

“The entire trade to themselves”: Contested Authority, Intimate Exchanges, and the Political
Economy of the Upper Hudson River Region, 1626-1713

By

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
(History)

at the
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

2018

Date of final oral examination: 05/10/2018

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My study of a seventeenth-century borderlands community was made possible by the institutions and communities of scholars who supported this project. I received generous financial assistance from the Colonial Dames of America in the State of Wisconsin, and from a Barton/Clark-Curti Fellowship and Minna Grotophorst Willis Fellowship from the History Department of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. My Dutch language acquisition was funded by a Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowship from the Center for European Studies at UW-Madison and the U.S. Department of Education. I participated in a Dutch language immersion program in Zeist, The Netherlands, with the financial assistance of the Ethel Antrim Bird Netherlandic Studies Fund from the German Department at UW-Madison. Jolanda Vanderwal Taylor always encouraged my studies of Dutch language and culture, and I am grateful for her years of guidance and support.

My dissertation committee provided crucial mentorship from the project's inception to its completion. My advisor, Charles Cohen, pored over many drafts with his keen eye and red pen. Thomas Archdeacon, John Hall, Larry Nesper, and Gloria Whiting pointed me to valuable resources along the way. When I embarked on my research in Albany, the New Netherland Research Center opened its doors to me, and I am eternally grateful for the hospitality, assistance, and translation help extended by Charles Gehring and Janny Venema.

I presented portions of my research in several settings, and I benefitted from the insights of senior scholars who offered comments on my papers and asked pointed questions at conferences. Evan Haefeli, Jaap Jacobs, Dennis Maika, Mark Meuwese, and Wim Klooster shared sources and comments that shaped my analysis. In 2013, the New Netherland Institute hosted an "Emerging Scholars Roundtable" in New York City for junior researchers of the Dutch

in the Americas. The roundtable was an extraordinary success, and the participants have maintained a community of scholarship and mutual support that I have had the pleasure of taking part in. Liz Covart, Deborah Hamer, Andrea Mosterman, and Nicole Maskiell have always been willing to swap sources, debate the idiosyncrasies of seventeenth-century Dutch words, and visualize new ways of bringing the history of New Netherland to public and academic audiences.

Conversations in the car on Monday nights with my colleagues in the Oakhill Prison Humanities Project formed the basis of my own graduate community, and I am lucky to have co-taught with friends and brilliant historians: Elena McGrath and James McKay, who were later joined by Jen Gramer, Jillian Jacklin, Benjamin Shannon, and Jillian Slaight. My students have relentlessly pushed me to see the bigger picture and understand this history's relevance for contemporary communities. I am grateful for their many questions and insights.

My family has long awaited the completion of this dissertation. Thank you to Alex, Quentin, and Margot for your love and patience.

For Angie, who is brave.

To Doria, my dear friend,

“Our moment is swift, like ships adrift, we’re swept apart, too soon.” – Billie Holiday

NOTE ON SOURCES

The bulk of the manuscript sources consulted for this project were original Dutch documents, particularly court records and council minutes, from Rensselaerswijck, Beverwijck/Albany, and New Netherland. Albany's records were written in Dutch until 1686, and occasionally even after that date. All translations from the Dutch are my own unless otherwise noted.

A fire at the New York State Archives in 1911 destroyed or damaged many of the original records from the colonial era. The Dutch documents fared better than those from the English period, though entire volumes of records were lost and those that remain are often charred and fragmented beyond legibility. In some cases, I have indicated in the footnotes where a document was unreadable or difficult to understand due to fire damage. Luckily, state archivists E. B. O'Callaghan and A. J. F. van Laer translated several volumes of documents before the fire, and I have sometimes compared the charred originals with these nineteenth and early twentieth-century translations, as indicated in the footnotes. Charles Gehring and Janny Venema of the New Netherland Project have produced excellent modern translations, as well, which are indispensable to scholars of the Dutch in North America. I am particularly grateful to Janny Venema for sharing her transcriptions of the more indecipherable pages and for her corrections of my translations.

I have kept quotations from English-language documents as close as possible to the original texts, including idiosyncratic spelling and punctuation, but I have expanded the many common abbreviations ("yt" to "that," "ye" to "the," etc.) for the sake of readability.

ABBREVIATIONS

- AA* Joel Munsell, *The Annals of Albany*, 10 vols. (Albany, NY: J. Munsell, 1850-1859).
- CARSM* Dutch Records: Court of Albany, Rensselaerwyck [sic], and Schenectady Minutes, 1668-1685, 3 Vols., Albany County Hall of Records, Albany, NY.
- CFOBM* Court of Fort Orange and Beverwijck Minutes, 1652-1656, [Beverwijck Court Minutes, Vol. 1] Albany County Hall of Records, Albany, NY.
- CJVR* A. J. F. van Laer, ed. and trans., *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer, 1651-1674* (Albany: University of the State of New York, 1932).
- CMVR* A. J. F. van Laer, ed. and trans., *Correspondence of Maria van Rensselaer, 1669-1689* (Albany: The University of the State of New York, 1935).
- DCAC* Dutch Colonial Administrative Correspondence, New York Colonial Manuscripts, Vols. 11-15, New York State Archives, Albany, NY.
- DCCM* Dutch Colonial Council Minutes, New York Colonial Manuscripts, Vols. 4-10, New York State Archives, Albany, NY.
- DHSNY* E. B. O’Callaghan, ed., *Documentary History of the State of New-York*, 4 vols. (Albany, NY: Weed, Parsons and Co., 1849-1851).
- DRCHNY* E. B. O’Callaghan, ed. and trans., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New-York, Procured in Holland, England, and France*, 15 vols. (Albany, NY: Weed, Parsons, and Co., 1853-1887).
- ERNY* James A. Holden, E. T. Corwin, and Hugh Hastings, eds., *Ecclesiastical Records, State of New York*, 7 vols. (Albany, NY: J. B. Lyon, 1901-1916).
- FOP* Fort Orange Proceedings, 1652-1660, [Beverwijck Court Minutes, Vol. 2], Albany County Hall of Records, Albany, NY.
- FOR* Charles Gehring and Janny Venema, eds. and trans., *Fort Orange Records*, 2 vols. (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2000 and 2009).
- FOSAR* Fort Orange Settlement and Administrative Records, [Beverwijck Court Minutes, Vol. 3], New York Colonial Manuscripts, Vol. 16, Pts. 2&3, New York State Archives. Albany, NY.

- GECNY* Peter R. Christoph and Florence A. Christoph, eds., *Books of General Entries of the Colony of New York, 1664-1673, Orders, Warrants, Letters, Commissions, Passes and Licenses Issued by Governors Richard Nicolls and Francis Lovelace* (Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1982).
- LIR* Lawrence H. Leder, ed., *The Livingston Indian Records, 1666-1723* (Gettysburg: Pennsylvania Historical Association, 1956).
- LOCNY* Commissioners of Statutory Revision, *The colonial laws of New York from the year 1664 to the Revolution: including the charters to the Duke of York, the commissions and instructions to colonial governors, the Duke's laws, the laws of the Dongan and Leisler Assemblies, the charters of Albany and New York and the acts of the colonial legislatures from 1691 to 1775 inclusive*, Vol. 1 (Albany: James B. Lyon, 1894).
- LONN* E. B. O'Callaghan, ed. and trans., *Laws and Ordinances of New Netherland, 1638-1674* (Albany, NY: Weed, Parsons, and Co., 1868).
- NYHS* New-York Historical Society, New York, NY.
- NYCM* New York Colonial Manuscripts, New York State Archives, Albany, NY.
- VRBM* A. J. F. van Laer, ed. and trans., *Van Rensselaer Bowier Manuscripts, Being the Letters of Kiliaen Van Rensselaer, 1630-1643, and Other Documents Relating to the Colony of Rensselaerswyck* (Albany: University of the State of New York, 1908).
- VRMP* Van Rensselaer Manor Papers, New York State Library, Albany, NY.

INTRODUCTION

In 1699, a Mohawk woman named Karehadée promised the wealthy Albany merchant and known smuggler Evert Wendell a beaver pelt in exchange for a cask of rum. She didn't have the beaver pelt with her, so instead she put down 6 strings of wampum as security on the debt.¹ All aspects of this exchange might seem surprising: a Mohawk woman participating in trade, an illegal transaction recorded in an account book, and her use of wampum to secure her purchase. It certainly would have frustrated Albany's other leading merchants that Wendell violated the alcohol trade ordinances. According to Wendell's accounts, however, this was a fairly routine exchange. About half of Wendell's Indigenous customers were women and, of those, 57% were Mohawk women, from the easternmost Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) nation. Alcohol formed the basis of about 20% of his trades.² What is truly remarkable about their transaction is the wampum and the promise it contained that Karehadée would return, carrying a beaver pelt. She, like the many other Indigenous traders whose transactions never made it into an extant account book, conducted exchanges facilitated by wampum, foodstuffs, peltry, and alcohol. Structured by Native as well as Euro-American values, the trade was more than a "straight" economic exchange based on market calculations of an object's worth. The wampum that Karehadée gave to Wendell was a promise upon which their relationship was built. It was agreement, understanding, and obligation. The wampum bound Karehadée to Wendell for a beaver pelt.

¹ Account dated 1699, folio 1, in Kees-Jan Waterman, ed. and trans., *To Do Justice to Him and Myself: Evert Wendell's Account Book of the Fur Trade with the Indians in Albany, New York, 1695-1726* (Philadelphia, PA: American Philosophical Society Press, 2008), 97.

² Table 4 and Table 8, in Waterman, *To Do Justice to Him and Myself*, 48, 54-55.

Theirs was diplomacy conducted on the smallest, most intimate scale, wrapped in 6 wampum strings.

The summer after Karihadee secured her debt to Wendell and left with her cask of rum, leaders from all five Haudenosaunee nations and a small Christian Mohawk delegation sat in council in Albany with Richard Coote, Earl of Bellomont, the governor of New York. Joining Bellomont were Albany's delegates to the colonial assembly, and the town's mayor, aldermen, justices of the peace, and sheriff. Also present were English military representatives stationed at Fort Albany. The proceedings lasted more than a week and covered a number of topics, typical for large diplomatic gatherings that periodically renewed the Covenant Chain alliance between the Haudenosaunee nations and the English North American colonies. The assembled men discussed ongoing warfare, the English plan to build a fort at Onondaga, the need for more Protestant missionaries to counterbalance the influence of French Jesuits, and, of course, the fur trade. In conversations ranging from the mundane to the profound, Haudenosaunee and English leaders negotiated their plans for the future, what they hoped to accomplish over the coming months and years, and they made promises to one another, secured by gifts of wampum and beaver pelts from the Haudenosaunee, weapons, ammunition, and clothing from the governor.³

Historians have sifted through the finest details of numerous councils such as the 1700 Covenant Chain renewal, gleaning information about Haudenosaunee politics, culture, warfare, and religious conversion, as well as English imperial policies, attitudes toward Native peoples, economic interests, and colonial expansionism. Formal diplomatic meetings contain rare

³ E. B. O'Callaghan, ed. and trans., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New-York, Procured in Holland, England, and France*, 15 vols. (Albany, NY: Weed, Parsons, and Co., 1853-1887), 4: 727-745.

examples of seventeenth-century Indigenous speech, though filtered through translators and words chosen by colonial officials, that give precious glimpses of Haudenosaunee perspectives. Karehadée, too, and the Indigenous traders like her have made it into historians' accounts of the fur trade, the economic transactions that connected Native peoples to a global economy, or started centuries of warfare, or created a cycle of Indigenous dependency, depending on whom you ask. That Karehadée and Bellomont both came to Albany to conduct their business of trade and diplomacy is so often taken for granted by historians of the seventeenth-century northeast borderlands. The setting for these events has been depicted as little more than backdrop for the larger dramas unfolding in the foreground.

For the Haudenosaunee and Anglo-Dutch leaders assembled together in the late summer of 1700, their meeting's location was at the forefront of their concerns. Their council could not have happened anywhere else because the agreement they sought to renew was deeply tied to place. Before replying to Bellomont's proposals, the Onondaga leader Sadeganachtie began his speech by acknowledging the locale: "Brother Corlaer, This is the ancient house wherein wee speak to one another, the house of conference between your Lordship and the Five Nations."⁴ The meeting place, rooted in tradition and decades of history, sanctified the words spoken at the conference and, alongside the carefully-chosen gifts, sealed the promises made among the peoples. Albany, "the ancient house," was the site of Anglo-Dutch-Haudenosaunee relationships of past, present, and future. As the conference neared its end, after the gifts had been exchanged, Sadeganachtie again invoked the connections of place and history in the negotiations: "Wee were here before you and were a strong and numerous people when you were but small and young like

⁴ Ibid., 732.

striplings, yet wee were kind and cherished you, and therefore when wee propose any thing to you, if you cannot agree to it, let us take councill together that matters may be carry'd on smooth.”⁵ Since the earliest days of trading in the upper Hudson River region, they had come together in that place and had, over the decades, worked out a system for addressing their disagreements, large and small. They renewed and reaffirmed their relationship in these occasional grand conferences but also in the day-to-day interactions that happened after Bellomont returned to New York and the Haudenosaunee leaders traveled back to Iroquoia. This place had nurtured and sustained their bonds since the days when Dutch traders were but “small and young like striplings,” and it would remain the site at which they could “take councill together” for years to come. Indeed, Albany was the heart of the storied Anglo-Dutch-Haudenosaunee partnership.

That Sadeganachtie and Bellomont, Karehadee and Wendell, found themselves in Albany at the turn of the eighteenth century was not accidental, and Sadeganachtie had every reason to believe that Albany would continue to be the place where all grievances could be heard, disagreements discussed and smoothed over in council. The key to Albany’s centrality—its deep ties to diverse peoples with overlapping and divergent interests—was its unusual system of political economy, developed over a period of years through planning and negotiation, circumstance and conflict, intimate exchanges and informal diplomacy. The “ancient house” of Albany was built locally by Indigenous and European peoples, resting on a solid foundation and constructed with multiple floors, with many doors and windows, openings and alternative exits. The structure depended as much on the smallest transactions—a beaver pelt for a cask of rum,

⁵ Ibid., 740.

say—as it did on the treaties and agreements negotiated at the highest diplomatic levels. Women such as Karehadée were as essential to Albany’s stability as a colonial governor like Bellomont.

This dissertation examines the development of Albany’s particular, localized form of political economy in the seventeenth century that nurtured and supported Anglo-Dutch-Haudenosaunee relationships. Above all else, the story of colonial Albany is a story of remarkable continuity, of a house able to weather many storms. To fully see the “ancient house” and restore it to the crucial central place it occupied for the upper Hudson River region’s diverse peoples requires examining a broad chronology, however. So often, the region’s story has been bifurcated into Dutch and English histories that, by default, become narratives of change rather than continuity. Framed by war, with English conquest at mid-century and violent regional conflicts woven throughout, Albany’s seventeenth-century history was surprisingly stable, and its patterns of political economy, once established, remained steady.

This continuity paradoxically resulted from striation; the region’s political economy, centered at Albany, consisted of two levels that operated simultaneously. The first was a longstanding partnership between up-and-coming Dutch elites and Haudenosaunee leaders that localized political power, created spaces for negotiation and council, and regulated intercultural exchanges. This high-level, officially-sanctioned part of the region’s political economy emphasized professionalized diplomacy, trade confined to formal marketplaces, and strict regulation of Native-Dutch social distance. Elite authority in the region was far from absolute, however. Poor/middling Dutch traders contested trade regulations, and individual Haudenosaunee peoples chose to participate in an underground exchange economy that persisted on the margins well into the eighteenth century. The second, underground level of political economy, characterized by informal diplomacy, intimate exchanges, and illicit behaviors,

provided alternatives to the formal structures imposed by Albany's Dutch elites. It, too, helped sustain the town's partnerships with Indigenous peoples throughout the upper Hudson River region through daily interactions and consistent trade. Though the participants in each level of political economy contested one another's behaviors and accused each other of being sources of potential ruin, their activities worked in tandem to construct and maintain the "ancient house."

Albany's seventeenth-century history tells a story of partnership and continuity, but it is nevertheless part of a larger narrative of devastating loss. Sustained Dutch presence in the region began with military and fur trading outposts: first Fort Nassau, which was swallowed up by the Hudson [North] River, and then Fort Orange established by the West India Company (WIC). Settlement beyond the forts proceeded only after 1629, when two simultaneous events on two separate continents profoundly changed the region. First, Mohawks went to war with the Mahicans who lived near Fort Orange. The violence, though likely unrelated to Dutch presence or to the fur trade, had the effect of dispersing Mahican peoples and solidifying the Mohawk-Dutch trading relationship. At the same time, the WIC implemented the *Freedoms and Exemptions* policies that instituted the patroonship system, or a framework for private colonization in which wealthy merchants or groups of investors could purchase and settle parts of New Netherland. The patroons would pay many of the upfront settlement costs, and the WIC would support their efforts with colonial defense and passage to and from the United Provinces on WIC ships. The first patroon to oversee settlement in the area was Kiliaen van Rensselaer, an Amsterdam jeweler, who sent his agents to New Netherland in 1630 to purchase land from

departing Mahicans. Albany's beginning was thus inextricably linked to war and displacement; the ascent of the Haudenosaunee-Dutch partnership came at the expense of Mahicans.⁶

The patterns established in 1629 would remain constant threads in the region's colonial history: settlement would depend on dispersal of Native peoples, colonists would misinterpret and misunderstand Indigenous actions and behaviors, violence would be everywhere on the margins as the Mohawks fought a series of conflicts that historians now refer to as the mourning wars, formerly the Beaver Wars. Destruction and displacement frayed the edges of the upper Hudson River region throughout the seventeenth century. These patterns were not so different from colonial settlements elsewhere in North America, among the English, Spanish, or French, and the Dutch were not immune from causing destruction to Indigenous populations through imperialism. This dissertation emphasizes alliance and trade with a narrow focus on Dutch and, later, English relationships to the Haudenosaunee built within Albany. The stability of this particular set of relationships often came at the expense of others, however, and understanding Albany's unusual political economy requires some discussion of the broader context of Native-Dutch interactions and the changing Indigenous world of the upper Hudson River region, as well as the ways in which that history has been written, rewritten, and mythologized since the English conquered New Netherland in 1664 and permanently established their rule in 1674.

The history of the Dutch in the Americas has long suffered from a mythology problem due, in part, to the history of conquest. Throughout the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the conquerors disparaged the conquered, mocking their language and institutions and

⁶ William A. Starna and José Antônio Brandão, "From the Mohawk-Mahican War to the Beaver Wars: Questioning the Pattern," *Ethnohistory* 51, no. 4 (2004): 725–50. The Mohawk-Mahican War and its origins and consequences are discussed in greater detail in Chapter One.

imposing Anglicization as a means of establishing New York as an English colony.⁷ In Albany, this process unfolded much more slowly, and the town remained quite insular and staunchly, culturally Dutch for much of the eighteenth century. This insularity did not protect the town and its citizens from criticism, however, and a handful of “observers” wrote scathing indictments of Albany, its Dutch inhabitants, and its relationships with Native peoples. The most famous of these accounts, still occasionally cited by historians of Native America, was Cadwallader Colden’s *The History of the Five Nations of Canada*, first published in 1727.⁸ Colden depicted Albany’s Dutch leaders as greedy, selfish, and unfit to maintain the Covenant Chain alliance with the Haudenosaunee. Colden also played an instrumental role in shaping the Swedish naturalist Peter Kalm’s opinion of Albany. Before traveling to the northeast borderlands, Kalm met with Colden, and his later observations that highlighted smuggling, greed, and depravity among the Dutch of Albany closely echo Colden’s critiques in *The History of the Five Nations of Canada*. Colden and Kalm both articulated a theory that the Dutch who settled Albany were not “respectable” or “honest” Dutch people, but rather a “pack of vagabonds” sent by the Dutch government and kept in check by “a few honest families.” This “pack of vagabonds” created a place so depraved, according to Kalm, that people asked him why he would want to journey

⁷ See Joyce D. Goodfriend, *Who Should Rule at Home?: Confronting the Elite in British New York City* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2017), 11-44.

⁸ The most notable recent example of a historian replicating Colden’s perspective by using his *History of the Five Nations* as a primary source is Daniel Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992). For a discussion of Colden and the politics of Anglicization, see William Howard Carter, “Anglicizing the League: The Writing of Cadwallader Colden’s *History of the Five Indian Nations*,” in *Anglicizing America: Empire, Revolution, Republic*, edited by Ignacio Gallup-Diaz, Andrew Shankman, and David J. Silverman (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 83-108.

there, because, “the avarice, selfishness, and immeasurable love of money of the inhabitants of Albany are very well known throughout all North America.” He described the ways in which Albany’s traders swindled Native peoples with alcohol and betrayed the colonists of New England by purchasing objects stolen from colonial homes during the raids and massacres of Anglo-French war.⁹

The mythology of the Dutch in Albany as portrayed by Colden and Kalm persisted for centuries. Their monstrous images were tempered somewhat with time and distance, but the overall sense of the town and its place in the region was that it was little more than a frontier outpost filled with greedy fur traders and surrounded by vast elite estates.¹⁰ The 1960s and 1970s revived historical interest in the fur trade, particularly histories of the Haudenosaunee, and scholars revisited colonial Albany and the Dutch role in diplomacy and alliance.¹¹ At the same time, histories that examined English conquest and the process of Anglicization from a Dutch

⁹ Peter Kalm, *The America of 1750; Peter Kalm’s Travels in North America; the English Version of 1770, Revised from the Original Swedish and Edited by Adolph B. Benson with a Translation of New Material from Kalm’s Diary Notes*, trans. Adolph B. Benson, Reprint (New York: Dover Publications, 1987), 344-346, 345 (quotations). For Kalm and Colden, see Thomas Elliot Norton, *The Fur Trade in Colonial New York, 1686-1776* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1974), 7-8.

¹⁰ In American literature, the Dutch were lampooned and caricatured in the nineteenth century by writers such as Washington Irving and James Fenimore Cooper. See Donna Merwick, *Stuyvesant Bound: An Essay on Loss Across Time* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 138.

¹¹ David A. Armour, *The Merchants of Albany, New York, 1686-1760* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1986); Francis Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire: The Covenant Chain Confederation of Indian Tribes with English Colonies from Its Beginnings to the Lancaster Treaty of 1744* (New York: Norton, 1984); Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975); Norton, *Fur Trade in Colonial New York*; Allen W. Trelease, *Indian Affairs in Colonial New York: The Seventeenth Century* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1960).

perspective began to untangle from historical reality some of the myths concocted by anti-Dutch British partisans.¹² In the decades surrounding the four-hundredth anniversary of Henry Hudson's voyage (2009), a flurry of historical scholarship emerged that described the unique Dutch presence in New Netherland and emphasized cultural values that the Dutch established in the New World: religious toleration, commercial imperialism, a benevolent view of Native peoples.¹³ These histories, while important corrections to the disparaging commentary of eighteenth-century Anglicization narratives, also produced a mythology of New Netherland and its relationship to diverse Indigenous populations, painting the Dutch as leaving a uniformly positive influence on North America and instilling New York with its most cherished twenty-first century qualities of commerce, diversity, and tolerance. The championing of Dutch North American imperialism is particularly jarring when one remembers that the Dutch were prolific slave traders, and that one of New York's most famous Dutch speakers of the nineteenth century was Sojourner Truth, who grew up immersed in the language in her owner's home.

In response to the late twentieth and early twenty-first century scholarship that perhaps overcorrected the grotesque images produced by Colden and Kalm, historians have reexamined the history of Dutch culture in New Netherland. Two influential volumes, one by Jaap Jacobs

¹² Joyce D. Goodfriend, *Before the Melting Pot: Society and Culture in Colonial New York City, 1664-1730* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992); Thomas Archdeacon, *New York City, 1664-1710: Conquest and Change* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1976).

¹³ See, for example, Roger Panetta, ed., *Dutch New York: The Roots of Hudson Valley Culture* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2009); Joyce Goodfriend, Benjamin Schmidt, and Annette Stott, eds., *Going Dutch: The Dutch Presence in America, 1609-2009* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2008); Russell Shorto, *The Island at the Center of the World: The Epic Story of Dutch Manhattan and the Forgotten Colony That Shaped America* (New York: Vintage Books, 2005); Benjamin Schmidt, *Innocence Abroad: The Dutch Imagination and the New World, 1570-1670* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

and the other by Janny Venema, study—in richly-sourced detail—the transfer of Dutch culture to New Netherland, the institutions that the Dutch created in their colonies, and the ways in which Dutch relationships with Native peoples changed over time based on settlement patterns. These histories are deeply tied to New Netherland’s people and their experiences of the New World, drawing on ignored or under-examined Dutch sources to tell many individual stories.¹⁴ Other recent scholarship has revisited specific mythologies, such as religious toleration, or told intriguing new tales of the Dutch in New Netherland and the extent to which their empire resembled or departed from those of their early modern peers.¹⁵

In her broad overview of Dutch-Indigenous relationships, Donna Merwick wrestles with the complex history of the Dutch in New Netherland who, at times, built powerful alliances, but who also carried out violent destruction in particular contexts. *The Shame and the Sorrow: Dutch Amerindian Encounters in New Netherland*, which takes its name from the 1969 documentary *The Sorrow and the Pity* about Vichy France and rural collaboration with the Nazis, attempts to reckon with unpleasant truths. Merwick underscores that *The Sorrow and the Pity* depicts French people’s capacity for the, “betrayal of France’s cultural past and humane values, betrayal of one another and themselves.”¹⁶ Her history of Native-Dutch interactions in

¹⁴ Jaap Jacobs, *New Netherland: A Dutch Colony in Seventeenth-Century America* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2005); Janny Venema, *Beverwijck: A Dutch Village on the American Frontier, 1652-1664* (Hilversum, The Netherlands: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2003).

¹⁵ See, for example, Wim Klooster, *The Dutch Moment: War, Trade, and Settlement in the Seventeenth-Century Atlantic World* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016); Benjamin Schmidt, *Inventing Exoticism: Geography, Globalism, and Europe’s Early Modern World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015); Merwick, *Stuyvesant Bound*; Evan Haefeli, *New Netherland and the Dutch Origins of American Religious Liberty* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012).

¹⁶ Donna Merwick, *The Shame and the Sorrow: Dutch-Amerindian Encounters in New Netherland* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 4.

colonial New Netherland thus sets up Dutch culture and its “humane values”—which she describes as “alongshore,” or preferring commerce, movement, and impermanence to the type of “culture” most frequently referred to by historians as “settler colonialism”—only to demonstrate the ways in which Dutch people betrayed those values when it was convenient to do so, as in the case of Kieft’s War in New Amsterdam and the Esopus Wars in the Hudson River Valley. All of Merwick’s books about New Netherland—beautifully written, engaging stories that linger with the reader—fall into the same pattern as *The Shame and the Sorrow*. Because her analysis is so deeply tied to seventeenth-century (and often medieval) European cultural context, one gets the sense from her narratives that the Dutch peoples of New Netherland never built anything new or created any lasting change. They were not influenced by local conditions, nor did they adapt. Those who changed in *The Shame and the Sorrow* betrayed their essential Dutch-ness, according to Merwick’s description, and in so doing betrayed all the positive characteristics she associates with “alongshore” culture.

Historians have also considered the ways in which Dutch culture shaped relationships with Native peoples in narrowly specific regions, demonstrating Native persistence as well as decline in the wake of Dutch colonization. Paul Otto and Tom Arne Midtrød, for example, examine the diverse groups of Munsee-speaking peoples who lived in the Hudson River Valley and experienced sustained contact with the Dutch in New Amsterdam as well as in the Esopus/Catskills frontier region. Otto employs the term “frontier” from Native American historiography, and his narrative unfolds in three parts that tell the story of a closing frontier, of decline along a trajectory of first contact, trade, and settlement, with colonization’s final phase ushering in periods of armed conflict and the dispersal of Native peoples. Otto’s key historiographical intervention is not simply to examine under-studied peoples but to show how

utterly familiar the Hudson River Valley's path of colonization was. The Dutch were not uniquely commercial or benevolent, in Otto's account. They were just like every other colonial power in North America in that they contested frontier spaces and, eventually, their colonial settlements displaced Indigenous peoples.¹⁷ Midtrød moves Euro-American individuals to the margins as much as possible in his study, considering instead the ways in which colonization affected the interactions among Munsee-speaking peoples, Mahicans, and the Haudenosaunee in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, particularly after New York's governors encouraged the resettlement of Indigenous peoples—refugees from the various wars fought in New England—to the Hudson River Valley. He argues that vast diplomatic and kinship networks tied diverse Indigenous peoples to one another and created the political conditions that sustained the Indigenous population for more than a century after Otto's narrative ends with dispersal and decline. Otto's story is a familiar declension narrative unfolding in an accelerated chronology. Though Midtrød's analysis echoes similar elements of settler colonialism and frontier violence, its emphasis on Native diplomacy demonstrates the persistence of Hudson River Valley Indigenous political structures into the era of the American Revolution.¹⁸

Other historians of Dutch culture and North American colonization have emphasized cultural flexibility as well as cohesion in Dutch-Indigenous encounters. Jacobs and Venema each find numerous examples of Dutch cultural traditions transplanted to, as well as cultural norms transformed by, the New World.¹⁹ Mark Meuwese's comparative examination of Atlantic

¹⁷ Paul Otto, *The Dutch-Munsee Encounter in America: The Struggle for Sovereignty in the Hudson Valley* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006).

¹⁸ Tom Arne Midtrød, *The Memory of All Ancient Customs: Native American Diplomacy in the Colonial Hudson Valley* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012).

¹⁹ Jacobs, *New Netherland*; Venema, *Beverwijck*.

World frontier spaces in the Gold Coast, Angola, Brazil, and New Netherland locates varying approaches to colonization in each region and widespread Dutch cultural adaptation to local circumstances. His focus on treaty making and high-level diplomacy confines his study to the interactions between imperial officials and Indigenous leaders. He argues, in contrast to Merwick, that, “Dutch merchants had dreams of empire that were as ambitious as those of other European powers,” and that creating a Dutch empire to rival those of Spain, Portugal, England, and France meant establishing extensive alliances and agreements with Indigenous peoples across the globe, “entangling” with one another in locally-defined ways.²⁰

Meuwese’s comparative history of frontier zones occasionally captures aspects of the Dutch-Haudenosaunee alliance, though his wide-ranging study never deeply considers the development of Beverwijck, the Dutch town that became Albany, and its complex, prolonged relationship with neighboring Indigenous peoples. Janny Venema’s thorough examination of Beverwijck’s Dutch culture describes Indigenous influences on the town’s functions and growth, but her study primarily attends to the Dutch cultural institutions—everything from churches to taverns, patterns of home construction to systems of poor relief—reproduced there. Her emphasis on Dutch cultural presence, then, necessarily describes a smaller and smaller role for Native peoples within the village as the town became increasingly Dutch.²¹ Meuwese and Venema, though they do not set out to advance a sustained analysis of Dutch-Haudenosaunee relationships, both offer corrections to the disparaging narratives promoted by Colden and Kalm while keeping their distance from valorized depictions of Dutch imperial presence in North

²⁰ Mark Meuwese, *Brothers in Arms, Partners in Trade: Dutch-Indigenous Alliances in the Atlantic World, 1595–1674* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2012), 10.

²¹ Venema, *Beverwijck*.

America. Meuwese demonstrates the ways in which the Dutch-Haudenosaunee partnership, though rooted in local circumstances, was tied to a larger network of Dutch-Indigenous alliances throughout the Atlantic World. Venema attends to the local, revealing instead a Dutch town that increasingly sought distance from its Indigenous neighbors as it built the capacity to sustain itself without being dependent on Native assistance.

All of the major histories of the Haudenosaunee in the seventeenth century are, by design, situated within Iroquoia, and they compare Haudenosaunee approaches to trade, alliance, war and cultural exchange with those of the different European powers on their borders: the French and the Dutch, who were eventually replaced by the English. These narratives often build toward the Grand Settlement of 1701 in which the Haudenosaunee nations negotiated peace with both the French and the English, creating a policy of neutrality that lasted for several decades. Historians, in tracing the path to neutrality, therefore emphasize factionalism in League politics, strains in the Covenant Chain alliances negotiated at Albany, the devastation caused by a century of near-constant warfare, and the growing persuasive authority of French missionaries operating within Iroquoia and New France in the later decades of the seventeenth century. These Haudenosaunee-centered histories demonstrate the tensions in the longstanding partnership with the Dutch of Albany and reveal the cultural and social destruction caused by a century of encounters with Euro-American imperial powers.²²

²² Eric Hinderaker, *The Two Hendricks: Unraveling a Mohawk Mystery* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010); William N. Fenton, *The Great Law and the Longhouse: Political History of the Iroquois Confederacy* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998); José António Brandão, “Your Fyre Shall Burn No More”: *Iroquois Policy toward New France and Its Native Allies to 1701* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997); Matthew Dennis, *Cultivating a Landscape of Peace: Iroquois-European Encounters in the Seventeenth Century* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993); Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse*; Jennings, *Ambiguous Iroquois Empire*.

Recent examinations of the Haudenosaunee have revisited some of the earlier assumptions about Indigenous dependence, factionalism, and the splintering of Haudenosaunee peoples into French-allied and English-allied groups in the later decades of the seventeenth century. Jon Parmenter argues that Haudenosaunee peoples approached the empires at the edges of Iroquoia with remarkable consistency throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and that the Grand Settlement of 1701 simply codified in treaty a longstanding conception of Iroquoia as an autonomous, fluid space that connected Haudenosaunee peoples across imperial borders.²³ Though an anthropological study primarily focused on the contemporary Mohawk community of Kahnawà:ke, Audra Simpson's analysis of membership, belonging, and kinship networks further questions the categories of alliance and dependence so often adhered to by historians of the seventeenth century. She notes that historical kinship networks demarcated cultural membership, and these networks crossed and expanded well beyond imperial borders and colonial structures.²⁴ Two recent dissertations further emphasize Haudenosaunee power during a period that historians have often categorized as one of decline and dependence on cycles of warfare and colonial trade. Holly Rine's examination of intercultural diplomacy argues that the "diplomatic landscape" shifted in the mid-seventeenth century to favor a broader political role for the Haudenosaunee within the diverse, multiethnic Hudson River region.²⁵ Eugene Tesdahl studies smuggling networks along the Albany-Montreal corridor in the eighteenth

²³ Jon Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1534-1701* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2010).

²⁴ Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014).

²⁵ Holly Rine, "Intercultural Contact and the Creation of Albany's New Diplomatic Landscape, 1647-1680" (Ph.D. Diss., University of New Hampshire, 2004).

century that relied on Haudenosaunee women and their familial connections to flourish, again demonstrating the ways in which Haudenosaunee peoples were unbound by Euro-American imperial borders and mercantilist systems.²⁶

These new approaches to Haudenosaunee history reflect a deeper engagement with Indigenous perspectives, including, in the scholarship of Parmenter, Simpson, and Tesdahl, an attempt to reconcile documentary records with contemporary interviews, oral histories, and Haudenosaunee tradition. They also reveal the ongoing tension between the new borderlands histories and the Atlantic World model. Historians of Native America have challenged the Atlantic World paradigm that has, for decades, dominated scholarship of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, arguing that Atlantic World histories concerned with the connective tissues that bound peoples together across vast geographical spaces in a globalized economy are inherently defined by Euro-American mobility, transfer, and plunder.²⁷ Indigenous peoples, though occasionally physically dragged into the Atlantic World system, were often only indirect participants in these global exchange networks.²⁸ Attempts to illustrate Indigenous consumer power in the fur trade reveals Native American influence on the commercial activities of

²⁶ Eugene Richard Henry Tesdahl, “The Price of Empire: Smuggling Between New York and New France, 1700-1754” (Ph.D. Diss., University of Colorado, 2012).

²⁷ Pekka Hämäläinen, “Lost in Transitions: Suffering, Survival, and Belonging in the Early Modern Atlantic World,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, 68, no. 2 (April 2011): 219-223; Amy Turner Bushnell, “Indigenous America and the Limits of the Atlantic World,” in *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal*, ed. Jack P. Greene and Philip D. Morgan (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Paul Cohen, “Was There an Amerindian Atlantic? Reflections on the Limits of a Historiographical Concept,” *History of European Ideas* 34 (2008): 388–410.

²⁸ For Indigenous peoples physically swept up into the Atlantic World, see Coll Thrush, *Indigenous London: Native Travelers at the Heart of Empire* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016); Hinderaker, *The Two Hendricks*; Pamela Scully, “Malintzin, Pocahontas, and Krotoa: Indigenous Women and Myth Models of the Atlantic World,” *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 6, no. 3 (January 2005), <https://muse.jhu.edu/>.

European metropolises, yet the power of consumer choice could never counterbalance the destructive weight of Euro-American imperialism.²⁹ The new borderlands histories, which center on interior, Indigenous spaces of North America, demonstrate the outermost limitations of historical imperial (later national) categories. The body of scholarship to which Parmenter and Simpson contribute take Indigenous categories of membership and belonging seriously in their attempts to reconstruct spaces that, on a map may have had demarcated imperial borders, but in reality, were crisscrossed with Indigenous kinship, trade, and communications networks that rendered those paper boundaries laughable.³⁰

Two studies of the Dutch in New Netherland—one very recent and the other nearing thirty years old—reveal some of the potential connections that bridge New Netherland and Haudenosaunee historiography of the upper Hudson River region. Susanah Shaw-Romney’s analysis of “intimate economic networks” that bound New Netherland to a broader Atlantic World contends that empire was constructed at ground level, by individuals who used their wide-ranging familial and financial connections to expand commercial opportunities. She argues that the foundational unit of Dutch politics, economics, culture, and society was the household, and that these most intimate spaces and the families they contained formed the basis of belonging

²⁹ For Indigenous consumers, see, for example, David J. Silverman, *Thundersticks: Firearms and the Transformation of Native America* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2016); Susan Sleeper-Smith, ed., *Rethinking the Fur Trade: Cultures of Exchange in an Atlantic World* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009); Timothy Brook, *Vermeer’s Hat: The Seventeenth Century and the Dawn of a Global World* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2008).

³⁰ For an overview of the new borderlands approach in Native American history, see Pekka Hämäläinen and Samuel Truett, “On Borderlands,” *The Journal of American History* 98, no. 2 (September 2011): 338-361.

and membership in Dutch Atlantic World communities.³¹ The juxtaposition of Romney's intimate networks with the Haudenosaunee kinship networks that defied imperial borders reveals that women—Indigenous and European—played formative roles in building and exposing the limitations of seventeenth-century empires and formal politics. Though Romney's analysis is more steeped in the historiographical traditions of the Atlantic World than those of Indigenous borderlands, she nonetheless contributes to an ongoing conversation that rethinks the reach and importance of imperial policies enacted by decision-makers an ocean away from communities they did not understand and could not control.

In 1990, Donna Merwick also questioned the relevance and contested meanings of imperial borders drawn on seventeenth-century maps. Her history of colonial Albany compares Dutch and English “possessions” of the town to demonstrate the different imperial styles that she attributes to culture. The Dutch, in her assessment, preferred a “*burgerlijk*”—commercial and maritime—approach to community organization. The “*burgerlijk*” worldview, as she describes it, did not just define politics and economic activities in colonial Albany; it ordered time itself and was so integral to the ways that Dutch colonists saw the world and their lives in it that the attempted imposition of an English worldview after conquest was utterly incompatible with the town's “*burgerlijk*” functioning. The English had to write over Albany's history because it was irreconcilable with the English way of colonization, settlement, and land use. She asserts that the

³¹ Susanah Shaw Romney, *New Netherland Connections: Intimate Networks and Atlantic Ties in Seventeenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, 2014).

English conquerors believed themselves civilizers, putting the land, the trade, and, by extension, alliances with Native peoples, to proper, “civilized” use.³²

Merwick’s analysis, though limited to a clash of cultures she ascribes to the nationally-defined boundaries of “Dutch” and “English,” points to the slipperiness of categories of belonging and ownership in the seventeenth-century upper Hudson River region. Albany’s particular history as a Dutch village, shaped by Haudenosaunee influence, conquered in name by the English but peopled by Dutch families, allowed it to develop a localized system of political economy that defied easy categorization. Albany was an imperial space built from the ground up, and its inhabitants consistently resisted all attempts to impose top-down imperial structures from afar upon its functioning systems of trade and diplomacy. The various groups who lived in the upper Hudson River region, who each had interests within Albany and its political economy, also contested one another’s attempts to define and govern the space. Other than the bloodless conquest of 1664 and the bloody massacre of Schenectady in 1689/90, Albany was not a site of physical or violent contest, however. The struggle to delineate the community and its political economy was rhetorical.

From its earliest days as a nascent patroonship adjoining a WIC fort to the high-level diplomatic speeches delivered at eighteenth-century Covenant Chain renewal conferences, those who had a personal stake in the town’s political economy used what I refer to as a language of community to argue for their particular vision of belonging, the borders and functions of the town’s spaces, and the ideal methods of conducting trade and diplomacy that would guarantee

³² Donna Merwick, *Possessing Albany, 1630-1710: The Dutch and English Experiences* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

regional stability and Albany's safety. These discourses happened at the formal centers of imperial governance, certainly, especially in the early years of Dutch settlement and trade, but such discussions were never confined to Amsterdam or, later, London. After Beverwijck's founding in 1652, these conversations increasingly took place within the town itself, reflecting the process by which governance and trade regulation became localized. They also happened among competing groups, and the historical record repeatedly demonstrates that "Dutch," "English," and "Haudenosaunee" peoples did not act as monoliths in seventeenth-century Albany. Participants in the underground exchange economy, most often poor/middling traders, bitterly protested trade regulations, accusing magistrates of monopolizing commerce and stifling economic opportunity. Mohawk leaders pressured Beverwijck's elites to create clearly demarcated boundaries for acceptable and unacceptable trading behaviors, confining exchanges to formal auctions conducted in the daytime, in public, and without the use of alcohol. Individuals resisted these strictures, however, and chose to trade and develop relationships with colonists on their own terms, in sites beyond the watchful scrutiny of leadership. Dutch elite families contested efforts by imperial leaders and other local Dutch elites to redefine the village, fighting (and winning) against efforts to grant large portions of the upper Hudson River region to the Van Rensselaers, Peter Schuyler, Dirck Wessells, and Domine Godefridus Dellius. They angled for—and received, at the behest of the New York colonial government—a powerful monopoly that confined the region's fur trade to Albany. Throughout the town's seventeenth-century history, groups distinguished by socioeconomic status and culture engaged in perpetual debates about trade and diplomacy, deploying a language of community to promote their particular perspectives. These conversations attempted to define the boundaries, functions, and

membership of a town that resisted easy categorization, to conjure and determine the shape of the “ancient house” on their own terms.

Though the debates over Albany’s political economy took many forms and had many participants who expressed their own distinct language of community, the conversations tended to fall into categories that I refer to throughout the dissertation as social distance and intimate exchanges. Social distance refers to policies that sought to formalize interactions between Indigenous and Euro-American peoples. Historians have frequently used the term and variations on the concept to describe Dutch attitudes toward Native peoples, generally referring to something inherent to Dutch culture and the goals of colonization that encouraged Dutch people to keep their distance from Native peoples. In the historiography of New Netherland, the term is most closely associated with archaeologist Nan A. Rothschild, who describes physical, spatial distances and examples of separateness from the material record of the upper Hudson River region.³³ Donna Merwick’s terms “*burgerlijk*” and “alongshore” contain elements of social distance and emphasize what she claims was a Dutch cultural preference for keeping Native peoples at arm’s length.³⁴ Social distance, as a policy and a cultural concern, was present in early discussions about trade, diplomacy, and settlement in New Netherland. In the early records of colonization, however, colonists were just as likely to describe intimate interactions with Native peoples as they were a preference for separation. Departing from Merwick and, to a lesser extent, Rothschild, I argue that social distance was a set of policy decisions, formulated

³³ See especially Nan A. Rothschild, “Social Distance Between Dutch Settlers and Native Americans,” in *One Man’s Trash Is Another Man’s Treasure*, by Alexandra van Dongen (Rotterdam: Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, 1995), 189-201.

³⁴ For “*burgerlijk*” see Merwick, *Possessing Albany*, 3-4; for “alongshore” see Merwick, *The Shame and the Sorrow*, 7-8.

over time, that enacted ideal standards of behavior and served the interests of upwardly mobile Dutch elites and Mohawk leaders. Ordinances that defined and enforced social distance often used references to protection, safety, and security as justifications for regulating behaviors. Indeed, social distance was everywhere in colonial records: in the laws and ordinances, administrative correspondence, council minutes, records of diplomatic meetings, and court records. Social distance, then, typified the upper level of the region's political economy; it was written into trade regulations and performed at high-level diplomatic negotiations, and it was most often expressed by elites, government officials, and Indigenous leaders. It was also contested as a policy stricture and ignored as an ideal.

Intimate exchanges were the converse of social distance. Throughout the dissertation, I use the term to refer to illicit transactions that involved alcohol, occurred outside the boundaries of Albany, or took place within homes or taverns. I choose the word "intimate," in part, to refer to Romney's "intimate economic networks," but the exchanges that I discuss depart from her analysis. She describes the small-scale, face-to-face daily exchanges for food and the most basic necessities that characterized early trade among colonists and Indigenous peoples; these most essential trades, she argues, formed the basis of intercultural "intimate networks" in early New Netherland. Her study ends at 1664, intercultural exchanges are one small part of her larger narrative, and therefore she takes only a cursory look at the ways in which these "intimate networks" morphed into underground smuggling networks.³⁵ The intimate exchanges that I depict as persisting long past the period of English conquest were not necessarily small-scale, nor were they transactions for necessities. They could be for bulkier quantities of goods or

³⁵ Romney, *New Netherland Connections*, 126-127.

alcohol for peddling or resale, or they could encompass a small, straightforward exchange. Large or small, these illicit exchanges were by definition *intimate*, however.³⁶ The laws that enforced social distance in the fur trade created a system in which illegal trades were trades that happened in close proximity, that required some conversation, or that might be lubricated by alcohol. To catch glimpses of these intimate exchanges, I consulted court cases spanning from the earliest court in Rensselaerswijck in 1648 through Albany's common council in 1713. Though illicit transactions are elusive in the documentary records, enough evidence exists to demonstrate that a considerable number of Albany's inhabitants chose to ignore prescriptions of social distance and instead persisted in building networks of intimate, illegal exchange long after such behaviors could incur heavy fines and potential banishment under the law. Social distance was Albany's official policy, but intimacy and familiarity were the lived reality for many Dutch and Indigenous peoples in the upper Hudson River region.

Both social distance and intimate exchanges were integral to what I identify as the town's two-tiered political economy. Dense economic networks created by both formal and informal diplomacy bound diverse peoples to one another, thereby dispersing regional authority and balancing competing interests. The early formal partnership between upwardly-mobile Dutch merchants and the Haudenosaunee, memorialized and reaffirmed in the "ancient house," founded a powerful alliance that lasted nearly two hundred years. Dutch elites leveraged their diplomatic authority to obtain regulatory independence from governing centers and then narrowed competition by outlawing specific types of small-scale exchanges, especially for alcohol, guns, and wampum, in an attempt to monopolize the fur trade. They passed ordinances that supported

³⁶ For intimacy and imperialism, see Ann Laura Stoler, ed., *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006).

their own economic and political interests, but these laws also worked to define their relationships with Mohawks, whose participation in the trade was indispensable. Indeed, Mohawks profoundly shaped the region's destiny by exerting influence over colonial policies, demanding, for example, a cessation of the alcohol trade and determining whether and how Albany would participate in English imperial wars.

Yet Albany was not a wholly oligarchical society, nor was its relationship with the Haudenosaunee defined entirely by high-level, formal diplomacy. Poor and middling traders resisted elite economic consolidation by developing an underground exchange economy that operated continuously in spite of colonial regulations. Individual Mohawks chose to participate in underground exchanges regardless of Mohawk leaders' concerns about the effects of trade on their societies. The underground exchange economy limited elite authority and underpinned regional stability even when magistrates championed the ideal, crafted in response to formal Mohawk diplomacy, of social distance in Native-Dutch encounters. The informal diplomacy of intimate exchanges allowed Albany to maintain its connections to Indigenous exchange networks when historical events such as English conquest and Anglo-French imperial wars threatened the Mohawk alliance. That no one group could fully control the region's political economy led to greater stability; diverse approaches to intercultural encounter were the source of Albany's strength.

Looking at colonial Albany with a broad chronological lens allows us to see the full development and structure of the "ancient house" that Sadeganachtie envisioned so clearly in 1700. Bridging the divide of Dutch and English rule brings the town's remarkable continuity into view; though New York City and other nearby spaces experienced profound transformation after English conquest, Albany persisted in its dual-level system of political economy first

developed by the Dutch and their Haudenosaunee trading partners. That system, forged in contest and debate, in discussions about the boundaries of community and the implications of trade and diplomacy, worked because of its slipperiness and ill-defined boundaries, its strict limitations and open alternatives. The political economy's many paradoxes allowed it to provide both freedom and protection, and balance came from the back and forth of contested authority, protest, and defiance. Karehadée's illegal promise to Evert Wendell was as integral to the maintenance of the "ancient house" as Sadeganachtie's Covenant Chain renewal, and the "ancient house" and the courthouse were as much promise as they were contest. Sadeganachtie knew, of course, that Albany was the place where disagreements could be taken up in council, debated and discussed, and eventually all could be "carry'd on smooth." This system of debate and compromise, of intimate exchanges tempered by social distance, was not a system inherent to Haudenosaunee or Dutch culture. It was not imposed from afar. The "ancient house" was built locally, by the people who depended on its sheltering structure, and it was entirely of their own design.

CHAPTER 1: EARLY ECONOMIC CONTESTS (1626-1652)

When Kiliaen van Rensselaer, the patroon of Rensselaerswijck, surveyed his account books and correspondence from New Netherland in 1633, he saw a colony on the precipice of ruin. He struggled with the West India Company (WIC) leadership both in the Netherlands and in New Amsterdam to govern the space in an efficient, rational manner, promoting long-term development and allowing the colony to flourish.¹ Though he lived an ocean away and epitomized the absentee landlord, Van Rensselaer was deeply concerned with the conditions of daily life in Rensselaerswijck, his colony situated just beyond Fort Orange in the upper Hudson River region. He carefully kept records of every cow and horse, whether they perished or gave birth or were used too harshly by their masters.² He had opinions on whether his tenants sowed winter or summer wheat and, of course, the quantities of their harvests.³ He recruited artisans for his colony and negotiated to procure the implements of their trades, building a grist mill and obtaining a brandy still.⁴ For an Amsterdam jeweler, he was deeply involved in the day-to-day operations of farms on a separate continent.⁵

¹ For Van Rensselaer's re-visioning of the fur trade in Rensselaerswijck, see James W. Bradley, *Before Albany: An Archaeology of Native-Dutch Relations in the Capital Region, 1600-1664* New York State Museum Bulletin #509 (Albany: University of the State of New York, 2007), 60-62.

² For livestock, see, for example, A. J. F. van Laer, ed. and trans., *Van Rensselaer Bowier Manuscripts, Being the Letters of Kiliaen Van Rensselaer, 1630-1643, and Other Documents Relating to the Colony of Rensselaerswyck* (Albany: University of the State of New York, 1908), 163, 192, 200, 211-212, 220-221, 224-229, 231, 274-275, 277-280, 289-290. (Hereafter cited as *VRBM*.)

³ For crops and harvests, see, for example, *ibid.*, 219, 233, 259, 278.

⁴ For brandy still, see *ibid.*, 253, 263, 267.

⁵ For example, Van Rensselaer wrote to Jacob Planck in 1637: "Do not neglect to keep a daily journal of everything that happens in the colony." And to Pieter Cornelisz van Munnickendam in

Van Rensselaer was an anxious landlord. He eagerly awaited the arrival of every ship bringing news and letters from New Netherland, and he constantly badgered his employees for more information and to keep better records. Unlike the other merchants who had leapt at the opportunity to establish their own colonies in New Netherland when the WIC announced the opportunity in 1629, only to watch their settlements gradually fall to ruin, pulling out their investments before they lost more in the bargain, Van Rensselaer continued to fund and oversee his patroonship.⁶ When the cows died, he arranged to send more cows across the ocean or up the river.⁷ When his blacksmith was murdered in a pub fight while onshore in England before the Atlantic crossing, he recruited another.⁸ He persisted where others had cut their losses and abandoned their efforts, and his was the only successful patroonship in New Netherland. However, he recognized that his fortunes were tied to the success of New Netherland as a whole and dependent on WIC policies and governance.

Instances of inefficiency and waste, especially with regard to the fur trade, troubled him as he surveyed his colony in relation to the whole of New Netherland. The trade, in his view,

1638: “Do not forget to write me about everything in detail and at length. I am ready to support your zeal, which I notice is so satisfactory, but not being sufficiently informed and in ignorance, I stand perplexed. The pen must convey to me what personal speech can not....” Ibid., 392 (Planck), 407 (Van Munnickendam). For Van Rensselaer as an anxious landlord, see Donna Merwick, *Possessing Albany, 1630-1710: The Dutch and English Experiences* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 24-26, 54-59. For a recent, more sympathetic treatment of Van Rensselaer, see Janny Venema, *Kiliaen van Rensselaer (1586-1643): Designing a New World* (Hilversum, The Netherlands: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2010), especially 241-267.

⁶ For an overview of the *Freedoms and Exemptions* that created the patroon system and the various failed patroonships, see Jaap Jacobs, *New Netherland: A Dutch Colony in Seventeenth-Century America* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2005), 113-118.

⁷ See, for example, *VRBM*, 223-229.

⁸ Ibid., 365-366 (death of Cornelis Thomasz, blacksmith).

and the many conflicts it created, would be the ruin of the colony. Van Rensselaer was an early investor in the WIC and one of its directors, and he understood the patroonships as symbiotic outgrowths of the company. Their interests were best intertwined and mutually supportive, not in competition with one another.⁹ In the earliest years of New Netherland's colonization, a brief period of free trade followed initial exploration. During the first few years of colonization, the New Netherland Company predominated, although several other small trading companies and partnerships also took part in the early era of the fur trade, known as the era of the *voorcompagnieën*. These enterprising merchants hoped to compete with the Russian fur trade by selling to Germany and Poland, the primary markets for New Netherland furs. The period was short-lived, lasting less than a decade, and the *voorcompagnieën* were quickly supplanted by the WIC, created by government charter in 1621. The scope of the company was vast with an exclusive trade monopoly that spanned West Africa, the West Indies, parts of South America and the Pacific coast, and the area between New Guinea and the Cape of Good Hope. A strong military component to the company ensured that the States General, who had chartered the WIC, would play a critical role in its operations.¹⁰ In an effort to promote further settlement in New Netherland, the company established the *Freedoms and Exemptions* of 1629, which set up a patroon system in which wealthy merchants and investors might establish their own colonies in

⁹ Ibid., 235-250.

¹⁰ Mark Meuwese, *Brothers in Arms, Partners in Trade: Dutch-Indigenous Alliances in the Atlantic World, 1595-1674* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2012), 20-32; Van Cleaf Bachman, *Peltries or Plantations: The Economic Policies of the Dutch West India Company in New Netherland, 1623-1639* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969), 13-27 (“*voorcompagnieën*”). See also Simon Hart, *The Prehistory of the New Netherland Company: Amsterdam notarial records of the first Dutch voyages to the Hudson* (Amsterdam: City of Amsterdam Press, 1959).

the New World, and Van Rensselaer was one of the first to take advantage of the new program. However, as Van Rensselaer saw it, the company's monopoly over the fur trade had pitted the company against these fledgling colonies with disastrous results. And so, in 1633, he took up his pen to plead with the WIC directors, known as the Nineteen, to allow the patroons to participate in the fur trade and let the company sit back and collect its profits on duties and fees.¹¹

Historians' assessments of Van Rensselaer's remonstrance have been mixed. Some have dismissed him as self-interested and self-serving, and have noted that his plea merely made a case for his own involvement in the fur trade.¹² Others have seen him as forward-thinking, if also heavy-handed.¹³ He envisioned the turn toward a greater emphasis on settlement a decade and a half before it became company policy. He believed in having colonies with diverse economies not heavily reliant on the fur trade. Yet he was also removed from local conditions and grasping at a level of control over his colony that he could not obtain. His remonstrance, like his correspondence, was managerial and overly preoccupied with efficiency and order. A colony half a world away was not a controlled environment for maximizing returns on investment. It was a messy, complicated place where unexpected events unfolded in real time only to be reported many weeks or months later to the patroon, after his colony's leaders had resolved the issue or made an independent decision about how to proceed. Van Rensselaer's reactions and responses always came too late.

¹¹ *VRBM*, 235-250.

¹² A particularly uncharitable view of Van Rensselaer's remonstrance can be found in S. G. Nissenson, *The Patroon's Domain* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1937), 173.

¹³ Venema, *Kiliaen van Rensselaer*, 247-250; Bradley, *Before Albany*, 60-62.

