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OTIUM CUM DIGNITATE: ECONOMY, POLITICS, AND PASTORAL IN EIGHTEENTH- CENTURY NEW YORK

Gregory Afinogenov

Indeed, it might soon go so far that one could not yield to the desire for the *vita contemplativa* (that is to say, excursions with thoughts and friends), without self-contempt and a bad conscience. Well! Formerly it was the very reverse: it was “action” that suffered from a bad conscience . . . “Only in *otium* and *bellum* is there nobility and honor:” so rang the voice of ancient prejudice!

Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, §329

In June 1778, the revolutionary government of New York passed a Banishing Act designed to purge the state of its recalcitrant Loyalist and neutral elements. Among its casualties was the lawyer Peter Van Schaack, deported to London within three months of the law’s promulgation. Van Schaack passed his seven years of exile by crafting a series of Chesterfieldian epistles to his son Henry—an attempt to breed up the young man to a life of classical virtue and learning. Interspersed with Latin quotations, peppered with remarks on the moral worth of *Clarissa*, Gray’s *Elegy*, and a variety of ancient and modern authors, these intercontinental letters provide a window into the values and ideals of the eighteenth-century New York gentleman: “*good breeding*” is extolled, felicitous writing encouraged, avarice and provincialism condemned.¹

A central concern of Van Schaack’s educational project is inculcating a proper attitude toward nature. The exile exhorts his son to “*think* and philosophize as you *walk*” through the bucolic environs of the family’s hometown in Albany County, carrying a fowling piece which is not to be used to “kill poor birds wan-

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tonly" (VS, 224). When his uncle comes to Kinderhook, Henry is to "compare [its] majestic hills to Mount Parnassus, or Atlas, and these pure streams to those of Helicon." Yet, in a letter of 1783, Van Schaack warns his son about seeming pedantic: "When you talk to your neighbors, who are farmers, you may tell them how husbandry was carried on in Virgil's time, but do not quote the *Georgics* to them." The warning is directly followed by a rueful aside: "By the way, do you not often read the first Eclogue with peculiar sensibility, when you think of the public troubles? Who will be the happy man of whom it shall be said, *Deus nobis haec otia fecit!*"² It is not by accident that Van Schaack chose this particular poem. The first Eclogue portrays Meliboeus, an endlessly wandering political exile who seeks a night's refuge in his friend's idyllic and divinely blessed pastures. The poem's profound resonance for Van Schaack, it seems, derived not only from his own identification with Meliboeus, but also from the resulting association between the verdant setting of Kinderhook and that of Tityrus's fields and vineyards.³

Such a Roman-inflected hermeneutics of the natural world was common—indeed, virtually unavoidable—in an elite culture whose participants were expected to possess at least some classical education. Roman writers such as Virgil and Cato, required reading in almost all college curricula, drew connections between virtue, political disengagement, and an agricultural lifestyle; figures like the public-spirited general Cincinnatus served as moral exemplars in their retreat from politics. While Cato, as filtered through Addison, may have been the larger influence in general, Virgil's *Eclogues* and *Georgics* were especially important for the association of political withdrawal with the pastoral ideal. These two concepts were frequently encapsulated together with the term *otium*, or retirement, and distinguished from *negotium*, which connoted both business and trouble. The *vita contemplativa* of the Renaissance humanists, both disengaged and useful, springs from the same source; in the context of the eighteenth-century English political vocabulary, its allure was equally difficult to ignore.⁴

Following this classical trail, the present essay attempts to read Van Schaack's "peculiar sensibility" into the eighteenth-century history of New York. He was not alone among New Yorkers in figuring the province's pastoral landscape as a privileged site of extrapolitical *otium*; William Livingston's better-known *Philosophic Solitude*, for instance, draws upon the same tradition. But Van Schaack's rhetorical question suggests a finally unattainable retirement, a pastoral more tragic than even the first Eclogue itself. Such a vision was not simply the product of a depressed and homesick mind. Rather, it represented a crucial stage in a historical development which had begun to take form in New York before the middle of the eighteenth century—a history shaped as much by economic transformations as by cultural ones. For the pastoral ideal, its deep roots notwithstanding, depends on a certain attitude to economy and society; when this is threatened, its stable normative structures come under strict scrutiny. In New York in particular a growing emphasis on the connective virtues of trade and the rapid rise of a politicized sociability made Van Schaack's pastoral vision increasingly insupportable.⁵

Studies of colonial politicians frequently note their propensity for retreating from the world of politics. Jack P. Greene's Landon Carter, for instance, was constantly "scurrying to his plantation and his study for refuge from a hostile and malevolent world."⁶ A number of similar studies have been influenced by Albert O. Hirschman's

economic “exit, voice, and loyalty” framework, an attempt to categorize political responses to decline. In that tradition, Eric Slauter has taken a broader view, drawing attention to the role played by images of solitary, disengaged figures—hermits, virtuous farmers, even runaway slaves—in challenging and interrogating the late eighteenth century’s conceptions of sociability and the social contract itself. A parallel strand of research, beginning with the work of Charles Mullett and pursued most recently by writers such as Eran Shalev, has begun to unravel the complex classical inheritance of eighteenth-century colonials. A key part of this legacy was mediated through the concept of *translatio*: the progress of liberty and civilization westward from Greece to Rome, and thence to England and America. As William Dowling has suggested, this allowed colonial writers to fit the classical Mediterranean world, with its topoi of retreat, into their intellectual geographies of the British empire.⁷

An attempt to link the pastoral ideal with its precise socioeconomic context cannot avoid mentioning Raymond Williams’s *The Country and the City*. It is hard to claim that Williams’s thesis can unproblematically be translated to the eighteenth-century colonial setting. Nonetheless, his discovery of a “retrospective radicalism” in English pastoral literature helps to explain the intransigent anti-capitalism of this fundamentally conservative poetic mode, despite its tendency to conceal oppression rather than expose it. Pastoral’s cousin, the georgic, has likewise not been without its political interpretations; scholars have linked it to emerging English ideas of nationhood and elucidated its role in legitimating the logic of empire. As Timothy Sweet and others have shown, these genres are fundamentally at cross-purposes: the georgic promotes the improvement and cultivation of land and extols the virtues of manual agricultural labor, seeing nature as a blank slate to be transformed by human hands; pastoral finds in nature a bountiful plenitude, a site of leisure rather than of work. Although, as Suvir Kaul suggests, neither style had a fixed ideological role—each could serve just as well to promote as to caution about imperial and commercial expansion—pastoral and georgic uneasily subsisted side by side in New York’s literary scene. To track the tensions between them is one purpose of this essay.⁸

In 1752, the Rev. William Smith, future provost of the College of Philadelphia, sent his correspondent Phila De Lancey a few poems and a brief “Essay to fix the Idea of an American Pastoral.” Smith—himself living in country seclusion at the “Hermitage” on Long Island (now Peconic)—drew a distinction between two types of “modern pastoral.” In one, “the Actors, or Personages, are mere Rustics, discovering no Knowledge, but in rural Affairs; to which they continually allude, with an unaffected Simplicity, and Innocence of Heart.” In the other,

the Actors are still Rural Persons, but such as are supposed to understand their several Relations, as Men, as Citizens, & as Creatures of God. Hence, Delicacy of Thought and Passion, with a considerable Knowledge in Philosophy, Polity and Religion may be introduced into this Kind . . . Pastorals of this Sort, where the Speakers have Knowledge, without having refined away the unaffected Dictates of sober Nature, may be so conducted as to be of great use, by presenting Virtue in her meekest & most engaging attitudes.⁹

Lacking in the obviously contemptible first genre, and evidently present in the second, is the characters' awareness of the political implications of the pastoral setting. There is a rough parallel here with Schiller's famous distinction: while the characters in the first are "naive," seeing the natural existence as actuality, the characters in the second are "sentimental"—they realize that their role is fundamentally to express an inaccessibly archaic ideal. In such a pastoral, they can become literary embodiments of the virtue of a rural retirement, because they can directly contrast it to the *negotium* of actual society.¹⁰

