

down to the vulgar. In particular, they wanted a social structure that would enable successful independent and affluent people, in conformity with the long-standing traditions of Western civilization (and probably all other highly developed civilizations), to exploit dependent people. They desired authoritative, if not very obtrusive, political institutions that could facilitate their socioeconomic and cultural development and would be presided over by people whose very success in the private realm testified to their merit and capacity and gave them a legitimate claim to political leadership. They wanted vital traditional social institutions that would contribute to and stand as visible symbols of their improvement, including churches, schools, and towns. . . .

By the 1730s and 1740s in older colonies and by the 1740s and 1750s in the newer ones, both provincial and, except in the most recently settled areas, local politics were dominated by coherent, effective, acknowledged, and authoritative political elites with considerable social and economic power, extensive political experience, confidence in their capacity to govern, and—what crucially distinguished them from their European counterparts—broad public support. Second, they had viable governing institutions at both the local and provincial levels most of which were becoming more and more assimilated to those in metropolitan Britain, vigorous traditions of internal self-government, and extensive experience in coping with the socioeconomic and other problems peculiar to their own societies. Third, even though political participation was limited to white, independent, adult males, their political systems were almost certainly more inclusive and more responsive to public opinion than those of any other societies in the world at that time, and they were becoming more and more capable of permitting the resolution of conflict, absorbing new and diverse groups, and, as their recent histories had so amply attested, providing political stability in periods of rapid demographic, economic, and territorial expansion.

If the several colonial polities were becoming more expert, they were also becoming far more settled. By the mid-eighteenth century, levels of collective violence and civil disorder were ordinarily low, few colonies had outstanding issues that deeply divided the polity, society routinely accepted existing institutional and leadership structures, relations among the several branches and levels of government had been thoroughly regularized, rates of turnover among elected officials were low, changes in leadership followed an orderly process through regular constitutional channels without serious disruption of the polity, and factional and party strife was either being routinized or reduced to levels at which it was not dysfunctional within the political system. As was manifest in declining turnover among elected representatives to the colonial assemblies in most colonies, the electorate increasingly exhibited a passive and uncoerced deference toward the governing elite. With their attentions firmly concentrated on their own individual and family goals in the private realm, the vast bulk of the electorate seems, in ordinary times, to have had little interest in taking an active role in public life. Together, these developments brought a new stability and regularity to colonial political life in the three or four decades before 1760.

Notwithstanding these developments, the public realm everywhere re-

mained small. Citizens expected little from government . . . . Indeed, possessing limited powers, colonial governments necessarily exerted only weak authority and were heavily dependent upon public opinion, which sharply limited the scope for action among political leaders. Government in these always potentially highly participatory polities was necessarily consensual. Always open to challenge from dissatisfied elements among the free population, the several polities of late colonial British America invariably contained a latent potential for widespread popular mobilization.

If many of the features of these emerging American political systems revealed a growing capacity for accommodation among increasingly differentiated and complex social populations within the several colonial polities, the same can be said for developments in other areas of cultural life. The societies of all regions of colonial British America remained predominantly English. But the substantial immigration of non-English groups after 1713 and, notwithstanding the strong predisposition of people from many of these groups to settle in communities of their own kind, the consequent intermingling of peoples of diverse cultural and national backgrounds and competing religious persuasions slowly edged people toward a habit of compromise and an enhanced capacity for the toleration and acceptance of ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity. At the same time, the overwhelming cultural preoccupation with the pursuit of individual and family happiness in the socioeconomic area seems everywhere to have weakened the impulse to try to enforce a coercive religious uniformity. . . .

Among the several colonial regions, there remained significant differences. At least on the continent, however, these regions were becoming increasingly alike during the generations immediately preceding the American Revolution. Over that period, a common developmental process produced a slow but powerful cultural and social convergence that mitigated the sharp variations that had distinguished the several regions of colonial British America from one another during the early generations of settlement. Out of this steady process of convergence emerged the beginnings of an American cultural order that was waiting to be defined during and immediately after the era of the American Revolution. . . .

