

## **MODULE 2: EXPLORATION AND NEW FRANCE (1492-1756) REVIEW**

### *Arrival of Europeans in North America*

In the late 1600s, after the arrival of the first explores in North America (Columbus (1492), Cabot (1497), Cartier (1534,1535, 1541) Europeans realized that there were many fish in the waters of North America.

Europeans were mostly Christians and there were many days of the year where Christians were not allowed to eat meat due to religious beliefs. BUT they could eat fish. Therefore, fisher were an imprint resource for Europeans and there were many fish have in North America.

From then on, fishermen would come from Europe to fish in North America. Among those groups that fished here the most were:

Basques from Spain  
Normans from France  
English from England

Fishermen had to come ashore to dry their fish on land and as a result they would come into contact with Aborigines. These were some of the first meetings of Aborigines and Europeans in North Americans.

Europeans would have traded metal tools, Knives, axes, etc. for furs, corn and other Aboriginal goods.

Due to the contact with Europeans, Aborigines trapped more furs than normal to trade for European tools and then traded these tools throughout their North American trade networks

### Population and Settlement:

#### *Population Growth*

The population growth of New France was slow.

By 1663 there was only 3000 inhabitants in the St. Lawrence Valley. These were mostly French Men working in the fur trade. There were some Aborigines as well. Very few women lived in New France.

Due to the first Intendant Jean Talon and Royal government, the population began to grow in 1663

Nearly one hundred years later, in 1760, there were about 65 000 inhabitants in the St. Lawrence Valley.

It was mixed population of Canadiens (People of French origin who had become adapted to life in North America). French, some Aboriginal and African Americans and more women than before (Filles de Roi)

Some Aboriginals and Africans were slaves but there is debate as to how many were in New France

### *Royal Government*

Under Royal government and Intendant Jean Talon policies were put in place to increase the population of New France

Sending over the Filles de Roi increase the number of women in N.F  
Giving land to engages (hired workers) and soldiers if they stayed in N.F instead of going back to France  
Encouraging people to get married and have large families

The results of these policies was that the population of N.F doubled between 1666 and 1672. The main reason for this growth was natural growth (births)

### *Effects of European Presence on Aboriginals*

There was a large effect of the Europeans on the Aboriginals

Many Aboriginals died from European diseases that they have no immunity to ex. Smallpox

Some Aboriginals who at one time were nomadic became sedentary as they adopted a European lifestyle and religion

There were some mixed births; mostly European fur traders and Aboriginal women

Many forts were built to support the fur trade and religious missions were built in Aboriginal territory to try and convert Aboriginals to Christianity.

### *French Territory in North America*

Due to the continuing expansion of the fur trade in N.F, the territory (land) became huge despite the fact that few people actually occupied the territory.

Most people in N.F lived along the St. Lawrence River Valley (Quebec to Trois Riviere to Montreal) with some pockets of people living in Acadia (present day Maritimes)

The territory of N.F up until 1713 was very large. it went from Hudson Bay, to Acadia and Newfoundland all the way south along the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico.

After the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, the French territory shrunk a little as they lost Newfoundland, Hudson Bay, and parts of Acadia to Great Britain.

### *Organization of the Territory of New France*

The French used the Seigneurial System to organize the land of N.F

The Seigneurial System was a way of dividing the land into smaller areas and distributing it to the people who could manage and develop the land as well as bring people to settle on the land

#### *Elements of the Seigneurial System*

Long rectangular plots of land (called censitaires) all with access to water (river or lake) for irrigation, drinking, and transportation.

The Seigneurie was either operated by a landlord (seigneur) or the Church.

### Economy and Development:

#### *Organization of the Economy of New France*

France used an economy system called **MERCANTILISM** to organize the economy of the colonies

Mercantilism was a system that used raw materials from the **COLONIES** (New France/ French West Indies) to enrich the **MOTHER COUNTRY** (France)

Under Mercantilism the colonies would send raw material to the Mother Country. The Mother Country would then make products with these raw materials and then sell them back to the colonies.