William Livingston's 1747 poem *Philosophic Solitude* conforms handily to this second type of pastoral. Its opening stanza asserts a principled rejection of the political world, where "dunces cringe to be esteem'd at court," in favor of a "neat, but simple mansion," "in the center of some shady grove / By nature form'd for solitude and love" (*PS*, 13): Arcadian retirement leads directly to religious inspiration; when the "God of day" appears, Livingston waxes rapturous and demands of a "railing Infidel" whether he can look at "th' harmonious structure of this vast machine / And not confess its Architect divine?" (*PS*, 21–22). But the mere contemplation of nature and its God does not suffice: "to improve the intellectual mind / Reading must be to contemplation join'd." To that end, the poet summons a host of poets—Milton, Pope, Dryden—among whom "Virgil as Prince, should wear the laurel'd crown." Philosophy, too, shares Livingston's idyll, as he calls forth "Sagacious Lock," Cato, Quintilian, Newton, and others (*PS*, 30–37). The poetic mode produced by this enraptured climate does not include the "mere Rustics" at all—no peasants, shepherds, or any agricultural activity that may indicate a real consciousness of the land. Instead, this pastoral sees nature as a site only of intellectual improvement, valuable precisely because of its separation from the social and economic.¹¹

Livingston's poem takes its place within a broader milieu of other pastoral poetry and prose being published in the New York press by sundry anonymous and pseudonymous authors around the 1740s. One 1739 pastoral, though borrowing Virgil's characters, sets its scene on "Long Hudson's Banks," where "Della and Cloe, Nymphs belov'd in vain, / Do once more Grace our Eboracean Plain."¹² Another, a love poem written in 1747, paints a flowery image of "breathing Zephyrs" and "sportive Lambkins," among which the poet can pass his "Days devoid of Care / In Contemplation lost."¹³ The most revealing of these works is "An Epistle from the Country," published in 1741. It opens with a conventional rejection of "the smiles or frowns of kings" and a withdrawal to "the Sylvan shade." Thereupon it becomes a dialogue, in which the unnamed poet's interlocutor challenges his resolve: "You'll fight to morrow for your wish to day / And tho' so fond to be a country swain / Would gladly turn a man o'th' town again." Yet despite this explicit anti-pastoral challenge, the poet continues to assert the self-reliance and independence to be found in "some fair village, near an ample wood." Preferring "brown juice, by British grain made strong" to "Oporto's cluster'd wine," the poet identifies his withdrawal with hearty peasant virtues, which are explicitly presented as outside the world of "toil for gold." The author's critique, a standpoint that allows him to "praise, or censure, all the ways of man," thus rests not only on a contrast between urban and rural life, but on the economic distinction between urban commerce and rural agriculture. Nonetheless, agriculture as it appears in this poem is still only a landscape: the author speaks not of tending his field, but of enjoying his "little

store” and spending his days in “solitude and contemplation,” with nary a mention of how the little store is to be accumulated in the first place. This, of course, is the characteristic pastoral attitude.¹⁴

An anonymous essay published in the *New-York Weekly Journal* in 1739, titled “Of the Contemplation of the Works of Nature,” allows a glimpse of another dimension of the *vita contemplativa*: the connection between the retirement of withdrawal and scientific inquiry. Rural contemplation is contrasted to the “sensual” employments of urban dissipation: “whatever the *Epicure*, or *Debauchee* can imagine in his *Banquet*, his *Bottle*, or his *Mistress*” is far inferior to “the flowery Meadows, the fragrant Gardens, the bloomy Orchards, the lowing Kine.” With the right contemplative frame of mind, “the *Philosopher* from every Insect, Leaf or Flower, can reap a Satisfaction not only more becoming the Dignity of human Nature, but likewise more exquisite.” His “agreeable Reflections” cause him to ask scientific questions: “wherefore the *Violet* is array’d in *Purple*, why the *Sun-Flower* glows with *Yellow*, and the *Lilly* appears in *White* . . . by what surprizing Chymistry, Nature from the same Soil, extracts the Delicious but different *Juices* of innumerable sorts of *Fruits*?”¹⁵ But rather than exploit these investigations for their pragmatic benefits, this writer implies that the difficulty of his questions suggests a lesson in humility and resignation before the wisdom of God; there is indeed no technical mastery to be derived from the contemplation of the works of nature.

For Cadwallader Colden, the link between science and a natural retreat was fundamental. Colden was one of the colony’s most active and omnipresent politicians. He was also one of America’s foremost scientists, on intimate terms with such luminaries as Benjamin Franklin and Carolus Linnaeus; he was, in the words of William Smith, Jr., an “intellectual Debauchee.”¹⁶ Colden published treatises on medicine, botany, physics, mathematics, and philosophy, while serving four terms as Lieutenant Governor.¹⁷ The impossibility of combining his scientific research and his political activity weighed constantly on his mind. “My time was so entirely taken up in the public affairs,” he complained to the biologist John Frederick Gronovius in 1755, “that I could in no shape continue my botanical amusements. I was so much engaged that I was few days in a year in my own except in the extremity of winter.”¹⁸ Though Colden longed “to spend his days in easy retreat,” he was particularly careful that his retirement not be devoid of intellectual improvement—a concern even as early as 1729, when he wrote to James Alexander,

[W]hatever people think of the Toil & Trouble of Business I believe there is no Condition of Life so unhappy as that of the Idle man & for that reason you’ll find that I make work for my self . . . Cicero says some where that the most happy state is Otium cum Dignitate which certainly cannot be in doing nothing I endeavour to make amusements usefull to my self as well as agreeable by making reflections on Human Life.¹⁹

“Otium cum Dignitate” became a familiar refrain for Colden, whose writings were usually not overburdened with Latinisms. In the late 1740s, he wrote frustrated letters to the geographer John Mitchell, communicating his dissatisfaction with a recent return to public life: “[N]othing I desir’d so much as to be at ease to prosecute these amusements as the fittest for an advanced Age . . . My wish was & still is Otium cum quadam dignitate.”²⁰ The polymath continually cycled between engagement and withdrawal, each time regretting his absence from his private retreat.

Though Colden wrote of these concerns to nearly everyone with whom he came into contact—politicians, scientists, family members—his correspondents were unfailingly eager to agree with his sentiments. “You are happy who live in Retirem[en]t,” sighed the lawyer Daniel Horsmanden in 1734, “Resentm[en]ts are carried to that Length here that all Charity and Humanity are laid aside!”²¹ Redcoat officer John Rutherford found his 1743 retirement “perfectly agreeable . . . for this reason, that ‘tis compleat, divideing my time equally for Mathematics, Philosophy, Politicks, &c without being interrupted in any Shape by Family cares or publick affairs as hitherto I have allways been.”²² Particularly sympathetic was Benjamin Franklin, who also lived a double life as politician and scientist. Sometimes, as in 1748, he would “congratulate” Colden on his return to “Beloved Retirement,” and assure him that “I too am taking the proper Measures for obtaining Leisure.” On other occasions, he expressed happiness and envy at Colden’s “passing the Remainder of Life in philosophical Retirement. I wish for the same, but it seems too distant.”²³

The relative intimacy of their professional relationship allowed Colden to trust Franklin with his ideas about political and social issues as well as his scientific proposals. One such idea was a 1749 entry in the debate over the creation of King’s College which broke out in New York between 1746 and 1754. Though much of this controversy dealt with the question of the school’s religious affiliation, Colden was concerned with another factor, location. He thought it imperative that the school be situated “in the Country at a distance from the City. By this the Schollars will be freed from many temptations to idleness and some worse vices that they must meet with in the [City] and it may be an advantage to many children to be at a distance from their parents.”²⁴ Colden conceived the purpose of education to be “to enable men and to incline them to be more usefull to mankind in General and to their own Country in particular and at the same time to render their own life more happy.” Thus it was only natural for him to suggest a country location, which he himself identified with contentment. But being located in the country also allowed the teaching of “Agriculture,” which Colden considered “the foundation of the Wealth and welfare of the Country.” Since agriculture was “usefull to a greater number than any of the other Sciences,” it would allow the college’s retirement to be less idle.²⁵

Colden’s emphasis on the utility of agriculture posed a peculiar dilemma. The model of natural science that operated in his day-to-day life—with his rhetoric of *otium* and his genteel scientific “amusements”—was evidently a pastoral one, privileging theory and contemplation over practical innovations; as William Smith, Jr. sneered, “resigning his Farm to the Superintendency of his Wife, a Woman of good Sense, he confined himself to his Room.”²⁶ Indeed, the treatise he considered his scientific masterpiece—an incoherent attempt at a reevaluation of Newtonian mechanics—was written almost without reference to empirical observation, despite purporting to explain planetary orbits. Colden merely used arithmetic progressions, performing simple mathematical operations to obtain an elegantly symmetrical, though entirely ungrounded, result.²⁷ Yet the scientific study of agriculture Colden proposed was georgic precisely in its emphasis on the transformation of the natural landscape. The conflict between the two was soon to acquire broader significance.

