

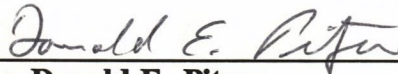
**A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF CORPORATE
AND INDIVIDUAL ENTERPRISE IN THE SETTLEMENT
OF EARLY AMERICA**

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A Comparative Analysis of Corporate and Individual Enterprise in the Settlement of
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This Capstone Project compares and analyzes the methods used by groups and individuals to establish and sustain the early American settlements of Jamestown, Plymouth, and Massachusetts Bay. Corporate and individual enterprise were used by English settlers attempting to locate and survive in the New World wilderness. Settlers adopted a variety of methods ranging from capitalism to communism. Individuals often found it necessary to form corporate entities whose cooperative methods ranged from stock holding to community of goods. Common property was an extreme measure but a means to an end to assure survival.

Through attempts to colonize America in the late 1500's, Queen Elizabeth learned that substantial capital was needed to establish and sustain early American colonization. Joint-stock companies were created to assemble the essential capital. The Virginia Company that established Jamestown and Plymouth set up systems of common property in which many settlers accepted the restricted status of indentured servants in order to see the colony develop.

Although the theme of the individual versus the corporate community is strong in these early settlements, another theme evolves. Materialistic and ideological factors become driving forces in this historical evolution of early America. Materialistic forces eventually influenced ideological forces in Jamestown, Plymouth, and Massachusetts Bay. A sociocultural evolution took place as the individuals within these colonies adapted to achieve their material requirements. The mode of production, whether farming, tobacco planting, or mercantilism, influenced the

general character of the social, political, and spiritual processes of life in these early American colonies.

Empirical evidence in this analysis will show that collective, corporate, including communal, arrangements were the springboard to successful early settlement of English America. Whether settlers held economic or religious motives for settlement in North America, European colonization was largely due to the cooperative activity of the mercantile and capitalist classes in England. The corporate phase of colonization, as under the Virginia Company and Massachusetts Bay Company, was often short-lived. Eventually, private initiatives were responsible for the greatest number of English settlements in America.

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A Comparative Analysis of Corporate and Individual Enterprise in the Settlement of Early America.

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Introduction and Purpose of Study

This Capstone Project will compare and analyze the methods used by groups and individuals to establish and sustain the early American settlements of Jamestown, Plymouth, and Massachusetts Bay. To survive in the New World, corporate entities and individuals used a variety of enterprising methods ranging from capitalism to communism. Corporate enterprise, including communal arrangements, was the springboard to successful colonization in early English America. To come to the New World and to survive the wilderness, individuals often found it necessary to form corporate, even communal, entities. Settlers at Jamestown and Plymouth colonies went so far as to accept common property, partly under the beginning of the indentured servant plan. This was an extreme measure but a means to an end to assure survival of the colonies. Through attempts to colonize America in the late 1500's, Queen Elizabeth learned that substantial capital was needed to establish and develop early American colonization. Joint-stock companies were created to assemble the essential capital.

This comparative analysis treats the settlements as undergoing a developmental process in which companies and colonists made vital adjustments in their economic, political, and religious structures to adapt to changing conditions and to assure survival of their early colonies. A developmental process begins when religious or secular movements form their ideologies. Communal living or collective economies are often adopted as a means to organize movements during their formative stages or to sustain them in times of crisis. In order to survive and flourish over time, movements also find it necessary to adjust their strictly communal efforts and to even choose new organizational forms. Changing conditions, both internal and external, as

well as the needs of rising generations often demand alterations in the economic and social structures of organizations.

Although the theme of individual enterprise versus the corporate community is strong in early American settlements, another theme emerges. This theme revolves around the materialistic and ideological factors that become driving forces in the historical evolution of English America. Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay colonies were built on the hope of universal reformation taken from Calvinistic theology. With the passing of time, however, the religious ideas of the Separatist and Puritan settlers became more diverse as people adapted to the new land and as new generations arose that did not share the formative Calvinistic experiences in England. The new generation of Puritans in America seemed to their elders more concerned with trade and private wealth than with the church and the public good. German sociologist Max Weber concluded that Puritanism played an important role in the development of modern economic life. Although Puritan social ideals clearly opposed the self-seeking of modern capitalism, it was the Puritan merchant whose diligence and hard work aided the growth of a market-regulated economy and modern economic individualism.

Empirical evidence in this analysis will show that collective and corporate, including communal, means were useful, if not essential, elements in the early settlement of English America. Materialistic forces eventually affected the ideological motivations that inspired the founding of Jamestown, Plymouth, and Massachusetts Bay. A sociocultural evolution took place as the individuals within these colonies

adapted and changed to achieve their material ends. The mode of production, whether it was farming, tobacco planting, or mercantilism, influenced the general character of the social, political, and spiritual processes of life in Jamestown, Plymouth, and Massachusetts Bay.

The concept of this Capstone Project is expressed well by historian Charles Andrews. He concluded that "at the very outset of our history appear, in contrast and almost in rivalry, two forms and methods of colonization both of which were destined to play the leading parts in effecting permanent settlement in America during the ensuing seventy-five years--the private adventurer or proprietor and the incorporated company. In origin one was aristocratic and feudal and in a sense representative of the past; the other was corporate and cooperative and in a similar sense contributory to the future."¹

The Jamestown settlement of 1607 exhibits how individuals joined collectively under a corporate joint-stock company to assure successful colonization. Preceding the formation of the Virginia Company, attempts to colonize proved beyond the resources of a single individual or small associations of private merchants. An English charter of 1609 created the joint-stock Virginia Company to assemble the capital required to sustain Jamestown. The charter's successful device to promote colonization was joint-ownership of land and the selling of stock. Common labor and property were required by the Virginia Company at Jamestown from 1609 to 1616. Under the joint-stock arrangement, the settlers essentially labored as indentured servants of the Virginia Company. The produce of the settlers' labor went into a

common storehouse from which they were fed and clothed. Any surplus they produced belonged to the company and was sold in England to provide profits for the company's investors. All land in the colony belonged to the company until the end of the seven-year period when improved lands and other property were to be divided among the company stock holders. However, the company soon found that when people were fed out of a common store they did not have an incentive to labor. In 1614 every man in the old settlement who had labored collectively was individually allotted one-hundred acres to farm. By 1616 the colony began to prosper under the new individual farming arrangement. In 1618 the company apportioned unoccupied lands to public purposes to advance the colony. Grants were made to non-subscribers through the "adventure of the person" or "headright" system form of private land distribution. The settlers became farmers and planters under the encouragement of the company to produce staples and establish industry. Also, subsidiary joint-stock or private ventures were organized to encourage small groups or associations of men to settle plantations or private colonies within the boundaries of the company's patent. The idea of establishing "outward" plantations not only helped to increase the colony's economy but also served to replenish the colonial population. Even with these incentives, the colony grew very slowly and the company's resources were inadequate to meet the cost of development and expansion. Near financial insolvency, the Virginia Company charter was annulled in 1624. By this time the colony possessed the essentials of permanent settlement. In 1634 the expansion of private venture was evident with seventy-five hundred colonists scattered across the colony

laboring in tobacco planting and cattle grazing. The Virginia Company's economic rationale for the settlement of Jamestown was upheld with increased trade and reduced English population. The majority of Jamestown settlers, who were artisans and tenant farmers, achieved individual ownership of land and economic gain away from the old feudal practices in England.

Plymouth Colony was quite different in its overall purpose from the Jamestown settlement. The Pilgrims were members of the Calvinistic Puritan religious movement. They mostly sought freedom to practice their religion without persecution in the New World. Merchant-promoter Thomas Weston obtained a charter from King James and organized the business arrangement for the Pilgrims with the Virginia Company in London. An unincorporated joint-stock company was formed in which the Virginia Company was to furnish the money and supplies for the founding of a colony in America and the Puritans of Leyden, England, were to furnish nothing but themselves and their capacity to work. The merchant capitalists of the Virginia Company actually insisted the colony be operated on a communal basis, everyone working for "the general" good. The Pilgrims had hoped for an economic base of fishing and trading, but at first they were forced to use the communal labor of subsistence agriculture in order to survive. In effect, the Pilgrims adopted pure communism temporarily as a survival technique. The product of their labor was poured into a common storehouse, their needs doled out of a common supply. The Pilgrim community of property lasted from 1620 to 1623. Then private economic interests supplanted the demands of the common good. In 1623 the common land was

divided for individual farming. In 1624 the Pilgrims decided to dissolve their partnership with the London merchants of the Virginia Company. Eight Plymouth leaders formed a holding company to purchase all of the Virginia Company's interest and holdings in the colony. Until 1630, Plymouth was the one stable and prominent English colony along the American coast. By 1642 Plymouth became the smallest and least powerful of a cluster of plantations. The effects of the expansion of New England upon Plymouth was striking. The common community of Plymouth had dispersed over the territory with its settlers seeking economic gain. The little colony of Plymouth was eventually absorbed into Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1692. The Plymouth Commonwealth throughout its existence from 1620 through 1692 underwent a developmental process in which vital adjustments from communalism to private enterprise were made to adapt to changing conditions.

