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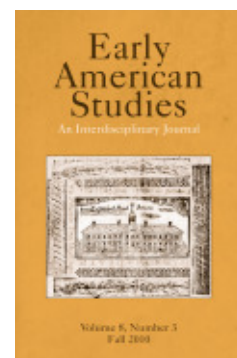
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Roots, Routes, And Rootedness Diversity, Migration, and Toleration in Mid-Atlantic Pluralism

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Roots, Routes, And Rootedness

Diversity, Migration, and Toleration in Mid-Atlantic Pluralism

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One of the most often cited descriptions of mid-Atlantic society ever penned appeared in 1782, in *Letters from an American Farmer*, written some years before by the French-born writer and New York inhabitant J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur. In the third letter of that volume, the author, posing as a farmer in Pennsylvania, asked the famous question, “What is the American?” He provided the following answer:

He is either an European, or the descendant of an European; hence the strange mixture of blood, which you will find in no other country. I could point out to you a family whose grandfather was an Englishman, whose wife was Dutch, whose son married a French woman, and whose present four sons have now wives of four different nations. . . . Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men.¹

There are many questions one could ask about the Farmer’s description—about nations and groups in the mid-Atlantic, about the nature of family life in the region, even about the gendered connotations of the concept of a new race of *men*. But the aspect that has always attracted the most attention has been the description of the mixing of peoples, long considered to be among

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1. J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer and Sketches of Eighteenth-Century America*, ed. Albert E. Stone (New York: Penguin Books, 1981; first published 1782), 69–70.

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the classic statements of American pluralism. It is fitting that such a passage was penned by an inhabitant of the mid-Atlantic, for there, more than anywhere else in British America, one found early and extensive intermingling of diverse groups of settlers—English, Dutch, French, Scots, Irish, Swedes, Finns, Jews, and German-speakers from diverse jurisdictions—along with similarly varied African and Native American peoples, who Crèvecoeur failed to mention. There one found as well the most often-noted system of religious toleration in British America, if not the whole of the Western world. The Middle-Colony region surely was, in Michael Zuckerman's apt phrase, "America's First Plural Society."²

The prevalence of toleration and pluralism in the region by no means describes all there is to know about diversity in the mid-Atlantic. Implicit in the Farmer's description is not only the fact of the intermixing of peoples in the region, but several different portrayals of how they mixed. In the passage cited above, the Farmer wrote of people of many nationalities "melted into a new race," a phrase that seems to anticipate depictions of America as a melting pot, in which immigrants from diverse backgrounds came to adopt a common culture. Yet at other times the Farmer described people of varying beliefs and habits living side by side, suggesting that those peoples were not really melted together at all. In those passages, the Farmer emphasized instead the toleration of difference, a society in which religious and cultural variety flourished. Moreover, there were clear limits to the author's general sense of inclusion. If the Farmer viewed Americans as assembled from "all nations," both the language and context make abundantly clear that the "nations" to which he referred were entirely restricted to northern and western Europe.

The ambiguities that appear in the Farmer's presentation had existed within the region almost from the beginning. For if toleration and diversity were among the distinguishing characteristics of the Middle Colonies, the ways in which people mixed—the degrees of integration and inclusion, the extent of liberty and tolerance, and the general character of the groups themselves—were quite varied. There were in fact several rather different varieties of pluralism present in the mid-Atlantic, ranging from an apparently large degree of intermixing that often appeared to reduce distinctions among people to a pluralism comprising diverse communities, sometimes living side by side, but with only limited interaction among them. Religious accommodation within the region also varied, from the limited and often grudging acceptance of doctrinal and denominational difference known as toleration to

2. Michael Zuckerman, ed., *Friends and Neighbors: Group Life in America's First Plural Society*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982).

something much closer to true tolerance and full religious liberty. If the Middle Colonies were in fact precursors of American pluralism, that is because all of those forms would have significant echoes later in American history.

Those different forms of pluralism developed for several reasons. Although we often think of toleration as the simple and straightforward recognition of the rights of others, in fact it has usually been implemented for specific purposes. In the Middle Colonies, those included a desire to promote and profit from settlement, the need to promote Protestant unity in the face of the Catholic challenge, the desire to create a holy society in which spiritual motives would reign, and the goal of limiting powerful and hostile religious establishments.

The varying forms of mid-Atlantic pluralism were also products of the very different natures of the groups themselves. If pluralism and toleration were not everywhere the same, that was in part because the groups that they accommodated also varied, in origin, structure, and character. What we know as national or ethnic groups in the Middle Colonies were not simply transplantations of Old World nationalities, but communities that emerged within, and were shaped by, the process of movement to and settlement within the New World environment. They were products, in short, of differing migration regimes. It was a very different thing, for example, for German-speakers from diverse small principalities in the Rhine Valley to leave behind their homes and families and settle together with other Germans of different religious backgrounds within an English-speaking British colony than it was for Scottish subjects of the United Kingdom—without altering their nationality, language, or status—to embark on the pursuit of opportunities within Britain's extended empire. Moreover, those groups were almost invariably embodiments of pluralism themselves, incorporating diverse populations.

This essay, then, will look at the intertwined emergence of pluralism and group experience within the mid-Atlantic region. It will contend that pluralism, rather than a specific system of accommodating difference, is better understood simply as an affirmation that accommodation should and would take place, whatever the particular characteristics of that accommodation might be. The forms of pluralism that emerged arose out of the intersection of a broad array of forces. In the end, the contest in the Middle Colonies would often be less over who would actually rule at home than who would get to define whose home it was to be.³

3. Most of our ideas about ethnicity in America derive from the experiences of later European immigrants to the American nation, many of whom were involved in similar experiences of adaptation and assimilation by Old World peoples into a New

I. THE ORIGINS OF PROTESTANT PLURALISM

The Dutch colony of New Netherland, extending from east of the Hudson River to the west of the Delaware, was among the most diverse of societies. It is by now well established that the settler population of that colony comprised a complex combination of persons from the Netherlands, as well as German-speakers from various provinces, French-speakers both from France and the Low Countries, English and Scots, Finns and Swedes, Portugese, Africans from Senegambia and Angola, and Jews, among others. Although the early arriving French-speaking Walloons at first established themselves in distinct settlements, on the whole, as individuals and groups moved in and out of the colony, the small and mobile population lived substantially intermixed. Despite the diversity, much of the population worshipped together in the Dutch Reformed Church, in part because there were rarely other ministers present in the colony.⁴

The diversity of New Netherland derived from several sources. One was the desire of company officials to attract settlers wherever they could get them. Just as important, the Netherlands itself was among the most diverse societies in Europe, serving as a principal center for Protestant refugees. Moreover, the extensive commercial ventures of the merchants of the United Provinces brought a constant stream of peoples into and out of Dutch cities. The Netherlands housed a considerable population in motion: inward, of foreign Protestants seeking secure places to live and trade; and outward, to the East Indies and the vast reaches of the Dutch commercial empire.⁵

The openness of the Netherlands was not unlimited, however. The successful Dutch Revolt against Catholic Spain (1572–88) had created a Protestant haven in the northern provinces, leaving the southern provinces or Spanish Netherlands under Catholic control. Thus refugees flocked to the

World nation. The concepts of nationality and ethnicity within Europe's extended empires are less well conceptualized. The now classic discussion of the creation of new national or ethnic traditions under the guise of the traditional is Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

4. Oliver A. Rink, *Holland on the Hudson: An Economic and Social History of Dutch New York* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1986), chaps. 3, 6; and David Cohen, "How Dutch were the Dutch of New Netherland?" *New York History* 62 (1981): 43–60.

5. Jan Lucassen, "The Netherlands, the Dutch, and Long-Distance Migration in the Late Sixteenth to Early Nineteenth Centuries," in *Europeans on the Move: Studies on European Migration 1500–1800*, ed. Nicholas Canny (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 153–91.

United Provinces because of its Protestantism. The Netherlands provided liberties to those populations not out of a support for religious freedom in the abstract, but as a strategic counter to Catholic power. The Provinces were a center of “Protestant pluralism,” a pluralism that welcomed Protestants of diverse origins, tolerated Catholic populations where they already were, but offered little encouragement to others.⁶

Even for Protestants the celebrated toleration of the Netherlands was not universal. For much of the seventeenth century the Dutch Reformed Church was engulfed in a series of struggles between competing religious factions. While the precise issues varied over time, they concerned the degree of latitude that would be tolerated within the Church and the strictness of the Calvinist orthodoxy it would endorse. Those religious divisions were linked to other fissures in the society: Amsterdam and the trading community were more likely to support theological latitude, if for no other reason than an aversion to driving out productive workers on the basis of small religious distinctions; their opponents were stronger in rural regions and among the populace at large. Thus while in Amsterdam one often found tacit acceptance of less strict Reformed preachers and of the presence of non-Calvinists such as Lutherans, Quakers, and even Jews, those groups were far less free to worship in most other places.⁷

The question of toleration in the Netherlands, then, was less a debate about whether to accommodate diversity than the kinds of diversity that would be accepted. Even where strict Reformed principles prevailed, the presence of refugees from foreign Protestant communions meant that certain variations were readily allowed. National distinctions, at least those of northern European nations, were never a problem in the United Provinces. Thus as England and Scotland fought their civil wars in the middle of the seventeenth century, Puritans and Presbyterians from those nations often flocked to the Low Countries, where their Reformed principles and their varying church practices were fully tolerated. In the stricter Reformed communities, one found not just Protestant pluralism but a kind of Reformed Protestant pluralism.⁸

New Netherland was affected by some of the same forces that influenced

6. A somewhat different use of “Protestant pluralism” can be found in Richard W. Pointer, *Protestant Pluralism and the New York Experience: A Study of Eighteenth-Century Religious Diversity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988).

7. See especially Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall 1477–1806* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), Parts I–II.

8. See, for example, William Steven, *The History of the Scottish Church, Rotterdam* (Edinburgh: Waugh and Innes, 1833) for the long history of one Presbyterian Church.

the United Provinces. As an offshoot of the larger Dutch commercial empire, the North American colony attracted migrants not only from the already diverse population of the Netherlands, but also from other Dutch colonies in the Caribbean and South America, especially after the loss of Brazil to Portugal in 1654. Thus, in addition to the varied European settlers arriving from the Netherlands, the colony on the Hudson drew on several additional populations. Among them were Portuguese Jews, who had converted to Christianity at home under severe pressure, but who reverted to Judaism in the Netherlands and its empire. They arrived in New Netherland principally from Brazil or the Caribbean. Another group were African slaves, often carried along Dutch trade routes and from other Dutch colonies, at first to work as company servants and later for private individuals. That population undoubtedly included adherents to African religions and very probably Catholics or Muslims also; apparently no one saw fit to limit the slave labor force to Reformed Protestants.⁹

Like the United Provinces, New Netherland experienced a continual contest over the tenor of religious life, as commercial interests desiring broad latitude to attract settlers to the underpopulated colony competed with leaders desirous of maintaining Calvinist orthodoxy. The West India Company itself was formed largely as an instrument of Calvinist merchants from the outer provinces jealous of the privileges that Amsterdam merchants had garnered in the East Indian trade, but New Netherland was long directed by the Amsterdam chamber of the company, which served as a moderating influence on the strict Calvinism of other company members. During the tenure of Peter Stuyvesant, the colony repeatedly worked to suppress the worship of Lutherans, Quakers, and Jews, although the Amsterdam chamber occasionally worked against him. At the time of the English conquest the struggle over religious control had still not been fully decided; the degree of toleration at any point in time seemed to depend on which authorities held sway at the moment. At the very least, New Netherland consistently provided a home to diverse groups of Reformed Protestants, while other groups often managed to make places for themselves in spite of official disapproval.¹⁰

9. There were Catholics among the slave population brought from the Portuguese colony of Angola, from which some of the first slaves in New Netherland derived, while Muslim slaves were brought to the Americas from the Senegambia region. See Michael A. Gomez, *Exchanging Our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), chap. 4; and John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400–1800* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), chap. 9.

