

**earwitnesses to
resonance in space**

**an interpretation of
puritan psalmody in
early 18th-century new england**

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It is not yet forgot by some surviving Earwitnesses of it, that when the Synod had finished the *Platform of Church-Discipline*, they did with an Extraordinary Elevation of Soul and Voice, then Sing together, *The Song of Moses the Servant of God, and the Song of the Lamb*, in the fifteenth Chapter of the Revelation: God forbid, that in the loss of that Holy *Discipline*, there should be hereafter occasion to Sing about *breaking down the carved work of the Houses of God, with Axes and Hammers*; or take up the *Eightieth Psalm* for our Lamentations

John Higginson
William Hubbard

John Higginson and William Hubbard wrote a lament for the passing of a way of life. They felt intense sorrow when they saw congregations turn away from old patterns of worship. But broader change affected their lives. They and other “old New England Men,” as Samuel Sewall called them, lived through the Andros regime which broke their church settlement. Subsequently, they witnessed the Charter of 1691 which splintered the old polity. Then, within a year, they watched the witchcraft craze which shattered the spirit world. Against these changes they raised the old, sacred

Cambridge Platform of 1648 and the ideals and patterns that it supported: absolute law as opposed to cooperative rule, spiritualized religion as opposed to mere piety, the old New England Way as opposed to the liberal tolerance of imperial England.¹

Higginson, Hubbard and other conservatives understood that these changes destroyed the old, spirit-ruled and spatial medieval world. In its place they found a linear, timely and material world. The place where spirits lived, space, simply became the nothing that surrounded their lives, belongings and persons. To be sure, ghosts and mysterious forces remained. Debates about the portentousness of comets and earthquakes occurred in 1719 and 1727: were comets signs in the heavens? were earthquakes portents of evil days to come? were they merely natural events, spiritless and unmysterious? But while supernaturalism followed a deep pathway among the uneducated and “conservative,” among the educated elite it died, replaced by the tamed, anglicized and pragmatic theology that Benjamin Colman often referred to as the new “Catholic spirit” of the age.²

As a result of the changed vision, Hubbard and others felt embattled by reforms. Fitting ceremony to the new intellectual style, some reforming ministers preferred to remove the conservative elders from ruling circles within the church. Simplifying ritual, they wished to read scripture without comment. Clarifying the politics of the church, they wanted to associate into professional groups and thus to expand the power of the councils at the expense of the local congregation. Indeed, during this period colonial politics caused ministerial influence to fade as secular power and imperial interests intensified. Moreover, competition from the Church of England acquired political overtones, and the new religious circumstances demanded an unprecedented measure of “catholic tolerance.” Conservative ministers thus retrenched or gave way, while reform ministers altered their message to fit the “spirit of the age.” Indeed, no scholar can look at the period from 1700 to 1730 without noting the mosaic of interrelated reform and rapid change that occurred not only in the church but also in the towns, in the empire and among the population.³ Anti-reformers faced a barrage of change.

Reformers, of course, took their parishioners toward a modern understanding of the world. Consequently, their culture, theology, politics and social perceptions seem familiar to us. Their ideas are certainly more appealing and more in the mainstream of American cultural, intellectual and social development than those of their antagonists. Their intrinsic appeal and their written documents have led historians to argue the reformers’ case. Although reformers exhibited some high-handedness, most interpreters have seen progress in their effect.⁴

Less evident in the histories has been a corresponding pattern of resistance. Higginson, Hubbard, John Wise and other ministers objected to expanded councillor powers and to other church reforms. Indeed, laymen in New England charged that reformers were “Catholic” or “foreign” and suspected that the structural, ceremonial and political

reforms were subversive traps. These anti-reformers left few documents, and their social and intellectual stance contradicts the preferred interpretation of American history. Consequently, their resistance to change has remained unclear, and their place in American history has been ambiguous.⁵

Now, however, the new social historians have created a portrait of the New England “peasant.” Like peasants elsewhere, he was suspicious of outsiders or of people whose ways failed to match his own. A chronic economic pinch intensified his suspicions, and a crabbed and antiquated local religion left him superstitious, ignorant and bigoted. Moreover, he was deeply conservative regarding religious or social change. This conservatism led him into conflict with his social and political superiors and made him an object of ridicule as the elite distinguished between the metropolis, Boston, and the surrounding countryside.⁶

This new perspective on the villagers makes the objections of Higginson, Hubbard and other conservatives more intelligible. Thus, it helps fill out the mosaic of resistance to change. As a result, familiar documents now seem to tell new stories and to have new implications. The most important set of such documents portrays the “country” folk’s resistance to a new style of singing psalms which involved specified rhythms, and hence was “regular” and harmonious. As they resisted, the “anti-regular singers” so rattled the elite that it left records of the quarrels. Using these records and other documents, I here describe the psalmody in the context of general cultural changes and interpret the meaning of the old style. Extending this interpretation, I refer the psalmody to social and political associations and suggest that it had general and specific stylistic meaning for social and political ceremonies. Consequently, I suggest, the psalmody was not just an alternative way of singing but was in fact a paradigm of knowledge, part of a “country” way of knowing. Thus, the old-style psalmody is far more important than historians have thought.⁷

psalmody, style and the cultural mosaic

In 1700 in New England most congregations sang their psalms more or less in the old style or “usual” style. This meant that they followed the practice of lining-out: a reader would read the line, then a precentor (often the reader himself, usually a deacon) would lead the congregation into the tune. When the congregation finished one line, the reader would read the next line, lead the singing, go on to the next and so on. The whole process had about it a ceremonial quality in which the lines of the psalm were often rendered nonsensical, and performance accentuated a painfully slow tempo. The singing was utterly without regulation, hence without rhythm.⁸

Reformers criticized this style. It was “a tedious Protraction of the Notes beyond the compas of a Man’s Breath, and the Power of his Spirit. . . .” Moreover, “usual” singers entered and left the tune without reference to pitch or place. Hence, the tunes lacked clear phrasing and

exhibited multiple contours: “No two men in the Congregation sing alike” and their “perpetual interferences with one another, perplexed jars, and unmeasured Periods, would make a Man wonder at the false Pleasure, which they conceived in that which good Judges of Musick and Sounds, cannot bear to hear.”⁹

Reformers charged that, in addition to its “longsomeness,” the old style encouraged a very harsh voice. “Usual” singers tended to excesses of pitch. In addition, they ornamented the tune with turns and trills and flourishes. Nathaniel Chauncey wrote that the psalmody included “quavering as in the singing of mass” [excessive tremolo] and an “overpowering” use of male voices that caused a harsh and unmodulated tone. Others shared such a perspective. Josiah Dwight wrote that the “many Quavers, semi-quavers, &c. belong to airy and vain” music rather than to psalmody, and Thomas Symmes faulted the “country people” for their inattention to proper pitch, their “flourishes” and “turnings” in the “wrong places,” and asserted that “Singers by Rote have little else to guide them but their Fancy.”¹⁰

Even more interesting from an analytical point of view is the reformers’ assertion that the “old way” of singing was an “oral tradition,” with all the odd quirks and distinctions that such a tradition presents. Thomas Walter used the term and noted that tunes differed from one congregation to another. Although he could recognize and even sing the tunes, he complained that the rural singers carelessly interjected phrases from one tune into another. Hence, the singing was “left to the Mercy of every unskilful Throat to chop and alter, twist and change, according to their infinitely diverse and no less odd Humours and Fancies.”¹¹ Allen Britton recognized in these descriptions a “folk” tradition. Gilbert Chase described it in more detail in his *America’s Music*, and Alan Lomax has suggested that it persisted throughout the period of reform and still exists, possibly modified but nevertheless recognizable, in the hymns of the upland Baptists in West Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee.¹²

