

Hum310



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Of Plymouth Plantation Of the two works read in Jay Parinis Promised Land, I feel " Of Plymouth Plantation" has an important role in identifying the beginning of America as it reflected the mood, passion and inspiration of the people who migrated from England to settle in the new land.

William Bradfords personal account was written to recount his perspectives on the environment, the motives and the challenges for survival of early pilgrims. At the time (between 1620 and 1647), these migrants were motivated by their passion for freedom of religious practice. They wanted to be separated from the Anglican Church and perceived the New Frontiers a place where they could put up their roots and established their own institutions of the same. Bradfords journal documented these sentiments through absorbing story telling techniques so that the reader could relate to the sense of community, the struggle of the early settlers, and the peaceful manners in which the Native Americans and the Pilgrims embraced each other. Had it not been for this peaceful integration with the Natives, specifically the Wampanoag tribe, later settlers from England would not have been able to establish towns and cities so easily. Indeed, through Bradford eyes, the challenge of " self-definition and establishment" (Parini 7), the origin of many of American traditions and culture such as Thanksgiving, could be seen to have emerged to shape the new nation.

Moreover, " Of Plymouth Plantation" demonstrated the importance of compromise and peacemaking in the process of making a nation. Instead, of concentrating on " wealth and adventure" alone, Bradford encouraged understanding of the Natives and communication. He believed in embracing the value the locals had to offer to the new settlers through " sacred bonds and ties" of the " sweet communion" (Parini 10).

At the same time one gets the sense of change during the 17th century. Bradford was saddened by the humiliation that the new generation brought with it by their violent behaviors and willful desecration of the locals. He believed the new colonists dissipated the foundations that were built by the early settlers particularly the Pilgrims of Plymouth that took years in the making. Although, Parini (10) sometimes believed Bradford to have veered from actual historical events, nevertheless one could relate to Bradfords experience at the time which were different from the narratives of the later colonists who were fiercer, resistant and against the Natives. Their dispositions resulted in bloody wars and waste of precious lives whereas Bradfords community took the peaceful path to achieve the same.

In fact, Bradford time and again reminded the readers of the root of migration to the New Frontiers by the people of England - in search of religious freedom and as he wrote in his journal " the right worship of God and discipline of Christ established in the church, according to the simplicity of the gospel, without the mixture of mens inventions." (Brandford quoted in Parini 12).

Clearly these aspects in Bradfords journal offered insight as well as reflected the emotional and inspiration for migration. The origin of the American identity was freedom - particularly for religious practice - and non-particularly for establishment of institutions free of aristocratic governance, not to have war with anyone.

Reference

Parini, Jay. " Of Plymouth Plantation" from *The Promised Land*. Doubleday, 2008.