10. Evan Haefeli, "The Creation of American Religious Pluralism: Churches, Colonialism, and Conquest in the Mid-Atlantic 1628–1688" (unpublished doctoral dis-

The situation in New Netherland and the Netherlands suggests the need to distinguish between toleration and tolerance. Toleration is a matter of policy: It is in the interests of the state or the society to accommodate a degree of variation in religious belief or practice, for reasons of commerce, diplomacy, or security. It does not imply either equality or full religious liberty. The Dutch Reformed remained the established, state-supported church, while other churches were allowed to maintain worship only at the discretion of state authorities, who granted it or not for their own purposes. Nor does it imply a willing acceptance of diversity of the sort that could be called true tolerance. In Protestant countries immersed in religious struggle, toleration was a means to forge a measure of unity within a religious outlook tending all-too-often toward schism, and firm up support against a common adversary. It did not necessarily mean abandoning doctrinal confessions or notions of religious certainty. In the Netherlands, advocates of toleration endorsed a limited freedom to disagree over things that were designated minor questions—what the English philosopher John Locke would later describe as “things indifferent”—but even they gave no license to individuals or churches for unlimited public dissent.¹¹ In New Netherland one found considerable tolerance for Reformed Protestants of diverse denominations and nationalities; for others, the degree of toleration depended greatly on who held the reins of power at the time.

Conquest and Community

The English conquest of New Netherland, growing out of imperial rivalries and the desire of the Stuarts to consolidate colonial settlement and impose order on the most politically and religiously independent, marked a new era in group relations. A colony of settlers and traders established to extend the reach of the Dutch commercial empire now found itself governed by its English commercial rivals. The various peoples who had come together voluntarily under the protection of the Dutch maritime power now found themselves conquered subjects under English rule. A pluralism intended in part to bolster the cause of strict Reformed Protestants against Catholic he-

sertation, Princeton University, 2000) presents a strong challenge to the traditional characterization of New Netherland—and the Netherlands outside of Amsterdam—as tolerant at all. Haefeli is surely right to note the exaggeration in that characterization, yet his own evidence suggests that the simple label of “intolerant” may not capture the complexities of the Netherlands and New Netherland.

11. On toleration in the Netherlands, see especially Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, esp. 429–32.

gemony was now altered by the decrees of a Catholic proprietor. A new form of toleration emerged in the colony, one imposed from above, designed to diminish the prerogatives of aggressive Reformed establishments in New Netherland and the Puritan communities of Long Island, allow full civil and religious liberties to Catholics, and promote obedience to proprietary and royal authority. Efforts to suppress Lutheran and Quaker worship were ended. The rights of Catholics and Jews were expanded. Protestant pluralism gave way to a seemingly broader form of toleration, but one that was at least as contentious as its predecessor, and just as likely to further particular interests within the Middle Colonies.

For the inhabitants of New Netherland, the greatest change may not have been the appearance of newcomers—who were relatively few in the early years—but the disruption of many of the connections that had been maintained by settlers already there. The terms of the surrender in 1664 guaranteed the property of the inhabitants of the Dutch colony and their right to continue their mode of worship, but they were only permitted to continue trading with their Dutch connections for six months. Migration to the colony from the Netherlands and the rest of the Dutch empire was essentially cut off. Those who remained thus had to adjust their relationships both within and beyond their local communities.

The new conditions affected different groups in varying ways. For wealthy merchants at the top of the social ladder, especially in the city of New York, the situation presented novel opportunities. The English conquest cut off many of the connections between overseas merchants in New York City and the Dutch trading world, but it allowed them to forge new alliances with British traders. Some developed close ties to the English regime, and many of those merchants did as well or better under the new English government as they ever had before. By contrast, commercial regulations in the colony forced up-river merchants to conduct their overseas trade through merchants in New York City but also gave them a monopoly position in the fur trade. That provided unusual opportunities for those merchant families who established close ties to the English trading community, such as the Scottish emigrant Robert Livingston, fluent in Dutch and raised in the commercial city of Rotterdam. Others kept their distance. Thus, the Albany merchant community remained strongly Dutch for many years as well as staunchly independent, a character well captured by the often critical label, the “Albany spirit.”¹²

12. Patricia U. Bonomi, *A Factious People: Politics and Society in Colonial New York* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 41–55; and see Donna Merwick, *Possessing Albany 1630–1710: The Dutch and English Experiences* (New York: Cam-

Farther down the social scale there was often less reason for close contact with the new arrivals. Especially for those living outside of New York City, a sense of distance from the conquerors and the lack of newcomers from the United Provinces led to the development of more insular and uniform communities than they ever had in New Netherland. The most dissatisfied inhabitants of New Amsterdam moved out the city and into the towns of the rural Hudson Valley and northern New Jersey—away from both the English authorities and the Dutch merchant elites, as well as the city’s most prominent Dutch clergy, who were often allied with them. There they developed identifiable Dutch communities with Dutch churches and a widespread use of the Dutch language. In some communities they maintained a degree of insularity that has led one historian to speak of the “thinness” of Dutch public culture, as manifest in a relative sparseness of newspapers and other printed works, and in a limited participation in politics and other aspects of public life.¹³

The paradox, of course, was that a large portion of those decidedly Dutch inhabitants had not come from the Netherlands at all. The experience of conquest led not to Anglicization but to what has been called a “Batavianization” of the populations of those rural communities—their assimilation not into the ruling English culture but the culture of the conquered former rulers. The intensity of the “Dutchness” that developed there came not from close contact with the Netherlands but rather from the lack thereof.¹⁴

In important respects, the later experience of conquest and isolation—and not that of living in a Dutch colony—established the pluralist legacy of Dutch

bridge University Press, 1990); on Livingston, see especially Lawrence H. Leder, *Robert Livingston, 1654–1728, and the Politics of Colonial New York* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1961).

13. A. G. Roeber, “‘The Origin of Whatever Is Not English among Us’: The Dutch-speaking and the German-speaking Peoples of Colonial British America,” in *Strangers within the Realm: Cultural Margins of the First British Empire*, ed. Bernard Bailyn and Philip D. Morgan (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 220–83, esp. 221, 226. See also Bonomi, *Factional People*, chap. 2; and Firth Haring Fabend, *A Dutch Family in the Middle Colonies, 1660–1800* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1991); on the Dutch withdrawal from politics, Adrian Howe, “The Bayard Treason Trial: Dramatizing Anglo-Dutch Politics in Early Eighteenth-Century New York City,” *William and Mary Quarterly (WMQ)* 47 (1990): 57–89.

14. The concept of “Batavianization” is taken from John Murrin, “English Rights as Ethnic Aggression: The English Conquest, the Charter of Liberties of 1683, and Leisler’s Rebellion in New York,” in *Authority and Resistance in Early New York*, ed. William Pencak and Conrad Edick Wright (New York: The New-York Historical Society, 1988), 56–94.

New York. It was very “Dutch” in its identification with Dutch traditions—in religion, in language, in architecture, and in community. But it was a very different Dutchness from that which had existed in the places from which most of the families came, and indeed in those parts of the Netherlands associated with the Dutch commercial empire. There religion and heritages were diverse, with a constant influx of peoples with varying beliefs and practices, as there had been in New Netherland. But in Dutch New York, there was little trade with the Netherlands, and for numerous rural communities, modest outside contact at all. Dutch settlers developed a new rootedness in their communities of a sort that had not emerged before in Dutch overseas settlement. The Dutch Reformed Church was becoming less a pillar of Protestant orthodoxy than a badge of ethnic and linguistic identity.

A good example of the process of ethnicization concerns the twin-door houses that became popular in Dutch communities in the Hudson Valley and northern New Jersey. In fact, such houses do not seem to have been common in the Netherlands at all but did appear in New Netherland before becoming common in Dutch communities in the eighteenth century. With those communities having little direct contact with the Netherlands, it was a purely local style that came to represent a form of Dutch housing in Anglo-Dutch New York.¹⁵

The ability of those towns to retain their Dutch character within a growing colony depended in large part upon their ability to absorb outsiders. It is often assumed that strongly ethnic settlements maintained their identities in part by limiting out-marriage, but that may be a wrong assumption. In Dutch New York, cut off from further Dutch immigration, both the establishment and retention of strong identities was accompanied by the integration of others. One historian has described rural Dutch communities as having maintained a complex structure combining an intense “tribalism” at the upper levels of society—limiting positions of power within the community to members of the lineage or “tribe”—while continually absorbing new people into the church and community.¹⁶

After 1664, most of those newcomers appear to have been English men drawn into the church by their Dutch wives. English men far outnumbered English women in early New York, and Dutch women in the colony appar-

15. Fabend, *Dutch Family in the Middle Colonies*, 57–59, 63–65.

16. Fabend, *Dutch Family in the Middle Colonies*, 161–62; Joyce D. Goodfriend, *Before the Melting Pot: Society and Culture in Colonial New York City, 1664–1730* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992), 36, *passim*.



Figure 1. Watercolor of the upper end of Broad Street, New York, c. 1797, by George Holland. As shown in the buildings at the far right of the painting, Dutch architectural styles continued to survive in New York City well into the Federal period. At center is Federal Hall, home to the U.S. government during its brief residency in New York prior to moving to Philadelphia in 1790. Stokes Collection, New York Public Library.

ently were considerably more likely than Dutch men to marry outside of their community. Yet Dutch women were also the central figures in preserving Dutch identity. Dutch traditions and inheritance customs combined to give Dutch women much greater control of family property than women in most European nations possessed, and those were substantially maintained in New Netherland. Dutch women also formed the bulwark of the Dutch Reformed Church, and even those who married outsiders were quite unlikely to leave it. Most of the evidence in fact suggests when Dutch women married men from non-Dutch households, the husbands were far more likely to join the Dutch Church than the other way around. In other words, Dutch women were attracting men into their communities. It is little wonder that the diverse New Netherland population became so strongly Dutch. The children of those marriages were raised in the Dutch Church, especially the girls among them, who were more than likely to remain part of close Dutch female networks

within the New York colony. Such developments made the Anglicization of rural Dutch New York a very gradual work.¹⁷

At one level, Leisler's Rebellion involved the playing out of the various roles that the Dutch inhabitants could adopt. Jacob Leisler himself, of German and Huguenot origin, was deeply involved in the trading world of the Dutch Atlantic. In some respects he was a good representative of Calvinist International, a believer in a rigorous Reformed theology with close connections abroad and an acute interest in the fate of Protestants everywhere. His son-in-law and second in command, Jacob Milborne, came from Protestant New England; part of the anger in Leisler's actions was sparked by the recent persecutions of French Protestants following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Leisler's targets included not only James and his Catholic appointees, but also those English and especially Dutch elites who worked with his government. An example was Nicholas Bayard, a long-time member of the Dutch Reformed communion who now sometimes worshipped in the Anglican Church and increasingly identified himself as English.¹⁸

Outside of New York City, even Reformed Protestants were wary of Leisler, preferring to keep as much of their governance as possible under local control. Thus Dutch Albany refused Leisler's demand to surrender the city to his control. The same was true of eastern Long Island, whose staunchly Puritan towns felt much greater affinity for their New England neighbors than for their fellow Calvinists among the Leislerians and the Dutch Church.

The defeat of the Leislerians spurred further withdrawals among the Dutch of New York, both from the direct control of the English government and from their Anglo-Dutch allies in New York City and its Dutch Reformed Church. Some moved to the Hudson Valley, while others left New York's dominions entirely for East Jersey, where they could follow their own ways unrestricted either by a hostile government or a collaborating church leadership.¹⁹

17. David Narrett, *Inheritance and Family Life in Colonial New York City* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1993); and Goodfriend, *Before the Melting Pot*, 86–99, 178–86, 208–13.