Between 1630 and 1642, almost 20,000 people emigrated from Europe to New England. The reason for the emigration was primarily commercial and grew out of the purpose to establish a strong, prosperous trading colony at Massachusetts Bay. The Massachusetts Bay Company, an incorporated joint-stock trading company, was organized under the charter of 1629. The purpose was to establish a colony in America as both a religious refuge and a profit-making plantation. The Puritan goals of regeneration and sanctification were to be sought within the organization of a Bible-Commonwealth. The Puritans sought to establish a state of their own which would be independent of the principal company in England and King Charles I. Political and religious structures were created in Massachusetts Bay to regulate affairs

and bring the settlers into harmony with the expressed will of God. The Massachusetts Bay trading company evolved into a political organism where the Puritans established a local self-governing state. The establishment of a Puritan state under a trading company's charter was without precedent in the history of commercial and colonizing enterprise. The trading company was entering a process of evolution into a commonwealth.

Massachusetts Bay Company made arrangements with artisans, craftsmen, laborers and indentured servants to settle the colony. The settlers were allotted grants of land and soon became scattered throughout the Bay. Towns developed which became the basis for social organization. Farmers and merchants soon successfully exported a variety of commodities. The development of foreign trade in New England and the emergence in Boston and elsewhere of powerful merchants changed the old Puritan political arrangements into a secular society. In 1684 the charter was annulled and a new charter was granted in 1691 confirming Massachusetts as a royal province of England.

Terms and Theories

This section will define terms and explain theories relative to this analysis of early American settlement. Evident at the outset of American history are individual and corporate methods utilized by pioneers to found and develop the English colonies. These early American pioneers exhibited individualism. The enterprise of an individual is shown by a single person of free and independent thought and action who pursues his or her own goals. The opposite of individualism is the community-

building method of corporate enterprise where individuals unite or join into one body, as in a corporation. Corporate enterprise can be seen within Jamestown, Plymouth, and Massachusetts Bay colonies' collective organizational forms of joint-stock, voluntary associations, communal arrangements with common property or community of goods, and commonwealths.² The first commercial enterprise used to settle early America was the incorporated "joint-stock" company. This form of organization could accumulate the capital essential for settlement into a common fund. Individuals subscribed by purchasing common shares of the fund. At the end of an allotted period of time, the subscribers would divide the earnings from the investment. The unincorporated "association" or "partnership" of individuals helped make Jamestown and Plymouth commercially successful. Encouraged by joint-stock trading companies to increase colonization in these early settlements, the "association" could settle plantations or colonies within the boundaries of the original company's charter. Using the joint-stock system, these unincorporated associations accumulated capital and traded under the charters of the incorporated companies.³

The Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay colonies desired to establish "commonwealths" in the New World. As individuals, colonists signed covenants for the "general good or advantage of the whole body of people." The Mayflower Compact of 1620 established on shipboard by the Pilgrims was the first example of the "Plantation Covenant." In accord with Calvinist thought the Mayflower Compact and other like covenants established the right of free and equal individuals under God to form a "civil body politic" and made consent the "de facto" basis for political

authority. The "Plantation Covenant" was repeatedly used in the settlement of early colonies and plantations.⁴

To assure survival in the vast wilderness of the New World, Jamestown and Plymouth went so far as to use joint ownership of "common property", also known as "community of goods." A "communal society" and "intentional community" established by movements are "small, voluntary social units, partly isolated and insulated from the general society, in which members share an ideology, a lifestyle, and an economic union while practicing their ideal system."⁵ The degree of economic union is found within specific terms: (1) "commune" in which "all property is held in common" (often called "community of goods"); (2) "collective" economies occur when "privately-owned property is shared, but members may dissolve the community and divide the assets"; (3) "cooperative" occurs when "major property is held corporately as in 'joint-stock', but members own individual shares of these joint assets and may dissolve the community and divide the assets"; and (4) "mixed-economy community" is "any combination of the other three, even with a single owner of the land and/or property."⁶

"Developmental communalism" is an alternative method of looking at movements that become communal. It studies "whole utopian movements rather than only their communal phases." Communalism then becomes a single aspect within the entire history of a movement. Three essential elements define developmental communalism in theory and process: (1) communal living and collective economies are universally available to peoples, governments and movements; (2) communal practices are often

adopted out of necessity for security, stability and survival during the emergence of a people, a culture, a political program or a religious or secular movement; and (3) communal usage is sometimes altered creatively or abandoned altogether for more relevant organizational strategies as new circumstances and opportunities arise, both preserving and perhaps invigorating the original culture, government or movement and its long-term objectives.⁷

Individuals and corporations possessed economic and ideological reasons for settlement of America. Economic relates to the development and regulation of the material resources of the community which are maintained for the sake of profit. An economic man is one who manages his private income and expenditures strictly and consistently in accordance with his own material interests.⁸ Scotch economist and moral philosopher Adam Smith assumed that if each person pursues his own interest the general welfare of all will benefit. In this view, the capitalist produces and sells consumable goods in order to meet the greatest needs of the people. In fulfilling his own interest, the capitalist automatically promotes the general welfare. Smith felt during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries England followed an economic policy of mercantilism. Mercantilism meant that economic policies were dictated by merchants at the expense of the rest of the community. In particular the government sought to increase national wealth by discouraging foreign imports and encouraging exports. The English people were encouraged to settle in America to promote this economic policy.⁹ Max Weber linked the rise of capitalism to the religious ethics of Protestantism, especially Calvinism. Weber argued that Puritan

religious ideologies and the Protestant work ethic contributed greatly to the eventual adoption of capitalism.¹⁰ Capital, the original funds of a trader, company, or corporation, is seen within an economic system which favors the existence of capitalists.¹¹ Ideological reasons for settlement are seen within every religious or secular movement. Puritan religious tenets rested on French Protestant reformer John Calvin's *Institutes of The Christian Religion*. Calvin's theology asserted God's omnipotence and the helplessness of man in the face of God's will. Austerity, frugality, and hard work were seen as evidence of Godliness and a way to receive God's salvation.¹²

This analysis of three early American settlements includes the merits of idealist versus materialist approaches to the study of human society and its evolution. Idealistic theoretical approaches attempt to explain the basic features of social life by reference to the creative capacity of the human mind. A society's ideological superstructure consists of religion, science, art, literature, and the general ideology of the culture. Materialistic approaches give priority to the practical, material conditions of human existence. The material infrastructure consists of the nature of the physical environment, the level of technology, and the organization of the economic system.¹³ Both approaches explain the structure and evolution of sociocultural systems that develop in Jamestown, Plymouth, and Massachusetts Bay. The principle of cultural materialism is upheld in these early colonies as they adjust their mode of production to meet their subsistence needs. Once the means of supporting life was met in the settlements, the colonists proceeded to increase production due to the influence of

capitalism and the Protestant work ethic. Cultural materialism holds that each society must cope with the problems of production to satisfy minimal requirements for subsistence. Additionally, each society must avoid destructive increases or decreases in population and must maintain secure and orderly behavioral relationships among its constituent groups and with other societies. Accordingly, cultural materialism promotes the priority of the materialistic and infrastructural conditions and processes over the ideological and superstructural conditions and processes in Jamestown, Plymouth, and Massachusetts Bay.¹⁴

Jamestown Settlement--Corporate Enterprise

In 1606 the English Parliament chartered two companies to establish English colonies. Control of the venture to establish the first successful English settlement in America was in the hands of a small group of merchants and gentlemen from London and Plymouth. Connected by business, family, and political ties, these capitalists were already accustomed to mutual cooperation. The London promoters formed a joint-stock company in which investors pooled their capital and shared the risks of the venture. The first expedition consisting of one hundred men and boys landed on May 14, 1607, on the shore of the river; they later named after King James. The settlers began at once to build a fort for protection, a storehouse, a church, and log huts for dwellings at Jamestown. The economic objective was to mine gold and iron ore, explore the country in search of the Northwest Passage, and manufacture pitch, tar, soap ashes, and glass. Nothing turned out as anticipated. There was no gold, no Northwest Passage, and no valuable commodity to send back to England. Instead, the

poorly prepared adventurers found a savage wilderness in which they lacked food, and many became sick and died.¹⁵

The promoters in London felt the colony critically needed additional resources and more colonists who were hardworking farmers and artisans to develop Jamestown. In desperation to save the settlement, the company encouraged the colony to live collectively through joint management of land and stock under a new royal charter. The charter of 1609 established the Treasurer and Company of Adventurers and Planters of the City of London for the first colony of Virginia, known as the Virginia Company.¹⁶ It enlarged the boundaries of the colony and increased the number of charter members and the resources of the joint-stock company. The new charter provided for two kinds of stockholders; settlers, also known as planters, and merchant capitalists, also known as adventurers. The planters were to work for the company for seven years and in return receive food, clothing, and shelter. At the end of a seven-year collective period, the planters and members of their family were to receive one hundred acres each and the profits of the common fund were to be divided among the stockholders.¹⁷ The Jamestown colonists essentially became indentured servants as they were bound by contract into the service of the Virginia Company for a specified term.