## Divergence in Four Colonial Cultures

DAVID HACKETT FISCHER

### Exodus: The Four Great Migrations, 1629–1750

After 1629 the major folk movements began to occur. . . . [T]he first wave (1629–40) was an exodus of English Puritans who came mainly from the eastern counties and planted in Massachusetts a very special culture with unique patterns of speech and architecture, distinctive ideas about marriage

David Hackett Fischer, "Four British Folkways in America: The Origin and Persistence of Regional Culture in the United States," conclusion of *Albion's Seed* (New York: Oxford, 1989), excerpts from 785–788, 793–796, 803–820. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.

and the family, nucleated settlements, congregational churches, town meetings, and a tradition of ordered liberty.

The second wave brought to Virginia a different set of English folkways, mainly from a broad belt of territory that extended from Kent and Devon north to Northamptonshire and Warwickshire. This culture was characterized by scattered settlements, extreme hierarchies of rank, strong oligarchies, Anglican churches, a highly developed sense of honor and an idea of hegemonic liberty.

The third wave (ca. 1675–1715) was the Friends' migration, which carried yet another culture from England's North Midlands to the Delaware Valley. It was founded on a Christian idea of spiritual equality, a work ethic of unusual intensity, a suspicion of social hierarchy, and an austerity which Max Weber called "worldly asceticism." It also preserved many elements of North Midland speech, architecture, dress and food ways. Most important, it deliberately created a pluralistic system of reciprocal liberty in the Delaware Valley.

The fourth great migration (1717–75) came to the backcountry from the borderlands of North Britain—an area which included the Scottish lowlands, the north of Ireland and England's six northern counties. These emigrants were of different ethnic stocks, but shared a common border culture which was unique in its speech, architecture, family ways and child-rearing customs. Its material culture was marked by extreme inequalities of condition, and its public life was dominated by a distinctive ideal of natural liberty.

Each of these four folk cultures in early America had a distinctive character which was closer to its popular reputation than to many academic "re-interpretations" in the twentieth century. The people in Puritan Massachusetts were in fact highly puritanical. They were not traditional peasants, modern capitalists, village communists, modern individualists, Renaissance humanists, Victorian moralists, neo-Freudian narcissists or prototypical professors of English literature. They were a people of their time and place who had an exceptionally strong sense of themselves, and a soaring spiritual purpose which has been lost beneath many layers of revisionist scholarship.

The first gentlemen of Virginia were truly cavaliers. They were not the pasteboard protagonists of Victorian fiction, or the celluloid heroes of *Gone with the Wind*. But neither were they self-made bourgeois capitalists, modern agro-businessmen, upwardly mobile yeomen or "plain folk." Most were younger sons of proud armigerous families with strong Royalist politics, a devout Anglican faith, decided rural prejudices, entrenched manorial ideals, exalted notions of their own honor and at least the rudiments of an Aristotelian education. The majority of Virginia's white population were indentured servants, landless tenants and poor whites—a degraded rural proletariat who had no hope of rising to the top of their society. Not a single ex-servant or son of a servant became a member of Virginia's House of Burgesses during the late seventeenth century. The mythical figures of Virginia cavaliers and poor whites were solidly founded in historical fact.

The culture of the Delaware Valley was dominated by British Quakers and German Pietists whose Christian beliefs had a special moral character.

Here again, their culture has been distorted by historical revisionists who have variously "reinterpreted" them as utopian cranks, manipulative materialists, secular pluralists and the "first modern Americans." The modernity of the Delaware Valley has been much exaggerated, and the primitive Christian roots of William Penn's "holy experiment" have too often been forgotten.

The backsettlers also possessed a strong and vibrant culture which also has been much misunderstood. They were not ancient Celts, or wild Scotch-Irish savages, or innocent children of nature. Neither were they rootless pluralists, incipient entrepreneurs, agents of the Edinburgh enlightenment or heralds of the New South. The majority, no matter whether northern Irish, lowland Scots or North Country English, shared a culture of high integrity which had been tempered in fire of the British borderlands. The more we learn by empirical research about these four cultures of British America, the more distinctive they appear from one another, and the closer to historical "myths" which they inspired.

