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Sommario/riassunto	This study situates the colonization of Virginia, the centrepiece of early English overseas settlement activity, in the social and political landscape of the early seventeenth century. Roper explores how the early development of the colony was viewed from both sides of the Atlantic, using the documentary record of key figures in the Virginia Company, as well as the colonizers themselves. He paints a vivid picture of a political culture characterized by patronage, the pursuit of personal agendas and fierce grappling for factional advantage, as 'Old World' political behaviour was successfully transplanted to the colony. At the same time however, he shows how local concerns and identity competed with the Stuart monarchy's attempts to centralize state affairs on the other side of the Atlantic. Roper rejects the prevailing view of the early colonisers, the Virginia Company and Crown ministers

as bumbling incompetents whose mismanagement nearly caused the failure of the Jamestown project. Rather, he argues, they had a clear sense of purpose for the colony, and successfully adapted and crafted inherited political systems to a very new situation.

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