The Virginia Company of 1609 was launched by an active campaign of letters and handbills to encourage a large number of initial investors. Fifty-six London companies and 659 individuals became charter members of the company. In 1610 and 1611, three expeditions arrived at Jamestown bearing fresh supplies. The

colonists who arrived concentrated on farming and obtained cleared lands from the Indians for cultivation. The colonists secured food from the natives, developed a fishery, and imported livestock to increase subsistence of the collective settlement.¹⁸ During the decades of 1610's conditions steadily improved at Jamestown, but the finances of the Virginia Company were not sufficient to support the developing colony. To increase the company's holdings a new charter was issued in March 1612 which extended the boundaries of the original charter to include the Bermuda Islands. It also held that all members of the company, including the planters and settlers, could attend four annual "great court" meetings to deal with the governmental affairs. Further, the company could establish one or more lotteries each year to raise funds for the joint-stock. However, by 1617-1619, even with the aid of the lotteries, the Virginia Company possessed inadequate resources to meet the cost of development and expansion of Jamestown. New ventures were needed to increase agricultural production and replenish the population. Subsidiary joint-stock or private ventures of small groups or associations of men were encouraged to settle plantations or private colonies within the boundaries of the company's land. These associates, also known as "societies of adventurers," were to provide tenants, servants, and equipment from their own resources and engage in agriculture, Indian trade, and fishing in the colony.¹⁹ Another goal of the guilds and communal associations that subscribed for shares of the common stock was Christian conversion of the natives.²⁰

Jamestown Settlement--Individual Enterprise

The introduction of private landowning at Jamestown was to determine the course

of later economic development in America. A transition occurred because the English had a desire for title to land and the company needed increased resources of people and money to continue the colony. To save the settlement, the company gave the colonists a personal interest in their labors and a stronger incentive to work by offering them the right to own land and the power to govern themselves. From 1614 to 1618, the settlers were transformed from company employees to farmers and planters under the encouragement of the company to produce staples and establish industry. This removed the settlers' reliance on the company and set them going in their individual directions.²¹

When the period of joint management of land and stock under the initial charter ended in 1616, individual freeholders could now decide what to produce on their land. The majority of landowners planted tobacco to sell on the English market. In sowing tobacco, the settlers switched from cultivating essential food crops to the cultivation of a lucrative crop. To keep Virginia's economy stable through diversity of products, acting-governor Sir Thomas Dale decreed in 1617 that no one could grow tobacco unless he also planted two acres of corn for himself and each male servant.²²

With dwindling funds the company in 1616 was compelled to adopt the "Society of Particular Adventurers for Traffic with the People of Virginia in Joint Stock." At this time, supplies to the colony were no longer forwarded in the name of the company. Instead an association of individual members formed a subsidiary joint-stock called a "magazine" to accumulate the funds for future supplies. Hereafter, the company could invest in the common funds of the "magazine" as an ordinary

adventurer and receive returns in proportion to the amount which was invested.²³

In 1618 the company apportioned unoccupied lands to public purposes. Grants of land were made to non-subscribers of the joint-stock through the "adventure of the person" or "headright" system form of private land distribution. This method allowed families and individuals who colonized at their own expense an opportunity to receive land in the colony. The "headright" system gave fifty acres to any person who financed the transportation of other settlers to the colony, as long as they remained for three years in the colony. The system was later extended so that each family head received fifty acres for each family member who emigrated and for every servant he brought into the colony. As a result, merchants and shipmasters who imported settlers, as well as families who came at their own expense, were compensated with land for their capital outlays to increase the population.²⁴ Settlement conditions steadily improved until disease took nearly four thousand lives between 1619 and 1624.²⁵ On March 22, 1622, an Indian massacre claimed an additional three hundred forty-seven colonists.²⁶

Jamestown Settlement--Settlement Analysis

Initially, the English Parliament and Crown dominated social and political life in the colony. The charters of 1609 and 1612 put control of the colony in the hands of the Virginia Company. The Jamestown General Court of stockholders had the right to elect the officers of the company, to make laws for the colony, and to dispose of its lands. In 1618 the company adopted a new policy when it granted land to colonial private ventures or associations of individuals, these property owners also were given

equal voice in the management and government of the colony. After the Virginia Company had lost more than 200,000 pounds in eighteen years, the English charter was declared vacated in 1624.²⁷ At this time the Crown appointed wealthy and influential Virginians as governor and members of the council to regulate the social and political activities of the established royal colony. The appointees owned great amounts of property and they favored a government whose power was limited to a select few. An oligarchy of wealth came to shape the Virginian colonial government and religion.²⁸ These aristocratic leaders established the Anglican faith of England as the official religion of Virginia. A unity of church and state continued in Jamestown as in England. Protestant parishes became the units of local government which joined the small number of people within the vast territory. Ministers were imported from England and property owners were ordered to pay taxes for the support of the clergymen. Anglicans believed that God freely offered salvation and that man had free will to choose his destiny. They felt that a kindly God provided means in their church for overcoming sin.²⁹

The failure of the Virginia Company was due to its lack of success as a colonizing and profit-making agency. Tobacco had become a money crop and a stable income for the self-sufficient plantations. Increasingly, the trade of Virginia was transacted by private traders, either as individuals or in partnerships. The joint-stock company necessary to settle the new colony was no longer effective. The Virginia Company created the change from corporate enterprise to increased individual enterprise in four ways: (1) by renting small plots to farmers; (2) by

giving hundred-acre tracts to settlers who had labored seven years for the company; (3) by issuing large tracts of land to groups composed of wealthy English investors with the understanding that they would develop extensive plantations; and (4) by offering the "headrights" to emigrants who would establish themselves in the colony at their own expense.³⁰

The English policy of mercantilism influenced the colonizing of America. Between 1530 and 1635 England underwent a period of overpopulation and unemployment due to the land enclosure movement. Many workers were without a means to produce food for their families. At the same time, merchant capitalists and emerging industry could not employ the growing working class. England sought an outlet for its excess population and a way to balance its import and export trade. American colonies could provide resources that were previously purchased through foreign trade. Subsequently, England would no longer have to buy its imports from foreigners who refused to take England's exports as payment. The trade of the royal colonies could be regulated so that the balance of payments would favor England.³¹

The majority of the Jamestown population was of the artisan and tenant class who became freeholders in America. They resented English feudal practices, required payments to the aristocrats, and saw no means to become members of the new class of English merchant capitalists. They could achieve their desire to own land by colonizing with the Virginia Company. In return, the colonists were to provide the labor to produce colonial goods to be traded in England. It was soon found that common labor and a collective economy did not create the environment for increased

production in the colony.³² Sir Thomas Smith, former treasurer of the company, relates the behavior of the Jamestown colonists under a collective economy:

When our people were fed out of a common store and laboured jointly together, glad was he [who] could slip from his labour, or slumber over his taske, he cared not how, nay the most honest among them would hardly take so much true paines in a weeke, as now for themselves they will doe in a day; neither cared they for the increase, presuming that howsoever the harvest prospered, the general store must maintaine them, so that wee reaped not so much corne from the labours of thirtie, as now three or four doe provide for themselves.³³

It is important to note that governmental or corporate mandated communalism is compulsory and tends to kill the initiative of individuals. With unsatisfactory labor and production, the financial resources of the Virginia Company were not sufficient to sustain and develop the colony.

Plantations became self-sufficient with the lucrative production of tobacco. The tobacco culture promoted an expansion of plantations across the colony. A system of large estates resulted as the tobacco planter sought fertile land to cultivate and extended his land clearings. The isolated lifestyle which the large plantations created discouraged the growth of towns and villages and diminished the tendency toward cooperation among people. Each plantation had its residents, its own laborers, and it either produced its own supplies or imported them from abroad. Historian Philip Alexander Bruce emphasizes that "As the sense of personal independence increased, an inevitable result of the plantation life, the disinclination of the individual to combine with other individuals of the same class for the accomplishment of common economic purposes became more marked."³⁴ Seventy-five hundred colonists were

scattered throughout the colony growing tobacco and ranging cattle in 1634. English mercantilistic policies had succeeded in establishing the first English colony in America.³⁵ According to historian Curtis Nettels, "Only with individual ownership did the colonist feel the spur to industry necessary in subduing a hostile wilderness."³⁶

Plymouth Colony--Corporate Enterprise

The Pilgrim Commonwealth rested upon the bonds of three separate contracts: the joint-stock venture with the merchant capitalists of the Virginia Company in London, the religious covenant of the congregation at Scrooby, England, and the political compact signed on the *Mayflower*. Merchant-promoter Thomas Weston obtained a charter from King James and organized the business arrangement for the Pilgrims with the Virginia Company. The charter was an agreement that the Pilgrims could settle land in the Virginia Colony. The English Crown did not grant the power of self-government to the Puritans. But the Pilgrims were satisfied because they were chiefly interested in their separateness and sufficiency to themselves as a church.³⁷ The forming of the partnership with Thomas Weston and seventy London merchant capitalists was the fortunate circumstance which enabled the Pilgrims to acquire passage on the *Mayflower* and secure the necessary supplies for the long voyage. The hiring of the *Mayflower* itself was a communal venture. They formed an unincorporated joint-stock company in which "Thomas Weston and his associates were to furnish the money and supplies for the founding of the colony in America while the Leyden Pilgrims were to furnish nothing but themselves and their capacity

to work." It was the prospect of building a fishing trade with Europe that made the Pilgrims feel they could repay the seven thousand pounds.³⁸

