

CUET · HISTORY · CLASS XI · CODE 314

Displacing Indigenous Peoples

CUET unit: World History — Background

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Snapshot

- Theme 10 (Chapter 6) of **Themes in World History** — sits inside Section IV "Towards Modernisation" and tells the story of native peoples of North America and Australia under European settler-colonialism from the 17th to 20th centuries.
- Colonialism took three forms: **settler colonies** (Americas, Australia, NZ, South Africa), **trading/direct imperial control** (East India Company in South Asia) and **semi-colonial** carve-up (China). CUET tests this taxonomy.
- Key examinable episodes: Trail of Tears (1838), Marshall judgment (1832), Indian Reorganisation Act 1934, Mabo case 1992, National Sorry Day 1999, and the **terra nullius** doctrine.
- Key vocabulary — aborigine, Amerindian, First Nations, Dreamtime, reservations, Metis, **terra nullius** — appears in match-the-following and definition-recall items.
- Anchored in the Timeline IV (c. 1700–2000), which itself is dense MCQ fodder (Suez Canal 1869, Trail of Tears 1838, Ghana 1957, Sputnik 1957, Mandela freed 1990, etc.).

Detailed Notes

2.1 Core concepts

- Two further developments turned subjects into citizens: the Industrial Revolution and a series of political revolutions (American 1776–81; French 1789–94) (NCERT §Towards Modernisation, p. 124).
- Britain was the world's first industrial nation; coal and cotton textiles came first, railways in the second stage. In contrast, Russia (late 19th century) began with railways and heavy industry in its initial phase itself (NCERT §Towards Modernisation, pp. 124–125).
- Section IV introduces three variants of imperialism — settler colonies, direct imperial control (British India), and semi-colonial meddling in 19th–early 20th c. China by Britain, France, Germany, Russia, America and Japan (NCERT §Towards Modernisation, p. 125).
- **Civic nationalism** (sovereignty in all people regardless of language/ethnicity/religion/gender) differs from **ethnic/religious nationalism** (solidarity around a

- given language/religion/traditions); Germany is a prominent exception still wedded to ethnic nationalism since the reaction to French imperial occupation of German states in 1806 (NCERT §Towards Modernisation, p. 126).
- Timeline IV (c. 1700–2000) flags key dates: King Agaja of Dahomey stops slave trade 1724–34; Linnaeus's taxonomy 1735; Liberia founded 1822; Trail of Tears 1838; Suez Canal opens 1869; Russian serfs freed 1861; first film 1895; modern Olympics at Athens 1896; First World War 1914–18; Russian Revolution 1917; Apartheid in South Africa 1948; Ghana independent 1957; Sputnik 1957; Mandela freed 1990 (NCERT Timeline IV, pp. 128–134).
 - Chapter 6 ("Displacing Indigenous Peoples") recounts native histories of America and Australia after 18th-century European settlement of North America, Central America, South America, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand (NCERT §Displacing Indigenous Peoples — opening, p. 135).
 - Place-name origins: "America" from Amerigo Vespucci (1451–1512); "Canada" from kanata (= village, Huron-Iroquois, heard by Jacques Cartier 1535); "Australia" from Latin **austral** = south; "New Zealand" from Tasman of Holland 1642 (NCERT box, p. 136).
 - The earliest inhabitants of North America came from Asia over 30,000 years ago via a land-bridge across the Bering Straits; the oldest artefact (an arrow-point) is 11,000 years old; population began rising about 5,000 years ago as the climate stabilised (NCERT §The Native Peoples, p. 137).
 - Natives lived in bands in river-valley villages, hunted bison (easier from the 17th century once they began riding horses bought from Spanish settlers), killed only what they needed, did not practise extensive agriculture and did not develop kingdoms; wampum belts of coloured shells were exchanged after treaties (NCERT §The Native Peoples, pp. 137–138).
 - Terminology box: **aborigine** (Latin ab + origine, native of Australia); **American Indian/Amerind/Amerindian** (natives of N & S America and Caribbean); **First Nations** (organised Canadian native groups — "bands" under the Indian Act 1876, "nations" from the 1980s); **indigenous people**; **native American** (now the preferred term); **'Red Indian'** (Columbus mistook the land for India) (NCERT box, p. 138).
 - 18th-century western Europeans defined "civilised" people by literacy, organised religion and urbanism — natives appeared "uncivilised". Rousseau idealised them as "the noble savage"; Wordsworth (who had never met one) called their life one of limited imagination; Washington Irving, who had actually met natives, said the white men treated them "as little better than animals" (NCERT §Mutual Perceptions, p. 140).
 - The USA and Canada existed by the end of the 18th century but covered only a fraction of present territory. The USA expanded by purchase (Louisiana from France 1803; Alaska from Russia) and by war (much of southern USA from Mexico); the