Reformers wanted to substitute musical literacy for this oral tradition. But they wanted to do more. They wanted to tame the style. Walter wrote that the singers should heed the mathematical “nature” of music, and thus make “Improvements and Progress” in their psalmody. Like a “string plucked,” he wrote, the singers should try to make their communal sound free of “all Jarr or Asperity,” and should attend the “Doctrine of Concords” so that they could avoid the irregular and arhythmic use of phrases. Thus they could avoid the discords that arose from mixing the phrases with multiple tempi.¹³

This matter of time was paramount for the reformers. Lack of tempo was the chief source of “discords” in the music. As far as Walter was concerned, once tempo had been regulated, “then the even, unaffected, and smooth sounding of the Notes, and the Omission of those unnatural Quaverings and Turnings will serve to prevent all that Discord and lengthy Tediousness which is so much a fault in our singing of Psalms.” In short, the reformers wanted to substitute a tamed and less subtle style, one note

for one syllable of the psalm, a basic and brisk rhythm that was about the beat of the pulse (quarter time), and then to establish a single contour for each phrase in the tune. Time was the controlling factor.¹⁴

Such special regard for tempo—time—relates psalmody to changes in an array of artifacts and ideas which expressed a new attitude toward space. Reformers demanded a shift from the regard for space (spirit) as primary to the regard for time (matter) as primary. It was this change that the anti-reformers resisted. This shift in epistemological focus is reflected as well in the styles of architecture, furniture, household implements and clothing which went from the ragged to the tame. Those who dominated the culture came to prefer the elegant contour and the definite tamed outline for their artifacts.¹⁵

In architecture the taming left out of fashion old rambling “country” homes with pilastered chimneys, adzed and studded beams, unpainted interior walls and diamond-paned, leaded windows. Balanced exteriors, plastered and painted walls, double-sashed windows and the other aspects of early Georgian styles came in. Similarly in furniture, the old carved chests and the court cupboards decorated with space that intruded into the body of the piece, the carved and colored decoration—posies, vines, tendrils and so forth—that gave the pieces movement, gave way to the smooth contour of the highboy and chest of drawers decorated with the “chinese” figures demurely stated in golds and browns. Parallel to the furniture, the elaborate embroidery in bright colors, the slashed sleeves and falling lace, the beribboned and fluttering outline in men’s and women’s clothing bowed to the smooth long-coat and vest, the clear-cut gown and modest shift. Although clothing was tailored in new and more elegant fabrics, the colors were now muted—golds and browns and other earth tones. Over all, the new style was the presentation of the person, clearly outlined but unostentatious.¹⁶ Corresponding to this change in clothing, gravestone art no longer exhibited the ragged death’s head and the symbolized ascending souls and descending angels. In fashionable Boston these were replaced with the visage of the departed or with smiling faces and a desymbolized and pragmatic acknowledgment of religious faith in the hereafter.¹⁷

The popularity of these changes is attested to by the elites of Boston, merchants among them, who accused the “country people” of ruining the economy by buying new furniture, clothing and “gue-gaws” on credit. Nevertheless, the change in fashion left convenient points of reference that allowed reformers to focus their generally favorable reaction to the new. When Thomas Symmes wanted to “prove” that his ridicule of old-style singers was aimed at everybody who resisted, he seized on a fashion metaphor. Any “ARS” (anti-Regular Singer) could “make what Figure he will, and let his Coat be of what Fashion or Colour, or other Quality it will”; he would still be unworthy to be called reasonable if he resisted reform. Josiah Dwight also used a parallel between the new artifacts and the new-style psalmody and thus separated the anti-reform group from those who preferred the new way.¹⁸

But there was more at stake than just the style. This culture was integrated. In each instance of change the people were required to go from an indeterminateness in space to a determined and defined contour. In material fashion they moved from the interpenetration of space and matter to the definition of space by matter. In their artifacts of the mind, especially music, they went from the interpenetration of space and time to dominance and definition by time. Charles Seeger has outlined the difficulty of comparing musical space and time: modern scholars associate music with time rather than space. Musical space, Seeger noted, consists of tone, the temper of the voices and the internal dynamics of the tune. Of course, these were the aspects of old-style music that the reformers found most objectionable. Harshness, quavering and irregular contours were aspects of the singing that made the "country" style least amenable to reform. Yet, together they constituted the music that the rustics held to most tenaciously.¹⁹

It is relevant that the "rusticks," as Cotton Mather called them, continued to prefer some of the old material culture. They preferred their painted and carved chests, for example. By extending carving to the outline of the piece, carvers obscured the material line and thus created the illusion of movement, of the interpenetration of space and matter. This style came to be called "country" furniture and to be associated with "whimsy." In addition, a market existed for "antick" dresses and "old-fashioned" silver pieces and other articles that were embroidered with or molded into posies, scallops, vines and other decorations that typify the old style. Josiah Dwight compared this preference for "an old house & house implements, hats &c" to the preference for old psalmody, and John Wise encapsulated the style when he asked, "What were Ingenious Mysteries & Inventions dignified for with Lawrells? For working Wood, Iron Brass, Leather, &c . . . and turning glittering Earth and glutinous matter of worms into Embroderies &c But to furnish a Generous People that would Banish sordidness, and live Bright and Civil with fine Accomplishments about them?"²⁰

These holdovers were important. Reformers compared the preferences for old styles to the preference for unsound religion. Indeed, as far as reformers were concerned, the rustics who preferred the old ways were aiming their lives at "superstitions" and "corrupt Customs." Unnatural and absurd attachment to place, a meeting house, or to ceremony, for example, was an attachment to forbidden incantation and magic. Thus, progressives in reformation associated the new style with a new cultural mosaic that made material dominance (time) the arbiter of taste. Resisters to reformation seem to have associated the old style with space, that is, spirit and superstition or the interpenetration of space and matter. Accordingly, in the cultural mosaic and in psalmody the interpenetration of space and time became an important marker for the enspirited resistance to change.

psalmody, ceremony and social style

Style was more than a cultural marker. It was also social and ceremonial. Documents make clear that the society of early eighteenth-century New England divided according to class, and that a large part of class perception was based on aesthetic preferences. Indeed, the definition of the “country” folk was based on preferences for old “hats” or “house implements,” antiquated manners and old ceremonies of worship including, of course, old-style psalmody. Moreover, documents reveal that the old social style was more ceremonial than the new, at least in the minds of the reformers.²¹ Hence, disgust with old-style psalmody reflected disgust for old social and cultural ceremonies. Rustics were certainly more self-consciously formal in their manners. They were more attached to ceremony, and, as I have suggested elsewhere, their ceremonies reiterated the past. Their preferred social and ritual form was the florid and “antick” style of the previous age.