Within the many pages of self-serving examples and condemnations of WIC governance, Van Rensselaer's remonstrance articulated his vision of successful colonization. Ostensibly a record of an economic contest between two powers absent from the people they governed, embedded in the document is a larger conversation about the kind of community the Dutch hoped to build in New Netherland and what its future should look like. Van Rensselaer was not a pamphleteer, nor a philosopher, nor a propagandist. He was an investor and stakeholder, and his vision of New Netherland necessarily reflected his pocketbook.¹⁴ He argued that patroons, not the company, were best situated to maximize fur trade profits and prevent losses due to smuggling and inefficiency. His memorial made an extensive case against the WIC's handling of the trade and demonstrated that a purely commercial approach to colonization could not yield profitability. The problem, in his view, was the great expense incurred through a myopic focus on trade.¹⁵ His colony forged a different path; he sought to build a thriving settlement with farmers and artisans, with a grist and saw mill, with brewers and distillers, and that participated in small-scale trade with Native peoples. His was a utopian dream of peaceful coexistence with the Indigenous population, with mutually beneficial trade and orderly conduct. Significantly, his vision allowed for individual colonists and families to participate in the trade, but in a supervised way that was only one aspect of their daily lives. Trade should not order the colony's functions;

¹⁴ For a discussion of the various groups competing to define the Dutch empire in the seventeenth century, and how their visions changed over time, see especially Benjamin Schmidt, *Innocence Abroad: The Dutch Imagination and the New World, 1570-1670* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

¹⁵ *VRBM*, 248.

it should be ancillary to farming and overall development. The fur trade, in his view, was essential for the colony's profitability, but should not be the colony's sole revenue stream.¹⁶

Van Rensselaer's remonstrance, at first glance, seems to mull over whether New Netherland should be a commercial or settlement colony. Historians have considered the early period of New Netherland's development by a single open question, neatly captured in the title of Van Claef Bachman's 1969 study of WIC economic policies: *Peltries or Plantations*. Would New Netherland consist of a series of trading outposts, sparsely staffed, that brought peltries from the New World to Holland, enriching the company's investors? Or, would New Netherland become a settlement colony filled with Dutch plantations, a *Holland on the Hudson*, as historian Oliver Rink called it? The implementation of the patroon system in the *Freedoms and Exemptions* of 1629 favored the latter option, and New Netherland expanded to become an established settlement colony throughout the 1630s, 40s, and 50s.¹⁷ Yet Van Rensselaer, for all of his worries about cows and winter wheat, devoted his entire remonstrance to a discussion of trade. His was not an effort to weigh in on one side of the peltries or plantations debate; he wanted New Netherland to be a commercial settlement colony. Trade, he argued, needed to be integrated into the other daily activities of settlers, families, and farmers.¹⁸

¹⁶ Ibid., 235-236.

¹⁷ Bachman, *Peltries or Plantations*; Oliver Rink, *Holland on the Hudson: An Economic and Social History of Dutch New York* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986); Jacobs, *New Netherland*; Merwick, *Possessing Albany*. For the Dutch shift from commerce to settlement and its effect on Native peoples, see especially Paul Otto, *The Dutch-Munsee Encounter in America: The Struggle for Sovereignty in the Hudson Valley* (New York: Berghahan Books, 2006).

¹⁸ *VRBM*, 244, 247-248.

The remonstrance demonstrated in detail the specific, local conditions that favored Van Rensselaer's approach to trade and settlement over the WIC's existing system. He recognized that the success or failure of New Netherland depended on the good will of the region's many Indigenous peoples. They would not distinguish between a corrupt WIC *commis* and a Rensselaerswijck farmer, he argued. If company employees behaved in a manner that incurred the wrath of their neighbors, all settlers would suffer. Fort Orange was not an isolated outpost in the "wilderness;" it was bordered by a settlement with families and livestock that depended on Native peoples for their survival. To gamble with Native-Dutch relations by leaving trade and diplomacy in the hands of the company was to invite misfortune.¹⁹ Building stronger relationships with Indigenous peoples required allowing them to participate in the daily activities of colonial settlements. The exchange of pelts for imported trade goods was but one part of the commercial economy of Van Rensselaer's idyllic vision: he hoped that Native peoples would rely on his grist mill and brandy still as much as the Dutch settlers, and that intercultural exchanges would become fully integrated into a diverse colonial economy. Even though Van Rensselaer never set foot in the New World, he was deeply concerned with the particularities of its local conditions, and he expressed a long-term vision for how best to settle and conduct commerce in New Netherland.²⁰

¹⁹ Ibid., 243.

²⁰ Ibid., 247-249. In a lengthy letter to Wouter van Twiller written in April 1634, Van Rensselaer further detailed aspects of his vision and how he hoped to implement it in his colony. The remonstrance served as an indictment of company policies and decision-making, whereas the letter to Van Twiller laid out the patroon's plans and pored over the intricacies of farms, animals, tools, and the day-to-day relations among company, colony, and Indigenous peoples. For the letter to Wouter van Twiller, see *ibid.*, 266-288.

As Van Rensselaer's remonstrance demonstrates, the early period of Dutch colonization in the upper Hudson River region was characterized by disagreement about the roles that trade and settlement would play in the future trajectory of the colony. All aspects of the region's political economy were in flux between the years 1626-1652. Among the unsettled questions of the era were: *who* should be allowed to conduct trade, *where* should trade happen, and *what* items were acceptable to trade. This chapter, framed by Van Rensselaer's remonstrance, will consider the competing groups that sought to define the answers to these questions and chart the region's course toward a future that suited their interests. Early economic contests set in motion the processes from which the region's peculiar, localized system of political economy would emerge by crystalizing relationships with the Haudenosaunee, expanding individual colonists' access to trade that planted the seeds of an up-and-coming elite to localize political power, and establishing a framework for debates centered on categories of acceptable and suspect trading behaviors, locales, and goods.

Each interested party who participated in these early economic contests did so by relating his version of the history of New Netherland, the mistakes and missteps that led to a present moment of crisis, and his specific vision for the future. These conversations went beyond a simple debate of settlement vs. commerce or free trade vs. monopoly; they sought to define the past and future of economic participation, community, and Native-Dutch relationships. Van Rensselaer's remonstrance told the story of New Netherland from the perspective of a frustrated patroon, worried that the WIC's employees would cause the ruin of the entire colonization project, and in it he proposed a new vision that would place trade and diplomacy in the hands of community stakeholders: the patroons and their servants. Harmen Meyndertsz van den Bogaert, the Fort Orange surgeon, would hear a different story from the Mohawk, Oneida, and Onondaga

leaders he met during a journey through Iroquoia, and his journal provided WIC officials with an Indigenous perspective on the fur trade. Johannes de Laet, a WIC director in Amsterdam, would testify before the States General that the ruin of New Netherland could be prevented by implementing still another vision of community, this time by drawing back the oversight of patroons and the company and allowing the colonists themselves to enjoy the rights of commerce and governance while shouldering the responsibilities of financing communal institutions. In the early 1640s, a group of men in Rensselaerswijck, free from serving the patroon, attempted to legally define their community as independent of the patroon's colony. At each moment of crisis and contest, individuals proposed new paths forward that would redefine what it meant to be invested in New Netherland.

Those who participated in early debates over the who, where, and what of intercultural exchanges used a vocabulary of community that would echo through the decades of Dutch settlement and well into the English period of regional control. These debates became the template for the back and forth interplay of regulation of intimate exchanges with Native peoples on the one hand and the contests against such regulations on the other. The region's competing interests—wealthy Amsterdam merchants like Van Rensselaer, Mohawk and Oneida leaders, WIC officials, and ordinary traders and settlers—deployed a language of community to promote their distinct visions of the purpose of New Netherland, its relationships with Native peoples, and its future trajectory. Though inchoate in a period when New Netherland's future existence was far from certain, these early contests created a foundation for the region's distinct political economy that would emerge in the coming decades and would be characterized by a bifurcation of diplomacy and trade into categories of formal and informal, sanctioned and illicit.

“Idle people... are only seeking to make a good deal of money and then get away”

Van Rensselaer's remonstrance was, at its heart, an argument for expanding the *Freedoms and Exemptions* to let the patroons manage New Netherland's fur trade. "Now the main cause of all these differences is nothing but the trade in furs or peltries found in that country and the question by whom it shall be conducted," he wrote.²¹ In his telling of the history of New Netherland, Van Rensselaer cited the WIC monopoly, a policy designed to prevent overhunting and the depletion of furs, as the primary means by which the company restricted patroons' returns on their investments in the colonies. By protecting its monopoly, the company treated patroons and their colonies as commercial competitors when they should have been working hand-in-hand to increase the profitability of the entire imperial enterprise. The remonstrance retold the history of the disastrous colonial enterprise on the Delaware [South] River that resulted in the deaths of colonists and livestock at the hands of Native peoples and the abandonment of that settlement, and Van Rensselaer entreated that a similar fate could befall the colony at Rensselaerswijck. It was the company's *commis*, the commercial agent, whose "error" resulted in the ruination of that colony, according to Van Rensselaer.²² Because the current company *commis* of Fort Orange had similarly enraged Rensselaerswijck's Indigenous neighbors such that they burned a small yacht and killed a number of livestock, Van Rensselaer pleaded, "So the case stands thus, that probably the whole trade of Fort Orange will be lost to the Company and the remonstrant's colony will be destroyed without hope of redress," if the WIC continued to leave the fur trade and its attendant diplomacy in the hands of reckless company employees.²³

²¹ *VRBM*, 244.

²² *Ibid.*, 241.

²³ *Ibid.*, 243.

Van Rensselaer's critique of company policy was essentially elitist; he trusted neither the company's employees nor individual colonists. Though he hoped to expand access to the fur trade and promoted his servants as those best suited to negotiate with Native peoples, Van Rensselaer did not envision free trade. He wanted the patroons to finance and manage all of New Netherland's commercial activities, with the company providing support, and he hoped to expand very slightly the number of people who could participate in the monopoly. Only the wealthiest merchants, the patroons who remained in the United Provinces but who planned and executed settlements in New Netherland, could be trusted to make the fur trade more profitable and efficient.

He contrasted his proposal with the early policies of free trade that were ultimately shut down by the company's monopoly: "[the] right of trade... was formerly with good intentions (though too soon for the time) fully granted to the poor people, who having no means had to be supplied by the Company with everything. Is it not better that the Company should draw a clear profit than make themselves trouble and loss?"²⁴ The poor, according to Van Rensselaer, should not be entrepreneurial traders seeking to make profit for themselves. Not only did they lack the capital to finance the fur trade, but poor individuals were "like a dying plant or leaking roof," incapable of being anything but a drain on company and colony if allowed to strike out on their own. Instead, if put to work in service of the "rich and well-to-do" merchants who did not emigrate, the poor of New Netherland could make the colony flourish, "just as the blind can carry the crippled and the crippled can show the way to the blind, so the rich may stay at home and send their money thither and the poor may go and perform their work with the money of the

²⁴ Ibid., 247-248.

rich.”²⁵ The hiring of the poor to undertake the enterprises of the rich was the idea that underpinned the original *Freedoms and Exemptions* and was essential to the success of New Netherland, in Van Rensselaer’s view. Company policies that barred the patroons from accessing the trade thus violated the spirit of the patroon system.

Despite his insistence that having poor employees carry out the imperial designs of wealthy patroons was foundational to the success of New Netherland, Van Rensselaer expressed concerns about wage earners and temporary employees of the WIC. The people hired by the company to participate in the trade, guard the forts, and oversee the colonies were just another source of waste, in Van Rensselaer’s assessment. Because they lived in New Netherland temporarily while in the employ of the company, the WIC’s soldiers, sailors, traders, and officials were not invested in building up the colonies or maintaining peaceable relations with Native peoples. According to Van Rensselaer, they were, “idle people... only seeking to make a good deal of money and then get away,” and therefore, “they will not trouble themselves to make the perilous journey inland, because their pay goes on just the same.”²⁶ WIC employees, then, did not put in the hard work to build alliances with Native peoples nor travel to Indigenous villages to build new trading partnerships. The individuals and families sent to populate his colony, by contrast, “having families of women and children, who after some time will become established there, try to make terms with the savages and, pushing far inland for their own profit, discover much more than those who only lie in garrison.”²⁷ These were the benefits of

²⁵ Ibid., 246.

²⁶ Ibid., 247.

²⁷ Ibid.

colonization that the patroon system offered, in Van Rensselaer's view: efficiency, a diversified economy, the establishment of families and regular order, and the use of diplomacy in a way that guaranteed the safety of colonies.²⁸

One of the company employees "serving for hire," Harmen Meyndertsz van den Bogaert, did eventually "push far inland" to discover why trade with the Haudenosaunee was in decline in the early 1630s. Just a year after Van Rensselaer wrote his remonstrance, Van Den Bogaert traveled to the Mohawk and Oneida villages with Jeronimus dela Croix and Willem Thomasz to "learn the truth" regarding rumors of Haudenosaunee peace with French-allied Native peoples and the implications of that peace for future trade.²⁹ The journal of their expedition—though brief—provides remarkable detail about Mohawk culture, society, and language in the early seventeenth century. Further, Van Den Bogaert took part in several councils in which Haudenosaunee leaders expressed their concerns about their relationship with Fort Orange and negotiated in terms of the who, where, and what of trade. Because Van Den Bogaert was there to gather intelligence, not for formal diplomacy, he dutifully wrote out these conversations,

²⁸ Susanah Shaw Romney has argued that the presence of women and children and the establishment of households in colonies served to mark spaces in the New World as colonized and symbolized permanence. See Susanah Shaw Romney, "'With and alongside his housewife': Claiming Ground in New Netherland and the Early Modern Dutch Empire," *William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, 73, no. 2 (April 2016): 187-224.

²⁹ Charles T. Gehring and William A. Starna, trans. and eds., *A Journey into Mohawk and Oneida Country, 1634-1635, The Journal of Harmen Meyndertsz van den Bogaert*, Revised Edition (1991; Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2013), 71. Gehring and Starna have transcribed Van Den Bogaert's journal, and it appears in the original Dutch in their volume. All translations are my own from their transcription.

which provide an unprecedented window into Haudenosaunee perspectives of the early economic contests in the upper Hudson River region.³⁰

By 1634, when Van Den Bogaert made his journey, the future of Dutch-Haudenosaunee trade was far from certain. Officials at Fort Orange hoped to expand the trade to the French-allied peoples beyond Iroquoia, but they also sought to strengthen their bonds with the Haudenosaunee, who had only in recent years become their dominant trading partners in the upper Hudson River region. In 1626, during the Mohawk-Mahican War, Daniel van Krieckenbeeck, *commis* at Fort Orange, sided with the Mahicans in the conflict and led a small contingent of Dutch soldiers alongside Mahican warriors in a disastrous assault against the Mohawks. The failed mission resulted in Van Krieckenbeeck's death and required tense negotiations with the Mohawks to smooth over the rift caused by Dutch involvement in the war. The conflict ultimately pushed the Mahicans, the closest Indigenous neighbors of Fort Orange and Rensselaerswijck, further to the east and south, and they sold their lands to Van Rensselaer as they departed.³¹

³⁰ For a discussion of Van Den Bogaert's journey from the perspective of Iroquoia, see Jon Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1534-1701* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2010), 41-45.

³¹ Historians have emphasized the longer history of warfare that contextualizes the Mohawk-Mahican War and calls into question narratives of Indigenous competition for access to the Fort Orange trade as the primary motivation for that conflict. In recent decades, they have set the Beaver Wars paradigm aside in favor of an understanding of Haudenosaunee warfare that considers requickening the dead, expansion of kinship networks, and preexisting rivalries as the key factors at play in the Haudenosaunee wars of the seventeenth century. José António Brandão and William Starna speculate that the Mohawk-Mahican War started as a result of Mohawks demanding passage through Mahican territory to facilitate war against the Mahican-allied Sokokis of the Connecticut River valley. Given these broader Indigenous contexts, Van Krieckenbeeck's participation in the war appears incidental to its eventual outcome. Indeed, according to contemporary accounts, the Mohawks seemed puzzled by the Dutch-Mahican attack. Nicolaes van Wassenae, who chronicled New Netherland in a series of pamphlets that drew on his conversations with sailors and WIC employees, described the incident and its

Van Krieckenbeeck's meddling in the war was, to Van Rensselaer, another example of the short-sighted actions of WIC employees in the region. The patroon directly benefitted from the Mahican loss in the conflict, but he nonetheless disparaged Dutch involvement. In a report of his colony drafted in 1634, Van Rensselaer described the Mahicans as a: "free, rich, and well-known nation with its own language... that in the year 1625, when sought by the Chartered West India Company, were unwilling to relinquish or sell any of their lands." Despite this position of power, the Mahicans fell under the sway of Van Krieckenbeeck, who engaged them in, "unnecessary wars against the bellicose nation of the *Macquaes* [Mohawks], their former friends and neighbors." Their losses in the war, particularly the death of a sachem, pressured them to leave and give up "their right, jurisdiction, and command" of their lands.³² The very

immediate aftermath in his *Historisch Verhael* of 1626. As he related the story, Pieter Barentsz visited the Mohawks shortly after the disastrous assault and learned that, "they wished to excuse their act, on the plea that they had never set themselves against the whites, and asked the reason why the latter had meddled with them; otherwise, they would not have shot them." If the conflict had started over access to trade at Fort Orange, then the Mohawks would have understood the Dutch-Mahican joint force more definitively than Van Wassenaer's account suggests. Even if the Mohawk-Mahican War was not a trade war, its outcome profoundly affected the region's political economy by making the Mohawks the dominant trading partners of Fort Orange. For Van Wassenaer's account of the incident, see J. Franklin Jameson, ed., *Narratives of New Netherland, 1609-1664* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909), 85 (quotation). For the war's Indigenous context, see William A. Starna and José António Brandão, "From the Mohawk-Mahican War to the Beaver Wars: Questioning the Pattern," *Ethnohistory* 51, no. 4 (2004): 725–50. See also William A. Starna, *From Homeland to New Land: A History of the Mahican Indians, 1600-1830* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013), 77-80.

³² This report was transcribed in Nicolaas de Roever and Abraham Bredius, eds., *Oud Holland. Nieuwe Bijdragen voor de Geschiedenis der Nederlandsche Kunst, Letterkunde, Nijverheid, enz.*, Vol. 8 (Amsterdam: Gebroeders Binger, 1890), 260. Translations are my own from the transcription. The report also appears in translation in *VRBM*, 306. Two of the original deeds that transferred land from the Mahicans to Rensselaerswijck in 1630 are located at the New York State Library. See "Contract of sale of land along the Hudson River from Mohican Indians to Kiliaen van Rensselaer, August 6, 1630," Van Rensselaer Manor Papers, Box 20, Folder 1, New York State Library, Albany, NY (hereafter cited as VRMP) and "Contract of sale of land along the east side of the Hudson River from Mohican Indians to Kiliaen van Rensselaer, August 13, 1630," VRMP, Box 20, Folder 2.

establishment and location of the patroon's colony was a direct result of company recklessness, according to Van Rensselaer.

Whether caused by the imprudent leadership of Van Krieckenbeeck or part of a larger pattern of regional warfare, the conflict set the stage for a developing partnership between the Dutch and the Mohawks. Once well-established, this partnership would strengthen over time, but in the years immediately following the Mohawk-Mahican War, the Dutch were uneasy about their new allies. Van Rensselaer was especially critical of the Mohawks, who burned a WIC yacht and killed a number of Rensselaerswijck cattle.³³ The company encouraged the Mohawks to pay Van Rensselaer an indemnity for the loss of the cattle, but they seem not to have done so. The patroon was still trying to collect payment in 1638, when he encouraged Jacob Planck, “without being too severe you should by constant admonition cause them [the Mohawks] to entertain a lively sense of their duty and what they owe the colony on account of the damage which they have done.”³⁴ Other Rensselaerswijck and Fort Orange residents also expressed uncertainty about the Haudenosaunee-Dutch alliance. In his description published in 1645, Johannes Megapolensis, the minister at Rensselaerswijck from 1642-1649, noted both the cruelty of Mohawks at war and their peaceful coexistence with the Dutch settlers. His disparaging commentary described the ceremonial torture of captives, cannibalism as part of war, and the Mohawk manner of eating undercooked deer intestines and meat, so rare that “blood r[an] from their mouths” as they ate. Yet interspersed with this imagery, likely meant to make Dutch readers recoil, were reassurances that, when colonists met Mohawks in the woods, “we consider

³³ *VRBM*, 243.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 416.

no more of it than if we had come across a Christian.” Megapolensis even remarked, “they also sleep in our rooms before our beds. I had 8 at once before my bed, on the floor lying and sleeping, as that is their manner.”³⁵ After decades of trade and regular contact with Mohawks, the Dutch were at best ambivalent about their neighbors and allies, yet maintaining their economic and diplomatic partnership became increasingly important in the years following the Mohawk-Mahican War.

The Mohawk and Oneida peoples that Van Den Bogaert met during his travels provided him information about the comings and goings of other European traders and the prospects of peace with French-allied peoples, all of significant concern to WIC officials. Opening up trade with peoples farther inland, past the Haudenosaunee, was a perpetual goal of the Dutch and later the English, who eagerly sought a resolution to the ongoing intertribal warfare in the Great Lakes region in a way that favored their economic interests.³⁶ If the Haudenosaunee made peace with

³⁵ Johannes Megapolensis the Younger, *Een kort Ontwerp, vande Mahakvse Indianen, haer Landt, Tale, Statuere, Dracht, Godes-dienst ende Magistrature. Aldus beschreven ende nu kortelijck den 26. Augusti 1644. Opgesonden uyt Nieuwe Neder-Lant. Door Johannem Megapolensem juniorem, perdicant aldaar....* [A short Description of the Mohawk Indians, their Country, Language, Stature, Dress, Religion, and Government. Thus written and recently, 26 August 1644, sent from New Netherland by Johannes Megapolensis the Younger, minister there.] (t’Alckmaer, *The Netherlands: Ysbrant Jansz. van Houten*, 1645), 5 (warfare), 6 (quotations: meeting in the woods, sleeping in bedrooms) and 7 (quotation: manner of eating). In depicting the savagery of Mohawk behaviors contrasted with Mohawk docility when inside Dutch spaces, Megapolensis deployed a common European trope of writing about the New World as simultaneously wild/violent but tamable when the implements of “civilization” were brought to bear upon the land and its peoples. For an example of these same tropes deployed in a radically different context, see Thomas P. Slaughter, *Exploring Lewis and Clark: Reflections on Men and Wilderness* (New York: Vintage Books, 2003), especially 47-85.

³⁶ For example, Van Rensselaer discussed the opening of trade with French-allied Native peoples in his remonstrance: “Are not the contrary minded well aware that their course will never increase the trade because the savages, who are now stronger than ourselves, will not allow others who are hostile and live farther away and have many furs to pass through their territory, and that this would be quite different if we had stronger colonies? Yes, that the *Maquaas*, who will not allow the French savages who now trade on the river of Canada and who live nearer to

their neighbors and allowed them passage through Iroquoia, then the fur trade at Fort Orange could be greatly expanded. Van Den Bogaert received mixed responses to his inquiries regarding peace. He learned from a Mohawk leader whose name he recorded as “OQUOHO”—Wolf—that the “French savages” were presently negotiating with the other Haudenosaunee nations, and he reflected, “At this I was pleased and thought I would surely reach my objective.”³⁷ Later in the journey, upon reaching the Oneida villages, Van Den Bogaert learned that peace negotiations were indeed underway. The Dutchmen asked their hosts about the general layout of the region, and the Oneidas laid out kernels of corn and stones to make a map, which Dela Croix copied, charting the distances between villages in miles. The highlands near the lake, the Oneidas warned, were settled by “people with horns.” Although beavers were plentiful in the outer regions, they explained that they didn’t venture too far because of ongoing hostilities with neighboring peoples and “therefore they should make peace.”³⁸

The following evening, several leaders hung a belt of wampum and declared that they would make peace with their French-allied neighbors, agreeing to allow them passage through Iroquoia. The assembled group deliberated and decided that the peace would last four years. Despite thus witnessing the conclusion of negotiations and the agreement that he sought, Van

us than to them [the French] to pass through to come to us, might through persuasion or fear sooner be moved to do so and that from the savages more furs could be obtained than are bartered now in all New Netherland?” *VRBM*, 248. For an overview of efforts to gain access to French-allied trade during the English period, see Thomas Elliot Norton, *The Fur Trade in Colonial New York, 1686-1776* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1974), 121-173.

³⁷ Gehring and Starna, *Journey into Mohawk and Oneida Country*, 78. Gehring and Starna point out that while Van Den Bogaert closely transcribed the Mohawk word for wolf, *okwáho*, he misunderstood that the man was identifying himself using his Wolf Clan affiliation, not saying that his name was “Wolf.” See *Ibid.*, 40-41n44.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 86.

Den Bogaert made no comment in his journal about his response to the council. He was perhaps tired, hungry, and restless. The next day he reprimanded his hosts for not providing enough food and, when they suggested that the Dutchmen stay another four or five days in the village, he insisted that they “mustn’t wait long.”³⁹ Perhaps he did not fully trust the peace he witnessed being negotiated, or perhaps he did not trust his safety with his hosts, who vastly outnumbered his tiny party of weary travelers.

Although Van Den Bogaert witnessed the good news of peace, he also received evidence of other European powers’ presence in the region. The man he identified as “Wolf” told him he had met an Englishman during his travels who was learning the Susquehannock language in order to trade.⁴⁰ Oneida leaders chastised the Dutchmen for failing to bring gifts, and proudly boasted of the good prices they could fetch from the French for their furs. They displayed some of the French wares they had procured: good hatchets, shirts, coats, etc.⁴¹ The Mohawks and Oneidas were eager to work out a permanent trading arrangement with Van Den Bogaert, and they used their relationship with French traders as leverage to negotiate set prices for their pelts. Van Den Bogaert, however, being only a WIC employee and a Fort Orange surgeon at that, had no authority to make a deal. He promised to speak with the company authorities in New Amsterdam and return to the villages in the spring with their answer. The leaders promised him that “if we get 4 hands [of wampum per beaver], we will trade our pelts with no one else.”⁴²

³⁹ Ibid., 87.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 78, 41n46.

⁴¹ Ibid., 85.

⁴² Ibid., 88.

Van Den Bogaert's journey revealed the extent to which the French had expanded their trading capabilities with the Haudenosaunee, but the primary concern of the WIC throughout the Dutch era of settlement was the presence of the English near and, in many cases, within New Netherland's borders.⁴³ After speaking with Dela Croix about the journey to the Mohawk and Oneida villages, Van Rensselaer concluded, "the English come much too high up and too near to us. The Company must open their eyes, I think, or they will lose the best part of that fair region."⁴⁴ Around the time that Van Rensselaer submitted his remonstrance to the WIC directors arguing to open the trade to the patroons, the States General heard testimony regarding English trading on the Hudson [North] River and border disputes in New Netherland. English merchants aboard the ship *William*, including the Dutch trader Jacob Eelkens, who had been an early presence in the region but had left after the WIC established its fur trade monopoly, complained that they had been prevented from trading for furs along the river, "[adjoining] to Virginia and New England."⁴⁵ After reading the statements of the *William's* crewmembers regarding the behaviors of WIC officials toward the traders, the States General sent the case to the company for resolution.⁴⁶ The Dutch were not about to open up the Hudson River trade to the English,

⁴³ Archaeological evidence suggests that, although the Dutch of New Netherland had a number of border disputes with the English, the French had actually made greater inroads with the Haudenosaunee in terms of volume of trade. See Bradley, *Before Albany*, 122.

⁴⁴ *VRBM*, 401.

⁴⁵ E. B. O'Callaghan, ed. and trans., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New-York, Procured in Holland, England, and France* 15 Vols. (Albany, NY: Weed, Parsons, and Co., 1853-1887), 1: 74. (Hereafter cited as *DRCHNY*.)

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 83. For a description of New Netherland's reaction to the presence of Eelckens and the *William* and how the story was retold by David Pietersz de Vries, see Jacobs, *New Netherland*, 110-111.

regardless of any petitioner's claims to jurisdiction, but the case was a troubling reminder of English proximity to the sparsely-populated Dutch colony. As English colonization in New England spread south and west and English traders ventured farther from the coasts, they began to encroach on Dutch settlements, and New Netherland's position between Virginia and New England began to seem increasingly precarious.

The Dutch and the English shared a philosophical tradition that shaped their understanding of colonization and imperial boundaries; land needed to be occupied and used to be fully possessed. The Dutch added a component of purchase to their imperial conceptions of possession based on the writings of philosopher Hugo Grotius, arguing that if land was properly purchased from its inhabitants, then it was legally owned.⁴⁷ Considering the evidence in the Eelckens case, the WIC directors wrote of the history of New Netherland in their report to the States General:

Divers[e] natives and inhabitants of these countries, by the assistance of said Company, planted sundry Colonies, for which purpose were also purchased from the chiefs of the Indians, the lands and soil, with their respective attributes and jurisdictions.... So that said Company had occupied, settled and cultivated those countries, and carried on trade there from the commencement of their charter.... except... Jacob Eelkens... lately by false [representations] sought to persuade his Majesty of Great Britain, that those countries of New Netherland were a part of his domains in that quarter of North America.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Meuwese, *Brothers in Arms, Partners in Trade*, 233-235; Oliver Rink, "Seafarers and Businessmen: The Growth of Dutch Commerce in the Lower Hudson Valley," in *Dutch New York: The Roots of Hudson Valley Culture* edited by Roger Panetta (New York: Fordham University Press, 2009), 20-21; Benjamin Schmidt, "The Dutch Atlantic: From Provincialism to Globalism," in *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal* edited by Jack P. Greene and Philip D. Morgan (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 163-191; Donna Merwick, *The Shame and the Sorrow: Dutch-Amerindian Encounters in New Netherland* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 63-68, 77-86 (Dutch vs. English practices); Merwick, *Possessing Albany*, 3-5 (Dutch vs. English "possessions"); William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983), 54-81 (English tradition).

⁴⁸ *DRCHNY*, I, 94.

The directors argued that they legally possessed the lands and rights of trade because they both purchased the land from Native peoples and effectively occupied the territories. That the English monarch could be so easily persuaded that he, in fact, possessed the upper Hudson River region was cause for considerable concern. To secure New Netherland's borders and prevent English encroachments, the WIC would need to make their occupation, settlement, and cultivation of the territory more obvious. The patroonship system was one method of increasing settlement in New Netherland by allowing patroons to pay the expenses and take the risk of sending settlers and the implements of colonization to the New World without putting company profits at stake. However, other than Van Rensselaer's colony, all patroonships had ended in failure. The WIC, goaded by the concerned States General, would need to make the prospect of New Netherland more appealing to potential Dutch settlers.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Emigration from the United Provinces to New Netherland and other WIC colonies was a perpetual source of concern for the company. In a 1633 remonstrance to the States General regarding the peace negotiations with Spain and the future of the WIC, the company directors noted: "the peopling of such wild and uncleared lands [the uncolonized Americas and West Indies], demands more inhabitants than our country can supply; not so much for want of population, with which our provinces swarm, as because all those who will labor in any way here, can easily obtain support, and, therefore, are disinclined to go far from home on an uncertainty." It was the uncertainty of prosperity and success in the New World that prevented individuals from emigrating, in their view. Making colonial prospects more appealing, and expanding possibilities for those willing to make the voyage to the Americas, became a significant focus for the WIC in the early 1630s. The directors' remonstrance suggested further trade with Native peoples, increasing the use of African slaves to help with the backbreaking labor of colonizing and reaping profits from "such wild and uncleared lands," and continuing efforts to disrupt and contest Spain's holdings in the Americas as the company's primary methods of encouraging Dutch settlement of the New World. *DRCHNY*, I, 65 (quotation). Jaap Jacobs discusses settlement efforts and emigration decisions at length, including a scheme to send orphans to New Netherland as a means of increasing its population. See Jacobs, *New Netherland*, 46-48, 83-88 (orphans).

The situation of English encroachments in New Netherland escalated in the mid-1630s such that in 1638 the States General interrogated Rutger Huygens, a WIC administrator, about the current status of New Netherland's borders and the prospect of having the government take over the company altogether. Rather than give up the WIC to the States General, Huygens suggested that the directors preferred to potentially, "surrender the trade with the Indians, or something else. Nothing comes from New Netherland but beaver skins, mincks, and other furs; considerable grain could be raised there in course of time."⁵⁰ Later that year, Johannes de Laet, a WIC director, drafted and presented a set of proposals to the States General that would promote settlement in New Netherland and increase the company's profitability. His proposal was a complete revision of the entire colonization project in North America, with rights such as trade, movement, and government—previously granted only to the patroons and the company—extended to all colonists. The New Netherland envisioned by De Laet more closely resembled the colony it would eventually become, with rights and privileges granted to individuals, and where, "every man shall be free to live up to his own in peace and decorum." Those who enjoyed such freedoms would also have to shoulder some of the cost of maintaining the colony by paying taxes to support the ministers, schoolmasters, and other necessary public servants. In a sense, De Laet proposed transforming New Netherland into a community rather than a collection of company towns, forts, and one thriving but feudal colony.⁵¹

The States General rejected De Laet's proposal outright, noting that it was, "not adapted to the service and promotion of the Colonies of New Netherland."⁵² The WIC returned after

⁵⁰ *DRCHNY*, I, 107.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 110-114, 111 (quotation).

⁵² *Ibid.*, 115.

considerable deliberation with an amended version of the *Freedoms and Exemptions*. The revised policy reconciled De Laet's proposal with the patroon system, or what remained of it, although it certainly managed to frustrate Van Rensselaer, who demanded further revisions.⁵³ The new document also allowed for stricter company management of the colony's settlement, for example, by encouraging the development of New Amsterdam before colonists moved further into the interior. Significantly, it relinquished the company's fur trade monopoly and allowed all individual colonists—not, as Van Rensselaer had hoped, solely the patroon's employees—to take up trade for themselves, provided they paid duties on merchandise imported for that purpose and on the pelts leaving New Netherland. To the great frustration of historians, an official decree ending the WIC's fur trade monopoly does not exist, but the trade opened in New Netherland around 1639.⁵⁴

In the 1620s, 30s, and 40s, the question of who would be allowed to trade was contested in the upper Hudson River region. Van Rensselaer proposed that settlers working for wealthy Amsterdam-based patroons would make ideal traders because of their permanence and the stability they would seek in partnerships with Native peoples. Yet the WIC held fast to its powerful monopoly from 1621 until 1640, when New Netherland's too-porous borders threatened the stability of the entire colonial project. The encroachments of English and, to a lesser extent, French traders forced the WIC to open the fur trade to individuals in an effort to encourage Dutch settlement. At the same time, the region's Indigenous balance of power

⁵³ Jacobs, *New Netherland*, 120-122.

⁵⁴ *DRCHNY*, I, 119-123. See also Jacobs, *New Netherland*, 119-122, 121n59 (extant records); Wim Klooster, "Failing to Square the Circle: The West India Company's Volte-Face in 1638-39," *de Halve Maen* 73, no. 1 (2000): 3-9.

shifted. The Mahicans, after facing heavy losses in their conflict with the Mohawks, moved from their homelands. Their departure from the region ushered in an era of Haudenosaunee ascendancy, and the Dutch at Fort Orange and Rensselaerswijck very quickly learned that they would need to make an effort to nurture their budding partnership with the Mohawks. Van Den Bogaert traveled to Haudenosaunee villages to gather intelligence about trade and alliance. Later, Megapolensis offered the floor of his bedroom to visiting Mohawks. The Dutch of the upper Hudson River region would gradually come to know their Mohawk neighbors with greater intimacy, learning the protocols of formal diplomacy and engaging in regular informal diplomacy conducted through small-scale trades and face-to-face interactions. Opening the trade to all of New Netherland's inhabitants would ultimately draw the colonial population politically and economically closer to Haudenosaunee peoples, but this proximity would reveal deep ambivalence on the part of Dutch and Haudenosaunee leaders about physical, social, and cultural intimacy.

“Many inconvenient places far distant from each other”

One of the company's many inefficiencies that Van Rensselaer identified in his remonstrance was the tremendous problem of physical distance. The fur trade, by design, had to be conducted at “many inconvenient places far distant from each other,” because of the diverse populations of Native peoples who lived within and near New Netherland.⁵⁵ Even if trade could be limited to the WIC forts, these were still scattered throughout New Netherland and difficult to access at different points in the year. The central problem of distance, from Van Rensselaer's perspective, was exacerbated by the temporary nature of the WIC's presence in New Netherland.

⁵⁵ *VRBM*, 244.

The company's traders needed provisions, both for themselves and to exchange with Native peoples. Without the support of permanent settlements and their agricultural and manufactured products—butter, cheese, bread, beer, wheat, etc.—the trading ships had to carry expensive and heavy provisions to and from sites of exchange. The patroon contended that the fur trade was not profitable enough year to year to justify the time and expense created by distance:

All this being considered, it will be found, no matter how economically it may be managed, that the ship which must go with merchandise from the fatherland and return—not counting the interest, risk, and ill usage... counting all the expenses of building, mounting, equipping, keeping up, manning and victualing, will cost so much that the... [profits] will come far short by many thousands.⁵⁶

Because the company had to carry on the trade with its own, imported provisions using ships that made the dangerous Atlantic crossing each year, their part in the trade was expensive and inefficient. Supplementing imported goods with locally-produced provisions and centralizing the fur trade to designated locations with nearby colonial settlements, Van Rensselaer argued, would be the only means of making the trade profitable.

Van Den Bogaert learned from the Haudenosaunee that they, too, preferred shifting the trade to a more centralized location, but they argued for a locale that better suited their interests. The prices and availability of trade goods at Fort Orange were inconsistent; so inconsistent, in fact, that they were discouraged from making the long trek from their villages to the Dutch trading post. A group of elder men explained to Van Den Bogaert: “We must go so far with our pelts, and when we arrive we often find no cloth, no wampum, no hatchets, kettles, nor anything else, and we have then lost in our endeavor. So we must go a long way back carrying our goods with effort.”⁵⁷ They encouraged the Dutch to come to their villages, instead. The Onondagas,

⁵⁶ Ibid., 245-246.

⁵⁷ Gehring and Starna, *A Journey into Mohawk and Oneida Country*, 88.

who lived even farther from Fort Orange than the Mohawks and Oneidas, were particularly eager to have Van Den Bogaert return, and he observed, “We would have received a great many pelts as gifts if we had just come to [their] country.” The Onondagas urged Van Den Bogaert to return in the summer, suggesting that they would show him the lake where the French came to trade, perhaps to gently remind him of his competition for their pelts.⁵⁸

That the Haudenosaunee hoped to reorient the upper Hudson River trade toward Iroquoia was part of a larger geopolitical shift that predated Fort Orange and even Hudson’s voyage. Starting in the sixteenth century, the region’s Indigenous populations underwent dramatic transformations. The Iroquoian peoples of the St. Lawrence River valley disbanded many of their villages—whether through war or for other reasons is not clear—and their populations scattered among the remaining Algonquian- and Iroquoian-speaking peoples of the Great Lakes. At the same time, Susquehannocks and other mid-Atlantic peoples moved further south, which disrupted trade routes. These population movements left a wide swath of space around the nations that would become the Iroquois League and gave them access to a number of crucial waterways. First the Mohawks, Oneidas, and Onondagas joined together in a loosely-structured political body, and they were later joined by the Senecas and Cayugas. Having a single political structure that bound Haudenosaunee nations to one another reoriented the region’s political configuration and exchange networks.⁵⁹ By the time Van Den Bogaert made his journey, the

⁵⁸ Ibid., 92. For a discussion of the three Haudenosaunee nations that Van Den Bogaert met and their individual responses to the Dutch traveler, see Daniel K. Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 91-93.

⁵⁹ Parmenter, *Edge of the Woods*, 11-18 (population movements and Haudenosaunee space); Martha L. Sempowski, “Early Historic Exchange Between the Seneca and Susquehannock,” in *Archaeology of the Iroquois: Selected Readings and Research Sources* edited by Jordan E. Kerber (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2007), 194-218; William E. Engelbrecht,

Haudenosaunee had already anchored the region's trade to their spaces of travel and settlement, and it was entirely fitting that they would aim to bring the Dutch into their orbit, not *vice versa*.

Although the Dutch did not entirely shift their trading locales to accommodate Haudenosaunee centralization, the implementation of free trade after 1639 scattered exchanges throughout New Netherland, no longer confined to WIC outposts. The WIC directors almost immediately regretted their decision to open up the trade, noting that by 1643, "as many will go thither to trade without acquiring a domicile there." If the objective of free trade was to promote settlement and permanence in New Netherland, the new policy seemed not to be working. The directors debated whether to limit trade in the colony only to inhabitants, or to allow additional opportunities for commerce with Brazil and other WIC colonies to those who permanently resided in New Netherland.⁶⁰ That same year, reports trickled back to the United Provinces of a disastrous war with the Native peoples living near the Dutch settlements on Manhattan and Staten Island. A letter from eight New Amsterdam men pleaded with the States General to send assistance to the rapidly deteriorating settlement. They described the horrifying scene at Fort Amsterdam: "We, wretched people, must skulk, with wives and little ones that still survive, in poverty together, in and around the fort at the Manahatas where we are not safe even for an hour; whilst Indians daily threaten to overwhelm us with it." The threats to their safety posed by the present war prevented them from planting and tending their crops, such that, "all of us who will

"New York Iroquois Political Development," in *Archaeology of the Iroquois: Selected Readings and Research Sources* edited by Jordan E. Kerber (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2007), 219-233; William Engelbrecht, *Iroquoia: The Development of a Native World* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2003), 129-144 (formation of the League and exchange networks).

⁶⁰ *DRCHNY*, I, 136.

yet save our lives, must of necessity perish next year of hunger and sorrow, with our wives and children, unless our God have pity on us.”⁶¹ The WIC resolved to recall New Netherland’s current director, Willem Kieft, so that he could answer for the war, and to send an interim director, Lubbertus van Dincklagen, “who is a favorite with the Indians.”⁶²

In the wake of Kieft’s War, the WIC turned over its records to the company’s Board of Accounts, hoping to see if their analysis might provide new suggestions for making New Netherland more profitable and keep the colony from total ruin, toward which it seemed to be accelerating. Their report related the history of New Netherland to 1644 with particular attention to the *where* of the fur trade and the effects of location on the colony’s successes and failures. The Board of Accounts reported that, upon its founding as a WIC colony, New Netherland was anchored by four trading posts—Fort Amsterdam on Manhattan, Fort Orange on the Hudson [North] River, Fort Nassau on the Delaware [South] River, and Fort Good Hope on the Connecticut [Fresh] River—from which trade and diplomacy were conducted. The *Freedoms and Exemptions* of 1629 opened New Netherland to private development and settlement, but agricultural and population growth were slow and sporadic. It wasn’t until the policy of free trade that much-needed colonists infused the colony’s population, bringing in traders from the United Provinces, as well as Virginia and New England. However, the implementation of free trade encouraged traders to “spread themselves far and wide,” and, eventually, the board discovered, “the abuses attendant on the free trade was the cause of [New Netherland’s] ruin.”⁶³

⁶¹ Ibid., 139. The eight men were: Cornelis Melyn, Jan Evertsz Bout, Thomas Hal, Gerrit Wolphertsz, Isaak Allerton, Barent Dircksz, Abraham Pietersz, and Jochem Pietersz Kuyter.

⁶² Ibid., 148.

⁶³ Ibid., 149-150, 150 (quotations).

The Board of Accounts spelled out four unintended consequences of the WIC's free trade policy: scattered colonial settlements, conflicts with Native peoples caused by proximity, firearms smuggling, and demands of Native tribute. The first problem, the scattering of peoples across New Netherland, should have been prevented by the clauses of the revised *Freedoms and Exemptions* that emphasized settling Manhattan first and ensuring its stability before allowing further development of the "interior." In practice, this provision was not adhered to, and colonists went to Native peoples for the trade, "each with a view to advance his own interests."⁶⁴ The policy of free trade also departed from the vision Van Rensselaer proposed in his remonstrance in that it allowed any individual to trade, provided he paid a percentage to the company. As we have seen, Van Rensselaer argued for patroon-sponsored (and monitored) trade for two reasons: first, that only wealthy merchants would have the available capital to outfit traders without taking on too much debt, and second, that trade would then be conducted by people invested in colonial communities. A patroon-and-company trading system, in his view, would put the other aims of the colony at the forefront of settlement: farming, crafts, husbandry, and production, with the fur trade then operating in tandem with these more viable enterprises. The free trade system created after 1640, however, substituted individual free men for the WIC's wage-earning employees that Van Rensselaer disparaged. Their primary motives were profit, according to the Board of Accounts, and they were less likely to establish permanent roots, dabble in enterprises such as farming or milling, or create communities that would demonstrate New Netherland's stability to those pressing at its borders.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Ibid., 150.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

The Board of Accounts was also deeply troubled by the cultural implications of physical proximity to Native peoples. They accused the traders scattered throughout New Netherland of “excessive familiarity and treating” of their Indigenous neighbors in an effort to “allure” them to their homes. These familiar interactions likely involved the giving of gifts, often a necessary prerequisite for Indigenous trade, and the use of alcohol. After 1643, supplying Native peoples with alcohol was outlawed within New Netherland, yet drinking and trading alcohol were crucial aspects of the fur trade throughout the seventeenth century.⁶⁶ The Board of Accounts did not detail what they meant by “excessive familiarity and treating,” but they implied that these behaviors created competition among Dutch traders and Indigenous peoples. Naturally, Native peoples wanted to trade with the individuals who treated them well, were familiar, and paid the best prices for their pelts. Thus, Native peoples began to favor certain traders over others and demand fair treatment from all. Uneven trading behaviors, then, became, in the Board of Accounts’ view, “the cause of enmity” between the Dutch and Indigenous populations.⁶⁷ Geographical distance, when other factors stirred enmity, could threaten the safety of New Netherland’s colonists. In 1647, the council at New Amsterdam decided to outlaw trading in the

⁶⁶ The first ordinance outlawing the sale of alcohol to Native peoples was passed in 1643. See Ordinance, June 18, 1643, Dutch Colonial Council Minutes (hereafter cited as DCCM), Vol. 4, no. 169, New York Colonial Manuscripts, New York State Archives, Albany, NY (hereafter cited as NYCM). The alcohol trade, and Dutch attempts to limit it, is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two. For more on familiarity, treating, gift-giving, and intimacy in the New Netherland fur trade, see Susanah Shaw Romney, *New Netherland Connections: Intimate Networks and Atlantic Ties in Seventeenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 158-167; Merwick, *The Shame and the Sorrow*, 248-250; Jaap Jacobs and Martha Dickinson Shattuck, “Beyers voor drank, land voor wapens/ Beavers for Drink, Land for Arms,” in Alexandra van Dongen, et al, *One Man’s Trash Is Another Man’s Treasure* (Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, 1996), 95-114.

⁶⁷ *DRCHNY*, I, 150.

interior and require traders to stay at the known trading posts in the forts. They argued that not only did interior trading create unfair competition for those who traded at the forts, but it could also lead to potential violence. “The Indians who want our goods might be tempted to murder or kill” for them, the council warned, which could cause the colony to once again become embroiled in “unrest and war.”⁶⁸

Settling in New Netherland’s frontier regions, far from the protection of the forts and the communities surrounding them, also held the potential for violence. The Board of Accounts noted: “proximity to the Indians, whose lands lay unfenced, the cattle belonging to our people, straying without herdsman, seriously damaged their corn or maize. This occasioned much complaint, and no redress following, they revenged themselves, killing both the cattle and the horses.”⁶⁹ Van Rensselaer’s remonstrance, a decade earlier, also complained about Mohawks killing cattle. The patroon blamed the *commis* of Fort Orange and his short-sighted trading practices for the incident, but more likely, a scenario unfolded like the one described by the Board of Accounts. Native peoples throughout North America targeted colonial livestock for a variety of reasons: livestock were often a nuisance, especially pigs who were allowed to roam free, trampling Indigenous crops and eating Indigenous foodstuffs. They also symbolized settlement, permanence, and the processes of colonization.⁷⁰ They left a mark on the landscape

⁶⁸ Ordinance, June 18, 1647, DCCM, Vol. 4, no. 296, NYCM.

⁶⁹ *DRCHNY*, I, 150. Fences were a particularly significant marker of “colonized” vs. Indigenous spaces. For further discussion of fences and imperialism in North America, see Patricia Seed, *Ceremonies of Possession in Europe’s Conquest of the New World, 1492-1640* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 16-25; Cronon, *Changes in the Land*, 127-157.

⁷⁰ Virginia DeJohn Anderson, *Creatures of Empire: How Domestic Animals Transformed Early America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004); James Homer Williams, “Great Doggs and Mischievous Cattle: Domesticated Animals and Indian-European Relations in New Netherland and New York” *New York History* 76 (1995): 245-264. Williams accepts Van Rensselaer’s

and were a tool of the colonizer: most Eastern Woodlands peoples did not practice animal husbandry, and certainly not in the European manner.⁷¹ Thus, an attack on livestock was an attack on the very settlements that Van Rensselaer championed as essential to the success of New Netherland. Given this context, it seems unlikely that Native peoples killed Van Rensselaer's cattle in retaliation for a corrupt Fort Orange *commis*. Instead, perhaps, they hoped to send a message about Rensselaerswijck and the cultural and environmental repercussions of settler colonialism.

Historians of New Netherland have carefully considered the extent to which Dutch culture, once settlement became the favored policy, followed Dutch people to the New World, and they have argued that New Netherland became increasingly culturally Dutch as settlements expanded and the population grew. Institutions such as the Dutch Reformed Church, the burgher right, poor relief, and even *ganstrekken*, a game called "pulling the goose," which was traditionally played on Shrove Tuesday, were imported to New Netherland and refitted to North American contexts.⁷² Cultural institutions further provided safeguards against the enticements of

assertion that the leadership of Fort Orange's reckless attitude toward Mohawk peoples was responsible for the slaughter, but Van Rensselaer's account should be considered in the broader context of Indigenous responses to livestock and settlement. Van Rensselaer wanted to remove the Fort Orange *commis*, Willem Hontom, who had a history of behaving violently toward Native peoples, but no evidence—other than Van Rensselaer's assertions—remains that directly links Hontom's behavior to the slaughter of the Rensselaerswijck cattle. See *VRBM*, 243-244, 270, 286.

⁷¹ Although Haudenosaunee peoples did not practice European-style animal husbandry in the seventeenth century, Van Den Bogaert did witness Mohawks keeping and feeding a bear, which they caught as a cub and raised for several years until ready to eat. Gehring and Starna, *Journey into Mohawk and Oneida Country*, 76, 38-39n36.

⁷² For *ganstrekken*, see Jacobs, *New Netherland*, 467-468. The game consisted of men on horseback competing to pull the head off of a live, greased goose. For the planting of Dutch culture in the New World, see especially Jacobs, *New Netherland*; Janny Venema, *Beverwijck: A Dutch Village on the American Frontier, 1652-1664* (Hilversum, The Netherlands: Uitgeverij

the New World. Dutch colonists and WIC officials alike worried about the extent to which settlements were open to Indigenous peoples and their cultural influence, particularly in Fort Orange and Rensselaerswijck. Not surprisingly, the Board of Accounts made physical and social distance from Native peoples a cornerstone of its recommendations for preventing the further decay of New Netherland. The report urged:

In order to prevent war in the future, the Colonists ought to settle nearer to each other, on suitable places, with a view of being thus formed into villages and towns, to be the better able to protect each other in time of need. Being separated from the Natives, will prevent the cattle damaging the corn belonging to the Indians, which, added to excessive familiarity in associating with them, was the cause of many difficulties. The employment of Indians as domestic servants will, thus, also be put an end to.⁷³

The anxiety of being surrounded everywhere by a diverse population of Indigenous peoples created the conditions by which New Netherland enclosed itself, everywhere erecting physical and metaphorical boundaries. The importation of Dutch cultural institutions helped define the limits of settlements, establishing a colonial “us” contrasted with an Indigenous “them.” Keeping Native peoples out of colonial homes, whether by outlawing their employment as domestic servants, banning them from taverns, or discouraging sleeping arrangements like the ones described by Megapolensis, was another method by which New Netherland’s settlements attempted to prevent “excessive familiarity” with their Indigenous neighbors.⁷⁴

In Rensselaerswijck, ending “excessive familiarity” meant keeping the colony wholly Euro-American (with the exception of a few African slaves) and preventing any Native peoples

Verloren, 2003); Merwick, *Shame and the Sorrow*; Bradley, *Before Albany*; Romney, ““With and alongside his housewife.””

⁷³ *DRCHNY*, I, 151.

⁷⁴ Venema, *Beverwijck*, 94-95.

from residing within or too close to its borders. The Rensselaerswijck court, in 1650, recorded an arrangement made by Jean Labatie aimed at displacing the colony's sole permanent Indigenous resident, a man the Dutch called *Den Uyl* ("the Owl"). The man, probably Mohawk, built a house north of Fort Orange, but it became a source of "great unrest for the colony as well as the fort." Labatie bought the house to "relieve [us] of the former troubles."⁷⁵ The following year, Labatie leased it to Adriaen van Alckmaer, who agreed to pay one beaver per year for its use. The transaction was recorded in the court minutes, and the court again underscored the home's origins, noting that it was, "heretofore built by a savage named *den Uyl*, through pressure brought to bear upon us by virtue of their [the Mohawks'] superior strength."⁷⁶ At the time *Den Uyl* built the house, the Rensselaerswijck court met repeatedly to discuss a potential impending Mohawk attack on the colony, and they perhaps initially allowed *Den Uyl* to reside there as part of some sort of arrangement with the Mohawks, though the details of that exchange weren't recorded.⁷⁷

Despite attempts to limit the boundaries of settlement and the passage of ordinances that constricted interactions between settlers and Native peoples, New Netherland remained a semi-permeable space, particularly on its fringes. Outside the scrutiny of local elites and government officials—increasingly often the same individuals—a thriving economy of small-scale exchanges

⁷⁵ November 28, 1650, Court of Rensselaerswijck Minutes, 1649-51, VRMP, Box 14, Folder 66.

⁷⁶ This page of the Rensselaerswijck court minutes was badly burned in the 1911 fire and is best consulted in A. J. F. van Laer, ed. and trans., *Minutes of the Court of Rensselaerswyck, 1648-1652* (Albany: University of the State of New York, 1922), 166-167 (quotation).

⁷⁷ For fears of a Mohawk attack in 1650, see Meeting of inhabitants, September 21, 1650 and Special meeting about the welfare of the colony, September 27, 1650, Court of Rensselaerswijck Minutes, 1649-50, VRMP, Box 14, Folders 62-64.

and smuggling persisted well into the eighteenth century. The *where* of trade would continue to be a concern for the council and the courts, who would craft policies to keep Dutch settlers contained within colonial spaces and restrict the movements of Indigenous peoples who came to the settlements to trade. Paradoxically, governing authorities would determine that the only suitable place to trade was within the town—trading at night, in the woods, or in frontier or Native spaces was increasingly frowned upon by the late 1650s—because there it could be monitored. By bringing Indigenous peoples into colonial spaces, leaders could reinforce social and cultural boundaries, thereby preventing “excessive familiarity.”

“A well equipped vessel... supplied with merchandise for trading”

Van Rensselaer’s remonstrance, written a decade before Kieft’s War, encouraged the kind of “excessive familiarity” that the Board of Accounts would later decry as the source of New Netherland’s ruin. He hoped to create a shared space in which colonists traded surplus agricultural products, manufactured goods imported from Europe, and services such as the use of the grist mill to Native peoples for furs. He believed that integrating the fur trade into the regular daily activities of the colonial economy would not only make New Netherland profitable, but that such an arrangement would keep the colony safe by creating mutually beneficial partnerships between permanent settlers and their Indigenous neighbors. Indeed, the remonstrance promoted the localization of the colonial economy over its existing Atlantic World framework. Van Rensselaer wanted his colonists to trade local products to neighboring Indigenous peoples because supplying the fur trade solely through imported manufactured goods was expensive and inefficient. Just to secure the minimum fur trade profits, he argued, the company had to annually send “a well equipped vessel... supplied with merchandise for trading,” at great risk to all. Not only was the Atlantic crossing long and costly, it was

dangerous: ships were destroyed by violent storms, lost at sea or blown off course, and regularly attacked by pirates. Reducing the number of Atlantic voyages necessary to conduct the fur trade was essential to New Netherland's future prosperity.⁷⁸

The colonial economy did adapt to local conditions, especially after the Mohawk-Mahican War brought Dutch and Haudenosaunee peoples closer in trade and alliance. Two objects—firearms and wampum⁷⁹—became associated with Dutch traders and quickly emerged as facilitators of the Dutch-Haudenosaunee partnership, giving the Dutch an advantage over their English and French rivals. These two goods represented the full spectrum of seventeenth-century commercial activity; firearms were manufactured in the United Provinces and exported to New Netherland as part of the Atlantic World's global trading networks, whereas coastal Algonquian peoples living in southern New England and, later, poor Dutch colonists and soldiers produced wampum beads for trade, representing a hyper-localized market. The two objects were also functionally and representationally paradoxical: weapons were instruments of war and wampum was the very essence of peace and alliance. The practical and representational import of firearms and wampum created significant anxiety among the WIC directors and local colonial leaders, who feared both the potential for violence inherent in the firearms trade and the

⁷⁸ *VRBM*, 244-248, 244 (quotation).