It was the Rev. William Smith who was perhaps most deeply plagued by this contradiction. Besides writing the essay on American pastoral, he also composed several poems of his own, including a 1753 *Ode on the New Year*. This work celebrates the seasons using pastoral language—Spring, for instance, “fills the Grove/With Song and Love”—and describes the virtuous man: “In Landskips green/He all-serene/Improves each Hour that fleets along.” Agriculture is represented by a “laughing Swain” being given Autumn’s sheaf of corn.²⁸ In short, Smith’s engagement with pastoral failed to transcend its most outworn clichés. But when it came to his public-spirited 1752 proposal for locating the new college in New York City’s environs, his stance was quite different. He mocked sentimental suggestions “to send our Youth into the Depths of the Woods, to perform their Collegiate Exercises, in the unambitious presence of inanimate Trees.”²⁹

This sally was met by a barrage of hostile reviews, so Smith changed his approach dramatically; within a year, he finished *A General Idea of the College of Mirania*, an eighty-page book presenting a complete lesson plan for a fictional college. It is remarkable above all for its ambivalence: Smith, it seems, can reject neither pastoral nor georgic as the appropriate attitude to nature. For instance, he makes a class on practical agriculture—“which *Tully* and *Columella* call the Study of Wisdom, and the life of a wise Man”—the capstone for the entire five-year course of study. Scientific courses on “Physic and animal Anatomy” allow the student to “explain the Oeconomy and Mechanism of Plants, the Structure of their Vessels, their Generation, Manner of Life and Accretion, Perspiration, Circulation of Sap, &c . . . the whole illustrated by a Course of chymical and statical Experiments.”³⁰ The ultimate goal of these courses is to forge a whole class of “skilful Husbandmen” to make New York “the *Granary* of Half the European Settlements in *America*” (*GI*, 77)—the ne plus ultra of georgic.

Yet Smith’s pupils must absorb the pastoral worldview as well. The college’s “worthy *Tutor*” (*GI*, 47) fulfills this mission by, for instance, leading his class to the “*Fields* . . . as if to shew us some curious herb; and there, seating Himself, wou’d artfully turn our attention and conversation upon the wildly-beautiful Landskips that everywhere rush upon the Sight in this new World” (*GI*, 77). Smith’s didactics aim to educate not only husbandmen, but also virtuous gentlemen who know the purpose and meaning of rural retirement. History, which like agriculture is studied in the fifth year, serves as the practical guide to pastoral values: it is supposed to teach “Virtue and Vice with all their consequences” (*GI*, 27)—a phrasing very similar to the argument for pastoral Smith had given in 1752. Students who are not yet trained in history are quick to assume that the indication of virtue is “the Apparatus of Triumph” (*GI*, 50). The tutor Aratus quickly disabuses them of that notion by pointing to a variety of historical examples: including “*Timoleon*,” who “retir’d to practice in Silence the Virtues of a private Life, only saving to himself the Pleasure of seeing Millions happy by his Means”; and the aforementioned “*Cincinnati*,” who renounced “the Praises and Acclamations of his fellow Citizens, to manure his little Farm.” What these “illustrious Models of all human Virtue” have in common is that they “descended voluntarily from the Command of Mankind to manure a few private Acres, and trace the Wonders of divine Power in the Works of Nature” (*GI*, 51–58).

The *General Idea of the College of Mirania*—and the contradictions it contained—turned out to mean nothing for New York’s institution, though Smith had groomed himself for a governing position. Obtaining an appointment in Philadelphia instead, he gave the curriculum of its new college a decidedly pragmatic natural-scientific bent. In New York, on the other hand, a succession of conservative college presidents came down equally unambiguously on the side of classical tradition. As late as the 1770s, a King’s College education was grounded more in Aristotle than in Newton. Still, the conflict between pastoral and georgic did not cease to play out in New York’s cultural sphere. Instead, after the mid-1750s new economic and social developments complicated and shaped the work of New York writers, forcing them to confront both the country and the city from a challenging new perspective.³¹

Colden’s attempts to secure a rural location for the college came to nothing. King’s College was built in the growing West Ward of the city, “on the West side of the *Broad-Way*.”³² Designed by Robert Cromellin, architect of St. George’s Chapel, it was a fashionably constructed building with genteel Palladian pediments. The decision on an urban location was not accompanied by much ideological fanfare or public debate, and it was not arguments like Smith’s that carried the day; rather, it was the composition of the group of trustees, eight of whom were urban New Yorkers.³³ Some residents of the province hoped the college would be a wellspring of virtue for New York, reforming the city’s vicious habits instead of becoming corrupted by them. As the merchant John Watts wrote: “[B]eyond doubt [New York City] is the worst School for Youth of any of his Majesty’s dominions, Ignorance, Vanity, Dress, & Dissipation, being the reigning Characteristicks of their insipid Lives . . . If it does instill into the minds of the rising generation a proper Spirit, which it is to be hoped it will, the Institution will be of infinite use to the Publick.”³⁴

The construction of a comparatively opulent urban college foreshadowed a turning point in New York’s colonial history: the economic transformation that accompanied the Seven Years’ War. As the new college enrolled its first graduating classes, New York’s physical environment changed around it; the “King’s Farm” in the West Ward adjoining the college became parceled out into house-sized lots, which were soon developed as the city expanded relentlessly northward. Between 1743 and 1760, the number of buildings in the town more than doubled. In 1755, the northern wards acquired paved streets; in the early 1760s, street lights were installed throughout the city.³⁵ From the mid-1750s onward, the city’s role as “metropolis and trade mart of the province,” which, “by its commodious situation, commands also all the trade of the Western part of Connecticut and that of New Jersey,” became acknowledged and widely proclaimed.³⁶ Economic statistics reflect this shift across the board: shipping clearing the port more than doubled, imports per capita increased fivefold, and ship registrations soared. In the five years between 1755 and 1760, provincial tax receipts (mostly trade duties) quadrupled. These changes were in most cases a direct result of the demands of the British armed forces, which awarded New York merchants lucrative provisioning contracts and used the port as a home base.³⁷

As the city experienced dramatic growth during the war years, the countryside became increasingly integrated into its economy and developed economically

in its own right. Lieutenant Governor James De Lancey oversaw the implementation of trade regulations that routed all trade goods from the countryside through New York City for quality control and standardization; an act of Assembly passed in 1750 ensured the construction of quality highways through Albany and Ulster counties, while other provisions liberalized the city's markets.³⁸ Though the provincial economy was still mostly agricultural, new manufacturing industries began to emerge: hatmaking and felt production, potash and pearl ash, sugar refining and rum distillation, and the manufacturing of linen, soap, and candles. Some of these, like potash, had previously failed to take hold, but were now thriving industries; the most important was iron. As late as 1753, the *Independent Reflector* still found that although "Of Iron . . . we have such plenty, as to be exceeded by no Country in the World of equal Extent . . . Our Success . . . in the Iron Manufactory, is obstructed and discouraged."³⁹ But in 1764, the German Peter Hasenclever imported hundreds of "Miners, Founders, Forgers, Colliers, Wheelwrights, Carpenters, &c. . . . to dig the Prima Materia out of the Bowels of the Mountains." This and other similar projects soon made "Pig and Bar Iron" one of the province's foremost export goods.⁴⁰ Throughout the middle part of the century, grain exports decreased as a proportion of the colony's total—from a third to just over a fifth—even taking into account the rapid wasting away of the fur trade.⁴¹

The decline of grain notwithstanding, the ideology of georgic in its scientific form quickly became mainstream after midcentury. As Sara Gronim has noted, New York's 1750s and '60s were characterized by a widespread fascination with agricultural "improvement," both in the form of individual wealthy landowners' attempts at rationalizing their estates and putatively broader efforts to encourage scientific agriculture. The most prominent of these was the Society for the Promotion of Arts, Agriculture, and Oeconomy, established in New York in 1764.⁴² The Society's initial announcement in the New York papers suggested that a principal rationale for its establishment was the need to "check the progress of Luxury and Extravagance" in order to avert "calamitous Consequences"—a classically georgic association between virtue and hard agricultural labor, needed to avoid the catastrophic slippery slope of societal vice. At the same time, the announcement (published amid a severe postwar economic downturn) argued for the concomitant advancement of commerce. This linkage between georgic interpretations of nature and emerging commercial rhetoric could be found in many places in 1760s New York, because grain was now only one of a rapidly expanding number of commodities.⁴³