Reforming clergymen and urban sophisticates alike seized on ritual and ceremonial style as the chief distinguishing characteristic of the rustics. In place of the coy rituals of country folks these social critics proposed simplicity, openness, clarity and even pragmatism. New social ritual demanded less attention to station, more attention to accomplishment. James and Benjamin Franklin in their *New England Courant* applied this standard, which they copied from sophisticated English attitudes. Their perception of manners is nowhere better explained than in Joseph Addison’s essay “Country Manners,” which sets out the accepted stereotype of the rustic. “A polite country squire,” Addison wrote, “shall make you as many bows in half an hour, as would serve a courtier for a week,” and asserted that the “rural politeness is very troublesome” to the more sophisticated, who desired less of the ceremonial” and less attention to “ranks and qualities.” Well before the Franklins copied this standard, Madam Sara Kimbel Knight criticized the overdone manners of country people. These rustics were too obsequious by “about 50 curtsies” and, in her company, were as nervous as “a Catt let out of a basket.” Indeed, the Atlantic standard led the colonial elite to object to the over-ornamented ceremonialism of country society as well as to the holdover of the high beds, the old-style furnishings and implements that remained in use in country homes.²²

Sophisticates engaged in a pattern: ridicule the rustic. With their ridicule they fit change to social demands. For example, ambitious children from country villages faced declining acres per person and thus were unable to farm. Hence they turned to other occupations and swelled the populations of seaport towns such as Boston, Salem and Newport. To ease the transition from bumpkin to clerk or artisan, Jonn Hill published five editions of his *The Young Secretaries’ Guide*, a “how-to” book which included proper forms of address spelling, epistolary formats and other social information. At the same time, Hill included a section ridiculing country courting practices. “Kind Hodge” and “Honest Margery” find them-

selves inexplicably thinking of one another. Hodge's "business goes on tedious." But Margery has a remedy for such "ill consequences." She will meet him, and together they will cure his "perplexities." Thus Hill shows the two country personae wallowing in ignorance and innocence, unaware of their own biological urges, polite in the extreme and contemptibly oblique and formal in their courtship.²³

From the elite perspective, then, country style emphasized ceremoniousness. Such emphasis matches ceremony with material culture—florid and detailed, alive with movement, formal, dependent on the interpenetration of matter and space. Spatial qualities belonged to the old medieval world of spirit, as I have already noted. Hence, the detailed ceremoniousness that so displeased the elites matched country superstitiousness which provided reciprocal support for the ceremoniousness.²⁴ In this regard, James Franklin often satirized rustic superstitions with smug understatements and thereby placed greater distance between the peasant mentality and form and the urbane modernism of Boston. For example, when Mr. Rogers of Ipswich disappeared during December, 1722, Franklin wrote with irony: "We have frequent Accounts that the People in those parts see Apparitions, and have Intimations from Dreams of his being murder'd. 'Tis said a Man at Cape Ann has been inform'd by his Ghost that he was murder'd by four Men, and buried between two Rocks; but we wait for a Confirmation of this Story." At work in this statement is the knowledge that a sophisticated audience would not see "apparitions" and would not talk to ghosts; hence, this enspirited ritual for obtaining knowledge was a humorous social aberration to Franklin.²⁵

Nathaniel Ames' experience as a "lover of mathematics" displays the pervasiveness of ritual and superstition among the rustics. Ames first published his "astrological" calculations in 1726. His first calendar included a list of astrological signs and a comment that the eclipse of 29 September 1726 would be so "near the Great Benevolent Jupiter, the Effect 'tis hop'd will not be ill." He ended the almanac with a mysterious jingle that emphasized folk beliefs, ties to the Indians' mystical knowledge, and the acknowledgment of the unknown:

Twice in a Century (*Old Indians Say*)
Our Land abounds with *Bear & Beasts* of Prey;
Whereof some do embrace [?bold?] Neptuns Waves,
And with the Scaly Tribe swim to their Graves:
Others retreat toward the Frigid Zone
And dwell in Desert yet to us unknown:
They'll come no more from whence they do Retire.
Until a Jubilee of Years Expire.

But in the years 1727 and 1728 Ames changed his tone and emphasized God's rule over the planets. Indeed, he distinctly avoided any pagan or folk influence. Then, in 1729, bowing to popular clamors, he published not only the list of signs but also the Man of Signs with the magical curative powers in particular parts of the year, Taurus for the neck, Virgo for the hand, and so forth. At the same time he published an "apology":

The Blackamoor may as eas'ly change his Skin,
As Men forsake the way they'r brought up in;
Therefor I've set the Old Anatomy
To please My Country men thereby,
But where's the Man that's born & liv'd among
—Can please a Fickle throng?

Ames thus gave up the modern “mathematical” calculations and capitulated to astrology and pagan holdovers that supported rituals of healing and ceremonial knowledge.²⁶

Elite disgust with overdone manners and elite skepticism about astrology had its own style which tied it to the modernizing Atlantic community. Above all, this style was material. Matter conquered space. Along with material improvements there came an emphasis on the reformation of society through good deeds. In logic and investigation there was a rising emphasis on linear or “scientific” truth. Consequently, the rustics’ wish to retain the florid and enspirited style and the enspirited source of folk knowledge led the elites to associate country style, especially country psalmody, with ignorant assertions, old-fashioned ceremonies, superstitions and old suspicions. Identifying “country” qualities with ignorance and unfounded suspicions, Cotton Mather described the musical dispute in Braintree to Thomas Hollis of London:

A mighty spirit came Lately upon abundance of our people, to reform their singing which was degenerated in our Assemblies, which made a Jar in the ears of the more curious and skilful singers. . . . But who would beleeve it? Tho' in the more polite City of Boston, this Design met with a General Acceptance, in the Country, where they have more of the *Rustick*, some Numbers of Elder and Angry people bore zelous Testimonies against these wicked Innovations, and this bringing in of Popery.

Mather associated Boston with the polite standard of London, and he thus added the ironic flourish; to the country folk, musical changes were wicked “Innovations” and “a bringing in of Popery.” Silly country people to apply their ritual suspicion of “wicked” change and their ignorant spiritualized vision that their “Popish” enemies were everywhere, even in the tamed and polite new style!²⁷

This deepening critical assessment of old-style culture, rustic society and psalmody is nowhere better portrayed than in the *Courant*. There James Franklin covered the music quarrels at Weston, Milton and Braintree, always ridiculing the “pretended” sacredness of the old way and the veneration for and foolish attachment to it that the peasants displayed. Conversely, he reported favorably on the singing-school meetings at which “young people” sang “regularly.” His distinction between the two is clear.²⁸ But he went further. He connected the old way of singing with country elegies and funerary ceremonies and thus criticized the non-syntactical and impressionistic meaning of rustic culture. That is, he aimed his critique at the inappropriate *sound* of rustic society, made inappropriate by the new sound of social change.

In this regard, “Hypercriticus,” writing in the *Courant*, criticized the verse of country elegies. It was “sentimental.” Moreover, it included double rhymes; hence it jingled and thus tended to nonsense just as the lined psalms did. Franklin and his writer supported the literate and fashionable style of English verse along with a despiritualized or unsentimental quality. They wanted the verse tamed to syntax, and they opposed the impressionistic aesthetic of sound and the meaning that sound gave to these elegies. “J. R.” answered “Hypercriticus” in a later issue, castigating him for his insensitivity and absurd concern about sound, no better than the rustics’ own attachment to sound in the psalms: “A strange position indeed that the sound of words, separate from Ideas should be so irksome to the pretended Hypercriticus! A more foolish Argument than the Country People use against the new way of Singing, viz. because they don’t like the Tone.” Of course, “J. R.” meant his criticism ironically, using it to underscore Hypercriticus’ repugnance for country ceremony and its non-syntactical and ritual sound. From this exchange it seems clear that the sound and the culture were inextricably bound together. Rustics “thought” the wrong sound and thus produced the wrong culture.²⁹

Disgust with the sound and the social aspects of psalmody characterizes Thomas Symmes’ *Utile-Dulci*, the capstone of elite criticism. As Symmes saw it rustics preferred the more ceremonial, more convoluted and complicated rituals. On the other hand, Symmes preferred the less ceremonial, simpler and more pragmatic social rituals and “reformed” practices that were *not* ceremonial, at least as far as the reformers were concerned. This distinction amounted to complex ostracism of the rustics’ society and ceremonies. Thus Symmes makes the country persona, “Neighbour,” not only ignorant but defensive and obsequious at the same time, while “Minister,” of course is a paragon of wisdom and wit:

Min.: How d’you do Neighbour?