⁷⁹ For clarity, I have chosen to use the familiar word "wampum" to describe the shell beads traded throughout the upper Hudson River region, but wampum had many names in the seventeenth century. Mohawk peoples most commonly called the beads *onekora*, the Dutch referred to them as *sewan*, *sewant*, or *zeewant*, French traders used the word *porcelaine*, and coastal Algonquian peoples commonly called the beads *wampumpeag*, which became the region's most frequently used term. For more on wampum terminology, see Paul Otto, "'This is that which... they call Wampum': Europeans Coming to Terms with Native Shell Beads," *Early American Studies* 15, no. 1 (Winter 2017): 1-36; Gunther Michelson, "Iroquoian Terms for Wampum," *International Journal of American Linguistics* 57, no. 1 (January 1991): 108-116.

obligations of peace contained in wampum strings. Attempts to regulate the weapons and wampum markets sought to limit New Netherland's exposure to the negative consequences—whether real or imagined—of these localized forms of trade.

The Board of Accounts identified the free trading of arms and ammunition to Mohawks as a third source of New Netherland's potential ruin, writing that, “not only the Colonists, but also the free traders from this country, sold for furs in consequence of the great profit, fire-arms to the Mohawks for full 400 men, with powder and lead; which, being refused to the other tribes when demanded, increased the hatred and enmity of the latter.”⁸⁰ By 1643, when the Board of Accounts compiled its report, the Haudenosaunee-Dutch partnership was well established. In part, this relationship of trade and alliance was secured by firearms; Dutch willingness to trade arms with Mohawks gave them an advantage over other imperial powers. The Dutch were prolific arms manufacturers in the seventeenth century, due to their ongoing war against the Spanish, and they exported weapons to colonial locations throughout the Atlantic World. Especially after the invention of the flintlock musket, which was easier to use and reload than earlier matchlock models, the arms trade became the foundation upon which the Dutch-Haudenosaunee alliance was built. The Haudenosaunee, for their part, were eager to obtain weapons for use in the mourning wars, a series of conflicts against French-allied Native peoples that were part of a pattern of precontact warfare but that increased in the wake of devastating smallpox epidemics. Because captive adoption for the purposes of replacing or “requickening”

⁸⁰ *DRCHNY*, I, 150.

the dead was the primary motivations behind the mourning wars, a cycle of disease, death, and war ensured a steady market for Dutch arms.⁸¹

As the Board of Accounts report suggests, however, the Dutch did not sell arms to all Indigenous peoples in the region. Arms trading was technically illegal throughout New Netherland, but smuggling occurred with regularity and generally escaped the notice of the courts when the Mohawks were involved. However, trading weapons and ammunition with other Native peoples, particularly those Algonquian-speaking peoples living nearer to the Dutch settlements, was expressly forbidden and occasionally punished. After Kieft's War, ordinances preventing arms smuggling were strengthened, as were other regulations of Native-Dutch interactions.⁸² Those who sold weapons to Mohawks were nonetheless participating in essential diplomacy, and after the establishment of Beverwijck in 1652, these transactions would increasingly fall under the purview of elite community stakeholders at the company's direction. In the early period of New Netherland, however, even men with good reputations in the community could face prosecution if their arms trading involved Indigenous peoples other than the Haudenosaunee.

Michiel Jansz was one such community stakeholder prosecuted for arms sales. His dealings probably would have escaped the notice of the Rensselaerswijck court—or at the very least they would have continued to turn a blind eye to his trading—had he not decided to move to

⁸¹ David J. Silverman, *Thundersticks: Firearms and the Transformation of Native America* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2016), 20-38. For the Dutch perspective of the firearms trade, see Romney, *New Netherland Connections*, 157-158; Jacobs, *New Netherland*, 208-211; and Trelease, *Indian Affairs in Colonial New York*, 89-108.

⁸² For the regulation of the firearms trade, see especially Ordinance, March 31, 1639, DCCM, Volume 4, no. 36, NYCM; Ordinance, February 23, 1645, DCCM, Volume 4, no. 216, NYCM.

New Amsterdam in 1646. As a Rensselaerswijck resident, he was obligated to settle all of his accounts with the patroon before he left (although it seems that he may have moved first before getting his accounts in order with the court). In 1648, the Rensselaerswijck court demanded that he produce all of his accounts for inspection, return the horses he took with him to New Amsterdam that in fact belonged to the patroon, and produce records of all the pelts he traded while living in Rensselaerswijck. Jansz was not authorized by the patroon to trade, which required establishing a contract and paying for a license, yet the court insisted that everyone knew he traded furs regularly. His worst offence, however, was selling arms and ammunition to Native peoples in a time of war, “at the cost of much Christian blood,” a crime for which, “he has given his life.”⁸³

Jansz’s life in Rensselaerswijck began in 1638, when he left Schrabbeckercke in Zeeland for New Netherland with his wife and two servants, Jan Dircksz and Claes Gijbertsz.⁸⁴ He rented a farm called *Hoogberch*—“High Hill”—where he discovered some deposits of rock crystals, which particularly interested Van Rensselaer. The patroon asked him repeatedly to send as many crystals back to the Netherlands as possible, though Jansz never sent more than an initial sample.⁸⁵ Around the time of Jansz’s arrival, a group of farmers living in Rensselaerswijck staged something of a political rebellion in which Jansz may have been a participant. Following the lead of Gerret de Reux, they tried to claim that they were members of an independent community that operated autonomously from the patroonship. All of the men

⁸³ October 15, 1648, Court of Rensselaerswijck Minutes, 1648-49, VRMP, Box 13, Folders 10-11.

⁸⁴ *VRBM*, 818.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 489.

involved seem to have been in a similar condition to that of Jansz: they had either already completed their terms of service with the patroon or had emigrated in positions other than servants. They therefore occupied a liminal position in the colony: on the one hand, they still lived on and worked the patroon's land using livestock and tools belonging to the colony, but on the other hand, they were no longer or had never been in the patroon's service.⁸⁶ Occupying this in-between position gave the men space to question Van Rensselaer's authority to govern their lives, economic activities, and the shape of their community. One of the extreme measures that the men took to circumvent the patroon's authority, from Van Rensselaer's perspective, was to establish a collection to pay for a minister. They wanted to fund their own church rather than accept a church leader brought to New Netherland at the patroon's request.⁸⁷ Although the men would gain financially by wriggling out of contracts that required them to pay tithes to the patroon, they seem to also have been motivated to establish their independence in an effort to have some say in the community where they lived.

Van Rensselaer was desperate to keep Jansz from joining this movement and sought him out as a confidant, writing to him, "be honest and do not let them stir you up; I shall remember you in such a way that you will get along well."⁸⁸ The patroon was in need of allies on the ground in New Netherland, and he was always trying to find those men who would provide him with all of the information about his colony that he sought and who would manage the colony according to his wishes. He wrote of Jansz to Arent van Curler: "I think he is one of the most

⁸⁶ For Gerret de Reux's original contract and terms of service and residency in Rensselaerswijck, see *ibid.*, 193-195. For Van Rensselaer's perspective of the "mutiny," see *ibid.*, 485-515.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 491-492.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 499.

upright farmers in the colony, and when there is an opportunity I shall have an eye to his advantage also. He writes most politely of all; let him do what is right and he will be treated well by me.”⁸⁹ The crystal deposits were one way of leveraging Jansz, and Van Rensselaer offered him a share of the profits if the deposits could be inexpensively extracted and sold.⁹⁰ The crystal was also an enticement for Jansz to join the men seeking to establish an independent community, however. If he could extract himself from the patroon’s oversight, he could potentially reap more profit from the deposits without having to pay a share to the landlord. What ultimately happened with the crystal deposits isn’t clear; Van Rensselaer continued to ask about them in letters as late as 1643, the year of his death.⁹¹ Perhaps Jansz found them not worth the trouble of digging up, or perhaps he chose not to inform the patroon of his efforts to mine and sell them. Given the later court cases against him, it seems entirely possible that Jansz hid any mining activity from the patroon, since he seemed to have blatantly ignored the injunctions against other forms of commercial activity.

The patroon had the men sign leases on their farms that guaranteed him one tenth of their profits, and the trouble quieted down, though it never fully resolved until the establishment of Beverwijck in 1652.⁹² Van Rensselaer died in 1643, and the colony changed hands several times in the decade leading up to the town’s founding. The court case against Jansz alleged that it was during this period of unstable leadership that he illegally traded weapons and ammunition to the

⁸⁹ Ibid., 489.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 499.

⁹¹ Ibid., 663.

⁹² Ibid., 492-493.

region's Native peoples. Significantly, these arms trades were alleged to have taken place during wartime, which is why the court demanded that Jansz forfeit his life. Kieft's War was confined to Manhattan and Long Island, however, and there is no evidence that Jansz sold guns or ammunition to the Native peoples specifically involved in that encounter.⁹³ Nonetheless, Kieft's War marked a turning point in Native-Dutch relations. After that conflict, policies throughout New Netherland would attempt to harshly punish those caught selling alcohol or weapons to neighboring Indigenous peoples, ostensibly to prevent violence, but also in an effort to enforce social boundaries between Dutch and Native peoples.

The case against Jansz dragged on for years while he continued to live and thrive in New Amsterdam. In 1647, Jansz was appointed to the group of Nine Men, advisors to New Netherland's director general. The Nine Men were drawn from the three principal groups of New Netherland's leading citizens: merchants, burghers, and farmers. Jansz was one of three representatives of the farmers.⁹⁴ The director held Jansz in such high regard that he nominated him to serve as *commis* of Fort Orange. The council voted instead for Carel van Bruggen to fill the post as he had already served as *commis* in Curaçao, but Jansz's consideration demonstrates his lofty position in New Amsterdam society.⁹⁵ The council later appointed him, with Olof Stevensz, guardians of Cornelis Dircksz, charging them with the oversight of Dircksz's estate, schooling, and person.⁹⁶ The leadership of New Netherland repeatedly demonstrated that they

⁹³ October 15, 1648, Court of Rensselaerswijck Minutes, 1648-49, VRMP, Box 13, Folders 10-11.

⁹⁴ Ordinance, September 25, 1647, DCCM, Vol. 4, no. 334, NYCM.

⁹⁵ November 6, 1647, DCCM, Vol. 4, no. 347-48, NYCM.

⁹⁶ September 14, 1648, DCCM, Vol. 4, no. 415, NYCM.

viewed Jansz as a reputable, trustworthy member of the New Amsterdam community, regardless of his standing in Rensselaerswijck.

The Rensselaerswijck court continued to request that Jansz turn over his accounts for review. Perhaps fed up with the ongoing litigation, Jansz hired Dirck van Schelluyne to serve as his attorney in 1651.⁹⁷ Van Schelluyne negotiated with the court, and they reached a settlement figure of *f*2,954:11, one half of which had to be paid up front within six weeks of the judgment. The court further ordered Jansz to pay *f*156:10 for each of the patroon's horses he took with him to New Amsterdam and *f*30 for court costs. The case of illegal trading, punishable by death, seems to have been dropped without further comment from the court, probably due to lack of evidence.⁹⁸ Jansz's good standing in New Amsterdam, his long tenure in the colony, and his wealth probably also contributed to the court's decision not to press forward with a capital case for arms smuggling.

One of Jansz's former servants, Claes Gerritsz, was prosecuted at the same time for selling ammunition to Native peoples, yet he fared worse than his former master.⁹⁹ His case also dragged on for years, until finally the court appointed him two arbiters, Andries Herbertsz and Willem Fredericksz, to negotiate a settlement. Gerritsz was caught red-handed with bars of lead in his pocket, so the court couldn't entirely dismiss the case against him. The settlement reached included a fine of *f*100:20 for each illicit item, and Gerritsz had to forfeit all of his "pelts and

⁹⁷ November 2, 1651, Court of Rensselaerswijck Minutes, 1651-52, VRMP, Box 15, Folder 92.

⁹⁸ November 4, 1651, Court of Rensselaerswijck Minutes, 1651-52, VRMP, Box 15, Folder 92.

⁹⁹ *VRBM*, 823. Claes Gerritsz's arrest was likely the cause of Jansz's prosecution because, when Gerritsz was caught selling ammunition in 1648, Jansz had already been living in New Amsterdam for two years.

contraband.”¹⁰⁰ The master, then, was able to avoid prosecution for arms dealing while the servant paid a hefty price for each item smuggled. Wealth and status could determine one’s ability to escape prosecution or, at the very least, punishment for violating trade regulations.

The Dutch of New Netherland earned a reputation for being willing arms smugglers, and they were often disparaged by neighboring English and French settlers for their weapons trade. However, the trade in arms was not universal nor wholly sanctioned by the government. On the one hand, weapons sales to Haudenosaunee peoples—particularly Mohawks—created necessary partnerships that allowed goods and people to flow between Fort Orange and Iroquoia. At the same time, trading guns and ammunition to other Native peoples—particularly those living near Dutch settlements—was not only illegal but also taken seriously by New Netherland’s leadership. Prosecutions for arms smuggling did occur, although, as with nearly all crimes, money and status could determine the outcome of a case. In the 1650s, this pattern of status determining authority to trade would become part of official diplomatic protocols. Elite merchants in Beverwijck, who were also the town’s diplomats and magistrates, would be allowed to trade weapons as part of formal diplomacy with the Haudenosaunee, but individual traders would still face prosecutions for small-scale sales of arms and ammunition.

Just as weapons and diplomacy were intertwined in early New Netherland, wampum and violence were also paradoxically joined throughout the colony. The final threat to New Netherland’s stability, as identified by the Board of Accounts, was the war started by Director Willem Kieft’s policies that demanded, “a contribution of maize on the Indians, whereby they

¹⁰⁰ Decision of the arbiters in the case of Van Slichtenhorst v. Claes Gerritsz, November 10, 1651, Court of Rensselaerswijck Minutes, 1651-52, VRMP, Box 15, Folders 93-95.

were totally estranged from our people.”¹⁰¹ Kieft actually demanded tributes paid in “pelts, *sewan*, or maize” from Native peoples living nearby because of the expense of maintaining the fort and paying company employees such as soldiers and sailors. He argued that the company had “shielded [the Indians] from their enemies” and therefore deserved some form of payment in return, just as the Dutch paid to help repair the fort and raised funds for soldiers’ salaries.¹⁰² The policy, malicious and misguided, proved disastrous, and was another in a series of tensions between the Dutch on Manhattan and neighboring Indigenous peoples, particularly the Raritans, that culminated in the violent conflict that would bear Kieft’s name.¹⁰³ For Kieft’s part, he seemed to want to raise money for the fort and the company’s employees, but he also seemed

¹⁰¹ *DRCHNY*, I, 150.

¹⁰² Order, September 15, 1639, DCCM, Vol. 4, no. 49, NYCM.

¹⁰³ Donna Merwick argues that Kieft’s demands of tribute from Native peoples were akin to the feudal system in the Netherlands or the demands of tribute to local Spanish rulers that influenced the Dutch Revolt and the Eighty Years’ War. Using the accounts of Kieft’s War published in the United Provinces and the testimony delivered to the States General after the conflict was over, Merwick makes a convincing case for the ways in which Dutch people living in the Netherlands interpreted Kieft’s policies and determined that the war was unjust on the part of the director. The original order issued by Kieft and recorded in the council minutes in 1639 used the word *eijschen* (“eisen” in modern Dutch), which best translates as “demand” or “require,” but the order then doubles back on itself, saying that such a payment could be made in the “Indians” choice of pelts, corn, or wampum, and that if they weren’t willing to make contributions “in friendship,” then another “suitable” arrangement should be worked out. The order is at once firm and flimsy, leaving avenues open for negotiation or, perhaps, for arguing his innocence after the fact. Regardless of whether Kieft’s War was unjust or his leadership was disastrous and cruel, Kieft’s order was more contradictory than the way Merwick and others have depicted it. Order, September 15, 1639, DCCM, Vol. 4, no. 49, NYCM. See Merwick, *Shame and the Sorrow*, 137-169. Mark Meuwese argues that Kieft’s demand of tribute or, as he calls it, “tax,” was inspired by the actions of New England’s leadership during the recently-concluded Pequot War. See Meuwese, *Brothers in Arms, Partners in Trade*, 243-245. For an alternative perspective of Kieft’s War and its cultural context, see Evan Haefeli, “Kieft’s War and the Cultures of Violence in Colonial America,” in *Lethal Imagination: Violence and Brutality in American History*, ed. Michael A. Bellesiles (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 17–40.

preoccupied with the idea that New Amsterdam's Indigenous neighbors benefitted from the Dutch settlement without contributing enough to it. A week after the demand for Indigenous "contributions," Kieft issued an order regulating the maize trade. He ordered that all those living within the boundaries of New Amsterdam were forbidden from trading one coat of duffels for less than twelve *schepels* of maize, "until which time the Director shall set a fixed price with the heathens."¹⁰⁴ Unlike Van Rensselaer and the Board of Accounts, Kieft believed that the source of New Netherland's struggle to thrive was the too-generous terms of trade and alliance with Indigenous peoples, and he enacted policies that both aimed to bring those peoples under the jurisdiction of Fort Amsterdam and that sought to prevent them from taking advantage of the Dutch. His policies were misguided and cruel, but they reflected his own struggle to define the relationship between the Dutch settlements and their Indigenous neighbors.

Kieft's order for Indigenous payment lumped *sewan* in with other trade goods, but wampum was unlike any other object in New Netherland. Its inclusion in Kieft's order is instructive because it highlights the two, intersecting functions of wampum in Native-Dutch relationships: alliance and exchange. By demanding tribute, or—perhaps more accurately, contribution—Kieft sought both payment and allegiance. The payment was meant to serve as a kind of tax, a way of raising funds for defense, but it was also an acknowledgement of Dutch-Indigenous interdependence, and the ways in which they shared the benefits of having a secure, well-manned fort to retreat to in case of attack. Of course, Kieft's order was not interpreted in this way by the region's Indigenous peoples, who, as the Board of Accounts described, became

¹⁰⁴ Order, September 22, 1639, DCCM, Vol. 4, no. 50, NYCM. It isn't fully clear if Kieft intended the ordinance to apply solely to New Amsterdam or to all of New Netherland. The order applies to those "van onse Limiten." Twelve *schepels* was equivalent to approximately nine bushels.

“totally estranged from our people” as a result of Kieft’s policies.¹⁰⁵ They balked at the order because they did not agree with Kieft’s assertion that they benefitted from Dutch presence or needed Dutch protection.¹⁰⁶

Subsequent directors of New Netherland would share Kieft’s fear that Indigenous peoples had the upper hand in trade and diplomacy, and the use of wampum in trade stirred the greatest anxiety about Native people profiting at the expense of settlers. In a letter regarding the wampum trade in 1659, Peter Stuyvesant requested that the company send him more European specie with which he could infuse the local economy in an effort to eliminate the wampum circulating throughout the region. The directors declined to send more coins and offered the unhelpful advice to somehow generally reduce the amount of wampum in circulation, see if that wouldn’t bring commodity prices down, and “accordingly the more industrious residents will profit more than the savages.”¹⁰⁷ Because of its dependence on an Indigenous object and the way that this object tied colonists and Haudenosaunee traders to one another, the wampum trade resembled an Indigenous form of exchange more closely than a European one. Dutch leaders—from elites to the local company director—feared that the wampum trade favored Indigenous peoples over upwardly-mobile merchants because its value was culturally imbalanced; Dutch and Indigenous peoples did not fully agree on its value and symbolism, and it was therefore

¹⁰⁵ *DRCHNY*, I, 150.

¹⁰⁶ See Merwick, *Shame and the Sorrow*, 157-159; Trelease, *Indian Affairs in Colonial New York*, 60-84.

¹⁰⁷ Directors to Stuyvesant, February 13, 1659, Dutch Colonial Administrative Correspondence, Vol. 13, Pt. 1, no.1, NYCM. For an example of how Indigenous economic activities did not function in the same manner as European market principals would have predicted, see Matthew Dennis, *Cultivating a Landscape of Peace: Iroquois-European Encounters in the Seventeenth Century* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 171-172.

never fully trusted as a currency. Wampum was what postcolonial theorist Homi Bhabha might consider *mimetic*: almost the same as money, but not quite; almost an effective means of facilitating exchange, but always a bit suspect or anxiety-producing.¹⁰⁸

Wampum was a potent representational object. For Euro-American traders and settlers, it was akin to money, although even money is a complex item that is at once a simplified means of exchange and a representation of value, culture, and ethnic or national identity.¹⁰⁹ Within New Netherland, for a time, wampum was a currency. It was used in place of gold or silver and exchanged for goods and services. The colonial government regulated its manufacture, its value, what counted as current wampum and what did not.¹¹⁰ However, for the Indigenous peoples who produced, traded, and used wampum, it was a religious and diplomatic object, as well. It was speech, text, and treaty. It was story, memory, community. Victoria Weaver, a museum educator who conducted field work regarding wampum repatriated from American museums under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (1990), reached the evocative conclusion that, to contemporary Haudenosaunee peoples, “the wampum was alive and it was

¹⁰⁸ Homi Bhabha, “Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse,” *October* 28 (1984): 125-133.

¹⁰⁹ Marc Shell, *Wampum and the Origins of American Money* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2013), 5-10.

¹¹⁰ See, for example, Ordinance, April 18, 1641, DCCM, Vol. 4, no. 90, NYCM; Notice, November 30, 1647, DCCM, Vol. 4, no. 352, NYCM; and Ratification, June 30, 1650, Court of Rensselaerswijck Minutes, 1649-51, VRMP, Box 14, Folder 56, Page 56r.

sacred.”¹¹¹ Archaeological and anthropological evidence from the seventeenth century bears out her conclusion for historical Haudenosaunee peoples, as well.¹¹²

Colonial authorities writing about wampum in the seventeenth century and the individual traders participating in wampum exchanges never fully understood its multifaceted meanings for Indigenous peoples. They grasped that wampum was valuable, they witnessed its use in a variety of settings, they noted its power, yet they considered it as an Indigenous analog of money and treaty without fully comprehending the weight of those categories and the ways in which wampum, as living and inanimate, as representation and embodiment, signified much more than economic or even diplomatic transaction. However, colonists and their leaders were not completely in the dark about wampum’s layers of meaning. Throughout the era in which wampum was used as a currency, it caused significant anxiety for WIC officials and, later, governing elites. They sought to control it, limit it, replace it with European specie. Eventually the English outlawed the wampum trade, although, like most aspects of intercultural exchange in the upper Hudson River region, an underground wampum manufacturing and exchange network persisted long after it became illegal to use the beads as currency.

Historians have depicted the wampum trade and its use as a currency as a peripheral curiosity in New Netherland’s colonization, a fleeting moment of unusual exchange that, in the

¹¹¹ Victoria Weaver, “Wampum as Social Practice,” (Ph.D. Diss., Pennsylvania State University, 2010), 120. See also Angela M. Haas, “Wampum as Hypertext: An American Indian Intellectual Tradition of Multimedia Theory and Practice,” *Studies in American Indian Literatures* 19, no. 4 (2007): 77-100.

¹¹² See, for example, George R. Hamell, “Trading in Metaphors: The Magic of Glass Beads,” in *Proceedings of the 1986 Shell Bead Conference, Selected Papers* edited by Charles F. Hayes (Rochester, NY: Research Division of the Rochester Museum and Science Center, 1989), 5-28; Lynn Ceci, “The Value of Wampum among the New York Iroquois: A Case Study of Artifact Analysis,” *Journal of Anthropological Research* 38, no.1 (Spring 1982): 97-107.

nineteenth and early twentieth century, interested historians, antiquarians, and numismatists but has, until very recently, fallen from a position of prominence in the story of the fur trade.¹¹³ For Native American historians, the diplomatic function of wampum, particularly as it pertained to eighteenth-century Indigenous politics and treaty-making, has supplanted discussions of wampum as a trade good.¹¹⁴ Anthropologists and archaeologists have long considered wampum in studies of Indigenous cultural change, and their scholarship helps break the silence of the colonial archive with regards to Indigenous perspectives of wampum.¹¹⁵ Recently, two historians of Native-Dutch relationships in New Netherland have revisited the period in which

¹¹³ See, for example, Peter Francis, Jr., “The Beads that Did *Not* Buy Manhattan Island,” *New York History* 78, no. 4 (October 1997): 411-428; Lynn Ceci, “The First Fiscal Crisis in New York,” *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 28, no. 4 (1980): 839-848; Marshall Joseph Becker, “Wampum: The Development of an Early American Currency,” *Bulletin of the Archaeological Society of New Jersey* 36 (1980): 1-11; Mary W. Herman, “Wampum as Money in Northeastern North America,” *Ethnohistory* 3, no. 1 (Winter 1956): 21-33; George S. Snyderman, “The Functions of Wampum,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 98, no. 6 (December 1954): 469-494. For a recent look at wampum as currency, see Shell, *Wampum and the Origins of American Money*.

¹¹⁴ See Paul Otto, “Wampum, Tawagonshi, and the Two-Row Belt,” *Journal of Early American History* 3, no. 1 (2013): 110-125; Paul Otto, “Wampum: The Creation and Transfer of Rituals on the Early American Frontier,” in *Transfer and Spaces: Ritual Transfer* edited by Gita Dharampal-Frick and Robert Langer (Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010), 171-188; Haas, “Wampum as Hypertext”; James M. Merrell, *Into the American Woods: Negotiators on the Pennsylvania Frontier* (New York: Norton, 1999), 187-193; Michael K. Foster, “Another Look at the Function of Wampum in Iroquois-White Councils,” in *The History and Culture of Iroquois Diplomacy: An Interdisciplinary Guide to the Treaties of the Six Nations and their League* edited by Francis Jennings, William N. Fenton, Mary A. Druke, and David R. Miller, Paperback Edition (1985; Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1995), 99-114.

¹¹⁵ See, for example, James W. Bradley, “Re-Visiting Wampum and Other Seventeenth-Century Shell Games,” *Archaeology of Eastern North America* 39 (2011): 25-51; Christopher L. Miller and George R. Hamell, “A New Perspective on Indian-White Contact: Cultural Symbols and Colonial Trade,” *Journal of American History* 73, no. 2 (September 1986): 311-328; Ceci, “The Value of Wampum”; J. S. Slotkin and Karl Schmidt, “Studies of Wampum,” *American Anthropologist* 51, no. 2 (1949): 223-236; James D. Burggraf, “Some Notes on the Manufacture of Wampum Prior to 1654,” *American Antiquity* 4, no. 1 (July 1938): 53-58.

wampum functioned as a currency and trade good. Mark Meuwese, in a 2011 article, argues that the wampum trade played a significant role in the Pequot War and influenced the Anglo-Dutch rivalry in southern New England. He traces the ascent of the coastal Pequots as wampum manufacturers who became, as he contends, caught in an imperial contest for control of southern New England and its wampum-producing peoples that eventually culminated in the violence of the Pequot War.¹¹⁶ Paul Otto has also revisited wampum as a trade good by considering the words used by Native peoples and French, Dutch, and English traders to describe the beads. The language of wampum shifted from the particular “sewan,” “porcelaine,” and “roanoke” to the more generalized “wampum” as the English became the dominant imperial power in the northeast and settlement overtook commerce as the prevailing form of imperial presence. No longer interested in the particular trade jargons that facilitated communication in commercial transactions, he argues, the generic term “wampum” sufficed for English colonists more concerned with diplomacy (and land sales) than trade.¹¹⁷

Dutch colonists did not fully understand the context in which Haudenosaunee peoples conducted trade any more than their English peers, but they used wampum to facilitate economic relationships and traded according to Indigenous standards and customs. When Dutch traders “discovered” wampum, they mistakenly thought it was money or some kind of precious material, in the same vein as pearls, gems, or gold. In 1632, Kiliaen van Rensselaer wrote in his instructions to the *schout* and council of Rensselaerswijck that they must order all of his colonists to collect, “the seawan, pearls, minerals, crystals, or similar things which any one of

¹¹⁶ Mark Meuwese, “The Dutch Connection: New Netherland, the Pequots, and the Puritans in Southern New England, 1620-1638,” *Early American Studies* 9, no. 2 (Spring 2011): 295-323.

¹¹⁷ Otto, ““This is that which... they call Wampum.””

them may find or obtain,” and then “deliver [them] into the hands of the officer, who shall keep the same in safety and at the first opportunity have report thereof made to the patroon.”¹¹⁸

Unlike pearls, minerals, or crystals, wampum would not have been of much use to the Amsterdam jeweler; its value was tied specifically to North America and the Indigenous peoples who traded the beads. Eventually, the Dutch changed their trading behaviors to better incorporate wampum’s cultural and relational value into exchanges for trade goods, acknowledging its worth beyond money. A WIC commercial agent, Isaak de Rasiers observed, “They are as particular about the stringing and sorting [of wampum] as we can be here about pearls.”¹¹⁹ His observation noted that it wasn’t just the beads but the way in which they were strung together that was important. The story and relational order contained in the objects together gave them value. Colonial officials recognized this particularity, as well, and in the early 1640s they decided to eliminate all loose wampum beads from the market, allowing payments only in strung wampum, one of many attempts by leaders to standardize and regulate the wampum trade.¹²⁰

Despite this example of an official acknowledgement of Native mores and their importance to the wampum trade, these exchanges and their Indigenous particularities deeply troubled local colonial officials and elite Dutch magistrates. The wampum trade was necessarily local and bound to local customs. Wampum was not traded outside of the Hudson River region; it would not become a part of the Dutch or British Atlantic Worlds, and it did not have

¹¹⁸ *VRBM*, 209.

¹¹⁹ Jameson, *Narratives of New Netherland*, 106.

¹²⁰ For example, Ordinance, April 18, 1641, DCCM Vol. 4, #90; Notice, November 30, 1647, DCCM Vol. 4, #352; and Order, April 29, 1656, DCCM Vol. 6, #381, NYCM.

international value. As an object that somewhat resembled currency among Euro-American colonists, it was always considered secondary to specie of European origin or internationally-accepted trade goods like duffels or beaver pelts.¹²¹ Beyond practical concerns, however, officials tried to eliminate wampum as a trade good because they at least partially understood its function as a tool of informal diplomacy and recognized that it carried significance for Native peoples outside of its monetary worth.

Wampum was an instrument and representation of peace, yet in New Netherland it was inextricably linked to violence. The origin stories of the wampum trade, as written for seventeenth-century audiences, reflected the anxieties of Europeans reporting on the trade. They described the origins as a conquest, in which the violence was unwarranted but served as a convenient means to discovery of the significance of wampum to Native peoples. The most commonly relayed story was of a series of kidnappings, committed by Willem Jorisz Hontom and Jacob Eelkens in the early 1620s.¹²² In his *Historisch Verhael*, the pamphleteer Nicolaes van Wassenaer described one of the kidnappings:

[Jacob Eelkens] imprisoned [the sachem] in the year 1622 in his yacht and obliged him to pay a heavy ransom, or else he would cut off his head. He paid one hundred and forty fathoms of *Zeewan*, which consists of small beads they manufacture themselves, and which they prize as jewels.¹²³

¹²¹ Jacobs, *New Netherland*, 192-197; Elizabeth S. Peña, “Making ‘Money’ the Old-Fashioned Way: Eighteenth-century Wampum Production in Albany,” in Charles L. Fisher, ed., *People, Places, and Material Things: Historical Archaeology of Albany, New York*, New York State Museum Bulletin #499 (Albany: University of the State of New York, 2003), 121-123.

¹²² Meuwese, “The Dutch Connection,” 307-308.

¹²³ Jameson, *Narratives of New Netherland*, 86.

By the time Van Wassenaer wrote his account, wampum was widely accepted as an important trade good throughout New Netherland, and the Dutch had become part of a “trade triangle” that connected coastal Algonquians who produced the beads to Haudenosaunee peoples who valued them.¹²⁴ The Dutch did not simply integrate themselves into precontact wampum networks, however. By linking wampum and violence in southern New Netherland, they disrupted wampum’s meaning and purpose and created rifts between colonial settlements and their Indigenous neighbors.

A court case from the colony’s council minutes serves as a useful canvas to illustrate the complicated, delicate dynamics of the wampum trade as it existed during the early period of New Netherland. In 1639, two men were prosecuted and convicted for stealing wampum from an Indigenous woman, one for committing the theft and one for receiving the stolen property. The case was unusual in that it was prosecuted swiftly and the offenders harshly punished, the robber ordered for public whipping and the purchaser of the belt ordered to “ride the wooden horse” and surrender two month’s wages to the court.¹²⁵ The circumstances of how the case came to the attention of the court weren’t recorded, leaving open questions as to who complained to the authorities about the incident and why. Perhaps the woman approached the New Netherland government, or one of her relatives. Perhaps Dutch bystanders—of which there appear to have been a handful—reported the incident. Even though the court prosecuted the case as if it were a theft, witness statements depict a violent incident that may have gone beyond mere robbery. The provincial secretary recorded the testimony of Philip Gerritsz, who saw Toby, a sailor on the ship

¹²⁴ Ceci, “Value of Wampum,” 97.

¹²⁵ Court proceedings, June 23, 1639, DCCM, Volume 4, no. 43, NYCM.

De Westindise Raven, “throw down a squaw on the path near the Fresh Water and then sit on her.” Tobias Jansz, aka Toby, then testified that it was Claes, the ship’s cabin boy, who forced the woman to the ground and, “draw a knife... intended to cut the belt which the said squaw had around her waist.” Claes, possibly assisted by Toby, stole the woman’s wampum belt.¹²⁶ In another court case from November of the same year, Juriaen Rodoloff was convicted of stealing wampum and was simply ordered to return the stolen property to its rightful owners.¹²⁷ That Claes’s case demanded public corporeal punishment implies that his crime was more than just a robbery, and that he may have done more than “sit on her,” though the records don’t specify. It wasn’t unusual for the court to obscure the details when crimes were sexual or violent.

When Claes and Toby attacked an anonymous Native woman and stole her wampum belt, they committed more than just robbery. Wampum was an essential trade good because it embodied not capitalist but Indigenous systems of exchange; it linked trade to kinship, diplomacy, and the building of relationships. The representational nature of wampum meant that it had to be traded carefully because it was more powerful—and more valuable—than gold in that it bound peoples to one another in exchange and informal diplomacy. Claes’s violent seizure of the woman’s belt plundered the living stories told by the beads. Public lashing, riding the wooden horse—these extreme corporal punishments fit such a blatant disregard for the political and social components of the wampum he violently stole. A few years later, during Kieft’s War, Dutch colonists would further entwine violence and the allegiance represented by

¹²⁶ A. J. F. van Laer, ed. and trans., *Register of Provincial Secretary, 1638-1642*, Vol. 1 (Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1974), 177. The original register burned in the 1911 fire.

¹²⁷ Court proceedings, November 3, 1639, DCCM, Volume 4, no. 53, NYCM.

wampum strings by offering to pay their neighbors 10-20 fathoms of wampum for the heads of Raritans, binding them to their allies through the gruesome exchange of flesh for wampum strings.¹²⁸

The final cause of New Netherland's ruin in the Board of Accounts report was Kieft's War and his demands of tribute. The policies that catalyzed the conflict and the violent behaviors associated with it created such chaos in southern New Netherland that Kieft recommended, according to the report: "to restore peace and quiet throughout the land, the Indians who had waged war against us, should be wholly destroyed and exterminated," though the Board of Accounts and the people of New Amsterdam balked at the proposition for practical, financial, and moral reasons.¹²⁹ The WIC expressed frustration at having to clean up Kieft's mess, and the report was one way of directing company policies going forward to prevent another "unnecessary" war by, "maintain[ing]... good correspondence with the neighboring people, and especially with the Indians."¹³⁰ Steadying these partnerships and eliminating violence would require stabilizing the colonial government, and the Board of Accounts recommended revising the local governing structure, making it more responsive to delegations from the colonies and charging it with, "the general advancement of the public welfare."¹³¹ This revised governing structure would ultimately localize political authority in the years after Kieft's

¹²⁸ Minute, July 4, 1641, DCCM, Vol. 4, no. 97, NYCM. See also Andrew Lipman, "'A meanes to knitt them together': The Exchange of Body Parts in the Pequot War," *William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series 65, no. 1 (January 2008): 3-28; Merwick, *The Shame and the Sorrow*, 137-150.

¹²⁹ *DRCHNY*, I, 151-153, 151 (quotation).

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 153.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 154.

War and would become a means by which local leaders, drawn from the local elite, would begin to pass regulations that governed the who, where, and what of trade. Objects like firearms and wampum would be closely scrutinized and their exchange increasingly confined to narrow circumstances in an effort to prevent a reprise of Kieft's War.

Conclusion

Van Rensselaer's 1633 memorial contained many important threads that foreshadowed the development of the political economy of the upper Hudson River region throughout the seventeenth century, even if he would not live to see the eventual outcomes. His remonstrance addressed the questions of who was well positioned to carry on the trade, where trade should be conducted, and what items were best suited for exchange. Van Rensselaer understood that trade scattered throughout New Netherland's frontier regions would lead to chaotic relations with Native peoples, especially if such trade was conducted by interlopers and company employees who had little interest in stabilizing partnerships built from exchanges. Instead, he argued that families and long-term settlers were better suited to seek out and establish permanent trading relationships with their Indigenous neighbors. The problem of distance and efforts at trade consolidation would remain the central concerns of WIC officials, elite merchants, and Native peoples, particularly the Mohawks.

Van Rensselaer defined limits on who should orchestrate, conduct, and benefit from the fur trade. He wanted his industrious colonists to expand the trade on his behalf, after setting aside the products of their labor owed to him. He argued that the poor could not be expected to come up with the capital needed to finance the trade without taking on significant debts to the patroon or the company. The fur trade—especially the exchange of pelts for imported trade goods—was better left to elites, the company's investors and the patroons. Carried out by

colonists in the name of these elites, the trade would be stable, efficient, and profitable. Eventually the WIC did open up free trade in New Netherland, but not in response to Van Rensselaer's efforts and not in the way that Van Rensselaer desired. The early decades of New Netherland's development were bookended by eras of free trade with a strict company monopoly between them. In opening the trade, the WIC considered the rights of individuals to earn a profit and their growing concerns that the settlement was every day falling under threat of English encroachments. They hoped to promote growth and stability by enticing settlers with the opportunity to profit from trade. Shortly after the implementation of free trade in 1639, however, complaints about disordered behavior and deteriorating relationships with Native peoples would plague New Netherland.

Van Rensselaer's assertion about who was ideally suited to conduct and manage trade would echo throughout the history of New Netherland and beyond English conquest, and the debate over which groups were categorized as either honorable or destabilizing would become the colony's central economic and political contest. As the economic landscape transformed from a company military outpost bordered by a privately-owned colony in the 1630s and 40s to a company village to a semi-autonomous town that anchored the region's trade and diplomacy in the 1650s and 60s, the definitions of interloper, community stakeholder, honorable merchant, and existential threat to security would shift at each step of development to accommodate new realities. Wealthy merchants and policymakers like Van Rensselaer, living across the Atlantic, would never be the sole voices defining the terms of debate, and new groups, such as the upwardly mobile elite traders of the upper Hudson River region, would play an increasingly significant role in colonial governance. Native peoples—especially Mohawks—would also voice their perspectives to the Dutch, who redefined the terms of commerce and regulated

colonists' behaviors through policies that reflected the concerns of Indigenous peoples. As the case of wampum implies, however, those negotiating with Indigenous peoples would never fully understand their perspectives nor heed their demands.

In his conclusion, Van Rensselaer demonstrated the interdependence of all facets of the colonial political economy. The company and the patroonships could not operate as separate entities with separate missions and purposes, he argued. If the company's traders upset local Indigenous populations, they could potentially bring war upon the patroon's settlements and end the entire colonization project, which, Van Rensselaer was always quick to point out, he funded at great personal expense. The essential message of Van Rensselaer's remonstrance was that trade and settlement could not be considered apart from one another; both were mutually dependent on the good will of Indigenous neighbors and, ideally, they could work in tandem to stabilize New Netherland. He wrote, "the colonies also will be ruined if they are shut off from the fur trade. The farms which now afford them sustenance will at the same time fail."¹³²

Ten years later, the Board of Accounts considered whether New Netherland was not, at that point, ruined, given the disastrous consequences of Kieft's War. They weighed the colony's future:

It would... be worth considering if it would not be better for the Company, by abandoning New Netherland, to rid itself of such heavy expenses altogether, than by retaining it to continue them. But inasmuch as the Company has... promised to take all Colonists, as well as freemen and servants, under its protection, and to aid in defending them against all foreign and domestic wars; and as the improvement of affairs by good orders from here, and better government there, is not altogether hopeless; so that this place may be preserved... with small profits, or at least without loss; we are, therefore, of opinion... that the Company cannot decently or correctly abandon it.¹³³

¹³² *VRBM*, 247.

¹³³ *DRCHNY*, I, 153.

The new systems of governance that emphasized “good orders from here” and “better government there” would attempt to create greater stability in the colony by regulating the economy and localizing political authority within New Netherland. Colonial leaders, starting in the wake of Kieft’s War, enacted a number of policies in the name of stability that also promoted their own self-interests, at the expense of other colonists and without a nuanced, comprehensive view of what Native peoples wanted and how those ends would best be achieved. In response, those outside the power structures would take all manner of measures to contest negative definitions of themselves and their commercial behaviors. They petitioned the company, locally and in the United Provinces. They slandered the magistrates and complained bitterly about policies they viewed as unjust infringements on their economic rights. Most importantly, they went underground. They smuggled arms, ammunition, and alcohol. They built economic networks that skirted the boundaries of legality, creating a second, illicit level of exchange that persisted well into the eighteenth century. These trading networks, disparaged and outlawed by colonial leaders, would nonetheless play an increasingly crucial role in maintaining regional stability by nurturing Native-Dutch partnerships. From the early economic contests of the 1620s-1640s, a template of regulation and resistance emerged—all articulated through a vocabulary of community—that would come to typify the peculiar, dual-level political economy of the upper Hudson River region.

CHAPTER 2: COMPETITION, CONFLICT, AND CONSOLIDATION (1647-1660)

One of Johan de Deckere's first prosecutions as vice director of New Netherland and *commis* of Beverwijck was for slander. On July 13, 1655, he brought Juriaen Jansz before the Fort Orange court for calling the magistrates, "louts, who were incapable of enforcing the provisions of their placards and ordinances against those who violated them." At issue was an ordinance outlawing the common practice of trading in the woods. Not only did Jansz slander the magistrates, he accused them outright of keeping "the entire trade to themselves" by demanding that all transactions take place inside the town gates. To De Deckere, such accusations could not stand; he denounced Jansz's protestations as serious violations in "a well-regulated country of justice and government." A fit punishment by the court, as argued by the plaintiff, required that Jansz: renounce his statements, "bareheaded, with folded hands, and on bended knees pray God and the court and the aforesaid two honorable magistrates for forgiveness," and promise not to slander the magistrates again. In addition, De Deckere asked the court to levy a $\text{f}600$ fine for the infraction—an astronomical sum. The magistrates seemed less interested in the spectacle of justice than the newly appointed De Deckere and accepted instead Jansz's simple apology and an $\text{f}80$ fine.¹

¹ July 13, 1655, Court of Fort Orange and Beverwyck Minutes, 1652-1656, p. 213-214, Albany County Hall of Records, Albany, NY. (Hereafter cited as CFOBM.) Jansz's case was the first recorded in De Deckere's hand after he succeeded Joannes Dijckman as *commis* at Fort Orange. Dijckman was removed from his post due to alcoholism and suspected mental illness, both of which ailments are reflected in the way he recorded the court minutes from 1652-1655. His handwriting is difficult to decipher, occasionally unintelligible, and he made frequent errors. The extant court minutes from the Dutch period are in two volumes at the Albany County Hall of Records and two parts of one volume at the New York State Archives. All three have different titles: the first is titled, "Court of Fort Orange and Beverwyck Minutes, 1652-1656," the second is called, "Fort Orange Proceedings, 1652-1660," and the third is, "Fort Orange Settlement and Administrative Records," which is Volume 16, Pt. 2 and Pt. 3 of the New York Colonial Manuscripts and consists of the court minutes for 1656-57 and 1660. The second volume contains only court proceedings from 1656-1659, despite its title. The minutes from 1661-1668

Few ordinances generated greater public protest in colonial Beverwijck than those that outlawed trading in the woods. When the ordinance was renewed in 1659, the entire town erupted in chaos during the 1660 trading season, with poor and middling traders openly defying the law and being dragged *en masse* before the court. Traders circulated petitions, voiced their disgust in court, and ultimately Director General Petrus Stuyvesant had to settle the dispute over where traders could meet the Native peoples who brought beaver skins to the town. The debate over “walking in the woods,” which reprised conversations from New Netherland’s early period about the *where* of trade, raised further questions about *who* could trade and who could not, who would regulate the economy and who could not, whose economic interests were represented in government and whose behaviors were declared dangerous or immoral. When Stuyvesant reaffirmed the ordinances and banned “Christian traders” from the woods, he essentially froze Beverwijck’s emerging class structure and political economy; Beverwijck’s new “merchant magistrates” directly benefitted from ordinances against walking in the woods. Such laws stifled upward mobility from the fur trade and helped create what one historian has referred to as the town’s “budding oligarchy.”² It’s no wonder that middling traders like Jansz had choice words

are missing. E. B. O’Callaghan, an archivist and translator, numbered the pages of all of the court minutes in the nineteenth century. Although he inadvertently left out a page number here and there, I use his numbering system for ease of locating specific court cases, as did Charles Gehring and, earlier, A. J. F. van Laer, when translating the minutes. O’Callaghan also created the organizational system for the New York Colonial Manuscripts collection at the New York State Archives. For a translation of all three volumes of court minutes (combined in one volume), see Charles Gehring, ed. and trans., *Fort Orange Court Minutes, 1652-1660* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1990).

² For “merchant magistrates,” see Dennis Maika, “Commerce and Community: Manhattan Merchants in the Seventeenth Century” (Ph.D. Diss., New York University, 1995), especially 322-383 and Oliver Rink, *Holland on the Hudson: An Economic and Social History of Dutch New York* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986). For Beverwijck oligarchy and a discussion of Jansz’s slander case in a larger context of a controversy regarding the use of trade

to say about the ordinances and the magistrates who enforced them. Indeed, Jansz's accusation that the magistrates were keeping "the entire trade to themselves" was right on the mark.

The story of Beverwijck's foundations is directly linked to the narrative of company monopoly versus free trade described in Chapter One. Tension between the vision of free trade promoted by the West India Company (WIC) directors in the Netherlands and the reality on the ground in New Netherland characterized the early years of Stuyvesant's administration. Around 1650, a new thread of economic contest emerged, this time drawing from competition among established colonists and between local (rather than Amsterdam) merchants and the WIC. Throughout New Netherland, merchants and artisans alike argued for increasingly localized control over the political economy with privileges such as the burgher right and economic regulations like the walking in the woods ordinances.³ A small handful of upwardly mobile families emerged as Beverwijck's elite class by the end of the Dutch period in 1664 and would remain the town's most powerful citizens even after English conquest. Using communitarian

brokers, see Martha Dickinson Shattuck, "A Civil Society: Court and Community in Beverwijck, New Netherland, 1652-1664" (Ph.D. Diss., Boston University, 1993), 254-268.

³ For the dispute between merchants and Stuyvesant, see especially Donna Merwick, *Stuyvesant Bound: An Essay on Loss Across Time* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 20-32. For the burgher right and localized control of the economy, see Simon Middleton, *From Privileges to Rights: Work and Politics in Colonial New York City* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006) and Maika, "Commerce and Community," 279-282. For building tensions between wealthiest and middling merchants resulting from the institution of the burgher right in New Amsterdam, see Cathy Matson, *Merchants and Empire: Trading in Colonial New York* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 30. For a brief overview of fur trade regulations in New Netherland, see J. A. Jacobs and M. D. Shattuck, "Bever Voor Drank, Land Voor Wapens. Elkele Aspecten van de Nederlands-Indiaanse Handel in Nieuw-Nederland," in *One Man's Trash Is Another Man's Treasure*, by Alexandra van Dongen, et al (Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Museum Boymans-van Beuningan, 1995), 98-101.

arguments and the rhetoric of safety and morality, the inchoate elite consolidated their grasp on the trade and reinforced their own political power.

This chapter will address the foundations of Beverwijck and elite consolidation of economic and political power during the twelve years of Dutch rule. The first part examines how competition among the WIC, the new leadership of Rensselaerswijck, and traders in the upper Hudson River region led to the establishment of a new company town where the trade could be consolidated and operate under the watchful scrutiny of the WIC and merchant magistrates. Part two traces the biographies of a small group of men with overlapping business interests who became the economic, political, and moral authorities of Beverwijck. Intertwined with the narrative of elite upward mobility is the story of Mohawks, who played an increasingly powerful role in the town's political economy. Their demands for guns and ammunition to use in the mourning wars led to a process by which a select group of individuals within Beverwijck became the primary diplomats with which the Haudenosaunee negotiated under increasingly formalized parameters. Further, Mohawks became regional power brokers, negotiating peace among neighboring Indigenous peoples through the Fort Orange court. They established Fort Orange as the regional seat of diplomatic power and thereby forged a crucial partnership with Beverwijck's political elite. With their political and diplomatic power entrenched, the emerging Beverwijck elite class gathered economic strength by condemning the commercial behaviors of poor and middling traders. In the third section, I will address the ways in which the new elites, inspired by Mohawks' concerns voiced at diplomatic councils, deployed a narrative of alcohol and its relationship to the threat of intercultural violence during the Esopus Wars to enhance their economic position, once again seeking to regulate which goods were acceptable for use in the fur trade.

* * *

The various paths chosen by the WIC that first emphasized trade and later promoted colonization have provided a framework for historians' accounts of New Netherland, which have emphasized the debate over commercial versus settler imperialism with regards to Beverwijck's political and economic development.⁴ Historians have demonstrated the extent to which Dutch society was well-established and Dutch culture had taken root in the colony, particularly after 1650.⁵ In part, histories of Beverwijck have served as a counterpoint to an eighteenth-century mythology, crafted by British partisans, that New Netherland was a backwards place and Beverwijck was little more than a trading outpost, scarcely settled and nearly lawless.⁶ Because of the persistence of Dutch language and culture there, the establishment of the Albany monopoly in the 1680s, and the town's close diplomatic relationship with the Haudenosaunee, the town was viewed as a suspect and impenetrable place by influential British politicians in New York City, such as Cadwallader Colden.⁷

⁴ See especially Donna Merwick, *Possessing Albany, 1630-1710: The Dutch and English Experiences* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Rink, *Holland on the Hudson*; Van Claef Bachman, *Peltries or Plantations: The Economic Policies of the Dutch West India Company in New Netherland, 1623-1639* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969).

⁵ Jaap Jacobs describes 1650 as the moment when New Netherland shifted from a commercial to a settlement colony. See Jaap Jacobs, *New Netherland: A Dutch Colony in Seventeenth-Century America* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2005).

⁶ As Donna Merwick opens her study of Albany: "I do not take its [Albany's] history, however, to have been an evolution. I take its past to have been layers of time when a single site, Albany, was made and remade as a result of successive, socially constructed interpretations. There was no 'Albany' making its way toward today's version. Rather, there was continual reinterpretation, rediscovery, and reaffirmation (or disaffirmation) of cultural meanings." See Merwick, *Possessing Albany*, 1.

⁷ In her recent examination of the formation of New York City's elite and resistance to their authority, Joyce Goodfriend argues that a handful of wealthy, ethnically-Dutch families

This eighteenth-century image persisted until recently, when historians have sought to correct the record about New Netherland, bringing new elements of the Dutch settlements into view. Donna Merwick compares the Dutch and English “possessions” of Beverwijck/Albany, and determines that, although the Dutch practiced a uniquely commercial form of imperialism, that commercialism had its own internal order and stability, which she calls “*burgerlijk*.” She sees the development of Beverwijck/Albany in terms of Dutch commercial culture; the Dutch had an inherent cultural proclivity toward business and trade that prevented the militarism and conflicts with Native peoples that defined English settler colonialism.⁸ Critics have pointed out that her characterization of Dutch commercial culture only applies to a small class of Amsterdam

embraced and co-opted the process of Anglicization to maintain political power after English conquest. Further, they contributed (along with British partisans) to a narrative that poor/middling Dutch peoples living in New York City were incapable of learning English and therefore less intelligent than their English conquerors. See Joyce Goodfriend, *Who Should Rule at Home? Confronting the Elite in British New York City* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2017), especially 11-76. The view that the Dutch of the upper Hudson River region were backward, greedy, and inept in their relationships with the Haudenosaunee is most commonly attributed to Cadwallader Colden and those he influenced, such as the Swedish naturalist Peter Kalm. See especially Cadwallader Colden, *The History of the Five Nations of Canada, which are dependent on the province of New-York in America, and are the barrier between the English and French in that part of the world*, Third Edition (London: Lockyer Davis, J. Wren, and J. Ward, 1755) and Peter Kalm, *The America of 1750; Peter Kalm's Travels in North America; the English Version of 1770, revised from the original Swedish and edited by Adolph B. Benson with a translation of new material from Kalm's diary notes*, edited and translated by Adolph B. Benson (New York: Wilson-Erickson, 1937). See also William Howard Carter, “Anglicizing the League: The Writing of Cadwallader Colden’s *History of the Five Indian Nations*,” in *Anglicizing America: Empire, Revolution, Republic*, edited by Ignacio Gallup-Diaz, Andrew Shankman, and David J. Silverman (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 83-108 and Thomas Elliot Norton, *The Fur Trade in Colonial New York, 1686-1776* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1974), 7-8.

⁸ Merwick, *Possessing Albany*, 3-4 (“*burgerlijk*”).

merchants and homogenizes a settlement that is better understood as socio-economically and culturally diverse.⁹

Responding to Merwick and to earlier, anti-Dutch mythologies, more recent histories have emphasized settlement, the roots of Dutch culture in New Netherland, and the colony's diverse peoples, religions, and economies. Janny Venema's depiction of Beverwijck in the Dutch era agrees with the urban nature of Merwick's view but moves away from the chaotic fur trade to show a village that was organized, cooperative, and increasingly Dutch. She traces the movement from a relatively open society before the creation of the *bijeenwoning*¹⁰, when Native peoples could still move freely among the Dutch, to a more rigidly Euro-American society as the village grew. Her almost encyclopedic account of Beverwijck's homes, inhabitants, and institutions thoroughly reinforces an image of the village as fully functional and well regulated by both the Dutch Reformed Church and the local government and court systems. Further, the provision of poor relief and establishment of education systems demonstrate how Beverwijck had everything its citizens needed to "work on a common future."¹¹

⁹ See especially Evan Haefeli, "To be or not to be Dutch," *Reviews in American History* 35 (2007): 10-17. His review of *The Shame and the Sorrow* critiques Merwick's assertion that the Dutch brought a seafaring commercial culture to the New World that favored "alongshore" interactions with Native peoples, and he demonstrates the ways in which Dutch colonists were not members of the elite Amsterdam merchant class that may have had an "alongshore" mindset. For definitions of "alongshore," which is similar to "burgerlijk" in that it emphasizes commerce and maritime cultural orientation, see Donna Merwick, *The Shame and the Sorrow: Dutch-Amerindian Encounters in New Netherland* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006) 1, 7-8.

¹⁰ *Bijeenwoning* translates as "living by each other" or "living together." At the time, it meant a small settlement, scarcely more than a frontier neighborhood or remote village, but nonetheless a community.

¹¹ Janny Venema, *Beverwijck: A Dutch Village on the American Frontier, 1652-1664* (Hilversum, The Netherlands: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2003), 21. Jacobs also considers the extent to

The historiography of New Netherland during the final decades of Dutch rule paints a portrait of a distinct, culturally Dutch space in which institutions such as the burgher right localized political power and the fur trade flourished alongside other diverse economic ventures. In demonstrating that New Netherland—particularly Beverwijck—was both thriving and orderly by the end of the Dutch era, historians have not described the limitations inherent within that new order nor the ways in which the political structure benefitted the economic interests of some while prohibiting the activities of others. In part, the eighteenth-century partisan image of Beverwijck as a backward, chaotic fur trade outpost came as much from the imaginations of New York City’s politicians as from an ongoing, seventeenth-century conversation about how best to create a stable, peaceful society on the frontier. The burgeoning Dutch elite class used the same rhetoric to argue against the trade practices of their poor and middling competitors that men like Cadwallader Colden would use to disparage the Dutch of Albany. I argue that these seventeenth-century conversations deserve as much scrutiny as the later, anti-Dutch statements of Colden and his fellow partisans. The recurrent themes of the threat of intercultural violence, disorder caused by the alcohol trade, lack of diplomatic grace, and greed would prove potent enough to recycle again and again by those seeking to consolidate the fur trade and its attendant Haudenosaunee diplomacy.