- western "frontier" was shifting and natives were forced back as it moved (NCERT §Mutual Perceptions, pp. 141–142).
- Key chronology box on the USA: 1803 Louisiana Purchase; 1825–58 natives moved to reserves; 1832 Justice Marshall's judgement; 1849 American Gold Rush; 1861–65 American Civil War; 1865–90 American Indian Wars; 1870 transcontinental railway; 1890 bison almost exterminated; 1892 "end" of American frontier (NCERT box, p. 142).
 - In 1832, US Chief Justice John Marshall held that the Cherokees were "a distinct community, occupying its own territory in which the laws of Georgia had no force". President Andrew Jackson refused to honour it, ordered the US army to evict them to the Great American Desert; of 15,000 forced to go, over a quarter died on the **Trail of Tears** (NCERT §The Native Peoples Lose their Land, p. 144).
 - Plantation owners in the south imported African slaves (after natives enslaved earlier in Spanish America died in large numbers); ban on the slave trade did not free those already in the USA. The 1861–65 Civil War ended slavery, but desegregation in schools and public transport came only in the 20th century (NCERT §Lose their Land, p. 143).
 - Natives were pushed into "**reservations**" — often land they had no connection to; the US army crushed rebellions 1865–90; the Metis (people of native-European descent) in Canada revolted 1869–85, then gave up (NCERT §Lose their Land, pp. 144–145).
 - Chief Seattle's 1854 letter to the US President — "How can you buy or sell the sky, the warmth of the land?... Every part of the earth is sacred to my people" — is quoted at length (NCERT §Lose their Land, p. 145).
 - Gold Rush of the 1840s in California triggered cross-continental railway-building employing thousands of Chinese workers; USA's railway done by 1870, Canada's by 1885. In 1860 the USA had been an undeveloped economy; by 1890 it was the leading industrial power in the world; by 1890 the bison were nearly extinct; by 1892 continental expansion was complete and the USA was setting up its own colonies in Hawaii and the Philippines (NCERT §The Gold Rush, and the Growth of Industries, pp. 145–146).
 - Constitutional rights — both the right to vote and the right to property — were initially only for white men. Daniel Paul (2000) cited Thomas Paine's claim that "the Native Americans by their example sowed the seeds for the long-drawn-out movement towards democracy by the people of Europe" (NCERT §Constitutional Rights, p. 147).
 - "Winds of Change": the Meriam survey **The Problem of Indian Administration** (1928) exposed grim conditions in reservations; the **Indian Reorganisation Act of 1934** gave natives in reservations the right to buy land and take loans. 1954 "Declaration of Indian Rights" accepted US citizenship on condition reservations and traditions be

preserved. Canada's 1982 Constitution Act accepted existing aboriginal and treaty rights (NCERT §Winds of Change, p. 147).