It was **NOT** a good system for the development of the colony's economy

France used a **TRIANGULAR TRADE** to make Mercantilism function properly

The triangle was formed between **FRANCE, NEW FRANCE,** and the **FRENCH WEST INDIES**

#### *An economy Based on Fur*

Although fishing was the first economic activity for the French in North America. Once the fur trade began it quickly took over as the main economic activity and main export for N.F

The main people involved in the fur trade:

Aboriginals - Hunted animals and processed the pelts (beaver)

Coueurs de bois and Voyageurs - Mainly Canadiens who brought the animal pelts to the fur trading posts.

Merchant Traders - Mainly Canadiens who traded the pelts with French companies

French Companies - shipped furs to France and sold them for profit.

In order to obtain furs the French had to make an alliance (friendship) with the Huron

The French would trade European tools and products with the Hurons for furs.

The fur trade and Mercantilism has several effects on N.F

The colony did not grow very fast; not many people (especially women) were needed to work in the fur trade

Many trading posts were established and therefore the territory of New France grew very very large (difficult to manage and defend)

The fur trade also has an effect on the relationship between N.F and the British 13 colonies to the south

The 13 colonies and N.F were rivals in the fur trade and competed to the fur trading territory

The competition for territory lead to wars between the French (N.F) and Britain (13 colonies)

### *Agriculture*

After 1663 and the implementation of Royal Government, the population of N.F was growing. Despite the continued success of the fur trade, most new inhabitants of N.F became farmers, not fur traders

Most agriculture products (ex.Wheat) was sent to local markets, cities or to France.

There were other economic activities that were related to processing agricultural products:

brewing beer

grinding grain

making canvas and rigging (ropes for ships)

Agricultural activities had an effect on the territory of N. F

the size of agricultural land grew

construction of mills

creation of public markets

### *Craft Activities (skilled jobs)*

There were some craft activities that developed in the colony:

- Wig making

- Construction of casks (for beer) and metal objects

- Carpentry

- Masonry

- Hat Making

Craft activities also had an effect on the territory of N.F

- Cities grew in size

- Creation of workshops and boutiques (shops)

### *Attempts at Economic Diversification*

After 1663, Jean Talon began a process of trying to diversify the economy of N.F so that they would be stronger and less dependant on the fur trade. Some of his ideas were:

- growing flax, hemo, and hops (for beer) instead of the same agricultural products each season

- Raise livestock (animals)

Later intendants such as Gilles Hocquart continued Talon's efforts:

- encouraged iron mining and building an ironworks in Mauricie to create metals tools

- established the King's naval shipyard in Quebec City to build ships

However, diversifying the economy did not follow the concept or theory of Mercantilism. Under Mercantilism the colony is not supposed to diversify or produce anything; that was the job of the Mother Country.

Therefore, diversifying the economy of N.F had several obstacles:

- economy was based on the fur trade (hard to change things)

- Lack of skilled labour

- Lack of capital (money to start business)

- Diversifying the economy went against the rules of Mercantilism

### Culture and Currents of Thought:

#### *Absolutism and the Divine right of Kings:*

The monarchs (Kings and Queens) of France believed in **ABSOLUTISM**. This meant that the King or Queen of a country had total and absolute power over the people.

They also believed in the idea of "divine right"; meaning that the total or absolute power of the King or Queen had come directly from God.

Therefore, no living person on earth (including the Pope or the Church) could tell them that they did not have a right in ruling their country.  
In N.F the **GOVERNOR** represented the King and Absolutism in the colony.  
People had to “pay homage” or swear loyalty to the Governor and the King.

Some examples of Absolutism in N.F would be:  
Naming places after King Louis XIV, ex: Louisbourg, Louisiana, Chateau St. Louis  
Displaying the royal coat of arms with the Fleur de Lys symbol around the colony  
Statues or “busts” of the King in public areas such as markets  
The fact that it was the King, not the Pope, who appointed bishops and named other senior Church positions in France

### *Catholicism*

France and therefore N.F were Catholic territories. The Catholic Church recognizes the authority of the Pope as the head of the Church  
However, we know that in France, the King took away much of the power of the Pope  
The Catholic faith was a daily part of life for people in N.F. It was everywhere  
People who represent the Church in N.F

**Bishops** (ex: Bishop Laval)

**Clergy** (Priests)

**Religious Orders** (Groups of Catholics such as the Jesuits, Recollects, Grey Nuns)

**Missionaries** (Religious people who went out into Aboriginal territory to convert the Aboriginals to Catholicism)

**Schools and Family** (you would learn about the Church at school which was run by Priests and nuns. Also, your family would have daily Church rituals and practices as well as Church on Sundays)

Forms of cultural expression associated with the Catholic Church:

Written documents such as the journals of the Jesuits called the “Jesuit Relations”

Written documents published by the Church to help teach Canadiens about their religion ex. Catechism de Diocese de Quebec (a religious booklet on being Catholic)

Religious buildings ex. “Grand Seminaries de Quebec” (school to train priests)

Religious calendar and celebrations (Easters, Christmas etc.)