Nei’b.: Alas! Sir, I have met with a great deal of Affliction in my time; I’ve had a great deal of Sickness, been exercised with many Crosses and Disappointments, but indeed never met with any thing in all my life, that made me so uneasy, as this New Way of Singing that’s forced upon us.

Min.: But I pray you N. to produce Your Cause and bring forth your strong Reasons, and Make out your Charge that Singing by Note is a New-Way, or obtruded upon you; and I’ll be your easy Proselite. . . .

Nei’b.: Well, Sir, but you’ll be angry (they say) if I should be plain with you. . . .

Whereupon “Minister” enters the proper social ritual by placing “Neighbour” in the submissive position. If he means “Plainness” to mean “Rudeness,” and if “Neighbour” will not come to “Minister” to learn a lesson in the truth about psalmody and style, “(I say, if so) I’ve just reason to be Angry. . . .”

Neighbour accepts the stationing: "Why truly Sir, I don't know whether I've skill eno' to range my Objections to your Mind." Now "Minister" can afford to be conciliatory: "You speak well N. and give me good hope (tho' you look'd so Unpleasantly at first) that you come hither with a Teachable Disposition." After "Minister" lists the objections, Symmes has "Neighbour" say that his "duty" is to listen, "and I dare do not otherwise, I should have no Charity for my self, if I were unwilling to see my Mistakes and Errors, and to come to the Light for that end."

But "Neighbour" is crusty even in his submission. "Minister" says "O that there were such an heart in all of you, that make these Objections. There's a perfect number of 'em; and if they wou'd hold weight, when try'd in the Balance of the Sanctuary, they'd carry the Case against all the Skilful Singers under heaven." This jibe conveyed a series of contemptuous assertions about the rustics: that rustics' objections, for all their number, were ridiculous, that their veneration of "sacred" tunes was as witless and superstitious as their awe for the "Sanctuary," and that the position of the reformers was unassailable, hence, that the reformers were socially, religiously and intellectually superior to the rustics. "Neighbour" answered the jibe: "Nay, Sir, Pray be Serious, and don't run upon me neither! I don't come hither to be laughed at."³⁰

Thus, Symmes and other reformers criticized the rustics' ignorance, useless ceremonialism, superstitions, paganism, inane suspiciousness of "Catholic" music and their emphasis on "tone" rather than syntactical meaning in psalm singing. Consequently, reformers placed the music reforms in juxtaposition with a society and a matching culture which included an antiquated sound. Along with other aspects of rural society, the sound separated the rustics from the anglicizing reformers. Accordingly, reformers emphasized rustic social and cultural inferiority by criticizing country style. In each aspect of culture and society, a new style was to replace the old florid or ceremonial style. Hence, when the rustics persisted in their social ceremonies and rituals they set themselves off from the dominant society and established a context for criticism of their old-style psalmody. But, of course, they persisted because they "felt" a cultural fit between their psalmody and their social style.

psalmody, power and political style

Association between music and society was not limited to general social change and manners. It also included the responses to change by particular groups whose power in the community shifted along with changes in social and ceremonial structures. Hence, the persistence of old-style music relates to a particular political style, patriarchy, which became old-fashioned. As a result there were pervasive disagreements about the relations between ministers and parishioners, youngsters and the elderly and women and men. Such disagreements were related to rule and to the exercise of power, and analysis of them hinges on the reformers' challenge to the patriarchs' power over the parishes, children and women in colonial New England.³¹

Reforms in the relations between pastors and congregations set the tone for the age. Ministers usually promoted regular singing and thus often antagonized their country parishioners. But reforms extended beyond music to embrace the whole religious structure of congregational polity. Reformers wanted to rule the church without the influential elders and thereby to eliminate both the traditional concern for local hierarchy and the traditional dependence on patriarchs. In that regard the reformers proposed rule by council, ministers from several churches along with one lay representative from each congregation, and believed that such a group would be more pragmatic and more amenable to reform. That this plan promoted brotherhood and opposed patriarchy was made clear when Benjamin Colman described it: "A deference & honor to be paid by all to the chair: an equal regard being given by the Moderator to every Member. Yet, freedom of speaking being preserved to each; that, offence not being taken at difference of thot."³² Colman expressed a plural give-and-take, the antithesis of patriarchy.

But the peasants preferred patriarchy. John Wise, their chief spokesman, wrote that the ministers should not share power with anyone except the local officers. Moreover, they should accept the responsibility to remain powerful local and legal authorities:

All other Officers, in Trust and Commission, who are wise and Loyal, execute the hardest Articles in their Employ. . . . Our Judges never stick to hang a man, so long as their Commission and the Law will bear them out, and they themselves are left, to be Interpreters of Both. . . . The Dream of an Imbroylment can never Counter-Poize Duty; If men are Trused with Duty, they must consult that, and not Events. If men are plac'd at Helm, to steer in all weather which Blows, they must not be afraid of the Waves, or a wet Coat.

Each town was separate. To the villagers Wise wrote, "*Furnish your Churches with Ruling elders!* The nature of the Office is not only agreeable with your Frame, and exacted by our Principles, but indeed carries safety and Protection in it to your Liberties. . . ."³³ Thus, in his popular *Churches Quarrel Espoused*, Wise upheld the local layers of rule along with the powerful ceremonies.

Reformers understood these objections and understood as well that changes, including reforms in psalmody, amounted to an alteration in the system of beliefs. Thomas Symmes related musical change to rural preferences for local patriarchy and absolute law. In his treatise, *Utile-Dulci*, he wrote that their "*Fathers of Blessed Memory*" came "to this Howling Wilderness" to find "not a Reformation in Religion according to GOD's word, but a Progress in Reformation." Their patriarchs, he wrote, had left not the legacy of set ceremonies of rule but a duty to accept, even to seek, reform. Rustic old "Neighbour," hears "Minister" attack the source of local rule, the Cambridge Platform: "[T]hat Platform," gives the congregation a "Privilege, which the Church doth Exercise, in

Choosing of their Own Officers, whether *Elders or Deacons*, . . .” but it says “not a word about matters of Doctrine or Worship.” Symmes wrote “Elders or Deacons,” not both. One set of local officers was enough, possibly too many. And in matters of worship, ceremony, Symmes was eager to cut the deacons’ power. Deacons, he wrote, should not set the tune: “their Business assign’d ’em by the word of GOD, is to *serve Tables*, and not to *Tune the Psalm*.”³⁴ Thus, in accordance with cooperative worship and music reform, Symmes and other reforming ministers retrieved the power over ceremonies and rule from the local patriarchs and influential religious leaders. Rustics objected and found support for patriarchy in their old constitution, the Platform, and in their ceremony of song—lining out led by the deacons.

In promoting a new style of power the reformers often aimed their appeals at the opposite of patriarchs—the village youngsters. Hence, their reforms helped create an antagonism between mature parishioners and the rising generation. In this, reformers only followed a development in Anglo-American society. Between 1700 and 1730 the first general attachment to youth appeared along with a corresponding decline in the veneration for age. During this same period New England’s society was growing younger and younger. Older parishioners saw a generation growing more and more sinful, full of the inclination to pride, disobedience, idleness, “unclean-ness,” drunkenness, riotousness, “chambering” and general “wanton-ness.” Family rule was the backbone of Puritan political theory, and such “degeneration” among the young created a crisis of authority. Ever active, the clergy established young men’s clubs for the study of Scripture. Later, they involved young men and women in the study of new-style psalmody. Country and urban youth alike attended the singing schools, and the older generation soon associated the youngsters with the new style, especially the sinful pleasure of rhythm.