### British Origins: The Regional Factor

The origins of these cultures were highly complex, involving differences of British region, religion, rank, and generation, as well as of the American environment, and the process of migration. Let us briefly examine each of these determinants, beginning with British regions—not because this factor was more important than any other, but because it has been less clearly understood. . . .

Four historical regions in seventeenth-century Britain were specially important to this inquiry. The first of them lay in the east of England, and included the three peninsulae of East Anglia itself, eastern Lincolnshire and the northeastern fringe of Kent. The boundary of this territory ran through the old counties of Rutland, Huntingdon and Hertford. In the seventeenth century, this area was commonly called the "East" or "eastern England." With the addition of Kent it corresponded roughly to the area of the "Eastern Association" which supported Parliament in the English Civil War. This region produced approximately 60 percent of emigrants to Massachusetts.

A second historical region, which sent many sons to Virginia, was a broad belt of territory through the south of England, extending from Kent to Devon, and north as far as Warwick. It encompassed the ancient kingdom of Wessex and its Mercian protectorates—the realm of Alfred and Aethelred. This area had the least articulated sense of regional identity because it believed itself to be the heartland of the country—in Henry James's phrase, "midmost England, unmitigated England." Nevertheless, it had a cultural existence which was defined by its history, in ways that made it distinct from East Anglia, the North Country and the Celtic cultures of Wales and Cornwall to the west. Roughly 60 percent of Virginia gentlemen and servants came from this region.

A third historical region lay in the North Midlands of England. It included a broad belt of territory from Cheshire and Derbyshire north through Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire to southern Cumbria. This area was called "the North Country" in the seventeenth century. Thus a Quaker named

John Crock wrote, "I was born in the North Country." Another wrote that "he heard of a people in the North of England, who preferred the light. . . ." And a third described Quakerism as "glad tidings brought out of the north." This area was the source of approximately 60 percent of the Quaker population which settled in the Delaware Valley.

The fourth historical region was an area which included the English counties of Westmorland, Cumberland, Northumberland, Durham, and the North Riding of Yorkshire, together with the southern counties of Scotland. As early as the fifteenth century this region was called the "border," or "borders," and its inhabitants called themselves "borderers." These people of Scotland and northern England, together with their transplanted cousins in Ulster, were very mixed in their ethnicity, but they shared a common culture which was shaped by the history of their region. More than 60 percent of settlers in the American backcountry were immigrants or the children of immigrants from northern Ireland, the lowlands of Scotland, and the six northern counties of England. . . .

### British Origins: The Religious Factor

Of all the determinants which shaped the cultural character of British America, the most powerful was religion. During the seventeenth century, the English-speaking people were deeply divided by the great questions of the Protestant Reformation. These divisions in turn created a broad spectrum of English denominations in the New World.

The "right wing" of the British Reformation was the party of Anglican Episcopacy which favored an inclusive national church, a hierarchy of priests, compulsory church taxes and a union of church and crown. Its worship centered on liturgy and ritual, its theology became increasingly Arminian in the seventeenth century, and its creed was defined by the Book of Common Prayer. This denomination was specially strong in the south and west of England. It was destined to dominate Virginia for more than a century.

Next to the Episcopalians on Britain's spectrum of religious belief were Presbyterians. They also favored a broad national church, but one which was ruled by strong synods of ministers and elders rather than by bishops and priests. The theology of Presbyterianism was Calvinist; its worship centered on preaching and conversion. The Presbyterians were numerous in Northern Britain, where they made much use of evangelical field meetings and prayer meetings. They became very strong in the American backcountry.

Near the center were Congregationalists, who defined their position as the "middle way." Their church government was a mixed confederacy of independent congregations and weak synods. Their theology took a middle ground between Arminianism (which tended toward rationalism and free will) and Antinomianism (the dominion of the spirit). Their formal beliefs were defined by the Synod of Dort (1618-19) in the five points of Calvinism (total depravity, limited atonement, unconditional election, irresistible grace and the final perseverance of the saints)—a Christian creed of extreme austerity. This group was strong in the eastern counties of England. It founded the colonies of Massachusetts and Connecticut.

