

Station #5-Southern Colonies

Document #1-North Carolina through Four Centuries (1989)

In North Carolina, the home of mainly small farmers, another crop (in addition to tobacco) emerged to some significance-forestry. The settlers began to fall pine trees for the naval stores of tar, turpentine and the lumber for use in British and New England shipyards. Naval stores of tar, pitch and turpentine were required for naval and merchant vessels. The Cape Fear River Valley, with the abundance of rosin-rich longleaf pines, soon became the production center for naval stores, with Wilmington as the shipping point.

The cultivation of rice and indigo played the same role tobacco did for the colonies of the upper South for South Carolina and Georgia. Rice was the most important crop of the lower Southern colonies. The cultivation of rice began in the swampy low country as early as 1700, but it was slow to evolve until McKewen Johnstone invented a method of flooding the fields using the tides to control the flow of water of the surrounding rivers and streams. Unlike tobacco, rice cultivation was physically quite demanding, and usually unhealthy. The rice, planted from March to May on plantations of 50 to 100 slaves, was harvested in August or September in stagnant water, which exposed workers to disease. Thus, the rice plantations of the lower South were especially harsh environments as compared to the tobacco operations of the upper South.

Document #2- The Economy of Colonial America, Columbia University Press (1988)

Once the idea of black slavery took hold in the South, it progressed rapidly. In the six years beginning in 1683, the population of blacks in Virginia grew from around 3,000 to 5,000. The pace of slave importation increased to some 1,800 per annum by 1705, and by the time of the Revolution, the colonies of Virginia and Maryland had a total black population of 206,000.

Document #3- Southern Religion, Vincent N. Parrillo (2009)

Dislike of Catholics was one common ground on which all the Protestants could agree. The Presbyterians, Baptists, Quakers, German reformed, and Lutherans along the "frontier" were intolerant of one another, yet often shared a strong dislike of Anglicans. The Anglicans, strongest in Virginia but prevalent throughout the South, disdainfully looked down on the New England Puritans, while the New Englanders reciprocated and jealously guarded their communities against the Anglicans achieving any inroads.

Document #4- African Diversity on the Plantations, Vincent N. Parrillo (2009)

Cultural diversity also existed among the African slaves, who came from different tribal backgrounds in western Africa-particularly Angola, the Gold Coast, Nigeria, and Senegambia. Because of this cultural mixing, no tribe or language group predominated, with the newly transported slaves speaking about 100 languages or dialects. The colonists, however, did not look on the Africans as a diverse group, instead viewing them as a single racial collectivity as well as less than human.

It was not simply the slave system that caused the colonists to ignore African diversity and generalize because they did the same thing with Native Americans. Nor was it simply a racist response or a premodern lack of sophistication. In groups, members typically generalize about outgroups, failing to note their diversity. Other examples of unnoticed diversity are when Americans a few generations ago viewed many diverse people from central, southern, and Eastern Europe as a single entity or people today generalize about all Asians or Hispanics.

In colonial times, the Africans adapted to their harsh new reality and, interacting with one another, soon overcame their tribal barriers through the process of ethno genesis. The Africans became bilingual, even trilingual, conversing in their native tongue to members of their tribe or language group and in broken English to their owner's. To converse with other slaves in the Carolinas, the Africans created Gullah, a dialect amalgamating some English and many African words into an African grammatical structure.