Accusations that certain traders—usually poor or middling—could not be trusted to conduct trade safely, fairly, and without threatening Beverwijck’s continued existence, could easily overrule an individual’s right to trade, and merchant magistrates used such accusations as justifications for their trade regulations. In disparaging the behaviors of their competitors and

which Dutch culture flourished in New Netherland, particularly after the shift toward settlement, which he dates at 1650. See Jacobs, *New Netherland*.

using the familiar terms of security and order to frame the debate, Beverwijck's new elite found a powerful means by which they could hinder economic competition in the fur trade, or at least drive their competitors underground. The up-and-coming elite deployed the same language of community discussed in Chapter One to define the boundaries of acceptable and suspect behaviors. Merchant magistrates used this vocabulary in their ordinances, crafted with the assistance of the company's governing council on Manhattan, to justify placing limitations on the who, where, and what of the fur trade. No wonder, then, that partisans like Colden would echo this same vocabulary in their descriptions of Beverwijck/Albany as a chaotic, unruly frontier town.

Building from the foundation of a peopled and viable New Netherland, new scholarship has taken a second look at the notion of a "frontier society" and the ways in which trade and diplomacy were intertwined in the upper Hudson River region. Paul Otto, Holly Rine, and Mark Meuwese have all reclaimed the concept of the frontier in their examinations of Native-Dutch interactions. Of the three, Otto most clearly articulates his choice of the word "frontier" from Native American historiography. A frontier, in his view, is both a space of intercultural encounter and a contested realm between two cultures, with each vying for sovereignty or supremacy.¹² Otto focuses on the Munsee-speaking peoples who lived to the south of Fort

¹² Paul Otto, *The Dutch-Munsee Encounter in America: The Struggle for Sovereignty in the Hudson Valley* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006), 6-10. He argues that encounters happened in the context of three overlapping stages—first contact, trade, and settlement—and that the third stage of frontier acculturation led to the violent conflicts known as the First and Second Esopus Wars. A recent study of the Native peoples of the Hudson Valley, including the same Munsee-speaking peoples that Otto examines, contends that, "much insight can be gained from examining how Indians interacted with other Indians, not just Europeans, which has tended to be the focus of most research on Indians in the colonial period. Hudson Valley Indians lived in a world far too complicated to be described simply as a binary juxtaposition of Natives and newcomers." This argument prods at Otto's periodization of the Dutch-Munsee frontier and his singular focus on Native-Dutch interactions. See Tom Arne Midtrød, *The Memory of All Ancient*

Orange, but his story of cultural continuity and change, contests over political sovereignty, and ultimate displacement of Munsees often draws in the settlers of Beverwijck and their trading partners. In particular, he documents the efforts of Mohawks and Mahicans who attempted to broker a Dutch-Munsee peace during armed conflicts in the Esopus region.¹³ Rine also connects Iroquoia, Beverwijck, and the Esopus, situating the Dutch village at the center of a European and Indigenous diplomatic “landscape” that was dependent on both colonists and Native peoples for its strength and stability.¹⁴ Finally, Meuwese demonstrates the ways in which Indigenous peoples shaped the Dutch Atlantic World in four “frontier” regions: the Gold Coast, Angola/Congo, Brazil, and North America. In the Beverwijck frontier region, Meuwese describes a budding Dutch society that depended on its Mohawk neighbors, who often viewed colonizers as subordinate, peripheral, or tributary.¹⁵ By reexamining the concept of the frontier, Otto, Rine, and Meuwese have brought Native peoples back into the narrative of Beverwijck’s growth and development while maintaining the image of Beverwijck as an urban and peopled space.

Haudenosaunee historians have provided an interior view of Iroquoia that demonstrates the ways in which the formation of the political body known as the Iroquois League influenced

Customs: Native American Diplomacy in the Colonial Hudson Valley (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), xiii (quotation).

¹³ Otto, *Dutch-Munsee Encounter*, 149-155.

¹⁴ Holly Rine, “‘Such Splendid Country,’ The Esopus Region, a Multi-Ethnic Colonial Landscape on the Hudson River, 1652-1670,” *The Historian* 73, no. 4 (Winter 2011): 705-729.

¹⁵ Mark Meuwese, *Brothers in Arms, Partners in Trade: Dutch-Indigenous Alliances in the Atlantic World, 1595–1674* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2012), 266-269.

diplomacy with the Dutch.¹⁶ The political system that joined the Five Nations into a single polity—and its various factions and dissenters—have been well-documented by historians such as William Engelbrecht, José António Brandão, Daniel Richter, William Fenton, and Francis Jennings.¹⁷ Recent scholarship by Jon Parmenter has amended our understanding of Iroquoia, demonstrating the cohesion of the Haudenosaunee polity created as a result of mobility and flexibility, despite political differences. His depiction of Haudenosaunee politics encourages a rethinking of Mohawk-Dutch diplomacy in the seventeenth century that emphasizes Indigenous strength in bargaining and influence over Dutch politics. Not simply a short-lived empire in decline or a deeply troubled society struggling to maintain cultural identity in the face of colonization and disease, Iroquoia was an increasingly fluid and independent space by the end of the seventeenth century. Indeed, he argues that the aim of Haudenosaunee diplomacy was remarkably consistent over two and a half centuries; they sought to create and protect an autonomous Iroquoia.¹⁸

¹⁶ For an overview of Haudenosaunee diplomacy, see Francis Jennings, William N. Fenton, Mary A. Druke, and David R. Miller, eds., *The History and Culture of Iroquois Diplomacy: An Interdisciplinary Guide to the Treaties of the Six Nations and Their League*, Paperback Edition (1985; Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1995). See also Matthew Dennis, *Cultivating a Landscape of Peace: Iroquois-European Encounters in Seventeenth-Century America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993).

¹⁷ See especially William Engelbrecht, *Iroquoia: The Development of a Native World* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2003); William Fenton, *The Great Law and the Longhouse: A Political History of the Iroquois Confederacy* (Norman: Oklahoma University Press, 1998); José António Brandão, *"Your fyre shall burn no more": Iroquois Policy toward New France and Its Native Allies to 1701* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997); Daniel Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992); Francis Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire: The Covenant Chain Confederation of Indian Tribes with English Colonies from its Beginnings to the Lancaster Treaty of 1744* (New York: Norton, 1984).

¹⁸ Jon Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1534-1701* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2010).

Historians who have characterized Beverwijck and the surrounding upper Hudson River region as a frontier space have done much to emphasize Native-Dutch relations and the importance of cross-cultural encounters to the development of Beverwijck's society, correcting the narrative of the Dutch as inept diplomats while underscoring the ways in which Indigenous peoples influenced those relationships. Likewise, Parmenter encourages a consideration of the ways in which Mohawks asserted their influence in diplomatic negotiations at Beverwijck to shape Dutch policies, thereby adding another layer of nuance to understanding Haudenosaunee perspectives of negotiations in Beverwijck. Still, the different approaches to exchange and encounter that bifurcated the region's political economy—among the Dutch and the Mohawks—remain under-examined in existing scholarship. Just as Dutch colonists were a diverse group with varying approaches to trade and diplomacy, Mohawks similarly did not act as a monolithic whole. While historians have discussed at length the examples of dissent and factionalism in Haudenosaunee politics and their effects on formal diplomacy with different European powers, the choices of individuals to trade with one person over another, to drink alcohol in a Dutch tavern or in the woods, to behave in ways that went against the wishes—and carefully negotiated diplomacy—of their leaders, have remained elusive both in the historical record and in the historiography of Beverwijck and Iroquoia. Examining the fur trade contests of everyday life, I have tried, when possible, to uncover examples of diverse preferences and trading behaviors among Mohawks, just as I have sought out striations within Dutch society in the upper Hudson River region that fostered the creation of their particular, localized system of political economy.

* * *

The years 1652-1664 proved formative in the development of Beverwijck's distinct political economy, during which time a two-tiered system emerged in which local elites

controlled the bulk of the trade with poor and middling traders less able to compete in the fur trade's formal marketplaces and increasingly constrained to an underground exchange economy.¹⁹ This structure was far from a foregone conclusion during the town's early years; upwardly-mobile elites crafted it partially through happenstance and good fortune, and partially through conscious efforts to consolidate and order the trade. A handful of merchants took advantage of two chaotic moments in the town's early history to establish themselves as elites and entrench their own political and economic power: the founding of Beverwijck in 1652 and the conflicts in the Esopus settlements starting in the late 1650s. In each case, the interests and desires of Mohawks influenced their designs. Without Mohawk leadership pressing for stabilized, professionalized diplomacy, the official sanction of limited gun sales to the Haudenosaunee to prevent an English alliance, and Mohawk efforts to curb the alcohol trade, elites would not have cemented a mutually beneficial partnership with the Haudenosaunee that ultimately pitted their authority against that of their poor and middling competitors. At these crucial moments of instability, Mohawk and elite interests overlapped in ways that drew the two groups closer together and distanced them from the small-scale, intimate exchanges that had characterized earlier partnerships.

The voices of Mohawk leaders played a crucial role in forming Beverwijck's elite because Native complaints were often the basis of trade regulations, and banning alcohol sales and other small-scale transactions helped merchant magistrates consolidate their grasp on the fur trade during a time of fierce competition. Laws passed by magistrates or diplomatic agreements negotiated by leaders did not eradicate or even very much alter the trading behaviors of colonists

¹⁹ For descriptions of *handelstijd*—the trading season—and the structure of formal markets in Beverwijck, see Venema, *Beverwijck*, 176-180; Merwick, *Possessing Albany*, 77-88.

and ordinary Indigenous peoples, however. Such regulations entrenched economic stratification and the elite political class, but poor and middling farmers, artisans, and traders continued to walk in the woods, smuggle, and illicitly provide alcohol to Native peoples as part of the small-scale, intimate economic networks of the Native-Dutch frontier.²⁰ Regulations created an underclass of traders whose small-scale trades were declared illegal and who, as we will see in subsequent chapters, had to move further outward into the frontier regions to continue their business. By 1664 these intimate transactions had been deemed immoral, unsafe, and criminal by the merchant magistrate elite, unfitting of a “well-regulated country of justice and government.” With their interests tied to those of Mohawks, a handful of upwardly mobile elites were able to entrench their own political and economic authority in just a dozen years.

Company Versus Colony and the Foundation of Beverwijck

Early in his administration, Stuyvesant reported to the WIC directors on the state of economic activity in the colony and his plans to combat smuggling and consolidate the company’s trading interests. Their response bemoaned the many conflicts besetting New Netherland, which echoed the conclusions of the Board of Accounts discussed in Chapter One.

²⁰ For daily transactions between Indigenous and European peoples and “intimate economic networks” in New Netherland formed through “interpersonal interactions,” see Susanah Shaw Romney, *New Netherland Connections: Intimate Networks and Atlantic Ties in Seventeenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 17-19 (definitions of “intimate network”), 122-190 (Dutch-Indigenous “intimate networks”), 126 (quotation, below). Romney argues that Dutch-Indigenous interpersonal networks became less intimate or trusting as a result of violence throughout New Netherland, especially after Kieft’s War and the First Esopus War, although she cautions that, “the intense intermingling of peaceful and violent interactions throughout the Dutch period belies any attempt to draw a clear chronological distinction between an era of peaceful trade followed by a period of violent farming.” Despite this claim of simultaneous trade and war, however, her discussion of Dutch-Indigenous intimate trade networks is divided into tidy chronological sections, the last of which describes “keeping one’s distance” and emphasizes the breakdown of trading relationships as settlements (and farms) expanded.

The colony continued to encounter the problem of traders scattered throughout the interior, diverting furs from the established trading posts at the forts. Yet the company was bound to its policy of free trade, which the directors still believed was necessary for increasing settlement and preventing the colony's collapse or capture at the hands of its competitors.²¹ Having firmly committed itself to free trade in New Netherland as a means of attracting and keeping settlers in the colony, the WIC had to be careful how much it regulated the trade and whether it directly competed with individual traders. As Stuyvesant observed, free trade in the colony had become a messy business by 1648. Traders roamed about in the woods, siphoning pelts from the official and established trading centers at Fort Orange, Rensselaerswijck, and in New Amsterdam. Instead of an orderly commerce with fixed prices and established, agreed-upon rules of engagement, free trade in the colony was devolving into a free-for-all characterized by shady transactions in the woods outside the watchful scrutiny of magistrates and WIC officials. Further, itinerant, or "Scotch" traders who did not reside in the region traveled up the Hudson during trading season, taking profits from the company and local residents.²²

Stuyvesant's solution was to propose a centralized trading outpost through which all aspects of the fur trade could be conducted under WIC supervision, but the directors were quick to decline his idea: not only would such a trading post violate the company's commitment to free trade, but it would also bring transactions closer to the settlements, thus bringing Indigenous peoples back into regular and intimate contact with colonists. On the heels of Kieft's War, with

²¹ Directors to Stuyvesant, April 7, 1648, Dutch Colonial Administrative Correspondence (hereafter cited as DCAC) Vol. 11, no. 12, New York Colonial Manuscripts, New York State Archives, Albany, NY (hereafter cited as NYCM).

²² Jacobs, *New Netherland*, 67-71.

the memory of violence fresh in the directors' minds, allowing Native peoples constant access to the settlements seemed a dangerous proposition indeed. Finally, the directors noted the weak economic position of the company and the infeasibility of returning to a strictly regulated fur trade, writing that Stuyvesant should monitor the collection of taxes and fees carefully to prevent fraud.²³ Instead of centralizing the trade, Stuyvesant would be stuck accounting for every penny of excise revenue and export duty as the primary means of generating company profits.

The letter from the directors to Stuyvesant foreshadowed the economic conflicts that would plague his administration and would continue to play out, in new iterations, even after English conquest. The problem of the fur trade was not a simple conflict of free trade vs. monopoly, as the nuanced letter from the directors demonstrates. After 1639, the WIC was fully committed to free trade, and Stuyvesant recognized its importance to the colony's future growth. However, leaders felt pressure to create a system that served the greater good, even if that meant regulating prices and creating standards of economic behavior. Protecting the community meant balancing private, company, and settlement interests. During the era of free trade, the growing merchant class wrested economic power from the company. They argued for safety, orderliness, and fairness, just as Stuyvesant had when he proposed a centralized company trading post. Stuyvesant's efforts to rein in the trade provided the template by which a small group of men became Beverwijck's elites.

Shortly after Stuyvesant was appointed the colony's director general, Brant van Slichtenhorst arrived in New Amsterdam to govern Rensselaerswijck. As discussed in Chapter One, Kiliaen van Rensselaer emphasized the interdependence of his colony and the company, but

²³ Directors to Stuyvesant, April 7, 1648, DCAC, Vol. 11, no. 12, NYCM.

his successors aimed to expand the colony's authority in the upper Hudson River region. Either Wouter van Twiller or Arent van Curler drew a new map of Rensselaerswijck that Van Slichtenhorst brought with him to New Netherland and that called for the establishment of a *bijeenwoning*e on the west side of the Hudson, alongside Fort Orange. The dispute over settling the east side versus the west side of the river was rooted in the decades-old question of whether the company and the colony were competitors or partners in the building of New Netherland. The implementation of free trade and the expansion of trade from Rensselaerswijck did result in increased competition for furs between the company and colony, just as the WIC directors had predicted but Van Rensselaer had denied would happen. After his death, the relationship between company and colony became more acrimonious, increasingly departing from the tense but stable partnership that existed in the 1630s and early 1640s. Expanding Rensselaerswijck by surrounding the fort with colonial homes sent a message to the company about who owned and controlled the land in the area. Stuyvesant ordered Van Slichtenhorst to cease building homes on the west side of the river, but Van Slichtenhorst continued to issue new permits while Stuyvesant was busy with other matters in New Netherland. By the time Stuyvesant became aware of the Fort Orange situation, the *bijeenwoning*e had grown to a few dozen houses. Van Slichtenhorst was arrested, Jan Baptist van Rensselaer assumed control of the patroonship, and Stuyvesant sent armed troops to take over the *bijeenwoning*e, transferring the allegiance of those settled there from Rensselaerswijck to the company. Such were the inauspicious beginnings of the town of Beverwijck.²⁴

²⁴ Venema, *Beverwijck*, 44-51 and Directors to Stuyvesant, March 21, 1651, DCAC Vol. 11, no. 29b, NYCM. Van Twiller was Kiliaen van Rensselaer's nephew and the appointed guardian of Johannes van Rensselaer, the patroon's minor son. He also served as director of New Netherland from 1633-1638. He seems to have put his loyalties to his family and his obligations as guardian before any concern for the company's jurisdiction; it was in the best interests of his ward to

Van Twiller, an enterprising former director of New Netherland, was acutely aware of the profits that could come from controlling the northern trade and obstructing the company's access to furs. The company accused him of ordering guns to be set up along the river to block the passage of company traders by force. The establishment of the *bijeenwoning* was thus part of Van Twiller's strategy to eradicate the company from the area around Rensselaerswijck and consolidate the patroonship's economic control of the upper Hudson River region. In 1651, the directors complained to Stuyvesant that Van Twiller, "intends to make himself master of the whole North River trade." They staunchly asserted the rights of all to access the river and the Fort Orange trade, accusing Van Twiller of impudence.²⁵ The directors' complaints against Van Twiller were twofold: 1) he acted against company interests and 2) he acted in a way that was detrimental to the free persons of New Netherland. In their view, Rensselaerswijck was a monopoly, but Fort Orange was a community institution open to all who wished to trade there. Ultimately the company seized the *bijeenwoning* and replaced it with the town of Beverwijck to better serve the interests of community and company.²⁶

Taking control of the *bijeenwoning* and establishing a new town near Fort Orange also served a strategic purpose in the ongoing competition with the English. As described in Chapter One, the Anglo-Dutch rivalry in the Connecticut River valley influenced the WIC's decision to

maximize Rensselaerswijck's profitability and prevent the company from encroaching further on territory that the family believed they had purchased legally from Mahicans in 1630. The legal dispute over these land claims would drag out beyond the Dutch period and into eighteenth century, and will be discussed at length in Chapter Three.

²⁵ Directors to Stuyvesant, March 21, 1651, DCAC, Vol. 11, no. 29b, NYCM.

²⁶ See especially Directors to Stuyvesant, February 16, 1650, DCAC Vol. 11, no. 18, NYCM.

implement free trade as a means of populating New Netherland.²⁷ Stuyvesant's administration faced even greater threats from nearby settlements, especially Springfield, Massachusetts. The directors urged him to collect surveillance of the trading outpost and prevent the expansion of English settlements by any means possible short of starting an Anglo-Dutch war.²⁸ Stuyvesant corresponded with John Winthrop, governor of Massachusetts, and other New England leaders to set out explicit boundaries for settlement and trade. However, the English had complaints of their own against the Dutch, namely, that they sold guns and ammunition to Native peoples. One governor even accused Stuyvesant of inciting the Mohawks against them. They also furiously protested the duties, fees, and taxes levied by the company on New Netherland commerce. Meanwhile, the WIC directors suspected that the English sought to drive the Wappingers from the region and settle in their territory, cutting Fort Orange and Rensselaerswijck off from the rest of New Netherland. Relations between the two powers continued to degrade throughout the 1640s and 1650s, and eventually Anglo-Dutch war, initiated in Europe, spilled over to New Netherland.²⁹

The establishment of Beverwijck seemed to offer the company tidy resolution to many of its ongoing problems in the upper Hudson River region. Van Twiller's threats to cut off Fort Orange by blockading the river and surrounding the fort with the *bijeenwoning* backfired:

²⁷ See also Rink, *Holland on the Hudson*, 117-138.

²⁸ Directors to Stuyvesant, [1646], DCAC, Vol. 11, no. 1, NYCM. This letter was badly fire damaged and is best consulted in Charles Gehring, trans., *Correspondence, 1647-1653*, New Netherland Document Series, Vol. 11 (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2000), 5. Gehring used pre-fire translations whenever necessary to supplement charred portions of documents.

²⁹ Numerous examples can be found in DCAC, Vol. 11, NYCM. See also Meuwese, *Brothers in Arms, Partners in Trade*, 249-251.

Stuyvesant seized the community in the company's name and deposed Van Slichtenhorst. The inhabitants were more than willing to abandon their loyalties (and obligations) to the patroon and become citizens in the new town, where they would enjoy greater rights and privileges. Having a second major settlement at a strategic location reinforced Dutch claims to the region and temporarily stalled English incursions on the northern trade. Forming an orderly community under the company's jurisdiction also had the potential to rein in some of the trade abuses and smuggling that Stuyvesant complained of in his letters to the directors. The WIC installed a vice director and *commis* to surveil the region and represent the company's interests, ostensibly bringing the area under greater company control. However, the peculiar circumstances of Beverwijck's foundations ushered in a new political economy characterized by local control and self-replicating power structures.

Transferring inhabitants' allegiance from the patroon to the WIC meant that Stuyvesant issued them a new oath, and from the start Beverwijck's leading and even middling citizens were referred to as *burghers*. In New Amsterdam, artisans, prosperous merchants, and members of the colonial council did not receive the burgher right until 1657, but it was immediately available in Beverwijck.³⁰ For *f*20 an artisan or middling trader could purchase the small burgher right, allowing him to legally practice his trade and obligating him to participate in the burgher guard (local militia/night watch). Beverwijck's new elite class was granted the great burgher right, which cost *f*50 and was required for service in colonial government. The great burgher right granted special privileges such as prosecutorial immunity and exemptions from night watch duty (especially during terms as magistrate). Significantly, it was hereditary, which meant that

³⁰ For the New Amsterdam struggle to obtain the burgher right, see especially Middleton, *From Privileges to Rights*, 11-52; Maika, "Commerce and Community," 162-237.

members of the courts and colonial government were always chosen from the same handful of wealthy families. With the immediate establishment of the burgher right in Beverwijck, political leadership quickly crystalized, giving tremendous authority to a small group of successful merchants.³¹

One early ordinance crafted by Beverwijck's new merchant magistrates was the prohibition against walking in the woods, first passed in 1655. The town leadership sent a delegation to New Amsterdam to speak to the council and formally request an end to the practice because, they claimed, it had the potential to harm the community. Stuyvesant and the council granted the delegation the authority to draft and post an ordinance that suited local conditions. The 1655 ordinance is just one example of the ascent of localized authority in the upper Hudson region after the establishment of Beverwijck. Merchant magistrates, who controlled local politics, had used the language of communitarian concerns to gain a competitive edge in the trade and circumvent established WIC policies. Just eight years earlier, the WIC directors had flatly rejected Stuyvesant's proposal to build a trading post because they did not want Native peoples coming too close to the settlements. Now the merchant magistrates convinced the council to require that all trade take place within the town itself, eliminating the chaotic competition of walking in the woods. In less than a decade the source of political and economic authority in the region had shifted from the company to Beverwijck's wealthiest families, who used their newfound status to craft policies that benefitted their own pocketbooks.³²

³¹ Jacobs, *New Netherland*, 355-365; Venema, *Beverwijck*, 106-107; Shattuck, "A Civil Society," 212.

³² Order, June 21, 1655, Dutch Colonial Council Minutes (hereafter cited as DCCM), Vol. 6, no. 60, NYCM. For an explanation of the procedures for drafting, passing, and implementing new ordinances, particularly during the Stuyvesant administration, see Shattuck, "A Civil Society," 23-33.

The merchant leadership of New Amsterdam continuously disputed Stuyvesant's many regulations and the company's authority, and historians have tended to apply the perspectives of New Amsterdam merchants to Beverwijck merchants by default.³³ Stuyvesant often attempted to limit local authority over politics and trade, but such restrictions were predominantly contested in New Amsterdam, where company oversight was greatest. There, merchants and artisans had to struggle with Stuyvesant's government to obtain access to guilds and eventually the burgher right.³⁴ In Beverwijck, the establishment of the burgher right at the town's founding moment immediately granted merchant magistrates the same privileges they would have enjoyed in the United Provinces. Given the remarkable upward mobility of several of the town's leading merchants, they may have had greater opportunities in Beverwijck than they could have in *patria*. Further, Stuyvesant's efforts at consolidation of trade and settlement aligned with the financial and political interests of the Beverwijck elite. Their request to outlaw trading in the woods certainly overstated the potential for violence caused by unsupervised exchanges, and the

³³ See, for example, Merwick, *Possessing Albany*, 89-94. She argues that the merchant magistrates manufactured the controversy over walking in the woods to wrest power over the fur trade away from the WIC. For the broader story of conflicts between New Amsterdam colonists and the WIC during this period, see especially Jacobs, *New Netherland*, 143-151 and Maika, "Commerce and Community," 20-79. Historians whose focus is specifically the fur trade and Native-Dutch relations have described the Beverwijck magistrates and WIC as having common interests and enacting mutually-reinforcing policies. They perhaps miss the nuances of elite efforts to localize political and economic authority, but they are right to point out the close relationship between Beverwijck merchant magistrates serving as diplomats and WIC officials like Stuyvesant and Johannes La Montagne. For this view, see especially Allen W. Trelease, *Indian Affairs in Colonial New York: The Seventeenth Century* (1960; repr., Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 132-137.

³⁴ For New Amsterdam merchants, see Maika, "Commerce and Community." For New Amsterdam artisans and guilds, see Simon Middleton, "How It Came That the Bakers Bake No Bread: A Struggle for Trade Privileges in Seventeenth-Century New Amsterdam," *William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series 58 (April 2001): 347-372.

policy directly benefitted elites who could easily compete in volume and price of wares if transactions were conducted in formalized marketplaces within the town limits. Indeed, by the late 1650s, Beverwijck's elite merchants were as frustrated by the proliferation of itinerant traders and scattered transactions as Stuyvesant was.³⁵ Just as they benefitted from the dispute between Rensselaerswijck and the WIC to obtain burgher status in a new town, they would use the opportunity created by a downturn in the trade, a violent conflict at the Esopus, and diplomatic pressures from Mohawks to their own financial advantage.

From Farmhands to Magistrates

The Beverwijck gossip in the winter of 1655 was the nicknames bestowed upon the houses primarily along present-day Broadway, in the Dutch period between Fort Orange and the *Fuyckenkil*.³⁶ Although the full weight and humor of the nicknames have been lost to time, they were noteworthy enough to warrant discussion at the funeral for Hendrick Jochemsz's child and, of course, be retold before the court. Perhaps Jochemsz felt stung that his funeral guests repeated the gossip in the presence of his great loss; he readily identified Cornelis Vos as the originator of the names. Claes Gerritsz was also brought before the court to testify against Vos, and he provided the court with an exhaustive list. The house nicknames, as dutifully copied into the Fort Orange court minutes, depict a who's who of Beverwijck society. All but three were magistrates

³⁵ Beverwijck's merchants also benefitted from ordinances passed by Stuyvesant's council, aimed at limiting trade to those who established permanent roots in the region, that outlawed upriver trading without a license and limited the Fort Orange trade to burghers. The fees associated with these regulations once again tipped the trade in favor of those who could afford to pay for the privilege, whether through licensing or the burgher right. Ordinance May 25, 1660, DCCM, Vol. 9, no. 261 and Ordinance, July 2, 1660, DCCM, Vol. 9, no. 318, NYCM.

³⁶ Janny Venema has assembled a definitive list of lots and occupants for the Dutch period. See Appendix 8 in Venema, *Beverwijck*, 457-481.

at one time or another and most were wealthy merchants. Not even Jeremias van Rensselaer was spared Vos's slanderous tongue. The list sheds light on how poor and middling traders perceived Beverwijck's principal merchants, and what they said about them in hushed tones, in the evening, behind closed doors. The meanings of some are plain, such as *'t Huys Onbeschoft*, "The House of Ill Manners," or *het Koeckoeck Nest*, "The Cuckoo's Nest." Others we can guess at, such as, perhaps, Philip Pietersz Schuyler's house, *Vliegende Wint*, "Flying Wind." And still others are lost to us: *de Vogel Grijp*, "The Griffin (or Bird's Grip)," or *de Vinckenest*, "The Finch's Nest." Despite testimony from Willem Fredriksz and Sijmon *de Backer* that contradicted Gerritsz's story, Vos appears to have been presumed guilty of spreading the "familiar" names, though he was never punished.³⁷

The names reveal a tangle of neighbors with overlapping business interests, a group of men who had achieved considerable economic, political, and social power in just a few decades. Three neighbors on *Handelaerstraet* whose fortunes were intertwined received nicknames we might consider enigmatic: Rutger (Rut) Jacobsz's house was *Soesende Wint* ("Whistling Wind"), Goosen Gerritsz's home was called *de Eendracht* ("Concord"), and Volckert Jansz Douw's home was named *de Vogelesanck* ("The Birdsong").³⁸ Following the threads of their stories—

³⁷ February 2, February 23, March 16, and April 27, 1655, CFOBM, p. 185-187, 197, 200. The list of nicknames appears on p. 186.

³⁸ Perhaps one clue about the name "Concord" is that the ship which carried many of the earliest Rensselaerswijck settlers/servants to New Netherland was named *de Eendracht*. See, for example, A. J. F. van Laer, ed. and trans., *Van Rensselaer Bowier Manuscripts, Being the Letters of Kiliaen Van Rensselaer, 1630-1643, and Other Documents Relating to the Colony of Rensselaerswyck* (Albany: University of the State of New York, 1908), 189. (Hereafter cited as *VRBM*.) It is possible that the meanings were unclear to contemporaries, however. When summoned to appear before the court, Vos was asked to decipher the list and explain why he decided to invent the nicknames. See March 16, 1655, CFOBM, p. 197.

and that of their detractor, Cornelis Vos—we can trace the path from Rensselaerswijck farmhand to merchant magistrate and the interconnected web of investment and accounts that entangled Beverwijck's elite.

Rut Jacobsz of Zuid Holland arrived in New Netherland in 1637 as a contracted farmhand. His initial term of service lasted six years, at which time he was engaged as the foreman of the Great Flats. Starting in 1645, he began leasing farms and rented a stake in a sawmill. In 1651 his name appeared as the lessee of a Rensselaerswijck farm called *Blommendael*, valued at $\text{ƒ}300$ with 9 horses and 10 cows. By 1654 he acted as bondsman and surety for the lease of a farm to Jan Barentsz Wemp.³⁹ He held one of the earliest patents in the new town and likely had a plot in the *bijeenwoning* prior to its becoming Beverwijck. Jacobsz, along with Goosen Gerritsz, was authorized as a brewer, and to his house on *Handelaerstraet* he added a waterwheel for a mill. The house and brewery were torn down in 1657, but he continued in the profession until he sold his brewing equipment two years before his death. With Andries Herbertsz he owned a small island called Constapel on which they grew wheat, rye, and other winter grains. When he died in 1665, his fortunes had fallen considerably, and he left his widow with substantial debts. Most of his household goods were sold at auction.⁴⁰

During the intervening years, however, Jacobsz flourished as a merchant, brewer, and landowner. He was a church elder, and his coat of arms was featured in stained glass in the church for which he laid the cornerstone in 1656. He served four two-year terms as magistrate. As a longtime resident of the region, he sometimes acted as an interpreter during Mohawk

³⁹ *VRBM*, 742, 755, 812.

⁴⁰ Additional biographical details from Venema, *Beverwijck*, 49, 58, 251, 260-261, 264-265, 300-301.

councils. He was called upon by Stuyvesant and La Montagne in 1654 to facilitate the sale of ammunition, powder, and lead to the Mohawks “as sparingly and secretly as possible” to prevent an alliance with the English. The justification for such a sale was that, “with the loss of their trade, we would also lose the friendship of the *Maquaes* [Mohawks] and hence heap more misfortunes upon us and our nation.”⁴¹ Jacobsz, as a middleman for the sale, performed a valuable service to the Beverwijck community and its relationship to the neighboring Haudenosaunee. The household items auctioned off after his death speak to the financial status he achieved in his lifetime. Among the pewter cups, copper kettles, and earthen dishes were rarer and exotic items of a wealthy merchant household: a silk wagon cover, several paintings, books, silver spoons with figures cast into the handles, and even “a rose-cut diamond ring.”⁴² Rut Jacobsz epitomized the Beverwijck merchant magistrate as a pious elder, a diplomat who could passably speak Mohawk, a brewer and landowner, and a trader whose fortunes rose and fell with the price of pelts. His financial interests further bound him to others like him, to Goosen Gerritsz of Utrecht and to Volckert Jansz Douw, his brother-in-law.⁴³

Gerritsz, Jacobsz’s partner in a brewery, was another former servant of Rensselaerswijck turned Beverwijck elite. He arrived in 1637, likely on the same boat as Jacobsz. His upward mobility was less meteoric than that of his business partner, though, and in 1648 he pleaded that he was unfit to serve on the Rensselaerswijck court because he was still indebted to the

⁴¹ E. B. O’Callaghan, ed. and trans., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New-York, Procured in Holland, England, and France* 15 Vols. (Albany, NY: Weed, Parsons, and Co., 1853-1887), 13: 35-36.

⁴² Charles Gehring and Janny Venema, eds. and trans., *Fort Orange Records*, 2 Vols. (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2000), A: 134-136 (hereafter cited as *FOR*).

⁴³ Additional biographical details from Venema, *Beverwijck*, 84, 166, 182, 229, 260-261.

patroon.⁴⁴ After four additional years leasing a house and paying for a trading license, Gerritsz had earned enough to be one of Beverwijck's leading citizens. He had an early grant on *Handelaerstraet* and was likely one of the early residents of the *bijeenwoning*. Gerritsz married up, thereby increasing his wealth and status, and when his first wife, Geertie Brantse, died, he set aside the remarkable sum of *f*6000 for their four children. He appeared in the town's official records for another somber occasion when Frans Gabrielsz van Delft confessed to molesting Gerritsz's seven-year-old daughter and was sentenced to a public lashing in one of Beverwijck's first court cases.⁴⁵

Like Jacobsz, Gerritsz diversified his investments. He was a brewer and tapper for most of his life, but he also owned considerable tracts of land and was even in the tanning business in the 1660s. Gerritsz was prosperous enough to own slaves. He gained an advantage in the fur trade by purchasing, along with Philip Pietersz Schuyler, a plot of land between the Hudson and Mohawk rivers that traders passed on their way to Beverwijck. Indeed, he was comfortable skirting the law when it suited his interests. In 1657, for example, he was prosecuted for smuggling and had an entire cargo of merchandise ("contraband"), worth *f*600:50, seized by the council at New Amsterdam.⁴⁶ Despite this brush with the law, he nonetheless served multiple terms as magistrate. His fortunes never seem to have fallen as far as Jacobsz's, but he was

⁴⁴ *VRBM*, 811-812.

⁴⁵ Extraordinary Sessions September 6 and October 13-14, 1652, CFOBM, pp. 22-24 (molestation case). The seriousness of the case against Frans Gabrielsz van Delft required the involvement of the council in New Amsterdam, which authorized the Fort Orange court to try and punish van Delft. See September 28, 1652, DCCM, Vol. 5, no. 64, NYCM. Additional biographical details from Venema, *Beverwijck*, 17-20, 49-50, 120, 255.

⁴⁶ June 15, 1657, DCCM, Vol. 8, no. 612 and June 18, 1657, DCCM, Vol. 8, no. 617, NYCM.

subject to the same fluctuations in the fur trade economy as any merchant. Jeremias van Rensselaer complained in a 1661 letter that Gerritsz had failed to pay a debt of *f*300 for a house: “I know that he was to pay the beavers this year and that he has failed to do so, for according to the accounts he has not paid more than 11 beavers. If with such people the situation is like that, you can readily imagine what it is with poorer people.”⁴⁷

Volckert Jansz Douw, brother-in-law of Rut Jacobsz, arrived as a Rensselaerswijck farmhand in the fall of 1641. Like Jacobsz and Gerritsz he did not depend solely on the fur trade to make his fortune but reinvested his profits in land. He also owned a brewery and in 1656 hired a brewer’s assistant from Amsterdam. When Jacobsz’s fortunes fell, Douw provided financial assistance and oversaw the auction of his estate. Douw did not, however, regularly conduct business with his brother-in-law, despite their proximity as neighbors. Instead, he generally partnered with Jan Thomasz, with whom he owned a farm. He was also close to Jan Baptist and Jeremias van Rensselaer. In 1659, he asked Jan Baptist to procure some luxury items for him in Amsterdam, including silk stockings, English damask, brocade, lace, spices, and a silver signet. Later that year, Jan Baptist wrote to Jeremias, aghast that Douw had not yet written to say how well the items suited him. He lamented that, “above all Volckert Jansz, my special friend, whom for that reason I call a rascal, since otherwise he is so quick with the pen and now, so soon after my departure, so slow in writing.”⁴⁸ Among Beverwijck’s merchant magistrates,

⁴⁷ A. J. F. van Laer, ed. and trans., *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer, 1651-1674* (Albany: University of the State of New York, 1932), 269. (Hereafter cited as *CJVR*.) Additional biographical details from Venema, *Beverwijck*, 116, 257, 268-269, 430.

⁴⁸ *CJVR*, 138-139, 181 (quotation). The following year, Jeremias wrote to Jan Baptist that the linen he sent was of poor quality and most spoiled on the journey, which may account for Douw’s unexpected silence. *Ibid.*, 222.

Douw was singular in his religious faith; he was a Lutheran who, with others, petitioned the States General for the right to practice his religion freely and openly in New Netherland. He was also one of a handful of diplomats who traveled repeatedly to the Mohawk villages. In 1643, he accompanied a diplomatic mission there and returned in 1650 with Arent van Curler.⁴⁹

Intertwined with the process of upward mobility for Beverwijck's new elites was the process of normalizing Dutch-Haudenosaunee relations. On July 17, 1654, the court at Fort Orange called on the town's wealthiest citizens to offer a financial gift to the Mohawks. Many of the same individuals had recently loaned significant sums to the colonial government to help repair Fort Amsterdam and the town's defenses, but the monies furnished to the Mohawks were not intended as a loan.⁵⁰ The merchant magistrates understood that they were personally investing themselves in Beverwijck's regional diplomacy. Jacobsz, Gerritsz, and Douw all contributed to the gift: Jacobsz donated five fathoms of wampum, a kettle, and four hatchets; Gerritsz offered four fathoms of wampum; Douw paid two pounds of powder and four fathoms of wampum. The items collected for the gift were of diplomatic significance, not simply trade goods. All except Jacob Schermerhoren contributed wampum, and several donated gunpowder. Aside from a few kettles and hatchets, they did not include everyday objects that would be distributed among the Mohawks like shirts, coats, or cloth. The goods included in the gift communicated that this offering was an exchange among leaders to serve diplomatic ends.⁵¹ The gift was therefore part of a growing number of exclusively diplomatic interactions between the

⁴⁹ *VRBM*, 826. Additional biographical details from Venema, *Beverwijck*, 44, 102, 249-254, 265, 445.

⁵⁰ For the loan to repair Fort Amsterdam, see June 23, 1654, *CFOB*M, p. 147-148.

⁵¹ For the gifts to the Mohawks, see Extraordinary Session, July 17, 1654, *CFOB*M, p. 154-155.

Beverwijck elite and Haudenosaunee leaders. As we have seen, Jacobsz was already involved in a secret transaction to funnel arms and ammunition to the Mohawks, and Douw participated in two diplomatic missions to the Mohawk villages. These same traders and magistrates generally served as negotiators at councils. By the late 1650s, diplomatic relations with the Haudenosaunee had grown so routine, formalized, and complex that the WIC began to pay translators a yearly salary.⁵²

That is not to say, however, that merchant magistrates originated the growing diplomatic function of the Fort Orange court. Especially after the Esopus Wars in the late 1650s, the Mohawks chose the courthouse as the site of their negotiations with European colonial powers. Mohawks redefined their diplomatic relationship with Beverwijck, and local merchant magistrates responded by professionalizing their role in regional diplomacy.⁵³ Mohawks further expanded diplomacy in the upper Hudson River region by brokering peace negotiations with neighboring Indigenous peoples.⁵⁴ Dutch townspeople were hopeless to negotiate an armistice after violence erupted in the Esopus region; they had difficulty locating the sachems with whom they hoped to parley, and initial agreements for prisoner exchanges and the return of stolen guns repeatedly ended in broken promises.⁵⁵ Without the intervention of Mohawk diplomats, the

⁵² Venema, *Beverwijck*, 164-165; Dennis, *Cultivating a Landscape of Peace*, 167-179.

⁵³ Holly A. Rine, "Mohawk Reinvention of the Fort Orange and Albany Courthouses, 1652-77," *Journal of Early American History* 2, no. 1 (2012): 3-31.

⁵⁴ Mohawks helped broker peace negotiations earlier, as well, during Kieft's War. See Meuwese, *Brothers in Arms, Partners in Trade*, 248-249.

⁵⁵ Ensign Smith to Stuyvesant, April 5, 1660, DCAC Vol. 13, Pt. 2, no. 91a, NYCM; Ensign Smith to Stuyvesant, April 24, 1660, DCAC Vol. 13, Pt. 2, no. 98, NYCM; Instructions for Claes Jansen van Ruyter sent to the Esopus, May 5, 1660, DCAC Vol. 13, Pt. 2, no. 109, NYCM. See also Dennis, *Cultivating a Landscape of Peace*, 169-171.

violence may have persisted for years. The magistrates at Beverwijck and Johannes La Montagne, the vice director of New Netherland who resided at Fort Orange, took some control over the negotiations from *Ensign* Dirck Smith at the Esopus. Although the peace agreement was finalized in New Amsterdam, negotiations among Mohawks, Mahicans, Catskills, and Esopus peoples flowed through Beverwijck, especially in the spring of 1660.⁵⁶ Mohawks asserted their regional authority to broker the peace, and they used the space of the Fort Orange courthouse as the primary site of diplomacy.⁵⁷

Increasingly by the late 1650s and 1660s, diplomacy became the purview of Mohawks and the Beverwijck elite. Competition with the English drew the Dutch closer to their Haudenosaunee allies, who in turn demanded access to firearms to aid their cause in the continuing mourning wars. The Dutch traded guns with Mohawks, but they did so carefully and as part of formalized diplomacy. Gun sales remained illegal for individuals, yet Stuyvesant could and did allow these exchanges at his discretion, especially as the flow of weapons into the colony expanded during the Esopus conflicts and as war with England drew closer in Europe. The WIC shipped guns directly to Stuyvesant, who was then responsible for their dispersal. In

⁵⁶ La Montagne and the Beverwijck merchant magistrates implored Smith to accept the assistance of Mohawks to negotiate peace. Magistrates at Fort Orange to Ensign Smith, April 21, 1660, DCAC Vol. 13, Pt. 2, no. 94, NYCM.

⁵⁷ Mohawks, by brokering these peace negotiations, demonstrated their influence over Dutch policies and their instrumental role in defining Dutch relationships with other Indigenous peoples. Their positions as mediators and the act of speaking on behalf of other Native peoples do not necessarily mean that Mohawks exerted extraordinary power over the Munsee-speaking peoples of the Esopus region, however. Midtrød explains the Esopus negotiations in a broader context of Indigenous mediation and traditional practices of diplomacy. He argues, “Although some leaders sometimes spoke on behalf of others, it would be a mistake to interpret this practice as evidence of clear power relations, or of a kind of patron-client relationship.” See Midtrød, *Memory of All Ancient Customs*, 52-54, 53 (quotation), 76-77.

one typical shipment in the spring of 1660, WIC officials sent weapons and ammunition both for the Esopus war and for the company.⁵⁸ The firearms, powder, and lead assigned to the company's account could then be distributed as Stuyvesant saw fit, including in transactions with Mohawks. Such delicate exchanges had to be conducted with company oversight, and Stuyvesant increasingly relied upon a dependable class of elites familiar with the protocols of Mohawk diplomacy, sympathetic to the interests of the company and the colony, and with established reputations as burghers and magistrates to participate in all diplomatic negotiations with the Haudenosaunee, particularly those conferences involving arms deals.⁵⁹ Through arms trades, Beverwijck's new elites became the gatekeepers of Haudenosaunee diplomacy.⁶⁰

Jacobsz, Gerritsz, and Douw represent the typical ascent of Beverwijck's merchant magistrates. They arrived early, in the 1630s and 40s, and worked off their debts to the patroon. They rented farms, paid for fur trading licenses, and invested in their trades and land. All three were brewers but, significantly, not tappers or tavern-keepers who might risk prosecution for alcohol sales to Native peoples. They partnered with other early settlers to buy more land and larger farms. They had joint business ventures. When Van Slichtenhorst and Van Twiller

⁵⁸ Invoice of munitions &ct. sent to New Netherland, April 22, 1660, DCAC Vol. 13, Pt. 2, no. 104, NYCM.

⁵⁹ Allen Trelease argues that Stuyvesant expressly went against the wishes of the WIC by funneling guns to Native peoples, and he further ascribes most of the flow of firearms to smugglers. Laws against gun sales, he claims, "failed in the first place because of the same spirit of greed and lawlessness which made a mockery of the liquor regulations." However, he notes a shift in WIC policy around 1650 that allowed firearms deals on a limited basis under the company's supervision, primarily due to competition with the English. See Trelease, *Indian Affairs in Colonial New York*, 89-108, 94 (quotation).

⁶⁰ For an overview of the Dutch-Indigenous arms trade, see David J. Silverman, *Thundersticks: Firearms and the Transformation of Native America* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2016), 20-38.

conspired to build a *bijeenwoning* to compete with Fort Orange, all three were likely settlers. And when Stuyvesant flexed his muscles as director general and created the village of Beverwijck, all three received early patents. They became burghers, magistrates, and church elders. They filled their homes on *Handelaerstraet* with luxury goods that they imported from Holland. Some learned Mohawk, or at least enough to passably translate, and all three participated in diplomacy with Mohawks when they traveled to Beverwijck. Such proceedings epitomized the professionalization of Haudenosaunee diplomacy starting in the 1650s. With overlapping business interests, self-replicating politics, diverse investments that increased available capital, and formalized diplomacy, in just a few years these men formed an elite class with deeply entrenched power that effectively narrowed competition and the region's potential for upward mobility.

Beverwijck's merchant magistrates were not universally adored nor respected by their fellow villagers. Slander, abusive language, and even rare formal petitions became outlets of poor and middling anger against the hegemony of a new elite class. The resentments seem to have been mutual. Jeremias van Rensselaer's pitiable remarks that Goosen Gerritsz was unable to pay his debts and that "if with such people the situation is like that, you can readily imagine what it is with poorer people," were partially in response to his brother's forceful attempts at calling in debts from across the Atlantic. In December 1659, Jan Baptist wrote his brother and enclosed a handful of unsealed personal letters addressed to their delinquent debtors. Although the text is partially destroyed, the letter makes plain that he took the debtors' failure to pay him promptly as a personal slight. His justification for calling in the debts was that he had, "given them credit and helped them out of their trouble... [they] now reward my kindness so poorly." He urged his brother to threaten lawsuits and badger the debtors into payment. "Dun them for

payment and do not let two or three trips discourage you, for of many nothing can be obtained by leniency. They are like horses which must be ridden with a tight rein and sharp spurs,” he wrote. Among the debtors receiving a personal letter from Jan Baptist at the end of 1659 was Cornelis Vos, the originator of the slanderous house nicknames.⁶¹

In 1665 Jeremias was still trying to collect debts from Vos, though he had little hope of recovering the paltry sum of *f*96, because by that point Vos’s affairs were “pretty well run down.”⁶² Vos’s fortunes had begun to fall in the late 1650s, when he was unable to settle his accounts and had to mortgage his home. By 1661 he had to sell his house and lot altogether. But in the early years of New Netherland, Vos seemed on track to follow a trajectory similar to those of his neighbors, Goosen Gerritsz and Dirck Jansz Croon. Like his fellow merchants he was an early resident of Beverwijck who likely settled in the *bijeenwoning*. He arrived in Rensselaerswijck in 1640 and served as a farmhand for six years. Vos started out on his own by renting a farm from the patroon and trading on the side. His economic ventures were somewhat lucrative for him; he had enough disposable income to purchase a ring in 1655 for *f*61:10, but he never seemed to get ahead in the trade as Gerritsz, Jacobsz, or Douw did.⁶³ In the same month, he was charged with slandering the householders on *Handelaerstraet* and deposed regarding “the

⁶¹ *CJVR*, 197-198, 198 (quotations).

⁶² *Ibid.*, 380 (quotation).

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 380; *VRBM*, 554, 631, 814. A Rensselaerswijck trading license issued by the colony’s secretary, Anthony de Hooges, in 1649, demonstrates the interconnectedness of Beverwijck’s merchants and serves as a reminder that men who started as equals would not necessarily follow the path from patroon’s farmhand to Beverwijck elite. In the 1650s, pluck and luck contributed to the good fortunes of some, like Douw, while others, such as Vos, watched their profits dwindle. “Fragment of Trading License for Cornelis Teunisz van Westbroeck, Volckert Hansz [Jansz Douw], and Cornelis Vos, April 3, 1649,” Van Rensselaer Manor Papers, Box 13, Folder 28, New York State Library, Albany, NY.

missing [tub] of butter.”⁶⁴ Thereafter, most of Vos’s appearances in court were for lawsuits against him. In a typical case from 1658, he requested that the court allow him to pay a debt after he received the second payment for his mortgaged house. At different times, he was sued by Rut Jacobsz and Volckert Jansz Douw, in at least one case for monies owed for beer, and he may have been a tavern- or innkeeper.⁶⁵ Vos does not appear in the extant records with the same frequency as Beverwijck’s principal merchants; he does not seem to have bought much land, diversified his business interests, or partnered in any large-scale operations. Legal and political power were self-replicating, and a middling merchant like Vos would not be found among the ranks of the magistrates at the Fort Orange court, in a leadership position in the church, nor in the council at New Amsterdam. Despite starting in the same position as Jacobsz, Gerritsz, and Douw, men like Vos watched their small shares of the fur trade grow narrower with each passing year.⁶⁶

Tensions between principal and middling merchants came to a head in the late 1650s during an ebb in the fur trade. The definitive years in building an elite monopoly were years of crisis: slim profits led to cutthroat competition, magistrates leveraged favorable economic conditions from their political authority, and those whose fortunes were most tethered to the fur trade stood to lose everything in a debt spiral. Not surprisingly, Cornelis Vos went from up-and-

⁶⁴ March 2, 1655, CFOBM, p. 195.

⁶⁵ July 9, 1658, Fort Orange Proceedings, 1652-1660, pp. 54-58 (multiple suits as defendant), Albany County Hall of Records, Albany, NY (hereafter cited as FOP, these are the second volume of minutes from the court of Fort Orange and Beverwijck); April 27, 1660, Fort Orange Settlement Administrative Records (hereafter cited as FOSAR, these are the third volume of Fort Orange court minutes), Vol. 16, Pt. 3, no. 144, NYCM; Extraordinary Session, May 25, 1660, FOSAR, Vol. 16, Pt. 3, no. 148, NYCM.

⁶⁶ Additional biographical details from Venema, *Beverwijck*, 178, 239, 260, 303, 430, 447.

coming trader to near-penniless debtor in the years between 1658 and 1661. Many poor and middling individuals suffered considerable losses during the same time, as did even the wealthiest traders.⁶⁷ The lean years played out against the backdrop of the First Esopus War. Although the settlements near Fort Orange were never threatened with bloodshed, merchant magistrates fitted the economic crisis into a narrative of alcohol, smuggling, and intercultural violence that justified stricter trade regulations. Their efforts were so successful that, by the end of the Dutch period in 1664, it would be almost impossible for a farmhand to replicate the trajectory of upward mobility that Beverwijck's elites had followed in the 1640s and 50s.

In the late 1650s and early 1660s, Beverwijck's elite maneuvered against their competitors: not the WIC, but the poor and middling traders who depended on small-scale, scattered, and intimate transactions to participate in the fur trade. The crystalizing elite class, initially crafted through the favorable circumstances of the WIC-Rensselaerswijck conflict, the outside pressures of English competition and formalizing Haudenosaunee diplomacy, and the personal ingenuity of a handful of individuals, set about codifying and reinforcing their economic power. Through the walking in the woods ordinances and prosecutions against alcohol peddlers and tavern-keepers, an up-and-coming elite would consolidate their hold on the trade and assert their political authority in the name of creating a more orderly, peaceful society. Poor and middling traders contested such efforts, protested the ordinances, and slandered the magistrates. They were unable to compete in Beverwijck's formal marketplaces and were forced to either grudgingly follow the law or choose to persist in behaviors increasingly deemed illicit, immoral, and potentially dangerous. The allegiance of elite, WIC, and Mohawk interests under a

⁶⁷ Merwick describes the downturn in trade and the resulting class tensions in the context of the walking in the woods controversy of 1660. See Merwick, *Possessing Albany*, 95-99.

banner of safety and community stability would prove more powerful than the policy of free trade, and those traders on the outside of government and formal diplomacy would have little recourse but to slander the magistrates and complain, behind closed doors, about the ordinances that stifled their upward mobility.

Alcohol, Violence, and Elite Consolidation in Beverwijk

On October 14, 1659, Dutch captives dutifully translated the Munsee survivors' account of the start of the First Esopus War. The story provided an Indigenous perspective of the conflict, but the survivors did not cite the encroachment of Dutch settlements nor the killing of livestock that had led to mounting tensions over time. Instead they offered a Munsee version of the final catalyst for war: an evening of drinking in the woods that turned violent. From the survivors' perspective (and most Dutch colonists agreed), the young Munsee men involved in the violent encounter had done nothing wrong that night other than drinking alcohol given to them in exchange for work and, when that had run out, seeking an additional bottle's worth at the fort.⁶⁸ The aggressors were Dutch colonists led by Jacob Jansz Stoll, who marched into the woods and fired on the intoxicated men. The entire war that followed was easily blamed on the events of a single night because the incident reinforced a narrative that colonial officials had repeated for years. After Kieft's War, New Netherland's leadership continually tried to prohibit the alcohol trade with ordinances, passed with greater frequency during times of conflict, that drew a direct rhetorical link between alcohol sales and intercultural violence.

Alcohol and isolated incidents of drunken violence were convenient scapegoats for longstanding conflicts without easy solutions, and Dutch colonists and Native peoples alike

⁶⁸ Declaration of Catskill Indians, Oct 14, 1659, DCAC, Vol. 13, Pt. 1, no. 46, NYCM.

blamed the alcohol trade for a variety of woes. Additionally, banning alcohol sales criminalized the regular activities of poor and middling traders and benefitted Beverwijck's elite. Merchant magistrates used the specter of intercultural violence to consolidate their grasp on the regional fur trade and professionalize the diplomacy that underpinned it. They justified ordinances that restricted the economic behaviors of poor and middling traders with appeals to moral conduct and community safety. Further, they officially aligned themselves with the interests of Native peoples—in particular, Mohawks—who had long criticized the Dutch for trade abuses and the proliferation of alcohol. Amid the two Esopus Wars, the Beverwijck fur trade further coalesced around a handful of principal traders who also served as town leaders and regional diplomats, such as Jacobsz, Gerritsz, and Douw. This cohort of merchant magistrates successfully legitimized their own economic behaviors while marginalizing the practices of their small-scale competitors, men like Cornelis Vos and Juriaen Jansz.

By the eve of the first Esopus War, in the fall of 1659, Beverwijck's elite had already demonstrated that they had a personal and professional stake in community governance, creating a localized and orderly economy, and normalizing relations with Native peoples. The Esopus conflicts would catalyze the ongoing process of consolidating their economic power. First, restrictions on alcohol sales and prosecutions of violators would target small-scale, intimate exchanges with Native peoples. Next, a carefully orchestrated experiment that opened up the use of Dutch brokers during the 1660 trading season and the chaos that resulted therefrom would ultimately bring the fur trade out of the woods and into the town, where principal traders could easily undersell their poor and middling competitors.

At the exact moment that Jacob Jansz Stoll and his fellow colonists attacked a group of intoxicated Munsee men in the woods, Beverwijck's principal traders were *en route* to the

Mohawk villages for a routine diplomatic meeting. One item under negotiation that day was a Mohawk request that the colonists no longer sell them brandy. The Dutch reply betrayed the central problem of banning liquor sales for colonists and Mohawks alike: leaders could pass any number of restrictions, but the alcohol trade would persist as long as there was a market for it. The Dutch traders scolded, “Brothers, do not let your people to come to us for brandy and it will not be sold to them.... Our leaders are very angry that the Dutch sell brandy to your people and always forbid our people [from doing it]. And forbid your people [from it] also.”⁶⁹ That the Dutch passed no fewer than ten ordinances between 1643 and 1663 banning alcohol sales to Native peoples demonstrates how widespread and persistent the illegal trade proved. In the wake of the Esopus Wars, Beverwijck’s merchant magistrates were that much more justified in cracking down on alcohol sales.⁷⁰

What made the alcohol trade so problematic and difficult to eradicate was its intimacy; from leaders’ perspective, intercultural relations were ideally cordial but distant, especially after an outbreak of violence. Keeping a distinct physical and social distance from Native peoples was becoming standard practice during the 1650s, yet the alcohol trade directly violated that remove. Sometimes alcohol was consumed together, other times it was taken into the woods, but the transactions themselves brought Native peoples into Dutch lodgings and alcohol peddlers into Indigenous villages. Indeed, when soldiers needed guidance locating the Esopus villages,

⁶⁹ Propositions made in the first castle of the *Maquas*... on the 24th of September Anno 1659, [September 27, 1659], FOP, pp. 176-182, 179 (quotation). See also Meuwese, *Brothers in Arms, Partners in Trade*, 271.

