

Lecture Two: The American Dream: Puritans and New England **\*\*Issues:\*\*** 1. The influence of religious idealism on American tradition. 2. The relationship between church and state. Puritanism was a movement among English Christians seeking to reform the Anglican Church. Facing persecution in the 15th century, a group of separatists, the Pilgrims, sailed to America in 1620, establishing Plymouth, the first permanent settlement in New England. Ten years later, a larger group of Puritans arrived with a powerful vision: to create a perfect society based on strict religious principles. New England provided an ideal environment for this experiment, with a clean slate and an opportunity to intertwine religious and political communities. The Puritans believed that God would bless their settlements with protection and prosperity if they lived according to a holy pattern. This political organization laid the foundation for later American democracy, though some aspects of the Puritan political tradition were eventually abandoned.