The Calvinists arrived in the threatening wilderness at Cape Cod on November 11, 1620. They actually landed north of the charter's designated Virginia Company land, but all agreed to establish settlement where they disembarked in unclaimed wilderness rather than to face the winter seas. On December 25, Plymouth Governor William Bradford observed that they "begane to erecte the first house for *commone* use to receive them and their goods."³⁹ The Directors of the company insisted the colony be operated on a communal basis, everyone working for "the general" good. The Pilgrims had hoped for an economic base of fishing and trading, but in their early development they were forced to use the communal labor of subsistence agriculture in order to acquire passage and supplies from the Virginia Company.⁴⁰ In effect, the Pilgrims adopted pure communism as a survival technique. "The product of their labor was poured into a common storehouse, their needs doled out from a common supply." Everyone shared the same work and ate the same food in an egalitarian way so often repeated on the American frontier. Private land ownership was, in fact, forbidden for individual colonists. Theoretically they were allowed no time to work for themselves. "The houses they had built were not their own, and any improvements they might make would pass to the merchants at a division to be made seven years hence."⁴¹ The Pilgrims' arrangement with the Virginia Company followed the establishment of Jamestown by eleven years. Both colonist groups mutually agreed to the requirement of the company to operate on a

communal basis during the seven-year formative phase. Acceptance of the contract to colonize was also an acceptance to live collectively with a community of goods.

Everett Emerson writes in *Puritanism in America 1620-1750* that the settlers of New England created "a commonwealth based on the conviction that discipline, law, and order were fundamental." Utilizing a powerful unity and alliance "an organic relationship of state, church, and society" was formed. It emphasized church fellowship and taught that God worked through the relationship called the "communion of the saints." Each person within the commonwealth was expected to "probe, privately but profoundly, his own soul, both to detect signs of faith and to root out hidden sins," said Emerson.⁴² Harvard historian Perry Miller's research reveals that "New England Puritans believed in a modified Calvinism, or 'covenant theology,' that allowed for man's activity in the process of salvation."⁴³ In his diary, William Bradford includes a letter from John Robinson, the Puritan's pastor at Scrooby, England, who describes the bond of the "sacred" church covenant: "We are knit together as a body in a most strict and sacred bond and covenant with the Lord, of the violation whereof we make great conscience, and by virtue whereof we do hold ourselves straitly tied to all care of each other's good and of the whole, by every one and mutually." This passage suggests the strength of the bond of the original English Scrooby Church Covenant and why the Pilgrims took the other "non-saints" into their fold.⁴⁴

The Pilgrim leaders recognized they must maintain control of the colony to preserve their religious independence. The Mayflower Compact, based on the

English Scrooby Church Covenant, was their initial civil covenant. The famed Mayflower Compact to which forty-one adults affixed their signature in the ship's cabin became the basis for their government.⁴⁵ It is important to note that among the forty-one men who signed the compact, only seventeen were the Puritan Separatists from Leyden, England. The other twenty-four were believers in the Puritan faith as well as non-believers. Pressured by the realities of the moment, all agreed to join together for their mutual benefit.⁴⁶ Frank Donovan writes about the compact, "The meeting held in the cabin of the *Mayflower* on November 11, 1620, was the first town meeting held in the New World, although there was not yet a town." Those who attended the meeting agreed to combine themselves together into "a civil body politic" in which each has the right to express an opinion and register a vote on the "just and equal" laws by which they are governed.⁴⁷

In a covenanted community the discipline of the state must also be directed by the saints. Alan Simpson asserts that Puritans wanted the separation of church and state, and this is one of the things that distinguish them from all Anglicans. Separation of church and state, in such a context, meant simply a division of functions between two partners, the civil officials and the clergy. In New England it was expected to be a partnership in unison, for church and state alike were to be dominated by citizens considered saints.⁴⁸ The idea that political authority, while authorized by God, derives from the consent of the people was a familiar one in the English and Calvinist tradition. "It is a consent to be governed according to the ordinances of God: an acceptance by saints of the political obligations of a chosen people."⁴⁹ The Puritan's

social interest was also bound with a sense of solidarity--"by the belief, namely, that the good of each is bound up with the good of all." Ralph Perry writes that the Plymouth Colony was considered "a single body of which the whole must suffer from the defect of any part."⁵⁰

Everett Emerson suggests that the concepts of the covenants--the social/political and the church covenants--flourished in American Puritanism because they reinforced each other, and because all were reinforced by Calvinistic covenant theology. Emerson notes four fundamental aspects of the covenant idea in theology: (1) the covenant implies some sort of agreement between God and man with mutual obligations; (2) man's obligation is to do what God would have him do; (3) the covenant between God and man originated in Old Testament times and continues through history; and (4) the covenant is a covenant of grace that succeeds an earlier covenant, the covenant of works.⁵¹

Plymouth Colony--Individual Enterprise

The Pilgrims were English Puritan Separatists devoted to the tenet of church discipline. William Bradford said it was hatred of the "holy discipline of Christ in his church" that led to their persecution.⁵² They were convinced they were withdrawing from the corruptions in the Church of England to establish their "pure" (Puritan) religion. "They joined themselves (by a covenant of the Lord) into a church estate in the fellowship of the Gospel."⁵³

Morton Dexter, who wrote a series of articles in 1893 for nationwide members of the Congregational Church Scrooby Club, said, "They seem to have been content with

the material conditions of their lives in England and probably would not have left their native land in order to better themselves financially." The main reason for their separation and of their subsequent emigrations from England to Holland and from Holland to America was to obtain and maintain their religious liberty. After reaching Plymouth, their zeal in founding their colony and in farming, trading, and sending back fish and skins to England was due more to "the necessity of self-preservation and to their obligation to the adventurers, without whose aid,...they could not have crossed the ocean at all, then [than] to any ruling ambition to acquire wealth."⁵⁴

A commingled group reached the New World in 1620. Of the 102 who crossed the sea on the *Mayflower*, half were separatists or "saints" and the other half were not interested primarily in religion but sought freedom, adventure, and wealth.⁵⁵ Originally, the Pilgrims did not plan to organize as a communal utopian group. As members of the Puritan religious movement, they merely sought freedom to practice their religion without persecution. A communal arrangement was accepted to guarantee their early endurance in America. Pilgrim community of property lasted from 1620 through 1623 when private economic interests supplanted concern for the common good. According to James Baker, a vice president for historical research at the present restoration of Plimoth Plantation, "The Pilgrims decided to divide the common land in 1623 for individual farming."⁵⁶ Realizing that further supplies were not to come from London and having "with a great deal of patience overcome hunger & famine," they urged the Governor to give them land to increase their production. Their request was granted and "to every person was given only one acre

of land, to them & theirs, as nere the towne as might be, ... kept close together both for more saftie and defence, and the better improvement of the generall employments."⁵⁷ Governor Bradford agreed with the division so they might "raise as much come as they could, and obtaine a beter crope then they had done ... This had very good success; for it made all hands very industrious, so as much more come was planted then other wise would have bene by any means the Governor or any other could use, and saved him a great deall of trouble, and gave farr better contente."⁵⁸ This statement points to the reality that if people unite voluntarily they work diligently, but if they are forced into an economic union as at Jamestown and Plymouth they may not. This was the beginning of the end of Plymouth's complete community of property, but it indicated their vitality in responding creatively and developmentally to changing conditions.

At planting time in 1624, the colonists asked Bradford to assign them lands on a permanent rather than a yearly basis, so that they might have the benefit of fields they had already worked to clear and improve. Bradford Smith observes that "thus the superiority of private venture over communal labor was recognized and adopted as a permanent principle."⁵⁹ In 1624, the Pilgrims decided to dissolve the partnership with the London merchants of the Virginia Company. Both parties mutually agreed to a financial settlement of 1,800 pounds. Eight Plymouth leaders formed a holding company to purchase the interest of the Virginia Company.⁶⁰

Until 1630 the Pilgrim settlement had been the influential English colony along the coast. Others looked to Plymouth for protection, for guidance, and for supplies.