This partnership between georgic and urban commercial ideologies served primarily to further the ends of the latter. In a 1763 letter to the *New-York Mercury*, "Amicus Mercator" suggested that improvement could only legitimate itself with reference to commerce: "The Philosopher may arrive to a high Pitch of Improvement in Agriculture, Arts and Sciences; The Husbandman, the Artisan, and Manufacturer, may reduce this speculative knowledge to practical uses . . . yet what will these avail without the Penetration and Sagacity of the Merchant, to propagate the Produce of our Lands, and the Labour of our Artists and Manufactures to foreign Countries, to the State as well as to himself?"⁴⁴ The merchant's ability to "propagate" commodities through foreign countries is crucial, because it suggests a thoroughly ungeorgic conceptual framework; rather than preserving

virtue by civilizing the wilderness, the merchant brings happiness and prosperity by forging connections between peoples. A 1766 “Encomium on Trade and Commerce” rhapsodized that “it is he who . . . ties country to country, and clime to clime, and brings the remotest regions to neighbourhood and converse; who makes man literally to be the lord of creation.”⁴⁵

This stress on the connective power of commerce and industry undermined pastoral ideas about the virtue to be found in solitary contemplation, as well as georgic thought that emphasized the virtue of self-sufficient freeholders, because connections between peoples were also connections between people. “Without numbers, Industry can be but very faintly pursued,” wrote one New Yorker in 1769. “It cannot be denied, that Industry becomes the foundation of a Variety of Relations among Men in Society; and that these relations are ever productive of such mutual Advantages as to endear and unite their hearts in the pleasing Bonds of Friendship and Esteem.”⁴⁶ Just as the role of the merchant began to be aggressively championed in the New York press, the virtues of an active—and by association urban—social life acquired increasing rhetorical significance. The erstwhile solitary philosopher William Livingston argued in his “Watch-Tower” that “a short Life of social Commerce, will more improve our intellectual Faculties, than a thousand years of monastic Solitude.”⁴⁷

These new ideas of sociability, in other words, divorced reflection and virtue from retirement and connected it instead with *vita activa*. That implied a moral lesson as well; as a column in the *Mercury* queried in 1768, if “man, formed for society, was created with a desire of *social* happiness . . . Who will be content to . . . restrain his happiness within the contracted circle of selfish pleasure?” The virtuous example of the “best and wisest men,” which for William Smith had been to retire from public life, was now identified with “benevolence and love for mankind”—which implicitly required participation in society.⁴⁸ There were more concrete links, too, between commerce and sociability: as Timothy Breen and others have argued, the midcentury culture of refinement required a continuous consumption of the products of the metropole, helping spread to New York ideas about polite society long established in England.⁴⁹

The emerging emphasis on commerce and social life changed the way pastoral poetry was written in New York. “The most intimate acquaintance with the classics, will not remove our oaks,” wrote William Livingston in a 1768 pamphlet, “nor a taste for the *Georgics* cultivate our lands.”⁵⁰ Such a promotion of a georgic ethos at the expense of the *Georgics* themselves indicates the degree to which the contemplative classical idealization of the natural world had given way to a transformative commercial pragmatism. Poets embraced sociability with the same devotion they had earlier given to pastoral. A 1765 poem asserted that “the wounded Lover” who “roves / Thro’ shady Woods, and lonely Groves” and “pines away” “in Solitude,” in fact roves “in vain,” without the “enlivening Ray” of friendship.⁵¹ Another, in 1767, declared explicitly that “Solitude’s the Nurse of Woe.”⁵² A year later, yet another poem, which took the form of an “epistle” from one staple pastoral character to another, asked, “Can rural prospects more afford / Of pleasure than the charms of love?” The answer, of course, was negative, because “melancholy, dreadful sprite! / In solitude is always near.”⁵³ Ironically, Smith had held precisely this “philosophic Melancholy” to be the source of “Love, Friendship,

and every tender emotion”—while retirement was not necessarily in contradiction with love and companionship, the new tendency of poetry presented the two as mutually exclusive (*GI*, 25). This new poetic trope represented a reversal of the argument of the “Epistle from the Country”; rather than forsaking the temptations of urban society for the humble village, the poets of the 1760s portrayed a return from the woods to the city.

Unsurprisingly, the effects of commercial ideas about sociability and social interconnectedness reverberated through the political sphere. As the work of Gary Nash has made clear, a trend toward collective representative institutions of all kinds took place in New York, as well as in the other major cities of British America, after the promulgation of the Stamp Act.⁵⁴ It is especially significant that the growth of collective activity took the form of urban political movements. If in 1763 John Watts had lamented the civic irresponsibility of urban New Yorkers, by the outbreak of the Revolution the city had become central for mass political mobilization. William Smith, Jr. maintained a constant awareness of the significance and political activity of the city; in 1773, he observed that the “De Lancey Dominion crumbled in the House of the Council and in the Coffee House”—the civic and social centers of New York City life.⁵⁵ Two years later, as news of Lexington and Concord filtered down to New York, Smith noted “the agitated State of the Town”:

At all corners People inquisitive for News – Tales of all Kinds invented believed, denied, discredited . . . the City Armory open the Powder taken out of the Powder House – The Taverns filled with Publicans at Night – Little Business done in the Day – few Jurors and Witnesses attend the Courts. Armed Parties summon the Town publicly to come & take Arms & learn the Manual Exercise – They are publicly delivered out and armed Individuals shew themselves at all Hours in the Streets . . .⁵⁶

This specifically urban activity, with its focus on public organization and dissemination of news through the public sphere, characterized New York throughout the prerevolutionary period. Committees—of Fifty-One, Fifteen, Sixty, One Hundred—were constantly being formed and reformed, and it is in the struggle over a majority in these committees that the vital conflict between the mostly conservative De Lancey party and the slightly more radical Livingstons manifested itself.⁵⁷

Yet this emergent style of collective politics did not go unchallenged. In 1767, a group of Anglican clergymen—Thomas Bradbury Chandler, Miles Cooper, and Charles Inglis—who had begun their pamphleteering careers in the battle over King’s College, began clamoring for an Anglican bishopric in America. They responded to objections in the “Whip for the American Whig,” a series of columns in the *New-York Gazette*, employing the pastoral rhetoric of withdrawal:

For many Years I have been retired from Business, and spend the *Evening* of my Days on a pleasant *rural Recess*, far removed from the Noise and Bustle incident to Cities and larger Towns. My Farm affords me all the Necessities, and some of the Conveniences of Life. As I am not engaged in the Pursuit of Riches or Power, much of my Time is devoted to the Contemplation of *heavenly Things*; some to a few favourite authors; and I, *now and then*, amuse myself by reading the Public Papers, whilst curling Eddies of Smoke wafting from the cheerful Pipe, diffuse a grateful odour thro’ my little Habitation.⁵⁸

The arguments of the “Whip” consciously accepted that the very much lesser value placed on retirement by its opponents constituted a political difference. “Are you so much under the Dominion of mistaken Zeal,” the “Whip” demanded in 1769, “or rather blind Bigotry, that you prefer an Exploit [resistance to the bishop], attended with so much Danger, before the alluring charms of *Philosophick Solitude?*”⁵⁹ The pamphleteers’ rhetorical emphasis, which vested discursive authority in the figure of the contemplative philosopher, thereby established a dichotomy between Whig politics on the one hand and withdrawal on the other.

Though the bishopric controversy resulted in the defeat of the Anglican party, the clergymen who cowrote the “Whip” did not disappear in the tumult of the 1770s. Instead, they became leading Loyalists.⁶⁰ Janice Potter has noted that in general, these largely hapless and fragmented holdouts were handicapped by their disdain and distrust of political organization.⁶¹ But it is important to distinguish between Loyalism as it appeared in the mass politics of the era—exemplified by a November 1776 “Declaration of Dependence,” which collected seven hundred signatures—and the educated, inherently elitist culture of the New York pamphleteers.⁶² The former was often driven by the sort of collective, ritualistic monarchism Brendan McConville has attributed to colonial America in general; the latter, on the other hand, was mistrustful of any kind of mob, whether Whig or Tory. Thus, in 1774 Thomas Bradbury Chandler called upon New York’s “farmers and mechanicks, and labourers, to return to their business, and the care of their families”—instead of mobilizing for his own side.⁶³

With the beginning of the American Revolution in 1775, a significant proportion of educated New York Loyalists, who had earlier been active in city life, started to retreat to their rural estates or other hideouts. Peter Van Schaack moved back to his hometown in Albany County.⁶⁴ William Smith, Jr., the Chief Justice and provincial historian, fled—first to his house in Haverstraw, Orange County, then to Peter R. Livingston’s nearby “Hermitage.” The pamphleteers Isaac Wilkins and Samuel Seabury, Smith noted, likewise disappeared from the town. He advised the elderly Attorney General Daniel Horsmanden also to “retire from the Metropolis”; a friendly English merchant soon “led him by the Hand out of the Capital . . . to that rural Grotto which he had provided for himself during the Hours of civil Discord.”⁶⁵ One possible reason for this mass emigration was the physical, legal, and financial danger Loyalists would face in areas that were Patriot-controlled, as New York City was before the British conquest—yet many of these withdrawals took place even before active persecution began, and often those who left did not return even after the city became friendly ground. One Loyalist New Yorker even complained that “Men of real Merit and Judgment are naturally averse to Tumults and fly from the boisterous Haunts of Discord,” leaving the field to “designing, passionate, or selfish Persons.”⁶⁶ From an ideological point of view, the reasons for this are clear: the Loyalists with the deepest roots in classical education and the *translatio* tradition would easily see the rural estates of the Hudson Valley and Long Island as a site of retreat worthy of a Cincinnatus.

