

1. The American War of Independence

Background and Causes

- **The 13 Colonies:** A group of Puritans known as the Pilgrim Fathers reached North America on the ship Mayflower and established the Plymouth colony.
- Later, 13 colonies were formed, inhabited mostly by the English.

British Control

- The King of England appointed governors to control the colonies.
- Britain treated the colonies as centers for collecting raw materials and selling manufactured goods (Mercantilism).

Oppressive Trade Laws:

- Goods could only be transported on British or colonial ships.
- Products like wool and tobacco could only be sent to England.
- **The Stamp Act (1765):** Legal documents and pamphlets required a stamp with a fixed value.

Intellectual Influence

Philosophers inspired the colonists to fight for their rights:

- James Otis: "No taxation without representation".
- Thomas Paine: Argued it was prudent to separate from England.
- John Locke: Stated that no government has the right to violate fundamental rights.

* **Boston Tea Party (1773):** In protest of the Tea Act, colonists dressed as Red Indians threw chests of tea into the sea.

The Continental Congresses (held in Philadelphia):

- **First Congress (1774):** Decided to suspend trade with Britain.
- **Second Congress (1775):** Appointed George Washington as Commander-in-Chief. The "Olive Branch Petition" was sent to the King to avoid war, but it was rejected.
- **Third Congress (1776):** Issued the famous Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776.

Independence and Constitution

- **Victory:** The American army, led by George Washington and aided by France and Spain, defeated the British army at Yorktown in 1781.
- The Treaty of Paris (1783) recognized American independence.

Drafting new constitution:

- Framed at the Constitutional Convention led by George Washington.
- It is the first written constitution in the world.
- It established a Federal System: Power is divided between the Central Government (foreign affairs, war, currency) and State Governments.
- George Washington became the first President.

2. The American Civil War

Reasons for Conflict (North vs. South)

- The United States faced a Civil War due to differences between the Northern and Southern states:
- **Economy:** The North relied on industry and commerce, while the South relied on agriculture and plantations.
- **Slavery:** The South supported slavery for their plantations, while the North opposed it.

The Course of the War

- **Abolition Movement:** Activists like John Woolman and works like Uncle Tom's Cabin by Harriet Beecher Stowe strengthened anti-slavery sentiment.
- **Lincoln's Election:** In 1860, Abraham Lincoln (Republican Party) was elected President.
- **Confederacy:** Southern states, led by South Carolina, seceded and formed the "Confederate States of America".
- **The War:** War broke out in 1861. The Union (North) won decisively at the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863.
- **Emancipation:** On January 1, 1863, Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, freeing the slaves.

3. The Russian Revolution

Causes : Autocracy: Russia was ruled by autocratic Tsars who suppressed freedom.

Social Misery:

- **Workers:** Suffered low wages, long hours, and poor living conditions.
- **Peasants:** Had no land, paid high taxes, and were oppressed by nobles.
- **Bloody Sunday (1905):** Workers marching to present a petition were fired upon by the army, killing hundreds.
- **World War I:** Participation in the war caused food shortages and massive casualties, increasing anger against the Tsar.

Ideology and Parties

- **Marxism:** Based on the ideas of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, arguing for the supremacy of workers.
- **Political Parties:** The Social Democratic Workers' Party split into the Bolsheviks (led by Lenin) and the Mensheviks.

Stages of Revolution (1917)

- **February Revolution:** Workers went on strike in Petrograd. Soldiers joined them. Tsar Nicholas II was deposed, and a provisional government under Aleksandr Kerensky was formed.
- **October Revolution:** Lenin and the Bolsheviks opposed the provisional government. They organized under the slogan "All power to the Soviets" (workers' councils). The Bolsheviks captured the Winter Palace and overthrew Kerensky.

Administrative Reforms

- Russia withdrew from World War I.
- Private land was confiscated and distributed to peasants.
- Factories were handed over to workers' committees.
- **New Economic Policy (NEP) 1921:** A temporary partial return to private trade and agriculture to revive the economy.
- **USSR:** Formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

4. The Chinese Revolution : Foreign Dominance

- **Opium Trade:** European traders profited by selling opium in China, harming the people's health
- **Opium War:** China lost to Britain and was forced to open major ports to foreign trade under the Treaty of Nanking.
- **Boxer Rebellion:** A resistance movement against foreign powers by a secret agency called the Boxers.

Revolution of 1911

- **Ideals:** Nationalism, Democracy, and Socialism.
- **Result:** The Manchu dynasty was overthrown, and a republic was established.

Communist Revolution

- **Chiang Kai-shek:** Took over the Kuomintang after Sun Yat-sen.
- His rule favored foreign powers and capitalists, causing suffering for common people.
- **Mao Zedong:** Led the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). He organized the peasants and workers.
- **The Long March (1934):** A historic journey led by Mao to evade attacks, covering vast distances and seizing land from lords to give to peasants.
- **People's Republic of China (1949):** The Red Army captured power. On October 1, 1949, Mao declared the formation of the People's Republic of China.