It is no surprise, then, to find Josiah Dwight placing those “over 40” among the old-stylers. They refused to sing regularly, he wrote, and objected not only to the fast rhythms that the youngsters preferred but also to youth’s lack of saving experience. Indeed, after the psalm-fests at the music schools, youngsters often sinned by “tarrying” together.³⁵ Although this was an issue of power, political considerations were not so clear in this struggle between youth and age as they were between ministers and parishioners. Peter Thacher asked the central question about the power of age: “Do you believe that it is lawful and according to the Rules of GOD’s Holy Word, that the aged in the Churchs should in their Age submit to be *turned out of their old Way* of Singing of Psalms, to gratify the Younger Generation?” His answer was a politic compromise. After all, the best congregants were old-stylers even though the most promising psalm singers were new-stylers. Thacher wrote: “To the *Younger People*, who are Regular Singers, we therefore say, We do in the matter of Singing not yield unto you, but to GOD.”³⁶

Still, political reality intruded: “The *Younger* Generation being the

Majority for Number, and having clearest & strongest Organs of Voice for Singing, *will prevail* in carrying on the Musick in singing of Psalms from Generation to Generation; and the *Elder* and stronger in Grace are not to be *offended* at them for so doing.” While the older generation gradually passed away, youth should avoid “all self-admiration, self exultation, vain ostentation and boasting and all vile despising of others” and should testify their thanks “by their *Modest* and *Respectful* carriage to their *Fathers in Age*, who are less able to Sing *Spiritually*[.]” Thus behavioral style had to include veneration for spirit, but the enspiritedness was to be subtracted from the musical style. Accordingly, Thacher wrote that the spiritually superior “Elder” should not “oppose the bringing of Regular singing into our Congregations out of Aversness with the Gratification of the Younger.”³⁷

Of course, despite Thacher’s careful arbitration, the old-stylers found the new psalmody unacceptable because it was not fit for their florid and ceremonial culture. When they complained that the young people sang without spirit, they meant that in the new style there was nothing to earwitness, no hearable spirit, “nothing of the Voice of Christ” in it. Indeed, their objection to youth and to rhythm and their unhappiness with the power of youth to affect change came down to a veneration of the old political structure and style including the old-style psalmody. They wanted spirit, patriarchy, localism and stability. In this regard their own perception of the proper relation between youth and age was itself florid, subject to a set of complex patriarchal rituals. Youth should be subordinate to experience in the spirit, and song should sound the old-fashioned power of spiritual reality.

As they promoted change, the reformers raised a third issue that involved patriarchy. Patriarchy extended rule over women. Reformers associated old-stylers with the dominance of male voices. They noted that old-style performance included the use of falsetto and grumbling, a “straining out of normal range.” Consequently, males sang in an undisciplined and “overbearing” way which obscured female voices by a loud and extravagant display at high and low pitches. Peter Thacher, defending the new way, asked, “What Convenience and Benefit would probably Ensur upon it, if Men’s Voices were Lowr’d in Singing (when otherwise very loud Voices are ready to drown all other Voices in the Congregation). . . .” Answering his rhetorical question, he fit cooperation in song to the metaphor of brotherhood and included women in the group. If the “tedious Length” of the old way, which is “more like the Mass, than like our Reformed English Musick” were reduced,

and were they who sing so Loud as they can hear no Bodies Voice but their own, reclaimed from the Absurdity—this Great Good would follow upon it . . . [that] all of ‘em (of both Sorts of Singers) sing together without so much Jarring, and so the Regular way of Singing with an Even, Smooth and Strait Voice, and the Customary way of Singing with a more Undulating, Uneven and Quavering Voice, may both with less Inconvenience be practiced at once, and be Sung peaceably together; as has been already proved in some Congregations. . . .³⁸

But the rustic parishioners refused to accept either the emergence of the softer feminine voice or the cooperative liberality that Thacher advanced. Indeed, they simply asserted that women should not be allowed to sing in the church at all. Thacher answered this antiquated idea with theology that to modern ears may sound condescending but that to a generation steeped in patriarchy must have sounded wildly liberal: “When they [women] are Commanded to *keep Silence in the Church*, They are restrained from being Authoritative Teachers. . . .” New Englanders were now free from old-fashioned ceremonial law, he wrote, and women had a God-given right to a corporate voice:

And how can they, which have the pleasantest Voices answer it to God, who gave them, if they don’t improve them in a Musical *Speaking Together* in Psalms and singing Spiritual Songs, not without Grace in their Hearts, . . . Privileges are enlarged and not straitned under the Gospel; as for instance with respect to the Initial Seal of the Covenant, which now they have . . . but had *not* under the Law; and ‘twas their Privilege to Sing Psalms under the Old Testament Dispensation, therefore much more under the New. . . .³⁹

Thus Thacher and other reformers opposed ceremonial law with its emphasis on male power and enlarged the power of women. At the same time they shrank the scope of male dominance in the church and “feminized” the ceremony. Accordingly, even though women already had been singing in the church for years, the anti-reformers objected. They demanded the traditional patriarchal male dominance in the ceremony of song.

Indeed, spokesmen for the old style of rule saw in music a marbling of power and style. “It is not yet forgot,” Higginson and Hubbard had written, “that when the Synod had finished the Platform,” the patriarchs “did with an extraordinary elevation of Soul and Voice,” celebrate the power of the Lord. John Wise republished their essay as an appendix to his *Vindication* and thus brought together the symbolic “breaking down of the *Carved Work of the Houses of God with Axes and Hammers*,” the “Song of Moses and the Song of the Lamb,” and the mythopoeic vision of New England’s history. In this popular Scripture, when the martyrs have crossed the fiery sea of glass (as New England’s founders crossed the Atlantic), they stand on the safe shore with the harps of God in their hands and sing praise to God. Earlier, in his *Churches Quarrel Espoused*, Wise concluded a long argument against the new cooperative style of rule by referring the villagers to the cessation of song:

And here we may dig a Grave to bury all our Antient Priviledges in, and Hang our Harps upon the Willows, and when we are thus wasted, should you call us in once more to sing one of the Songs of Sion, all our Notes must be Elegies & Destrribus, yet the Broken Accents, and lowly Murmours of our Sorrow will serve for Elahs and Sweet Diapans, in the Conquerors Song of Triumph.

Thus, in the reassertion of patriarchy, Wise drew together psalmody and

the music of the old style that sounded the notes of allegory and patriarchy to the ears of the New England peasants.⁴⁰

Old style singing, then, encompassed not the new hierarchy, not the urbane contempt for rural values or the shift in family rule, not the new inclusiveness for women nor the larger view of the Atlantic world, but local authority, patriarchy and the crabbed, male-dominated and layered rule of the New England village where the villagers preferred to sing psalm tunes old-style.

psalmody and the country style as a way of knowing

John Wise may have been the last authoritative spokesman for a medieval style in America.⁴¹ But the style itself persisted. It represented spirit, superstition and resistance to modernity. Emma Bell Miles wrote of the upland spirituals of the southern mountains that they sounded “. . . a feeling for the supernatural . . . The oddly changing keys, the ending that leaves the ear in expectation of something to follow, the quavers and falsettos become in recurrence a haunting hint of the spirit-world[.]” Her sensitive treatment of mountain life emphasized the supernatural and the importance of ceremony.⁴²

Like the nineteenth-century mountain people, the New England peasant lived with an integrated style. An aesthetic was the integrating agent, and the aesthetic was tied to the interpenetration of space and matter or time, that is, the spatial or textural qualities of artifacts, ceremonies of worship and rule, and, especially, music. Thus, I think that the “truth” of traditional knowledge derived from beauty as style and ceremony.

