like widespread illness, plagues, infestations etc. By 1620 the Puritans had moved the Church of England in their direction of thought, but then it went in a surprising way. New King Charles I cooperating with those opposing the Puritans, he launched a determined counterattack. First, the Anglican Church, supported by the monarch, succeeded bishopric system. Second, they

supported the then infrastructure for worship services - elegant clothes for Priest, magnificent objects made of gold and coloured glass. The altar, which is used for worship to be treated as a place of almost miraculous importance. Third, prayers from the prayer-book and sacraments are to be worshiped by the Puritan context. The Anglican Communion has to be the center of all worship, especially the center of communion resembling the body of Christ.

Puritans were shocked to see these retrograde things they thought were retrograde. Trends within the church, and hundreds of priests who resisted were expelled from the pulpit. Like other Puritans they Believed the Church of England to be the driving force and the true heart of the country life. If it falls, chaos itself will rain down on the earth. There were disorder and disharmony like, Gambling, prostitution, theft, and murder. The Puritans were more concerned on prudence, frugality, and diligence. They thought God their father would not tolerate sins and would punish humanity by sending plagues and many more disasters. However, if England had a perfectly cleansed church, the Puritans said, 'God would stop' punishing the British for their crimes. When Puritan John Winthorpe's fleet led the Great Migration of Puritans from England and founded the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630, it pursued utopian goals.

#### **4. PURITANISM: THE FOUNDATION OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY:**

American democracy has always been viewed as a model for western democracy. The description of Independence (1776) presents the idea that all of mankind are equal. Certain inalienable rights, including life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. After independence, America began to continue its political ideology. The authority was categorised into three, namely executive, legislative and the judiciary. Early puritanism played an important role in the establishment of America Democratic system. The Mayflower Compact, 1620 led way to the American democracy. The agreement was signed on November 11th as he attempted to form an interim government pending a more formal government where they would be given the right to govern themselves in new England.

The puritan belief was that the covenants were formed in order to produce America's first democratic institution. At the town's meeting all members of the church had the right to speak and decisions were made by majority voting. The puritan church contributed greatly to its establishment of American democracy. As mentioned above, American puritans were happy to build churches and they chose their own priests and controlled them themselves. There was no strict hierarchy in the church. The pattern served to later American democracy.

#### **5. THE PURITANS' CONTRIBUTION TO A MORE POWERFUL NATION:**

American citizens have considered that advancing equality is one 's duty from the moment the country was founded. to spread freedom throughout the globe and offer guidance to Nation of Israel. Because of the significant influence it exerted on American society, beliefs, and behaviours, this feeling of destiny was deeply ingrained. We can track a feeling of purpose to the Puritans' future. They constructed New Jerusalem and followed religious goals in the "country of hope" that was the new world.

They had the idea that their purpose was to disseminate the Christian message and save the world's sinners. As the new world took shape, the early puritans' strong sense of mission provided them a spiritual energy. Americans incorporated a feeling of mission into nationality as ethnic identities increased. Aside from that, the nation's foreign policy is a blatant example of this sense of mission. Most Americans have long thought of America as the lighthouse for the rest of the globe. Their goal is to foster freedom and democracy in accordance with the will of God. All people in the world will have access to light, which will be sent to all four corners of the planet.

Although Puritanism no longer holds sway in New England, it nevertheless has a significant impact on modern American culture, notably on yank values. The American Mind by Henry James author Commager (1977) endorsed the significance of Puritanism. Though Puritanism's systemic effects have diminished over time, it still has an impact on American moral and political beliefs. It's impossible to deny that American ideals have changed and that modern society is very different from the Puritan lifestyles of New England. The core of Puritanism, however, replaces the foundational elements of American principles. As a result, Puritanism is not just a religious belief to Americans but also a fundamental aspect of their national identity that helped shape both their national character and their people's values.

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