To the left of the Congregationalists were the Separatists, who believed in the autonomy of each congregation, and wished to separate themselves from the corruption of an unreformed national church. Their theology was broadly Calvinist, and their classical text was Robert Browne's *Reformation without Tarrying for Any* (1583). This denomination included the *Mayflower* Pilgrims who founded Plymouth Colony.

Farther left were various sects of Anabaptists, many of whom subscribed to the five points of Calvinism, but added a "sixth principle" that baptism should be restricted to regenerate Christians. Their theology stressed the working of the Holy Spirit more than the teaching of divine law. Their church was a fellowship in which worship was a sharing of the spirit of Grace. Most Baptists also believed in the separation of church and state, primarily to preserve the church from spiritual pollution. They founded the colony of Rhode Island.

Beyond the Baptists were the Quakers, who believed that Jesus died not merely for a chosen few but for everyone, and that a Holy Spirit called the Inner Light dwelled within all people. Their beliefs rose from the teachings of George Fox and received their classic statement in Robert Barclay's *Apology for the True Christian Religion*. Quakers rejected the legitimacy of established churches, ordained clergy and formal liturgy. Their meetings for worship centered upon the movement of the spirit. This denomination first appeared in the North Midlands of England. It founded the colonies of West Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware.

Because religion touched so many parts of life in the era of the reformation, these denominational divisions created deep cultural differences which have survived in American regions long after their original purposes have been lost.

### British Origins: The Factor of Generations

The four migrations came not only from different regions, ranks and religions, but also from different generations. The key concept here is that of an *historical* generation—not a demographic cohort but a cultural group whose identity is formed by great events. In the turbulence of the twentieth century, for example, everyone recognizes the "generation of the Great Depression," the "generation of World War II," and the "generation of the '60s." Seventeenth-century England had similar historical generations, which were defined by the same events that set the major folk migrations in motion.

Each of these migrations created a culture which preserved something of the moment when it was born. The Puritans settled Massachusetts within a period of eleven years from 1629 to 1640—an epoch in English history which is remembered by Whig historians as the "eleven years' tyranny." This was the time when Charles I tried to rule without a Parliament and Archbishop William Laud attempted to purge the Anglican Church of Puritans. The great constitutional and religious issues of this epoch were carried to the Puritan colonies and became central to the culture of New

England—persisting as intellectual obsessions long after they had been forgotten in the mother country.

A large part of Virginia's migration of cavaliers and indentured servants occurred between 1649 and 1660, an unstable era of English history called the interregnum. In this period of disorder the dominant elite was an oligarchy of English Puritans, and their victims included a group of defeated Royalists, some of whom carried to Virginia a culture which was defined not merely by their rank and party but also by their generation—in its fascination with constitutional questions, its obsession with honor, and its contempt for the arts of peace. The culture of America's tidewater south was to retain these characteristics long after England had moved beyond them.

The Friends' migration to the Delaware Valley happened mainly in the years from 1675 to 1689. This was part of an historical epoch which began with the Restoration, and continued through the reigns of Charles II (1660–85) and his Catholic brother James II (1685–88). In this period of English history, the great questions were about how people of different beliefs could live in peace together. That question was central to the cultural history of the Delaware colonies, and remained so for many years.

Another period of English history followed the Glorious Revolution of 1688, when a pattern of political stability formed "as suddenly as water becomes ice," in historian J. H. Plumb's words. The government of England passed firmly into the hands of an oligarchy of country gentlemen. This solution created new problems which concerned the relationship between England's governing elite and others—in particular, the people of Ireland, Scotland, America, the London mob and the rural poor. Violent conflicts set in motion yet another wave of emigration which brought to America the great question of whether the rights of English gentlemen belonged to other people. These issues took root in the American interior, where they survive even to our own time. All four folk cultures of Anglo-America preserved the dominant themes in English history during the years when they began.

### American Development: The Environment

British culture was not the only determinant of regional differences. The American environment also played an important role—not by "breaking down" or "dissolving" European culture (as the frontier thesis suggested) but by more complex material pressures which modified European cultures in some respects and reinforced them in others.