As I have indicated, the common aspects of rustic life and society were imbued with ceremonial importance. Ceremonies reflected the aesthetic. Consequently, the aesthetic became the reiterative agent for the meaning of the ceremonies. Josiah Dwight, himself a rural pastor, seems to have felt this reiteration of ceremony more than other reformers and to have associated it with the old visual culture. Dwight left only two sermons and no papers or other writing. Yet both sermons demonstrate an unusual visual sensitivity. His sermon on blindness, *A Bright Side of Dark Providence* (1710), “improves” blindness—those who are blind to Christ are more to be pitied than those who are merely blind to things. But, he wrote, though the blind “welcome that Clamity, that Private Centinel, in the Black Regiment of Death Temporal,” they may yet recover their vision through the healing miracle of faith.⁴³ Ceremonies of healing, of course, were associated with prayer, but also with superstitions that were embedded in astrology, the almanacs and ancient folk religion.

In his other sermon Dwight associated comfort in the “old” with the artifacts of an antiquated visual culture. Preaching at Framingham, Massachusetts, and defending new-style singing, Dwight said:

For our nature is apt to be fond of things we have had a long intimacy with, and apt to recoil at innovation, if never so much for

the better. So you shall see some fond of an old house, & house implements, cloaths, hats &c, and if those that are never so much better and more useful, be offered in their room, they are slighted because those they have had long acquaintance with, are ever so dear to them.

So, he continued, the people who avoid reform are peculiarly tied to the old visual artifacts. But they are tied to old styles not just through familiarity. Dwight extended his metaphor and reminded his audience that in reformed Christianity there should be no “special Moding,” that is, no special style or fashion, and no adherence to “the *galling Yoke of Ceremonies*. . . .”⁴⁴

This old style of “imperfectly founded Tunes” has, Dwight said, “gained a veneration from some as if a sort of Sacredness with them. . . .” Thomas Symmes’s criticism of the country preference focused this objection to “special Moding” and its corresponding “Sacredness” by comparing a “reasonable” or syntactical way of knowing with a “whimsical” or impressionistic way of knowing: “And I appeal to all men of sense, whether Christians are to make *Reason & the Word* of God the Rule of their Faith and practice or the *Obeigo’s and whimsies* of some . . . whose *Hearts* are better than their *Heads*.”⁴⁵ Symmes cited as evidence Samuel Clarke’s emphasis on the combined dangers of superstition and of supernatural “knowledge.” Clarke wrote:

The liberty of a Christian, may also sometimes very properly signify, his Deliverance from the Slavery of endless *Superstition*. Of the Prophets of Baal it is recorded; . . . that they cried aloud and cut themselves with knives and lancets, till the Blood gushed out . . . Those among the Heathen, who were less Cruel; yet were in perpetual fear of Dreams and Omens, and vain Presages: and in continual Bondage to Tedious and useless Observations and [ceremonies].⁴⁶

Thus Symmes, Dwight and other ministers saw in the old style an aesthetically patterned ceremony. Both style and ceremony were antiquated and even primitive in the pejorative sense. Both reiterated primitive superstition, hence, supernaturalism. Knowledge was evil when it was gained from such a non-syntactical “superstitious” source.

But, of course, the rustics found in their psalmody just the “special Moding” that fit their mind-set. Indeed, they embraced the superstitiousness or enspiritedness, the “Sacredness,” that separated New England’s culture into the “reasonable” and the “whimsical.” In doing so they clung to the importance of space as the place of spirit, hence to the aesthetic that represented space as something preferable to mere time. In their antagonism to this spatial style, the reformers voiced a general increasing antagonism to space. Symmes’ sometime intellectual referent, Samuel Clarke, wrote a clear defense of space as spirit:

Of Infinite Space—space is not nothing. The Weakness of such, as have presumed to imagine Infinite Space to be a just Representa-

tion or adequate Idea of the Essence of the Supreme Cause: This is a weak Imagination, arising from hence, that Men using themselves to judge of all things by their Senses only, fancy Spiritual or Immaterial *Substances*, because they are not Objects of their Corporeal Senses, as it were, mere Nothings; just as Children imagine Air, because they cannot see it, to be mere Emptiness and Nothing.⁴⁷

Space as “something” marked the old style. Reformers might have agreed with Clarke’s philosophical position; nevertheless, wittingly or unwittingly, they planted the seeds that the rustics intuitively knew would grow to destroy their supernatural “knowledge.”

This sense of style had its counterpart in a more abstract aspect of rustic knowledge. Until about 1700 supernaturalism was accepted as a source of knowledge about time. Ministers emphasized it by using the jeremiad. For three generations they taught that New England had been founded for God’s purpose by almost divine leaders. But after the first generation no one had matched the original zeal for reform. Nevertheless, repentance and recapture of the ancient dedication would bring back God’s favor and end the calamitous events of late years—war, economic decline, political reverses, Anglican intrusion, Catholic threats and internal apostasy. Thus the New Englanders had been instructed in the allegorical rather than the historical meaning of time. As a consequence, they measured the past by spirit rather than by time.⁴⁸

By about 1720, however, the reforming ministry had moved from allegory to mere history. Moreover, elites were conscious of this change. Isaac Watts, the great hymnodist, wrote to Cotton Mather that Dr. Daniel Neale’s history of New England was timely, not allegorical:

I hoped when I first heard of it that I should have there found an abstract of the Lives & Spiritual experiences of those great and good Souls that planted & promoted the Gospel amongst you, & those most remarkable Providences, Deliverances & Answers to Prayer both amongst the English & the Indians . . . ; but I am disappointed . . . for he has written with a different view, & has taken merely the task of a Historian upon him. . . .⁴⁹

Like Dr. Neale in his history, Thomas Symmes, in his sermon on music, tried to correct the false allegorical associations with New England’s past. Understanding that the rustics in some way “knew” the allegory as part of their music, Symmes believed that he had to make them give up allegorical “knowledge” and the association of old-style singing with the founders. They had to stop reiterating their aesthetic and their past. Justifying reform, he wrote, “Opposition to the work of Reformation was judged by the Last *Synod* of these Churches [1679] to be one of the *Provoking Evils* of the Land.” Removing the veneration for allegorical perfection and uniformity, he wrote, “Some of *our* [regular singers’] Fathers, that were I suppose, pretty near as Good as any of yours, sang by note;” thus, he wrote, “some of your Fathers and Grandfathers are gone the wrong way.”

Symmes saw superstition in the veneration of old tunes, the old style, and the rustics' association of these with an untrue and allegorical tale of perfect founding.⁵⁰

With such criticisms Symmes, Walter and other reformers actively denied the allegorical "knowledge" that made the tunes sacred. But the rustics could not entertain the argument that their knowledge ought to become syntactical. Indeed, they could entertain not even the style of the argument, literate and linear, and especially not the deeper meaning, the imposition of time, history, on their way of knowing. Spirit in space was "true" and time was "false" because their aesthetic "told" them so. Symmes wrote that God was the author of the new style and that the rustics should not "buy Peace with falsehood"; rather they should accept truth: "[b]etter Truth without Peace." In addition, he told the rustics that they would "fly from *Books* offered for their Illumination and Conviction, as they would from a *Rattle-Snake*, as the manner of some has been. . . ."⁵¹ Rustic folk wisdom included a special fear of the rattlesnake, which had the power to hypnotize and to change the spirit of its victim. Thus Symmes here asserted that rustics refused to accept the literate and linear "truth" of history and feared it superstitiously as they feared the supernatural power of a local serpent's evil eye.