⁷⁰ For excerpted and translated alcohol ordinances, see E.B. O’Callaghan, ed. and trans., *Laws and Ordinances of New Netherland, 1638-1674* (Albany, NY: Weed, Parsons, and Co., 1868) 34, 47, 52, 64, 100-101, 182, 258, 310, 383, 446.

they turned to Dutch alcohol smugglers to show them the way. The alcohol trade formed an integral part of the interdependent economic networks that connected Dutch settlers and nearby villagers. Small-scale, daily exchanges of food and pelts for alcohol and goods occurred with great frequency and generally without violence. Yet when unrelated violence did occur, as in the case of the Esopus Wars, it was always all too easy to blame these small, intimate transactions because they violated the basic values of physical and social distance espoused by the Beverwijck elite, echoing earlier economic contests and prescriptions for behavior such as the Board of Accounts report of 1643.⁷¹

That Dutch elites were gradually coming to codify an ideal vision of social distance in their interactions with Native peoples was in part due to Mohawk pressure to regulate traders' behavior. Mohawk leaders pushed for the Dutch to regulate the colonial side of alcohol sales because they relied on Dutch coercive authority over colonists to stop the trade at its source.⁷²

⁷¹ For social distance as an ideal, see especially Venema, *Beverwijck*, 167-172; Dennis, *Cultivating a Landscape of Peace*, 163-172; and Nan A. Rothschild, "Social Distance Between Dutch Settlers and Native Americans," in van Dongen, et al, *One Man's Trash Is Another Man's Treasure*, 189-201. For alcohol peddlers and the Esopus conflicts, see Holly Rine, "'Such Splendid Country,' The Esopus Region, a Multi-Ethnic Colonial Landscape on the Hudson River, 1652-1670," *The Historian* 73, no. 4 (Winter 2011): 724-726. For Dutch and indigenous men drinking together in the Esopus region, see Merwick, *The Shame and the Sorrow*, 248-250. For the alcohol trade as part of small-scale economic networks in early New Netherland, see Romney, *New Netherland Connections*, 158-167. For alcohol and the creation of social/spatial boundaries in two different colonial contexts, see Sami Lakomäki, Ritva Kylli, and Timo Ylimaunu, "Drinking Colonialism: Alcohol, Indigenous Status, and Native Space on Shawnee and Sámi Homelands, 1600-1850," *Native American and Indigenous Studies* 4, no. 1 (Spring 2017): 1-29.

⁷² As William Fenton describes, "The Iroquois political genius was sound, and the Five Nations' strength lay in diplomacy, but their social control was weak. Individuals acted on their own when they disagreed with official policy." Put another way, social control was not the primary function of Haudenosaunee political structures, which were predominantly used for diplomacy. Fenton, *The Great Law and the Longhouse*, 275.

Consensus politics, coupled with the social authority of clan networks, made power among the Haudenosaunee diffuse. These elements of Haudenosaunee political life allowed for flexibility in their relationships with the empires on their borders.⁷³ However, when trade with Europeans threatened the Haudenosaunee social fabric, leaders turned to creative methods to stop individuals from purchasing or drinking alcohol. Certainly, the Haudenosaunee had internal structures by which they created and enforced social norms, but the political leaders of the League had little authority on an individual and clan level. The clan system dictated that women—clan mothers—were vested with political and social authority over those within their lineage, and they could influence individuals’ behavior. The Haudenosaunee did not have the same governing structure as the Dutch; they could not simply pass an ordinance banning the alcohol trade as a means of restricting social behaviors. They pressed Beverwijck’s elites at every opportunity to stop the alcohol trade through the enforcement of colonial laws, and the merchant magistrates frequently obliged their requests.⁷⁴

⁷³ For a similar situation among the Shawnee in the eighteenth century, see Lakomäki, Kylli, and Ylimaunu, “Drinking Colonialism,” 12-13. For Haudenosaunee consensus politics, see also Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), especially 44-45; Gerald R. Alfred, *Heeding the Voices of Our Ancestors: Kahnawake Mohawk Politics and the Rise of Native Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 24-50.

⁷⁴ Fenton, *Great Law and the Longhouse*, 27, 215-216. For women’s authority, see Barbara Alice Mann, *Iroquoian Women: The Gantowisas* (New York: Peter Lang, 2000). Haudenosaunee women, although rarely included in formal diplomatic negotiations with Euro-American outsiders, nonetheless exerted considerable influence over economic activities and trading behaviors. For a general discussion of Indigenous women’s participation in New York trade, see Kees-Jan Waterman and J. Noel, “Not Confined to the Village Clearings: Indian Women in the Fur Trade in Colonial New York, 1695-1732,” *New York History* 94 (Winter/Spring 2013): 40-58. For an example of Haudenosaunee women’s unseen economic power, see Jeffrey A. Bursey, “Women and Cabin Sites: Understanding the Iroquoian Economic System,” *North American Archaeologist* 25, no. 2 (2004): 161-187. Mohawks allied with the Dutch at Beverwijck encouraged the Dutch to enforce ordinances against alcohol sales, but in other locations, such as Kahnawà:ke, they used elements of Christianity and ties to missionaries to prohibit alcohol

The Dutch justified such ordinances using the rhetoric of the threats posed by Native peoples committing acts of drunken violence. The ordinances ostensibly served preventative purposes, yet cases of actual intercultural violence or disordered drinking occurred with no greater frequency than among Dutch settlers. Such explanations were generally rhetorical rather than strictly preventative; they were designed to convince WIC officials and perhaps even the people whose behaviors they limited that restrictions on the alcohol trade and regulations of intimate exchanges created a more stable, orderly economy and society with less potential for sporadic, drunken violence.⁷⁵ Still, alcohol, violence, and threats to social health and well-being were closely intertwined for both colonists and Indigenous peoples. Mohawks urged Beverwijck's elite to renew and enforce ordinances that prohibited intercultural alcohol sales because they sought to limit alcohol consumption within their own communities by halting the trade, thus ending a cycle of violence, disease, and poverty that resulted from the widespread availability of alcohol. Even if Beverwijck's elites overstated the threat to Dutch communities posed by such transactions as a rhetorical justification for their ordinances, Mohawks independently recognized the dangers of alcohol consumption and pressed for Dutch elites to stifle the trade.⁷⁶

consumption within their village spaces. See especially Allan Greer, *Mohawk Saint: Catherine Tekakwitha and the Jesuits* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 89-110; Gilles Havard, *The Great Peace of Montreal 1701: French-Native Diplomacy in the Seventeenth Century*, Phyllis Aronoff and Howard Scott, trans. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), 27-45.

⁷⁵ For racialized depictions of dangerous, "drunken Indians" and efforts to enforce borders, see Lakomäki, Kylli, and Ylimaunu, "Drinking Colonialism," 15-18.

⁷⁶ Peter C. Mancall, *Deadly Medicine: Indians and Alcohol in Early America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), 86-129.

Prosecutions for alcohol smuggling thus sought to correct colonial infractions in Native-Dutch relations, not regulate Indigenous behavior. In only a small handful of instances did Dutch elites attempt to limit Native peoples' access to alcohol by restricting where they could consume it. One notable example was in the armistice negotiated with the Esopus peoples that concluded the First Esopus War in July 1660. Although the terms began with a reassurance that all "prior actions will be forgiven and forgotten," they contained several constraints on Esopus behaviors and, significantly, made Esopus peoples subject to Dutch courts for specific violations. Going forward, any Indigenous person who killed Dutch livestock would have to "give prompt satisfaction" and violent quarrels with colonists would need to be settled by the courts, lest they erupt into another war. Finally, the armistice laid out two provisions that sought to prevent conflicts within the town. The first stated that Esopus peoples could no longer come to the settlements armed and the second dictated that they could drink, "neither wine nor strong drink [brandy] in our houses or town." Although the inciting incident of the war involved men drinking away from the settlements, alone in the woods, the negotiations concluded that the intimacy of sharing a drink in a home or perhaps a tavern was a threat to lasting peace.⁷⁷

Merchant magistrates drew a distinction between ceremonial drinking and diplomatic gift giving on the one hand, and prohibited intimate exchanges on the other.⁷⁸ In a remarkable case from the Delaware River region of New Netherland, Jan Juriaensz Beckker pleaded that, although he had occasionally provided alcohol to Indians, he did not make "a profession of it," meaning that he did not operate a tavern or generally peddle quantities of brandy. Instead, he

⁷⁷ Council to Directors at Amsterdam, July 26, 1660, DCAC Vol. 13, Pt. 2, no. 121, NYCM.

⁷⁸ Mancall, *Deadly Medicine*, 46-49.

protested that he exchanged brandy as a gift to local sachems when they brought him “a goose, a duck or a deer or turkey.” These gift exchanges were part of his political obligations as commissary, he argued. He further contrasted his actions with those of everyone else in the town: “neither Dutchmen nor Swedes disdain openly to provide [them] with liquor or to drink with [them] at the tavern, which is done so free, frank and open, as anything, that is allowed, can be done.”⁷⁹ Beckker was convicted, fined, and banished because the council did not believe his story, but his testimony demonstrates an awareness of the kinds of behaviors that were allowable and those that were suspect. Cementing diplomatic relations with Native peoples, increasingly limited to the purview of merchant magistrates in an official capacity, meant reciprocal exchanges of gifts and ceremonial alcohol consumption. By the 1650s, such exchanges were becoming increasingly ritualized and formalized, and typified the ideal of cordial social distance. Simultaneous to the professionalization of diplomacy, alcohol sales in taverns and—considered worst of all—social drinking with Indigenous peoples were facing greater scrutiny. In alcohol-related prosecutions, merchant magistrates targeted behaviors that represented Native-Dutch familiarity and excluded their own use of alcohol in formalized diplomacy.

In the early years of settlement at Beverwijck, the individuals prosecuted for alcohol sales tended to fall into one of three categories: those who sold alcohol on the river or by traveling to frontier areas, those who were caught after an incident of violence or other disturbance, and tavern-keepers who regularly supplied alcohol to Native customers. A closer look at a few representative cases in each of these categories demonstrates the characteristics of restricted economic behaviors that merchant magistrates punished, namely, intimate transactions or those

⁷⁹ O’Callaghan, *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, 12: 339-340. See also Mancall, *Deadly Medicine*, 47.

that occurred outside the surveillance of the city center. By prosecuting certain individuals, merchant magistrates sought to control the economic transactions on the fringes of settlements, at night, or in the woods.

The Catskill/Esopus region was under the jurisdiction of the Fort Orange court until 1661, and many prosecutions of alcohol sales focused on those who traveled to Munsee villages or met Native peoples on the river in sparsely settled frontier areas. The prosecution of Jacob Sijmonsz Clomp, a skipper, is representative of small-scale frontier smuggling. Because he brought goods up and down the river from Manhattan, Clomp appeared regularly before the Fort Orange court. He became entangled in disputes over accounts and even sued debtors for monies owed. Eldert Gerbertsz sued Clomp for selling a cargo of hogs to the highest bidder instead of delivering them as commissioned, and Cornelis Gerbrantsz sued Clomp for wages owed. Clomp was prosecuted for slander against the court, Adriaen Jansz van Leyden, and Willem Fredriksz in February 1654. Despite his angry outburst directed at the court and his colleagues, his services as a ferry were necessary for the functioning of the community; a few months later the court hired his yacht to carry the monies and goods collected to help fund the rebuilding of Fort Amsterdam.⁸⁰

Clomp remained part of the Hudson River transportation network, even after he was prosecuted in July of 1653 for passing, “brandy in a kettle from his bark [sloop] to the Indians,” per the testimony of Marten Martensz. He was convicted and fined *f*250, a relatively modest sentence, and allowed to continue to operate his yacht. To the merchant magistrates, Clomp

⁸⁰ January 27, 1654, CFOBM, p. 89 (sued for a debt); February 10, 1654, CFOBM, p. 95 (slander); June 23, 1654, CFOBM, p. 147 (use of sloop to transport items); July 21, 1654, CFOBM, p. 155 (sued by Cornelis Gerbrantsz for wages); Extraordinary Session, October 15, 1654, CFOBM, p. 166-167 (sued by Eldert Gerbertsz for missing hogs).

represented a problem that plagued the region: the sale of alcohol on the river or the frontier. Less than a year after Clomp's prosecution, the court passed an ordinance to prevent alcohol smuggling, declaring that no one could leave the Beverwijck area on a boat without the court's permission and without having the vessel inspected by a court officer.⁸¹

Other prosecutions sought to relieve tensions between Native peoples and settlers in the Catskill/Esopus frontier region. In Jacob Clomp's trial, the court blamed him and another settler, Christoffel "Kit" Davits, for the unrest in the region. The case against Davits required thorough testimony from several witnesses who heard him openly discuss selling alcohol in the Esopus. In the presence of the commissary and others, Davits admitted to selling large quantities of alcohol to Munsees there. The most damning evidence against him was the testimony that, "the *sackemaas* [sachems] of the savages themselves had visited him, Kit Davits, and begged Cristoffel Davits not to sell any more brandy to the savages, because it caused... trouble among the savages." The court went further to blame tensions between Christians and Indigenous peoples on Davits's alcohol smuggling, asking Marcelis Jansz in his testimony if the sales created violence in the region. Jansz replied, "Yes... because the horses of Thomas Clabbort had been in the corn."⁸²

Jansz's remark about the horses foreshadowed the inciting incident of the First Esopus War and the way that event would become part of a narrative of alcohol and intercultural

⁸¹ July 15, 1653, CFOBM, p. 59 (testimony of Martensz, sentence of Clomp); May 19, 1654, CFOBM, p. 133 (ordinance).

⁸² Extraordinary Session June 19, 1653, CFOBM (trial of Clomp) pp. 55-56; December 23, 1653, CFOBM, p. 73-74 (testimony of Lourens Jansz against Kit Davits), 74 (quotation); February 3, 1654, CFOBM, p. 93-94 (testimony of Marcelis Jansz van Bommel against Kit Davits), 94 (quotation).

violence. In an odd twist of fate, five years later Thomas Clabbort, aka Thomas Chambers, gave the brandy to the Munsee men involved in that violent encounter. But in the case against Davits, in 1653, we can already see how magistrates wrote a story of alcohol smuggling leading to frontier tensions over the reality of a settlement bumping into and displacing Indigenous inhabitants and their agricultural production. With their unruly horses, wandering livestock, fences, and homes, the Dutch must have been an overwhelming presence in the Catskill/Esopus region. Rather than address the problem of horses in the corn, however, the magistrates chose to focus on alcohol as the sole source of trouble on the frontier.⁸³

Not all convictions involved the Catskill/Esopus frontier region, and a third group targeted for prosecutions was women, especially those who kept taverns in or on the edges of Beverwijck. Maria Goosens Jansz, aka *Lange Maria*, had a tavern in her home with her husband, Steven Jansz, and as a businesswoman she was also regularly involved with the court, both as plaintiff and defendant. She called her tavern, located next to the south gate of the town, *De Vrouwe Maria*. In September 1654, she was prosecuted for giving brandy to a Native woman in her tavern in exchange for some wampum. She was accused again two months later and received a warning from the court. In a third case, in 1655, she confessed to selling alcohol to Indigenous peoples, and the magistrates ordered her to pay a fine of *f*300 and be banished from the community for a year and six weeks.⁸⁴ Remarkably, her husband did not accompany her into banishment, and he successfully divorced her and sold the house and tavern. Maria was back in

⁸³ Midtrød, *Memory of All Ancient Customs*, 67-68, 72-73; Otto, *Dutch-Munsee Encounter in America*, 134, 142, 148-150; Merwick, *Shame and the Sorrow*, 239-244.

⁸⁴ September 12, 1654, CFOBM, p. 164; November 3, 1654, CFOBM, p. 170; December 15, 1654, CFOBM, p. 176; February 25, 1655, CFOBM, p. 189 (details regarding Maria Jansz's tavern); June 8, 1655, CFOBM, p. 213.

Beverwijck by 1660 when, like Clomp, she was prosecuted for abusive language. Her name reveals some familial connection to Goosen Gerritsz, though the records never make their relationship explicit. Significantly, Gerritsz paid her husband $\text{ƒ}300$ around the time of her conviction, the same amount as her fine. He also supported her financially after her return to Beverwijck: Maria Goosens occupied the house for which he had failed to pay the Van Rensselaers more than eleven beavers. Their relationship raises more questions than the scant records can answer, but it seems little surprise that, of the merchant magistrates, it would be Gerritsz who might have some dealings with a convicted alcohol smuggler.⁸⁵

Another case involving a woman tavern-keeper was that of Egbertjen Egberts in 1656. Johan de Deckere, as prosecutor, demanded harsh and public punishment for Egberts as a lesson to others. He asked for a $\text{ƒ}500$ fine and “arbitrary corporal punishment and correction” and also that she be banished from the community, “as the very sad and dangerous calamities coming from the tapping, selling, or giving of wine or beer to the savages certainly require.” Even though there had not been any incidents of violence attributed to her or her tavern, she, unlike in the case of Kit Davits, was subject to harsh punishment perhaps because she kept a tavern in Beverwijck and sold beer to Native peoples with some regularity. The court had mercy on her and levied only a $\text{ƒ}300$ fine.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ June 8, 1660, FOSAR, Vol. 16, Pt. 3, no. 158, NYCM (Maria Goosens back in Beverwijck, sued for a debt); Extraordinary Session June 12, 1660, FOSAR, Vol. 16, Pt. 3, no. 161-162, NYCM (Maria Goosens operating a tavern located near the edge of town). For the relationship between Gerritsz and Goosens, see Venema, *Beverwijck*, 188, 302, 304-305.

⁸⁶ October 4, 1656, CFOBM, p. 291-292, 291 (quotation). This record was duplicated in FOSAR, Vol. 16, Pt. 2, nos. 2-3. See also Venema, *Beverwijck*, 312-314.

A final case—against Poulus Jansz—demonstrates the magistrates cracking down on the use of alcohol in the fur trade. Unlike the alcohol smugglers going to the Catskill villages and using the river as a smuggling highway along the frontier, or the female tavern-keepers prosecuted for serving Indians in their homes, Poulus Jansz may have only been an intermediary. He testified that Hans Vosch and his wife planned to split the profits from the sale with him, that he would earn one third of the profits, and that they had smuggled alcohol to Native peoples on an island in the river before. He even claimed that the beaver pelts earned in the transaction should still be at Vosch's house. Given the quantities being dealt with, it is safe to say that Vosch and Jansz were poor to middling traders hoping to earn a few pelts by carrying alcohol. Jansz's accomplices sold him out; Vosch's wife testified that she sold him some alcohol but did not know what he planned to do with it. Significantly, the punishment asked for by the court was levied in full without leniency: a *f*500 fine and six years of banishment.⁸⁷ In August 1658, about a month later, the case against Vosch began. Vosch, the deputy *schout* for Beverwijck, was handled differently than Jansz: he was not put in irons but instead placed under house arrest. He escaped from his home and fled to the Catskills, which, according to the court, proved he was guilty of alcohol smuggling, even though he testified that he fled because of a debt.⁸⁸

The Jansz/Vosch case is significant because it specifically related to the fur trade and incurred the heaviest fines and the harshest punishments. The smuggling happened at night, the alcohol was passed through a hole in the stockades, and it occurred on multiple occasions. Although quantities were small, these behaviors were a direct affront to the surveillance of the

⁸⁷ July 16-17, 1658, FOP, p. 67-71.

⁸⁸ Extraordinary Session August 6, 1658, FOP, p. 79-80.

merchant magistrates/burgher guard and the large-scale fur trade transactions that occurred at public auctions sanctioned by the court. Jansz's case was a precursor to the walking in the woods controversy: he was an intermediary conducting illicit trade outside the city walls under cover of darkness. This smuggling was exactly the kind of behavior that merchant magistrates would try to punish during the 1660 trading season. The ordinances, when invoked in his prosecution, were cited as being "issued by the honorable director general and council."⁸⁹ The magistrates often referred to violations of ordinances in this way, at once infusing their proceedings with the authority of the company and higher government but at the same time averting attention from their own local power to draft ordinances and render judgment in court. Blaming New Amsterdam for the ordinances served to obfuscate the ways in which merchant magistrates directly benefited from such prosecutions. As we have seen, local magistrates sent delegations to New Amsterdam to request the drafting and implementation of certain ordinances, and they had considerable say in their own local governance. The same merchant magistrates orchestrated events in 1660 to force Stuyvesant's hand, and they similarly invoked the director here in a way that shifted attention away from their interests in or approval of the alcohol ordinances. In cases of violence or debt or slander, the magistrates did not mention that the laws were handed down from the honorable director or council. However, when an ordinance was particularly controversial, such as the alcohol or walking in the woods laws, the court would frequently refer to the outside institutions that approved the ordinances.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ July 17, 1658, FOP, p. 70.

⁹⁰ Shattuck, "A Civil Society," 192-236.

The opening of the 1660 trading season in Beverwijck, coinciding with the continuing hostilities at the Esopus, saw an unprecedented eruption of conflict between principal and middling traders. The first stirrings of discontent emerged in the 1657 trading season, then resurfaced in 1659, and finally came to a head in 1660. Essentially, the controversy surrounded ordinances that outlawed the use of brokers and the practice of walking in the woods in conducting the fur trade. Brokers could be salaried Indigenous or Dutch servants, and they were paid to meet the incoming traders in the woods before they reached the Beverwijck town gates. Using gifts, alcohol, sales pressure, or even outright violence, brokers attempted to direct traders to their employer, waiting inside the gates, where all transactions legally had to take place. Merchant magistrates could afford to hire “Indian brokers,” the least controversial group. Poor and middling traders relied on their servants or themselves to broker the trade, and they were blamed for the beatings and unfair dealings. In 1660, the merchant magistrates conducted a grand experiment that we can assume they expected to fail. They first made the use of Native brokers legal, and then, after outrage and petition from poor and middling traders, they threw up their hands and permitted the use of all brokers during the trading season.⁹¹

In the Fort Orange court minutes, the 1660 trading season reads like a well-crafted and artfully performed drama. It began with petitions from the citizens, which were carefully considered by each magistrate and the company’s representative, La Montagne. Next came the cacophonous prosecutions of traders caught in the woods, then petitions, and a final exasperated

⁹¹ Extraordinary Session June 15, 1660, FOSAR, Vol. 16, Pt. 3, no. 163-171, NYCM. This controversy has been examined by others, with different interpretations of the merchant magistrates’ motivations. Shattuck argues that those who could afford Indian brokers hoped to prove their superiority and ultimately make their usage legal. For this view, see Shattuck, “Civil Society,” 268-291 and Jacobs, *New Netherland*, 212-214.

cry from the magistrates that they had little choice but to allow brokers as the petitioners would violate the laws, anyway. They washed their hands of the trouble, claiming that they would have no role in the chaos that would inevitably result.⁹² At the perfect moment, just after the merchant magistrates tentatively legalized brokers, the Mohawks entered as if from stage left to protest Dutch conduct toward their traders, the beatings and abuses they had to suffer that year, and their desire to eliminate the Dutch practice of walking in the woods. To make sure their message was clearly understood, the merchant magistrates carefully noted in the record that, “[the Mohawks] say that it might turn into the same trouble as with the Dutch and [the] savages in the Esopus.”⁹³ At the council, Native voices echoed the magistrates’ concerns. They articulated directly what Beverwijck’s elite could only imply: the competitive economic behaviors of poor and middling traders might result in another war, this time in Beverwijck. Amid this crisis, Stuyvesant traveled upriver to weigh in on the controversy. He issued a final, definitive ordinance banning the use of brokers altogether and, for good measure, renewing the prohibition on alcohol sales to Native peoples at the same time.⁹⁴ The matter was thus settled in the official record, and the merchant magistrates could count the 1660 trading season as an overall win for their economic interests.

⁹² Extraordinary Session June 17, 1660, FOSAR, Vol. 16, Pt. 3, no. 171, NYCM.

⁹³ Proposal made by the *Maquas* in Fort Orange, June 26, 1660, FOSAR, Vol. 16, Pt. 3, no. 172-175, NYCM. For more Haudenosaunee perspectives of Dutch trade practices around this time, see Parmenter, *Edge of the Woods*, 113-114 and Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 96-103. See also Holly Rine, “Intercultural Contact and the Creation of Albany’s New Diplomatic Landscape, 1647-1680” (Ph.D. Diss., University of New Hampshire, 2004), 164-166.

⁹⁴ Ordinance, July 21, 1660, DCCM, Vol. 9, no. 349, NYCM.

The Beverwijck merchant magistrates offered little financial or manpower support for the Esopus War. After all, frontier colonists had provoked hostilities with Munsee peoples through the proliferation of the alcohol trade. Despite this disinterest in the war effort, the specter of the First Esopus War loomed over the activities of the Fort Orange court for years to come. The manufactured trade broker controversy, the renewal of ordinances banning alcohol sales to Native peoples, and the normalization of diplomatic rituals with Mohawks sped up the process by which merchant magistrates consolidated their grasp on the fur trade. They legitimized their increasing economic and political power by presenting their behaviors and financial dealings as orderly, morally upstanding, and done with the best interests of the community in mind.

Conclusion

The resolution of the walking in the woods controversy demonstrated that an elite class had emerged in Beverwijck, and they controlled the levers of local governance. By 1660, a handful of former Rensselaerswijck farm hands had amassed enough wealth under the right circumstances to purchase land and invest in diverse economic ventures, thereby achieving some financial distance from the fluctuations of the fur trade. After the formation of Beverwijck from the *bijeenwoning*e, and with the implementation of the burgher right, this small group of elites became the leaders of the Fort Orange courthouse, serving repeated terms as magistrates. In the court, they crafted ordinances, prosecuted violations of their laws, and meted out justice. They also took on an increasingly important role in regional diplomacy, demonstrating to WIC officials like Stuyvesant that they could be trusted with the most sensitive diplomatic negotiations, such as arms sales to the Haudenosaunee. They consolidated their share of the fur trade by outlawing the types of small-scale, intimate exchanges that characterized poor/middling traders' economic activities. They outlawed trading outside of the town, forbade alcohol sales to

Native peoples, and prohibited the use of trade brokers. These trade regulations encouraged the use of formal marketplaces where principal traders could easily outsell their poor and middling competitors. Written into the laws were the vocabulary of community and elite justifications for their own authority. Deploying themes of security and order, the ordinances defined the proper economic activities of a community stakeholder versus the suspicious, chaotic, and threatening behaviors of those who defied the laws. After twelve years of Beverwijck's existence, a small group of elites had consolidated their authority at the highest level of the region's political economy, and they had justified their self-replicating systems of power using a familiar language of community, first articulated in the early economic contests of the 1620s-1640s.

Elite power in Beverwijck was far from absolute, however. The court cases against those who traded in the woods, who sold alcohol on the river or in their homes, demonstrate the limitations of elite political and social authority. Poor/middling traders spoke against the magistrates in and out of court, complaining bitterly about the ordinances and the power of the law. They also took political action against ordinances that they viewed as unjust, and petitioned the court, gathering signatures from their fellow citizens. The types of exchanges prohibited by the ordinances never stopped, they just went underground. Beverwijck's citizens continued to trade as they saw fit, in spite of the ordinances. These trades were two-way, intercultural exchanges, and their persistence reveals not only the limitations of Dutch elite authority, but that of Mohawk leaders, as well. Because Mohawks were not prosecuted in Dutch colonial courts for violating the ordinances, we rarely get a glimpse of their perspectives on illicit exchanges. For every case against a Dutch trader, however, there was an Indigenous person on the other side of the transaction who also chose to violate their leaders' attempts to limit the risks associated with alcohol. Mohawk leaders creatively appealed to the Beverwijck magistrates to place restrictions

on the alcohol trade as an indirect means of restricting specific social behaviors among their own populations. The alcohol trade and the small-scale exchanges outside of formal marketplaces were impossible for leaders—Dutch and Mohawk—to eradicate completely. The passage of trade regulations, then, served only to create a second, underground level of the region’s political economy that continued to illicitly operate on the periphery. These underground exchanges were too intimate to surveil effectively, and they continued to serve a purpose for those who undertook them that outweighed the risks associated with violating the law.

The ordinances had the effect of writing into law prescriptions for social distance between Dutch and Indigenous peoples. They drew distinctions based on culture/ethnicity of who could drink alcohol and where, who was allowed in certain areas and whose movements needed to be monitored. The laws, and their enforcement by merchant magistrates, drew metaphorical boundaries around Beverwijck, delimiting the community and defining its membership. Inhabitants could sell alcohol to one another, trade with each other wherever they saw fit, and engage in regular social and economic commerce. Indigenous peoples were marked as outsiders, as visitors to Beverwijck who could not occupy tavern spaces nor trade in inhabitants’ homes. Similarly, inhabitants were not to venture into the woods to meet Native peoples in “their” spaces. Ideally, they would remain separate. The laws defined social and physical distance as the necessary preconditions for creating a stable community “of justice and government.”

Creating social space between Indigenous and Dutch peoples was also a goal promoted by Haudenosaunee leaders. Although their formal diplomatic agreements bound them to the Dutch, the aims of their treaties were always in service of Haudenosaunee autonomy. They defined the Fort Orange courthouse as the space for negotiation, and they taught Dutch merchant

magistrates the protocols of Haudenosaunee diplomacy. They encouraged Dutch elites to pass laws that would protect their people from trading abuses and violence. Though the text of the ordinances referred to Indigenous violence and the potential for intercultural warfare, the laws were often crafted in direct response to Mohawk leaders' speeches that chastised the Dutch for their behaviors in the fur trade. The laws against specific trading behaviors reflected the Euro-American perspectives of their authors, but they were initiated through the demands of Haudenosaunee leaders at diplomatic councils.

After the trading season of 1660 drew to a close, Mohawks continued to protest the practices of walking in the woods and the proliferation of the alcohol trade. Even though ordinances drove such trading behaviors underground, they persisted on the outskirts of Beverwijck and in the Esopus frontier region. In 1661, Mohawks again asserted their influence over the Dutch settlements in an effort to reform trading practices, but this time they circumvented the wishes of Beverwijck's elite and supported the settlement of Schenectady as direct competition to the Beverwijck trade. At Schenectady, they would attempt to create a shared community space in which the futures of Mohawks and Dutch settlers would intertwine, thereby reforming the partnership forged in the decades following the Mohawk-Mahican War.⁹⁵ This new approach to the question of social distance further demonstrates the ways in which Mohawks did not act as a monolithic group in response to Dutch presence in the upper Hudson River region. Some Mohawk individuals chose to live among the Dutch at Schenectady or, at the very least, take their pelts to the new town for trade, whereas others continued to prefer

⁹⁵ For Mohawk efforts to end Dutch trade abuses by granting the Schenectady patent, see Meuwese, *Brothers in Arms, Partners in Trade*, 272-274; Parmenter, *Edge of the Woods*, 108-114; Thomas E. Burke, Jr., *Mohawk Frontier: The Dutch Community of Schenectady, New York, 1661-1710* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 1-32.

trading at Beverwijck and the formalized agreements negotiated at the Fort Orange courthouse. Some chose to align themselves with Dutch elites in the upper level of the region's political economy, while others persisted in exchanges that collapsed the boundaries of social distance and operated underground.

Despite competition from Schenectady, Beverwijck would never fully fall from Haudenosaunee favor, and the interventions of the English, who conquered New Netherland in 1664, would further cement Beverwijck's place in the region as the center of trade and diplomacy. Beverwijck's elite would become Albany's leading merchants, and they would remain the primary sources of regional political and economic authority. Poor and middling traders had little choice but to break the law and risk the penalty, petition the court, or, hopefully out of earshot of the merchant magistrates, complain bitterly about the burdensome ordinances, as Cornelis Teunissen Bosch was caught doing in 1659. In what must have been a humiliating exchange, the court interrogated several persons as to whether they heard Bosch, "say that he would go into the woods and let everyone see it and that... he would shit on the ordinances."⁹⁶ Such examples only reinforced the merchant magistrates' rhetoric that their rules were necessary to bring order to a fur trade plagued by drunken disorder and sporadic violence.

⁹⁶ July 8, 1659, FOP, p. 153-154, 153 (quotation).

CHAPTER THREE: THE ALBANY MONOPOLY AND ITS DISCONTENTS, 1661-1690

The trouble had been brewing for a few months, but the Van Rensselaer family, like most settlers in the upper Hudson River region, had been more concerned with the Second Esopus War unfolding in the Catskills/Esopus area during the summer of 1664. Jeremias van Rensselaer dashed off several letters to his brother in Amsterdam when the English ships arrived, trying to notify him that he sent a shipment of wheat and beaver pelts across the Atlantic as scheduled. When the dust had somewhat settled and the colonists of New Netherland accepted English conquest without firing a single shot, Van Rensselaer reflected, “During the spring we had so much trouble with the Indians that we thought that everything would go to ruin, but afterwards, with the surrender of the country, things went even worse.”¹ In the transition from Dutch to English rule, the future of New Netherland, now called New York, seemed uncertain, and no one was quite sure how the English would govern the colony. Van Rensselaer feared that he would lose the patroonship, and he immediately set about establishing his family’s claim to the Rensselaerswijck colony through negotiations with the new governor. Like all of New York’s Dutch families who remained after conquest, the Van Rensselaers sought to keep their livelihoods and property intact while learning to navigate a new government with new laws and cultural traditions, all conducted in a foreign language.

In her richly detailed biography of Adriaen Janse van Ilpendam, Albany’s notary from 1669 to 1686, Donna Merwick asserts that the transition from Dutch to English imperial rule was so dramatic, the differences between the two forms of empire so extreme, that New Netherland’s

¹ A. J. F. van Laer, ed. and trans., *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer, 1651-1674* (Albany: University of the State of New York, 1932), 358-365, 365 (quotation). (Hereafter cited as *CJVR*.)

conquest (and the elimination of the office of notary) may have played a role in Van Ilpendam's ultimate decision to end his own life.² The court records of Albany and the letters of its leading citizens tell a story of quieter transition, however, a gradual transformation of town governance that remained strikingly Dutch for decades after conquest. The immediate post-conquest period was remarkable for its consistency: the town remained predominantly ethnically Dutch, the language its citizens spoke was Dutch, and they kept their church and other important cultural institutions. In fact, Albany—though no longer called Beverwijck—became increasingly insular in the post-conquest era, and church membership grew rather than dwindled.³ Families such as the Schuylers, Van Schaicks, Gerritszes, Van Cortlandts, Slichtenhorsts, Staets, and Wendells, remained firmly entrenched as the town's political and economic elite. Business continued much as it had during the period of Dutch rule, the relationship with the Mohawks remained central to the functions of the town, and merchant magistrates continued to pass ordinances that governed the fur trade in ways that both suited their own economic interests and promised greater stability and security. Poor and middling traders continued to protest these ordinances, violate the laws, and participate in an underground exchange economy that expanded beyond Albany to the newly-formed settlement of Schenectady. The patterns of political economy established in the 1650s repeated consistently through the end of the seventeenth century.

² Donna Merwick, *Death of a Notary: Conquest and Change in Colonial New York* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999).

³ Jaap Jacobs, *New Netherland: A Dutch Colony in Seventeenth-Century America* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2005), 293. See also Joyce D. Goodfriend, *Before the Melting Pot: Society and Culture in Colonial New York City, 1664-1730* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 103-104.

The capture of New Netherland by the English in 1664, and the reconquest of 1674 after a brief interim period of Dutch rule, brought some changes to the region, though the fear of what conquest could mean was often greater than the effects of actual policies. In the initial orders sent to Albany in 1664, New York's first governor, Richard Nicolls, kept most aspects of town governance in place: he kept the burgher right and magistrates intact, asking the court to elect a *schout* to serve the town similar to an English sheriff. He kept the law against trading in Schenectady in place, and he initially maintained the law against selling alcohol to Native peoples. Although these items would all gradually change, many of the basic structures of government would remain intact for decades. Nicolls ultimately exempted Albany from the Duke's Law system of jurisprudence, preferring for the most part to leave the Albany court system alone. He established the use of jury trials for some offenses, but such proceedings were rare. The most noticeable differences included in the initial orders were for maintaining soldiers in garrison at Fort Albany and a warning that anyone who used, "scandalous and dangerous words to the dishonor of his Majesty and the Royall family," would be subject to public whipping as a lesson to others.⁴

Marked changes became more apparent after the English recaptured the colony in 1674. Starting in 1675, some transactions appeared in the court minutes in English pounds rather than guilders, though most debts were still settled in wampum, beaver pelts, *schepels* of wheat,

⁴ Peter R. Christoph and Florence A. Christoph, eds., *Books of General Entries of the Colony of New York, 1664-1673, Orders, Warrants, Letters, Commissions, Passes and Licenses Issued by Governors Richard Nicolls and Francis Lovelace* (Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1982), 49-51, 50 (quotation). (Hereafter cited as *GECNY 1664-1673*.) For the transition from Dutch to English law, see William E. Nelson, "Legal Turmoil in a Factious Colony: New York, 1664-1776," *Hofstra Law Review* 38, no. 1 (Fall 2009): 69-162, especially 83-98.

boards, and even Holland specie.⁵ More English names appeared, as citizens, debtors, traders, and criminals. In August 1675, for example, Timothy Cooper was admitted to the town as a burgher and took the oath of citizenship. He had connections to Springfield, Massachusetts, formerly Albany's leading rival trading settlement, and he attempted to travel back and forth between the towns, likely to sustain his fur trading connections and economic networks.⁶

Building trade networks with neighboring English settlements offered new opportunities to poor/middling traders and elite merchants alike, who began to take advantage of new connections to Springfield, Boston, and other spaces within the English empire.⁷ When relations with France were stable, trade expanded to the growing settlements of New France, as well. Although English conquest brought with it new money, new people, and a new language, it also provided new opportunities for the merchants, burghers, and farmers of the upper Hudson River region.

In two parts, this chapter will address the continuity and change of the region's political economy during the period 1661-1689. The first part attends to the upper level of political

⁵ One of the striking features of Evert Wendell's account book from 1695-1726 (discussed in Chapter Four) is that Wendell recorded no transactions in English currency. See Kees-Jan Waterman, *"To Do Justice to Him and Myself": Evert Wendell's Account Book of the Fur Trade with the Indians in Albany, New York, 1695-1726* (Philadelphia, PA: American Philosophical Society Press, 2008), 32-33.

⁶ August 24, 1675, Dutch Records: Court of Albany, Rensselaerwyck, and Schenectady Minutes, 1668-1685, Vol. 2, p. 5, Albany County Hall of Records, Albany, NY (hereafter cited as CARSM); Extraordinary Session September 17, 1675, CARSM, Vol. 2, p. 23. For Cooper and his Massachusetts connections, as well as his conflicts with the Albany elite, see Lawrence H. Leder, *Robert Livingston (1654-1728) and the Politics of Colonial New York* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1961), 19-20.

⁷ For examples of trade with English settlements, see April 13, 1671, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 227-228; June 30, 1671, CARSM Vol. 1, p. 259-260.

economy by examining the Van Rensselaer family's efforts to maintain their patroonship after English conquest. Navigating English imperial structures to obtain a patent for their lands challenged the family for decades, and the process ultimately divided the family into opposing groups: those who sought to keep the colony intact and continue litigating their case and those who wished to carve up Rensselaerswijck into parcels, farms, and estates, dividing the profits among a complex web of investors and heirs. Negotiating their position within the English empire meant proving their title to the 1630s land purchases from the Mahicans, as well as demonstrating that Stuyvesant had unlawfully taken a section of the patroonship to establish Beverwijck. The Van Rensselaers hoped to reclaim their authority over the town and expand their influence after conquest; they re-litigated their case against Beverwijck in an effort to right past wrongs and, as they saw it, finally profit from their costly colonial endeavors.⁸ At the same time, several of their heirs, tenants, and employees brought suit against the family, asserting ownership of sections of the patroonship and questioning the family's authority. A newcomer, Robert Livingston, laid claim to a significant part of the patroonship and used his ability to navigate the New York colonial government as well as his dense family ties within Albany's elite circles, procured through marriage, to force the Van Rensselaers to settle for less than they had hoped to achieve from English conquest. The Livingston family demonstrate the ways in which new residents in the region could establish themselves as part of the merchant elite, but their stories equally represent the hurdles to entry created by Albany's leading families.

Although he married into the Schuyler family and became an essential figure in regional politics

⁸ For attempts during the Dutch period to litigate the case and assert Rensselaerswijck's authority over Beverwijck, see Janny Venema, *Beverwijck: A Dutch Village on the American Frontier, 1652-1664* (Hilversum, The Netherlands: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2003), 50-53.

and diplomacy, Robert Livingston was always treated as something of an outsider by the Dutch elite. With his wife, Alida Schuyler Livingston (formerly Alida Schuyler van Rensselaer), he established economic networks that knitted his family into the upper levels of Albany society, but the same elites with whom he socialized and traded would eagerly cast him out of power when given the opportunity in the 1690s.⁹ Bilingualism, family ties, and wealth could help individuals access the upper levels of Albany's political economy in the years following English conquest, but newcomers were generally seen as a threat to the established order by the increasingly insular Dutch community.

The Van Rensselaer family ultimately divided over the question of how best to proceed in a new era, with the family's Holland branch pressing for a transatlantic, profit-based model for Rensselaerswijck and Maria van Rensselaer advocating for a breakup and reconfiguration of the patroonship that would fit the local pattern of the successful colonial elite families around her. The town's merchant magistrates, at first sympathetic to the Van Rensselaers, eventually learned that the family hoped to annex Albany and petitioned the English government to prevent the issuing of a patent for the colony. The argument they presented in their petition regarding local stability and maintaining the status quo persuaded New York's governors to ignore an imperial order and block the expansion of Rensselaerswijck. The upper level of the town's political economy remained remarkably cohesive and intact under English rule, and elites sought new opportunities to continue to localize their political and economic power and prevent disruption to the established order in the first decades after conquest.

⁹ For Livingston's brief ouster from Haudenosaunee diplomacy and his position within Albany, see Leder, *Robert Livingston and the Politics of Colonial New York*, 102-128.

Rather than pursuing an English imperial timeline, however, the discussion that follows is bookended by dates significant to Schenectady's settlement, and that town's early development is the subject of part two of this chapter. For Albany's merchant magistrates, neighboring Mohawks, and the poor/middling traders who founded the new town, Schenectady and its future were top of mind during the early decades of English conquest. Albany's elite traders fiercely contested the town's existence and tried to block the settlement.¹⁰ Eventually Arent van Curler, holder of the Schenectady patent, prevailed, and Petrus Stuyvesant allowed the frontier settlement to come into being in 1662, although he required the town's citizens to take an oath swearing that they would not participate in the fur trade.¹¹ For the next twenty-eight years, the town was a thorn in the side of Albany's leading merchants, who made Schenectady the site of contests over the *who* and *where* of the region's trade. Despite their best efforts at regulation, and the approval of the English government, Albany's merchant magistrates were unable to prevent a thriving underground exchange economy from developing in Schenectady. The frontier town's rise as Albany's competition was deeply rooted in Mohawk preferences and the relationships between that place and the Mohawk villages. Religion, culture, and alliance intertwined with trade to make Schenectady a crucial site of interethnic partnership during the early decades of its settlement. Schenectady's location on the Mohawk River, between Albany and Iroquoia, rendered it a contested site in the seventeenth century. Its townspeople became

¹⁰ See Stuyvesant and Council to [Fort Orange], June 24, 1661 and Magistrates to Stuyvesant, January 12, 1662, Dutch Colonial Administrative Correspondence, New York Colonial Manuscripts, Vol. 14, Pt. 1, nos. 29 and 42, New York State Archives, Albany, NY.

¹¹ See Stuyvesant to [La Montagne], May 9, 1663 and La Montagne to Stuyvesant, May 19, 1663, Dutch Colonial Administrative Correspondence, New York Colonial Manuscripts, Vol. 15, Pt. 1, nos. 16 and 18; E. B. O'Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New-York*, 15 vols. (Albany, NY: Weed, Parsons and Co., 1853-1887), 13: 253-254.

adept navigators of these frontier spaces' different cultures, which made them a threat to Albany's established role as the region's center of power and trade.

* * *

As Merwick's account of Van Ilpendam's life and suicide suggests, the historiography of English conquest has tended to emphasize upheaval rather than continuity. In part, this narrative derives from location: most historians writing about the transition from Dutch to English rule have examined New York City, where the English imperial presence was much stronger and where Anglicization was more dramatic, even violent at times.¹² Albany's experience of conquest was notably different from that of New York City, however, but it has received very little scholarly attention. In her earlier study of the town's sociology, Merwick argues that Dutch and English cultures of "possession" were incompatible and that the English period marked a significant contrast with the way Dutch peoples lived in and occupied the upper Hudson River region.¹³ As discussed in Chapter Two, critics of Merwick's approach have pointed to her characterization of Dutch "*burgherlijck*" or "alongshore" culture as being rooted in the perspectives of wealthy Amsterdam merchants far removed from New Netherland's

¹² Joyce Goodfriend, *Who Should Rule at Home?: Confronting the Elite in British New York City* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2017); Ignacio Gallup-Diaz, Andrew Shankman, and David J. Silverman, eds., *Anglicizing America: Empire, Revolution, Republic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015); Goodfriend, *Before the Melting Pot*; Thomas Archdeacon, *New York City, 1664-1710: Conquest and Change* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1976); Patricia Bonomi, *A Factious People: Politics and Society in Colonial New York* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1971).

¹³ Donna Merwick, *Possessing Albany, 1630-1710: The Dutch and English Experiences* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Donna Merwick, *The Shame and the Sorrow: Dutch-Amerindian Encounters in New Netherland* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).

socioeconomic and ethnic diversity.¹⁴ Nonetheless, she identifies the military presence of English imperialism as being a significant contrast to Albany's commercial development during Dutch rule.¹⁵

New Netherland certainly had a military component, and, as discussed in Chapter One, the States General's oversight of the West India Company ensured that military strategy was a key aspect of Dutch imperial growth in the Atlantic World.¹⁶ Still, the court minutes bear out Merwick's conclusions regarding militarization of the upper Hudson River region during the early decades of English rule. In part, the increase in soldiers and defenses can be explained by developments outside of imperial culture such as the growth of New France and the ongoing mourning wars among the Haudenosaunee and the region's diverse Native peoples. Yet Merwick's assertion that English settler colonialism and its attendant violence, especially in the New England frontier regions, brought conflict and a greater need for security to Albany is essential to understanding the town's political economy in the late seventeenth century. Albany played a significant role in the English imperial wars of the later decades of the seventeenth and early part of the eighteenth century, the subject of Chapter Four, but militarization was a process that began shortly after conquest and picked up speed during King Philip's War and its aftermath in the 1670s. The town's frontier position increasingly rendered it vulnerable to attack, and fear

¹⁴ Evan Haefeli, "To be or not to be Dutch," *Reviews in American History* 35 (2007): 10-17.

¹⁵ Merwick, *Possessing Albany*, 259-285.

¹⁶ For the early military functions of the WIC, see also Mark Meuwese, *Brothers in Arms, Partners in Trade: Dutch-Indigenous Alliances in the Atlantic World, 1595-1674* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2012), 27-37; Van Claeef Bachman, *Peltries or Plantations: The Economic Policies of the Dutch West India Company in New Netherland, 1623-1639* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969), 25-43.

became a dominant theme in court minutes and correspondence. Albany's merchant magistrates—drawn from elite Dutch families—for the most part embraced the security afforded by a greater English military presence and encouraged militarization, profiting from defense spending and contributing to community fortifications.¹⁷ Dutch elites' willingness to align themselves with English military leadership could put them at odds with the rest of the town, who occasionally expressed resentment at the burdens of raising and supporting a military presence.¹⁸

Indeed, socioeconomic status played a crucial role in the process of Anglicization throughout New Netherland. In a recent study of contested authority in colonial New York City, Joyce Goodfriend examines how elites participated in Anglicization, and how Dutch language and culture became associated with poverty, ignorance, and lack of refinement in the city. Non-elites pushed back against these stereotypes, she argues, but the alignment of powerful Dutch families with English imperial culture ensured that Dutchness became a marker of class division.¹⁹ Albany's transition from Dutch to English rule complements her assessments. In the upper Hudson River region, Dutch elites aligned themselves politically with English leaders to maintain their established power structures and control over trade and diplomacy. However, unlike New York City, Albany remained staunchly, stubbornly Dutch. The town's elite families maintained cultural distance from their English rulers because of the stability created by their

¹⁷ See, for example, Extraordinary Session, August 18, 1670, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 165, in which Jeremias van Rensselaer encouraged the creation of a military guard, which the magistrates remarked was an “outstanding thing” (“treffelijcke saecke”).

¹⁸ Merwick, *Possessing Albany*, 273-276, 282-285.

¹⁹ Goodfriend, *Who Should Rule at Home*, 11-44.

preexisting systems of political economy, particularly the longstanding alliance and trade with the Haudenosaunee. Albany's merchant magistrates cooperated with the English empire just enough to guarantee local control over governance, commerce, and diplomacy, and they were able to carve out significant concessions for maintaining Dutch cultural institutions. The central metaphor in the story of Albany's transition, then, is not the order to start keeping records in English, which may have been a factor in Van Ilpendam's suicide, but rather the remarkable timespan after English conquest that official business was conducted in Dutch.

The English obtained in New Netherland a Euro-American colony with longstanding ties to the Haudenosaunee, established through formal diplomacy and decades of informal contact and trade. They initially left much of the Dutch partnership structure intact, but the empire's larger demands eventually encouraged New York's governors, particularly Edmund Andros and Thomas Dongan, to rethink Haudenosaunee diplomacy. The English presence in North America, which had expanded to include new Chesapeake and mid-Atlantic colonies, as well as further settlement throughout the New England borderlands, entangled larger numbers of English colonists in the ongoing mourning wars. Colonial leaders affected by Haudenosaunee warfare began to advocate peace among the Haudenosaunee and other Indigenous peoples, as well as with the different English colonies. Further, English expansion created boundary disputes and questioned Haudenosaunee autonomy in places such as the Susquehannock hunting grounds on the Pennsylvania frontier. When Metacom's War broke out, New Englanders' need for Haudenosaunee assistance and the fear of Haudenosaunee interference made alliance an increasingly urgent matter. New York's leadership, for their part, wanted to maintain the colony's special Haudenosaunee relationship that they had inherited from the Dutch, but they faced mounting pressure to settle other colonies' various disputes, concerns, and incursions.

Andros, with considerable assistance from Albany-based diplomats and translators, ultimately decided in the mid-1670s to broker a series of agreements among the Haudenosaunee, other Indigenous nations, and the English colonies. The Anglo-Haudenosaunee alliance that resulted from these negotiations, and all the various agreements, were collectively called the Covenant Chain. New York's governors periodically renewed the Covenant Chain alliances in Albany, and they established this diplomatic protocol to ensure that all Anglo-Haudenosaunee negotiations would flow through New York.²⁰

The advent of the Covenant Chain alliances represented both change and continuity for the upper Hudson River region. This multitude of agreements acknowledged (and often sought to limit) the Haudenosaunee nations' wide reach across multiple colonial spaces within the English

²⁰ Historians have examined the Covenant Chain alliances in great depth and from a variety of angles. The classic overviews of the many alliances and agreements that comprised the Covenant Chain, the negotiations' context, and Haudenosaunee diplomatic protocols remain: Daniel K. Richter and James H. Merrell, eds., *Beyond the Covenant Chain: The Iroquois and their Neighbors in Indian North America, 1600-1800*, Paperback Edition (1987; Philadelphia: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003); Francis Jennings, William N. Fenton, Mary A. Druke, David R. Miller, eds., *The History and Culture of Iroquois Diplomacy: An Interdisciplinary Guide to the Treaties of the Six Nations and Their League*, Paperback Edition (1985; Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1995). For the Andros and Dongan negotiations, see Jon Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1534-1701* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2010), 146-152, 165-175; William N. Fenton, *The Great Law and the Longhouse: A Political History of the Iroquois Confederacy* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998), 301-310; Daniel K. Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 133-161; Francis Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire: The Covenant Chain Confederation of Indian Tribes with English Colonies from its beginnings to the Lancaster Treaty of 1744* (New York: Norton, 1984), 145-185; Allen W. Trelease, *Indian Affairs in Colonial New York: The Seventeenth Century* (1960; repr., Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 228-294. See also Tom Arne Midtrød, *The Memory of All Ancient Customs: Native American Diplomacy in the Colonial Hudson Valley* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012), 122-141; James H. Merrell, *Into the American Woods: Negotiators on the Pennsylvania Frontier*, Paperback Edition (1999; New York: Norton, 2000), 13-17, 107-117; José António Brandão, *"Your Fyre Shall Burn No More": Iroquois Policy toward New France and Its Native Allies to 1701* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 117-126.

North American empire. The Covenant Chain was an early example of the diverse and fragmented English North American colonies coordinating negotiations, war, and policies toward Native peoples, but a unified sense of English imperial diplomacy developed slowly, over many years and many Covenant Chain renewals. Anglo-French rivalry, and the imperial wars that ended the seventeenth and began the eighteenth century, would intensify the alliances' broader imperial focus. Covenant Chain diplomacy would remain tied to Albany's interests, even as it gradually took on greater significance for all English North American colonies.

These negotiations required significant participation from Albany. Elite leaders, who had since the 1650s established themselves as the arbiters of Haudenosaunee diplomacy, took part in the Covenant Chain renewals, and a handful of translators drawn from Albany and Schenectady played an increasingly important role in councils that negotiated matters covering a wide geographical area and diverse political interests. Haudenosaunee leaders and Andros built the Covenant Chain from the foundations of the Dutch partnership with input from Albany's Dutch elites.²¹ In that sense, it broadened Albany's existing role as the regional center of trade and diplomacy; a fur trade monopoly kept Albany at the heart of regional commerce while the Covenant Chain diplomatic traditions ensured the town would play a prominent role in intercultural—as well as imperial—politics. The dependence on local people, established partnerships, and multiple translators guaranteed that Albany would maintain its diplomatic functions for decades after conquest. Further, everyday diplomacy and trade remained structurally intact, with Albany's magistrates participating in ongoing conversations with

²¹ For the threads connecting Haudenosaunee-Dutch alliance and the Covenant Chain, see Jon Parmenter, "The Meaning of *Kaswentha* and the Two Row Wampum Belt in Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) History: Can Indigenous Oral Tradition be Reconciled with the Documentary Record?" *Journal of Early American History* 3, no. 1 (2013): 82-109, especially 89-95.

Haudenosaunee peoples, particularly Mohawks, about trade policies, grievances against colonial behaviors, and matters of regional concern.²² The court minutes that recorded such day-to-day interactions demonstrate the remarkable consistency of Native-Dutch relations in Albany during the transition to English rule.

* * *

When Jeremias van Rensselaer wrote in the autumn of 1664 that the surrender would be “even worse” than New Netherland’s ruination at the hands of Munsee peoples from the Esopus, he dreaded the changes that English conquest would bring to his family and the region as a whole. Though he had cause to fear a heavy-handed English imperial presence, he and his fellow Albany elites would ultimately ensure that the transition from Dutch to English rule would be gradual and would favor preexisting local structures of governance, trade, and diplomacy. What Van Rensselaer and his social circle would come to learn was that the English empire depended on Albany and its Haudenosaunee partnership; the English would have little choice but to allow the town to operate much as it had from its beginnings. Albany’s leading families would continue to define their community and its participation in the fur trade according to their interests.

At the same time, poor and middling traders would seek inroads into the trade and would contest elite efforts to consolidate their hold on that commerce via petition, slander, and participation in illicit exchanges. They maneuvered around the ordinances, moving the frontier to Schenectady, traveling to the Mohawk villages, or inviting Native peoples into their homes. Mohawk leaders still partnered with Albany’s Dutch elites to stop trade abuses and create more

²² Trelease, *Indian Affairs in Colonial New York*, 204-227.

formalized systems of exchange and diplomacy, yet individual Mohawks encouraged the settlement at Schenectady and closed the social distance between themselves and individual colonists. The two-tiered political economy, then, persisted unabated regardless of whether Amsterdam or London nominally controlled the region.

“Otherwise they may easily run away with the bacon”: The Fate of Rensselaerswijck

Upon New Netherland’s surrender, Jeremias van Rensselaer immediately set about guaranteeing the boundaries and conditions of Rensselaerswijck, taking his deeds and paperwork first to Richard Nicolls, the colony’s new governor. Nicolls provisionally accepted the documents, ordering on October 18, 1664 that, “Mr. Jeremias Renslaer shall and may carefully enjoy and Execute all such privligges and authority within the limitts of Renselaerswicke as hee did enjoy and execute before the surrender of new Yorke.” The order would last for one year, at which time Van Rensselaer would need to secure a patent from the crown. For the time being, however, all would remain as it had been under Dutch rule.²³ Although the written document did not include any tribute or payment demands, Jeremias confided to his brother, Jan Baptist, that Nicolls sought an annual fee of 200 beavers or a combination of 50 beavers and 1000 boards. Fearing the terms that Nicolls might ultimately demand, the family set about negotiating with James Stuart, Duke of York, for a more favorable arrangement.²⁴

Jeremias saw English conquest as an opportunity to correct the wrongs committed by the WIC against his family’s property. In instructions to Jan Baptist regarding the negotiations with

²³ Provisional confirmation of the rights and privileges of Rensselaerswijck by Richard Nicolls, October 18, 1664, Van Rensselaer Manor Papers, Box 21, Folder 2, New York State Library, Albany, NY. (Hereafter cited as VRMP.)