In New England, the Puritans selected a rigorous environment which was well suited to their purposes. The climate (colder and more changeable than today) proved exceptionally healthy to Europeans, but high mortality among African immigrants reinforced a Puritan ambivalence toward the growth of slavery. The configuration of New England's coastline and the distribution of soil resources in small pockets of alluvial fertility encouraged town settlement. The Indians of Massachusetts Bay had been nearly destroyed by disease before the Puritans arrived; conflicts remained at a comparatively low level for nearly fifty years except during the Pequot War.

The Virginians encountered a very different environment. The Chesapeake Bay, with its 6,500 miles of tidal shoreline, its hundreds of rivers and creeks, and its abundance of good soil, encouraged scattered settlement and plantation agriculture. The climate (about the same as today) produced bountiful staple crops. But the Chesapeake estuary was unhealthy, and European death rates were twice as high as in New England. Africans had lower mortality rates than in the northern colonies, and slavery developed rapidly from the late seventeenth century. The large Indian population of the Powhatan Confederacy strongly resisted English settlement, with much bloody fighting.

The Delaware Valley offered yet a third set of environmental conditions. This area proved more salubrious than the Chesapeake, but less so than Massachusetts. Its climate was mild and its soil endowment was the richest of the eastern colonies, producing crop yields above all other coastal regions for three centuries. An abundance of mineral resources and a fall line only a few miles from the sea supported rapid industrial development. The Delaware Indians were not warlike in the early years of settlement. Altogether this environment was perfectly suited to the purposes of the Quakers, as they well knew when they chose to settle there. For many years it supported their "holy experiment" in prosperity and peace.

The southern backcountry was a densely forested highland region of enormous proportions. Markets were distant and travel difficult, but the abundance of land and water encouraged the rapid growth of family farming and herding. The climate was comparatively mild and healthy. The Indians were numerous and very hostile to European settlement. The backcountry became a cockpit of international rivalry, and was ravaged by major wars in every generation from 1689 to 1815. The climate, resources and dangers of this American environment were well matched to the culture of the British borderlands. . . .

### American Development: Immigration and Race

. . . British America's voluntary migration encouraged religious diversity rather than uniformity. It also allowed like-minded colonists of various sects to settle together and to transplant their own folkways to the New World.

Immigration also promoted regional development in another way. For many years, the American colonies effectively became their own gatekeepers. They were able to control the process of immigration themselves, and did so in very different ways.

The Puritan colonies stubbornly enforced a policy of strict exclusion despite imperial opposition. The homogeneity of New England's population was not an historical accident; it arose from the religious purposes and social values of a regional culture.

The founders of Pennsylvania had very different ideas about immigration. William Penn and the Quaker elite of the colony made a special effort to attract European Protestants whose values were compatible with their own. English Quakers, German Pietists and Swiss Anabaptists all believed deeply in the doctrine of the inner light, religious freedom, the ethic of work and

the evil of violence. The immigration policy of the Quakers expanded the community of Christian values beyond the boundaries of their own sect, and deliberately encouraged a diversity of national stocks in the Delaware Valley.

The rulers of Virginia adopted still a third immigration policy. Puritans and Quakers were not welcome; many were banished or driven out. But the Virginians actively recruited a servile underclass to support their manorial ideal, first by bringing in large numbers of English servants, and then by importing African slaves. Their object was not merely to solve a problem of labor scarcity (which might have been done in many other ways) but to do so in a manner consistent with their hierarchical values.

The backsettlers were not able to control immigration to the southern highlands in any formal way. But local neighborhoods had other methods of deciding who would go or stay. The old folk custom of "hating out" was used when necessary. The prevailing cultural climate also had a similar effect; in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, for example, Quakers and Congregationalists left the southern backcountry, moving north to a more congenial cultural environment.

Local control of immigration thus tended to reinforce cultural differences between regions. Even as most parts of British America became more diverse during the eighteenth century, they did so in very different ways, according to purposes and values of their founders.

One effect of immigration was to change the racial composition of the four major regions of British America. African slaves were imported to every colony, but in very different proportions. In many parts of New England blacks were never more than 1 percent of the population before 1760; in some southern coastal counties, blacks were more than a majority by that date.