But the influence of the Pilgrims on the other New England colonies and upon their institutions after 1630 decreased. So rapid was the change after the founding of Boston in 1632, "New Plymouth found itself no longer a leader and scarcely an equal, already pushed somewhat to one side. Ten years later it was the smallest and least powerful of a congregation of plantations, most of which already deserved the name of states, and the wealth, numbers, and ability of each of which were far greater than the Pilgrims ever dreamed of possessing."⁶¹

Governor William Bradford became disillusioned because their communal bond was weakening. After 1632 he saw few signs of God's providence at work in the colony. Their common community was divided and scattered. Pointing to the development of men's greed Bradford said,

...the people of the plantation began to grow in their outward estates, by reason of the flowing of many people into the country, especially into the Bay of Massachusetts...many were much enriched and commodities grew plentiful. And yet in other regards this benefit turned to their hurt, and this accession of strength turned to their weaknesses. For now as their stocks increased and the increase vendible, there was no longer holding them together, but now they must of necessity go to their great lots. By which means they were all scattered all over the Bay (Plymouth Harbor) quickly and the town in which they lived compactly till now was left very thin and in a short time almost desolate...but the church must also be divided, and those that had lived so long together in Christian and comfortable fellowship must now part and suffer many divisions.⁶²

A religious transformation began in the late 1640's with the adoption of The Cambridge Platform and was accelerated with the Half-Way Synod in 1662.⁶³ The definitive statement of Congregationalism, The Cambridge Platform of 1648, declared that the "power and authority of magistrates is for helping and furthering the

churches." The church as a body now had a visible political union among its members.⁶⁴ The adjustment in membership was found in 1662 through the famous Half-Way Covenant, a device whereby the second generation was admitted to church membership after making a profession of obedience. This enabled their children to be baptized within the church thus increasing their political rights. But in spite of their efforts, "the religious experiences of the first generation refused to become a hereditary endowment."⁶⁵ Everett Emerson summarizes it well. "Puritan leaders of the late seventeenth century did what they could to retain power....All means, however, failed. The churches of the Puritans were rapidly losing their influence....The communion of the saints was an outmoded ideal."⁶⁶

Plymouth Colony--Settlement Analysis

Governor William Bradford in 1623 lamented in his diary over the failure of the communal venture:

The experience that was had in this common course and condition, tried sundrie years, and that amongst godly and sober men, may well evince the vanitie of that conceite of Platos & other ancients, applauded by some of later times;--that the taking away of propertie, and bringing in communitie into a commone wealth, would make them happy and flourishing; as if they were wiser then God.⁶⁷

Secular attitudes became dominant in the Plymouth Plantation. Private interest led to expansion and dispersion of the Commonwealth. John Demos likened the process of dispersion to the powerful magnetic attraction of empty land to acquire and settle. This dispersion of settlement was part of a larger change in which the community left behind the ideals of the first settlement. Richard Bushman describes the change in

this period as "from Puritan to Yankee."⁶⁸ In 1642 several factors created the need to join the New England colonies into a confederation for mutual dependence: decrease in immigration, the shortage of business opportunities with England, and the threat of Indian hostilities.⁶⁹ Perry Miller points to the frank admissions of Bradford in 1642 as to the reasons for the declension of Plymouth; "The multitude were not universally holy and probably had no great comprehension of the complex theory [of covenants]. Many, perhaps the majority, migrated for material rather than spiritual reasons, and their energies were certainly much taken up, once they had arrived, with physical tasks."⁷⁰ Alan Simpson observes that second generations usually do not have the same commitment to a cause as do their forefathers. This is part of the common experience of all creative revivals, when the first generation hands over to the second and habit replaces direct experiences as the source of guidance.⁷¹ Stress occurred between the older and younger generations over restricting membership. Robert Pope's article describing the reasons for diffusion of Puritanism states that later generations did not realize that in the first decades the founders were experimenting and adapting "their politics and their polity to fit the new environment."⁷²

The Pilgrim Separatists were a voluntary religious group sharing a common ideology, a lifestyle, and an economic union from 1620 to 1623. They bound themselves together using three separate contracts: the religious covenant of the original Calvinist congregation written in 1607 at Scrooby, England; the social/political compact signed on the *Mayflower* in 1620, and the commercial

contract with the merchant capitalists of the Virginia Company in 1620. All three contracts created a bond of union needed to practice and sustain the Pilgrim's ideal Calvinist religion. Plymouth Commonwealth can be seen throughout its existence from 1620 through 1692 as undergoing a developmental process in which adjustments were made in the economic, political, and religious structures to adapt to changing external and internal circumstances. Plymouth went through a formative communal phase with a collective economy to settle new lands and survive the wilderness. It later adjusted by a division of lands and the dissolving of the economic partnership to increase their agricultural production. It made adjustments in ideology with the second generation. As a young, vigorous, and possibly utopian religious movement becomes an established church, its power tends to decline. With the loss of the old charter in 1684, and the issue of a new one in 1691, the custodians of the Puritan ideal in Massachusetts were obliged to defend it under increasingly difficult conditions.⁷³ The little colony of Plymouth was absorbed into Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1692. At this time, the status of all the New England colonies was under scrutiny by the advisers to the new king, Charles II. "The Crown apparently felt that the Old Colony would be better served (particularly in terms of defense) by being joined to one of her larger neighbors."⁷⁴

The Pilgrims did not establish a communal movement. Instead, Puritanism was a religious utopian movement that used communal methods to help insure its survival. In this regard, the short communal phase of Plymouth provided an important example continued by the entire Puritan Separatist movement. The communal founders of

Plymouth set a precedent for further migrations and the development of future religious commonwealths in New England. They brought their families to form permanent homes. They provided the basis of covenant church government. They acquired individual ownership of lands. And they severed business and legal relations with English companies. The working combination of two institutions--the family and the town--were very important to sustain the commonwealth. In an era when there were no hospitals and no government welfare institutions, the service dimension of the extended family was highly significant.

Massachusetts Bay Commonwealth--Corporate Enterprise

Formation of the Puritan movement coincided with an extreme dissatisfaction with life in England. Reasons for discontent were found in the policies of King Charles I and a severe economic depression in England from 1620 to 1635. Individuals who were unhappy with the Church of England unified under the Puritan religious movement to "purify" the established church by making it more Calvinistic.⁷⁵ John White, Puritan minister of Dorchester, appealed to influential Puritans to establish a holy experiment in the New World. In a practical sense, White perceived in migration an opportunity to relieve the poor and unemployed of England who were growing more numerous under the pressure of a long depression.⁷⁶ In 1628 a number of prominent Puritans bought their way into a commercial company that was being organized in London. Called the New England Company, it took over the rights of a defunct group, the Dorchester Adventurers. The Dorchester group had tried to establish a farming and fishing colony at Cape Ann in 1623. The New

England Company obtained a charter from the Council for New England to begin a settlement at Massachusetts Bay. A year later on March 4, 1629, the New England Company was reorganized as the Massachusetts Bay Company and had its proprietary and governmental rights confirmed by a new charter obtained directly from King Charles I.⁷⁷

The Massachusetts Bay Company, an incorporated joint-stock trading company, was modeled after the Jamestown charter of 1612. The proceeds of the common fund were to be distributed after a seven-year common fund period. The trading company was organized to found a colony in America that should be both a religious refuge and a profit-making plantation. On August 26, 1629, twelve Puritan leaders, including John Winthrop, met at Cambridge, England, to develop an agreement that bound the subscribers of the common fund. Each agreed to proceed with God's work in the new plantation provided that the government of the colony should remain with the company.⁷⁸ The charter of the Massachusetts Bay Company differed from other charters of the time in that the joint-stock was not just for trade. It included common stock for the maintenance of the settlement in Massachusetts. Under the common fund, the colony's land, buildings, and livestock were to be locally controlled in New England. This meant that Puritan company stockholders who emigrated would have full control of the government under which they would live. The Puritan leaders felt it was fundamental to the success of their mission to diminish English authority.⁷⁹

Everett Emerson notes that the Puritans referred to their society not as a colony but as a commonwealth. The charter was interpreted as a grant of "semi-sovereign

status" where local political, social, and legal control of the commonwealth lay with "Puritan Godly men."⁸⁰ A gradual transformation of a trading company into a colonizing commonwealth occurred. The famous sermon given in 1630 by Massachusetts Bay Governor John Winthrop in mid-ocean aboard the *Arabella* came to define the "tribalization of the Puritan spirit." In it he explained that the goals of regeneration and sanctification were to be sought within the bonding of the people in the Commonwealth.⁸¹ Historian Robert Kelley emphasizes their idealism in his *The shaping of the American past*:

When John Winthrop's fleet arrived in Massachusetts Bay in 1630,...it was in pursuit of a utopian goal: to found in the New World a pure and undefiled Zion that would serve as an example to the Old World. They were not escaping from England, they were on an "errand into the wilderness." "For wee must consider," as Governor Winthrop said, "that wee shall be as a Citty upon a Hill, the eies of all people are uppon us."⁸²

James Adams suggests that the Winthrop colonists in 1630 accepted the church-covenant idea of the Pilgrims. "They wished, first, to found and develop a peculiar type of community, best expressed by the term Bible-Commonwealth, in which the political and religious elements, in themselves and in their relations to one another, should be but two aspects of the same method of so regulating the lives of individuals as to bring them into harmony with the expressed will of God, as interpreted by the self-appointed rulers."⁸³ They sought to establish a Puritan Utopia based upon God's laws as revealed in the Bible. The town of Dedham, Massachusetts, organized in 1636, was founded as a "Christian Utopian Closed Corporate Community." It was formed as a closed corporate commune because its membership saw itself as a select

group joining together in covenants of perfection and love. The commune demanded the loyalty of its members "offering in exchange privileges which could be obtained only through membership."⁸⁴

