

Colonization

Expectations and Results

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Edmund Morgan's book *American Slavery, American Freedom* states that the "major part of the colonist's work time" was intended to be used in the generation of "promised riches" for exportation back to England, which is not too great a departure from Hakluyt's original plan.¹ In this paper I will argue that Virginia's development from Hakluyt's vision came about from a shift in economic priorities and focus as part of a move from an unstable frontier colony to a more established and stable colony. To do so I will first look at Hakluyt's vision for the colonies, then how the colonies failed to meet these expectations, and finally how the colonies changed and adapted to the conditions of the New World. Hakluyt and Morgan's writings demonstrate change by economic and social factors built on the evolution of labor in Virginia, from planned exploitation of natives to indentured servants to slaves.

Before beginning I will evaluate my sources. The two sources used for this paper are Richard Hakluyt's *Discourse on Western Planting* and Edmund Morgan's *American Slavery, American Freedom*.² Hakluyt's writing is a primary source written in an attempt to convince the monarch and investors to launch an expedition to the Americas. As a result, he twists or outright fabricates information to make his proposal look better. It is an assessment of how Hakluyt wants the expedition to go, not a record of actual occurrences, which further skews his statements. However, it is still a perfectly viable source despite these limits, since my argument revolves around the differences between Hakluyt's predictions and Morgan's analysis of what happened.

1 Edmund Sears Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2003), 87.

2 Richard Hakluyt, "A particular discourse concerning the great necessity and manifold commodities that are like to grow to this Realm of England by the Western discoveries lately attempted, written in the year 1584," National Humanities Center, 2006, excerpted from David B. Quinn & Allison M. Quinn, eds. *Discourse of Western Planting* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1993)..

As a secondary source, Morgan's book is written largely to argue that slavery "created" the American ideal of freedom and shows the progression of that. It is a record of actual occurrences from the perspective of a historian. Due to this, Morgan's writing is a reliable source of information.

To begin, Hakluyt believed that colonization was necessary in order to provide England with a means of countering Spanish holdings in America. He writes that "all other English trades are grown beggarly or dangerous" due to their proximity to Spanish territory, where a wreck or other accident would lead to the Spanish seizing the ship and its goods along with the men crewing it.³ Since this is clearly untenable in his eyes, he proposes that they should turn the tables on the Spanish, setting up "two or three strong forts" along the coast of the Americas to intercept Spanish fleets coming from the New World.⁴ His final main point regarding the Spanish presence is that they are spread thin and have not conquered or befriended all the natives in the areas they hold.⁵ As a result, if England were to launch her own colonization attempt they would be able to potentially remove the Spanish from some of their holdings and even the field more between England and Spain.

lucrative and enticing that everyone would want to go.⁹ He also mentions in the same lines that it would be a good way to rid England of unemployed poor people.

In regards to these poor people, Morgan demonstrates that the poor and des-