Abandoning the city in the spirit of retirement was a kind of triumph for the banished and persecuted Loyalists. Samuel Seabury used his exclusion from city life to bolster his disinterested image, telling readers that he lived “at a distance from the city, and visit it but seldom” and hence “I must have the privilege of

calling a fig,—a Fig; and an egg,—an Egg.”⁶⁷ In his *General Idea of the College of Mirania*, citing the exile of Cicero and Milo, William Smith had suggested precisely the Loyalist response as proper for his gentlemen-students:

Should the prevailing Power of Calumny and Faction . . . force them from the Scene of public Action, and perhaps into Exile . . . then is the Time they will reap the choicest fruits of such an Education. Their minds now vacant from all worldly Cares, and honorably dismiss'd from Business and civil Duties, they can elevate themselves so high, as to look down with calm Contempt on all they fell from. Instead of being the citizens of one Kingdom, they will now see themselves Citizens of the World, and in the Society of universal Nature. (*GI*, 57–58)

This fantasy of a triumphant exile is of course a pastoral one, an echo of Tityrus in the first Eclogue—the “ungrateful town” behind him, he can pasture his oxen in God-given *otium*.⁶⁸ But it was apparent that a perfect leisure remained unrealizable; the Loyalists in their rural retreats felt a painful longing for the city life they had left behind.⁶⁹

This rediscovery of the inaccessible pastoral ideal provoked two kinds of responses among New York’s Loyalist writers. The first was a stereotypically georgic solicitude for the advancement of agriculture. In a 1774 pamphlet, Samuel Seabury, the “Westchester Farmer,” drew upon long-established agricultural rhetoric: “[T]he Farmers are of the greatest benefit to the State, of any people in it: They furnish food for the merchant, and mechanic; the raw materials for most manufactures, the stable exports of the country, are the produce of their industry.”⁷⁰ Thomas Chandler thought that farmers, “poor creatures,” would be ruined by the Continental Congress’s nonexportation policy, while Isaac Wilkins, writing as “A Country Gentleman,” showed an equal anxiety about the fate of the “insulted and unhappy Farmers.”⁷¹ By harping on the (declining) economic and political significance of the New York farmer, the Loyalists were hoping to preserve an orderly and obedient virtue among the people.

The corresponding pastoral response was almost tragic; the drive was to constrict emotional and intellectual engagement with the New York scene to a minimum. William Smith, Jr. cultivated an attitude of “Equanimity” in his “Hermitage,” sighing, “There can be no stronger Proof of the Narrowness of Men’s Minds than the Elevation & Depression both of Whiggs & Tories upon their little losses and Advantages.”⁷² Peter Van Schaack came to believe by 1778 that “the sphere wherein *my* actions or concerns can be of any consequence, is . . . confined to my children, my family, my friends.” Until his departure, he spent his days pining for the “happy scenes” of his past: “our clubs, our moots and our Broadway evenings . . . *fuius Troes, fuit Ilium*” (*VS*, 99–100; 130). Finally, after denying him a permit to visit his wife on her deathbed, his old friends on the Committee for Detecting Conspiracies ordered his deportation to England—which only further reinforced his isolation.

There, Van Schaack slipped easily into melancholy contemplation. When he wasn’t writing letters to his son, he wandered around England’s “monuments of antiquity,” declaring them to be “a great source of reflection to a contemplative mind . . . to show us how transitory is the glory and the power of the greatest na-

tions!" (VS, 160, 198). Yet he was vexed by the lack of a clear distinction between the country and the city, between the ostensibly genuine world of nature and the constructed world of society: "Art here seems to have usurped the powers of nature by its imitation of her works . . . it is difficult here to distinguish the improvements of art from the works of nature, as it is often to know what is reality and what deception in the public exhibitions" (VS, 161–62). This attitude helps to explain the "peculiar sensibility"—described at the beginning of this essay—he brought to reading the first Eclogue. For Van Schaack's was an ineluctably sentimental pastoral, in Schiller's sense; he saw in nature an imperishable, yet inaccessible ideal, and its pollution by works of art could not be countenanced. Cut off socially from the world of English "luxury and refinement," as the war ended Van Schaack found himself "absolved . . . from all the ties of allegiance . . . a citizen of the world" (VS, 160–62)—fulfilling, in as many words, William Smith's hopeful prescription. The irony of this cosmopolitanism is that its claims, while grounded in an expansive notion of an intellectual community, were for Van Schaack and his fellow Loyalist intellectuals contingent upon being outside the dominant urban society. True to form, the exile returned home—to Kinderhook, not New York City

One May day in 1779, Van Schaack stood in Alexander Pope's grotto at Twickenham and felt "a pleasing kind of solemnity and awe" (VS, 143). The grotto proved to be one of pastoral's most prominent rhetorical topoi. But the starkest and most poignant description of a grotto comes from the pen of another Loyalist, the paradigmatic author of georgics—that is, J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur. His "Grotto," not published until the 1920s, describes the hideout of three of the "American Farmer"'s Loyalist friends, "a retreat which had baffled the Inimical Ingenuity of the Times."⁷³ To reach the grotto, the narrator has to be conducted to "the spott, the most Romantick I had ever seen . . . the azilum of security & silence . . . a perfect Hermitage." But the kind of nature he encounters is hardly Virgil's bucolic ideal:

we Climbed over old decayed Trees . . . under others which tho' Living yet [were] so Inclined & distorted as to make us afraid Least they Crush us in their fall . . . I observed how a Late Thunderstorm had wasted its fury on a lofty spruce Tree whose Roots had reached at a great distance, the Trunk was split in shivers, it had been stript of all its Limbs & branches, soon after this we suddenly Turned to the South towards a spott almost devoid of Vegetables but Exceeding full a Rattle snakes; hard by was a Morass Incompassed all around with very Craggy Grounds . . . ("TG," 294–96)

"What an horrid part of the Creation," one of Crèvecoeur's companions is moved to comment. "We shoud be far from blaming Nature," another responds, "has not she given us a sufficient Number of fair & Smooth Acres of Fertille Lands why shou'd she not now & then subtract few spots from our avidity[?]" ("TG," 296). This characterization marks the retreat as a site of total exclusion, from the productive world of farming as much as from the commercial public life of the city. In fact, it is pastoral taken to its fullest extent. While the traditional neoclassical trope of retreat implicitly presupposes a leisurely lifestyle and public respect for the noble Cincinnatus, here gentility is sacrificed to security and closeness with nature is achieved at the cost of almost total oblivion.

A shrunken “society” of a sort survives. The roughness of their underground burrow notwithstanding, the fugitives maintain a shelf of books “for leisure and improvement,” including Clarendon’s *History of the Rebellion* (a Royalist account of the English Civil War). But so strong is the desolate appeal of the scene that Crèvecoeur remarks, “here the Plaintive swain might become spontaneously Inspired with the True Elegiack Strains & paint the accents of Melancholy with those which this Solitude wou’d Inspire” (“TG,” 297). The grotto has about it an air of finality, like a “sepulchral Monument Inhabited by some happy Spirit”; Crèvecoeur concludes, “Phylosophers & contemplatists never araise but in the days of Peace and Tranquility, & nobody Knows when these days shall return again” (“TG,” 296–97; 301). For him, as for Van Schaack, the coming of the Revolution means the collapse of pastoral as a positive and happy ideal—and by extension, the impossibility of its poetic representation.