Although based upon perfection and an example to others, the Puritans did not take everyone into their commonwealth. Winthrop speaks of the exclusiveness of their communal membership when he compares a family to a commonwealth.⁸⁵ Seeking a broader base for their commonwealth government, the leaders established a civil oath based upon the religious foundation of the Puritan church-covenant. To become a voting member of the colony, each male had to take the "freemen of the commons" oath. The oath read: "I, being by God's providence an inhabitant and freeman, within the jurisdiction of this commonweale, doe freely acknowledge myself to be subject to the government thereof." The original trading corporation was transformed into the governing body of a commonwealth. "Membership in a Puritan church replaced the purchasing of stock as the means of becoming a freeman." The original charter of 1629 had remained unchanged but it had been adapted to the Puritans' practical needs to sustain their commonwealth.⁸⁶

When Winthrop and his associates opened freemanship to all church members, they foresaw that the number of members would soon become too large to effectively assemble as a legislature. Their solution was to leave lawmaking to the executive council of assistants who were elected by the church members. But in 1634 with the spread of settlements throughout the bay, the freemen insisted that the lawmaking powers be delegated to "deputies" elected from each settlement. The General Court

was altered to include deputies or representatives who were all elected by the freemen. At this time, the colony allowed a more representative local government.⁸⁷

The Puritan faith which centered on salvation by reading the Bible was enforced during the 1640's by laws to require the institution of public education in Massachusetts Bay. The act of 1642 made the establishment of elementary and, under certain conditions, secondary schools compulsory. In 1647, towns of fifty families were required to maintain a teacher to instruct the children to read and write and towns of one hundred families were ordered to also establish secondary or grammar schools.⁸⁸

Massachusetts Bay Commonwealth--Individual Enterprise

Artisans, craftsmen, laborers, indentured servants, and young maids contracted with the Puritan trading company to colonize Massachusetts Bay. The *Arabella* was the first ship to arrive at Salem harbor on June 12, 1630. In all, seventeen vessels left England for New England in the year 1630. As result of a well-organized campaign, over a thousand people settled in Salem, Charlestown, Dorchester, Natascot, and Plymouth during the first year. Charles Andrews portrayed the individual leaders of the trading company as "men of wealth and education, of middle-class origin with a quantum of political training, hardheaded and dogmatic,...stubborn in their adherence to a religious and political purpose." These Puritan leaders looked upon themselves as commissioned by God to create both a pure church and a utopian social order.⁸⁹

For religious and secular purposes, individually and severally, the Puritans bound

themselves together. Under a mutual agreement or religious covenant of the first Salem church they pledged, "We covenant with the Lord and with one another and do bind ourselves in the presence of God to walk together in all his ways, according as he is pleased to reveal himself unto us in his blessed work of truth."⁹⁰ To carry forward economic organization at first based on agriculture, settlers were allotted land grants within the Massachusetts Bay settlements. The men worked plots assigned to them and their cattle grazed on the common land of the commonwealth. Settlements developed into towns which became the basis for social organization. The meetinghouse became the central feature of the town where government and religious functions were held. The town meeting and the commonwealth's selectmen oversaw land distribution and social order. The Puritan commonwealth joined church and government into a complex whole best described as a theocracy.⁹¹

Religious motives of the Puritan leaders in Massachusetts Bay lead them to be selective when choosing freemen to become members of the company. Wanting only people of character and those who were members of the church, led them to select a small number of settlers who actually became voting members of the company. Oscar Handlin wrote "Saintliness and property were thus associated as tests of fitness to participate in the polity. The great landholders and merchants were chosen to office and listened to with respect in town and church meetings because their wealth was usually both a source of power and a sign they were among the elect."⁹²

The money that emigrating Puritans brought with them sustained Massachusetts through the early years. But the task of New England individuals were to find a

future economic base for the new colony. Codfish were found in the fishing waters off the coasts of northern New England and Newfoundland. From 1640 through 1660 increased colonial trade shipped meat, fish, lumber, rum, grain, whale oil, ginger, and iron to Europe. As this new trading pattern developed, accordingly, a new class of merchant began to emerge. Merchants, who had emigrated from the business districts of London, soon began to conflict with the Puritan authorities. The capitalistic Boston merchants felt the price of goods should be set by market demand for the product. The Calvinistic Puritans believed in a non-capitalistic approach in which business activities are regulated to benefit the general community's public good. This Puritan medieval concept advised that each article had its "just" price and that interest should not be charged on debts. As the Boston merchants' economic and political power increased, the conflict between the Puritans and merchants heightened in Massachusetts Bay.⁹³

Massachusetts Bay Commonwealth--Settlement Analysis

The majority of the almost 20,000 people who came to Massachusetts Bay between 1630 and 1642 were not Puritans. Historians have isolated a number of motivations for the departure from England ranging from religious persecution and economic distress, to a yearning for a better life. Those who ventured came mostly as part of a family group, typically a husband and wife with a few children and one or more servants. Few who came were poor. Mainly farmers and craftsmen, they were united chiefly in their desire to achieve local control away from England's civil and religious authority. They developed the New England town meeting system and

created harmony through the town and church covenants. Puritanism became a binding force of harmony within the towns. But within this harmony was also a rigid and disciplined structure that was selective in its membership.⁹⁴ The Puritans in Massachusetts Bay wished to establish a state of their own which would be independent of all outside control, not only of the principal company in England but also King Charles I and the English Parliament. In this respect they differed fundamentally from the Puritan Separatists at Plymouth who rejected the Church of England but recognized the power of the king and Parliament.⁹⁵

John Winthrop of Massachusetts Bay and William Bradford of Plymouth were men of intense religious conviction who were discontent with the compromise worked out in England between Roman Catholicism and radical Protestantism. All Puritans wished to purify the Church of England, simplify the rituals, and eliminate the prayer book and all the sacraments except baptism and communion. All were followers of John Calvin who acknowledged the supreme authority of the Bible, along with the doctrines of original sin, predestination, and salvation through grace. In addition to the religious covenant between man and God, the Puritans established covenants between man and church and between man and government based on Calvin's doctrines. In Massachusetts Bay a covenant entered into by the "visible saints" who confessed their faith and allegiance to the covenant formed the membership of the church and the state.⁹⁶ The establishment of a Puritan state under a trading company's charter was without parallel in the history of commercial and colonizing enterprise.

Puritan history is one of a losing struggle to preserve the original religious intensity of the "Great Migration" to America. To keep order and encourage religious observance, "the governments had to stand firmly behind the colonial ministers and implement the theology with fines, prisons, the dunking stool, and the noose."⁹⁷ In 1646 the Massachusetts government required everyone within a town to go to church in hopes that they would become converted. The effect of this compulsory attendance was not successful. In 1648 the Cambridge Platform was produced that increased the influence of the Puritan clergy. In an effort to keep the second generation within the church, in 1662 the Half-Way Covenant was enacted to allow the children of men who had not professed conversion to be baptized.

In 1675 a major Indian attack took the lives of six hundred Puritan settlers. The ministers and leaders interpreted this disaster as punishment of the Puritan colonies for breaching their covenant with God. A new series of rules and laws were enacted in 1675 to restore the piety of the people. But church attendance continued to decline. By the end of the century, Puritan theology was stretched to allow those who professed true Christian faith and lived good lives to become baptized. Thereafter, the Puritan church was no longer just for the elect "visible saints."⁹⁸

By 1660 New England merchants were trading freely in France, Spain, Holland, and the Caribbean islands. King Charles II decided to regulate the merchants to benefit England. The Navigation Acts which required that most colonial trade be channeled through England established a colonial civil service of tax collectors who gathered duties at the New England seaports. At this same time, the Boston

merchants complained to England of the Puritan-enforced church membership before one could become a voting member of the commonwealth. Eventually after twenty years of turbulence between the Puritans and the Boston merchants, England withdrew the original Massachusetts charter in 1684. Massachusetts then became a royal colony and in 1691 a new and remodeled charter was granted. The governor was now chosen in London from among English politicians and the governor in turn selected the Council, often chosen from the Boston merchant class.⁹⁹ No longer did the local Massachusetts town and its town meeting have the authority to create social and economic policies. The Bible Commonwealth had ended. The gradual emergence in Boston and elsewhere in Massachusetts of wealthy and powerful merchants changed the old Puritan political arrangements. The Puritan colony was transformed into a secular society.¹⁰⁰ But Massachusetts made two important contributions to influence American political life by the establishment of the town meeting and the public school.¹⁰¹

Conclusions

Corporate and individual enterprise were used by English settlers attempting to locate and to survive in the New World wilderness. Cooperative methods ranging from joint-stock to collective economies with community of goods were employed. It was essential for successful emigration and development that joint-stock trading companies evolve to amass capital to fund the settlements. Although necessary to settle America, these corporate and communal phases were short-lived. The Virginia Company of London formed in 1609 and obtained charters from England to establish

settlements at Jamestown and Plymouth. The company lost its charter at Jamestown in 1624 and the Pilgrims dissolved the economic partnership with the Virginia Company in 1624. The Massachusetts Bay Company formed in 1629, settled many towns in Massachusetts Bay, and then evolved into a commonwealth to regulate the social and economic business of the colony. The charter of this trading company was officially vacated by England in 1684. Common labor and property, required by the Virginia Company at Jamestown from 1609 to 1616 and at Plymouth from 1620 to 1623, were preconceived means to settle the colonies. The settlers accepted the Virginia Company's communal requirements to emigrate to the New World.