- Australia: aborigines arrived from New Guinea (then connected by land-bridge) over 40,000 years ago; their tradition holds they were always there; the past centuries are the "Dreamtime". In the late 18th century there were 350–750 native communities, each with its own language (200 still spoken today). Together with the Torres Strait Islanders they made up 2.4% of Australia's population in 2005 (NCERT §Australia, p. 148).
- European reach: 1606 Dutch sight Australia; 1642 Tasman lands on Tasmania; 1770 James Cook reaches Botany Bay (named New South Wales); 1788 British penal colony, Sydney founded. Cook was killed by a native in Hawaii — a single incident used to justify subsequent violence (NCERT §Europeans Reach Australia, pp. 148–149).
- Roughly 90% of natives later died from exposure to germs, loss of land and battles. Early settlers were British convicts deported and allowed to live free in Australia on condition they did not return to Britain (NCERT §Australia, p. 150).
- Capital naming: when the new capital was decided in 1911 one suggested name was "Woolwheatgold"; the chosen name **Canberra** is from **kamberra**, a native word meaning "meeting place" (NCERT §Australia, p. 150).
- Chinese coolie immigration began 1851, stopped by law 1855; gold rushes 1851–1961; Federation of Australia formed with six states 1901; Canberra established as capital 1911; two million Europeans migrated 1948–75; until 1974 a government policy kept "non-white" people out (NCERT box, p. 150 + p. 150 narrative).
- "Winds of Change" Australia: 1968 lecture by W.E.H. Stanner — "The Great Australian Silence" — about historians' silence on aborigines; Henry Reynolds's **Why Weren't We Told?**; "multiculturalism" became official policy from 1974. The government had always termed the land **terra nullius** (belonging to nobody); the **Mabo case (1992)** in the Australian High Court declared **terra nullius** legally invalid and recognised native claims from before 1770; 1995 National Enquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children; 26 May 1999 "A National Sorry Day" (NCERT §Winds of Change, pp. 151–152).

2.2 Definitions to memorise

Term	Definition	Page
Aborigine	Native people of Australia; from Latin ab = from, origine = the beginning	138
First Nations peoples	Organised native groups recognised by the Canadian government — called "bands" under the Indians Act of 1876, "nations" from the 1980s	138
American Indian / Amerind / Amerindian	Native peoples of North and South America and the Caribbean	138

Term	Definition	Page
'Red Indian'	Brown-complexioned people whose land Columbus mistook for India	138
Native American	The indigenous people of the Americas (the term now commonly used)	138
Reservations	Small areas in which natives were locked off after being pushed westward; often land they had no earlier connection with	144–145
Metis	People of native-European descent in Canada who staged armed revolts 1869–85	145
Dreamtime	Australian aborigines' term for the past centuries; blurs the distinction between past and present	148
Terra nullius	"Land belonging to nobody" — the doctrine Australia used to justify takeover, struck down by the Mabo case (1992)	151
Wampum belts	Belts of coloured shells sewn together, exchanged by native tribes after a treaty	137
Civic nationalism	Vests sovereignty in all people regardless of language, ethnicity, religion or gender; defines nationhood by citizenship	126
Ethnic/religious nationalism	Builds national solidarities around a given language, religion or set of traditions; defines the people ethnically	126
'Noble savage'	18th-century European (esp. Rousseau) view of natives as admirable because untouched by the corruptions of civilisation	140
Indian Reorganisation Act, 1934	US law that gave natives in reservations the right to buy land and take loans	147
Mabo case, 1992	Australian High Court ruling declaring terra nullius legally invalid and recognising native claims to land from before 1770	152
National Sorry Day	26 May 1999 — public apology for the forced separation of mixed-blood children from their native relatives between the 1820s and 1970s	152
Trail of Tears	1838 forced march of 15,000 Cherokees from Georgia to the Great American Desert; over a quarter died	144
Marshall Judgment	1832 US Supreme Court ruling by Chief Justice John Marshall that the Cherokees were a "distinct community" beyond Georgia's laws	144
Cherokees	Native American tribe of Georgia evicted by Andrew Jackson on the Trail of Tears	144
Bison		