18. David William Voorhees, "The 'Fervent Zeale' of Jacob Leisler," *WMQ* 51 (1994): 447–72; John Murrin, "The Menacing Shadow of Louis XIV and the Rage of Jacob Leisler: The Constitutional Ideal of Seventeenth-Century New York," paper delivered at the Twelfth Rensselaerswyck Seminar, Albany, N.Y., September, 1989; Howe, "Bayard Treason Trial"; and see J. F. Boshier, "Huguenot Merchants and the Protestant International in the Seventeenth Century," *WMQ* 52 (1995): 77–103

19. Randall Balmer, *A Perfect Babel of Confusion: Dutch Religion and English Culture in the Middle Colonies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989) finds the origin of Dutch pietism in East Jersey among the exiles from Dutch New York.

The rural Dutch were not the only group in English New York to maintain rather inward-looking communities. The slow influx of newcomers over the next three-quarters of a century left considerable space for groups to set themselves apart in relative obscurity. Even communities of English origin were involved. One such group were the New Englanders who settled the eastern Long Island communities of Southold, Southampton, and East Hampton. For much of their early history those communities participated in a thriving trade with New England across Long Island Sound; East Hampton in particular was an active port from which settlers conveyed the products of their lucrative whaling trade. But gradually, in the wake of the English conquest and the absorption of eastern Long Island into New York, their ties beyond their local world began to diminish along with the supply of whales. There was very little influx of population to those towns, which instead took on a more insular character with “tribal” characteristics, as many of the leading families remained descendants of early settlers, who controlled an increasing portion of town property and important aspects of church life.²⁰

The relatively slow growth of New York and the dispersal of the population allowed other groups to maintain a considerable degree of insularity in the New York countryside. Among them were the Scots Highlanders who settled in Argyle, New York, during the 1730s, at a time when few Highlanders were moving toward the northern colonies. Still another relatively isolated group were German-speakers drawn largely from the region of the Palatinate along the Rhine, refugees who settled in New York in 1709 with a promise from Governor Robert Hunter of land and work in the Mohawk Valley. They received little of what had been offered. Some among them moved onto those lands without official approval; others eventually left in a group for Pennsylvania, where their presence would help establish a long tradition of German settlement. Few German-speakers were tempted by New York thereafter. Those who remained stayed largely in the vicinity of their original settlement, where, living in relative isolation from other German-speakers, they would long maintain a distinct identity as “Palatines”—a name originally applied to all German-speakers that would be less prominent among their countrymen who settled elsewhere.²¹

20. See especially T. H. Breen, *Imagining the Past: East Hampton Histories* (New York: Addison-Wesley Publishing, 1989), 147–68, 198–205.

21. Philip Otterness, “The 1709 Palatine Migration and the Formation of German Immigrant Identity in London and New York,” *Explorations in Early American Culture*, supplement to *Pennsylvania History* 66 (1999): 8–23; and see Elizabeth Lewis Pardoe, “The Many Worlds of Conrad Weiser: Mystic Diplomat,” *Explorations in Early American Culture* 4 (2000): 113–47. If the insularity of some New York commu-

The principal exception to the creation of rooted ethnic communities was New York City, where the upper levels of Dutch society Anglicized much more quickly. So also did French Huguenot settlers at similar social levels. Even so, a fair portion of the Dutch population retained strong community attachments into the eighteenth century. There also Dutch women who married non-Dutch men usually retained their affiliations with the Dutch Reformed Church; the few Dutch men who married other than Dutch women were likely to choose brides of at least partial “Dutch” ancestry. And even as they learned and spoke English in public, they still often used Dutch as the language of home and church.²²

One group that may have established something of a national community within the city and its surroundings—if “nation” can be considered an appropriate term here—was the small free black population, composed largely of former slaves of the Dutch West India Company, of diverse African origins, who had arrived early in New Netherland. At least two dozen former slaves inhabited farms of their own in the Bowery shortly after the English conquest, and nearly as many lived northward toward Harlem; others moved to the outskirts of the city, to New Jersey or to Long Island. The community remained small, with few slaves freed after the Dutch period, but over the years free blacks met together in taverns and markets and established their own physical and cultural spaces. They participated in community festivals also, such as Pinkster, the Pentecostal holiday of the Dutch Reformed Church, which became an important ritual for New Yorkers of African descent.²³

nities was partly the result of slow growth, a significant exception would be New York’s manors, which, after slow beginnings, began a period of extensive growth in the middle years of the eighteenth century in response to the relative shortage of land in freehold. All of the evidence indicates that the tenants on those manors derived from diverse backgrounds, and—in a period of conflict between tenants and proprietors—sometimes made common cause. For a recent examination of land riots, see Thomas J. Humphrey, “‘Extravagant Claims’ and ‘Hard Labour’: Perceptions of Property in the Hudson Valley, 1751–1801,” *Explorations in Early American Culture*, supplement to *Pennsylvania History* 65 (1998): 141–66, and for a discussion of ethnicity and the New Jersey riots, Brendan McConville, “Conflict and Change on a Cultural Frontier: the Rise of Magdalena Valleau, Land Rioter,” in *Explorations in Early American Culture*, 122–40.

22. Goodfriend, *Before the Melting Pot*, 178–91; and see Jon Butler, *The Huguenots in America: A Refugee People in New World Society* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983), chap. 5.

23. Graham Hodges, *Root and Branch: African Americans in New York and East Jersey 1613–1863* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 34–38,

Restoration and Toleration

If the English conquest led to the establishment of rooted ethnic communities in early New York, its ecclesiastical impact was to impose a system of toleration on increasingly distinct religious communities. The terms of the English conquest allowed the Dutch settlers there the freedom to worship in what would no longer be the established church—a freedom extended to such other groups as Lutherans and Quakers. The Duke's Laws went farther, providing a parish system in which ordained Protestant ministers would be chosen for each community, to be supported by all of its inhabitants. That created, in effect, a system of local ecclesiastical establishments, with each community able to choose its own form—and with all of the inhabitants joining with or at least contributing to the dominant denomination within a given locale.²⁴

On the surface, the duke's government provided New Yorkers greater religious liberty than they had had before. Groups whose worship was previously challenged now had full liberty to practice their religions as they wished. Public support, previously restricted to the Reformed Church, could now go toward whatever Protestant communion the inhabitants desired. In some respects, this was toleration on the French model, from the years James had spent in France, before the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, when Protestant worship was freely permitted, but only within the fortified Protestant towns. Nonetheless, the kind of toleration that emerged in New York was not welcomed by all of its inhabitants—not even by some whose positions were officially sanctioned. Like most forms of toleration, that which emerged in New York served particular ends.

Both in Britain and in the colonies, James's motives in establishing a broad toleration have been debated ever since. Was toleration, as his critics maintained, merely a ploy by James to allow him to place Catholics in positions of authority with an eye toward eventually Catholicizing his kingdom and his colony, possibly by force? Or was he, as his allies maintained, a sincere advocate of liberty of conscience? The answer was buried with James, but certain

87–88; Goodfriend, *Before the Melting Pot*, chap. 6. This was not of course a national community in the sense that it identified with a specific African nation, but freed men and women in New York did begin to adopt the characteristics of national communities even as they retained other attachments.

24. On church-state relations in New York, see John Webb Pratt, *Religion, Politics, and Diversity: The Church-State Theme in New York History* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1967), and Pointer, *Protestant Pluralism and the New York Experience*.

aspects are clear. James offered little support to any Protestant denomination that posed the threat of a potential establishment, even the Church of England. He was even more suspicious of the Reformed Protestants in the Dutch and New England churches or among the Puritans on eastern Long Island. Those groups were staunchly anti-Catholic in their views and, as the British revolutions of midcentury had shown, potentially hostile toward royal authority in general and that of the Stuarts in particular. One of James's goals in New York was to hem in the troublesome New Englanders. James used toleration aggressively not only to grant Catholics liberty of worship but to promote their civil liberties as well, and he actively appointed them to positions of power in the colony and at home.

The contested nature of the toleration James offered is evident from the opposition it engendered. While overt resistance in New York was muted until England's Glorious Revolution allowed Leislerian Protestants to unleash their fury, elsewhere violent opposition began even earlier. In England the prospect of James and his policies provoked Protestant plots and uprisings for a decade before his removal. In the Reformed stronghold of western Scotland, opposition was even stronger. There toleration was accompanied by the imposition of loyalty oaths and monetary and bodily punishments that left parts of the region in virtual rebellion.²⁵

James's successors after the Revolution altered the workings of toleration but not toleration itself. The Ministry Act of 1693 borrowed from the Duke's Laws, providing that, in the lower four counties, congregations were to be supplied with "good sufficient Protestant" ministers at the people's expense. Where James's government had used such a plan to limit the claims of its Protestant opponents, its successors sought to isolate Protestant dissent in order to boost the position of the Anglican Church. The Ministry Act had spoken only of Protestant ministers, but the Tory governors who enforced it were avid supporters of the Church of England. From the year the act took effect, Anglican governors beginning with Benjamin Fletcher interpreted it as mandating ministers of the Anglican Church for the four lower counties, in spite of the small membership in that church.

The following decade, Lord Cornbury took an even more aggressive stance, evicting the Presbyterian preacher from the parish and manse in the town of Jamaica—built and paid for by the town's Presbyterian majority—

25. The story of Scotland's "killing times" has been told many times mostly by hagiographers. For a balanced discussion of Restoration politics see Julia Buckroyd, *Church and State in Scotland 1660–1681* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1980); there is still much work to be done on James's Scottish regime.

and handing it over to a minister of the Anglican Church. Cornbury undertook a similar effort in nearby Hempstead. To Fletcher and Cornbury, the kind of toleration represented in the Ministry Act was a grudging toleration, to be granted to Dutch or other Reformed populations only in out-of-the-way locales, and only where they composed an overwhelming majority. Elsewhere, the Church of England was to be promoted at every opportunity.²⁶

The system of toleration that developed in New York largely followed English principles. The Toleration Act of 1689 was an act for exempting their Majesties' Protestant subjects from penal laws. Toleration was granted to Trinitarian Protestants: Catholics, non-Christians, and Protestants who questioned the doctrine of the trinity were excluded. Toleration implied much less than civil equality. Dissenters were denied civil office, or even the right to attend Oxford and Cambridge; they were simply allowed to worship without fear of arrest. In both England and New York, toleration was intended to diffuse overt opposition on the part of dissenters. In pluralist New York, that principle was extended farther to allow whole communities of dissenters to maintain *de facto* local establishments in remote areas where they posed little challenge, while working toward Anglican hegemony in the New York City region.²⁷

What one found in the early history of both New Netherland and New York was toleration without a great deal of tolerance. From the beginning, successive authorities in the colony, while allowing for a measure of diversity, continually worked to promote one set of interests over others. New Netherland governors established the Dutch Reformed Church, tolerated local branches of the Reformed Churches of other nations, and struggled with the more tolerant Amsterdam authorities to suppress Lutherans, Quakers, and Jews. James appointed Catholics to positions of leadership, did his best to rein in the Puritan establishments on Long Island and the Dutch Reformed establishment elsewhere, and tolerated diverse local churches that would accede to his plans. Leislerians promoted Reformed Churches while suppressing Catholics and their alleged sympathizers. The New York government

26. Pratt, *Religion, Politics, and Diversity*, 40–47; and see the “Case of the Presbyterian Congregation at New York, 1724,” Church of Scotland Ms., Scottish Record Office, Edinburgh; and *The Case of the Scotch Presbyterians of the City of New York* (New York: n.p., 1773).