²⁴ *CJVR*, 362.

the English crown, he encouraged Rensselaerswijck's expansion to include the lands that Stuyvesant seized in 1652. He wrote:

It seems to me... if on each side they extended as many miles into the woods, we might be content and if the Fuyck [Beverwijck] was included I would consider our colony worth more than before, [especially] if the patent should also contain articles about the free trade between us and the Indians.²⁵

Jeremias used the change in regional leadership to reassert Rensselaerswijck's former authority.

The English needed allies in New York who could ease the transition to English rule, and his family's position in the community gave him leverage in his negotiations. As original landowners who had, by that point, maintained a thriving patroonship for more than three decades, the Van Rensselaers would be ideal partners for the government going forward, and the English eagerly sought their allegiance. Jeremias used this favorable negotiating position to advocate for a radical realignment of the region by claiming Albany as part of his patroonship, despite the town's twelve years of independent growth. "We shall make every effort to maintain the rights of the colony, in order that we at last reap the fruits thereof," he wrote to his brother.²⁶ The Van Rensselaers aimed to build the colony they believed the WIC had deprived them of by seizing the *bijeenwoning*e and establishing Beverwijck. Remarkably, the family nearly succeeded in their efforts, yet their attempt to expand the colony ultimately put them on the wrong side of Albany's elite.

The Van Rensselaers had genuine cause to fear that the English might confiscate their property or otherwise disrupt their claim to Rensselaerswijck; the WIC's patroon system was not

²⁵ Ibid., 366.

²⁶ Ibid., 367.

entirely compatible with English colonial and manorial models.²⁷ Jeremias urged Jan Baptist to immediately reach out to the Duke of York about their boundaries and to secure a royal patent because he believed the local governor might extort them. He also enlisted his brother Nicolas, a minister, to press the case from his position as chaplain to the Dutch ambassador in England.²⁸ If they were unable to secure a patent via the imperial seat of power in London, he argued, “[the English] may easily run away with the bacon.”²⁹ By 1666, the family still had not successfully convinced the English government of their claim. The Duke of York wrote to Nicolls that he hadn’t received “any perticular information from your selfe” regarding Rensselaerswijck, and he suspected that the paperwork was simply “Miscarryed.” He therefore renewed the provisional order but declined to issue a formal patent.³⁰ The English sought to appease the Van Rensselaers but continued to delay an official patent, preferring year-by-year provisional orders to a permanent guarantee.

The paperwork had possibly not miscarried at all. Having in the two years since the initial conquest learned more about New York’s state of affairs, Nicolls may have never sent it, although he claimed to have done so.³¹ Nicolls initially sought out an allegiance with the Van Rensselaers, but the relationship soured after he visited Albany, particularly after he learned that

²⁷ For land policies, the patroon system, and the transition from Dutch to English rule, see Sung Bok Kim, *Landlord and Tenant in Colonial New York: Manorial Society, 1664-1775* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978), 3-43.

²⁸ *CJVR*, 375.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 362.

³⁰ Order of the Duke of York to Governor Richard Nicolls, May 8, 1666, VRMP, Box 21, Folder 4.

³¹ *CJVR*, 389.

the family wanted their patent to expand their current boundaries. The governor moved against the colony in 1665, consolidating the Rensselaerswijck court with that of Albany. The Van Rensselaers could still nominate and send three magistrates to the court, but this change was a crucial step toward limiting the patroon's rights, and, as Jeremias wrote to his father-in-law, "I have retained no more administrative power than that [of electing magistrates]."³² The family had apparently kept secret their intentions to include Albany in their patent, as Nicolls learned their design only in October 1666. He wrote to Jeremias, "I giue you friendly advice not to grasp at too much authority.... Let there be no Controuersies of this nature betweene you and mee who will in all reasonable things serve you. Sett y[ou]r hearth therefore at rest to bee contented with the profitt not the government of a Colony, till we heare from His Royall Highness."³³ Nicolls was perfectly happy to allow the Van Rensselaers a large share of land, even special rights and privileges, because he knew he could (and did) collect substantial tributes from them. Granting the Van Rensselaers the entirety of Albany, however, would have put him at odds with the town's elite families, who were cooperating with the new government. Now familiar with the way that power worked in the region, Nicolls chose Albany over Rensselaerswijck. Consolidating the courts was an important symbolic step: the courthouse was the space in which Albany's merchant magistrates enforced their regional authority, as discussed in Chapter Two.³⁴

³² Ibid., 382.

³³ Ibid., 389.

³⁴ Donna Merwick argues that the dispute between the Van Rensselaers and Nicolls was rooted in a conflict between Dutch and English ways of possessing, occupying, and bequeathing land. She emphasizes a Latin verse that Nicolls included in his letter to Jeremias, "*Filius ante diem Patrios inquirat in annos,*" which she translates, "The Sonne his Fathers hastie death desires." In her view, Nicolls misunderstood the purpose and management of the patroonship and Jeremias's place within his dense family networks, focusing on Jeremias's greed and a theme of filiofetism in his denial of the patent. Her analysis of paternalism and filiofetism in Nicolls's letters

Nicolls delayed the case throughout his entire administration. In 1673, James again wrote to New York's governor, now Francis Lovelace, claiming that he had yet to receive any information from Nicolls and therefore had no choice but to renew the former orders and decline to issue a patent.³⁵

Shortly thereafter, the Dutch retook New Netherland, and Van Rensselaer petitioned the WIC regarding Rensselaerswijck's boundaries. The family's claim to Albany—called Willemstadt during the brief Dutch repossession—was at last recognized by the WIC after many petitions and lawsuits.³⁶ This acknowledgement came too late, as Dutch rule in New Netherland ended in 1674, leaving the Van Rensselaers to once again apply to the English for a patent. They

considers his favoring English systems over Dutch ones, emphasizing cultural incompatibility and misunderstanding. Cultural positionality, while certainly at play in the rift between Nicolls and Van Rensselaer, need not alone account for the decision to delay the family's patent, which was also a simple political calculation. Giving the Van Rensselaers authority and title over Albany would have sent the region into turmoil and upset the fortunes of the elite families who had consolidated their wealth and power in the years since Stuyvesant seized the *bijeenwoning*. The English depended on the cooperation of the same elite Dutch families who would have been most affected by Rensselaerswijck's expansion. Merwick further explains Nicolls's move to consolidate the courts—alongside other disputes with the Albany magistrates—as an effort to “civilize” law enforcement and make it more English. The courts, however, represented continuity rather than change in Albany (less so in other parts of New York). Magistrates still hailed from the same handful of elite families, and the court persisted in the same behaviors from the years prior to conquest. Merchant magistrates prosecuted similar crimes in a similar fashion as before, and their squabbles with the governor fit a pre-conquest pattern of attempts to consolidate elite power and localize control over governance. See Merwick, *Possessing Albany*, 152-169 (Nicolls vs. Jeremias van Rensselaer), 158 (quotation), 180-187 (“civilizing law enforcement”). For the law and courts after conquest, see Nelson, “Legal Turmoil in a Factious Colony,” 83-98; Dennis Sullivan, *The Punishment of Crime in Colonial New York: The Dutch Experience in Albany in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Peter Lang, 1997), 207-236.

³⁵ Copy of warrant from Duke of York, July 10, 1673, VRMP, Box 21, Folder 6; Copy of the order of Governor Francis Lovelace, July 10, 1673, VRMP, Box 21, Folder 5.

³⁶ Declaration of the West India Company transmitting any claim to Rensselaerswijck, April 2, 1674, VRMP, Box 21, Folder 7.

petitioned the States General to intercede on their behalf, but the Dutch government simply forwarded the case to the English crown for a decision.³⁷ The family began their negotiations with James anew, noting that when the new governor, Edmund Andros, arrived in New York, he could “Inform himself of ye ancient Rights, and Jurisdiction and Priviledges, of ye above mentioned Colonie Renselaerswyk, which the Lord Patron and Propriators by their severall Governours have Injoyed many years.” Of course, the patroon’s rights, jurisdiction, and privileges had been the subject of contention with both the Dutch and English colonial governments for many years, but the Van Rensselaers insisted that they could provide Andros enough documentation to satisfy James and finally receive their royal patent.³⁸ Jeremias died in the autumn of 1674, shortly after the English reoccupied New York, and the case lay dormant for a few years as a result.

The crown was clearly stalling. The family petitioned James and Andros again in the spring of 1678, and Andros finally drafted his report.³⁹ The English Privy Council ruled in the family’s favor that summer, James ordered Andros to grant them a patent, and his orders allowed them to enjoy “such priviledges and immunityes as formerly they had,” acknowledging their claim to Albany but excepting Fort Orange and its immediate area. To resolve the thorny issue of an entire town having grown up on the patroon’s land in the decades since Stuyvesant seized

³⁷ Extract of the “Register of Resolutions of the States General,” June 4, 1674, VRMP, Box 21, Folder 8. See also O’Callaghan, *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New-York*, II, 560-561.

³⁸ Copy of the petition of the proprietors of Rensselaerswijck to James Duke of York, July 23, 1674, VRMP, Box 21, Folder 9.

³⁹ Copy of the Petition to his Royal Highness James, March 27, 1678, VRMP, Box 21, Folder 11; Report of Governor Sir Edmund Andros, March 29, 1678, VRMP, Box 21, Folder 12.

the *bijeenwoning*, James decided that the houses should remain in the possession of those who built and occupied them, as turning them over to the patroon's family would certainly have caused chaos. Instead of transferring the town's homes to the patroonship, he instead enacted a rent system wherein those houses built between 1652 and 1678 would be assessed an annual fee to the patroon: two beavers for the "great" houses, one beaver for the "middle sort," and one-half beaver for the "lesser" homes. These payments would continue for thirty years, after which time the patroons, tenants, and governor's council would have to negotiate a "reasonable" sum for rent. With the patent and orders for rent payments came responsibilities, and James also included a provision that the family perform "all publique Dutys and impositions as formerly have by them or their predecessors," and that they follow any orders issued by James, the governor, or the council.⁴⁰

Jan Baptist wrote of the good news to Domine Nicolas, about to depart for New Netherland, and appended a packet that contained all of the evidence and rulings in the case. He hoped that the documents and his petition would sway Andros to issue a formal patent in their favor, according to James's instructions, but "depending on God's direction." Again, he cited the legitimacy of the land purchases made in 1630 as the Mahicans departed the region, his frustrations with Stuyvesant's grants to former Rensselaerswijck servants such as Volckert Jansz Douw on the patroon's lands, and the family's assertion that most of Albany's—perhaps even Schenectady's—homes were built without proper payment to the patroon. The family believed that anyone living on or possessing lands purchased by the patroon should have to pay and be

⁴⁰ Report of the council, June 4, 1678, VRMP, Box 21, Folder 13; Order of [James to] Sir Edmund Andros, June 7, 1678, VRMP, Box 21, Folder 15 (quotations).

subject to the jurisdiction of Rensselaerswijck, the same argument they had made repeatedly since Beverwijck's founding in 1652.⁴¹

Albany's inhabitants also heard rumors in the summer and autumn of 1678 about James's order and the potential that they would have to pay rent for homes they believed they owned. They expected news regarding the patroonship with Andros's arrival, and upon his landing that October, the town's citizens petitioned the court, who then sent a formal petition to Andros. They called the rumored rents "unbearable" and insisted that issuing the Van Rensselaers a patent to Albany would infringe upon their rights, as they held legal titles to their homes and lots.⁴² One might have expected more uproar—indeed most townspeople would have had their homeownership compromised and the town's landlords would have also suffered if the patent had been issued as James ordered—yet the one brief petition was all that came of James's decision in the matter, at least in the extant records. Nicolas wrote to Jan Baptist that he had "by kind and consoling words quieted the feelings of the good peoples as much as possible and everybody is awaiting my return to know how everything will be taken by the honorable general [Andros] and worked out."⁴³ The populace must have felt considerable unease: on the one hand, their minister (Nicolas) assured them that the new patent would cause them no harm, but on the

⁴¹ Copy of a letter of Jan Baptiste van Rensselaer to Nicholas van Rensselaer relative to negotiations with Governor Sir Edmond Andros to obtain a patent for Rensselaerswijck, June 10/20, 1678, VRMP, Box 20, Folder 17. See also "The Case of the Colonie of Rensselaerswijck" delivered to the Council of the Duke of York, April 27, 1678, VRMP, Box 20, Folder 18.

⁴² October 28, 1678, CARSM, Vol. 2, p. 375.

⁴³ A. J. F. van Laer, ed. and trans., *Correspondence of Maria van Rensselaer, 1669-1689* (Albany: The University of the State of New York, 1935), 25. (Hereafter cited as *CMVR*)

other hand, they heard that the Van Rensselaers laid claim to the whole town. Nicolas's position as both patroon and reverend was especially thorny in the fall of 1678.

Nicolas's letter to Jan Baptist implied that Andros may have been stalling his final decision after arriving in New York. The Domine and his wife, Alida Schuyler van Rensselaer, traveled to see Andros, but Nicolas could not get a meeting alone with the governor to discuss the patent. They had dinner with him but did not converse about the colony's fate, much to Nicolas's frustration.⁴⁴ The townspeople were put at ease by a letter from Andros later that month, which stated:

The Duke intends the family of Renselaers there just Rights formerly Enjoyed, to be Confirmd to them, but without wronging any others of which all Care & Regard shall be had and therefore ye Court and officers are to take Care, there be no disturbance, or needlesse Expenses made by ye Inhabitants upon Reports or Rumors to their Prejudice.⁴⁵

And with his letter, the matter was settled, for a time. Nicolas and Jan Baptist both died in late 1678, and Maria van Rensselaer, Jeremias's widow, managed the patroonship on behalf of Kiliaen, her minor son, with the assistance of Stephen van Cortlandt, her brother.

Settling the many accounts of the Van Rensselaer men who died within a short period of time became the preoccupation of Maria and Van Cortlandt. In 1680, Maria wrote to her brother-in-law, Richard van Rensselaer, regarding the accounts' sorry state. All the litigating back and forth about the colony, as well as entertaining visiting dignitaries, likely an effort to curry favor in an era of patronage with those responsible for issuing patents, had caused the patroonship great expense. "Dear brother, you well know yourself how it went, first upon the arrival of the English, then upon the arrival of the Dutch, and then again upon the arrival of the

⁴⁴ Ibid., 25-26.

⁴⁵ October 31, 1678, CARSM, Vol. 2, p. 375.

English, and how, whenever any one of importance came from New York, he had to be entertained to keep up the dignity of the colony,” she wrote. Maintaining an appearance of wealth and status to each new government, in addition to their many land titles and papers, was the means by which the Van Rensselaers hoped to convince the various empires of the veracity of their claims and their importance to the imperial project. She continued, “For whom, then, was it done, except for the colony?”⁴⁶ They had hoped their lavish entertaining would help the colony, but they were now poorer and still waiting for their patent. Maria, for her part, doubted the wisdom of pressing for a patent. She felt sympathy for those across the Atlantic counting on the colony’s profits, but she had also suffered during the recent war and conquest. “That the friends in Holland through the war have suffered great loss makes us heartily sorry, God knows,” she wrote, “but consider, dear brother whether to lose my health and in addition to lose my property and my dearest partner and to be left with six children and such an encumbered estate is not hard on me either.”⁴⁷ Jeremias had seen conquest as an opportunity to expand the colony and right past wrongs, but his sudden death had left the widow Van Rensselaer deeply in debt and ready to abandon the entire project.

As the patroonship’s guardian, Maria’s brother Stephen van Cortlandt again took up the cause after the crown recalled Andros in 1680. He wrote to Maria, telling her to delay speaking

⁴⁶ *CMVR*, 37-38.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 38. Maria suffered from ailments and infections in her leg and hip resulting from chicken pox that periodically caused excruciating pain and limited her mobility. In 1665, she had an abscess drained from her hip, which her husband described in gruesome detail in a letter to her father. See *CJVR*, 384-385. For more on Maria’s own reflections about her body in her letters, see Nan A. Rothschild, “Maria and Alida: Two Dutch Women in the English Hudson Valley,” in *Tales of Gotham, Historical Archaeology, Ethnohistory and Microhistory of New York City*, edited by Meta F. Janowitz and Diane Dallal (New York: Springer, 2014), 89-104.

to any officials who might inquire about the colony because he was in the process of negotiations.⁴⁸ The colony continued to burden Maria, who had hoped Richard might come to New York from the United Provinces to oversee the estate himself. The sudden death of his sister prevented Richard's travel, and in 1681 he had Maria's father, Oloff Stevensz van Cortlandt, to ask that she send, "the value of two or three hundred schepels of wheat," even if she had to sell a farm or cattle to raise the funds, "in order that for once they might see a little revenue come from the colony which has cost so much money."⁴⁹ Maria was in ill health and hoped to extract herself from these familial obligations. She replied, "If it should please God to have brother Rygert [Richard] or some one else come over, I should get rid of the farm, for I can not stand it."⁵⁰

In the meantime, the colony was embroiled in a conflict with the tax assessors regarding the taxes due to both New York and Albany. Maria refused payment of either tax until her brother arrived in the spring; he asked her to hold off on the payment because he questioned the assessors' demands.⁵¹ With Andros gone and no new governor in place, the need to collect taxes on the governor's behalf seemed to have evaporated, from Stephen's perspective. Further, he could not understand why Rensselaerswijck would need to pay to support Albany. The colony, in its original design, was meant to be an independent entity. While he did not dispute the need to pay tribute, tithes, or taxes to the larger imperial structure, he viewed Rensselaerswijck as

⁴⁸ *CMVR*, 47-48.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 49-50.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 50.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 51; December 6, 1681, *CARSM*, Vol. 3, pp. 199-200.

separate from Albany, so long as his family could not legally claim title to the town.⁵² The widow Van Rensselaer was pulled in many directions, caught in a number of family squabbles over the colony, and now on the wrong side of the Albany court. The individuals who had a financial stake in the patroonship, scattered across the Atlantic World, constantly bombarded her with questions about the accounts and demands for payments. That winter, Oloff van Cortlandt wrote to his daughter, “I shall confer sometime with your brother to see what can be done to secure for you a quiet life. I have noticed for a long time that all this quarreling is neither good for you nor profitable. Be of good courage. I hope that God after all these troubles will grant a happy ending.”⁵³

In the early 1680s, Maria and Richard split in their intentions for the colony. Immobilized by her various health concerns, Maria found the colony’s upkeep and its many obligations, such as collecting rents, paying taxes, and settling accounts, burdensome. She hoped to cut her losses, divide up the colony, and settle on a profitable parcel of land with access to the grist and saw mills.⁵⁴ Richard, who lived an ocean away from Albany and had no role in the colony’s daily upkeep, saw only Rensselaerswijck’s potential. If it could just be managed properly, if the weather could just hold out enough to produce a bountiful harvest year, if the English government could just be convinced to finally issue the patent promised before Jan

⁵² *CMVR*, 53.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 55.

⁵⁴ Her son, Kiliaen, who had been living in New York as an apprentice, was supposed to return in 1682 to help her manage the estate. He was instead hired out as an apprentice again, first to a man in Boston who hanged himself and then to Jeremiah Dummer, a silversmith. Being alone, and caring for the younger children while managing the estate, was taking a toll on Maria, and she had little assistance other than the managerial aid offered by Richard in the United Provinces and her brother and father in New York. *Ibid.*, 57-58, 74-75, 77-78, 80-82.

Baptist's death, then the colony would not be the family's ruin. To provide Maria with additional support and buy more time to litigate the patent, Richard used the opportunity afforded by his selection of a new minister for Albany, Schenectady, and Rensselaerswijck by taking the unusual step of asking the minister to help Maria manage the colony.⁵⁵ Domine Godefridus Dellijs was unfortunately delayed in Holland, during which time Rensselaerswijck, according to Maria, had gone from "bad to worse." New York's lack of leadership meant that, "things drift along and every one does what seems best in his eyes."⁵⁶ Further, the colony's taxes were still due, and, "whether the harvest is good or bad, the taxes must be paid the same."⁵⁷ At the beginning of 1683, Maria again urged Richard to dissolve the colony, divide it among the heirs, and stem the hemorrhaging expenses.⁵⁸

One heir pressing for a share of the colony was Nicolas's widow, Alida. She remarried shortly after his death, and her second husband, Robert Livingston, took over managing Nicolas's estate and settling his accounts.⁵⁹ The Albany magistrates granted him authority to settle the estate without question, but the Van Rensselaer family, particularly Richard, contested his claims to have paid Nicolas's outstanding debts. They were particularly enraged that the

⁵⁵ Ibid., 76-77.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 84.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 85.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 89.

⁵⁹ Extraordinary Session December 18, 1678, CARSM, Vol. 2, p. 394-396 (Alida van Rensselaer becomes administrator of her husband's accounts after he dies intestate); December 7, 1680, CARSM, Vol. 3, p. 42-43 (Livingston takes over administration of Nicolas's accounts); Extraordinary Session December 29 and 30, 1680, CARSM, Vol. 3, p. 43-51 (inventory of the estate and settlement of debts).

Livingstons continued to live in Rensselaerswijck, occupying a home they believed should belong to the family. Maria expressed dismay that the garden, which was a burial ground for several Van Rensselaers, would become part of Livingston's estate.⁶⁰ Robert immediately appealed the case to the governor of New York, then Edmund Andros. Livingston's Scotch heritage and English fluency allowed him to find favor in the English government, whereas Rensselaerswijck's continued ties to the United Provinces drew English colonial officials' suspicion.⁶¹ In November 1680, Robert wrote to Alida that he had met with the governor to discuss the case and was hopeful that he would be able to secure her inheritance.⁶² She replied, "It lifts my [spirits] to hear that you have good courage about our case. I hope that God shall give that which satisfies us and nothing more."⁶³

A *quietus*, or a legal release from all of Nicolas's transatlantic debts, would satisfy the Livingstons.⁶⁴ By immediately settling the Domine's accounts in New York, Robert ignored or denied accountability for any debts that existed in Holland. Of course, Nicolas had spent a substantial portion of his life in the Old World and had a number of debts there, including to his father's estate. Robert Livingston's ingenious innovation was to attempt to cut all financial ties

⁶⁰ *CMVR*, 30, 35, 57 (Livingstons occupy house and garden).

⁶¹ For Livingston's connections to New York government and his methods of patronage, see Cynthia A. Kierner, *Traders and Gentlefolk: The Livingstons of New York, 1675-1790* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), 13-26.

⁶² Robert Livingston to Alida Livingston, November 6, 1680 [Dutch], The Livingston Family Papers, GLC03107.02167, Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, New York, NY.

⁶³ Alida Livingston to Robert Livingston, November 16, 1680 [Dutch], The Livingston Family Papers, GLC03107.00052, Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, New York, NY.

⁶⁴ Robert Livingston to Alida Livingston, November 6, 1680 [Dutch], The Livingston Family Papers, GLC03107.02167, Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, New York, NY.

between the Van Rensselaer manor of the upper Hudson River region and the Van Rensselaer family of Holland, or, as one historian has described it, to “divorce” the two parts of Nicolas’s estate.⁶⁵ Livingston’s plan demonstrated his considerable savvy and awareness of his political moment, though certainly greed and luck played a role in his success, as well. Settling the New York accounts immediately left him in a favorable position with the people who mattered in local politics: the Dutch elite families who controlled Albany and the English government in New York, who cared very little about the concerns of the Van Rensselaers living across the Atlantic.

In response to Livingston’s maneuvers, Richard worked behind the scenes to call in some of Nicolas’s Holland debts to litigate Livingston into compliance.⁶⁶ He also wrote to Livingston, hoping to advise him of his missteps and chastise him for attempting to separate Nicolas’s estate. From Richard’s correspondence, one gets the sense that the Holland Van Rensselaers viewed Livingston as little more than a fraud and a cheat, a man who appeared on the scene only to steal from them. Richard wrote to Livingston, “I think that if I should submit such samples to the patroon and co-directors, they would judge that you seek to avail yourself of unfounded claims and that you are a solicitor of fraudulent affairs.”⁶⁷ The ongoing litigation and the Livingstons’ continued occupation of the Rensselaerswijck home caused Maria and Richard such anger that they lost sight of Alida, Nicolas’s widow, who was his legal heir despite her new marriage, and who, by all accounts, did nothing wrong other than turn over her legal obligations to her new

⁶⁵ Leder, *Robert Livingston and the Politics of New York*, 24-27, 25 (quotation).

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 26-28.

⁶⁷ *CMVR*, 65.

husband and opt to stay in the home she had shared with Nicolas.⁶⁸ The symbolism of the Livingstons living with Van Rensselaer men buried in their yard distressed Maria, but Richard was most concerned with the protocols and procedures that Livingston had skipped in settling Nicolas's accounts. "In your prudence you should have proceeded herein in another way," he chided, "as according to form and practice of law one must first publicly post and affix a notice, not only in Albany, but even here in Holland, that if any one has any claim against the estate... he must present the same."⁶⁹ Livingston hadn't followed legal tradition, and Richard was outraged that the Albany debts were paid first without proper notice given to those in Holland who may have also had claims against the estate. Richard warned him, "[the estate] will plague you.... You may in the future remember that I foretold you so, if there is any justice to be had in that country."⁷⁰

The winds shifted for Rensselaerswijck in 1683, when Richard again took up the colony's cause in Europe, drawing on his connections to Dutch nobility. "God grant that what was obtained by our brother Jan Baptist van Rensselaer, deceased, from the Duke of York may be brought to perfection during my lifetime, whereupon all the affairs of the colony will also be [settled]," he wrote to Maria.⁷¹ The widow Van Rensselaer did not support his cause. Her son, Kiliaen, had finally returned from his long apprenticeship in Boston, having learned the

⁶⁸ For Alida Livingston, see Melinda M. Mohler, "A Dutch Woman in an English World: The Legacy of Alida Livingston of New York," (Ph.D. Diss., West Virginia University, 2011); Linda Briggs Biemer, *Women and Property in Colonial New York: The Transition from Dutch to English Law, 1643-1727* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1983).

⁶⁹ *CMVR*, 67.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 93.

silversmith trade, and set up a little country shop. He collected rents from the colony's farmers, negotiated what they owed, and tended to the patroon's cattle. Maria, now more comfortable with her son at home to oversee business and ease some of her burdens, began to consider her age and the possibility that the colony's fate may never be resolved. She pleaded with Richard, "I beg you once more, dear brother, to be pleased to make an end of it while we are still living.... To express my opinion I shall only say this, that I believe you will never attain your purpose and that whatever you do and spend on it will be money wasted."⁷² Both Richard and Maria held fast, Richard continuing the quest to settle the colony's case and Maria angling to get one of the farms, the grist and saw mill, and divide up the colony so that she could support herself and end her days in relative comfort, if not the wealth Jeremias believed they could obtain as fit their station. Reputation and status were important to Maria, as she reiterated in her letters to Richard. "I can not live with my family on 200 schepels of wheat and then receive calls from the most prominent people every day," she admonished, "I pray brother to take that into consideration sometime and to [help] a sorrowful widow."⁷³ The aging Van Rensselaers, both concerned by their dwindling time and hoping to secure their legacies, could not agree about Rensselaerswijck's future.

At the heart of their disagreement were the personal interests of two individuals separated by the Atlantic, certainly, but also two competing views of what it meant to profit from the New World. Maria watched her social circle—friends, neighbors, and the dense networks of Albany's elite families—improve their stations year by year, living comfortably on the estates they built in

⁷² Ibid., 114.

⁷³ Ibid., 117.

the upper Hudson River region. Although transatlantic commerce was a part of their daily lives, and in part responsible for their upward mobility, they had put down local roots, played crucial roles in local governance, and profited from diverse local business opportunities. The elite families who surrounded Maria built their lives and secured their wealth within their local community. The colony that Maria managed, by contrast, was ensnared by a complex web of transatlantic death and inheritance—a worst-case scenario of global commerce.⁷⁴ With most local Van Rensselaers either dead or not yet the age of majority, the responsibility for navigating these economic networks fell on Maria's shoulders.

The shift from Dutch to English to Dutch to English rule in just a few years further complicated the case. Trying to expand their colony's control over the region meant patronage, and they had to lavishly entertain dignitaries from New York City as well as get the documents into the right hands of different imperial governments. Securing a patent meant drawing on the most distant relationships to officials and nobility, and even then, they were at the whim of imperial politics and the continual fluctuations of war and peace. When Maria expressed skepticism that any renewed efforts to obtain a patent would lead to the family's security, she saw the writing on the wall. The English empire would stall and delay their efforts, constantly reaffirming their status but never granting the family the full patent they believed they were owed. Better, then, to sell the farms, send the proceeds to the relatives in the United Provinces, and let them reinvest their money in whatever new ventures they chose, without all the baggage of transnational politics.

⁷⁴ For the family ties of the Van Rensselaers in the Old World, and a discussion of inheritance and familial obligation in the foundations of Rensselaerswijck, see Janny Venema, *Kiliaen van Rensselaer (1586-1643): Designing a New World* (Hilversum, The Netherlands: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2010), especially 201-209.

From Richard's perspective, across the Atlantic, the colony was his father's grand design, which his brothers, nephews, and cousins had managed. It was not his only source of income nor his only financial concern, but it formed a significant part of his family's legacy. He believed, or perhaps wrongheadedly convinced himself, that they were on the verge of success. One key motivation for the family's continued efforts at reasserting the colony's authority appears to have been the central belief that they were right: they had the documents to prove that they owned the land they claimed, the WIC had promised Kiliaen certain rights and privileges that influenced his decisions about colonization, and Stuyvesant had illegally seized the *bijeenwoning*. Their cause's righteousness, coupled with the WIC's favorable ruling in 1674 and James's order of 1678, encouraged Richard to press on despite signs that they would never collect a penny of rent from Albany. Richard also viewed the colony from his position in the Old World. He saw it much as his father had, as an investment from which he expected to collect returns. Unlike Kiliaen, however, he wouldn't send over more tools, cattle, or blacksmiths to make the colony work. By the 1680s, Rensselaerswijck was no longer in need of the basic implements of agriculture and trade that patroon's servants could put to use. Instead, the colony's profitability had become dependent on politics and patronage. Richard hoped that his connections to Dutch nobility would help grease the political wheels to move things in his favor. He failed to recognize from his position what Maria plainly saw from hers: exercising local political power was the only way forward in the upper Hudson River region.

A new governor, Thomas Dongan, arrived in August 1683 to end New York's three-year leadership vacuum. Shortly thereafter, Maria's brother, Stephen van Cortlandt, petitioned the government for the colony's patent. He wrote that the family had been told, "to waite still till a better opportunity did present," but that, "continuall delays att their Greatt Expences" caused

them to take up the case again out of desperation. Van Cortlandt's primary concern was the colony's quitrents, which they had trouble raising annually. Though they were obligated to pay the colony's expenses, they received none of its privileges, nor profits. He asked that Dongan grant them what James ordered in 1678, or, if not, at least the areas outside of Albany.⁷⁵ Despite reassurances that Dongan planned to issue their patent, he still hadn't done so by the beginning of 1684. Stephen wrote to Maria, "A patent I hope and believe we shall get, but the city of Albany I see no chance of getting. May God give that it will succeed. It will apparently cost quite a bit of money."⁷⁶

Finally obtaining a patent did cost Stephen quite a bit of money, though how much is unclear. The Van Rensselaers settled with Livingston in 1685, granting him the home and land he occupied with Alida and their children, freeing him from Nicolas's transatlantic debts, and awarding him 800 *schepels* of wheat. In exchange, Livingston returned some of the Rensselaerswijck lands to the family and assented to the colony's patent. The Van Rensselaers unceremoniously received a patent for the colony's undisputed portion after they reached their settlement with Livingston, but Maria's troubles did not end.⁷⁷ The new governor continued to oppose any expansion of Rensselaerswijck's authority, and the Albany elite angled to pressure

⁷⁵ Petition of Stephen van Cortlandt to Thomas Dongan, 1683, VRMP, Box 21, Folder 16.

⁷⁶ *CMVR*, 139.

⁷⁷ Thomas Dongan, Conveyance of the Estate of the late Nicholas van Rensselaer to Robert Livingston, September 1, 1685, The Livingston Family Papers, GLC03107.05419, Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, New York, NY; Peter R. Christoph, ed., *The Dongan Papers: Files of the Provincial Secretary of New York During the Administration of Governor Thomas Dongan, Part 2: 1683-1688*, New York Colonial Documents Series Volume 35 (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1996), 370; Kim, *Landlord and Tenant*, 32-40; Leder, *Robert Livingston and the Politics of New York*, 31-32.

the Van Rensselaers to sell their best lands. During a visit to Albany in 1684, Dongan told her that he, “would not benefit the Rensselaers who are in Holland,” and then proceeded to levy more taxes and tithes against the colony.⁷⁸ Rensselaerswijck was excluded from Dongan’s call for individuals to serve in New York’s general assembly, and Albany’s magistrates began to isolate the colony, as well.⁷⁹ They forbade the town’s citizens from using Rensselaerswijck’s grist mills, for example, further depreciating the colony’s value.⁸⁰ After her parents’ sudden deaths, Maria began to feel increasingly alone, even paranoid that her brother and brother-in-law were selling her legacy out from under her. “I can not with the pen express the falseness of the people, which at present is so great that it cries unto heaven. I shall therefore be on my guard,” she wrote.⁸¹ In a letter written a few months before her death, Maria expressed dismay that Richard had sold farms to the Staets brothers, Jan Swart, and, earlier, a parcel to the Schuylers. Despairingly, she chided, “That those who have struggled so long in this country and the colony and who have preserved the colony must now see that strangers are to possess their father’s estate.... I have dared not go into the place [Albany], because people talk so and call it a shame.”⁸²

Maria’s isolation from the people of Albany, her feeling that they gossiped about her misfortunes, must have been devastating to her in her final months. Her letters to Richard and

⁷⁸ *CMVR*, 169.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 156.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 171.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 171-172.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 186.

Stephen repeatedly expressed that what she most desired was to be considered a peer of Albany's elite families. She wanted to live comfortably and enjoy the wealth and status of those around her, to which, as Rensselaerswijck's heir, she felt entitled. She discovered after her husband's death that the colony was quite different from the estates of her friends, neighbors, and relations. It had deep financial ties to the Old World that proved exceedingly burdensome when several founding investors died in rapid succession. In a sense, Rensselaerswijck suffered from the same problems that Kiliaen van Rensselaer identified within the WIC in his 1633 remonstrance. The colony was too tethered to the Atlantic and not locally self-sufficient enough to make it profitable; the patroonship system that he championed left the colony too entangled with the financial interests of people living a world away from its farms. Those investors and their heirs schemed within the United Provinces to sell parcels here, divide plots there, and settle this or that account, all with a months-long information gap between the colony and its proprietors. Maria tried during her lifetime to carve out a piece of the colony for herself and her children, a farm and the mills that might allow her to live as her neighbors did, in relative comfort and status. Instead, she spent her days embroiled in transatlantic squabbling over inheritances and past due accounts.

Settling accounts and divvying up shares would have been complex regardless, but English conquest of New Netherland in the midst of these negotiations only muddled the process. Jeremias's scheming to expand the colony to include Albany further disrupted the estates and caused a rift between the Van Rensselaers and the upper Hudson River region's Dutch elite families, which in turn put the colony on the wrong side of New York's governors. James, Duke of York, was sympathetic to the Van Rensselaers as manorial landowners and supported their efforts to obtain the rights to Albany, as demonstrated by his 1678 order, but he

lived an ocean away from Rensselaerswijck and did not have to depend daily on the cooperation of Albany's elite as his governors did. Starting with Nicolls, a series of English governors sided with Albany over the colony, delaying the patent, refusing to carry out James's order, levying significant taxes on the Van Rensselaers, and everywhere limiting the colony's autonomy by bringing its court under Albany's jurisdiction and keeping it from sending representatives to the colonial assembly. These governors were less concerned with imposing an English system on the upper Hudson River region's landscape and peoples than they were with maintaining the status quo, keeping Albany's elite families content, and preventing chaos. When forced to choose between upheaval and continuity, they picked continuity every time, even directly challenging an order from James to grant Albany to the Van Rensselaers. In the decades after conquest, woe to the family that found themselves on the wrong side of Albany's elite.

“Sinister and suspect”: Mohawks, Schenectady Traders, and the Albany Court

Despite their ability to chip away at the fortunes of a powerful family like the Van Rensselaers, the merchant magistrates were still unable to stop the smuggling at Albany's edges, even when they enlisted the English government's support. The tenacity of poor/middling traders willing to persist in underground exchanges, and the autonomy of Mohawks who chose to align themselves with Schenectady, tested elite authority in the post-conquest era. The pattern of Haudenosaunee ascendancy discussed in Chapter Two did not cease after 1664, and Mohawks continued to press for policies—and court rulings—that protected their regional interests. When the Albany merchant magistrates failed to meet their needs, Haudenosaunee peoples protested, appealed to the court, or simply circumvented Albany's policies governing the fur trade. By facilitating the establishment of a new town at the end of the Dutch period, Schenectady, they

helped create an alternative to Beverwijck/Albany that promoted a thriving underground economy characterized by small-scale, intimate exchanges.

In a remarkable display of peaceful protest, hundreds of Mohawks and Oneidas gathered in Albany in the summer of 1665 to sit in solidarity with the Onondagas, waiting for their arrival. They came to protest the arrest and trial of two Indigenous men accused of murder. Because the court records from 1660-1668 are missing, we don't have a full account of the events that led to the arrests, nor the trial or sentence. Jeremias van Rensselaer was so struck by the crowd, however, that he recorded the scene in a letter to his father-in-law:

There is great trouble here both among the Christians and the Indians, but I can not give any reason why, for the Indians are behaving very well, so that not much can be said against them, even though nearly four hundred of them have been here in the Fuyck [Albany] now for seven days.... The Indians demand that we shall release the two murderers, which we refuse to do, referring to the Onnedages, to let them say what they think of it, as [one of the murderers] belongs to their nation, whom they want to [release] by force.⁸³

The peaceful demonstration was perhaps enough to convince the magistrates to let the alleged murderers go free, because they were presumably not executed, based on the scant records that still exist from the era.⁸⁴ The Mohawk and Onondaga men may have escaped the gallows because they were innocent, the court had insufficient evidence, or because of Haudenosaunee political pressure, both in the ongoing demonstration in Albany and possibly in behind-the-scenes negotiations among Dutch and Haudenosaunee leaders. The presence of hundreds of

⁸³ *CJVR*, 381. The men have been described by historians as both being Mohawks, or one Seneca and one Mohawk, but Van Rensselaer's letter indicates that one was Onondaga.

⁸⁴ Jacob Goldstein, "Murder in Colonial Albany: European and Indian Responses to Cross-Cultural Murders," (M.A. Thesis, George Washington University, 2012), 84; Merwick, *Possessing Albany*, 181.

Mohawk and Oneida peoples in the town, and the two men's subsequent release, were potent demonstrations of Haudenosaunee power in the year immediately following English conquest.

A similar murder case from February 1672/73, for which the court minutes are extant, reveals the influence that the Mohawk and Oneida protestors wielded in the earlier incident. The 1672/73 prosecution of two "Northern Indians" named Kaelkompte and Keketampe for the murder of John Steward, an English soldier garrisoned at Fort Albany, resulted in a guilty verdict and the two offenders' public execution. Kaelkompte and Keketampe murdered Steward during the commission of a robbery, according to testimony delivered in the case. The Mohawk and Onondaga men's arrest in 1665 might have led to a similar outcome were it not for Albany's occupation by hundreds of Mohawk and Oneida protestors, who, according to Jeremias van Rensselaer's description, refused to leave until the Onondagas arrived and the prisoners were released. In the case of Kaelkompte and Keketampe, the court further required sachems to witness the trial and execution and sanction the proceedings against the two men. Trying Native peoples in colonial courts was still of dubious legality in the 1670s, and Indigenous witnesses would provide the proceedings legitimacy. Presumably, given Van Rensselaer's observations, no such witnesses were willing to participate in the 1665 case against the Haudenosaunee men, which may have contributed to that case's dismissal. The two cases' contrasting outcomes demonstrate the solidarity of Haudenosaunee peoples in the face of pressure from the Albany court.⁸⁵ When the Haudenosaunee desired a specific outcome from Albany, they had proven methods to obtaining those ends.

⁸⁵ Special Court of Oyer and Terminer held in Fort Albany, February 14, 1672/73, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 333-335; *GECNY 1664-1673*, 522-523; Victor Hugo Paltsits, ed., *Minutes of the Executive Council of the Province of New York, Administration of Francis Lovelace, 1668-1673*, 2 vols. (Albany: State of New York, 1910), 1: 155-157. For discussions of the 1672/73 case and the transition from Dutch to English jurisprudence, see William E. Nelson, *The Common Law in*

One such method proved to be facilitating trade competition by welcoming a new Dutch settlement on the Mohawk River. The ongoing problems of violent trade encounters, illicit alcohol sales, and the inconvenience of traveling overland with their furs to reach Beverwijck encouraged the Mohawks to grant a parcel of land to their favored diplomat, Arent van Curler, in 1661.⁸⁶ Beverwijck's merchant magistrates contested the patent because they believed it would cause a precipitous decline in Albany's fur trade. Schenectady was founded with every intention of usurping the Beverwijck trade, of course, and the merchant magistrates had good reason to worry about competition. Historian Thomas Burke, Jr. calculates that: eight of the fourteen original Schenectady proprietors were known to have participated in the fur trade before moving to the Mohawk River, five signed the 1660 petition regarding walking in the woods and the use of Indigenous brokers in the trade, at least four were poor or middling (Burke calls them "small") traders in Albany, and two had substantial debts. Moving from Albany to Schenectady, then, provided opportunities "for the improvement of one's economic or social status" by establishing farms and participating in illicit trade.⁸⁷

Colonial America, Volume 2: The Middle Colonies and the Carolinas, 1660-1730 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 32-34; Goldstein, "Murder in Colonial Albany," 84-86; Nelson, "Legal Turmoil in a Factions Colony," 85-86; Jacobs, *New Netherland*, 394; Jaap Jacobs, "Te Fournereen nae de loffelijcke costumen der stadt Amsterdam: Nederlandse Regelgeving in Nieuw-Nederland," *Pro Memorie: Bijdragen tot de rechtsgeschiedenis der Nederlanden* 5, no. 2 (2003): 364-377, especially 373; Sullivan, *Punishment of Crime in Colonial New York*, 202-206.

⁸⁶ For the Mohawk context for granting the Schenectady lands, see Meuwese, *Brothers in Arms, Partners in Trade*, 272-274; Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods*, 108-114; Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 97-98; Thomas E. Burke, Jr., *Mohawk Frontier: The Dutch Community of Schenectady, New York, 1661-1710* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 26-32.

⁸⁷ Burke, Jr., *Mohawk Frontier*, 21-22 (statistics of proprietors), 65 (quotation).

Merchant magistrates used their power in the courts to enforce laws against Schenectady. They occasionally prosecuted individuals specifically for trading, had the *schout* (later the sheriff) search inhabitants' homes looking for peltry or trade goods, or seized contraband from wagons on the road between the two towns. More often, however, they prosecuted Schenectady traders under the same ordinance that they used to target poor/middling traders in Albany: a law that forbade individuals from providing overnight lodging to Native peoples or having them at home after the ringing of the bell.⁸⁸ This ordinance later specified that sachems were exempted and was expanded to include a clause against enticing Native peoples away from designated trading locations or lodgings "on the hill," where special trading houses had been erected, or using any kind of violence or force against Native traders, even if they were in debt to a colonist.⁸⁹

Such laws were identical in spirit to the disputed ordinances of the 1650s and 1660s discussed in Chapter Two by specifically regulating *where* trade could take place, limiting trade to formal marketplaces, preventing its occurrence outside law enforcement surveillance, and keeping it confined to daylight hours. The ordinances simultaneously targeted the intimacy and familiarity of trade that happened in homes, behind closed doors, possibly lubricated by alcohol. Just as they had during Dutch rule, merchant magistrates cited Mohawk concerns regarding trading behaviors as justifications for these ordinances and their enforcement. The laws also benefitted certain groups over others, limiting competition in the fur trade and helping to

⁸⁸ For examples of early ordinances, see Extraordinary Session May 2, 1670, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 130-132; June 23, 1670, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 145-146.

⁸⁹ Extraordinary Session August 1, 1671, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 269 (trading on the hill); May 23, 1672, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 304 (exemptions for sachems); Extraordinary Session October 22, 1675, CARSM, Vol. 2, p. 35-36 (seizure of items to satisfy debts).

maintain an elite trade monopoly, centered in Albany. In the years after Schenectady's founding, merchant magistrates used trade ordinances to target their competition from poor/middling traders in two locations instead of one. They used the opportunity presented by having judicial jurisdiction over Schenectady to solidify their regional trade monopoly before they had it codified in Albany's 1686 town charter.

Historians cite the law regulating Indian lodgings as an example of English culture enforced in Dutch spaces in the years following conquest.⁹⁰ The limitations on where Indigenous peoples could sleep and the number who could be in Albany at any one time seem less incongruous with Dutch traditions when considered alongside the walking in the woods controversy and the alcohol ordinances of the 1650s and 1660s, however. These laws demonstrate a single trajectory that followed the ascent of Haudenosaunee and Dutch elite authority after Beverwijck's establishment, a codifying of social distance and a consolidation of trade that ostensibly prevented violence and abuse but that simultaneously favored the economic interests of the men crafting and enforcing the laws. These ordinances, then, represent continuity after conquest in the upper Hudson River region's political economy, not abrupt change imposed from top-down English imperial structures.

The lodging question was reevaluated year after year, and each trading season Albany's magistrates revised the law in ways that emphasized their financial interests and promoted the social distance ideal, just as the walking in the woods and alcohol ordinances had done in the 1650s. In 1671, they decided that anyone trading on the hill would need to erect permanent houses there, with fences around the lots and chimneys in the homes, and traders would need to

⁹⁰ The most notable, and eloquent, example is Merwick, *Possessing Albany*, 209-213.

live in the homes year-round.⁹¹ These restrictions limited the trade to permanent Albany residents and forbade the presence of interlopers and itinerants, just as ordinances in the 1650s had limited the Fort Orange trade to burghers and the 1643 WIC Board of Accounts report encouraged policies that would prohibit non-resident trade. These policies promoted the interests of Albany's principal traders by preventing individuals from New England, New York, Schenectady, or elsewhere from participating in the fur trade, establishing an Albany monopoly.

Making the trading houses into permanent dwellings for colonists again raised the problem of where Native peoples should sleep when they traveled to Albany. The town's principal traders sought to limit who could trade and likely decrease the number of individuals involved in the yearly trading season by demanding costly improvements to trading shacks and year-round residency, both of which requirements were likely prohibitive. Replacing the trading shacks with permanent dwellings would also leave no space for Native peoples to sleep, however, given the laws prohibiting their presence within homes. The burghers argued that these problems could be solved by erecting a communal shed or sheds for the purpose of lodging at the town's expense.⁹² Similar sheds existed long before English conquest, although they were generally confined to private lots. Despite Megapolensis's description of having Mohawks sleep at the foot of his bed, Dutch people living under Dutch laws also sought to provide lodging for visiting Indigenous traders outside of private residences, and the lodging issue, which predated English conquest, remained a question in the Albany court throughout the seventeenth century.⁹³

⁹¹ Extraordinary Session August 1, 1671, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 269.

⁹² Extraordinary Session August 13, 1672, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 308-309.

⁹³ For trading sheds during the Dutch period, see Venema, *Beverwijck*, 91-93. A law regarding the construction and maintenance of sheds for lodging Indigenous traders in Albany was passed by the New York Assembly in 1716. Commissioners of Statutory Revision, *The Colonial Laws*

Schenectady, a Dutch settlement established just before conquest, threw a wrench in the entire project of consolidating elite control over the fur trade, formalizing Haudenosaunee diplomacy, and regulating Dutch-Indigenous intimacy. The settlement posed a greater threat to Albany's interests in the region than the English empire because it directly contested Albany's authority over the fur trade and its attendant diplomacy. Further, it represented a new possible coalition: poor/middling Schenectady traders and Mohawks. Before Schenectady's founding, the Beverwijck elite established themselves as the central Dutch authorities in the region by taking the burgher oath and controlling the courts. Their adoption of Haudenosaunee diplomatic protocols and professionalization of their interactions with Mohawks, as discussed in Chapter Two, made them indispensable to the WIC and the colonial government on Manhattan. The English had an even greater need than the Dutch for nurturing the Haudenosaunee alliance. Especially in the mid-1670s, when Metacom's War threatened New England settlements, the English depended on the Haudenosaunee to lend them military assistance in conflicts against the French and their Indigenous allies and against the Native peoples of New England.⁹⁴ They therefore took Haudenosaunee diplomacy seriously, and sought to maintain the status quo as much as possible without disruption to the longstanding alliance the Dutch had enjoyed.

One of Nicolls's first acts as New York's governor was to send George Cartwright to Fort Albany in September 1664 to meet with a diverse group of Native peoples, including

of New York from the Year 1664 to the Revolution, Vol. 1 (Albany: James B. Lyon, 1894), 890-92.

⁹⁴ For Haudenosaunee nations, Metacom's War, and New York diplomacy, see: Andrew Lipman, *The Saltwater Frontier: Indians and the Contest for the American Coast* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015), 203-217; Parmenter, *Edge of the Woods*, 148-162; Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 135-137; Burke, Jr., *Mohawk Frontier*, 93-98; Trelease, *Indian Affairs in Colonial New York*, 228-238.

Haudenosaunee representatives, and negotiate their new partnership with the English government. The agreement that they established did not change much about daily intercultural interactions. The trade would continue as it had before, conducted using the same exchange goods. Two articles related to reciprocal justice and ordered that “punishment” and “due satisfaction” would be necessary to resolve cases of intercultural violence. The punishments, and the use of colonial court systems to litigate, were not detailed in the agreement, leaving open the possibility of seeking “satisfaction” through Indigenous methods as well as creating the potential for Native peoples to be tried in colonial court, as happened to Kaelkompte and Keketampe. The “Indyan Princes” involved in the negotiations added five additional requests, to which Cartwright assented. One required that “they may have free Trade as formerly,” and another that “they may be lodged in houses as formerly.”⁹⁵

Nicolls issued separate instructions to Captain John Baker, who was installed as the head of the English forces at Albany. In general, his orders were to get along with the Dutch as well as possible to ensure a smooth transition to English rule. Baker was to ignore gossip, encourage his soldiers to be amenable to their landlords and employers, and, significantly, stay out of the court except in cases involving capital crimes or Native peoples. Nicolls further ordered him to let the magistrates decide how to negotiate with visiting Indigenous dignitaries, and Baker was supposed to confer with the magistrates regarding any conflicts with Native peoples, unless he received further orders from New York. Finally, Nicolls instructed him to receive diplomats and exchange gifts, even at his own personal expense.⁹⁶ In the agreements negotiated at Fort Albany

⁹⁵ *GECNY 1664-1673*, 47-49, 49 (quotations).

⁹⁶ Peter R. Christoph, ed., *New York Historical Manuscripts: English, Administrative Papers of Governors Richard Nicolls and Francis Lovelace, 1664-1673*, New York Colonial Documents Series, Volume 22 (Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1980), 32-33.

and the instructions sent to Captain Baker, Nicolls emphasized continuity in relationships between colonists and Native peoples during the transition from Dutch to English rule. These orders and negotiations prevented upheaval in Albany like that which happened elsewhere throughout New York. Albany's special relationship to the Haudenosaunee and its position as the heart of trade and diplomacy spared the town from many of the provisions that replaced Dutch law, created an intrusive military presence, or disrupted preexisting social structures, all of which created conflict in places such as the Esopus and New York City.⁹⁷

Albany's Dutch elites worked within these conciliatory policies to maintain their hold on the courts, regulate exchanges, and prevent competition with Schenectady over both the fur trade and diplomacy. Just as they had learned to work with Stuyvesant to obtain the outcomes they wanted in the 1660 walking in the woods controversy, Albany's elite merchants learned to navigate the English political system and colonial government so that they could secure their power, status, and fortunes after conquest. Schenectady repeatedly petitioned Albany and the imperial government for access to the fur trade, and they were repeatedly denied. At times, they were granted the right to trade for essentials such as food, but not for profit. The Albany merchants offered to provide poor Schenectady farmers with whatever small amounts of merchandise they might need to conduct this very small-scale trade, but it could not be for furs.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ For the uprising in the Esopus, see *Ibid.*, 40-58; Merwick, *Possessing Albany*, 171-172, 185, 231, 234.

⁹⁸ Extraordinary Session June 3, 1669, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 59-60; Extraordinary Session May 2, 1670, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 126; Extraordinary Session July 26, 1670, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 156-158.

Albany's principal merchants maintained legal power over Schenectady—and kept it within their surveillance—by keeping it within the Albany court's jurisdiction. Schenectady's inhabitants complained to the court and to the council about burdensome travel for court days, but the magistrates insisted that Schenectady cases needed to be tried in Albany. The English government came to a compromise and allowed Schenectady to hold a small court that could handle disputes with a value less than £100. All criminal cases and civil disputes above that amount had to be litigated at Albany.⁹⁹ Maintaining law enforcement's power and the court's jurisdiction helped merchant magistrates protect their fur trade and diplomatic monopoly. Schenectady's leadership, they believed, could not be trusted to enforce the laws prohibiting trade. Maintaining court jurisdiction was a roundabout way of ensuring that Albany would be responsible for surveilling Schenectady and enforcing compliance with the Albany trade monopoly.

Albany's magistrates had good reason to fear that Schenectady's citizens were breaking the law and participating in trade. Not only was the town's very founding a thinly-veiled attempt at rerouting Mohawk trade to its indebted and disgruntled poor/middling proprietors, but law enforcement officers kept uncovering evidence that Schenectady was deeply involved in the fur trade. In one particularly dramatic case from 1679/80, Grietie, the wife of Peter Jacobsz Borsboom, was prosecuted by the Albany court for threatening the sheriff and resisting a search. The sheriff testified that, in the process of searching her Schenectady home, he discovered a beaver pelt sticking out from the floorboards under a bed. He ordered her to

⁹⁹ Extraordinary Session August 13, 1672, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 309; Extraordinary Session November 4, 1672, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 323; Paltsits, ed., *Minutes of the Executive Council... Administration of Francis Lovelace*, I, 146.

move the bed and reveal what was under the floorboards, which she refused. She threatened to pull the sheriff's hair if he proceeded with the search, so he left the home without completing the inspection. Grietie then attempted to settle the case by bribing the sheriff with two beavers, which, according to the sheriff's testimony, proved she had several pelts stashed away in her home. Her statement of defense argued that the sheriff was unreasonable to ask her to pull her bed down onto the floor in order to complete his search. The court fined her ƒ80 for resisting the search, but did not weigh in on whether she was guilty of trying to settle with the sheriff out of court or of illegal trading.¹⁰⁰

Most court cases regarding illicit trading in Schenectady either enforced the ordinance against lodging Indigenous peoples in colonial homes or involved individuals caught with contraband in wagons on the road between Albany and Schenectady. At the end of the 1669 trading season, for example, the court prosecuted ten cases of individuals caught with Native peoples and their trade packs in their homes. Of those, five were residents of Schenectady, still a tiny frontier settlement when compared with Albany.¹⁰¹ The cases against Herman Vedder and Robert Sandersz were typical examples of these prosecutions: when called to court, Vedder claimed that, "a savage with a pack of beavers came into his room against his will," and Sandersz insisted that the traders came into his home when he was not there, and therefore he

¹⁰⁰ February 3, 1679/80, CARSM, Vol. 2, p. 487.

¹⁰¹ The Schenectady prosecutions were: Jan Luycasz, Helmer Otten, Herman Vedder, Robert Sandersz, and Dirck Hesselingh. See September 30, 1669, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 85, 88, 89; October 14, 1669, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 94. Schenectady residency, when not apparent from court or other documents, was determined by checking names against the genealogical entries in Jonathan Pearson, *Contributions for the genealogies of the descendants of the first settlers of the patent and city of Schenectady, from 1662 to 1800*, Reprint (1873; Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1976).

could not be guilty of illicit trade.¹⁰² Common defenses included not being at home, housing Native peoples but not trading or profiting from it, or the traders coming into the house or yard against the owner's will. Depending on the circumstances in which the individual was caught, the court might dismiss or settle the case or levy a modest fine.¹⁰³

The sheriff monitored movement between Albany and Schenectady and, at times, required a license for passage. Despite the restrictions on mobility, the road between the two towns became a highway for contraband and illicit trade goods, especially at night.¹⁰⁴ The case against Adam Vrooman was typical: in 1678, he quarreled with the sheriff who would not let him transport an *anker* of rum to Schenectady without a pass. The sheriff then prosecuted him for abuse and threats, but Vrooman had to miss his first court date because, as a farmer, he was busy with the harvest and could not leave Schenectady.¹⁰⁵ After the harvest, Vrooman returned to court to conclude the case. The sheriff, Johannes Provoost, related the story of Vrooman resisting his orders and making threats as he seized the contraband rum. Although Provoost asked for a fine of *f*500, the court showed leniency and ordered Vrooman to pay *f*100 because, according to their ruling, though provoked, he should not have threatened the sheriff.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² September 30, 1669, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 88-89, 88 (quotation).