In the context of rustic knowledge, then, the reformers rejected objections to the new music. Moreover, they "interpreted" the country folk's reiteration of spirit and space in the old music and their "superstitious" feeling for ceremony. Symmes called them "odd" because they sang the same tunes over and over. He wrote that "people who opposed set prayers" should not ritualize their music. Symmes and other reformers knew that in this ritual sound the rustics found support for their chief paradigm of knowledge, the allegory. Accordingly, it is clear that when the rustics sang their ritual, they sang a way of knowing.

conclusion

What do such criticisms mean when applied to musical style and performance in the context of musical, religious and social reforms? Of course they mean that the two complex realities, the allegorical and the historical, were in conflict, and that each group thought itself in possession of the truth. Thus the attack on old-style psalmody was an attack on the rustic allegorical consciousness with all the social and political implications I have outlined here. But the attack was also an effort to bring a whole new musicological vision to rural New England. Walter, Symmes, Dwight and other reformers wanted to establish not only unceremonial linear song with a good brisk tempo, but also the linear flow of history, time with its acknowledged good and bad effect. Time was the source of both unceremonial worship and a modern, clear-headed vision of the past, including the history of music, not the allegorical meaning of sound.

Indeed, almost all reform and change during this period must be referred to this taming, despiritualizing, demystifying and desymbolizing

subordination to time, or at least that was the way it must have seemed to the rustics. In contrast, they saw only space filled with spirit. As regards such a vision, Clifford Geertz's interpretation of the ceremonial insinuation into all aspects of Balinese life is instructive: "The Anonymization of persons and the immobilization of time are thus but two sides of the same cultural process: the symbolic de-emphasis . . . of the perception of fellowmen as consociates, successors, or predecessors in favor of the perception of them as contemporaries."⁵² To be sure, in the case of the New England peasants, predecessors were deified contemporaries, time was immobilized, ceremony was paramount and, hence, there was no history, no time.

More important, though, is that in the context of the allegorical consciousness the art itself stopped time. It is no surprise that Symmes, Dwight and Walter all hit hard at the timelessness of the music that they wanted to change. Nor is it surprising that the rustics defended it and asserted that there was no "spirit" in the new style. In their attack on ceremony, the reformers asserted time and the movement of time, rhythm. They tried to replace vocally-worked space with time. They simply rejected the old world of carved houses, chests and court cupboards, the rising souls and spirits of the gravestones, and the indeterminate "anonymized" person of the beribboned and fluttering costumes. That is, they denied space. At the same time, of course, they denounced the local supporting life of the village by depriving the villagers of patriarchy and veneration, that is, worship of their ancestors who were in the haunted spirit-world of musical space.

Grating, grumbling, harshness and "very imperfect pitch" characterized the rustic musical style. As the rustics attacked a tune, each creating his own fabric of sound, howling and embroidering with inexpressible turns and other musical frills, the spatial aspects of the music obviously became paramount. Indeed the reformers' preference for time, the sophisticates' ridicule of the ceremonial nonsense in the lining-out, along with the "double rimes" in the rustic funerary verse, the rustics' defense of superstition and supernaturalism, the assertion of patriarchal politics, and the extension of society, when referred to the music, make the music itself a readable document. Accordingly, the old-style psalmody shows the anti-reformers challenging the despiritizing quality of the new style and asserting the rustic aesthetic. The rustics, defending their song, defended their society, their polity, their set of ceremonies and rituals and an allegorical "epistemology." These aspects of their lives were aesthetically rather than syntactically based. They thus earwitnessed, in their old-style psalmody, a resonance between space with its textured aesthetic and the whispered reality of the unseen, timeless spirit world.

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notes

1. John Higginson and William Hubbard, *A Testimony to the Order of the Gospel*, in John

Wise, *A Vindication of the Government of the Churches of New England* (Boston, 1717), appendix, 3-8; Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: Colony to Province* (Boston, 1953), 249-252.

2. Thomas Prince, *An Account of a Strange Appearance in the Heavens* (Boston, 1719); Thomas Paine, *The Doctrine of Earthquakes* (Boston, 1728). Sacan Bercovitch, *The American Jeremiad* (Madison, 1978) and *The Puritan Origins of the American Self* (New Haven, 1975), finds the transformation of the jeremiad, the vehicle for this vision, from the seventeenth into the eighteenth century, to exhibit a passage from pessimism to optimism and from cosmic time to linear time. I think that the traditions separate here, that the allegorical aspects of the earlier vision continued to serve the peasants as a timeless or, as I note below, a spiritual, hence spatial, definition of the past.

3. Such reforms were codified in the Proposals of 1705. Far from dying, as several historians have suggested, they were gradually insinuated into practice by reform-minded ministers, as noted in G. William T. Youngs, *God's Messengers: Religious Leadership in Colonial New England, 1700-1750* (Baltimore, 1976), 72-82.

4. Miller, *Colony to Province*, 288-292. For a re-reading of this episode see Eldon R. Turner, "Peasants and Parsons: Readers and the Intellectual Location of John Wise's *Churches Quarrel Espoused*," *Early American Literature* 17, 146-170.

5. John Wise, *The Churches Quarrel Espoused* (Boston, 1713), *passim*; Thomas Symmes, *Utile-Dulci; or a Jaco-Serious Dialogue* (Boston, 1722), 52. No full-length study of anti-Catholicism among the latter-day Puritans has yet been done. This aspect of religion is central to the anti-reformers in every way. Carl Bridenbaugh, *Meiter and Scepter: Transatlantic Faith, Ideas, Personalities, and Politics, 1689-1775* (New York, 1962), 54-68, provides some information, but it is not local. Richard Hofstadter, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* (New York, 1962), 63-64, notes the liberalizing clergy and the continued suspiciousness of the laity.

6. The parochial aspects of the "peasant mentality" are provided in Eric Wolf *Peasants* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1966), especially 15-16, where he explains the symbolic values of house, land and household items. The first extension of the term to the New England farmers was in Kenneth Lockridge, *A New England Town: Dedham, Massachusetts, the First Hundred Years* (New York, 1970), 18-19. Other historians have followed Lockridge in their analyses. The idea that the New Englanders were "peasants" is controversial, but I think that Lockridge and others have isolated an important aspect of some of the New Englanders. Hence the idea informs a central assumption in this paper: a peasant or "rustic" culture existed in early eighteenth-century New England, and it was well integrated relative to the dominant elites.

7. Influential in my theoretical stance have been Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (New York, 1978), and James L. Peacock, *Consciousness and Change: Symbolic Anthropology in Evolutionary Perspective* (New York, 1975), especially his section on the separation of art from religion. My treatment of style, ceremonies and the rustic aesthetic stems from E. Brooks Holifield, *The Covenant Sealed: The Development of Sacramental Theology in Old and New England, 1570-1720* (New Haven, 1974), chapter 7; Charles Hambrick-Stowe, *The Practice of Piety: Puritan Devotional Disciplines in Seventeenth-Century New England* (Chapel Hill, 1982); Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York, 1973), particularly the sections on ceremony and aesthetics.

8. Robert Stevenson, *Protestant Church Music in America: A Short Survey of Men and Movements from 1546 to the Present* (New York, 1966), and the standard, Gilbert Chase, *America's Music, from the Pilgrims to the Present* (New York, 1966), 10-39. Advances by musicologists have fit Puritan psalmody into a general pattern of development, most recently, Nicholas Temperly, "The Old Way of Singing: Its Origins and Development," *Journal of American Musicological Society*, 24 (Fall, 1981), 511-544. Contemporary descriptions of the old way were first collected in George Hood, *A History of Music in New England with Sketches of Reformers and Psalmists* (Boston, 1846), which largely set the interpretive orientation—reform improved the music. Allen Britton, "Theoretical Introductions in American Tune Books to 1800," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1949, 87, includes the best checklist of contemporary treatises which describe the old-style singing; most famous among them are Thomas Symmes, *The Reasonableness of Regular Singing* (Boston, 1720) and Thomas Walter, *The Sweet Psalmist of Israel* (Boston, 1722), Thomas Symmes, *Utile-Dulci; or a Jaco-Serious Dialogue* (Boston, 1723).