It is tempting to accept this conclusion. But to think in terms of definitive finales is not simply ahistorical; it also means ignoring one of the central insights of *The Country and the City*, the “escalator” effect. Just as the peaceful, harmonious country of old is always supposed to be back “there, just over the next hill”—yet survives to be nostalgically evoked again a few decades later—so the pastoral ideal itself never quite disappears. Rather, as Williams demonstrates, it evolves in such a way that the possibility of its disappearance always appears on the cusp of being realized. Prefiguring the fading pastoral of the Loyalists, Oliver Goldsmith closes his *Deserted Village* with a farewell to poetry itself; Williams, faithful to the specific circumstances of each retrospect, sees only the beginning of another “structure of feeling.”⁷⁴

It is significant, then, that the last chapter in the history of New York’s colonial pastoral begins with a challenge to Goldsmith. If he “weeps in melancholy strains / Deserted Auburn and forsaken plains,” announces Philip Freneau in his 1772 poem *The American Village*, it is only because he does not see that the rural ideal has undergone a *translatio* to America.⁷⁵ Freneau’s work is not a simple reversal of Goldsmith’s. He juggles both pastoral and georgic; though the land is rich and bountiful and “no needy wretch the rage of winter fears,” there is glory in “the plough torn through the new made field,” and the land is “made fertile by the labors of the swain.” But he is haunted by an acute sense of the fragility of this country vision. Freneau describes an island inhabited by self-reliant, georgic peasants, “to agriculture’s first fair service bent”—and then shows it washed away by the sea, an ironic echo of the last lines of *The Deserted Village* (*AV*, 1, 4–7). By the end of the poem, Freneau’s design is clear. He has “no comfort left but poetry,” which takes the place of these country scenes in soothing the poet’s mind:

Long, long with her I could have stray’d
To woods, to thickets or the mountain shade . . .
Here then shall center every wish, and all
The tempting beauties of this spacious ball:
No thought ambitious, and no bold design,
But heaven born contemplation shall be mine. (*AV*, 16–17)

The frame of reference shifts from representing an actual, physical retreat to the mere wish for that retreat—the contemplation of contemplation. Freneau’s pastoral

ideal becomes an abstract yearning, wholly dependent on his own subjectivity. In sharp contrast with Goldsmith, with his difficult goodbye to his muse, Freneau closes his poem with a command: "Now cease, O muse, thy tender tale to chaunt, / The smiling village, or the rural haunt; / New scenes invite me, and no more I rove, / To tell of shepherds, or the vernal grove" (AV, 18)

New scenes did, in fact, invite him; the young Freneau soon came to prefer being *engagé* to being retired. He became the leading Patriot satirist of Revolutionary-era New York.⁷⁶ Even in his later years, when he had practically abandoned the political scene, the appeal to a contemplative rural retreat never recurred as strongly it had in *The American Village*. Another poem in the same volume, which had sincerely portrayed a farmer pining for life in "ARCADIA" in conjugal bliss with an imagined "pretty rural shepherdess," he later reprinted with noteworthy changes. The farmer was changed to a sentimental citizen, and the ending became ironic: "In three short months, sick of the *heavenly train* / In three short months—he moved to town again."⁷⁷

Freneau came closest to writing traditional pastoral in two poems about hermits. "Hermit's Valley," published in 1795, describes a visit to an abandoned hermit's hut on the Schuylkill. Who, Freneau asks, would prefer "crowded courts and would-be kings" to the hermit's surroundings, with their "many charming things / By Nature to perfection dressed / To please the man of fancy"? The hermit, however, is to be admired less for his contemplative life than for his easy and uncomplaining death.⁷⁸ Likewise, 1788's "Hermit of Saba" declaims on the virtues of "contemplation, heaven-born contemplation!" but reaches his dramatic apotheosis only when he is murdered for his metaphorical wealth by literal-minded sailors.⁷⁹ That images of pastoral contemplation could only appear in such a setting suggests the distance Freneau struggled to maintain between himself and the earlier tradition—he never revoked his order to his muse.

Yet he never quite surrendered the form either. Fragmented and partial, pastoral images and perspectives continued to appear in Freneau's postrevolutionary poetry. After the failure of his *National Gazette*, Freneau wrote "To Sylvius, on his Preparing to Leave the Town," in which he bitterly lamented that "Gold, only gold, this niggard age delights," and presented departure from "a stage / Where knaves and fools in every scene abound" as the only conscionable alternative.⁸⁰ The 1790 "Orator of the Woods" defends the life led by a rural preacher from the contempt of "those that courts and titles please."⁸¹ Freneau's meditations on the evanescence of all things—of which "The Wild Honey-Suckle," his best-known poem, is only one example—should also be seen in this context. The flower grows in a "silent, dull retreat"; its "days, declining to repose," mirror the traditional accoutrements of retirement; and the poet's musings on its demise are a melancholy version of the contemplation of the heavens promised by pastoral poetry.⁸² Freneau's attempt, in short, is not to abandon eighteenth-century pastoral but rather to untangle its complex of stable tropes and linkages, to recover from it a usable poetics in the service of a broader cultural critique.

This complex, not the ideal itself, was what the Revolution disrupted in New York. As it was written in the 1740s, and as the Loyalists imagined it, pastoral poetry depended on a configuration of social and economic relations that would seem foreign to nineteenth-century Americans. The dream of *otium cum dignitate*

was dreamt by benevolent, public-spirited elites, longing for leisure and a contemplative withdrawal from public life. The hopes it represented—communion with nature, solitude, freedom from political oppression and commercial vice—would echo from Walden Pond to Ezra Pound’s “dimension of stillness.” But its language and concept of place had been destabilized, sometimes, as with Philip Freneau, in a deliberate effort at liberation. “Phylosophers & contemplatists,” pace Crèvecoeur, would soon return, but not as he had known them.⁸³

NOTES

1. Henry C. Van Schaack, *The Life of Peter Van Schaack, Embracing Selections from the Correspondence, and Other Writings* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1842), 185–235. (Hereafter cited parenthetically as VS.)

2. “God has made this *otium* for us” (VS, 221; my translation).

3. Virgil, *The Eclogues and the Georgics*, trans. R. C. Trevelyan (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1944), 5–6.

4. See Carl Richard, *The Founders and the Classics* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1994), 12–38, 160–62; and Richard M. Gummere, *The American Colonial Mind and the Classical Tradition* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1963), 55–57. For Florentine ideas about *vita contemplativa*, see for example Francesco Petrarca, *The Life of Solitude*, trans. Jacob Zeitlin (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1924), 290. The definitive study of Florentine influences on the English political vocabulary is J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1973), esp. 49–80.

5. William Livingston, *Philosophic Solitude, or, the Choice of a Rural Life: A Poem* (New York: Parker, 1747). (Hereafter cited parenthetically as PS.) Recent work in colonial New York history has been particularly sensitive to the intellectual and cultural context of its economy. See, for example, Cathy Matson, *Merchants & Empire: Trading in Colonial New York* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1998); and Sara Gronim, *Everyday Nature: Knowledge of the Natural World in Colonial New York* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers Univ. Press, 2007), esp. 106–98. The definitive work on the political history of New York in this period has been Patricia U. Bonomi, *A Factious People: Politics and Society in Colonial New York* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1971); the classic and still influential Progressive interpretation is chapter one of Carl Lotus Becker, *The History of Political Parties in the Province of New York* (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1910). For a fine mid-Atlantic comparative study, which emphasizes the complex uses of ideology in the colony, see Alan Tully, *Forming American Politics: Ideals, Interests, and Institutions in Colonial New York and Pennsylvania* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1994).

6. Jack P. Greene, *Landon Carter: An Inquiry into the Personal Values and Social Imperatives of the Eighteenth-Century Virginia Gentry* (Charlottesville: Dominion Books, 1965), 71, 86–88.

7. Albert O. Hirschman, *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1970). The evolution of the theory is most recently addressed in Keith Dowding et al., “Exit, voice, and loyalty: Analytic and empirical developments,” *European Journal of Political Research* 37 (2000): 469–95; Eric Slauter, “Being Alone in the Age of the Social Contract,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 62 (2005): 31–66; Charles F. Mullett, “Classical Influences on the American Revolution,” *The Classical Journal* 35 (1939): 92–104; Gummere, *American Colonial*; Richard, *The Founders and the Classics*; Eran Shalev, “Empire Transformed: Britain in the American Classical Imagination, 1758–1783,” *Early American Studies* 4 (2006): 112–46; Scott Breuninger, “‘Social Gravity’ and the Translatio Tradition in Early American Theories of Empire,” *Southern Quarterly* 43 (2006): 70–109; and William Dowling, *Poetry and Ideology in Revolutionary Connecticut* (Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1990), 47–48.

8. Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1975), 35–36; Rachel Crawford, “English Georgic and British Nationhood,” *ELH* 65 (1998): 123–58; David S. Shields, *Oracles of Empire: Poetry, Politics, and Commerce in British America, 1690–1750* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1990), esp. 195–220; Timothy Sweet, *American Georgics: Economy and Environment in Early American Literature* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 2002); Suvir Kaul, *Poems*

of *Nation, Anthems of Empire: English Verse in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 2000), esp. 138–82; and Dowling, *Poetry and Ideology*, 36–48. For some recent applications of Williams's thesis, see the essays in Gerald MacLean et al., eds., *The Country and the City Revisited: England and the Politics of Culture, 1550–1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1999), esp. Karen O'Brien, "Imperial Georgic, 1660–1789," 160–79. For an analysis of the distinction between retreat and retirement in post-Augustan England, see John Sitter, *Literary Loneliness in Mid-Eighteenth Century England* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1982), esp. 83–103. Also see David S. Shields, "Happiness in Society: The Development of an Eighteenth-Century Poetic Ideal," *American Literature* 55 (1983): 541–59.

9. William Smith to Phila De Lancey, 15 November 1752, Box 3, Folder 75, Items 1 and 2, William Smith Papers, University of Pennsylvania. An early biography of William Smith, which includes a considerable amount of primary source material, is Horace Wemyss Smith, *Life and Correspondence of the Rev. William Smith, D. D.* (Philadelphia: Ferguson Bros. & Co, 1880). The Rev. William Smith bears no relation to the three other William Smiths who appear in New York's colonial history: William "Tangier" Smith, the council member; William Smith, Sr., lawyer and member of the anti-Zenger coalition in the 1730s; and his son William Smith, Jr., future Chief Justice of Canada.

10. Paul Alpers, "Schiller's Naive and Sentimental Poetry and the Modern Idea of Pastoral," in Mark Griffith and Donald J. Mastrorarde, eds., *Cabinet of the Muses: Essays on Classical and Comparative Literature in Honor of Thomas G. Rosenmeyer* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 319–31.

11. One of the first studies of this poem is Frank Shuffelton, "'Philosophic Solitude' and the Pastoral Politics of William Livingston," *Early American Literature* 17 (1982): 43–53; see also Rob Wilson, "William Livingston's *Philosophic Solitude* and the Ideology of the Natural Sublime," *Early American Literature* 24 (1989): 217–37. For Livingston's role as a New York lawyer and politician, see Milton M. Klein, "The Rise of the New York Bar: The Legal Career of William Livingston," in Klein, *The Politics of Diversity: Essays in the History of Colonial New York* (Port Washington, NY: Kennicat Press, 1974), 129–47. For a detailed analysis of the Livingston clan as a representative New York mercantile family, see Cynthia A. Kierner, *Traders and Gentlefolk: The Livingstons of New York, 1675–1790* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1992).

12. "Thyrsis and Menalcas: A Pastoral," *New-York Weekly Journal*, 27 August 1739.

13. Philoparthenos, "An Epistolary POEM, address'd to Miss M—y W—n," *New-York Gazette, or Weekly Post Boy*, 4 May 1747.

14. "An Epistle from the Country," *New-York Weekly Journal*, 23 November 1741.

15. "Of the Contemplation of the Works of Nature," *New-York Weekly Journal*, 3 September 1739.

16. William Smith, Jr., *Historical Memoirs from 16 March 1763 to 25 July 1778*, ed. William H. W. Sabine (New York: Arno Press, 1969), 29–30. The page numbering in this volume restarts after the entry for 9 July 1776; Smith's eulogy for Colden is located in the second part.

17. For a dated but useful biography of Colden, see Alice Maplesden Keys, *Cadwallader Colden: A Representative Eighteenth Century Official* (1906; repr., New York: AMS Press, 1967). Alfred R. Hoermann's *Cadwallader Colden: A Figure of the American Enlightenment* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002) is an excellent study of Colden's role as scientist and philosopher. Jane Colden, Cadwallader's more accomplished botanist daughter, is treated in Sara Gronim, "What Jane Knew: A Woman Botanist in the Eighteenth Century," *Journal of Women's History* 19, no. 3 (2007): 33–59; also see Susan Scott Parrish, "Women's Nature: Curiosity, Pastoral, and the New Science in British America," *Early American Literature* 37, no. 2 (2002): 195–245.

18. Cadwallader Colden to Dr. John Frederick Gronovius, 1 Oct. 1755, *Colden Papers* (years 1917–1923 and 1934–1935), in *Collections*, New-York Historical Society, 5:29. (Hereafter cited as *Colden Papers*.)

19. Colden to Peter Collinson, Oct. 1755, *Colden Papers*, 5:36; Colden to James Alexander, Dec. 1729, *Colden Papers*, 7:324–25.

20. Colden to Dr. John Mitchell, 9 Jan. 1749, *Colden Papers*, 9:20. See also Colden to Mitchell, 7 Nov. 1745, *Colden Papers*, 7:328–37.

21. Daniel Horsmanden to Colden, 11 Nov. 1734, *Colden Papers*, 2:116.
22. John Rutherford to Colden, 10 Jan. 1743, *Colden Papers*, 3:1.
23. Benjamin Franklin to Colden, 29 Sept. 1748, *Franklin Papers*, 3:317a. <http://www.franklinpapers.org> (hereafter *Franklin Papers*); Franklin to Colden, 14 Sep. 1752, *Franklin Papers*, 4:354b. Accessed DATE.
24. Colden to Franklin, Nov. 1749, *Franklin Papers*, 3:430a. For an overview of the location controversy, see David C. Humphrey, "Urban Manners and Rural Morals: The Controversy Over the Location of King's College," *New York History* 54 (1973), 4–23; and Thomas Bender, *New York Intellect* (New York: Knopf, 1987), 18–27. Other contemporary entries in the broader debate include "A Letter From a Gentleman in the City to His Friend in the Country," *New-York Evening Post*, 9 January 1749; and William Livingston, *Some Serious Thoughts on the Design of Erecting a College in the Province of New-York* (New York: Zenger, 1754). For more on the Presbyterian side of the question, see William Livingston et al., *The Independent Reflector*, ed. Milton M. Klein (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1963), 171–214. The corresponding Anglican periodical is *John Englishman, In Defense of the English Constitution* (New York, 1755). On the cultural role of King's College and other colonial universities before and during the Revolution, see J. David Hoeveler, *Creating the American Mind: Intellect and Politics in the Colonial Colleges* (Lanham, MD: Rowan and Littlefield, 2002); and John F. Roche, *The Colonial Colleges in the War for American Independence* (Millwood, NY: Associated Faculty Press, 1986).
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26. Smith, Jr., *Historical Memoirs*, 29–30.
27. Gronim, *Everyday Nature*, 146–48.
28. William Smith, *Ode on the New Year* (New York: Parker, 1753), 11.
29. William Smith, *Some Thoughts on Education* (New York: Parker, 1752), 11; Franklin to Smith, 19 April 1753, *Franklin Papers*, 4:467a.
30. William Smith, *A General Idea of the College of Mirania* (New York: Parker, 1753), 46, 26. (Hereafter cited parenthetically as *GI*.)
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32. *Charter of the College of New-York, in America* (New York: Parker, 1754), 3.
33. Carl Bridenbaugh, *Cities in Revolt: Urban Life in America, 1743–1776* (New York: Knopf, 1955), 22; Humphrey, "Urban Manners and Rural Morals," 16–17.
34. John Watts to Moses Franks, 24 Nov. 1763, New-York Historical Society, *Collections* (1928), 200–201.
35. Bridenbaugh, *Cities in Revolt*, 16, 241–42; *Minutes of the Common Council of New York, 1675–1776*, 8 vols. (New York: Dodd, Mead, & Co., 1905), 6:15–16. For a study of the spatial expansion of eighteenth-century New York, see Nan A. Rothschild, *New York City Neighborhoods: The 18th Century* (San Diego: Academic Press, 1990). For a dated but fairly comprehensive institutional history of New York in the decades before the Revolution, see volume two of Arthur Peterson and George Edwards, *New York as an Eighteenth-Century Municipality*, 2 vols. (1917; repr., Port Washington, NY: Ira J. Friedman, 1967).
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37. Gary Nash, *The Urban Crucible: Social Change, Political Consciousness, and the Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1979), 180, 410–12; E. B. O'Callaghan, ed., *Documentary History of the State of New York*, 4 vols. (Albany: Weed, Parsons, & Co., 1849), 1:704.
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39. Livingston, *Independent Reflector*, 437–38. See also De Lancey to Board of Trade, 1 December 1757, in O’Callaghan, *Documentary History*, 1:731.

40. *New-York Gazette*, 8 October 1764; William Tryon, “Report on New York,” 1774, in O’Callaghan, *Documentary History*, 1: 757–61. See also Smith, Jr., *Historical Memoirs*, [1]:200–201.