27. Toleration in New York partially followed the French model in place before the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which allowed Protestant worship but only in fortress towns where Protestants were dominant. A recent survey of the background to Toleration in England is John Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration in Protestant England, 1558–1689* (New York: Pearson, 2000).

thereafter worked to establish the Anglican Church in lower New York, tolerating only those dissenters who acknowledged their status as dissenters by seeking licenses to preach from the governor and surrendering rights to property and tithes.

In 1692, Charles Lodwick described the social order of New York City as having “too great a mixture of nations.” Lodwick’s depiction is an apt characterization of official attitudes toward pluralism in early New York. The population was heavily mixed, and to most authorities, that was not a good thing. As Richard Nicoll recognized at the time of the English conquest, there was little alternative to toleration, and the old inhabitants were guaranteed their property and their freedom of worship. But successive governments set out to structure pluralism to serve their own ends. In New York City, that meant the use of commercial privileges and other incentives to promote conformity to general English ways. Those who objected were free to remove themselves to rural places, where their viewpoints seemed to pose less of a direct challenge.²⁸

II. SPIRITUAL LIBERTY

The English conquest opened more than just New York to new settlement. Even before the takeover was effected, James had ceded the lands across the Hudson to two Stuart loyalists, Lord Berkeley and Sir John Carteret. Later, the Stuarts would grant the lands west of the Delaware to still another friend and ally, William Penn. As a Quaker, Penn held beliefs markedly different from those of the Catholic James, yet in important respects their goals were complementary. If one of James’s principal worries was the emergence of a powerful Protestant establishment, whether Anglican or Reformed, he had nothing to fear from Friends, whose spiritual leanings made them just as opposed to such an outcome. A Quaker colony in Pennsylvania would preclude the development of a Protestant establishment in the west while James imposed his new order on New York.

Where in New York the emergence of multiple national groups mandated a tactical toleration under what were effectively local religious establishments, in Pennsylvania one found a situation much closer to heterogeneity and true religious liberty. That was of course largely the work of William Penn and the Society of Friends. In the late seventeenth century, Quakers emerged as the most vocal advocates of religious liberty in the British world. That was partly a result of their own experiences of persecution, as Penn and many

28. Charles Lodwick, “New York in 1692,” *Collections of the New York Historical Society*, 2d ser., 2 (1849): 244, quoted in Goodfriend, *Before the Melting Pot*, 3.

of his coreligionists had suffered fines and imprisonment for their Quaker beliefs.²⁹

As important as their prison experiences in shaping Friends' attitudes toward religious liberty was the nature of Quaker beliefs themselves. Unlike most orthodox Protestants, who believed that God had delivered his full revelation to humankind in the Bible, Quakers believed in a continual unfolding of divine truth through the inner light—the voice of the spirit in everyone. If revelation were ongoing, then no group could set down a fixed creed for all to follow. And if, as Quakers supposed, it was communicated to all, then knowledge of the truth could not be the preserve of any one church. Believers were obliged to listen to the voice within them, something that could not be enforced by law or by arms.

In the first Quaker effort to establish those beliefs in a New World colony, the West Jersey Concessions of 1677, Quaker proprietors went farther than any other group in the granting of religious liberty, guaranteeing that “every person might freely enjoy his own judgment and the exercise of conscience in matters of worship.” Penn’s plan for Pennsylvania was not quite so liberal. While the draft version of the “Fundamentall Constitutions of Pennsylvania”—one of Penn’s early plans for the colony—had provided “that every Person that does or shall reside therein shall have and enjoy the Free Possession of his or her faith and exercise of worship towards God,”³⁰ the *Frame of Government* he published to the world granted liberty only to those “who confess and acknowledge the One Almighty and Eternal God to be the Creator, Upholder and Ruler of the World,” still a very liberal set of privileges.³¹

Religious liberty in Pennsylvania had its political and practical side. Penn’s charter had to pass through James, and it is hard to imagine that figure allowing a colony led by any other group of dissenters on the borders of his colony. There was a practical side for Penn as well. In encouraging the migration of Friends and their closest spiritual allies, Penn was both promoting the success of his enterprise and (he thought) creating the conditions for the maintenance of Quaker government, while lessening the risk of a powerful religious counterinterest that might threaten Quaker spirituality. Penn’s idea of religious

29. On Quakers and religious liberty, see especially J. William Frost, *A Perfect Freedom: Religious Liberty in Pennsylvania* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1993). For a recent brief summary of Penn’s life see Mary K. Geiter, *William Penn* (New York: Pearson, 2000), along with *The Papers of William Penn* cited below.

30. *The Papers of William Penn*, ed. Richard S. Dunn, Mary Maples Dunn, et al., 4 vols. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982–87), 2: 141–53.

31. *Frame of Government* (1682), in *Papers of William Penn*, 2: 212–26

freedom did not include the liberty to foster such counterinterests. That was partly responsible for Penn's ambivalence toward Roman Catholics as well. When James ruled, Penn usually endorsed a broad view of religious freedom, but in other writings on toleration he suggested it should not be extended to Catholics, who, he feared, could not be trusted to live peaceably under Protestant rule.³²

If the need to cope with the diversity of national groups was an important factor in determining the forms that religious toleration would take in early New York, in Pennsylvania it was religious liberty that led to national diversity. The mixing went a good deal farther than Penn had planned. From the beginning, Penn used his religious contacts to attract diverse populations of Quakers, Baptists, and other voluntarist groups to Pennsylvania from across Britain and central Europe, promising a religious liberty far beyond what existed in their homelands. But as their countrymen from orthodox Protestant churches began to follow them—sometimes with the direct assistance of those Penn had recruited—the presence of those later arrivals posed a challenge to Penn's plan.

German Speakers

An important target of recruitment for Penn was the cluster of German-speaking principalities in the Rhine Valley in central Europe. Working through the agency of the Rotterdam Quaker Benjamin Furly, Penn set out to recruit Friends on the Continent as well as German Baptist groups such as the Mennonites. As early as 1683 a group of Friends from the Rhine Valley established the first German-speaking settlement at Germantown outside of Philadelphia.³³

German settlement was sporadic in the early years, and Robert Hunter's attempt to settle Palatine migrants in New York might well have directed most of it to the northern colony. But as those settlers became increasingly disenchanted with poor treatment and broken promises in New York, a group among them headed down the Susquehanna Valley to Pennsylvania, where they established a foothold for German settlers. Their numbers began to increase after 1727, promoted by an active group of merchant entrepreneurs in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, London, and Philadelphia, who were linked to one another by religious networks as well as the profit motive. Together they

32. See especially the *Seasonable Caveat Against Popery* (London, 1670).

33. On Germantown see Stephanie Grauman Wolf, *Urban Village: Population, Community, and Family Structure in Germantown, Pennsylvania, 1683–1800* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976).

organized the lucrative trade in redemptioners, in which German settlers were granted free passage in exchange for their promise to work for an owner to whom they were auctioned on their arrival in Philadelphia.³⁴

In their homelands, Germans-speakers, like their Dutch neighbors, were accustomed to regular and frequent migrations, but the migration experiences of the peoples of those places differed. The Netherlands was a magnet for Protestant refugees during the seventeenth century; many of those were subsequently funneled abroad, mostly into the Dutch commercial empire. By contrast, the German lands—racked by wars and economic difficulties—mostly exported migrants. For Germans, moreover, that involved an explicit decision to emigrate beyond German territories, often requiring an application and the payment of fees. Before they began embarking for America in significant numbers, many German-speaking Protestants had migrated north to the Netherlands. Others went to Poland and other parts of eastern Europe, which would be by far the most popular destination in the eighteenth century, even during the peak years of emigration to North America. Given the cheaper and safer travel involved in migrating to the east, and the often more favorable terms those migrants received, it is doubtful that there would ever have been significant German migration to Pennsylvania at all had it not been for the presence of those early settlements.³⁵

In their movements to the east and west, German migrants followed a pattern of chain migration that would become frequent in mass movements. The initial move to a particular place was usually begun by a small group of migrants, whose paths were then followed by others from the same villages or regions. Whole villages did not pick up and move, nor did all German-speaking migrants who ended up one place necessarily come from the same

34. The literature on German emigration is substantial and of exceptionally high quality; see especially Marianne S. Wokeck, *Trade in Strangers: The Beginnings of Mass Migration to North America* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1999); Aaron Spencer Fogelman, *Hopeful Journeys: German Immigration, Settlement, and Political Culture in Colonial America, 1717–1775* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996); Rosalind J. Beiler, “Distributing Aid to Believers in Need: The Religious Foundations of Transatlantic Migration,” in *Empire, Society, and Labor: Essays in Honor of Richard S. Dunn*, ed. Nicholas Canny, Joseph E. Illick, Gary B. Nash, and William Pencak, supplement to *Pennsylvania History* 64 (1997), 73–87; and Georg Fertig, “Transatlantic Migration from the German-Speaking Parts of Central Europe, 1600–1800: Proportions, Structures, and Explanations,” in Canny, ed., *Europeans on the Move*, 192–235.

35. Wokeck, *Trade in Strangers*, chap. 1; Fogelman, *Hopeful Journeys*; and Fertig, “Transatlantic Migration.”

region. But they almost always settled in clusters, with enough local links to ensure that those who went would find significant connections and a ready acceptance wherever their journeys took them.³⁶

Where immigration to the mid-Atlantic from the Netherlands largely ceased after 1664, German migration would be almost continuous through the first half of the eighteenth century. The migrants came from varied backgrounds, including both the Reformed and Lutheran Churches as well as smaller sects such as the Mennonites and Moravians. Unlike the Dutch of New Netherland, whose eventual isolation from migration streams led them to withdraw from much of public culture and coalesce within a single church, the continual influx of varied groups from the lands along the Rhine kept the German-speaking population diverse, and publicly active. If some observers considered their language as a distinctive marker of a well-developed ethnic identity, German-speakers themselves were unlikely to have made that same mistake. While there were distinct clusters of German-speakers of varying backgrounds, especially among the sectarian groups, most came to inhabit mixed but substantially German regions of Pennsylvania, where Germans of different religious backgrounds might live together. No Pennsylvania group maintained the distinct “Palatine” identity that so marked the much smaller German community in New York.³⁷

Although migrants tended to settle in identifiable German-speaking areas, for the most part they were not far removed from non-Germans. Certain counties in Pennsylvania were known for high concentrations of German speakers—Berks and Northampton, for example—but Germans were not the only inhabitants of those areas. Most Germans arrived relatively late in the settlement process, and because most were seeking farming land, the greatest number clustered in backcountry regions. There they were more than likely to live in close proximity to Irish migrants, even as they continued to immerse themselves within local German networks. Those networks allowed them to maintain community links with other German speakers without settling all together in a group. Thus German-speakers from a single village in central Europe might cluster together within several different settlements in Pennsylvania. They could continue to move about as well: German-speakers who moved on from Pennsylvania as far south as North Carolina often still main-

36. Fogelman, *Hopeful Journeys*, 60–64.

37. Sally Schwartz, “A Mixed Multitude”: *The Struggle for Toleration in Colonial Pennsylvania* (New York: New York University Press, 1987), 148–49, notes that German Reformed and German Lutherans established considerably greater connections with each other than they did with non Germans or with members of German sects.

tained ties to particular communities of Pennsylvania Germans. And because there was no shortage of German migrants, German communities did not confront the same necessity of absorbing outsiders into their communities as did Dutch New Yorkers. Thus while most German-speakers, like their Dutch neighbors, practiced partible inheritance, the greatest proportion of German marriages seem to have been with other Germans.³⁸

By the middle of the eighteenth century, German-speakers were playing a much larger role in the public culture of Pennsylvania. Led by the Pietist printer Christopher Sauer in Germantown, the German press began publishing everything from political writings to works explaining English law to religious tracts. German migrants also began injecting themselves into colonial politics, as they did during the contest over proprietary rule in mid-eighteenth-century Pennsylvania, and again during the Stamp Act crisis. During those years, thousands of German speakers had themselves naturalized so that they could vote in the elections.³⁹

Those well-known events held particular meanings for German colonists. The battle over proprietary rule was for them in part an attempt to overturn the proprietor's efforts to impose new restrictions and fees through the land office, which threatened German land tenure. Many Germans later changed sides in the political debate, supporting the proprietor and opposing the Quaker Party for its perceived failure to defend backcountry inhabitants against Indian attacks. Yet if the Germans appeared to some to constitute a political block, different groups of Germans took varying positions on key issues. German Pietists, for example, many with pacifist leanings, were far more supportive of their Quaker neighbors than were Germans of the Lutheran and Reformed faiths, whose religious traditions were less likely to emphasize the testimony of peace than Christian militancy, and who were less concerned with extending Christianity to their Indian neighbors than with defending themselves against worldly attack by those same groups.⁴⁰

German involvement in public culture was promoted less by spiritual concerns than by several other key issues. One of those was property. Many German-speakers who emigrated retained claims to family property in the villages from which they came, and one of the most important publishing activities in Pennsylvania instructed emigrants in navigating the English legal

38. Fogelman, *Hopeful Journeys*, chap. 3, esp. 76–86, and see Marianne S. Wo-
ckeck, "Patterns of German Settlements in the North American Colonies," paper pre-
sented to the Philadelphia Center for Early American Studies, November 1994.