To understand the relationship between race and regional culture in British America, one must study carefully the timing and sequence of historical change. An important and neglected fact about race slavery in British America is that it developed very slowly. Africans did not begin to arrive in large numbers until the late seventeenth century. The presence of blacks did not begin to have a major cultural impact on British America until the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. Then, the impact was profound. The problem of race relations moved rapidly to the center of cultural history in the plantation colonies. African folkways also began to transform the language and culture of Europeans, and the "peculiar institution" of slavery created new folkways of its own. . . .

### The Expansion of Four Regional Cultures

By the year 1770 the four folk cultures had taken firm root in British America. All expanded rapidly. Emigrants from Massachusetts founded colonies with similar cultures in Connecticut, New Hampshire, southern Maine, eastern Vermont, Long Island, East Jersey, upstate New York and northern Ohio. The culture of tidewater Virginia expanded into southern Maryland, southern Delaware, coastal North Carolina and west beyond the mountains to parts of Kentucky. The folkways of the Delaware Valley spread through West Jersey,

eastern Pennsylvania, parts of northeastern Maryland and central Ohio. After 1740 the borderers of North Britain rapidly occupied the Appalachian highlands from Pennsylvania to Georgia, and moved west to the Mississippi.

The people of these four cultures shared many traits in common. Nearly all spoke the English language, lived by British laws, and cherished their ancestral liberties. Most dwelled in nuclear households, and had broadly similar patterns of marital fertility. Their prevailing religion was Christian and Protestant. Their lands were privately owned according to peculiar British ideas of property which were adopted throughout much of the United States. But in other ways these four British cultures were very different from one another. The more we learn empirically about them, the less similar they appear to be. . . .

### Other Colonial Cultures

The four major cultures did not embrace all of British America. Other cultural areas also existed. Some were of considerable size, though smaller than the major regions. The largest of these other cultures was New Netherland, which occupied much of the Hudson Valley. In 1700 Dutch burghers and boers were two-thirds of the population in Dutchess and Ulster counties, three-quarters in Orange County, five-sixths in Kings County and nine-tenths in Albany. They also colonized part of East Jersey, where as late as 1790 they were 75 percent of the population in Bergen County, and 80 percent in Somerset County.

This was a very conservative culture. Its old-fashioned Dutch dialect survived even into the mid-nineteenth century. Its architecture remained distinctive for broad barns, hay barracks, steppabled town houses, and low, narrow farmhouses with half doors. Settlement patterns retained a special character, with homes built in distinctive irregular clusters around a reformed church. Rates of internal migration were exceptionally low, and Dutch households had a different demographic profile from those of English neighbors, with fewer children and more slaves. In 1738, most Dutch families in King's County were slave-owners.

This culture developed its own special ways of dealing with other ethnic groups. It combined formal toleration, social distance and inequality in high degree. The result was an ethnic pluralism that became more atomistic than in the Delaware Valley and more hierarchical than in New England. The peculiar texture of life in New York City today still preserves qualities which existed in seventeenth-century New Amsterdam—and Old Amsterdam as well.

The culture of New Netherland did not expand far beyond its original boundaries. Its population remained small. In 1664, only 7,000 Dutch settlers (and 3,000 non-Dutch) were living in New Netherland. By 1790 only about 98,000 people of Dutch descent were living in the United States—less than one-tenth the population of New England, and a small fraction of the other major regional populations.

Another distinctive colonial culture developed on the coast of South Carolina. Some of its founding families came from the West Indies; others were

French Huguenots, and more than a few were emigrants from tidewater Virginia. Three-quarters of the low-country population in 1790 were slaves who came mostly from the Congo basin and the coast of Angola. These groups rapidly developed their own unique customs and institutions, which were closer to the Caribbean colonies than to the Chesapeake. Speech ways were heavily influenced by the "Gullah" (Angola) dialect of the black majority. Building ways were a unique amalgam of Caribbean, French, African and English elements. Patterns of settlement were marked by the highest level of urbanization in colonial America: nearly 25 percent of low-country whites lived in Charleston. The wealth of its white families was the greatest in the colonies (£450 in 1740), and highly concentrated in a few hands. The annual rhythm of life was regulated by a pattern of transhumance that did not exist in other mainland colonies. This area became a distinct cultural region, but it never developed into a major cultural hearth. As late as 1790 less than 29,000 whites lived in the South Carolina low country, compared with more than 300,000 whites in eastern Virginia and 450,000 in the southern back settlements (of whom 112,000 were in the South Carolina upcountry alone).