9. Thomas Walter, *The Grounds and Rules of Music* (Boston, 1721), 4-5.

10. Nathaniel Chauncey, *Regular Singing Defended* (New London, 1728), 4-5, 13; Symmes, *Reasonableness*, 10-11.

11. Walter, *Grounds and Rules*, 3.

12. Britton, 22 nt. 3, 86-87; Chase, *America's Music*, 23; Alan Lomax, "The Gospel Ship: Baptist Hymns and White Spirituals from the Southern Mountains," (New World Records, n.d., 294), inner jacket.

13. Walter, *Sweet Psalmist*, 7.

14. Walter, *Grounds and Rules*, 5.

15. My reading of these artifacts has been influenced by Sigfried Gideon, *Space, Time and Architecture: The Growth of a New Tradition* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1941), 108-110. Standard works on the cultural transition are well known. Support for the nature of these changes has come most recently from James Deetz, *In Small Things Forgotten: The Archeology of Early American Life* (Garden City, 1977). Robert Trent, ed., *Pilgrim Century Furniture: An Historical Survey* (New York, n.d.), provides an historiographical selection.

16. Elizabeth McClellan, *Historic Dress in America, 1607-1870* (New York, 1977 [1904]), 83-115, 177-193, 299-307; Estelle Ansley Worrell, *Children's Costume in America, 1607-1910* (New York, 1980), 9-31.
17. Allan I. Ludwig, *Graven Images: New England Stonecarving and its Symbols, 1650-1815* (Middletown, 1966), 424, finds in the rural culture by about 1750 a trend toward line, away from texture. Peter Benes, *The Masks of Orthodoxy: Folk Gravestone Carving in Plymouth, Massachusetts, 1689-1805* (Amherst, 1977), 160, nt. 70, finds that the last towns to introduce new figures, angels and portraits and to abandon the old textured death's heads and the decorations, were also the last towns to change from the old way of singing to the regular.
18. Symmes, *Utile-Dulci*, 28; Josiah Dwight, *An Essay to Silence the Outcry . . . Against Regular Singing* (Boston, 1725), 6. Elizabeth Bodey Schumpeter, *English Overseas Trade Statistics, 1697-1808* (Oxford, 1960), provides the best evidence that the import of new goods was widespread. Economic concerns resulted in a series of pamphlets which have been collected in Andrew M. Davis, *Colonial Currency Reprints* (Boston, 1910-11).
19. Charles Seeger, "Systematic Musicology: Viewpoints, Orientations and Methods," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 4 (Fall, 1951), 241. Walter, *Grounds and Rules*, 3-5; Symmes, *Utile-Dulci*, 19-25; Peter Thacher, et al., *Cases of Conscience about Singing of Psalms* (Boston, 1723), 9-13.
20. Irving W. Lyon, *The Colonial Furniture of New England* (New York, 1977 [1891]), 139; *Boston News-Letter*, October 21-28, 1706; *Boston Gazette*, June 15-22, September 14-21, 1724; Dwight, *Silence the Outcry*, 6; [John Wise], *A Word of Comfort to a Melancholy Country* (Boston, 1721), 37-38.
21. Dwight, *Silence the Outcry*, 6; Symmes, *Utile-Dulci*, 44.
22. Joseph Addison, "Country Manners," in John R. Greene, *Essays of Joseph Addison* (New York, n.d.), 253; Sara Kemble Knight, *The Private Journal of a Journey from Boston to New York* (Albany, 1865), 58, 60.
23. Thomas [John] Hill, *The Young Secretaries Guide* (Boston, 1718), 18-19.
24. I think that in these rituals and artifacts there is a good deal of what Victor and Edith Turner have called "symbolic density," in which symbols are multivocal and draw together aspects of history, religion, polity and society and allow all to be imbued with symbolic meaning. Victor and Edith Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture* (New York, 1978), 114.
25. *New England Courant*, December 24-31, 1722.
26. Nathaniel Ames, *An Astrological Diary for . . . 1726* (Boston, 1726), [6]. Same title, 1727, 1728. Ames included an essay on the vastness of space in his almanac for 1728. Ames' almanacs are an interesting contrast to Thomas Paine, *An Almanac* (Boston, 1719), and Thomas Robie, *An Almanack* (Boston, 1716), which take up scientific subjects. Yet Edward Holyoke, *Almanac* (Boston, 1715), included the anatomy, the Golden Number for the year and the Circle of the Signs. I think that elite concern for such things was simply waning while the country people continued to take magic and astrology seriously. Jon Butler, "Magic, Astrology, and the Early American Religious Heritage, 1600-1760," *American Historical Review*, 84 (April, 1979), 317-346, and Herbert Leventhal, *In the Shadow of the Enlightenment: Occultism and Renaissance Science in Eighteenth-Century America* (New York, 1976), 16-34, note the interest in magic, astrology and other aspects of "folk" beliefs.
27. Cotton Mather to Thomas Hollis, November 5, 1723, in Cotton Mather, *Diary*, *MHSC*, Series 7, Vol. 8 (Boston, 1915), 728.
28. *New England Courant*, December 4-11, 1721; February 26-March 5, March 21-29, April 2-9, May 7-14, November 19-22, 1722; March 18-25, March 25-April 1, August 12-19, September 9-16, December 2-9, 1723.
29. *New England Courant*, November 5-12, 1722; February 18-25, 1723.
30. Symmes, *Utile-Dulci*, 8-13.
31. Youngs, *God's Messengers*, 107.
32. Benjamin Colman, notes for an address to the Boston-Cambridge Ministerial Association, August, 1705, Colman Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.
33. Wise, *Churches Quarrel Espoused*, 68-69, 19.
34. Symmes, *Utile-Dulci*, 2, 52, 53.
35. Chauncey, *Regular Singing Defended*, 48; Dwight, *Silence the Outcry*, 10-11; Symmes, *Utile-Dulci*, 11.
36. Thacher, *Cases of Conscience*, 8-9.
37. Thacher, *Cases of Conscience*, 9.
38. Thacher, *Cases of Conscience*, 13, 14.
39. Thacher, *Cases of Conscience*, 15.
40. Higginson and Hubbard, *Order of the Gospel*, appendix in Wise, *Vindication*, 3. *The Interpreter's Bible* (New York, 1957), 477-479.
41. This interpretation of Wise is in Turner, "Peasants and Parsons."
42. Emma Bell Miles, *The Spirit of the Mountains* (Knoxville, Tennessee, 1975 [1905]), 153.
43. Josiah Dwight, *A Bright Side of Dark Providence* (Boston, 1710), 3-5.
44. Dwight, *Silence the Outcry*, 6, 7-9.
45. Dwight, *Silence the Outcry*, 10; Symmes, *Utile-Dulci*, 28.
46. Samuel Clarke, *Works* (London, 1738 [1705]), I, 221.

47. Clarke, *Works*, II, 2.

48. Sacvan Bercovitch, *Horologicals to Chronometricals: The Rhetoric of the Jeremiad*, in *Literary Monographs*, 3 (Madison, 1970), 16, nt. 16, posits such an enclosed world where spirit and matter are visualized as one; my debt to his scholarship cannot be overstated.

49. Isaac Watts to Cotton Mather, February 18, 1720, Colman Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

50. Symmes, *Utile-Dulci*, 5, 38, 40.

51. Symmes, *Utile-Dulci*, 32-33.

52. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 399. Geertz's idea that Balinese morality is at bottom aesthetic, 400, is much like the interpretation I have pursued for the rustics of New England.