39. Fogelman, *Hopeful Journeys*, chap. 5.

40. Fogelman, *Hopeful Journeys*.

system, both for the properties they were to receive from abroad and that which was to be passed on in Pennsylvania. German-language almanacs gave explicit directions for preparing proper wills that would conform to German traditions of partible inheritance rather than English property law. Similarly, one of the first issues that drove Germans-speakers to apply for naturalization and the political franchise in Pennsylvania was the desire to protect their land claims.⁴¹

Another issue that encouraged public expression among German speakers was migration itself. Those who traveled as redemptioners faced an arduous and expensive voyage from the Rhineland to the Netherlands to England to Pennsylvania. Many suffered hardships along the way, such as sickness, impoverishment, and even death. German letter writers set out to warn prospective settlers of the dangers, some addressed to Sauer, and it became a subject of discussion in print. The most famous publication appeared in Europe: the account of Gottlieb Mittelberger, whose *Journey to Pennsylvania* was published in Frankfurt in 1756 after the author's return from Pennsylvania. Mittelberger wrote to protect his fellow Germans who might be lured by false promises, describing at length the risks that awaited such travelers. How effective it was is hard to say; it did not appear until the peak of German migration to America had passed, and the harsh picture Mittelberger painted of the voyage was at least partially balanced by a much more favorable presentation of Pennsylvania itself.⁴²

Irish Presbyterians

Settling alongside German speakers in the Pennsylvania backcountry were the Irish, principally Presbyterians from Ulster in the north, where English and especially Scots Protestants had begun establishing a presence at the beginning of the seventeenth century. As was the case with German-speakers, their arrival in Pennsylvania also was prompted by Quaker invitations, in this case that of Penn's secretary James Logan, himself an Ulster native born to Scottish parents, who helped establish Ulster migrants in the Lancaster County town that would be named Donegal.⁴³ Like migrants from the Rhine,

41. Roeber, "Origins of Whatever is Not English Among Us"; and A. G. Roeber *Palatines, Liberty, and Property: Germans Lutherans in Colonial British America* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), esp. chap. 6.

42. Gottlieb Mittelberger, *Journey to Pennsylvania*, ed. and trans. Oscar Handlin and John Clive (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960); and see Roeber, "Origins of Whatever is Not English Among Us."

43. James G. Leyburn, *The Scotch-Irish: A Social History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962), 191–93.

Irish settlers were drawn to Pennsylvania not simply by economic opportunities, but because of the greater religious liberty they encountered there. In Ireland, most had been dissenters from the Episcopal Church of Ireland, and they had suffered substantial civil disabilities. In Pennsylvania they found both religious liberty and the opportunity to build an aggressive and expansive church.

The culture of those Ulster emigrants, known variously as “Scotch-Irish,” “Scots-Irish,” and “Ulster Scots,” has never been well understood. There was, of course, relatively little mixing between Scots Presbyterians and the native Irish, who were largely Catholic and Gaelic-speaking. Nor were all Ulster Protestants descended from Scots migrants. There had been considerable English Protestant settlement in Ulster also, and while migrants from the two nations concentrated their settlements in different parts of northern Ireland, they were never wholly separated.⁴⁴

One of the most important points about the culture of the Ulster Scots was that they were not descended from a single wave of settlers, as is often imagined. The original Scots plantation of Ulster dates from the first quarter of the seventeenth century, but settlement during the plantation years was modest compared to what would follow. By 1625 there were probably about twenty thousand Scots in Ireland, but their numbers diminished greatly during the years of years of civil war at midcentury. The Restoration settlement finally reestablished Protestant control and led to in-migration probably greater than had occurred earlier, but the largest influx undoubtedly came during the 1690s, when famine and starvation in parts of Scotland may have led to the movement of as many as forty to fifty thousand persons, just two decades before the beginning of sustained Scots-Irish migration to America.⁴⁵

The culture of the Ulster Scots, then, was still quite fluid when emigration

44. The most extensive discussion of the early period remains M. Perceval-Maxwell, *The Scottish Migration to Ulster in the Reign of James I* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973), but see also Raymond Gillespie, *Colonial Ulster: The Settlement of East Ulster, 1600–1641* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1985); and Philip Robinson, *The Plantation of Ulster: British Settlement in an Irish Landscape 1600–1670* (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 1994; first published 1984). There was also some migration to America by Irish Catholics, but it remained largely separate from the migration of Ulster Scots.

45. T. C. Smout, N. C. Landsman, and T. M. Devine, “Scottish Emigration in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,” in Canny, ed., *Europeans on the Move*, 76–112, esp. 7–80, 86–88; and W. Macafee and V. Morgan, “Population in Ulster, 1660–1760,” in *Plantation to Partition: Essays in Ulster History in Honour of J. L. McCracken*, ed. Peter Roebuck (Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 1981), 46–63.

to North America began in earnest in the early years of the eighteenth century. Migration from Scotland to Ulster had been continuous, as was return travel to Scotland on the part of Ulster Scots, to visit family, for trade, and for education. Glasgow University was the principal university attended by Ulster Scots; Glasgow itself was in many ways the cultural capital. The result of all of the movement back and forth was that Ulster Scots can hardly be said to have established a wholly separate identity by the beginning of the eighteenth century, or much in the way of rootedness. That is evident in the difficulty people then and now have had in naming them. Contemporary documents might refer to them as Scots or Irish, or “Scottish and Irish Presbyterians.” Their most recent historian has called them “the people with no name.”⁴⁶

The largest element of their identity was their attachment to Presbyterianism, but even that affiliation was quite fractured. The Ulster community included some of the staunchest advocates of orthodox Scottish Presbyterian tradition, emphasizing doctrinal conformity to the Westminster Confession of Faith and a host of traditional practices. Others, called “New Lights,” allowed a much greater degree of theological innovation and inquiry and the toleration of diverse opinions, inspired by the ideas of the Enlightenment. Still others adopted the new evangelical mode of preaching for conversion that was being developed by such groups as the Continental Pietists and English Methodists, along with many Calvinist preachers in England, Scotland, and North America. Some among the Irish joined one of several communions of breakaway or “seceder” Presbyterian Churches that were even stricter than the orthodox Presbyterian Church. And all of those varieties of Presbyterianism found their way to Pennsylvania.⁴⁷

46. Patrick Griffin, *The People with No Name: Ireland's Ulster Scots, America's Scots Irish, and the Creation of a British Atlantic World, 1689–1764* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), and see Maldwyn A. Jones, “The Scotch-Irish in British America,” in Bailyn and Morgan, eds., *Strangers within the Realm*, 284–313. There is also considerable evidence that “Scots-Irish” communities often contained migrants from Scotland, either because they ventured first to Ulster, or because emigrant ships called at both Scottish and Ulster ports.

47. See, for example, the very different characterizations of transatlantic Scots-Irish Presbyterianism offered by Marilyn J. Westerkamp, *Triumph of the Laity: Scots-Irish Piety and the Great Awakening, 1625–1760* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), Leigh Eric Schmidt, *Holy Fairs: Scottish Communion and American Revivals in the Early Modern Period* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989), and Elizabeth Nybakken, “New Light on the Old Side: Irish Influences in Colonial Presbyterianism,” *Journal of American History*, 68 (1982): 813–32. The “New Lights” in Ireland, most of whom were trained by liberal and enlightened professors at Glasgow

Ulster Scots developed a reputation as a violent culture and as Indian fighters, and both labels were well earned. In Pennsylvania, Scots-Irish Presbyterians formed the principal element among the Paxton rioters, a group of men from the town of Paxtang and surrounding villages, who responded to what they deemed insufficient protection from Indian raids on the part of the government by attacking and slaughtering a group of peaceful Conestoga Indians who were under the protection of the colony. That was not their only involvement in frontier violence. Part of the reason James Logan originally invited Ulster migrants to settle along the Pennsylvania frontier was because of their reputation as fighting farmers, dating back to the defense of Protestant towns during Ireland's religious wars.⁴⁸

The participation of Ulster emigrants in frontier violence was partly a product of their persistent presence in the backcountry, where they served as a buffer between Native Americans and eastern farmers. Even German migrants, who had a far more peaceable reputation, played a role in the events surrounding the Paxton uprising in their communities in and around the Forks of the Delaware.⁴⁹ One of the circumstances that persuaded German settlers to engage in political activity in Pennsylvania was their opposition to what they regarded as government inaction in defending their settlements.

The frequency with which Ulster migrants moved into the backcountry was itself no mere coincidence. It was partly the result of their relatively late arrival in the colony, as Irish and Germans moved simultaneously into Pennsylvania's back counties in large numbers. It was also a product of a

University, opposed requiring ministers to subscribe the Westminster Confession. They were thus a very different group from those who would come to be called New Lights in New England, who emerged in the aftermath of the Great Awakening. That group endorsed evangelical preaching of a sort that Irish New Lights opposed, while opposing liberality in matters of doctrine.

48. John R. Dunbar, ed., *The Paxton Papers* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1957) remains a useful collection of primary documents. An exaggerated view of the inherent violence of Scots-Irish culture can be found in David Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989); see my "Border Cultures, the Backcountry, and 'North British' Emigration to America," *WMQ* 48 (1991): 253–59.

49. Jane T. Merritt, *At the Crossroads: Indians and Empires on a Mid-Atlantic Frontier, 1700–1763* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003) covers the events in and around the Forks of the Delaware; and see the account in Joseph Mickle, *Brief Account of Murders by the Indians, and the Cause Thereof, in Northampton County, Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: T. W. Stuckey, 1875); and Charles Rhoads Roberts, *History of Lehigh County, Pennsylvania*, 2 vols. (Allentown, Pa.: Lehigh Valley Publishing Co., 1914), 1: 102ff.

continuing propensity to migrate. Like their German neighbors, Irish Presbyterians moved in clusters, maintaining ties of kinship and friendship in older townships even as they moved on into new ones. Unlike the Germans, migration among the Irish was not synonymous with emigration, and they continued to move with considerable frequency after their arrival in Pennsylvania. For those settlers, the constancy of migration among interlocking settlements served as an important foundation of community.⁵⁰

The Presbyterianism of the migrants was well suited to maintaining mobile communities. In form, Presbyterianism constituted something of a middle way in eighteenth-century American religion. Lacking the formal hierarchy of the Anglican Church, Presbyterians did not require metropolitan involvement to establish new congregations. Yet unlike New England Congregationalists or other voluntarist groups, whose congregations were essentially independent of one another, Presbyterian churches were joined together under regional presbyteries, and members could move easily from one to another. Moreover, the meetings of the presbytery, composed of ministers and elders from each congregation, linked dispersed congregations across the region.