Individual reasons for emigration were mainly economic or religious. The majority of the Jamestown settlers were from the English artisan and tenant class who resented the English feudal practices. They sought to achieve a better life for themselves and their families in America through private ownership of land and the establishment of individual business enterprises. Individual enterprise in the colonies of Virginia and Plymouth did not advance until experiments with corporate production and trade had failed. Under the corporate arrangement, the settlers essentially labored as employees of the Virginia Company. The produce of the settlers' labor went into a common storehouse from which they were fed and clothed. Any surplus they produced belonged to the company and was sold in England to provide profits for the company's investors. All land in the colony temporarily belonged to the company until the end of the seven-year period when improved lands and other property were to be divided among the company stock holders. This plan did not yield good results

because the settlers did not have an incentive to labor when all their material requirements were provided by the company. A surplus was not produced, the company did not make a profit on its investment, and the resources of the company were not sufficient to sustain the colonies throughout the seven-year period.

Jamestown began to grant land to individuals under the charter of 1612 and Plymouth in 1623 assigned garden plots to individuals. The unhappy and non-productive experience of Virginia and Plymouth under a collective communal economy demonstrated its weakness to other colonial promoters. Massachusetts Bay immediately introduced private landowning and with it a competitive trade in farm produce carried on by individual merchants. In Jamestown and Plymouth, the first step toward a new economy was the transfer of land from the companies to individual settlers. Thereafter, the settlers enjoyed the fruits of their labor directly and, therefore, had more incentive to work to produce goods on their individual land. The settlers could sell their surplus production to the highest bidder. With this development, the monopoly on settlers' labor came to an end.

New Englanders settled as communities upon land granted to each town by the General Court of Massachusetts Bay Colony. Towns, the same unit of government as counties in the Mid-West, granted land to individual community members who had confessed their faith to the Puritan religion. All Puritans felt a powerful sense of community. By signing a common agreement or covenant, all individuals were bound within the colony. They believed that God dealt not with individuals but rather with the whole community of God's elect. Just as God made a covenant with them, so

they had a covenant among themselves to aid each other and combine for their common good. They insisted that godly men must be self-controlled and they arranged a strong government to direct, even dominate, the commonwealth, the church, and the family. The Puritan experiment exhibited the paradox of an authoritarian leadership who did provide a means for all church members to participate in the affairs of the state. Through the town meeting and election of deputies or selectmen, a representative form of government evolved. It is important to note that Plymouth Colony was more tolerant than Massachusetts Bay Colony of differing religions. Plymouth did not grant land on the condition of church membership as did Massachusetts Bay.

The religious movement of Puritanism was the social basis for the new societies established at Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay. Their venture was an unusual experiment in the establishment of an intentional community that was built on the hope of universal reformation. Rooted deeply in the Calvinist theology or thought was the covenant or contract concept which became the foundation of their government. The social/political and the religious covenants used to link individuals within the community flourished in American Puritanism because they reinforced each other, and because all were reinforced by Calvinistic covenant theology. Close-knit communities developed where the good of each was bound-up with the good of everyone within the colony. The wilderness was cleared, churches were built, and social and political institutions created. The churches were the heart of the community. The secular government was dedicated to protecting the churches and to

maintaining a godly community. Together, church and state sought to foster an ordered, productive society. Individual efforts to exploit the opportunities in America were to be moderated by an ultimate devotion to God and a Christian concern for the good of the whole. However, the Puritan dream of a communal utopia did not infuse rising generations. Gradually, the religious commitment of the community weakened. Pressures and opportunities of the American environment prevented Puritan institutions from being the perfect expression of the colonists' intentions. Capitalism brought economic individualism in which individuals sought self-gain. Puritan religious ideals in turn supported capitalism. Puritans believed that every man was called by God to work in a particular occupation. It was a person's duty to pursue this calling which would benefit the community. Investment to promote the commonwealth was preferred over individual accumulation of wealth. The irony is that when Puritan merchants dutifully worked to pursue their calling they were also contributing to the growth of a market-regulated economy and modern economic individualism. With the passing of time, the religious ideals of the Puritan settlers became more diverse as people adapted to the land and new generations sought to achieve their own more secular ends. The common good was no longer foremost as individuals established private ventures to seek economic gain.

A developmental process occurred as a result of ideological, theological, political, and economic conflicts in the early English American colonies of Jamestown, Plymouth, and Massachusetts Bay. Vital adjustments were made in the economic, political, and religious structures to adapt to changing conditions and to assure

subsistence of these early settlements. Changing conditions, both internal and external, and the needs of new generations demanded that original organizational structures be altered. Materialistic and ideological factors became driving forces in this historical evolution of early America. It was the materialistic forces that eventually influenced ideological forces in Jamestown, Plymouth, and Massachusetts Bay. Increased profits were sought by individuals. Jamestown's population declined as plantations developed to produce tobacco. The Commonwealths of Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay, founded upon the religious movement of Calvinism in its Puritan phase, soon found their settlers scattered across Massachusetts Bay seeking land to provide a means of living. In Boston, powerful merchants evolved who changed the commonwealth into a secular society. The mode of production seen in farming, tobacco production, and mercantilism influenced the general character of the social, political, and religious processes of these early settlements. A sociocultural evolution took place as the individuals within these settlements adapted and changed to achieve their goals. As individuals acquired personal independence, their desire to combine with other individuals decreased.

Collective, corporate means were essential to successful settlement of Jamestown, Plymouth, and Massachusetts Bay settlements. Joint-stock arrangements naturally evolved in the seventeenth century from the collective societies of the Middle Ages. Capitalists used the principal of communal living with common labor and property in the formative phase of early English colonies. The Virginia Company required Jamestown and Plymouth settlers to live in a communal society with collective labor

for the joint seven-year period. In return, the settlers' passage to and subsistence in the New World were provided by the trading company. In reality, the settlers were forced into a communal arrangement. Settlers, who were required to live collectively, lost their initiative to produce past their subsistence level. The Virginia Company, and later the Massachusetts Bay Company, concluded with the English settlers that individual ownership of land was necessary to increase production and encourage the emigration of future colonists. However, corporate enterprise, including communal arrangements, did provide the springboard to successful settlement in early English America. By arranging the capital, the settlers, the passage, and some subsistence in the colonys' formative phase, corporate enterprise did assure the foundation of the English colonies. Without the cooperative activity of the mercantile and capitalist classes in England, the creation of English colonies in America could not have occurred at this time. Following the closure of the unprofitable Virginia and Massachusetts Bay Companies, individual enterprise became responsible for the greatest number of English settlements in America.

Notes

1. Charles Andrews, *The Colonial Period of American History* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1934, 1964), Vol. 1, 78.
2. Definitions taken from *The Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1989).
3. Andrews, *The Colonial Period* Vol. 1, 41-42.
4. Frank R. Donovan, *The Mayflower Compact* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1968), 164-165. Sanford Kessler, "Tocqueville's Puritans: Christianity and the American Founding," *Journal of Politics*, (August, 1992), 784: According to Alexis de Tocqueville, The Mayflower Compact and other like covenants established the right of free and equal individuals under God to form a "civil body politic" and made consent the "de facto" basis for political authority. William Warren Sweet, *Religion in Colonial America* (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1965), 79: The Mayflower Compact was the first example of the "plantation Covenant" which was to be used over and over again "in the land of covenants, ecclesiastical and civil."
5. Donald Pitzer, "Developmental Communalism: An Alternative Approach to Communal Studies," *Utopian Thought and Communal Experience* Dennis Hardy and Lorna Davidson, eds. (Middlesex, England: Middlesex Polytechnic, 1989), 59.
6. See Richard Fairfield, *Communes USA: A Personal Tour* (Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books, 1972), 1; Albert Bates and Allen Butcher, "Options for Incorporation of Intentional Communities," *1990/1991 Directory of Intentional*

- Communities* (Evansville, Indiana: Fellowship for Intentional Community, 1990), 98-101.
7. Donald Pitzer, ed. *America's Communal Utopias* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, in press 1994), Preface, Introduction.
 8. Definitions taken from *The Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1989).
 9. John Blum, Edmund Morgan, Willie Rose, Arthur Schlesinger, Kenneth Stampf, and Vann Woodward, *the national experience: a history of the United States to 1877* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1963, 1968, 1973), 27-32.
 10. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), 155-183.
 11. Definitions taken from *The Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1989).
 12. John Calvin, *Institutes of The Christian Religion* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1970), Vol. 1, Introduction. David Hall, ed. *Puritanism in Seventeenth-Century Massachusetts* (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1968), 3: Harvard historian Perry Miller's research reveals that New England Puritans believed in a modified Calvinism, or "covenant theology," that allowed for man's activity in the process of salvation.
 13. Stephen Sanderson, *Macrosociology: An Introduction to Human Societies* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 1991), 4-6, 46-51.
 14. Marvin Harris, *Cultural Materialism: The Struggle for a Science of Culture* (New York: Vintage Books, 1980), 51-56.