Term	Definition	Page
	Wild cattle that natives of the North American plains hunted; nearly exterminated by 1890	137, 146
Bering Straits	Land-bridge across which the first natives reached North America from Asia over 30,000 years ago	137
Settler colony	Colony in which Europeans came to live permanently and displaced natives — e.g., Americas, Australia, NZ, South Africa	125
Botany Bay	Coastal site where Captain James Cook reached Australia in 1770; named "New South Wales"	148
Captain Cook	British navigator who reached Australia in 1770; killed by a native in Hawaii	148–149
Canberra	Australia's capital, established 1911; name from kamberra (meeting place)	150
Meriam Survey	1928 US report The Problem of Indian Administration exposing reservation conditions	147

2.3 Diagrams / processes to remember

- **Map 1: The expansion of the USA** (p. 141) — shows the original 13 colonies, Louisiana Purchase from France, Alaska from Russia, and land won from Mexico; the steady westward shift of the frontier.
- **Map 2: Australia** (p. 149) — locates Botany Bay/Sydney on the coast, the arid central desert (which explains why most towns are coastal), Tasmania, and the routes of Dutch and British arrivals.
- **Timeline IV (c. 1700–2000)** (pp. 128–134) — four-column chronology covering Africa, Europe, Asia, South Asia, Americas, and Australia/Pacific Islands; CUET regularly pulls "match the year to the event" items from this.
- **Population data box (Activity 2, p. 144)** — USA 1820 vs Spanish America 1800; shows whites dominant in USA (9.0 million of 11.6 million total) while natives dominated Spanish America (7.5 million of 16.9 million total).
- **Chronology boxes** for Quebec/American colonies (p. 139), Canada/USA (pp. 141–142), and Australia (pp. 148 and 150) — each compresses the colonisation arc into datable events.
- **Process — sequence of native dispossession in the USA:** (1) treaties and gift-exchange (wampum belts) in 17th century; (2) push-back as frontier moves west; (3) 1830 Indian Removal Act + 1832 Marshall judgment defied by Jackson; (4) 1838 Trail of Tears (Cherokees); (5) 1865–90 American Indian Wars crush armed resistance; (6) "reservation" system locks natives on marginal land; (7) Meriam survey 1928 → Indian Reorganisation Act 1934 → 1954 Declaration of Indian Rights.

- **Process — Australian land dispossession:** (1) 1770 Cook's landing; (2) 1788 penal colony established at Sydney; (3) frontier wars + 90% native mortality from disease and conflict; (4) doctrine of **terra nullius** invoked by settlers; (5) "Stolen Generations" forcibly removed children 1820s–1970s; (6) 1968 Stanner's "Great Australian Silence" lecture; (7) Mabo case 1992 overturns **terra nullius**; (8) 1999 National Sorry Day.

2.5 Timeline / Key events

Year / Period	Event	Significance
30,000+ years ago	Asian peoples cross Bering Straits into N. America	First peopling of the Americas (NCERT p. 137)
40,000+ years ago	Aborigines arrive in Australia from New Guinea	First peopling of Australia (NCERT p. 148)
1606	Dutch sailors sight Australia	First European glimpse (NCERT p. 148)
1642	Tasman lands on Tasmania	Tasmania named (NCERT p. 148)
1770	Captain James Cook reaches Botany Bay; names "New South Wales"	British claim to Australia (NCERT p. 148)
1776–81	American Revolution	Birth of the USA (NCERT p. 124)
1788	British penal colony established at Sydney	Settlement of Australia begins (NCERT p. 148)
1789–94	French Revolution	Subjects become citizens (NCERT p. 124)
1803	Louisiana Purchase from France	USA doubles in size (NCERT p. 142)
1832	Marshall judgment — Cherokees a "distinct community"	Defied by President Jackson (NCERT p. 144)
1838	Trail of Tears — 15,000 Cherokees forced west; 25%+ die	Worst single episode of Indian removal (NCERT p. 144)
1849	American Gold Rush in California	Cross-continental railway boom (NCERT p. 145)
1854	Chief Seattle's letter to US President	Famous indigenous statement on land (NCERT p. 145)
1861–65	American Civil War; slavery abolished	End of plantation slavery (NCERT p. 143)
1865–90	American Indian Wars	US Army suppresses native rebellions (NCERT p. 145)
1869–85	Metis revolts in Canada	Last native armed resistance in Canada (NCERT p. 145)