### *Independent Spirit of the Canadiens*

Due to the distance of N.F from France and the environment they lived in, people living in N.F developed a unique identity (cultural differences) than that of their Mother Country (France). They became Canadiens.

Canadiens were unique in many ways:

They were influenced by Aboriginal culture; they dressed in fur clothing, they used canoes and snowshoes, they could speak some Aboriginal languages and at times were inter-married with Aboriginals

They did not always obey the French state or the Church. They were “rebels” compared to people in France. ex. They traded fur without a license, they didn't follow Church rules all the time.

They adapted their lived and homes to living in the cold climate of Quebec winters

### Power and Countervailing Powers:

#### *Power between Aboriginals and the Administrators of N.F*

In the early days of N.F (before 1663), most “political” decisions were between the French State (government and colonial administrators) and Aboriginals along the St. Lawrence saw the arrival of the French as an opportunity to trade for European tools and weapons, as well as getting help in fighting their enemies (the Iroquois).

The French under Samuel de Champlain also saw the value of alliances with the Algonquian of the St. Lawrence (Montagnais, Innu) and the Huron further south along the Great Lakes. By making such alliances, the French became automatic enemies with the Iroquois

Aboriginals were able to influence the State by threatening war or by limiting the supply furs to the French

There were several results of this influence or pressure by Aboriginal on the French:

1. Champlain joined the Huron on a war party up the Richelieu River against the Iroquois
2. There was increased conflict between the French and Aboriginal enemies
3. The French had to reinforce the colony with a military presence
4. The French finally got Aboriginals to sign the “Great Peace of Montreal” in 1701 ensuring the security of the fur trade for years
5. The French used Aboriginal customs during negotiations

The Iroquois turned first to the Dutch near New York and later the British along the 13 colonies for help in trade and military support against the French

#### *Power relations between the Administrators of N.F and the French State (Mother Country)*

Since the early days of Champlain, administrators of the colony demanded help for the Mother Country (France)

They would ask mostly for military help and financial resources (\$\$\$)

Before Royal government (1663), it was the companies and governors who asked for such help. Royal government, was mostly intendants like Jean Talon who asked for help.

In this age of limited technology and transportation, they would write letters and create reports on colonial activities that would ask for help. These letters and reports would take months to reach France and then they would wait for a reply.

In general, efforts to get help from France were **NOT** successful. France believed in Mercantilism therefore through it was the colony's job to provide wealth for the Mother Country, **NOT** the other way around

The colonial authorities would have to submit to the authority of the state and, as a result, there was a little economic diversity or demographic (population) growth in the colony for many years.

### *Power relations between the Church and the State*

For most of our history, there has been some sort of relationship between the Catholic Church and the State (Mother Country)

From the beginning for N.F. Catholic missionaries (Jesuits, etc.) had been coming to convert Aboriginal and ensure the religious and social well-being of the colonists.

However, like colonial administrators, they had demands to make of the French State (the King)

One of the early demands made by the Church and the first Bishop of N.F (Bishop Laval) was that French fur traders should NOT be allowed to trade alcohol (brandy) with the Aboriginals

There were only a few ways for the Church to make demands of the King:

1. They could write letters to the King complaining about Governors
2. They could write letters promising to convert more Aboriginals

There were several results of these demands made by the Church:

The church made an alliance with the state to ensure public order in exchange for more power and land (seigneuries) in the colony; During religious services, the church would tell colonists to obey the State and not cause trouble.

The Church was able to get several governors fired (recalled back to France) for not following the state and Church rule s

As you can see, with the little ability to put pressure on the State, the Church was quite effective at getting the things that it needed in the colony