¹⁰³ See, for example, the resolution of Dirck Hesselings's case in 1670. He was fined *f*25 after admitting to the crime. June 23, 1670, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 143.

¹⁰⁴ One such order from 1675 levied a fine of *f*25 for individuals caught on the road from Schenectady and encouraged all law enforcement officers to monitor the road between the towns. Extraordinary Session December 9, 1675, CARSM, Vol. 2, p. 60.

¹⁰⁵ August 6, 1678, CARSM, Vol. 2, p. 354.

¹⁰⁶ September 3, 1678, CARSM, Vol. 2, p. 366-367.

Given the enthusiasm with which alcohol sales to Native peoples were prosecuted in the 1650s, it may seem surprising that the alcohol laws were an example of changes to Dutch policy that occurred during the early decades of English rule. However, the new alcohol laws continued to support wealthier merchants' activities while prohibiting exchanges by poor and middling traders and limiting the activities of Schenectady's inhabitants. The *spirit* of the laws remained unchanged even if the specifics were amended. Nicolls kept the laws against alcohol sales to Native peoples in place immediately after conquest, but the ordinances were eventually softened and repealed (the specifics are unclear because of the missing years of court records). The Albany court attempted to reinstitute the alcohol trade prohibition in the spring of 1671, this time banning only the sale of "strong drinks" to Native peoples. They included in the proposed ordinance an explanation that the law would apply to all persons "of the whole district, whatever quality he may be, and also whether an Englishman or Dutchman," which provided an opening for dispute.¹⁰⁷ The English government did not support the new law, and the military leadership at Fort Albany sought an exception from Governor Lovelace, who granted them permission not to follow it. The court, exasperated, repealed the new ordinance, similar to the way in which they threw up their hands to the petitions against the court during the walking in the woods controversy. The English officers capitulated, the law went into full effect, but, again, the magistrates left an opening for protest.¹⁰⁸ Shortly thereafter, a handful of burghers petitioned the court to annul the law and proposed raising sales taxes on alcohol as a compromise. The

¹⁰⁷ Extraordinary Session April 18, 1671, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 230.

¹⁰⁸ Extraordinary Session, May 6, 1671, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 241-242; Paltsits, *Minutes of the Executive Council, Administration of Francis Lovelace*, I, 89-90.

magistrates allowed them to negotiate a new proposal and present it to the court.¹⁰⁹ They ultimately decided to allow the alcohol trade as long as individuals selling liquor to Native peoples paid a fee, not an excise tax which would have been levied later, but an immediate payment for the privilege.¹¹⁰ This compromise opened up the alcohol trade but tied it to one's ability to pay the tax, which favored wealthier merchants and traders.

Alcohol sales at Schenectady—whether to Native peoples or colonists—were fiercely contested in the 1660s and 1670s. As the smuggling case against Vrooman suggests, alcohol was the most common contraband good found and seized on the road. In 1668, the *schout* of Schenectady, Jan Gerritsz van Marcken, requested permission from the court to open an ordinary in the town, which was granted, but within months he found himself on the wrong side of the law for selling alcohol on the Sabbath and running up debts.¹¹¹ Cornelis Cornelisz Viele, an interpreter often called on by the court and government in legal cases and for diplomacy, also discovered that the court was deeply concerned by the frontier alcohol trade.¹¹² He attempted to

¹⁰⁹ Extraordinary Session, May 10, 1671, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 243-244.

¹¹⁰ Extraordinary Session May 11, 1671, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 245-246.

¹¹¹ October 29, 1668 and December 10, 1668, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 18, 30. The *schout* was an office that predated English rule, but the English viewed it as similar to a sheriff. Nicolls's initial orders to the Albany court included nominating a *schout* for each town, meant to fulfill the role of sheriff but in a blended way that blurred the lines between Dutch and English law enforcement. Eventually the court dropped the Dutch term and used the word "sheriff" to refer to the same person. For the office of the *schout*, see Jacobs, *New Netherland*, 105-106, 116-117; for transition from *schout* to sheriff, see Nelson, "Legal Turmoil in a Factious Colony," 113-115.

¹¹² In a remarkable instance of Schenectady's solidarity against the authority of the Albany court, Viele was prosecuted in 1680/81 for refusing to act as an interpreter to gather evidence in a case against Dirck Hesselingsh for illegal trading. The court demanded that Viele assist them in questioning an Indigenous man, who petitioned the court himself in a suit against Hesselingsh regarding a debt that Hesselingsh tried to pay with a broken gun. Viele refused to act as an interpreter for the case, and he offered the defense that the court needed to formally issue a warrant to compel his services. The court disagreed and reprimanded him, telling Viele that he

open a tavern in Schenectady in 1671, citing his service to the town as interpreter as the reason he should receive special favor from the Albany magistrates. Jacques Cornelisz disputed Viele's tavern, citing his own tapping "privilege" and noting that his tavern had already been authorized by the English government.¹¹³ Viele was not willing to give up the fight, however, and a few months later, he presented the court with a patent for his tavern issued by Governor Lovelace.¹¹⁴ Cornelisz continued his case against Viele, arguing that he, as an interpreter, had gained the exclusive privilege of opening a tavern first from Governor Nicolls. Cornelisz asked the Albany magistrates to write him a letter of recommendation to Lovelace, thereby putting their thumbs on the scale for him, which they consented to do. Ultimately, the executive council had to resolve the dispute, and Lovelace decided to allow both men to operate taverns in Schenectady, despite the Albany court's favoring Cornelisz.¹¹⁵ That both men were interpreters deeply involved with the court's functions and diplomacy allowed them special privileges and favored status, but their role also raised the Albany magistrates' suspicions and concerns.

One of Albany's many fears regarding Schenectady was the potential for the frontier town to usurp Albany's diplomatic power by forging stronger bonds with neighboring Mohawks. The Albany court could not limit who the townspeople spoke or interacted with, but they tried to

needed to serve the court when summoned. See February 1, 1680/81, CARSM, Vol. 3, p. 63-64. Viele's role as interpreter will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four.

¹¹³ December 7, 1671, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 284.

¹¹⁴ February 1, 1671/72, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 290; Paltsits, *Minutes of the Executive Council, Administration of Francis Lovelace*, II, 667-668. The patent declared that Viele could open a tavern and entertain/lodge visitors to Schenectady provided that he did not serve alcohol to Native peoples.

¹¹⁵ March 28, 1672, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 295; April 18, 1672, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 298; Paltsits, *Minutes of the Executive Council, Administration of Francis Lovelace*, II, 668-669.

prevent informal diplomacy and competition in formal diplomacy by regulating movement to and from Schenectady. In 1669, the court seized money given to Bastiaen Peters, a slave, who was caught traveling to the Mohawk villages. He was sent there by his mistress in an effort to “obtain help for” the Mohawks, probably to send a message from Schenectady to warn them of an impending attack on their villages, an effort which troubled the court. They noted that such travels, “might put forth an extremely grave danger, as the Christians ought to keep out of the activities of the savages.”¹¹⁶ The “Christians,” as defined in this example, included a slave like Bastiaen Peters but of course exempted the magistrates themselves, who were very much involved in the “activities of the savages” as the arbiters of regional diplomacy. Alliance, negotiation, even a neighborly warning—these all fell under the purview of Albany’s merchant magistrates and, in their view, were delicate matters best left to the professionals.

The magistrates decided in 1670/71 to limit all travel from Schenectady to places with sensitive diplomatic ties, ordering that, “those who so lightly resolve to travel to the Maquas’ [Mohawk] country, the Sinnekes [Senecas, or other places within Iroquoia], or the French country, or elsewhere, whereby they tarnish themselves as sinister and suspect,” would be forbidden from such travel without an official pass.¹¹⁷ The wording was significant, even if it did not explicitly state the ordinance’s intentions or the kinds of behavior the Albany court hoped to prevent. The first part, addressing the “lightness” of the travel probably referred to frequency, regularity, and possibly intimacy. That such travel could be routine, familiar, “lightly”

¹¹⁶ September 2, 1669 and September 30, 1669, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 77-78 (quotation), 85.

¹¹⁷ February 16, 1670/71, CARSM, Vol. 1, p. 214-215, 215 (quotation). The original text reads: “voor de gene die soo lichtelijck resoluieren te reysen noch het maquaaslandt, Sinnekes, oft franselandt, ende elders, waerdoor sy haer seluwen verdacht ende suspect maecken.”

undertaken, troubled the Albany magistrates. Such “lightly” undertaken travel rendered the people of Schenectady “sinister and suspect,” their ability to move between areas within the borderlands—Iroquoia and New France—immediately a source of discomfort and mistrust. Were they engaging in illicit trade (probably) or were they up to something more nefarious (unlikely)? Were they plotting an alliance, an attack, a mutiny? The court couldn’t be sure, but they wanted to prevent any routine intercourse or familiarity among Schenectady’s inhabitants and neighboring Mohawks, other Haudenosaunee peoples, and New France.

In an ordinance that covered two areas of concern, the magistrates tried again in 1675 to protect their diplomatic role. The order prohibited violence and theft against Native peoples, whether in the commission of trade or otherwise. Its primary concern was not trading behaviors or criminality but diplomacy. The magistrates, along with Captain Anthony Brockholes, noted that private arrangements with Native peoples could be dangerous and could not be tolerated among the populations of Albany, Schenectady, or Rensselaerswijck. They thus issued an order that forbade “any conversation with the Indians” and the “question[ing of] them about any matters concerning the country.” If an Indigenous person spoke to an inhabitant about such matters, they were ordered to report the conversation to Captain Brockholes immediately and not engage in any further dialogue regarding diplomatic concerns.¹¹⁸ In multiple ordinances, then, the magistrates, with the blessing of the English government, sought to limit participation in diplomacy. Their ordinances against trade, lodging, movement, and speech restricted Schenectady’s ability to interact with any familiarity with Native peoples, and possibly, in turn,

¹¹⁸ October 22, 1675, CARSM, Vol. 2, p. 35-36, 36 (quotations).

conduct any informal negotiations or engage in any conversations that might be considered diplomatic.

Despite merchant magistrates' herculean efforts to enforce social distance between Schenectady's inhabitants and neighboring Mohawks, prevent trade in Schenectady that might compete with their monopoly, and keep diplomacy professionalized and tethered to Albany, Schenectady developed an undeniable closeness with the Mohawks. The town was settled on Mohawk lands, the very first territory ceded by the Haudenosaunee. They gave the land to Arent van Curler because he was a trusted personal ally of the Mohawks—for years they referred to all diplomats at Albany as "Corlaer" as an acknowledgement of the personal relationship he established with them—and because they wanted the Dutch to settle a new fur trading village as an alternative to Beverwijck. Decades earlier, during their meetings with Van Den Bogaert, the Haudenosaunee expressed frustration at the long overland journey they had to undertake with their peltry to reach Fort Orange. Schenectady provided a solution to this perpetual problem because it could be reached by water. Further, Schenectady offered the possibility of starting relationships anew, with fresh agreements and protocols, with new individuals and new arrangements. Remarkably, despite the long odds, some of these efforts worked. Schenectady became a true frontier community, with Mohawks and Dutch and English settlers living side-by-side. Many Mohawks who settled there converted to the Dutch Reformed faith and worshipped alongside their colonial neighbors.¹¹⁹ Although social interactions were discouraged and trade was prohibited, a thriving underground exchange economy persisted in spite of the ordinances. Schenectady traders broke the law and allowed Mohawks to sleep in their homes, drank alcohol

¹¹⁹ Burke, Jr., *Mohawk Frontier*, 145-156; Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 106-107.

with them, conversed about matters concerning the province. Albany's merchant magistrates did what they could to prevent the town from becoming what its proprietors—and the Mohawks who granted the lands and settled within and near the town—hoped it would be, but they were powerless to stop the closeness and familiarity that came from everyday proximity.

Conclusion

Twenty-two years after the English first conquered New Netherland, Governor Dongan issued Albany an official town charter. Other Dutch towns and villages had received charters or patents after the English reoccupied New York in 1674, but Albany's charter was delayed by the ongoing efforts of the Van Rensselaers to claim the city as part of Rensselaerswijck. With a settlement reached between the Van Rensselaers and Livingstons, Albany's inhabitants could finally receive a formal set of boundaries, rules, and expectations that would define their community. Before codifying Albany's privileges and obligations for the future, the charter first explained the city's past, the "Antient Towne" that had once belonged to the Dutch but was now under English jurisdiction. The charter described the individuals who had been responsible for conveying "Libertyes Immunityes and Privilidges" to the people; known variously as "Commissaryes" of Beverwijck or Albany, *schepenen* of Willemstadt, or Justices of the Peace of Albany, the magistrates played a central role in town governance by drafting, passing, and enforcing ordinances. Albany's inhabitants also took part in constructing Albany's "Antient" foundations, as elucidated by the charter, in that they built structures together for public use, such as a courthouse, church, and burial ground. The two defining features of Albany's past that paved the way for its future within the English empire, according to Dongan's charter, were the elite families who controlled law enforcement and the court system, establishing themselves as pillars of the community, and the sense of communal obligation that encouraged structures to

serve the most essential public needs. Albany, then, was defined by top-down rules and limitations as well as bottom-up communal duty and cooperation.¹²⁰

After acknowledging Albany's past as a place of laws and communal obligations, the charter then defined the town's present and future. The magistrates, formerly the essential source of town governance, would be joined in government by a mayor and aldermen. The people, now called the "Comonalty," would enjoy, "every such and the same Libertyes Privilidges, ffranchizes Rights Royalties ffree Customes Jurisdiccons and Immunityes which they have Antiently held... PROVIDED alwayes that none... bee Inconsistent with or Repugnant to the Laws of his Majestyes Kingdom of England."¹²¹ In the decades following conquest, the Albany magistrates and townspeople had undertaken a process of negotiating which "Antient" [Dutch] rights and privileges were consistent with English law, which could be grudgingly accepted by New York's governors, and which were wholly "Repugnant" to the English empire. That process would continue even after the charter, although, by 1686, the town had been Albany longer than it had been Beverwijck and the people had carved out significant cultural and authoritative space to carry on as a predominantly Dutch community under English rule.¹²²

The most striking provision of the town charter came near the end, after pages of defining borders and setting up the new governmental structure. The Albany fur trade monopoly, enshrined in the town charter, demonstrated the greatest continuity from Dutch to English rule in

¹²⁰ Commission of Statutory Revision, *Colonial Laws of New York*, 195-197, 196 (quotations).

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 197.

¹²² Donna Merwick points out that not everyone received the new charter with joy, and that the system it created benefitted some families while harming the financial interests of others. See Merwick, *Possessing Albany*, 204-205.

the initial decades after conquest. Dongan acknowledged that the monopoly, first established by the Dutch, “has Always been found by Experience to be of Greate Advantage not only to the said Citty in Particular butt to the whole Province in Generall,” because it not only brought in tax revenue to the crown but served to stabilize relationships with the region’s diverse Indigenous populations. It was, as he wrote:

The Sole meanes not only of Preserving this Province in Peace & Quiett whilst the Neighbouring Colonyes were imbrued in Blood & Warr... it has been no lesse evident that whenever there has been any Slacknesse or Remissnesse in the Regulacon & keeping the Indian Trade within the Walls of the sd Citty Occasioned by the encroachment of Some Persons trading with the Indians in Places remote some Clandestinely... this Governmt has lost much of the Reputacon and Management amongst the Indians which it otherwise had and enjoyed.¹²³

The Albany monopoly was so essential to the stability of New York, New England, and the entire northeast borderlands region, that it needed to be protected in the town’s foundational documents. In granting the monopoly, Dongan also gave the Albany government the authority to manage the trade, pass ordinances that would define its limitations and restrictions, and prosecute those who were caught trading anywhere other than within the designated spaces set aside for that purpose.¹²⁴ Dongan thus wrote into the town’s charter the elites’ control of trade and the governing structure that supported their monopoly. He codified and sanctioned the arguments Albany’s merchant magistrates had made for decades: they knew best how to organize and conduct intercultural exchanges and diplomacy. Their narrative of the town’s history and its importance to the English empire became the official story of Albany.

¹²³ Commission of Statutory Revision, *Colonial Laws of New York*, 211.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 210-212.

Yet the need to spill so much ink in the service of Albany's monopoly suggests that the issue was far from settled after decades of elite consolidation. Did illicit trade and intimate exchanges—like the ones that occurred daily in Schenectady—threaten the region's stability? Mohawk decision-making in granting the Schenectady lands to Van Curler, participating in regular (if illegal) commerce with the poor/middling traders and farmers there, and, occasionally, moving near or within the village, suggests that the Albany merchants' competition, the second tier of the region's political economy characterized by an underground exchange economy, had something to offer individual Mohawks that they were not getting at Albany. They found it easier to travel to Schenectady by water than to make the overland trek with their heavy packs, certainly, and they had long sought redress for unfair or even violent trading practices at Albany without much success, despite the ordinances. Schenectady's proximity to the Mohawk villages and the relative fluidity of its frontier society perhaps made it a more hospitable space for Mohawk traders, who illegally slept in colonial homes. Despite the warnings, prohibitions, arrests, fines, and sanctions levied against those who dared to trade at Schenectady, the underground exchange economy persisted there because, for at least some Mohawk individuals, Schenectady provided a welcome alternative to the elite-controlled marketplaces and hillside communal shacks of the Albany trading season. As long as Mohawks exerted their influence and authority—and chose where they brought their furs—the Albany monopoly as spelled out in the charter would always face competition from the clandestine trade.

By the time of Dongan's passage of the Albany charter, the town's elites had negotiated a means of governing that suited the English empire's interests. In the 1650s and 1660s, merchant magistrates consolidated their political authority, limited the power of the WIC and Rensselaerswijck, and developed a profoundly localized system of jurisprudence and governance

that promised greater order and stability in the region. Remarkably, despite squabbles and protests here and there, the town's leadership maintained most of these systems for decades after conquest. Though Dongan's charter dramatically changed government offices and titles of authority, the document kept many familiar practices in place, and the town was still able to govern itself semi-autonomously. The names of the individuals holding public office in the new government's first year were all familiar, drawn from the same elite families who gained authority under the burgher right and maintained power for years, with a few English individuals thrown in for good measure.¹²⁵ These same elite families would maintain their hold on the town's government for decades after the 1686 charter.

Albany enjoyed continuity in its political economy in the years after conquest because its system worked to create stability and order, and Albany's elite families regularly communicated their effectiveness and significance to the English government. They were so skilled at navigating their relationships with the New York government that they easily convinced a series of governors to defy an order from James, Duke of York, and refuse to grant a patent to the Van Rensselaers that would threaten Albany's stability. These governors further narrowed Rensselaerswijck's authority until the colony became nothing more than a manor, similar to those estates of its elite neighbors. Albany's magistrates also worked to slowly dismantle the patroonship by levying taxes against it and forbidding the town's citizens from using its grist mill. The Albany elite, in partnership with the English government at New York, repeatedly

¹²⁵ The individuals named in the Albany charter as the first slate of public officials were: Peter Schuyler, Robert Livingston, James Parker, Isaac Swinton, Dirck Wessells, Jan Jansz Bleecker, David Schuyler, Johannes Wendell, Levinus van Schaick, Adriaen Gerritsz, Joachim Staets, John Lansing, Isaack Verplank, Lawrence van Ale, Albert Ryckman, Melgert Wynantsz, Jan Becker, and Richard Pretty. *Ibid.*, 201-204.

demonstrated to the Van Rensselaers that their colony—and its complex, frustrating transatlantic ties—was too tethered to the past to survive in a post-conquest world. Expanding Rensselaerswijck, making it profitable at last, would have caused regional chaos and uproar. Quietly dismantling the colony, policy by policy, account by account, parcel by parcel, helped maintain the status quo.

In the immediate decades of transition from Dutch to English rule, Albany's elite carved out concessions for its localized political economy. Soon, those systems would be put to the test during a period that embroiled the upper Hudson River region in contests initiated across the Atlantic that spilled over into the northeast borderlands. The militarization of Albany's frontier had unfolded gradually over the years, the buildup of soldiers and armaments quietly scattered throughout court records still predominantly concerned with debts and trade ordinances. Fears of attack, rumors of impending destruction, and tales of the horrifying bloodshed that plagued New England spread throughout the upper Hudson River region with increasing frequency until, in the winter of 1689/90, an attack finally came. Having established some balance in their peculiarly localized way of life, the inhabitants of Albany and Schenectady, partnered with their Mohawk neighbors, would have to wield their dual-level political economy—and all the implements of trade and diplomacy—to serve the English empire in an imperial war.

CHAPTER 4: A DUAL-LEVEL POLITICAL ECONOMY IN WAR AND PEACE (1690-1713)

At five o'clock on the morning of February 9, 1689/90, Simon Schermerhoorn arrived at Albany. After his horse had been killed by gunfire, he had dragged himself, wounded in the thigh and bleeding, all the way from Schenectady to sound the alarm. The worst had happened: the French and their allies had attacked in the night. French soldiers crept into the village under cover of darkness, massacred sixty individuals, and burned the settlement and its resources to the ground. Hearing the news from Schenectady, Albany's leadership was in a state of panic. Schermerhoorn and the other survivors reported that the French had an army of 1400 waiting in the woods, ready to descend on Albany and the Esopus. The men at Fort Albany fired the cannons to signal the farmers in outlying areas, and they feared the news would not spread quickly enough, the sound of the cannons muffled in the knee-deep snow. Throughout the day survivors streamed into Albany with harrowing tales of escape and fearful estimates of where the French might strike next. The town leadership quickly dispatched messengers carrying letters to all nearby settlements, sent notice to the Mohawk villages, and rallied a few horsemen to look for the French forces supposedly lurking in the woods. Upon seeing the destruction at Schenectady firsthand, Laurence, a Mohawk interpreter, decided better of calling down the Mohawks. The horsemen were forced to turn back because of the deep snow, and Albanians could do little else but sit and wait for the French.¹

With the attack on Schenectady, imperial war came to Albany for the first time.

Albany's citizens had heard tales for years of gruesome attacks, towns razed, cattle slaughtered,

¹ E. B. O'Callaghan, ed., *The Documentary History of the State of New-York*, 4 vols. (Albany, NY: Weed, Parsons & Co., 1849-1851) I: 188-189. (Hereafter cited as *DHSNY*.) See also Thomas E. Burke, Jr., *Mohawk Frontier: The Dutch Community of Schenectady, New York, 1661-1710* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 102-107.

and fields burned throughout New England and, earlier, in the Esopus and on Manhattan. The town had occasionally witnessed a scattered attack here or there, but nothing on the scale of the Schenectady massacre. After Schenectady, Albany knew what it meant to be part of the English empire in North America. They understood, perhaps more viscerally than they had immediately after English conquest, the ways in which wars initiated in Europe—in this case, the Nine Years' War—could become global conflicts for control of resources, trade routes, and Indigenous alliance. The attack on Schenectady, and the duration of King William's War, as the conflict was known in the Americas, gave Albany enemies to fear and hate: the French and their Indigenous allies. Large-scale military operations, the burdensome presence of soldiers in the town, oaths of loyalty and, of course, taxes, all ensured that the empire and the crown would be increasingly present in the lives of Albany's inhabitants.² A second Anglo-French war immediately followed the first, and Albany would spend decades at the heart of contests for empire in the northeast borderlands.

Though a military presence would remain constant in the town until the mid-eighteenth century, the war effort was not constructed from London or New York. Albany defined its own engagement in the Anglo-French wars that ended the seventeenth and began the eighteenth centuries. In three parts, this chapter will examine the ways in which Albany's citizens fitted these conflicts into their preexisting systems of trade and diplomacy, and the methods by which they wielded their particular, localized system of dual-level political economy in the service of war. The first part describes how Albany's elite families approached the wars in the same ways they approached other moments of crisis, by consolidating their own power and emphasizing

² Donna Merwick, *Possessing Albany, 1630-1710: The Dutch and English Experiences* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 259-285.

local governance, upholding the Albany monopoly, and deploying a language of community to justify their actions.

For a brief interlude in the midst of King William's War, it seemed that a profound shift had occurred among Albany's elite leadership in favor of collapsing social distances between the town and its Mohawk neighbors, the subject of part two. During the chaotic years of the war, the necessities of frontier warfare provided opportunities for some Mohawk and Albanian elite leaders to reimagine the political landscape of the upper Hudson River region. They took advantage of the extraordinary circumstances created by the war to enact their separate visions for what the region's political economy and human geography could become: an autonomous Iroquoia bordered by Euro-American imperial settlements that would serve as convenient conduits for trade, diplomacy, military assistance, and religious instruction, or an Anglo-Dutch fur trading region with Albany at its center, filled with Haudenosaunee subjects. To these ends, Peter Schuyler, Dirck Wessells, Robert Livingston, and other prominent merchant politicians—as well as the laity of Albany, Schenectady, and Rensselaerswijck—supported the efforts of Domine Godefridus Dellijs to convert Native peoples to Christianity and settle a new Mohawk Christian village near Albany. Although both the Anglo-Dutch elite and the Christian Mohawks wanted to draw themselves closer to one another, they did not share a common understanding of the meaning of nearness. For Mohawks, a closer partnership did not negate their autonomy, but Albanian elites viewed such closeness as an acknowledgement of dependence and a tributary relationship to the larger English empire. Both parties maneuvered toward each other without a shared vocabulary that could reconcile the implications of such movements. Not surprisingly, a crisis erupted when Mohawk leaders and Albany's town council discovered that Dellijs, Schuyler, and Wessells had convinced a few Mohawk converts to sell them parcels of land that

encompassed all of the Mohawk villages. As the Dellius land grant scandal unfolded, the experiment in narrowing social distance was halted before it ever gained traction.

Part three discusses the intimate exchanges and familiarity among Mohawks and Albany's inhabitants that persisted on the periphery. Indeed, the underground exchange economy was alive and well during the years of Anglo-French war and was increasingly linked to the French settlements against which the town was embroiled in war. The disruptions to the flow of furs caused by imperial restrictions encouraged even some members of the Albany elite, such as Evert Wendell, to weigh the risks and decide to smuggle along the Albany-Montreal corridor. Poor and middling traders, for their part, continued to protest trade regulations and defy the ordinances. They smuggled, sold alcohol, and invited Native peoples into their homes, just as they had since the founding of Beverwijck. All told, Albany at war was remarkably consistent with Albany at peace.

The town's overall stability during the period 1687-1713 may seem surprising given the contexts of armed conflict, upheaval, and bitter factionalism that seemed to dominate the era. The wars witnessed radical swings of political fortunes between New York factions. The era began with an uprising in New York City that further divided the leadership of Albany and Schenectady, who already contested one another's commerce, and that was only the beginning of the colony's tumultuous leadership crisis. Between 1688 and 1708, one New York governor would be deposed, one would be executed, two would die suddenly of natural causes, and two would be recalled by the crown after their administrations became mired in scandal. Administrations viewed each other with such animosity that, at one point, the council nullified

every law passed during the prior administration.³ These factional crises and New York's raucous colonial politics have drawn the attention of numerous historians, who have tended to place every event into factional categories. The Delliuss scandal, for example, unfolded along Whig vs. Tory and Leislerian vs. Anti-Leislerian party lines, but the events were not simply another in a long list of disputes between rival factions.⁴

Political contests such as Leisler's uprising came to Albany, certainly, but the town responded in familiar ways to events happening in New York or London whose effects reverberated up the Hudson River or across the Atlantic. The town leadership argued for increasingly localized control over the region's political economy and took advantage of the opportunities created by instability at the colonial and imperial levels of government to manage trade, diplomacy, and war on their own. If, as Susanah Shaw Romney argues was the case for the Dutch of New Netherland, "[individuals] built the early modern empire from the bottom up," then considering the particularities of a colonial town that behaved differently, that operated according to its own particular local circumstances, can reveal much about the mutability and

³ "An Act for Repealing Several Acts of Assembly, and Declaring other Ordinances, publisht as Acts of Assembly, to be Void," *The Colonial Laws of New York from the Year 1664 to the Revolution*, Vol. 1 (Albany: James B. Lyon, 1894), 523-525 (hereafter cited as *LOCNY*).

⁴ For factionalism and New York colonial politics, see, for example: Joyce D. Goodfriend, *Who Should Rule at Home? Confronting the Elite in British New York City* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2017); Owen Stanwood, *The Empire Reformed: English America in the Age of the Glorious Revolution* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011); Jason K. Duncan, *Citizens or Papists? The Politics of Anti-Catholicism in New York, 1685-1821* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005); Kathy Matson, *Merchants and Empire: Trading in Colonial New York* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); Alan Tully, *Forming American Politics: Ideals, Interests, and Institutions in Colonial New York and Pennsylvania* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994); Patricia Bonomi, *A Factious People: Politics and Society in Colonial New York* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971); Lawrence Leder, *Robert Livingston and the Politics of Colonial New York* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1961).

limitations of broader imperial structures.⁵ Anglo-Dutch peoples and their Haudenosaunee neighbors in the upper Hudson River region carved out a singular space for themselves within the English empire, separate from the partisan politics that embroiled New York and London.

Recently, historians have shifted their focus to the political and economic conflicts happening outside of imperial or elite levels of power in colonial New York. Joyce Goodfriend's examination of class and politics in New York City considers the ways in which poor/middling individuals contested elite authority by speaking Dutch, exercising religious choice, challenging household power structures, resisting slavery, and thwarting moralizing efforts aimed at "civilizing" the poor. Looking to the informal politics that played out in individuals' daily lives reveals an expansive array of acts of resistance that demonstrates the limitations of histories that focus solely on partisan, formal politics.⁶ For the upper Hudson River region, the translation and publication of Evert Wendell's account book has informed new scholarship by Jan Noel and Eugene Tesdahl regarding smuggling and political resistance along the Albany-Montreal corridor in the early eighteenth century.⁷ Smugglers crossed borders and ignored regulations, building a very different sort of empire from the ground up.

⁵ Susanah Shaw Romney, *New Netherland Connections: Intimate Networks and Atlantic Ties in Seventeenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 18.

⁶ Goodfriend, *Who Should Rule at Home?*

⁷ Eugene Richard Henry Tesdahl, "The Price of Empire: Smuggling Between New York and New France, 1700-1754," (Ph.D. diss., University of Colorado, 2012); Kees-Jan Waterman and Jan Noel, "Not Confined to the Village Clearings: Indian Women in the Fur Trade in Colonial New York, 1695-1732," *New York History* 94 (Winter/Spring 2013): 40-58; Jan Noel, "'Fertile with Fine Talk': Ungoverned Tongues among Haudenosaunee Women and their Neighbors," *Ethnohistory* 57, no. 2 (Spring 2010): 201-223. For Evert Wendell's account book, see Kees-Jan Waterman, ed. and trans., *"To do Justice to Him and Myself": Evert Wendell's Fur Trade with Indians in Albany, New York, 1695-1726* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 2008).

Histories of the Haudenosaunee have also moved beyond the factionalism of League politics to examine the cohesive Haudenosaunee identities of peoples living across imperial borders.⁸ Jon Parmenter has documented the remarkably consistent messages of autonomy and mobility that informed more than two centuries of Haudenosaunee war and diplomacy.⁹ Further, he has argued that the split between French-allied Laurentian Iroquois and Anglo-Dutch-allied League peoples was not a sharp division, and that these alliances were less definitive than their European participants may have believed or that historians have claimed. He identifies kinship networks and culture as the foundational elements of Haudenosaunee political belonging—elements that crossed borders and were unbounded by geography or treaty.¹⁰ Recent studies of colonial mission/trading towns such as Kahnawà:ke further demonstrate the extent to which Haudenosaunee peoples living at the edges of empire maintained their sovereignty, defined the culture of their villages, and fostered a connection to Haudenosaunee society as a whole.¹¹

⁸ For factionalism and the politics of the Iroquois League, see William N. Fenton, *The Great Law and the Longhouse: Political History of the Iroquois Confederacy* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998); Daniel Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992).

⁹ Jon Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1534-1701* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2010).

¹⁰ Jon Parmenter, “After the Mourning Wars: The Iroquois as Allies in Colonial North American Campaigns, 1676-1760,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, 64 (2007): 39–82.

¹¹ Recent treatments of Kahnawà:ke include: Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014); Tesdahl, “The Price of Empire”; David L. Preston, *The Texture of Contact: European and Indian Settler Communities on the Frontiers of Iroquoia, 1667-1783* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009); Allan Greer, *Mohawk Saint: Catherine Tekakwitha and the Jesuits* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

The recent historiography of colonial New York and Iroquoia during the era of Anglo-French warfare demonstrates that tidy categories of “French,” “English,” or “Haudenosaunee” were messier on the ground, in individuals’ daily lives, than leaders in Paris, London, or Onondaga may have expected. Further, resistance, dissent, and illegal activity happened with remarkable consistency and outside the narratives of political faction captured in imperial administrative records and elite leaders’ correspondence. At ground level, individuals behaved according to their own identities and financial interests, ignoring borders and imperial dictates. In wartime, these choices questioned the very definitions of loyalty and empire that violent imperial conflicts sought to clarify. The chaos of factionalism at the highest levels of governance allowed these choices and the particular, localized way that Albany participated in the war effort to go unnoticed for a time, though the Delliuss scandal would temporarily refocus New York’s attention on Albany. Centering an examination of Anglo-French war on a singular town, however, reveals individuals building an empire radically divergent from the visions of London, Paris, and, perhaps, even Onondaga.

“Seditious letters now founde all bloody upon Skinnechtady streets”: Localizing Global War

In the months leading up to the attack on Schenectady, rumors circulated throughout the region of shifting alliances and potential betrayals. Robert Livingston reported to the colonial government in the summer of 1689 that a “North[ern] Indian” had recently been in Albany and informed the town that the French had supplied their allies with, “as much [powder] as they could cary teling them it was to kill the English withall and if they wanted more he would give them a Cano[e] full.” Livingston went on to explain that the three Mohawk villages had been visited by a delegation of French allies, who enjoined them to abandon their loyalty to Albany,

the English, and the Covenant Chain alliances. These messengers told the Mohawks: “You are all dead people you and all the 5 Nations... for all the Christians have combined together unanimously to destroy us there is no more Christian fraternity for they are all united against us and you must not think that you will find any Christian Brethren any where.” The Mohawks, in the version they relayed to Livingston, explained to the messengers that they should have come to the villages sooner, so the Mohawks could have advised them against declaring war on the English, “because they are our Brother Corlears [sic] people.” The Mohawks accused the messengers of lying during an earlier meeting with a council of elder women, and chided, “we see your false harts and all your false doings.” The document ended with the statement: “Arno[u]t the Interpreter [wrote] this is the reall truth.”¹² Whether the “reall truth” or a dramatized version of the truth, the depiction of the meeting in the Mohawk villages raised Albany’s anxieties. Mohawks declined the messengers’ offer to take up arms against their Anglo-Dutch allies, but the idea of a pan-Native alliance against all of the colonies—especially one that included the Haudenosaunee nations—was a terrifying prospect, indeed.

In addition to tensions created by rumors of an Indigenous uprising, Albany’s physical security was most threatened at a time of great political uncertainty, adding to regional unease. When news of the Glorious Revolution arrived in New York, a wealthy, German-born merchant named Jacob Leisler seized control of first Manhattan and then the entire colony, naming himself Lieutenant Governor. Leisler won over a mix of supporters in New York City, including Dutch, English, and French Huguenot residents. His virulent message of anti-Catholicism appealed to

¹² Robert Livingston [and Arnout Cornelisz Viele], “Notes on hostilities with Maques Indians,” [ca. 1689], American Indian Collection, MS 322, Box 1, Folder 4, New-York Historical Society, New York, NY (hereafter cited as NYHS).

those who felt aggrieved by New York's diversity and religious toleration.¹³ Outside the city, rural communities' responses to the uprising reflected their own particular contexts.¹⁴

In Albany, Leisler's uprising was initially met with uproarious support, and it seemed that Leisler would install a new government based on the Dutch court system. A handful of Dutch elites in the existing government—notably Peter Schuyler, then the mayor, and Dirck Wessells—chose to resist Leisler's authority and prevent the election of magistrates to replace them. This group formed a separate governing body that they called “the convention.” In a

¹³ Historians have disagreed about the motivations for the uprising and the purpose it served for Leisler's adherents. One of the most recent assessments, by Joyce Goodfriend, contends that the movement was primarily religious because of its anti-Catholic rhetoric and attacks on religious toleration, but that, after Leisler's execution, the Anti-Leislerian elites restored to power portrayed the uprising as a predominantly Dutch ethnic rebellion. Leisler's Dutch supporters, for their part, blamed the English for the unjust trial and execution of a leader they admired. See Goodfriend, *Who Should Rule at Home*, 24-35. For an examination of Leisler's rebellion in the context of anti-Catholic uprisings throughout the English North American empire in 1689, see Stanwood, *Empire Reformed*, 85-139. For the context of Dutch vs. English forms of religious tolerance in post-conquest New York, see Evan Haefeli, *New Netherland and the Dutch Origins of American Religious Liberty* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 253-278. Haefeli makes an evocative argument that New York's storied history of religious tolerance cannot be attributed to Dutch people, culture, or policies in New Netherland. It was the English, he claims, who conquered a diverse colony at a particular historical moment and decided to implement policies of religious freedom. For earlier scholarship that considers the roles of class, ethnicity, religion, and the particularities of New York political factions on the uprising and its aftermath, see Jaap Jacobs, Claudia Schnurmann, David W. Voorhees, and Hermann Wellenreuther, *Jacob Leisler's Atlantic World in the Later Seventeenth Century* edited by Hermann Wellenreuther (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2009); Adrian Howe, “The Bayard Treason Trial: Dramatizing Anglo-Dutch Politics in Early Eighteenth-Century New York City,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, vol. 47, no. 1 (January 1990): 57-89; Tully, *Forming American Politics*, 15-25; Bonomi, *A Factious People*, 75-81.

¹⁴ For Leisler's uprising and its role in creating factional contests and deepening preexisting political divides in rural and frontier communities, see especially: Evan Haefeli, “A Scandalous Minister in a Divided Community: Ulster County in Leisler's Rebellion, 1689-1691,” *New York History* 88, no. 4 (Fall 2007): 357-389; Firth Haring Fabend, “The Pro-Leislerian Farmers in Early New York: A ‘Mad Rabble’ or ‘Gentlemen Standing Up for Their Rights?’” *Hudson River Valley Review* 22, no. 2 (2006): 79-90.

dramatic standoff, Schuyler, flanked by a party of Mohawks, “who were come here for the assistance of there Majesty’s Subjects,” refused to allow Jacob Milbourne, Leisler’s second in command, to occupy Fort Albany. According to the convention’s account of events, the Mohawks, “were very much Dissatisfyed & if Milborne [sic] did not withdraw with his Company they would fyre upon him.” Schuyler sent Wessells and Domine Delliuss to confer with the Mohawks, and Delliuss reported their threats to Milbourne. With Mohawk support behind Schuyler, Milbourne had little choice but to retreat. Leisler’s chance to win over Albany’s government had gone.¹⁵

Schuyler, Wessells, and Delliuss wielded their diplomatic relationship with the Mohawks to prevent the spread of Leisler’s uprising to Albany. Just as a delegation of Mohawks had appeared at the perfect moment to settle the 1660 walking in the woods controversy in the merchant magistrates’ favor, the Mohawks arrived in 1689 to protest a takeover that would have doubtless removed their diplomatic allies from power. Indeed, Donna Merwick writes of the standoff, “on the hill stood about eight hundred of the men who had always played a deciding role when the meaning of Albany was contested.”¹⁶ Merwick assumes the Mohawks were stage managed or given specific talking points, but their particular grievance against Milbourne and Leisler deserves some attention. As the convention summarized their remarks: “Since they were in a firm Covenant chain with us, and seeing that the People of New Yorke came in a hostile manner to Disturbe their Brethren in the fort which was for our and there Defence... if any of

¹⁵ *DHSNY*, II, 130-132, 130-131 (quotations). For a more detailed account of Leisler’s attempts to take over city government and the formation of the convention, see Merwick, *Possessing Albany*, 241-258.

¹⁶ Merwick, *Possessing Albany*, 245.

those men came... to approach the fort they would fyre upon them and charged there guns.”¹⁷

This speech, though recorded after the fact by Wessells, was an important validation of the Mohawks’ special relationship to Albany. They claimed that the Covenant Chain alliance that bound all the English colonies and the Haudenosaunee was, at its heart, an alliance with “us,” the town and its elite leaders who served as diplomats. This relationship was entirely isolated from New York; the colonial government would not be allowed to disrupt Albany, to “Disturbe their Brethren.” The English were not their brethren, nor any person who controlled the levers of imperial governance. Only Schuyler, Wessells, and Delliuss—and, by extension, Albany—were brethren.¹⁸ The convention occupied the fort, the place where they conducted diplomacy, the place established for “our and there Defence.” Months later, the necessity of a common site of defense would become all too real when the French attacked Schenectady.

Despite the dramatic standoff with the Mohawks in nearby Albany, Leisler was able to win over Schenectady’s leadership, making Albany’s leading merchants even more skeptical of his intentions. He allegedly promised Schenectady an opportunity to reroute the fur trade, offering the inhabitants trading rights that invalidated the Albany monopoly. When Albanians descended on Schenectady to bury the dead, their worst suspicions about Jacob Leisler were

¹⁷ *DHSNY*, II, 130-131.

¹⁸ For use of the word “brethren” and other familial metaphors in Haudenosaunee diplomatic speeches, see Matthew Dennis, “Family Business: Kinship and Commerce on the Borderlands of New Netherland and New France,” in *Trading Cultures: The Worlds of the Western Merchants, Essays on Authority, Objectivity, and Evidence* edited by Jeremy Adelman and Stephen Arons (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2001), 111-134. For a glossary of terms used in Haudenosaunee speeches, see Francis Jennings, *et al.*, “Glossary of Figures of Speech in Iroquois Political Rhetoric,” in *The History and Culture of Iroquois Diplomacy: An Interdisciplinary Guide to the Treaties of the Six Nations and Their League*, edited by Francis Jennings, William N. Fenton, Mark A. Druke, and David R. Miller, Paperback Edition (1985; Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1995), 115-124, especially 119-120 (“kinship”).

confirmed. According to their reports, which should be read with a cautious eye to partisan hyperbole, among the debris littering the vacant streets were letters from Leisler to the Schenectady leaders. As Robert Livingston distressingly wrote, “Thus had Leysler perpereted that poor people by his seditious letters now founde all bloody upon Skinnechtady streets, with the notions of a free trade, boalting &c. and thus they are destroyed; they would not watch, and where Capt. Sander commanded, there they threatened to burn him upon the fire, if he came upon the garde.”¹⁹ Livingston’s description sought to answer the question that haunted all of New York: why had Schenectady failed to keep watch? Turning away the guard because they represented the Anti-Leislerian faction provided a tragic—if logical—explanation for the horrors that befell the settlers. To the very end, they allegedly put the promise of fur trade profits ahead of even their own safety.²⁰

The French also viewed the attack on Schenectady through the lens of the fur trade, and French policy in the Americas was further transformed by English political upheaval. When William and Mary ascended to the British throne in the Glorious Revolution, the French crown considered whether the transfer of power from a Catholic to a Protestant monarch would

¹⁹ *DHSNY*, I, 193.

²⁰ For tensions between Albany and Schenectady and the confusion surrounding Leisler’s authority in the upper Hudson River region, see Peter R. Christoph, ed., *The Leisler Papers, 1689-1691: Files of the Provincial Secretary of New York Relating to the Administration of Lieutenant-Governor Jacob Leisler* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2002), 21-25, 35-47, 99-101; Burke, *Mohawk Frontier*, 157-195. Burke argues that Leisler’s uprising in Schenectady was not a religious or ethnic movement per se; rather, it reflected ongoing tensions between original settlers and newcomers regarding the availability of land. Trade was a preoccupation for merchants like Livingston who felt Schenectady threatened Albany’s economic viability, but the reasons why people in Schenectady chose to support Leisler were, as Burke demonstrates, more variable than trade alone. The Albany monopoly was always top of mind for Albany’s principal merchants, less so for everyone else in the region.

reconfigure English strategy in North America, and they ultimately decided to redouble their efforts in the war against the Haudenosaunee. Writing to Jean-Baptiste Colbert, Marquis de Seignelay, the governor of Montreal, Louis-Hector de Callières, noted his concerns about the potential effects of the Glorious Revolution on the future of New France:

As the recent Revolution in England will change the face of American affairs it becomes necessary to adopt entirely new measures to secure Canada against the great dangers with which it is threatened. . . . we must expect that [Edmund Andros] will not only urge the Iroquois to continue the war against us. . . . to lead them and seize the posts of Niagara, Michilimakinak and others proper to render him Master of all the Indians our allies.

De Callières proposed launching a preemptive strike against the English, and he chose New York as an ideal commercial target. He planned to attack Albany first and then march to Manhattan, securing all of New York for the French crown.²¹

De Callières knew that the coming imperial war was for control of resources. To him, an attack on Albany would be necessary to prevent New Yorkers from seizing the entire fur trade, which was the true threat from shifting regional alliances. He continued, “They are about to . . . raise all the Savages against us, in order to deprive us wholly of every sort of Trade and draw it all to themselves, and thus become masters of all the peltries; a trade which sustains Canada and constitutes one of the chief benefits that France derives from that Colony.” King William’s War would be, in his view, a competition for the hearts and minds—or at least economic interests—of Native peoples. To strike at Albany and then Manhattan would damage the English alliance with the Haudenosaunee and prevent New Yorkers from gaining Indian customers by underselling their French competitors.²²

²¹ *DHSNY*, I, 179.

²² *Ibid.*, 179-181, 179 (quotation).

To handle the escalation of conflict with English North America, the French crown sent Louis de Baude de Frontenac to lead the expedition against New York. The instructions provided to Frontenac betray the French king's exaggerated expectations of what could be achieved with such an assault. Once the entire province of New York was securely in French hands, Frontenac was to inventory all Dutch and English property, redistribute the colony's resources to deserving French families, and send the survivors away. Dutch and English colonists would be forced to resettle in New England or Virginia, but French Huguenots would be deported to France. The selected families of New France would then occupy the colony as-is, simply moving onto preexisting farms and, presumably, replacing Anglo-Dutch leadership at Albany with a new, French-led alliance with the Haudenosaunee. The scheme was bizarre and completely unfeasible given French resources in Canada. Needless to say, the French did not conduct a major assault on New York. They were unable to raise the necessary troops to attack even Albany, so they settled for burning the fledgling community at Schenectady and killing most of the Dutch and English inhabitants there.²³

The Schenectady massacre had the effect of terrifying Albanians for years to come. Even after they learned that the French did not have an army of 1400 waiting in the woods and that they had immediately returned to Montreal after the Schenectady assault, Albany's leadership feared that the town was vulnerable to the fate that had befallen their neighbors. On February 18, nine days after the attack, the council still expected the French to arrive at any moment. They pulled down outlying homes and fences and brought stockpiles of logs and timber into the

²³ *DHSNY*, I, 183-188. See also W. J. Eccles, *Frontenac: The Courtier Governor* (1959; repr., Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), 198-211.

safety of the palisades, where the risk of fire was less.²⁴ As late as May 1690, Stephen van Cortlandt wrote to Edmund Andros informing him that many in the town had simply fled to Manhattan. The problem was so widespread that Jacob Leisler and the New York council had to pass an ordinance prohibiting all residents of Albany and Ulster and the surrounding counties from fleeing their homes.²⁵

The French attack shook the Albany leadership, despite their partisan finger pointing. The convention immediately instructed Reynier Barents to travel to Manhattan and solicit help from whomever was currently heading the government there. They hoped the new governor would have arrived by that time, but they urged Barents to consult with Leisler if he remained in power. In their instructions, they wrote, “beseech them to lay aside all animosities and divisions and that every one exert his power to crush the Common Enemy.”²⁶ The convention now realized that they needed the assistance of all English North America if they were going to avenge Schenectady and protect their vulnerable frontier town. Albany’s elite responded to the crisis by immediately raising as many supplies and as large a military force as they could. They planned an expedition to Canada and attempted to rally other colonies to their cause, with little

²⁴ *DHSNY*, II, 89.

²⁵ *DHSNY*, I, 195. For the law against abandoning Albany and Ulster, see Commissioners of Statutory Revision, *The Colonial Laws of New York from the Year 1664 to the Revolution: including the charters to the Duke of York, the commissions and instructions to colonial governors, the Duke’s Laws, the laws of the Dongan and Leisler assemblies, the charters of Albany and New York and the acts of the colonial legislatures from 1691 to 1775 inclusive*, 5 Vols. (Albany, NY: James B. Lyon, 1896) I: 219-220. (Hereafter cited as *LOCNY*.) For an assessment of the Albany merchants’ concerns for security during the war, see Thomas Elliot Norton, *The Fur Trade in Colonial New York* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1974), 60-78.

²⁶ *DHSNY*, II, 97.

success. Their ambitious plan called for a naval blockade of Quebec headed by New England, met by a land assault launched from Albany. They repeatedly sought soldiers and provisions from New York City and neighboring colonies, but wound up funding much of the Albany war effort out of their own coffers. The convention wrote to neighboring colonies asking for support, and Leisler did the same. The contest for authority over the region's governance and security remained unsettled, and the convention acted as a semi-autonomous government in its response to Schenectady.²⁷

Albany's leading merchants took on the war effort with enthusiasm, and they negotiated with New York City for provisions and reimbursements throughout the war. Already in late March 1690, the Albany council had to request that the Leisler administration send blankets for the soldiers because the town's merchants distributed duffels from their stores to use as coverlets.²⁸ The arrival of the appointed governor, Henry Sloughter, who unseated Leisler, did not resolve the financial difficulties of provisioning a prolonged frontier war. The colonial council minutes demonstrate that Peter Schuyler, Dirck Wessells, and Robert Livingston brought their account ledgers to the colonial government on an almost monthly basis throughout the war. Sometimes their accounts were paid, and other times the council failed to raise the funds from a

²⁷ Ibid., 95 and Christoph, *Leisler Papers*, 84, 89, 101-108, 123, 125, 132-142, 146-149. For more on the military strategy of the Canadian expeditions during King William's War, see K. A. J. McLay, "Wellsprings of a 'World War': An Early English Attempt to Conquer Canada During King William's War, 1688-97," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 34, no. 2 (2006): 155-175.

²⁸ *DHSNY*, II, 110.

tax-wary populace. More than anyone else, these three elite merchants financed and managed the war effort at Albany.²⁹

Midway through the war, Livingston travelled to England to seek recourse for the monies and goods he provided to the community after the Schenectady attack. His appeal to the crown argued:

None of the severall sums enumerated in the Report accrued due to me by ye sale of goods to ye Crown, whereby I could get any profit, but were advanc'd by me in specie when ye exigency of the Province of New Yorke required greater supplys than the Revenue of that place could afford, and I rais'd 'em out of a true zeal for the Crown, that the country might not be expos'd to a French invasion.

Livingston at the very least knew the right words to say to get his money back, but we have no reason to doubt the sincerity of his claims to a “true zeal for the Crown.” He worked tirelessly in the service of the war even when it hurt his pocketbook, as did his colleagues in the Albany leadership.³⁰ A 1699 bond signed by Livingston’s wife, Alida, demonstrates the difficulty in recouping monies and goods furnished during the war. She acknowledged that she bought firewood from John Mitchell of Woodberry, Connecticut, “for his Majesty’s Garrison at Albany.” The debt was unpaid in 1700, when Mitchell transferred it to Lewis Lyrion, “Merchant of Millford.” Later that year, Jacob Thibois of New York signed that he received partial payment for the boards from Edward Antill. That the bond, passed from colony to colony and

²⁹ See Berthold Fernow, ed., *Calendar of Council Minutes, 1668-1783*, New York State Library Bulletin #58 (Albany: University of the State of New York, 1902), 65-129.

³⁰ *DRCHNY*, IV, 127-141, 139 (quotation); Leder, *Robert Livingston and the Politics of Colonial New York*, 101-124.

merchant to merchant, eventually made its way back into the Livingston family papers implies that it was likely settled in full, but it took at least a few years to recover the debt.³¹

We cannot know how Albany's merchants might have responded to King William's War had the French not attacked Schenectady, but evidence suggests that the massacre rallied a somewhat ambivalent and insular community to the English cause. For years, they feared a French attack and were always anxious about the state of their fortifications. We should not underestimate the psychological repercussions for Schenectady's closest neighbors in Albany. Those who had been killed were friends and family, business partners, and colleagues to Albany's inhabitants. Despite the factionalism caused by Leisler's uprising and the competition discussed in Chapter Three, Albany had numerous bonds of kinship and fidelity to the Schenectady community. The loss must have been truly devastating.

Albany's merchants fervently supported King William's War in the wake of Schenectady, but they did so in a way that emphasized their particular role in the region's political economy. Not trusting Leisler, they wrote to nearby English colonies to gather support and strategize a two-pronged assault on the French. They organized and paid for much of the war effort themselves, supplying what they saw fit and then taking their accounts to New York and even London to demand repayment. Always they emphasized their own local autonomy in managing the town's defenses. Albany's principal merchants expended considerable financial resources in the service of Anglo-French imperial war, but their enthusiasm for defeating the

³¹ Bond to John Mitchell, October 29, 1699, Livingston Family Papers, GLC03107.02171, Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, New York, NY. Individuals' accounts often went unpaid or partially paid for long periods of time. Though not entirely unusual for an account to remain open and passed along among merchants, the debt for the boards demonstrates the extensive networks of credit drawn on by Albany elites such as Livingston to finance the war effort.

French was entirely localized. That Schenectady happened at a time when Albany had separated itself from New York's government and formed the convention set the tone for the war effort that followed. Men like Schuyler and Wessells saw themselves leading a town with its own interests, traditions, and populace to protect, separate from the larger structures of the English empire in North America. Being a part of empire had its benefits, such as lending support and financial restitution, but New York and London did not, in their view, subjugate Albany.

“That we may be near to on ononyer upon any occasion”: Schenectady and Tiononodorge

Throughout the war, Schuyler and Wessells would maneuver to secure Albany's future as a semi-autonomous power center. The Schenectady massacre opened up possibilities for the relationships among Anglo-Dutch and Haudenosaunee peoples beyond the war's immediate military needs. With Albany's nearest competitor in the fur trade—Schenectady—lying in ruins, a handful of elite merchants saw an opportunity to make permanent their monopoly by bringing Haudenosaunee peoples physically and socially closer to Albany. They would draw on relationships with the Mohawks, using the closeness demonstrated during the 1689 standoff and further advanced by the missionary efforts of their colleague, Domine Dellijs, to reimagine the upper Hudson River region. Dellijs was a convenient conduit for realizing this vision: as a missionary and proselytizer, he had developed close personal relationships with individual Mohawks who proposed settling nearer to Albany and whom, eventually, Dellijs played some role in defrauding. For a few Albany elites, wartime provided the opportunity they had long sought to ensure Albany's regional status and protect their financial interests in the fur trade. With two controversial, underhanded, and self-serving land grants, they might have radically reoriented the regional political landscape, making the Mohawks tributary partners of a fur-trading region centered at Albany and protected by a Christian Mohawk village called

Tiononodoroge. The grants' discovery by the Albany and Mohawk leadership thwarted these plans, which were at odds with Mohawk conceptions of their own autonomy and the rest of the Albany elite's immediate financial interests. The merchants' experiment that encouraged collapsing Native-Dutch social distance was ended before it could permanently disrupt Albany's—and Iroquoia's—status quo.

Mohawks also drew themselves closer to Albany, though they did so for reasons that were at cross-purposes to those of the Anglo-Dutch elite. Haudenosaunee leaders viewed the massacre that started the war for Albany's inhabitants as just one in a series of French attacks on the region. After a century of devastating conflict with the French and their allies, the Haudenosaunee hoped to establish enough autonomous space for themselves that Laurentian (French-allied) and League (English-allied) Haudenosaunee peoples would not be drawn into battle against one another nor caught up in the imperial struggles of England and France. Crucially, the creation of such a space would facilitate mobility and communication between Catholic and Protestant Mohawks, who lived across colonial boundaries and were increasingly facing demands for military assistance from their imperial allies. Reimagining the region's human geography, for Mohawks, might undo some of the changes—and devastation—that colonization wrought.³² Despite their intersections, the goals and strategies of Albany's elites and Mohawk converts were ultimately at odds with one another. They maintained their uneasy

³² Parmenter, *Edge of the Woods*, especially 248-257. See also Matthew Dennis, *Cultivating a Landscape of Peace: Iroquois-European Encounters in the Seventeenth Century* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 268-271.

allegiance throughout the war and into the eighteenth century, but misunderstanding and deceit often tested their partnership.³³

Living in the midst of these disparate visions of the upper Hudson River region, but without a thorough understanding of Haudenosaunee perspectives, Albany's minister decided to start preaching to Mohawks, instructing them in religion at his kitchen table. In doing so, he became a vital intermediary at a time when Mohawks and Albanians needed individuals to go between them and draw them closer together. However, it was his position as an intermediary that ultimately ensnared him. Thus, the person tasked with drawing Mohawks and Albanians closer together was almost responsible for tearing them apart. Understanding Delliuss's kitchen gatherings of Mohawk Christians, however, necessitates starting at the beginning with Schenectady's bloodied streets, when war created a moment in which Mohawks and Albany's elites first expressed and maneuvered toward their visions of the region's political landscape.