Year / Period	Event	Significance
1870	Trans-continental US railway completed	Bison decline accelerates (NCERT p. 146)
1885	Canadian Pacific Railway completed	(NCERT p. 145)
1890	Bison nearly extinct in N. America	Ecological collapse (NCERT p. 146)
1892	American frontier officially "ended"	Continental expansion complete (NCERT p. 146)
1901	Federation of Australia formed (six states)	Creation of modern Australian state (NCERT p. 150)
1911	Canberra chosen as capital	Compromise between Sydney and Melbourne (NCERT p. 150)
1928	Meriam Survey, USA — The Problem of Indian Administration	Reservation conditions exposed (NCERT p. 147)
1934	Indian Reorganisation Act, USA	Natives gain right to buy land, take loans (NCERT p. 147)
1954	"Declaration of Indian Rights" accepted US citizenship	Conditional on preservation of reservations (NCERT p. 147)
1968	W.E.H. Stanner: "Great Australian Silence" lecture	Critique of historians' neglect of aborigines (NCERT p. 151)
1974	"White Australia" policy ends; multiculturalism official	(NCERT p. 150)
1982	Canadian Constitution Act recognises aboriginal & treaty rights	(NCERT p. 147)
1992	Mabo case — Australian High Court strikes down terra nullius	Native claims to land pre-1770 recognised (NCERT p. 152)
1999 (26 May)	National Sorry Day in Australia	Public apology for Stolen Generations (NCERT p. 152)

2.4 Common confusions / NTA trap points

- **Trail of Tears (1838)** — students confuse the tribe (it was the **Cherokees**, not Sioux/Apache) and the official (Andrew Jackson defied Chief Justice John Marshall's 1832 judgment; Marshall did not order the eviction).
- **Three variants of imperialism** — NTA likes to swap "settler colony" (Americas/Australia) with "direct imperial control" (British India) and "semi-colony" (19th-c. China); each must be matched correctly.
- **First Nations vs Aborigines vs Amerindians** — First Nations = Canadian natives; Aborigines = Australian natives; Amerindians = native peoples of N & S America and the Caribbean. Do not interchange.

- Terra nullius **was struck down in 1992 by the Mabo case** — distractors often substitute 1788 (Sydney founded), 1901 (Federation), 1974 (end of White Australia), or 1999 (Sorry Day).
- **Indian Reorganisation Act (USA) is 1934, not 1928** — 1928 was the year the Meriam survey *The Problem of Indian Administration* was published.
- **"Indians" ambiguity** — in this chapter "Indians" usually means Native Americans, not South Asians; CUET stems sometimes use the ambiguity to mislead.
- **Bering Straits land-bridge** — natives reached North America from **Asia** over 30,000 years ago, not from Europe; the oldest artefact is 11,000 years old.
- "America" is named after **Amerigo Vespucci**, not Columbus; "Canada" from Huron-Iroquois *kanata* (village); "Australia" from Latin *austral* (south). NTA loves these etymological matches.
- The 1838 Trail of Tears (under Jackson) is not the same as the 1830 Indian Removal Act (the legal authorisation). NCERT focuses on the 1838 episode.

Practice MCQs

PYQ Alignment

This chapter is a CUET favourite within the Class XI World History "Background" segment — typically yielding 5–7 MCQs per year across CUET 2023–25, with NTA leaning heavily on the Trail of Tears, the Marshall judgment, **terra nullius**/Mabo case, definitions from the terminology box (aborigine, First Nations, Metis), and chronological match-the-following items pulled directly from Timeline IV. PYQ bank: </pyq/history>.