The participation of Ulster men and women in frontier violence may also have been a product of their strict Calvinist heritage. Like many religious groups, orthodox Scottish and Irish Presbyterians were firmly wedded to the notion of an unvarying religious truth, but the manner in which they defended that truth often gave their institutions an unusual rigidity. Scots and Irish Presbyterians traditionally upheld their faith through rites of public testimony, such as the signing of local and national covenants that affirmed the status of Presbyterianism as a providentially ordained religion, or requiring subscriptions to articles of faith. During the Restoration years, Presbyterians were fined, imprisoned, or banished from their homelands for refusing to subscribe their names to a test oath formally renouncing Scotland's covenants,

50. Ned C. Landsman, *Scotland and Its First American Colony 1683–1765* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1985), chap. 5, and “Religion, Expansion, and Migration: The Cultural Background to Scottish and Irish Settlement in the Lehigh Valley,” in *Backcountry Crucibles: The Lehigh Valley from Settlement to Steel*, ed. Jean Soderlund (Cranbury, N.J.: Lehigh Press, forthcoming); Griffin, *People with No Name*, chaps. 3–4; and see Marion Nelson Winship, “The Land of Connected Men: A New Migration Story from the Early American Republic,” in Canny, Illick, Nash, and Pencak, eds., *Empire, Society, and Labor*, 105–22. For an extended portrayal of the Scots and Scots-Irish as borderers who willingly settled the farthest frontiers, see Fischer, *Albion's Seed*, 605–782.

which would long remain a touchstone for the most orthodox of Presbyterians.⁵¹

In a published defense of their actions, the Paxton men referred to themselves as the “distressed and bleeding frontier inhabitants” of Pennsylvania, and the language suggests quite a lot about the culture of the Ulster Scots. The imagery derived from that used by Scottish and Irish Presbyterians during the persecutions of the seventeenth century. A pro-Paxton pamphlet praised them as “descendants of the Noble Enisknellers,” a reference to the



Figure 2. “The German bleeds and bears ye Furs” This 1764 political cartoon discloses the tensions between English, Native American, German and Scots Irish colonists that shaped Pennsylvania politics after the Seven Years’ War. Collections of the Library Company of Philadelphia.

51. A good example, which illustrates the content of half a century of such testimonies, is John Willison, *A Fair and Impartial Testimony, Essayed in Name of a Number of Ministers, Elders and Christian People of the Church of Scotland, unto the Laudable Principles, Wrestlings, and Attainments of that Church; and against the Backslidings, Corruptions, Divisions, and prevailing Evils, both of former and Present Times* (1744), in *The Whole Works of the Reverend and Learned Mr. John Willison*, 4 vols. (Edinburgh: John Bourne, 1816), 4: 267–414.

Ulster town of Enniskillen, which had held out against James's army in 1688 in defense of the Protestant succession.⁵²

The language was one of martyrdom and resistance, deriving from nearly ubiquitous popular traditions that long circulated in Ulster and western Scotland. It invoked instances of divine support for the cause of religious truth. It was, therefore, a language that brought a marked sense of moral certainty. These were godly people who believed that they were suffering grievous trials on behalf of divine truth. On both sides of the Atlantic, the agents who imposed that suffering were identified as markedly un-Christian. Those included the native Irish during the Civil War years of the seventeenth century, and, of course, the Indians on the Pennsylvania frontiers. Behind those "un-Christian" agents were persecuting authorities, in this case a Quaker government that denied fair representation to the back settlements, ignored their requests for security and assistance, and acted more affectionately and protectively toward native inhabitants than Christian subjects.⁵³

Beyond such references to their particular version of Presbyterian history, the culture of Ulster migrants was less uniform than most portrayals suggest. Successive waves of migration from Ulster brought a variety of styles to the backcountry. If Irish emigrants in those areas did indeed display much violent and intemperate behavior, they also brought an alternative culture of civility. Thus, Ulster Presbyterians were among the greatest promoters of education in the mid-Atlantic, and especially in the backcountry, creating an unparalleled network of colleges and academies that one writer has called an "evangelical educational empire." Through those institutions, they may have done more than any group to bring the ideas and perspectives of the Enlightenment to America—including the new moral philosophy, with its emphasis

52. *A Declaration and Remonstrance of the Distressed and Bleeding Frontier Inhabitants of the Province of Pennsylvania* (1764), in Dunbar, ed., *Paxton Papers*, 99–110. For another specific reference to Old World events see *An Historical Account, of the Late Disturbances, between the Inhabitants of the Back Settlements; of Pennsylvania, and the Philadelphians* (n.d.), in Dunbar, ed., *Paxton Papers*, 25–29. Good examples of the myths of martyrdom and divine deliverance that circulated in the popular cultures of both Scots and Irish Presbyterians were the popular biographies by Patrick Walker, which have been collected in *Six Saints of the Covenant: Peden: Semple: Welwood: Cameron: Cargill: Smith*, 2 vols. (New York: Hodder and Stoughton, 1901).

53. For criticism of the lack of protection from the Quaker government during the Paxton affair, see especially *Declaration and Remonstrance of the Distressed and Bleeding Frontier Inhabitants*; and *The Conduct of the Paxton-Men, Impartially Represented: with some Remarks on the Narrative* (1764), in Dunbar, ed., *Paxton Papers*, 265–98.

on sympathy and sensibility, which contrasted sharply with their often violent behavior. Moreover, even the violence toward Indians exhibited by many was partially balanced by the considerable involvement of Ulster migrants as missionaries and as frontier traders and negotiators. A few among those traders even married Native American women, in a dramatic extension of mid-Atlantic pluralism.⁵⁴

The continual influx of Irish and German migrants into Pennsylvania during the eighteenth century contributed both to the diversity of their populations and to considerable intermingling of settlements. Except for members of a few small sectarian groups, those migrants displayed little evidence of rootedness in fixed or homogeneous locales; instead, they continued to move and expand along with the colony. While Irish and German newcomers concentrated their settlements within particular Pennsylvania counties, they usually established themselves in small villages or hamlets rather than over extensive townships, often bordering on the settlements of other inhabitants. Thus even as they maintained regular connections with those of similar religious, cultural or linguistic heritage, they rubbed shoulders with those of other backgrounds more often than did some of the Puritan settlers of eastern Long Island, for example, or many of the Dutch of northern New Jersey and the Hudson Valley.⁵⁵

Diversity in Pennsylvania extended to church life, and here migration and diversity went hand-in-hand. Where in New York the number of different denominations remained relatively stable during the first half of the eighteenth century—as French and other European Protestants, for example, often simply attached themselves to other Protestant churches—in Pennsylvania denominations proliferated, a result of the freedoms the colony provided and the continuing influx of newcomers of varied faiths. German migrants included members of the Reformed Church, Lutherans, Moravians,

54. Howard Miller, “Evangelical Religion and Colonial Princeton,” *Schooling and Society*, ed. Lawrence Stone (Baltimore, Md., Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 115–45, and see my “Presbyterians, Evangelicals, and the Educational Culture of the Middle Colonies,” in Canny, Illick, Nash, and Pencak, eds., *Empire, Society, and Labor*, 168–82. Important recent works on traders and frontier negotiators include James H. Merrell, *Into the American Woods: Negotiators on the Pennsylvania Frontier* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000); and Merritt, *At the Crossroads*.

55. Fogelman, *Hopeful Journeys*, 80–92, argues for an unusual concentration among German settlers, but his conclusions derive largely from aggregate data demonstrating a heavy concentration of Germans within particular counties. Elsewhere he provides considerable evidence of the tendency of German-speakers to settle in dispersed clusters; see 72–80.

Mennonites, Swiss Brethren, Amish, Schwenkfelders, and Dunkers, among others; Scots and Irish settlements housed not only Presbyterian Churches but various denominations of breakaway Presbyterians, including both burgher and antiburgher seceders, and Cameronian and Reformed Presbyterians. There were also Anglicans, Quakers, Keithian Quakers, and, by the end of the colonial period, Methodists, Catholics, and Jews. Not until the New York backcountry began a rapid new phase of growth at the end of the Seven Years' War did the newly pacified backlands begin to attract so diverse a population to that colony.⁵⁶

Intermingling was not always peaceful. Mobile Irish and German populations continued to expand and to involve themselves in the public affairs of Pennsylvania. Irish Presbyterians in particular attracted rivalry and hostility that was manifest in the political sphere and—during the Paxton episode—with the threat of arms. Those conflicts pitted ethnic Irish and Germans against both the colonial authorities and their Native American neighbors.

III. ESTABLISHMENT, DISSENT, AND COUNTERESTABLISHMENT

While the pattern of pluralism was of course not wholly uniform in either Pennsylvania or New York, the most diverse colony may have been New Jersey. In that colony one found aspects of group life present among both of its neighbors with additional features not existing elsewhere. In the north were communities possessing many of the traits of their rural New York neighbors, including distinctly “Dutch” communities in and around Bergen, as well as often insular towns founded by former New Englanders.⁵⁷ In southern New Jersey one encountered a landscape of diverse settlements, mixing English, Irish, Dutch, and Swedes, including Quakers, Presbyterians from Scotland, Ireland, and New England, Anglicans, Baptists, and Lutherans. The influx of migrants to southern Jersey was slower than to its Pennsylvania neighbor, and some groups there were able to maintain rather isolated existences. Others even in the most rural areas established surprisingly cosmopol-

56. On the New York backcountry, see especially Bernard Bailyn, *Voyagers to the West: A Passage in the Peopling of America on the Eve of the Revolution* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986).

57. See, for example, Jacob Green, *A View of a Christian Church, and Church Government* (Chatham, N.J.: Shepard Kollock, 1781) for the continuing independence of some New Englanders in northern New Jersey.

itan communities connected to cultural circles in Philadelphia and in Princeton, where the new College of New Jersey resided.⁵⁸

As the place where different forms of pluralism met, New Jersey became, in important respects, the center of religious contestation in the Middle Colonies. As in New York, leading members of the Church of England worked aggressively to promote Anglican ascendancy. In New Jersey, as elsewhere, they confronted vocal and aggressive proponents of religious dissent, who were in a much stronger position there than they were in their northern neighbor. The contest that developed there extended throughout the mid-Atlantic and helped to create still other meanings of toleration and religious liberty.

One reason for the intensity of conflict in New Jersey was its central position between the two larger colonies. Leading citizens of New Jersey played significant roles in the affairs of its neighbors, especially New York; there was in fact considerable overlap between the elites of northern New Jersey and the New York City region. There were two additional reasons. One of those was the diverse and assertive dissenting population in New Jersey, one that much more willing to engage in public debate over political and religious matters than were their New York counterparts. The other was the substantial presence in the Jerseys of migrants from Scotland. Their involvement in the region began with the Scottish proprietary colony in East New Jersey in 1683; it would extend across the colony and into the adjacent regions of New York and Pennsylvania. While the size of the Scots migration never rivaled the numbers of Germans or Irish who came to the Middle Colonies, the unusually high profile of the Scots migrants gave them an influence in several areas of colonial life well out of proportion to their numbers.⁵⁹

In several respects, the experience of the Scots ought to have been much like that of the Dutch of New York. Both came from societies with strong migratory traditions. Both were Protestant nations with staunchly Calvinist churches. Both were highly commercial peoples who devoted considerable

58. John Fea, "Rural Religion: Protestant Community and the Moral Improvement of the South Jersey Countryside 1676–1800" (Ph.D. diss., SUNY at Stony Brook, 1999); and "Ethnicity and Congregational Life in the Eighteenth-Century Delaware Valley: The Swedish Lutherans of New Jersey," *Explorations in Early American Culture* 5 (2001): 45–78.