Yet another colonial culture developed in North Carolina's Cape Fear Valley, where Highland Scots began to arrive circa 1732. Many followed after the '45 Rebellion, and by 1776 their numbers were nearly as large as the white population in the South Carolina low country. Other ethnic groups also settled in the Cape Fear Valley, but so dominant were highlanders that Gaelic came to be spoken in this region even by people who were not Scots. There is a story of a newly arrived Highland lady who heard two men speaking in Gaelic:

Assuming by their speech that they must inevitably be fellow Highlanders, she came nearer, only to discover that their skin was black. Then she knew that her worst foreboding about the climate of the South was not unfounded and cried in horror, "A Dhia nan fras, am fas sinn vile mar sin?" (O God of mercy, are we all going to turn black like that?)

Even in the twentieth century, the Cape Fear people sent to Scotland for ministers who were required to wear the kilt, play the pipes, and preach in Gaelic. . . .

### Rhythms of Regional Development

Every regional culture had its own history, which unfolded in its own way. But all of them passed through a similar sequence of stages which created a powerful rhythm in colonial history. The first stage was the transit of culture from Britain to America, in which individual actors played decisive roles. In Massachusetts, for example, Puritan leaders such as John Winthrop and John Cotton shaped the future of their region when they decided to bring the charter of the Massachusetts Bay Company to the New World, to define church membership in a rigorous way, to create a standard model for town government,

and to block the growth of a Puritan aristocracy in New England. In Virginia, Sir William Berkeley made many critical decisions when he recruited a colonial elite, encouraged the growth of slavery, drove out Puritans and Quakers, and discouraged schools and printing. In Pennsylvania, William Penn's decisions transformed the history of a region—in the design of local institutions, the recruitment of German immigrants, and the content of libertarian laws. In the southern highlands the backcountry "ascendancy" played a seminal role. All of these cultural leaders gave a direction to regional development.

The second stage was a cultural crisis of great intensity. It always began as an internal conflict among immigrant elites who supported the founding purposes of their colony, but disagreed on issues of authority, order, and individual autonomy. In Massachusetts, the crisis came with the Separatist challenge of Roger Williams (1635–36) and the Antinomian Crisis of Anne Hutchinson (1638–39). In Virginia, the critical period was that of Bacon's Rebellion (1676) and the violent repression that followed (1676–77). Pennsylvania's crisis occurred in the 1690s, when William Penn briefly lost control of the colony (1692–94) and the Quaker colonists were deeply divided by the "Keithian schism" (1692). The critical time in the back settlements was the Regulation (1768–70). In each case a new clarity was brought to regional cultures by these events.

These crises were followed by a period of cultural consolidation which occurred in Massachusetts during the 1640s, in Virginia during the 1680s, in Pennsylvania during the early decades of the eighteenth century, and in the backcountry during the late eighteenth century. In every case, the dominant culture of each region was hardened into institutions which survived for many years. In Massachusetts, for example, courts, churches, towns, schools, and militia all were given their definitive shape in laws which were passed within the span of a few years, mostly in the period from 1636 to 1648. Something similar happened in most other colonies at comparable stages in their development.

This period of consolidation was followed by a complex and protracted process of cultural devolution. In New England, that trend occurred in the half-century from 1650 to 1700, when Puritans became Yankees. It happened in Virginia from 1690 to 1750, when Royalists became Whigs. It took place in the Delaware Valley during the transition from the second to the third stage of Quakerism, and the development of a more inward-looking faith in an increasingly pluralistic society. In the backcountry, it happened as backsettlers evolved into frontiersmen. In every instance, founding purposes were lost, but institutions were preserved and regional identities were given new life.

### FURTHER READING

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