15. Oscar Handlin, *The History of the United States* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967), 29-30.
16. Andrews, *The Colonial Period* Vol. 1, 103.
17. Oliver Perry Chitwood, *A History of Colonial America* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1931, 1948), 78-79.
18. Curtis P. Nettels, *The Roots of American Civilization: A History of American Colonial Life* (New York: Meredith Publishing Company, 1963), 111, 134, 156.
19. Andrews, *The Colonial Period* Vol. 1, 116-117, 126-130.
20. Handlin, *The History of the United States*, 29-30.
21. Nettels, *The Roots of American Civilization*, 222-224.
22. Alden T. Vaughan, *American Genesis: Captain John Smith and the Founding of Virginia* (Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1975), 99-100.
23. Phillip Alexander Bruce, *Economic History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: MacMillan Company, 1895, 1935), Vol. 2, 279.
24. Nettels, *The Roots of American Civilization*, 135.
25. Nettels, *The Roots of American Civilization*, 156.
26. Vaughan, *American Genesis*, 158.
27. Nettels, *The Roots of American Civilization*, 290-291.
28. Nettels, *The Roots of American Civilization*, 164-166, 290-293.
29. Nettels, *The Roots of American Civilization*, 166-167.
30. Nettels, *The Roots of American Civilization*, 223.
31. Nettels, *The Roots of American Civilization*, 90-96.
32. Robert Kelley, *The shaping of the American past* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey:

- Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975), 17-19; Chitwood, *A History of Colonial America*, 71-73.
33. Andrews, *The Colonial Period* Vol.1, 123-124.
 34. Bruce, *Economic History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century*, Vol. 2, 566-569, 523-524.
 35. Andrews, *The Colonial Period* Vol.1, 206-207.
 36. Nettels, *The Roots of American Civilization*, 224.
 37. A. L. Rowse, "New England in the Earliest Days," *American Heritage*, (August, 1959), 106.
 38. William Warren Sweet, *Religion in Colonial America* (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1965), 77; Harvey Wish, ed. *Of Plymouth Plantation by William Bradford* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1962), 46-49.
 39. Wish, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, 62-68.
 40. Bradford Smith, *Bradford of Plymouth* (Philadelphia and New York: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1951), 198.
 41. Smith, *Bradford of Plymouth*, 187.
 42. Everett Emerson, *Puritanism in America 1620-1750* (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1977), Introduction.
 43. Hall, *Puritanism in Seventeenth-Century Massachusetts*, 3.
 44. Emerson, *Puritanism in America*, 43; Alan Simpson, *Puritanism in Old and New England* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1955), 33.
 45. Sweet, *Religion in Colonial America*, 78-79; Frank R. Donovan, *The Mayflower Compact* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1968), 164-165. The text of The

Mayflower Compact, 1620 reads:

In the Name of God, Amen.

We whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord King James, by the Grace of God of Great Britain, France and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, etc.

Having undertaken, for the Glory of God and advancement of the Christian Faith and Honour of our King and Country, a Voyage to plant the First Colony in the Northern Parts of Virginia, do by these presents solemnly and mutually in the presence of God and one another, Covenant and Combine ourselves together into a Civil Body Politic, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute and frame such just and equal Laws, Ordinances, Acts, Constitutions and Offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the Colony, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witness whereof we have hereunder subscribed our names at Cape Cod, the 11th of November, in the year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord King James, of England, France and Ireland the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fifty-fourth. Anno Domini 1620.

46. James Truslow Adams, *The Founding of New England* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1921), 98. Smith, *Bradford of Plymouth*, 21: "Of the forty-one men who signed the Mayflower Compact but eighteen survived, and only six of these were from the Leyden congregation--Bradford, Brewster,

Winslow, Allerton, Fuller, and Cooke. Yet the Leyden influence remained the dominant one, largely because of Bradford."

47. Donovan, *The Mayflower Compact*, 157, 164-165. The town meeting is a communal consensus process for governing like that of modern communal groups.
48. Simpson, *Puritanism in Old and New England*, 25-26.
49. Simpson, *Puritanism in Old and New England*, 26.
50. Ralph Barton Perry, *Puritanism and Democracy* (New York: The Vanguard Press, 1944), 327.
51. Emerson, *Puritanism in America*, 56-57.
52. William T. Davis, ed. *Bradford's History of Plymouth Plantation 1606-1646* (New Jersey: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1908), 27; Harvey Wish, ed. *Of Plymouth Plantation by William Bradford* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1962), 26. Samuel Eliot Morison wrote in *The Intellectual Life of Colonial New England* that Governor Bradford's diary was incomparably the best of New England colonial histories, 177.
53. Emerson, *Puritanism in America*, 33, 39. Davis, *Bradford's History of Plymouth Plantation*, 31.
54. Morton Dexter, *The Story of the Pilgrims* (Boston and Chicago: Congregational Sunday School and Publishing Society, 1894), 304-305.
55. Emerson, *Puritanism in America*, 33.
56. Statement in personal telephone interview with James Baker, vice president for historical research at Plimoth Plantation, on February 8, 1994.
57. Wish, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, 101.

58. Wish, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, 89-91.
59. Smith, *Bradford of Plymouth*, 204.
60. Sweet, *Religion in Colonial America*, 79-80.
61. Roland G. Usher, *The Pilgrims and Their History* (Williamstown, Massachusetts: Corner House Publishers, 1984), 173-174.
62. Emerson, *Puritanism in America*, 43.
63. Robert G. Pope, "New England Versus the New England Mind: the Myth of Declension," *Puritan New England: Essays on Religion, Society, and Culture* (Alden T. Vaughan and Francis J. Bremer, eds. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977), 316.
64. Emerson, *Puritanism in America*, 47-51.
65. Simpson, *Puritanism in Old and New England*, 35.
66. Emerson, *Puritanism in America*, 94.
67. Smith, *Bradford of Plymouth*, 187-188; Davis, *Bradford's History of Plymouth Plantation*, 146-147; and Wish, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, 90.
68. John Demos, *A Little Commonwealth: Family Life in Plymouth Colony* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 11-12.
69. Adams, *The Founding of New England*, 225.
70. Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1954), 455.
71. Simpson, *Puritanism in Old and New England*, 34-35.
72. Pope, "New England Versus the New England Mind", 323.
73. Simpson, *Puritanism in Old and New England*, 36-38.

74. Demos, *A Little Commonwealth*, 18.
75. Nettels, *The Roots of American Civilization*, 93-95; Emerson, *Puritanism in America*, 27-34.
76. Handlin, *The History of the United States*, 47.
77. Blum, Morgan, Rose, Schlesinger, Stamp, and Woodward, *the national experience*, 19.
78. Andrews, *The Colonial Period* Vol. 1, 388-390.
79. Andrews, *The Colonial Period* Vol.1, 365-374, 398.
80. Emerson, *Puritanism in America*, 51.
81. Simpson, *Puritanism in Old and New England*, 23-24.
82. Kelley, *The shaping of the American past*, 39.
83. Adams, *The Founding of New England*, 142-143.
84. Kenneth A. Lockridge, *A New England Town; The First Hundred Years: Dedham, Massachusetts 1636-1736* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1970), 16-17.
85. Edmund S. Morgan, ed., *Puritan Political Ideas 1558-1794* (Indianapolis; New York; Kansas City: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1965), 146. "A family is a little common wealth, and a common wealth is a great family. Now as a family is not bound to entertain all comers, no not every good man (otherwise than by way of hospitality) no more is a common wealth."
86. Nettels, *The Roots of American Civilization*, 168-171; Morgan, *Puritan Political Ideas*, 94-96..

87. Blum, Morgan, Rose, Schlesinger, Stamp, and Woodward, *the national experience*, 19-20.
88. Bradley Chapin, *Early America* (New York: The Free Press, 1968), 73.
89. Andrews, *The Colonial Period* Vol.1, 395-396.
90. Andrews, *The Colonial Period* Vol. 1, 378.
91. Handlin, *The History of the United States*, 50-52.
92. Handlin, *The History of the United States*, 50-52.
93. Kelley, *The shaping of the American past*, 43-45.
94. Emerson, *Puritanism in America*, 37-38.
95. Andrews, *The Colonial Period* Vol. 1, 372.
96. Richard B. Morris, William Greenleaf, and Robert H. Ferrell, *America: A History of the People* (Chicago, Illinois: Rand McNally & Company, 1971), 34-35.
97. Miller, *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century*, 455.
98. Kelley, *The shaping of the American past*, 46-47.
99. Kelley, *The shaping of the American past*, 45-46.
100. David Grayson Allen, *In English Ways: The Movement of Societies and the Transferal of English Law and Custom to Massachusetts Bay in the Seventeenth Century* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1981), 242.
101. Adams, *The Founding of New England*, 396-397.

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