59. Landsman, *Scotland and its First American Colony*. Scots Quakers were still another group initially recruited by Penn, but they soon decided not to invest in Pennsylvania but to join with other Scots proprietors instead in founding their own colony.

effort to venturing abroad in the pursuit of foreign trade. Both had legal systems derived from Roman law, including systems of partible inheritance that funneled property into both the male and female lines of descent, and significantly greater protection for women's property rights than was found in English Common Law. Moreover, the religious wars of the seventeenth century had sent many Scots to seek refuge in the Netherlands, including families who would subsequently involve themselves in American trade and settlement.

There were crucial differences between the two nations, however. Where the Netherlands in the seventeenth century became among the wealthiest nations in western Europe, Scotland remained among the poorest. While the Netherlands, as a trading center as well as religious refuge, experienced substantial inflows and outflows of population, Scotland, which had few products or resources that others valued, had only outflows. It was probably the most consistent provider of net out-migration in Europe.⁶⁰

A second distinctive aspect of Scots migration was how far up the social ladder it extended. Not only the poor went abroad with regularity; so also did merchants, military officers, ministers, medical men, and other professional persons. For Scots to participate in almost any aspect of commercial, cultural, or professional life, they had to be willing to travel abroad. Scots developed an image and an identity in early modern Europe as a nation of arms, commerce, and of letters, none of which would have been possible had Scots of substance not been willing to venture abroad to pursue them. And while their continuing involvements in Europe meant that Scots in general were relatively slow to involve themselves in transatlantic migration, the number of skilled and educated persons among the migrants was disproportionately high.⁶¹

With the exception of a few distinct groups of migrants such as the Highlanders who settled in Argyle, New York, in the 1730s, Scots did not form a separate and easily identifiable group in the region. Most were Lowlanders, and they tended to settle at commercial and cultural crossroads: in the cities, along the principal trade routes, and in what became the cultural centers. Outside of New York and Philadelphia, their primary presence in the mid-Atlantic was in the busy central Jersey corridor that connected those cities.

60. Smout, Landsman, and Devine, "Scottish Emigration."

61. The literature on Scottish migration is much too large to list, but see the references in Ned C. Landsman, "Nation, Migration, and the Province in the First British Empire: Scotland and the Americas 1600–1800," *American Historical Review*, 104 (1999): 463–75.

Rather than inhabiting separate enclaves of the sort the rural Dutch would develop, and focusing on private over public culture, they were an integral presence in almost every aspect of public life.⁶²

The fact that migrants from Scotland generally avoided ethnic insularity does not mean that they lacked a sense of national community. Although Scots in the mid-Atlantic spread out across considerable distances, they maintained community ties. Part of that was because they, like their Irish and German counterparts, often settled in small, dispersed clusters, which remained closely linked to one another. Scots would move, marry, and trade among those dispersed settlements. Moreover, the practice of partible inheritance meant that family property was regularly distributed across the larger region. Ties among their settlements were further solidified by their participation in a network of interlocking Presbyterian churches; which served more as regional religious centers than as village-based institutions.⁶³

The other connecting link among Scots settlers was a set of trading networks modeled on those developed originally by Scots merchants on the European continent, and in the Low Countries in particular. There Scots traded principally through associations of their own countrymen, as a way of overcoming the disadvantages they faced competing against the better-supplied merchants from larger and wealthier nations. In the mid-Atlantic, Scots merchants in the leading cities participated in trading networks that spanned the Atlantic, from the British Isles to the Caribbean to Africa. Just as importantly, they extended those networks on a smaller scale within the region, linking Scots farmers, artisans, and petty traders across the central Jersey corridor and eventually into an extended backcountry of what would become upstate New York and western Pennsylvania.⁶⁴

62. Landsman, *Scotland and Its First American Colony*. For general considerations of Scots migration, see Eric Richards, "Scotland and the Uses of Atlantic Empire," in Bailyn and Morgan, eds., *Strangers within the Realm*, 67–114. Ian C. C. Graham, *Colonists from Scotland: Emigration to North America, 1707–1783* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1956) is the classic, albeit dated work; David Dobson, *Scottish Emigration to Colonial America, 1607–1785* (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1994) is principally composed of genealogical data.

63. Landsman, *Scotland and Its First American Colony*, chap. 5, 7.

64. See David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735–1785* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995). The classic description of Scots trading networks in the Chesapeake is Jacob Price, "The Rise of Glasgow in the Chesapeake Tobacco Trade," *WMQ* 11 (1954): 179–99; see also T. M. Devine, *The Tobacco Lords: A Study of the Tobacco Merchants of Glasgow and Their Trading Activities c. 1740–1790* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1975). For examples of the extension of a Scots or Glaswegian trading style

Another indication that the lack of geographical concentration did not signify the absence of a sense of rootedness among Scottish migrants was their pioneering role in the formation of national clubs, in the Saint Andrews societies of New York and Philadelphia, open to natives of Scotland and their descendants. In keeping with the character of the Scots community, those clubs combined the pursuit of sociability with commercial motives, linking Scots merchants across a wide swath of territory; the New York club, for example, in a vivid display of the extensiveness of their trading networks, included members who resided as far from that city as Albany, Philadelphia, Quebec, and Glasgow. Like the trading networks the merchants established, the society incorporated less wealthy persons into its network; a principal purpose of the society was to provide financial relief to any natives of Scotland in distress.⁶⁵

The relative prominence of many of the Scots who came to the region, combined with the intensity of their connections, accounts for some of the contentiousness of the pluralism that developed in the regions they settled. Although Scots proprietors governed East Jersey for only twenty years, members of that group retained considerable wealth, power, and prominence for many decades thereafter. The hard stance taken by Scots on the proprietary board against the land claims of the inhabitants of the townships of Newark and Elizabethtown—both settled by former New Englanders—led to one of the most sustained outbreaks of land rioting in the American colonies during the middle decades of the eighteenth century. They were regularly a conten-

throughout the Atlantic, see David Hancock, "Scots in the Slave Trade," and Douglas Hamilton, "Scottish Trading in the Caribbean: The Rise and Fall of Houstoun and Co.," both in *Nation and Province in the First British Empire: Scotland and the Americas, 1600–1800*, ed. Ned C. Landsman (Lewisburg, Pa.: Bucknell University Press, 2001), 60–93, 94–126. On networks in the mid-Atlantic, see Landsman, *Scotland and Its First American Colony*, chap. 7. On later settlements in upstate New York see especially Bailyn, *Voyagers to the West*, chap. 16.

65. William Macbean, *Biographical Register of the Saint Andrew's Society of the State of New York*, 2 vols. (New York: The Saint Andrew's Society, 1922); *An Historical Catalogue of the St. Andrew's Society of Philadelphia With Biographical Sketches of Deceased Members 1749–1907*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: The Saint Andrew's Society, 1907–13). For the even earlier Scots Charitable Society of Boston, see Marsha Hamilton, "The Scots' Charitable Society and North Atlantic Trading Networks in the Seventeenth Century," paper delivered at the Omohundro Conference on Early American History, Glasgow, July 2001, and Hamilton, "Scottish Communities in New England and the North Atlantic World in the Seventeenth Century," Working Paper No. 02–11, International Seminar on the History of the Atlantic World, Cambridge, Mass., August 2002.

tious force in the politics of New York as well as New Jersey. The Scottish Episcopalians among them—both government officials and members of the clergy—were also among the leading proponents of foisting an Anglican bishop upon the often unwilling colonists of the region.⁶⁶

If Scots played prominent roles in the American Episcopal Church, they were just as important among leaders of their principal adversaries within the region: the Presbyterians. As Anglican leaders in New Jersey and New York—including some prominent Scots—worked to bolster the position of the Church of England in the Middle Colonies, Presbyterians—many of whom were Scots or Scots-Irish—took the lead in organizing opposition. Central New Jersey was long the institutional home of that resistance, led first by the aggressive Presbyteries of New York and New Brunswick and, after 1746, the College of New Jersey.⁶⁷

The religious situation in the colony varied considerably from that of its neighbors. Where in New York the Anglican elite was allied with leading members of the Dutch and Huguenot communities—some of whom joined the Church of England—in New Jersey Presbyterians forged the most important alliances, with Dutch Reformed congregations and with the descendants of New Englanders, most of whom joined the Presbyterian Church. And where in Pennsylvania Presbyterian opposition was directed at a tolerant government, Presbyterian interests in New Jersey and New York were able to oppose Anglican ascendancy with a rhetoric of religious liberty.

The creation of the Presbyterian college is itself a good illustration of the way that the balance of power in the colony—and ultimately the region—was shifting. When Presbyterians first pushed through a charter, the measure met

66. On the land riots, see Brendan McConville, *These Daring Disturbers of the Public Peace: The Struggle for Property and Power in Early New Jersey* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1999); see especially chap. 2, “The Enlightenment’s First Offensive.” There is no adequate study of Scottish Episcopalians in the colonies. Scots were among the most numerous clergymen of the Anglican Church, and often the most aggressive, a result of the scarcity of employment for Scottish Episcopal ministers at home after the reestablishment of Presbyterianism in the Revolution settlement and the assertive Jacobitism of so many of them. See Provost R. Foskett, “Some Scottish Episcopalians in the North American Colonies, 1675–1750,” *Records of the Scottish Church History Society* 14 (1963): 135–50; and James McLachlan, “The Scottish Intellectual Migration to British North America 1650–1770: New England and the Chesapeake,” paper delivered at conference on Scotland and the Americas, John Carter Brown Library, June, 1994.

67. For those alliances, see Schwartz, *Mixed Multitude*, 148–49, and see Carl Bridenbaugh, *Mitre and Sceptre: Transatlantic Faiths, Ideas, Personalities, and Politics, 1689–1775* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962).

with predictable objections from Anglican leaders. Those were quickly waived aside by the governor Jonathan Belcher, a native New Englander, and by his successor, the Scotsman John Hamilton. By contrast, when, several years later, Anglicans sought their own college in New York, the request provoked a bitter public debate led by the Presbyterian William Livingston. Anglicans were reduced to arguing that in fact they would hold only the most limited power in the college, and that what they were seeking was nothing more than what Presbyterians already had in New Jersey. Anglicans would get their college in New York, but Presbyterian opposition managed both to delay the charter and to force the Church into a defensive posture.⁶⁸

Anglicans would remain on the defensive thereafter. In the 1760s, Anglicans in the mid-Atlantic, led by the New Jersey minister Thomas Bradbury Chandler, embarked on a campaign to obtain an Anglican bishop for the region. Chandler's proposal was put forward in very muted terms. It disavowed any secular authority for bishops through ecclesiastical courts. It denied them any authority over non-Anglicans. It limited their work to those colonies where Anglicans already had a substantial presence. Chandler in fact contended that he was asking only that Anglicans be granted the same liberty as other denominations to maintain their full ecclesiastical structure. Nonetheless, the proposal brought about a flurry of publications from dissenters and a new effort among Presbyterians to unite behind the New Jersey college in opposition.⁶⁹

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of those debates is that Presbyterians

68. The best source remains *The Independent Reflector Or Weekly Essays on Sundry Important Subjects More particularly adapted to the Province of New-York By William Livingston and Others*, ed. Milton M. Klein (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963; first published 1754), esp. numbers XVII–XXII, XXXVI–XXIX, XLIV, and XLIX–LI. The principal responses appeared in *The New-York Mercury*, followed in 1753 by discussions in *The Occasional Reverberator* and subsequent contributions on both sides in the *Mercury*.