41. Matson, *Merchants and Empire*, 222–64.

42. Gronim, *Everyday Nature*, 95–105.

43. *New-York Gazette*, 10 December 10, 1764. See also *The Commercial Conduct of the Province of New-York, Considered . . . In a Letter to The Society of Arts, Agriculture, and Oeconomy* (New York, 1767), esp. 8, 19–20.

44. “Amicus Mercator,” “The Dignity of the Merchant, and the Consequences of this Institution to the Public,” *New-York Mercury*, 19 December 1763.

45. “Encomium on Trade and Commerce,” *New-York Gazette*, 14 July 1766.

46. “That the Industry of the Poor intitle them to Relief,” *New-York Gazette, and the Weekly Mercury*, 13 November 1769.

47. “Watchtower No. X,” *New-York Mercury*, 27 January 1755.

48. “The Mirror, Numb. XVI,” *New-York Gazette, or Weekly Post-Boy*, 2 February 1768. For the political meaning of the concept of benevolence, see Gordon Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991), 213–25.

49. T. H. Breen, “An Empire of Goods: The Anglicization of Colonial America, 1690–1776,” *Journal of British Studies* 25 (1986): 479–82; see also Gronim, *Everyday Nature*, 106–33.

50. William Livingston, *A Letter to the Right Reverent Father of God, John, Lord Bishop of Landaff* (New York: Garrat Noel, 1768), 23. Kaul, *Poems of Nation*, presents a much more comprehensive analysis of the enlistment of poetry in eighteenth-century British commercial expansionism.

51. “To Friendship. An ODE,” *New-York Mercury*, 11 February 1765.

52. “Hymn to Contentment,” *New-York Gazette*, 16 November 1767.

53. “An Epistle from Corydon to Damon,” *New-York Journal, or, the General Advertiser*, 8 June 1768.

54. Nash, *Urban Crucible*, esp. 347–49, 363. Becker, *Political Parties*, is still the most commonly referenced source for New York’s organizational and political activity after 1760. Joseph Tiedemann, *Reluctant Revolutionaries: New York City and the Road to Independence, 1763–1776* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1997), is a much more comprehensive analysis; Tiedemann attempts, largely successfully, to integrate the perspectives of Louis Kriesberg’s conflict theory and Theda Skocpol’s model of social revolution. For New York City’s major pre-Stamp Act political struggles, see Milton M. Klein, “Prelude to Revolution in New York: Jury Trials and Judicial Tenure,” in Klein, *Politics of Diversity*, 154–77. For a social and political history of the transformations wrought in New York by the Revolution, see Edward Countryman, *A People in Revolution: The American Revolution and Political Society in New York, 1760–1790* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1981).

55. Smith, Jr., *Historical Memoirs*, [1]:145.

56. Smith, Jr., *Historical Memoirs*, [1]:222.

57. See Tiedemann, *Reluctant Revolutionaries*, 186–206; Nash, *Urban Crucible*, 363–74.

58. “Timothy Tickle,” “A Whip for the American Whig, No. XVII,” *New-York Gazette, and the Weekly Mercury*, 1 August 1768; Roche, *Colonial Colleges*, 24–37.

59. “Timothy Tickle,” “A Whip for the American Whig, No. XLII,” *New-York Gazette, and the Weekly Mercury*, 30 January 1769.

60. The literature on Loyalism in New York is particularly extensive. Philip Ranlet, in *The New York Loyalists* (Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Press, 1986), demonstrates that despite the prevalent myth,

Loyalists never constituted a majority or plurality of New York's population. For a detailed study of the class hierarchies that cut across both sides, see Judith L. Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies: Patriots and Loyalists in Revolutionary New York* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 2003). Janice Potter's *The Liberty We Seek: Loyalist Ideology in Colonial New York and Massachusetts* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1983), is a detailed and comprehensive ideological study, which nonetheless underestimates the differences between the Loyalist lawyers and clergymen of the colony. The former are studied in William Allen Benton, *Whig-Loyalism: An Aspect of Political Ideology in the American Revolutionary Era* (Cranbury, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson Univ. Press, 1969), 22–27ff. For the problematic postwar fate of New York's Loyalists, see Joseph Tiedemann, "Patriots, Loyalists, and Conflict Resolution in New York, 1783–1787," in *Loyalists and Community in North America*, ed. Robert M. Calhoon et al. (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), 76–88.

61. Potter, *Liberty We Seek*, 143–52.
62. R. W. G. Vail, ed., "The Loyalist Declaration of Dependence of November 28, 1776," in *Narratives of the American Revolution in New York*, New-York Historical Society, *Collections* (1975), 34–35.
63. Thomas Bradbury Chandler, *The Friendly Address to All Reasonable Americans, on the Subject of our Political Confusions* (New York, 1774), 15–16; Chandler, *The American Querist* (Boston: Mills and Hicks, 1774), 31; and Brendan McConville, *The King's Three Faces: The Rise and Fall of Royal America* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2006).
64. William A. Benton, "Peter Van Schaack: The Conscience of a Loyalist," in *The Loyalist Americans: A Focus on Greater New York*, ed. Robert A. East and Jacob Judd (Tarrytown, NY: Sleepy Hollow Restorations, 1975), 47.
65. Smith, Jr., *Historical Memoirs*, [1]:222; [2]:viii, 39–44.
66. "To the Inhabitants of North-America," *New-York Gazette, and Weekly Mercury*, 10 October 1774.
67. Samuel Seabury, *The Congress Canvassed: or, An Examination into The Conduct of the Delegates . . .* (New York: Rivington, 1774), 3–4.
68. Virgil, *Eclogues*, 6.
69. See, e.g., Peter Van Schaack to John Jay, 15 April 1778, in VS, 99–100; and William Smith, Jr. to Ebenezer Hazard, 15 Nov. 1778, in *Historical Memoirs*, [2]:43–44.
70. Seabury, *Congress Canvassed*, 3–4; Samuel Seabury, *Free Thoughts on the Proceedings of the Continental Congress* (New York, 1774), 4.
71. Chandler, *Friendly Address*, 41; Isaac Wilkins, *Short Advice to the Counties of New-York* (New York: Rivington, 1774), 11.
72. Smith, Jr., *Historical Memoirs*, [2]:83.
73. J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, "The Grotto," in *More Letters from the American Farmer*, ed. Dennis D. Moore (Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1999), 294–301. (Hereafter cited parenthetically as "TG.")
74. Williams, *The Country and the City*, 9–12, 78–79; Oliver Goldsmith, *The Deserted Village* (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1771), 21.
75. Philip Freneau, *The American Village, a Poem* (New York: Inslee and Car, 1772; facsimile reprint, Providence, RI, 1906), 1. (Hereafter cited parenthetically as AV.) Similarly, Eric Slauter argues that Freneau represented a voice in favor of solitude in the context of the Early Republic. For an account of Freneau as a principled critic of commercialization in the period, see Steven Watts, "Masks, Morals, and the Market: American Literature and Early Capitalist Culture, 1790–1820," *Journal of the Early Republic* 6, no. 2 (1986): 127–150.
76. For Freneau's poetic activities in British-controlled New York City, see Cynthia Edelberg, "Jonathan Odell and Philip Freneau: Poetry and Politics in the Garrison Town of New York City," in Calhoon et al., *Loyalists and Community in North America*, 105–20. "Rivington's Reflections," in *The*

Poems of Philip Freneau, Poet of the American Revolution, ed. Fred Lewis Pattee, 3 vols. (Princeton, N.J.: Univ. Library, 1903), 2:190–96, is representative of his work during this period.

77. Freneau, “The Farmer’s Winter Evening, a Poem, to a Nymph I never saw,” in *AV*, 19–22. The reprinted version is “The Citizen’s Resolve,” in *The Poems of Philip Freneau* (Philadelphia: Francis Bailey, 1786), 32–34; see *AV*, xiii–xvii. The move is taken from Horace’s second Epode.

78. Freneau, “Hermit’s Valley,” in *Poems*, 3:128–29.

79. Freneau, “The Hermit of Saba,” in *Poems*, 2:359–68.

80. Freneau, “To Sylvius, on his Preparing to Leave the Town,” in *Poems*, 3:113–14. For the broader context of the *National Gazette* episode, see Jeffrey Pasley, *The Tyranny of Printers: Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic* (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 2003), 48–78.

81. Freneau, “The Orator of the Woods,” in *Poems*, 3:41–42.

82. Freneau, “The Wild Honey-Suckle,” in *Poems*, 2:306–7.

83. Ezra Pound, *Cantos* (New York: New Directions, 1998), 244–45; “TG,” 301.