

Terms and Concepts

Typology / Typological Hermeneutics / Type / Antitype

John Calvin, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1534)

Arminianism / Arminian heresy: Jacobus Arminius (Dutch Reformed theologian at the University of Leiden)

Synod of Dort (1618-19), a meeting of Calvinist clergy in the Netherlands: the five doctrines of total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace, perseverance of the saints (“TULIP”)

Materialism vs. idealism / Phenomenal vs. noumenal

Puritan “plain style”

Form of the Puritan Sermon: Biblical Text, followed by 1) Explication; 2) Doctrine; 3) Propositions and Reasons; 4) Application

Lay Sermon

The Great Migration

Dates and Events

1620 Pilgrims arrive in New England

1621 Robert Cushman, business agent for the Plymouth Colony, preaches the first sermon delivered in New England: *The Sin and Danger of Self-Love*.

1622 *Mourt's Relation* published in England.

1630 John Winthrop's group arrives in Massachusetts Bay: “A Model of Christian Charity.”

Bradford begins Book I of *The History of Plymouth Plantation*.

There are approximately 5,000 Puritans in New England.

1630s “The Great Migration” – approximately 20,000 Puritan colonists arrive in the New World.

Points to Remember

William Bradford (ca. 1589 –1657)

Rewriting History: Compare *Mourt's Relation* (1622), thought to be written by William Bradford and Edward Winslow, to Book I of *The History of Plymouth Plantation* (1630) by William Bradford.

Bradford's Rhetoric: Why does Bradford “pause” and break chronology near the bottom of p. 115? Why bring in the “savage barbarians” here, before they are

actually seen? What is the logic of this passage as a whole? How does it make use of typological hermeneutics?

Depiction of Nature: Compare descriptions of natural imagery in *Mourt's Relation* to the "hideous" wilderness of the *History*. **What is at stake in this revision?** Why does Bradford leave certain details out in the *History*? What are the ideological functions of **rhetorical abstraction** in the later text?

Lack of Interest in Language: Compare Bradford's account of a battle against the natives on p. 119 with the following passages from *Mourt's Relation*. What are the key revisions? What is their effect?

Anon, all upon a sudden, we heard a great and strange cry, which we knew to be the same voices, though they varied their notes. One of our company, being abroad, came running in and cried, "They are men! Indians! Indians!" and withal, their arrows came flying amongst us. Our men ran out with all speed to recover their arms, as by the good providence of God they did. In the meantime, Captain Miles Standish, having a snaphance ready, made a shot, and after him another. After they two had shot, other two of us were ready, but he wished us not to shoot till we could take aim, for we knew not what need we should have, and there were four only of us which had their arms there ready, and stood before the open side of our barricade, which was first assaulted.

They thought it best to defend it, lest the enemy should take it and our stuff, and so have the more vantage against us. Our care was no less for the shallop, but we hoped all the rest would defend it; we called unto them to know how it was with them, and they answered, "Well! Well!" every one and, "Be of good courage!" We heard three of their pieces go off, and the rest called for a firebrand to light their matches. One took a log out of the fire on his shoulder and went and carried it unto them, which was thought did not a little discourage our enemies. The cry of our enemies was dreadful, especially when our men ran out to recover their arms; their note was after this manner, "Woach woach ha ha hach woach." Our men were no sooner come to their arms, but the enemy was ready to assault them.

John Winthrop (ca. 1588 -1649)

Biography: A lawyer in England, son of a lawyer, grandson of a self-made businessman. Later, governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony.

The Great Migration: Demographic composition: 1% of highest (aristocracy) and lowest (underclass); 10% poor servants; 10% unskilled laborers; **79% "middling"** (upwardly mobile, mainly urban, mainly professionals). Economic as well as religious reasons for the migration: "profits in the wilderness" (to use the historian John Frederick Martin's phrase).

Difference: Note Winthrop's defense of hierarchy at the beginning of the sermon. (What is wrong with Elizabeth Winthrop's description of the "difference" John Winthrop invokes as "diversity" in our contemporary sense?)

In their different ways, both Bradford and Winthrop and Bradford demonstrate that the Puritans see themselves creating a new center in the New World, from which their values would radiate outward.

They saw themselves engaged in an "errand unto the wilderness" (the title of a famous sermon by Samuel Danforth). They saw themselves creating a "shining city on a hill," as Winthrop puts it at the end of "A Model of Christian Charity."

Conceptual Associations: Think about the ways in which certain ideas are mapped onto one another:

- Old Testament – law – justice – nature – type
- New Testament – charity – mercy – grace – antitype

Systems of Value: community first, individual second; a rhetoric of philosophical materialism used to promote an idealist conception (the true reality exists not on earth but in the Kingdom of God).

New Testament vs. Old Testament: Part I of Winthrop's sermon draws heavily on Matthew and on the Pauline sections of the New Testament: Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians. Part II uses the "city on a hill" image from Matthew, but draws heavily on the Old Testament: "people of Israel," Leviticus, Samuel, "covenant," Micah, Deuteronomy. How is the message of charity overtaken in the end by the Puritans' conception of themselves as God's chosen?

Ronald Reagan's appropriation of the "city on a hill": his reversal of Winthrop's values as an example of the vicissitudes of cultural symbology:

"The preservation and enhancement of the values that strengthen and protect individual freedom, family life, communities, and neighborhoods and the liberty of our beloved nation should be at the heart of any legislative or political program presented to the American people."

"Liberty can be measured by how much freedom Americans have to make their own decisions—even their mistakes."

The Republican party "must be the party of the individual. It must not sell out the individual to cater to the group. No greater challenge faces our society today than insuring that each one of us can maintain his dignity and his identity in an increasingly complex, centralized society.

"... Then with God's help we shall indeed be as a city upon a hill with the eyes of all people upon us."

Reagan on Winthrop:

“What he imagined was important because he was an early Pilgrim, an early freedom man. He journeyed here on what today we’d call a little wooden boat; and like the other Pilgrims, he was looking for a home that would be free.”

For further thought:

In what ways is Winthrop’s “Pauline” discussion of love, which seems to arise primarily from the New Testament, in fact framed by an Old Testament conception of a chosen people making a covenant with God?

Here is St. Paul’s “hymn to charity” (1 Corinthians 13):

- 1: Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.
- 2: And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.
- 3: And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.
- 4: Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,
- 5: Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;
- 6: Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;
- 7: Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.
- 8: Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.
- 9: For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.
- 10: But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.
- 11: When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.
- 12: For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.
- 13: And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

How does the sermon frame its New Testament principles within a conception bounded by the Fall of Man and Revelation?

In the aftermath of the events September 11, 2001, does Winthrop's call for a polity based on "love" take on renewed force and radicality? What would it mean to achieve such a polity, and why were the Puritans themselves unable to do it?

Review the articles by Kuklick and Bercovitch to understand the difference between the Puritan view of history as sacred the secular view that most Americans take for granted today.

Today's Songs

Elliott Smith, "Christian Brothers"

Bruce Springsteen, "Working on a Dream"

The Rolling Stones, "Gimme Shelter"

Petra, "Onward Christian Soldiers"