69. Thomas Bradbury Chandler, *An Appeal to the Public, in Behalf of the Church of England in America* (New York: J. Parker, 1767). The most comprehensive discussion of the controversy remains Bridenbaugh, *Mitre and Sceptre*; also see Arthur Lyon Cross, *The Anglican Episcopate and the American Colonies* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1964; first published 1902). The effort to forge a united front behind the Jersey college largely involved Francis Alison, whose correspondence on that matter can be found in *Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles*, ed. Franklin Bowditch Dexter, 3 vols. (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1901). Even Quakers had little sympathy for the Anglican position; as James Logan remarked, Anglican claims of persecution in reality meant little more than "not suffering them to be the Superiour," quoted in Schwartz, *Mixed Multitude*, 60.

were able to counter those Anglican efforts with claims of religious liberty. It was a particular kind of liberty they endorsed. It was not opposition to state-supported religions: Presbyterians opposed the granting of a charter to an Anglican college in New York even as they stoutly defended the state-chartered Presbyterian College of New Jersey. Nor was ecclesiastical establishment the problem; in challenging the appointment of an Anglican bishop in the Middle Colonies as a threat to their civil and religious liberties, Presbyterians bolstered their position by forging active alliances with the established Presbyterian Church of Scotland and New England's Congregational establishment.⁷⁰

By the middle of the eighteenth century, the rhetoric of religious liberty had attained broad appeal throughout the British world. It did not possess a single meaning, however. It was widely proclaimed by Protestants, who viewed their religion as granting people the freedom to think for themselves; such a view provided a ready rationale for denying liberty to Roman Catholics who were, in such a view, liberty's inherent enemies. Those outside of the Anglican establishment added another qualification: religious liberty signified freedom of the church *from* the state, and from a state-supported hierarchy such as that which Anglicans possessed in particular. The state might well provide support for the church, which they would eagerly seek in New Jersey. But it was not to control it directly. That provided the basis for a general opposition to churches with erastian hierarchies, whether Anglican or Catholic, that aligned Reformed denominations across the Atlantic. In discussions by Presbyterians and other dissenters, the general Presbyterian form—meaning any church governed by no authority above minister and congregation, and including most Reformed Churches—represented popular participation in the government of the church.⁷¹

70. A different discussion of Livingston's use of libertarian rhetoric in the college debate appears in Thomas Bender, *The New York Intellectual: A History of Intellectual Life in New York City, from 1750 to the Beginnings of Our Own Time* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987).

71. There is an analogy here to the emerging literature on political economy in the British world, in which Scots and dissenters also played a vital role. When the new political economists argued for free trade, they did not mean that commerce should be completely outside the realm of government influence; many of the works argue explicitly for government support. Their principal goal was to eliminate favoritism for chartered trading companies and those with direct involvement with governmental authority. It was a fit doctrine for those outside interests who had as little stake in the chartered companies as they did in the metropolitan religious establishment.

The equation of popular government with the Presbyterian form, broadly conceived, became a regular theme in Presbyterian writings in Britain as well as North

By defining religious liberty in terms of the freedom of the church from the state, Presbyterians were able to muster a substantial coalition against Anglican initiatives. Where dissent in New York was diffused through separate and often isolated communities, in New Jersey the several Reformed denominations would consolidate in opposition. There the rhetoric of liberty served as a partisan tool, supporting a Presbyterian college for promoting liberty, piety, and prosperity while opposing an Anglican institution which, they charged, would lead to backwardness, corruption, and lethargy. In a pluralist mid-Atlantic, the state was free to support any and all religious institutions that were not directly subordinate to the state, as the Church of England was. That emerging consensus on the meaning of religious liberty did not lead at the outset to the separation of church and state, but rather to an aggressive low church counterestablishment.⁷²

CONCLUSION: THE RHETORIC OF MID-ATLANTIC PLURALISM

If diversity of religion and nationality were indeed distinguishing characteristics of the Middle Colonies, the region exhibited several varied kinds of pluralism, promoting markedly different ends. In New York, an aggressive English authority oversaw a variety of Protestant pluralism designed to bolster High Church authority, leaving much of the population to retreat into consolidated ethnic and religious enclaves. The spiritual liberty for which Pennsylvania was famous, by contrast, supported a far greater degree of religious and ethnic intermingling among more fluid population groups that extended well beyond what the proprietor had intended. And in New Jersey, the combination of a New York-style Anglican elite with an assertive Reformed population led to a contentious colony and an aggressive dissenting reaction.

Those varying systems of pluralism were not simply products of the founders' conceptions. They emerged in conjunction with the settlement and devel-

America, including during the Episcopate controversy, when it led opponents to separate the Episcopal form, which was merely a question for denominations to decide, from the subordination of the Church of England to secular authorities. Also see William Livingston, *Independent Reflector*, 38, 319–26. On its extensive use in Scotland, see my “Liberty, Piety and Patronage: The Social Context of Contested Clerical Calls in Eighteenth-Century Glasgow, in *The Glasgow Enlightenment*, ed. Andrew Hook and Richard B. Sher (East Linton, Scotland: Tuckwell Press, 1995), 214–26.

72. Compare the *Independent Reflector* on the results of religious tyranny, numbers 18 and 37, with the prospects for the College of New Jersey predicted in many publications; see for example, Samuel Davies, *A Sermon Delivered at Nassau-hall, January 14, 1761: On the death of His Late Majesty King George II* (New York: J. Parker and Company, 1761), 41, passim.

opment of the colonies in which they were located. The limited toleration that prevailed in New York both fostered and was furthered by the relatively slow influx of population. The Quaker effort to promote the spiritual liberty of Friends and their allies in Pennsylvania supported an expansive pluralism that, in turn, rendered any effort to suppress either tolerance or the increasing diversification of the population almost inconceivable. And the quest for Anglican ascendancy in a deeply divided Jersey colony fostered not only active opposition to Anglican rule but an organized effort to create a unified counterestablishment.

Nor were what we know as national groups in the mid-Atlantic simple carryovers of Old World nationalities. The Dutch community in English New York derived from many peoples, all attracted by the varied opportunities of the Dutch colonial empire; ethnic consolidation followed, rather than preceded, colonization and conquest. German Pennsylvania was a linguistic rather than a national community, comprising persons of starkly varied values and beliefs, whose migration experience encouraged a public culture concerned with issues of religion, citizenship, property, and law. The Irish community linked migrants professing a strong adherence to Irish Presbyterian traditions across wide geographic regions, even if they did not always agree on exactly what those traditions were. And the African-American community in New York certainly had less to do with any shared background of its members than with the circumstances of their migration and the condition of their livelihoods.

English ethnicity was less well formed. Persons of English affiliation and descent adopted markedly opposed political and religious attitudes and identities. There was little need for diverse groups of English migrants to consolidate in the manner of the New York Dutch, nor did they possess the shared religious identification of Irish Presbyterians; Anglicans, Quakers, and dissenters retained their separate communions. Well-connected English merchants had little need to form ethnic clubs comparable to the Saint Andrews societies. Their separate political and religious identifications seemed far clearer than any common identity.

What did begin to promote a specifically English identity was diversity itself. There is considerable evidence that in the middle years of the eighteenth century, participants and observers remained uncomfortable with many of the differences that surrounded them. No less a figure than Benjamin Franklin, in his 1751 essay on population, noted the rapidly increasing presence of German-speakers in his home colony of Pennsylvania, and famously asked why what he called “Palatine boors” should be “suffered to swarm into our Settlements, and by herding together establish their Language and Man-

ners to the Exclusion of ours?" He went on to question why colonials should continue to "increase the Sons of Africa, by Planting them in America."⁷³ During the Paxton uprising of the following decade, Franklin expressed similar misgivings about the Irish, and the Paxton pamphlets published during those years were full of religious and ethnic aspersions cast upon the Irish by opponents of the uprising, and on their principal adversaries, the Quakers, by its supporters. And the drive for an Anglican bishop prompted similar epithets from both Anglicans and dissenters.⁷⁴

Crèvecoeur was among the keenest observers of diversity in the mid-Atlantic, and one of its leading interpreters. One of the ways to understand the passage with which we began the discussion is as an attempt to impose an order on the tremendous diversity of group life that surrounded him, affirming pluralism while striving both to define and confine it. While the letter referred repeatedly to the variety of groups that coexisted in Pennsylvania, its goal was to consolidate those diverse peoples into a single figure, *the American*.

The first and most obvious limiting feature of that designation was that the American to whom the Farmer referred was descended only from the nations of Europe. Moreover, the forms of nationality and group life he described were even more confining. Even as the Farmer emphasized the extent of group diversity one found in Pennsylvania, the characteristics he attributed to those groups and nations were curiously unvaried. For even if their backgrounds were diverse, the Farmer assigned each of them an essential character, deriving from a seemingly unbroken heritage. In that sense they were all similar in that they differed from his Americans, who were uniquely mixed, possessing a "strange mixture of blood, which you will find in no other country."⁷⁵

The limited significance of those differing heritages is well illustrated in the Farmer's account of a tour through the Pennsylvania countryside. To one side, the Farmer wrote, "lives a Catholic, who prays to God as he has been taught and believes in transubstantiation; he works and raises wheat, he has a large family of children, all hale and robust; his belief, his prayers, offend nobody." Farther along lived a Scots seceder, "the most enthusiastic of all sectaries; his zeal is hot and fiery. . . . He likewise raises good crops, his house

73. Benjamin Franklin, "Observations Concerning the Increase of Mankind," in *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, ed. Leonard W. Labaree et al. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959-), 4: 225-34.

74. See Dunbar, ed., *Paxton Papers*, passim; and see Alison Gilbert Olson, "The Pamphlet War Over the Paxton Boys," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, January/April 1999, 31-55.

75. Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer*, 69.

is handsomely painted, his orchard is one of the fairest in the neighbourhood.” The Farmer then asked, “How does it concern the welfare of the country, or of the province at large, what this man’s religious sentiments are, or really whether he has any at all? He is a good farmer, he is a sober, peaceable good citizen.”⁷⁶

The implication, of course, is that the fact that the seceder was a good farmer, unlike his strict religious principles, *did* concern the welfare of the country. This is toleration with a purpose once again, an endorsement of general settler values; the greatest good was in the settling and improving of the land. The toleration of even the most enthusiastic believers was justified by those labors. The Farmer praised groups repeatedly for their industry, “which to me who am but a farmer is the criterion of everything.” All the rest, even religious belief, were minor matters, mere custom and ritual, consigned to the realm of the unimportant, provoking what he called religious “indifference.”⁷⁷

The views established in Crèvecoeur’s day left a considerable legacy for the way we have thought about pluralism in the Middle Colonies. The picture of a constant and uncontested mid-Atlantic pluralism that was unequivocally accommodating and tolerant remains with us today. So do the accompanying images of uniformly liberal values of property, prosperity, and independence.⁷⁸

There were, of course, other groups present in the Middle Colonies: Africans, Native Americans, and European sectarians, whose lives fit far less easily into the settlement project. And there were contests for power from the start. National groups coalesced in order to defend diverse sets of values, and varying ends. Even before the English conquest, toleration already served as a means of structuring diversity in purposeful ways. The language of liberty allowed both the accommodation of diverse ways and, at times, the promotion of a narrow orthodoxy and uniformity. Yet so consistent has the main story of American pluralism seemed, and so important, that those variations have come to be regarded as mere exceptions to its inevitable development rather than essential elements at its core.

76. Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer*, 74–75.

77. Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer*, 68, 75–76. In a sense industry to the Farmer was a product of heritage, which—like the Farmer’s farm—was passed down from generation to generation following basic lines of descent. The linking of industry to ancestry—usually an ancestry identified through surname and the male line—gave a very particular meaning to the assertion that Americans were a new race of *men*.

78. James T. Lemon, *The Best Poor Man’s Country: A Geographical Study of Early Southeastern Pennsylvania* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972).