On February 25, 1689/90, a delegation of Mohawks offered their condolences to the Albany leadership in the wake of the Schenectady massacre. They also came to strategize a united Anglo-Dutch-Mohawk assault on New France. Sinerongnirese, a Mohawk leader, used the language of the Haudenosaunee condolence ceremony, called the Edge of the Woods, offering to wipe away tears and blood and sweep the house clean in a speech to the assembled diplomats:

Wee come to ye house where we usually doe Renew ye Covenant which house we fynde Defiled with blood this is known to all ye 5 nations and we are come to wipe off ye blood and Sweep ye house clean and therefore pray yt Corlaer [the Dutch at Albany]... may use

³³ Schenectady guaranteed that Albany's elite would play a larger role in war than they might have otherwise, but overall the English proved fickle allies to the Haudenosaunee. Internal political struggles preoccupied New York's leadership and the larger English imperial structure throughout the war, and they failed to adequately respond to further French attacks on Mohawk villages. See Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 162-189.

all means and direct all affares to be revenged of ye Enemy that have done us this Evill doe give a belt of wampum.³⁴

In parts of the speech he referred to the Schenectady massacre as an assault on themselves, including the town and, by extension, Albany, in his conception of Iroquoia. He called the French the “Enemy that have done us this Evill” and referred to mourning the dead at Schenectady as mourning “brethren,” a word often used in Haudenosaunee speeches at Albany.³⁵ He put the attack on Schenectady into the context of earlier attacks on Haudenosaunee villages, noting, “But what shall we say it is ye same as he [the French] did at Cadarachqui and ye Sinnekes Country this ye third time that he hes done so; he hes this is ye third time Broke open ye gevell of our house on both ends ye one end at Sinnondowanne and ye oyr here, but we hope to be revenged.”³⁶ Sinerongnirese conflated the Anglo-Dutch settlements and Mohawk villages as the eastern door of Iroquoia, and the French had succeeded in breaking open the house at both ends by attacking the Seneca at the western door and Schenectady at the east.³⁷

Interwoven with language that united Albanians and Mohawks as one people were other, perhaps contradictory, statements that expressed the Anglo-Dutch-Haudenosaunee relationship in terms of covenant, alliance, and social distance.³⁸ Sinerongnirese appealed directly to the

³⁴ *DHSNY*, II, 92.

³⁵ See Dennis, “Family Business,” 111-134.

³⁶ *DHSNY*, II, 92.

³⁷ Jon Parmenter uses the Edge of the Woods ceremony as the frame for his spatial history of Iroquoia before 1701. See Parmenter, *Edge of the Woods*, xxvii-xxviii (condolence ceremony), 182-195 (French attack on Seneca “western door”), and 209-211 (context for Sinerongnirese’s speech).

³⁸ See Jennings, *et al.*, “Glossary,” 116-117.

Albany leadership, naming Peter Schuyler, Dirck Wessells, and Robert Livingston as the arbiters of Anglo-Dutch policy. He pleaded with the Albanians not to abandon their settlements nor prematurely end the war. He chastised earlier interventions in the mourning wars when the English encouraged peace to Mohawks' detriment. Be more resolute, he argued, and be more like us. "Wee are of ye Race of ye Bear and a bear doth not yeald as long as there is a droop of blood in its body we must all be soe," he said. Though the Mohawks and Albanians were of two peoples, they needed to converge to defeat the French.³⁹

Already at the start of the war, as Sinerongniresse's speech demonstrates, finger-pointing and defensive posturing peppered diplomatic negotiations at Albany. The town's leadership had reason to question Mohawk enthusiasm for the military partnership. Just a few weeks before the Schenectady attack, two Mohawk men, "Captain Blew Stocking" and Deganocheeri, met with the Albany leadership and pledged to keep forty scouts patrolling the area around Schenectady through the winter. They planned to launch an expedition to Canada when the ice thawed in spring and requested powder, lead, and axes to aid in their cause. The Albany diplomats praised their efforts in the service of regional security and offered them powder and lead as requested. They concluded the meeting by promising the Mohawks, "you need not fear but we shall be Ready upon all occasions if the french should come."⁴⁰

When the French did come, no one was ready, not the Mohawk scouts, the Schenectady villagers, nor the Albanians. The context of failed promises reveals an additional, defensive layer to Sinerongniresse's speech; he was perhaps too forcefully eager to prove Mohawk military

³⁹ *DHSNY*, II, 92.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 87. See also Christoph, *Leisler Papers*, 52-53.

readiness and too emotive in his condolences. The ambiguity with which he described the Anglo-Dutch-Haudenosaunee relationship—at once socially distant and of one people—may have been a means of deflecting criticism. Placing Schenectady in the context of an earlier attack against the Seneca unified Anglo-Dutch and Haudenosaunee experiences at the hands of a common enemy. The passages that emphasized formal distance between the two communities helped ease Mohawk responsibility for regional defense. He reminded the Albanians of their ill-fated interference in Mohawk military actions against the French, which further abdicated the Mohawk role in defending Schenectady. As Sinerongnirose concluded, it was Albany’s fault that the French hadn’t been defeated once and for all a long time ago.

The response to Sinerongnirose’s speech, delivered on the Albany convention’s behalf by Peter Schuyler, reminded the Mohawk delegation of their obligations to the Schenectady villagers. Those killed had trusted the scouts’ surveillance and had not kept watch, “for the Brethren did assure us that no french Could Come heire without being Discouered.” Schuyler quickly shifted the speech away from the fairly gentle rebuke—knowing full well that Albany had not always proved steadfast allies to the Mohawks, either—noting that, “this Evill is done and Cannot be Called back again,” before making a peculiar formal request of the Mohawk delegation. He asked that the Haudenosaunee send families to plant at Schenectady, to live there for the year, to ensure that the crops would be planted and harvested now that the residents were all dead, and “that we may be near to on[e] onoyer upon any occasion.” The Albany leadership, vulnerable and dependent on Mohawk assistance, could not offer a full-throated condemnation of the failed surveillance. Instead, they collapsed the usual social distance and requested that Native families come and live in the houses of the Schenectady dead.⁴¹

⁴¹ *DHSNY*, II, 93-95, 93 (“for...Discouered” and “this...again”), 94 (“that...occasion”).

Haudenosaunee dispersal also contributed to the ambivalence of the Schenectady condolence speeches. French-allied Mohawks living at Kahnawà:ke were part of the raiding party sent to Schenectady, and French commanders wrote glowingly about the bravery of their Haudenosaunee allies. In the French account of the Schenectady raid, a speech delivered by a French-allied Mohawk warrior rallied the troops and encouraged the brutality of the attack.⁴² Most Mohawks living in Schenectady were spared during the massacre, which the French claimed was a strategy intended to beckon them over to the French side. However, Mohawks frequently avoided engaging their kin in battle, instead secretly sharing intelligence about upcoming military actions. Indeed, three Mohawk women, captured prior to the raid, provided crucial intelligence about Schenectady to their French-allied kin.⁴³

Schuyler and his colleagues were aware of the divisions among the Haudenosaunee and their unwillingness to take up arms against each other, so they attempted to convince their allies that the longstanding alliance with Albany was stronger than bonds of blood and culture. Schuyler's principal concern was with French persuasion; in his view, Catholicism had already enticed many Mohawks to settle in villages like Kahnawà:ke. The Albany elite feared that the French, though smaller in number, possessed some sort of superior guile that helped them appeal to Mohawks hesitant to fight their own kin in imperial wars. In 1692, Schuyler admonished a group of Mohawk diplomats to "be more wary & Cunning th[a]n formerly" and to attack New

⁴² *DHSNY*, I, 187-188.

⁴³ Lawrence H. Leder, ed., *The Livingston Indian Records, 1666-1723* (Gettysburg: Pennsylvania Historical Association, 1956), 160 (hereafter cited as *LIR*). The French accounts of the massacre that emphasized Mohawk participation in the violence were boastful, hyperbolic, and overstated Mohawk enthusiasm for and conduct during the attack. See Parmenter, *Edge of the Woods*, 208-212; Parmenter, "After the Mourning Wars," 47-49.

France, including the French-allied Haudenosaunee villages. “It is in Vain for you to think to treat or Parley with them Since Experience hes often taught you yt ye Jesuits & they are to Cunning for you. therefor you must Dally no more with them but give them a Blow at once,” he urged them. Schuyler and his colleagues repeatedly promised that Haudenosaunee unity would result from a French defeat, and that the elimination of the French from North America would bring Mohawk kin living with the Jesuits back into the fold.⁴⁴

Schuyler’s assessment of Mohawk desires to reunify those scattered by imperialism and the decisions of individuals to convert to Catholicism demonstrates that he only partially understood the Haudenosaunee perspective of colonization. In sympathizing with his estimation of a Mohawk point of view, he further revealed his ignorance of Haudenosaunee kinship networks and the autonomy they sought. At the end of the war, Schuyler would refer to the Haudenosaunee as “our Indians” when negotiating prisoner exchanges with the French.⁴⁵ To him, Haudenosaunee peoples were no more sovereign than the Dutch peoples who continued to reside in the upper Hudson River region after English conquest, though, having been in Albany’s government for years, he certainly knew first-hand how subjugation on paper could look quite different on the ground. Schuyler recognized that Haudenosaunee peoples straddled the edges of two empires, but he did not acknowledge the ways in which kinship bonds networked peoples across imperial boundaries and that those bonds formed the basis of political and social belonging for the Haudenosaunee. French-allied and English-allied Mohawks failed to attack

⁴⁴ *LIR*, 162-163.

⁴⁵ During his later negotiations with the government of New France, Schuyler referred repeatedly to the Haudenosaunee as “our Indians” when demanding the release of Haudenosaunee prisoners from French custody at the conclusion of King William’s War. Delliuss was also present at the negotiations and signed his name to Schuyler’s report. See especially *DRCHNY*, IV, 347-351.

one another during the French assault on Schenectady and instead provided intelligence crucial to that event. They sought unity, certainly, but not by making all Mohawks English subjects. Mohawks desired the political autonomy that would allow them to settle where they chose, free from the maneuvering of warring imperial powers who angled to divide a polity knit together by kinship.⁴⁶ Schuyler's misunderstanding would nearly destroy the longstanding partnership between elites at Albany and their Mohawk neighbors. He and his colleagues would presume—whether intentionally through greed or unintentionally through ignorance—that Mohawks who settled a mission village near Albany had somehow ceded their political autonomy through religious conversion.⁴⁷

* * *

Before the war, in May 1682, Richard van Rensselaer wrote from Amsterdam to Maria van Rensselaer that he had chosen a new minister for Albany who might also help her with managing Rensselaerswijck and the ongoing litigation over the colony's patent. Domine Godefridius Dellius possessed, in Richard's words, "reasonably good gifts," and his father was a well-respected minister in Kooten. Finding someone willing to serve a frontier community like Albany was never an easy task, but Richard reassured Maria that Dellius, "is a person of good

⁴⁶ See especially Parmenter, *Edge of the Woods*, 237-273 and Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus*, especially 9-12, 25-33, 45-49.

⁴⁷ Historians have also echoed this presumption. Eric Hinderaker's recent examination of Hendrick, one of Dellius's converts, concludes that Christian Mohawks who moved to Tiononoderoge, "represented a further splintering of Mohawk society" because they chose an identity based on their Christianity that would "modify" their "traditional patterns of life." See Eric Hinderaker, *The Two Hendricks: Unraveling a Mohawk Mystery* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 48.

promise and a happy disposition. He is well recommended and his testimonials are good.”⁴⁸

Dellius seems to have been less than enthusiastic about the post; a year after his arrival he complained in a letter to Nicolaes van Beeck that he wanted to leave his congregation at Albany, but the Amsterdam Classis refused his request.⁴⁹ Resigned to a frontier post, then, Dellius made the most of his decades in the region, converting Mohawks with the help of his interpreters, serving as a go-between during King William’s War and the peace negotiations with the French. He quickly ran into financial trouble, as missionary efforts among the Mohawks came with the same expectations of reciprocal gift-giving as in formal diplomacy.

Dellius asked the Amsterdam Classis for their support, admitting the awkwardness of his position as a Dutch minister serving a Dutch community located in English colonial territory. Ministering to the Mohawks was a significant financial burden for Dellius, according to his letter. Mohawk custom obligated him to present gifts and maintain reciprocal exchanges with individuals and communities. As Dellius explained to his potential benefactors, “For more than sixteen months I have scattered among the heathen both spiritual and temporal comforts. I found that temporal things could not be put out at better interest than to gain their souls. But I must confess, I have not sufficient means.” He quickly learned that the New York colonial government was not always eager to repay the costs of his ministry.⁵⁰ The colonial government

⁴⁸ A. J. F. van Laer, ed. and trans., *Correspondence of Maria van Rensselaer, 1669-1689* (Albany: University of the State of New York Press, 1935), 69-70, 70 (quotations).

⁴⁹ Van Laer, *Correspondence of Maria van Rensselaer*, 175-176. Van Beeck was one of the individuals in Holland who had a financial stake in the colony of Rensselaerswijck and was at odds with Richard van Rensselaer.

⁵⁰ James A. Holden, E. T. Corwin, and Hugh Hastings, eds., *Ecclesiastical Records, State of New York*, Vol. 2 (Albany, NY: J. B. Lyon, 1902), 1010-1011, 1011 (quotation). (Hereafter cited as *ERNY*.) Jon Parmenter has tallied the official English gifts given to the Haudenosaunee during the period 1689-1701, which totaled £3,973 in sterling and also included gifts of powder, lead,

somewhat eased his financial woes during the war, seeing conversion efforts in terms of strategic policy rather than Christian charity. As Delliuss explained in a letter to the Classis in 1693:

Notwithstanding the war I can count two hundred converts, so that I can plainly see the blessing of God upon my work. This makes the labor easier. The government also takes more interest than formerly in the continuation of this pious work, and has promised to make compensation to me for these extra services. I only wish that this care and burden did not rest entirely on my shoulders.

Converting Mohawks to Christianity became a priority only during King William's War, under Delliuss's guidance, and his missionary efforts represented a significant shift toward collapsing social distance and tethering Mohawks to the Anglo-Dutch settlements of the upper Hudson River region. The realities of war required greater intimacy and familiarity to nurture the bonds of military alliance.⁵¹

The military assistance required by imperial war created an opportunity to try new approaches to Anglo-Dutch-Haudenosaunee relationships. In previous wars, the threat of violence underscored the need for formalized diplomacy, routinized interaction, and cordial social distance. The Esopus Wars of the 1650s and 60s on Albany's southern frontier catapulted the Mohawks to a lasting, prominent position in Native-Dutch relations and formalized regional diplomacy. During those earlier conflicts, Mohawks played a prominent diplomatic role in negotiating peace with the Munsee peoples at war with the Dutch, as discussed in Chapter Two. Although the conflicts at Esopus ultimately drew Albany politically closer to the

and muskets, as well as other items, a significant increase from pre-war years. Unofficial gift-giving, of the kind Delliuss participated in, further contributed to the maintenance of alliance. See Parmenter, *Edge of the Woods*, 205.

⁵¹ *ERNY*, 1065-1066.

Haudenosaunee, they did so in a way that emphasized social distance.⁵² In other English colonies, particularly in New England, war with Native peoples spelled the end of religious conversions. After Metacom's War, John Eliot's "praying towns" were reconfigured, several were dissolved, and many of his converts were sold into slavery. Indeed, as Jill Lepore argues, Metacom's War was, at least in part, fought due to "Indians becoming Anglicized and the English becoming Indianized," or, put differently, Native peoples and English settlers becoming too close to one another, socially and culturally.⁵³

Remarkably, Delliuss replicated some of Eliot's methods in his own missionary efforts, just a dozen or so years after Eliot's experiment with Indian souls was considered to have failed in the wake of Metacom's War.⁵⁴ He translated prayers and Psalms into "the Indian language" (presumably Mohawk and presumably with considerable assistance from his translators) and the Psalms, he mused, "are set to our notes, and they [the Indians] sing them with sweet melody." The most devout converts became full church members at Albany and received communion alongside the congregation. As of November 1693, Delliuss boasted of sixteen such Mohawk

⁵² For the Esopus Wars and Native-Dutch relations, see especially Holly Rine, "'Such Splendid Country,' The Esopus Region, a Multi-Ethnic Colonial Landscape on the Hudson River, 1652-1670," *The Historian* 73, no. 4 (Winter 2011): 705-729; Donna Merwick, *The Shame and the Sorrow: Dutch-Amerindian Encounters in New Netherland* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 239-258; Paul Otto, *The Dutch-Munsee Encounter in America: The Struggle for Sovereignty in the Hudson Valley* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006), 148-155.

⁵³ Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity* (New York: Vintage Books/Random House, 1998), 26.

⁵⁴ Delliuss may have imitated the style of Eliot, but he was not as enthusiastic about his mission. As Allen Trelease notes, "Delliuss lacked the aura of saintliness which characterized John Eliot or Father [Isaac] Jogues, and he maintained a deep interest in matters temporal as well as spiritual." Allen W. Trelease, *Indian Affairs in Colonial New York: The Seventeenth Century* (1960; repr., Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 327.

church members.⁵⁵ For this work Delliuss depended heavily on the assistance of interpreters, particularly Arnout Cornelisz Viele, described in one report as “a poor Englishman their Interpreter who has lived a long time with the Indians and frequently converses with them,” and Hiletje van Olinda, a Mohawk-Dutch woman who lived in Schenectady and was paid to serve as an interpreter.⁵⁶ Delliuss’s close relationships with his interpreters, especially Van Olinda, and his translation of religious texts into the Mohawk language were profoundly similar to Eliot’s methods. During wartime, as Lepore demonstrates, those people who lived in between cultures, particularly those who gained literacy or spoke multiple languages, were viewed with skepticism by default. In New England, the so-called “Praying Indians” experienced betrayal at the hands of those who had encouraged their conversion when their towns were destroyed and many converts sold into slavery. Yet Delliuss chose King William’s War as the ideal time to proselytize to the Mohawks, a practice that no *domine* before him had carried out with any enthusiasm.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ *ERNY*, 1087.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 1166 (Arnout Cornelisz Viele). In April 1693, the council agreed to pay Delliuss a salary of £60 per annum “for teaching and converting the Indians” and Van Olinda a salary of £20 per annum “to interpret for ye Five Nations.” See *DHSNY*, I, 200. For Arnout Cornelisz Viele, see Parmenter, *Edge of the Woods*, 175-176, 194, 238-239; Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 139-140, 152-155, 171-172. For Hiletje van Olinda, see Tom Arne Midtrød, “The Flemish Bastard and the Former Indians: Métis and Identity in Seventeenth-Century New York,” *American Indian Quarterly* 34, no. 1 (Winter 2010): 83-108; Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 106-107, 192-193.

⁵⁷ For Dutch religious attitudes toward Native peoples and missionary efforts (or lack thereof), see Stephen Staggs, “‘Gentiles by Nature’: Indian-Dutch Relations in New Netherland/New York” (Ph.D. Diss., Western Michigan University, 2014), especially 239-277. For language, Metacom’s War, and the Praying Indians of New England, see, Kristina Bross, *Dry Bones and Indian Sermons: Praying Indians in Colonial America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004), 146-185; Linda Gregerson, “The Commonwealth of the Word: New England, Old England, and the Praying Indians,” in David J. Baker and Willy Maley, eds., *British Identities and English Renaissance Literature* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 178-193;

At first glance, the particular circumstances of King William's War seem to account for the differences in approach to Indigenous conversion from previous wars. It was, after all, an imperial war, even a European war that spilled over into the colonies. If the antagonists were the French and their Native allies, then the need to build alliances by any possible means was essential to Albany's political and religious leadership. Yet the Schenectady massacre was a complicating factor. The intelligence shared with the French by Mohawk women who aided the attack, the sparing of Mohawks during the massacre, and the unwillingness of Laurentian and League Haudenosaunee peoples to battle each other were all circumstances that raised suspicions and undermined the partnership. Albany's leadership did not respond to Schenectady with suspicion or calls for social distance, as they did in the wake of the Esopus conflicts. Instead, they urged Mohawks to move into Schenectady and tend to the crops of the dead. They had too much invested in Albany as the heart of the fur trade to turn on the Haudenosaunee, especially with the upper Hudson River region's political economy hanging in the balance. Metacom's War reinforced social and cultural boundaries in New England, but the Albanian elite response to King William's War sought to break those same boundaries down wherever possible. Dellius was at the forefront of the project to draw the Mohawks in, physically and socially.

Shortly after Governor Henry Sloughter arrived in the colony to unseat Leisler, he traveled to Albany to meet with a group defined in the official account of the meeting as "Christian Mohawks." They distinguished themselves from other groups by noting that they were not an official Haudenosaunee delegation ready to participate in diplomacy: "wee are not

Laura J. Murray, "Joining Signs with Words: Missionaries, Metaphors, and the Massachusetts Language," *New England Quarterly* 74, no. 1 (March 2001): 62-93; Hilary E. Wyss, *Writing Indians: Literacy, Christianity, and Native Community in Early America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000), 17-51; Lepore, *The Name of War*, 21-47.

commissionate by the Sachims of our nation to treat of publick affairs.” Rather, they were a group acting autonomously to request further instruction in Christianity. Significantly, the Mohawks expressed a desire to move closer to Albany, where they could practice Christianity: “we are fully resolved to settle ourselves at Tionondoroge (a place fifty six miles above Albany) and pray that we may have ministers to instruct us as the French send Priests to instruct their Indians.”⁵⁸

Sloughter replied by encouraging Dellius’s ministry and approving of the move to Tiononodorge. He suggested that, in the future, the Christian Mohawks might receive religious instruction in their own settlements rather than in Albany, since much of Dellius’s proselytizing took place in his own home. Of course, the two parties exchanged gifts. The Christian Mohawks, identifying themselves as “soldiers,” presented Sloughter with “that wherewith we adorne ourselves, when we goe out to warr (that is a Pouch made of Porkepine quills).” For his part, Sloughter offered them: “one dozen stockings, six shirts, three baggs of powder, sixteen barrs of lead, thirty gul: strung wampum, three Runletts Rumm. (three rolls of Tobacco) and privately to the Chiefe men some Coats of Duffells.” His gift was significant for the size of the group.⁵⁹

The strategic political and military undertones of this conversation stand out, despite the Mohawks’ insistence that they did not represent the political body of the League. Couched in a

⁵⁸ *ERNY*, 1018. For the longer history of the Tionondoroge settlement, see Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 229-234.

⁵⁹ *ERNY*, 1018-1019. The official account doesn’t list the number of Christian Mohawks in attendance, but it was far fewer than two hundred, which was the number of converts Dellius boasted about in a letter to the Amsterdam Classis two years later, though the number of full church members was considerably less. For conversion figures from 1693, see *ERNY*, 1065; Hinderaker, *The Two Hendricks*, 49.

discussion of religious instruction, theirs was a conversation about alliance.⁶⁰ They referred to the French manner of proselytizing three times. By invoking the specter of French Jesuits working among the Haudenosaunee, a source of great discomfort for the English colonial government, the Christian Mohawks reminded Sloughter of the stakes of Dellius's mission. He was not simply converting souls for Christ, nor making Mohawks Protestant instead of Catholic. Dellius's work could, in their view, bring Mohawks closer to the English rather than losing them to the allures of the Jesuits. Further, the gifts exchanged at the meeting clearly demonstrate how military strategy was inextricably linked to Dellius's mission. The Mohawks self-identified as soldiers and gave Sloughter a military ornament. In addition to his small gifts of staples, Sloughter offered the converts powder and lead, and the coats he privately distributed may have been military uniforms. Neither party exchanged objects of religious significance.

The repeated references to French missionary efforts also explained the plans to move closer to Albany and settle at Tiononodorge. The French had several mission towns close to Montreal and Quebec where Native converts lived and from which the French launched attacks

⁶⁰ Eric Hinderaker argues that the resettlement at Tionondoroge was meant to, "build a refuge from the destructive waves of violence breaking around them [the Mohawks]," and that Christian Mohawks hoped to move closer to Albany to avoid further violent attack from the French. Christian Mohawks founded Tionondoroge during King William's War, and their speech to Governor Sloughter certainly had a strong military component, but they never asked for refuge, safety, or protection. Instead, the speech emphasized military readiness; the petitioners were self-described soldiers. The Christian Mohawks who settled in Tionondoroge certainly knew about Schenectady and had witnessed the destruction of that nearby Euro-American town. They likely would not have assumed that a move closer to Albany would have afforded them any greater protection from the French by default. The military theme of the speech can thus be considered a reference to military alliance wherein they demonstrated to Sloughter that a Mohawk village near Albany would benefit joint military operations. With Albany and Tionondoroge in a military partnership that provided mutual defense, everyone in the region would be safer if/when the French attacked in the future. See Hinderaker, 44-49, 48 (quotations).

on Haudenosaunee and English towns. Each French mission space had its own distinct character depending on the Catholic order based there and the ethnic identities of Indigenous inhabitants. For instance, the Jesuit mission at Lorette, located near Quebec, was predominantly a Huron village of mourning war refugees where converts blended traditional subsistence agriculture with participation in French marketplaces. Jesuits considered the converts devout Catholics, yet the Hurons there likely practiced syncretic forms of religion; the Catholic Feast of All Saints fell around the same time of year as the traditional Huron Feast of the Dead, and both festivals emphasized memorializing the dead and maintaining connections to ancestors.⁶¹

The largest French mission town was at Kahnawà:ke, just outside of Montreal on the southern bank of the St. Lawrence River. Mohawks established the village at the edge of their traditional hunting grounds in response to the French settling Montreal; it was as much a political and economic stronghold as a Jesuit mission. Kahnawà:ke was an independent space during much of the colonial era: Mohawks governed and settled it, and there they received religious instruction from Jesuits and adopted certain, but not all, Catholic practices. The town leadership, for example, banned the use of alcohol and required Christian baptism for all permanent residents. Kahnawà:ke's population was predominantly Mohawk (Turtle clan) yet ethnically diverse as a result of captive adoption during the mourning wars. In the early eighteenth century,

⁶¹ Evan Haefeli and Kevin Sweeney, *Captors and Captives: The 1704 French and Indian Raid on Deerfield* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), 59-63. For a comparison of French and English methods and cultural meanings for conversions, see James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).

captives from English settlements would join the village, as well, contributing to its heterogeneity.⁶²

Significantly, Kahnawà:ke became a focal point for the eastern fur trade because of its strategic location along the Albany-Montreal corridor. The extensive trade conducted through the village depended on Mohawks—particularly women—to serve as vital intermediaries who could navigate Indigenous trade networks and maintain a flourishing commerce even during times of imperial warfare.⁶³ The planned resettlement of Christian Mohawks to Tiononodorge would create a frontier village similar to Kahnawà:ke: an independent, Mohawk space with close cultural and economic ties to Albany. The meeting with Slaughter suggests that the resettlement plan was a Mohawk invention, just as Mohawks established Kahnawà:ke as a response to expanded French presence in Montreal. What is impossible to tell from the record is Delliùs’s role in encouraging his converts to move to Tiononodorge. The conversations he had at his kitchen table with Christian Mohawks went unrecorded, leaving us with more questions than answers about his influence and strategic planning. What the settlement plan for Tiononodorge makes plain is that the goals of conversion intersected with politics, military strategy, and the economic interests of Albany’s entrenched elite.

As the minister of Albany and missionary to the Mohawks, Delliùs firmly aligned himself with Albany’s leading merchant families. He frequently appeared in colonial records in the same

⁶² Greer, *Mohawk Saint*, 89-102. See also: Preston, *The Texture of Contact*, 53; Parmenter, *Edge of the Woods*, 141-147; Haefeli and Sweeney, *Captors and Captives*, 67-73; Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 120-121.

⁶³ For a detailed account of smuggling through Kahnawà:ke in the first half of the eighteenth century, see Tesdahl, “The Price of Empire.” Tesdahl emphasizes the role of Mohawk women traders in building a flourishing network of smugglers.

sentence as Peter Schuyler, Dirck Wessells, and Robert Livingston, and he had close connections to—and was involved with the finances of—the Van Rensselaer family, as well. Establishing an independent mission settlement at Tiononodoroge promoted elite interests as much as it did those of Christian Mohawks. The loss of Schenectady provided men like Schuyler an economic opportunity to thwart that town's influence in the fur trade before it could be rebuilt, and settling a Mohawk village near Albany would prevent Schenectady from rising out of the ashes to threaten the Albany monopoly again. Instead, a village modeled after mission spaces like Kahnawà:ke would, in theory, guarantee elite Albanians continued access to furs. Further, having a nearby Mohawk village closely aligned with Albany would provide security. If the French mission towns were a template, then having a similar town in the upper Hudson River region would provide similar benefits; namely, a site from which the town might launch attacks on the French and draw closely-allied warriors. Tiononodoroge might serve a symbolic purpose of regionalizing Albany's security. Tiononodoroge was therefore a panacea for Albany: it solved the problem of competition with Schenectady, provided a Protestant counterpoint to Catholic missions in Iroquoia, and served as a symbol of both the traditional partnership and the new military facet of the Anglo-Dutch-Haudenosaunee alliance. The circumstances of King William's War encouraged Albany's elite to rethink their policies of social distance and reorient the upper Hudson River region into a shared space with Albany at its center.

Not all Albanians shared in Schuyler's vision of a unified Anglo-Haudenosaunee region subject to the crown, and the land deal that he eventually negotiated with a few Mohawk converts, once discovered, outraged the common council. Further, collapsing social and geographical distance raised concerns among the town's population still reeling from the Schenectady massacre. The haunting memory of the attack and the occasional murder of a

farmer or villager who strayed too far from the settlements provided all the excuses the inhabitants needed to leave or, like their New England counterparts, cast a suspicious eye toward the Mohawks drawn increasingly into the fold by Dellius and the town's elite. Dellius described Albany's tense atmosphere during wartime in a letter to the Amsterdam Classis in late 1693:

Nothing grieves me more than the daily decay of my churches by the constant removal of inhabitants, both rich and poor. This is caused not only by the failure of trade of the place, but also by the ruin brought on by the war, and the fear of the cruelties of the barbarians in war. Of this we have had distressing experiences several times, and now lately again, within ten or twelve days, we have seen people killed, or scalped while yet alive.⁶⁴

Although Dellius lamented the flight of "both rich and poor," many of the town's leading inhabitants stayed in Albany, particularly those merchant families invested in political and diplomatic leadership, such as the Livingstons, Van Rensselaers, and Schuylers. Some wealthy families sent away women and children or left temporarily during moments of rumored attack only to return later. Other townspeople, at best ambivalent about the English military cause and, at times, outwardly hostile to the increased presence of the imperial state, were more likely to flee the area than those invested in trade partnerships' long-term outcomes.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ *ERNY*, 1087.

⁶⁵ In 1697, Governor Benjamin Fletcher ordered a census of the city and county of Albany to determine how many inhabitants had fled or were killed since the start of the war in 1689. The population had decreased by 567 persons, a 28% loss. The census also counted, probably imprecisely, male members of the Five Nations and the "River Indians" living near Albany. In total, these groups decreased during the same period by 1,480 men or 53%. See *DRCHNY*, IV, 337. In 1699, the mayor's court of Albany decided to fine those who had abandoned the town during the war, drawing up a list of those who left for longer than a year and six weeks. The list had several limitations. First, it contained only the names of male heads of household who had previously been or would like to be considered "free citizens" of the town so that they might practice a trade, participate in the fur trade, or sell any other goods and services in Albany. ("Citizenship" was established in the 1686 town charter and was a right that could be purchased from the mayor and alderman. It was almost identical to the burgher right. See *LOCNY*, 209-210 for the establishment of the program in the Albany charter.) The list therefore only contained the names of those who left and returned again later; those who permanently relocated were not

For Mohawks—even those who converted to Christianity—Haudenosaunee autonomy was of singular importance and shaped their understanding of resettlement to Tiononodorge. New York’s leadership interpreted the move to Tiononodorge as an act furthering Mohawk dependence on the English, perhaps even as a sign of Haudenosaunee weakness. Just as the French viewed the mission towns near their settlements as part of New France, Albanian elites were beginning to include at least some sections of Iroquoia, particularly the Mohawk villages, as being within the boundaries of their *physical* territory, whereas earlier they may have emphasized their *political* ties to the Five Nations. Jon Parmenter demonstrates that the Haudenosaunee believed the reverse. In his estimation, the mourning wars that were drawing to a close by the time of Dellius’s ministry reflected “more than half a century of League efforts to establish Iroquoia as a crucial, central space between French and Anglo-America settler populations on the periphery of their homelands.”⁶⁶ Essential to that effort was the maintenance of independence and mobility for all Haudenosaunee peoples; whether they chose to settle close to Albany or Montreal, their villages were autonomous polities within the greater bounds of Iroquoia. Anthropologist Audra Simpson has examined this concept of Mohawk autonomy in the context of Kahnawà:ke and its present-day struggles over sovereignty and membership. As she explains, the mere fact of resettlement and conversion to Christianity did not make the early inhabitants of Kahnawà:ke any less a part of Iroquoian culture or politics. Because kinship networks ordered Haudenosaunee life, and Kahnawà:ke remained a part of the larger

accounted for by the mayor’s court. See Joel Munsell, *The Annals of Albany*, 10 vols. (Albany, NY: J. Munsell, 1850-1859), III: 50-52. (Hereafter cited as *AA*.) For Albanian disillusionment with British imperial presence, see especially Merwick, *Possessing Albany*, 261-269.

⁶⁶ Parmenter, *Edge of the Woods*, 271.

Haudenosaunee clan system, the village was a Mohawk space. The social, cultural, and political crises over sovereignty and membership that she details occurred not as a result of Mohawks moving near Montreal but rather because of the significant losses of land and autonomy that occurred in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁶⁷ If we thus view Kahnawà:ke as a template for the ways in which Christian Mohawks would have understood their resettlement to a village near Albany, we can imagine that they still considered themselves members of Iroquoia. The house that had been broken open by the French, as Sinerongniresse articulated, would include Tiononodoroge and its Christian Mohawk inhabitants.

Planning the resettlement at Tiononodoroge would be Dellius's crowning achievement, yet the enactment of the Albanian elite regional vision would ultimately be his downfall. In intimate conversations and familiarity with his Mohawk converts, Dellius would cross the line into corruption. Serving the Albany elite would come at a cost to the minister, and eventually his name would be associated with the dangers of intermediaries. Dellius wrote to the Amsterdam Classis in 1693, "In the meantime, in whatever way Heaven may direct the entangled and confused affairs of this country, I shall follow its leadings. A good conscience is my greatest treasure."⁶⁸ The direction in which Heaven directed him was toward the interests of Albany's elite merchants and diplomats. Whether his conscience remained clear is an open question.

Governor Sloughter died unexpectedly and, after the brief interim tenure of Richard Ingoldsby, Benjamin Fletcher was sent from England in 1692 to assume leadership of New York. From the start, his administration was plagued with controversy. Fletcher's enemies accused him of profiting from his position as governor, using the militia to bully citizens, dissolving the

⁶⁷ Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus*, 47-49.

⁶⁸ *ERNY*, 1088.

council and replacing the members with his cronies, and currying favor with certain individuals through excessive land grants.⁶⁹ Whether corrupt or not, Fletcher had the tendency to bestow favors, large tracts of land, and valuable government appointments to his friends and wealthy supporters. For example, he handed over all diplomatic authority to Peter Schuyler, Dirck Wessells, and Domine Dellijs, granting them the power to “treat, confer, and consult with” the Haudenosaunee in place of the governor.⁷⁰ Formal Haudenosaunee diplomacy continued to be an essential component of the war effort, and even the Lords of Trade recognized the importance of having familiar diplomats conduct negotiations at Albany. In a 1696 report explaining “How to Maintain Friendship with the Indians,” the Lords of Trade wrote:

⁶⁹ *DRCHNY*, IV, 143-145. The bitter factionalism expressed in the Glorious Revolution did not dissipate with Jacob Leisler’s execution. Under Sloughter’s governance, several of Leisler’s closest allies had been jailed and their assets seized. These individuals—particularly Abraham Gouverneur and Jacob Leisler, Jr.—petitioned the imperial government and levied accusations against Fletcher. *Ibid.*, 197-198. To bolster his case for financial restitution during the war, Robert Livingston accused Fletcher of mismanaging public funds and bungling the war effort. *Ibid.*, 127-141 and Leder, *Robert Livingston and the Politics of Colonial New York*, 101-116. For more on the political controversies of Fletcher’s administration, see Goodfriend, *Who Should Rule at Home*, 26-36; Stanwood, *The Empire Reformed*, 180-186; Bonomi, *A Factious People*, 75-78; Leder, *Robert Livingston and the Politics of Colonial New York*, 77-116; James S. Leamon, “Governor Fletcher’s Recall,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, 20, no. 4 (October 1963): 527-542.

⁷⁰ Although Fletcher indicated that he would occasionally provide them with detailed instructions and requested that they periodically report their progress, the reins of diplomacy were entirely given over to the trio. See *ERNY*, 1169. Historians have examined Fletcher’s approach to Haudenosaunee diplomacy in considerable detail because he oversaw much of the fighting in King William’s War. At one diplomatic council following an attack on Haudenosaunee villages by the French, Fletcher was awarded the nickname “Swift Arrow.” For historians, the nickname has served as a metaphor for his actions and policies: was it sincerely given in gratitude for his “swift” responses to his allies’ needs or was it a thinly-veiled insult of his failure to act decisively in the war? For the larger diplomatic story in New York, see Trelease, *Indian Affairs in Colonial New York*, 308-331. For the Haudenosaunee perspective of Fletcher’s administration, see Parmenter, *Edge of the Woods*, 231-237, 243-251; Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 174-192.

It is absolutely necessary to continue these five nations in his Majesty's interest in order to preserve those Colonies.... The persons most proper to treat with them, being very much beloved by them... are Mr. Peter Schuyler, late Mayor of Albany and one of the Council, Mr. Dirck Wessells, Justice of the Peace at Albany, and Domine Godefridus Dellius a Dutch Minister.⁷¹

In September 1696, the Lords of Trade again reported that efforts to convert Native peoples to Protestant Christianity should receive greater financial assistance because furthering Dellius's mission would provide security for the New England and New York frontier regions. They wrote, "Religion has been found to be one of the strongest bonds of union," and converting the Haudenosaunee was "of the greatest importance imaginable."⁷²

As the war between France and England drew to a close, the crown decided to replace Fletcher with a new, less controversial governor, and Richard Coote, Earl of Bellomont, was chosen as Fletcher's successor.⁷³ The crown made a critical mistake in letting Fletcher know ahead of time that he was being relieved of duty and a successor was on his way. According to testimony obtained later, Fletcher spent his final days in office deeding away much of New York

⁷¹ *ERNY*, 1166.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 1174. The report did not mention Dellius by name but did directly address his efforts to convert Mohawks to Christianity.

⁷³ Bellomont, an Irishman and staunch Whig politician, had been in government for some time and privy to the controversies surrounding the Fletcher administration. He also had a personal inclination toward sympathy for the Leislerians. Like Gouverneur and Leisler, he had experienced the frustration of having his assets seized during a time of political upheaval; the Irish took his estate because he refused to support James II in exile. When William and Mary ascended to the British throne, he was given restitution and the title of Earl of Bellomont. Before setting off for his new post, he conferred with Livingston and others to learn the ins and outs of New York politics. He left determined to right the wrongs of the Fletcher administration and restore power to the Leislerians, just as King William had done for him during the Glorious Revolution. Stanwood, *Empire Reformed*, 186-187; Leamon, "Governor Fletcher's Recall," 535-538; and Frederic de Peyster, *The Life and Administration of Richard, Earl of Bellomont, Governor of the Provinces of New York, Massachusetts and New Hampshire, From 1697-1701* (New York: New-York Historical Society Press, 1879), 6-11.

to his friends and allies. When Bellomont finally arrived in the colony, after being briefly stranded in Barbados, he discovered that the King's garden and the pastures set aside for his use had been granted to Fletcher's cronies. Bellomont was furious.⁷⁴ In the midst of this turmoil, the war ended, and Bellomont was tasked with notifying the French governor and negotiating prisoner exchanges. He sent Schuyler and Delliuss to Canada with instructions for the negotiations. During their absence, he traveled to Albany and met with Haudenosaunee diplomats.

He encountered a group hostile to or at least unsure of his position. The structure of diplomacy during the Fletcher administration, with Schuyler, Wessells, and Delliuss authorized to negotiate independently, created some confusion when Bellomont arrived at Albany. In his initial complaints, he stressed the frustration he felt at having his authority undermined by the trio: "Delliuss... had possessed the Indians (as these Sachims confessed) that their power... was equall to mine, and did Insinuate, as If it did more peculiarly belong to them, to take cognizance of the Indians and their affairs, and to treat with and succor them at all times, then It did to me."⁷⁵ With Schuyler and Delliuss absent, Bellomont set about untangling Fletcher's influence with the Haudenosaunee. More than anyone else, Delliuss became the target of his wrath. The new governor accused him of manipulating the Christian Mohawks for his own personal gain, thereby putting Britain's entire imperial project in jeopardy. At issue was diplomatic authority and two land grants, secured by Delliuss, that deeded away most of the Mohawk territory to four of Albany's top merchants—all Fletcher allies—and to Delliuss himself.

⁷⁴ *DRCHNY*, IV, 327-328.

⁷⁵ *ERNY*, 1240.

Bellomont's primary informants regarding the land grants were members of Albany's local government. How they learned of the grants is unclear, but they were outraged upon hearing that the Mohawk lands had fallen into the hands of a few elites. Just as they had responded to the news that James, Duke of York, had granted all of Albany to the Van Rensselaer family in 1678, the members of the common council drew up a petition to stop the grants from taking effect. They attempted to meet with Schuyler, Delliuss, and Wessells to negotiate giving the patent over to the city, but the trio refused to comply, so they sent Hendrik Hanse and David Schuyler to New York to plead their case with Bellomont and the colonial assembly. In their petition, the council wrote—in language that echoed the protests against the 1662 Schenectady patent and the 1678 petition against the Van Rensselaers—that the Mohawk patents, “will be the utter Ruine to the generall trade and commerce of this Citty,” and were “so Destructive to the gennerall good of this Place.”⁷⁶

Bellomont also obtained testimony from two of Delliuss's Mohawk converts, Hendrick and Joseph, as to the bills of sale of the Mohawk lands.⁷⁷ They claimed that the first sale happened around 1694 or 1695, when Mohawk warriors were fighting in Canada alongside English soldiers. In that transaction, they alleged that Arent Schuyler convinced several intoxicated warriors to sell the land at Schoharie to Nicolas Bayard in exchange for “the value of

⁷⁶ *AA*, III, 30-32, 32 (quotation), 33, 35. The council also debated and protested a similar grant issued to Hendrick van Rensselaer for a territory that included Schaghticoke. Allen Trelease contends that Albany's leadership had known about the grants for a while but did not speak openly against them until after Fletcher was removed from office. Trelease, *Indian Affairs in Colonial New York*, 337-338.

⁷⁷ For the life of Hendrick within and beyond Tiononderoge, see Hinderaker, *The Two Hendricks*, 15-21, 37, 49-135.

thirty Beaver-skins in Rum and other goods.”⁷⁸ The second land sale involved Dellius in some capacity, and he was listed as owning one part of the lands in question. Hendrick and Joseph’s statements underscored the deceit involved in the transaction:

[The] [p]urchasers... used artifice to circumvent them and their Companions into a bargain of Sale with them, by Pretending as it was a time of War so it would be their best and securest way to defend them against the Enemy... that it should not be in the power of any person to make an Infringement upon their Property and as long as any of the Maquase nation lived.⁷⁹

The deed was dated July 8, 1697, very near to the end of the war.⁸⁰ Dellius later admitted to the sale, but he upheld the notion that the Mohawks would have access to the lands in perpetuity.

That provision of the sale, he argued, was changed by the Attorney General, who “judged it was against the King’s dignity to grant a conditional patent.” He continued, “That is what makes him [Bellomont] speak of fraud in obtaining an absolute grant; but I am unable to understand how it can concern me, as I did not petition for it, and I was about thirty six [Dutch] miles from there.”⁸¹

The Mohawks were disgusted. Whether legal or not, the deeds were obtained through coercion and deceit, and the final patent did not resemble what the signers agreed to. The patent was bound to create a rift between Dellius and his flock, regardless of who made the decision to change the terms.

⁷⁸ *DRCHNY*, IV, 346.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ The license to purchase land “on the Mohawk river” was granted by the colonial council to Schuyler, Dellius, Wessells, Evert Bancker, and William Pinhorne on June 17, 1697. Fernow, *Calendar of Council Minutes*, 124. The Treaty of Ryswick was signed in September 1697.

⁸¹ *ERNY*, 1403.

Sifting the truth of the extent of Dellius's corruption from the testimony that followed is a difficult, if not impossible, task. Bellomont's council vacated all land grants issued by Fletcher and destroyed the original documents in the process. In the same act, they removed Dellius from his office.⁸² Dellius was an easy target for Bellomont's animosity toward Fletcher; as a Dutch minister, he could be removed from the country relatively easily. Indeed, his co-conspirators in the land sales—all Albanian elites with strong ties to the community, sprawling estates, and government posts—did not face the same punishment. Peter Schuyler, for example, walked away entirely clean and went right back to negotiating with the Five Nations at Albany. When, in 1699, Dellius attempted to repatriate, Bellomont wrote again to the Board of Trade against him, noting, "I do assure your Lordships that man is capable of any mischief whatsoever.... He is a most proud wicked man, and so contentious that he has divided the people at Albany into factions and parties, who would otherwise have been all united."⁸³

As soon as his council voted to vacate the land grants awarded by Fletcher and remove Dellius from his post, Bellomont arranged a delegation to travel to Mohawk country with the news. His instructions for Hendrick Hanse, then the mayor of Albany, and Ryner

⁸² "An Act for ye Vacating Breaking & Annulling several Extravagant Grants of Land made by Coll Fletcher the late Govr of this Province under his Majtie," May 16, 1699, *LOCNY*, 412-417. He wrote to the Board of Trade explaining how Dellius's removal became part of the act: "The Bill for vacating the grants begun with us at the Council Board, and we sent it down to the Lower House; and there they added a clause for depriving Mr. Dellius of his benefice at Albany; so that we were obliged to passe that clause as part of the Bill, or we must have lost the Bill; and I thought it better to lose a wicked clergyman than a good Bill." *ERNY*, 1314.

⁸³ *ERNY*, 1213-1214, 1241-1242, 1288-1290, 1288-1289 (quotation), 1334. Owen Stanwood stresses the significance of Bellomont's anti-Catholicism to the Dellius controversy. Because Dellius already faced criticism for his correspondence with the Jesuit Pierre Milet, and he traveled to Canada to negotiate peace, Bellomont had little difficulty raising the specter of possible treason in his case against Dellius, even though he had no hard evidence that Dellius had any particular sympathy for the French. See Stanwood, *Empire Reformed*, 189-194.

Schermerhoorn referred to “a great violence and injury done them by Domine Dellius,” which was, “a breach of trust and faith he had given to the Indians.” He further detailed the contents of the bill that vacated the patents, noting that the documents had been destroyed “as the Indians desired,” and the Dellius would be sent back to Holland, “as [he was] a person not worthy to be a Minister of the Gospell, who would betray his proselyts in such a manner.” He then urged Hanse and Schermerhoorn to remind the Mohawks that Bellomont had taken these extraordinary steps “for their sakes,” that they therefore should remain steadfast allies of the colonial government, and that they should be wary of swindlers in the future.⁸⁴

Before Dellius left New York, Christian Mohawks partially recanted their testimony in Dellius’s kitchen before several members of the Albany colonial government. The magistrate, Kiliaen van Rensselaer, and aldermen, Hendrick van Rensselaer, Johannes Schuyler, and Wessel ten Broeck, took new testimony from them in front of Dellius and Sinerongniresse in which they claimed, “We have not done it. It was done by others, who led us as if by a cord.... Father, forgive us the evil we have done.”⁸⁵ Two days later, Hendrick was brought to the Albany courthouse to testify in open court before all the magistrates. They entered as evidence the statement taken at Dellius’s house and then asked Hendrick if he agreed to what had been written. He assented to the basic premise of the statement, but he denied asking for Dellius’s forgiveness.⁸⁶ In a personal letter to Dellius written after he left Albany, Kiliaen van Rensselaer

⁸⁴ *DRCHNY*, IV, 565-566, 566 (quotations). See also: *ERNY*, 1303.

⁸⁵ *ERNY*, 1318.

⁸⁶ Sinerongniresse testified that “Hille the interpretest had taken the word out of his mouth and said it.” Van Olinda, for her part, demanded that several of Dellius’s closest students visit him one last time to say their goodbyes before he left the country. She accused them all of being led away from Dellius “by a cord” and blamed them for his departure. She even went so far as to

noted that, in light of the three conflicting sets of testimony from Hendrick and Joseph, “you can see what great rascals they are, and can see also who the persons are who stir up the trouble, but the last makes good the first and kills the second,” meaning that the courthouse testimony upheld their earlier denunciations of Dellius and rendered questionable the statements made at his home.⁸⁷

Dellius’s Anglo-Dutch congregants in Albany and Schenectady wrote petitions on his behalf, begging that he be allowed to remain at his post and insisting that they also spoke for those Dellius had converted to Christianity. The Schenectady congregation was especially forceful in its claims of dependence on Dellius’s proselytizing. The members praised his efforts in rebuilding their church after the massacre and went so far as to claim that he singlehandedly restored their congregation and protected them from further harm, insisting that, “next to God, he was the principal means of saving the property and lives which remained after the burning of our city, with the murdering of even the smallest infants; for, because of their conversion, the heathen (Indians) stayed, and did not move to Canada.” They claimed to speak for the Christian Mohawks, “who, as well as ourselves, love him very much.” No Christian Mohawk offered a statement of support to append to these documents or any other petitions for Dellius, not even Van Olinda, though she had played a role in the scene of apology and forgiveness, an account of which was added to Dellius’s defense. The strong endorsement of Dellius’s white congregants was enough for the Amsterdam Classis to reinstate him, despite the profound silence of the

provide a man named Gideon with a pelt to offer Dellius as a gift, since he had no offering. *DRCHNY*, IV, 539-541, 540 (quotation). See also Hinderaker, *The Two Hendricks*, 56-58.

⁸⁷ “Kiliaen van Rensselaer to Rev. Godefridus Dellius, June 1699,” Van Rensselaer Manor Papers, Box 9, Folder 2, New York State Library, Albany, NY. (Hereafter cited as VRMP.)

Mohawks who supposedly “love[d] him very much.” Delliuss exchanged posts with the Rev. John Lydius; he took up Lydius’s ministry at Antwerp and Lydius transferred to Albany, and Delliuss lived out his days tending to his new congregation in Antwerp.⁸⁸

In addition to the uneven restoration of removing Delliuss but keeping men like Schuyler in power, Bellomont lied to the Mohawks about the extent to which he returned the land to them.⁸⁹ Bellomont’s repeated letters to the Board of Trade in 1699 and 1700 indicate that the entire embassy of Schermerhoorn and Hanse was a fraud. The grants—whether vacated or not—belonged to the English. The only unsettled question was whether the land and its resources stayed in the hands of Delliuss *et al* or whether they would be seized by the government and redistributed as the governor saw fit.⁹⁰ His scheming to parcel up the land strikes an even more sinister chord when we consider the gratitude expressed by Hendrick for the restoration. At a diplomatic meeting in August 1700, Hendrick stood before the assembly and delivered a short speech of thanks: “Wee do again thank your Lordship in behalf of the Five Nations for your fatherly care in restoring our lands to us again.”⁹¹ Bellomont proudly appended the text of the speech to a letter to the Board of Trade, even though he knew no Mohawk lands had truly been restored.⁹²

⁸⁸ *ERNY*, 1305-1309, 1309 (quotation), 1333-1336.

⁸⁹ As early as the fall of 1699, he was already offering to distribute “the lands granted by Colonel Fletcher to Mr. Delliuss and Mr. Bayard to the officers and soldiers after seven years service.” *DRCHNY*, IV, 588-589, 588 (quotation).

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 824-825. For other, similar letters to the Board of Trade with reference to the grants and Bellomont’s plans for them, see *ibid.*, 588-589, 780, 785, and 791.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 743.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 714. In 1707, the Board of Trade brought the unresolved issue of Bellomont’s legislation and Fletcher’s grants, which had sat in limbo after Bellomont’s death in 1701, to

In 1709, the grants were brought up by the Board of Trade as a possible site to resettle the Palatine refugees currently living on Jamaica.⁹³ However, when the surveyors arrived to map out the land and divide it into parcels, the Mohawks protested. They remembered precisely the details of the embassy of Hanse and Schermerhoorn, and that “the Land called Skohere was Surrendered back again to us, and... we Remained the Just and true owners thereof.”⁹⁴ The Mohawks were willing to offer land for the Palatine settlements, but they needed to first assert that the land was theirs to give, underlining their autonomy. For payment, they asked the Queen: “give us what you shall think Convenient, we are better satisfyd now then we were before, for we apprehended that you would have taken our Land from us against our wills, but you thought we had not so good a Right to it as you see we had.” They concluded by asserting that all future land sales should be conducted in the same manner, in public, without alcohol, and with representatives present from all three Mohawk clans (“Bear wolf and turtle”). Hunter responded that he had not known the land belonged to the Mohawks and agreed to their terms.⁹⁵ The Palatine families relocated to Schoharie in the early 1710s, yet “Dellius’s land” was still

Queen Anne’s attention, supplied with testimony that considered all facets of the decision to uphold the law. Those opposed believed the grants should be trimmed down rather than annulled and that it was beyond the power of a colonial governor and council to seize land that had been lawfully obtained. Those in favor cited Hendrick’s speech of gratitude for the lands’ restoration as one particularly thorny reason why the crown should probably uphold Bellomont’s promise to the Mohawks. The Board of Trade recommended that the Queen vacate the grants, redistribute some of the land to the original patentees in smaller, more reasonable tracts, and collect quitrents from those parcels. *DRCHNY*, V, 21-26.

⁹³ *DRCHNY*, V, 87.

⁹⁴ “Propositions from the Chiefs of the three tribes of the Macquas to Gov. Hunter, with his reply,” Aug. 22, 1710, American Indian Collection, MS 322, Box 1, Folder 1, NYHS. See also Georgiana C. Nammack, *Fraud, Politics, and the Dispossession of the Indians: The Iroquois Land Frontier in the Colonial Period* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1969), 17-19.

⁹⁵ “Propositions from the Chiefs,” American Indian Collection, NYHS.

contested in 1720, when Hunter wrote the Board of Trade to inquire if it could be granted to settlers.⁹⁶

Perhaps no image better illustrates the “entangled and confused affairs of this country” at the end of King William’s War than that of a disgraced minister, holding his convert’s hand, forgiving him when he did not ask for forgiveness.⁹⁷ Economic, political, and military threads, seemingly woven together, overlapping, creating a whole cloth, were but tangles and snares. When Delliuss wrote of the region’s complexities, he referred only to the partisan politics that he blamed for his tarnished reputation and removal from his post. During his defense, he never admitted to knowing anything of the Mohawk perspective or even why his original vision of the land grants would have been at odds with Haudenosaunee attempts to secure autonomy. A minister widely praised for converting Mohawks, he barely spoke their language and relied heavily on the benevolence of interpreters like Hilletje van Olinda. He got caught up in a frontier experiment designed by a handful of Albany’s elites that attempted to reimagine the upper Hudson River region, placing Albany at the center of a vast fur trading network owned by merchants and protected by subsidiary Haudenosaunee villages.

That experiment, when it exploded in scandal, revealed the unsteady foundation upon which the Anglo-Dutch-Mohawk partnership was built. At a moment when both sides of the alliance attempted to collapse distances between them, both physical and social, they came nearest to realizing their disparate goals. The scandal, however, brought to light the ways in

⁹⁶ *DRCHNY*, V, 552-553 (Hunter’s request), 574-576 (Palatine petition regarding resettlement). For more on the settlements at Schoharie, see Preston, *Texture of Contact*, 61-115.

⁹⁷ As Hendrick testified, “When Mr. Delliuss gave me his hand he forgave me but I said nothing.” *DRCHNY*, IV, 540.

which such goals were mutually exclusive. Closeness for Schuyler and his colleagues meant bringing the Haudenosaunee into Albany's larger fold, serving as loyal subjects in a war against the town's enemies. For Mohawks, nearness meant forging a stronger alliance and reinforcing military and economic partnerships without threatening the autonomy of Iroquoia or Haudenosaunee peoples living adjacent to empires. Social distance served a purpose for all parties of the alliance, and ambiguity nurtured their partnership. The region's particular political economy worked best when intimacy happened on the periphery, informally, outside the scrutiny of official policies and formal agreements. Putting the land and its peoples onto paper, drawing boundaries of subjugation and limitations on sovereignty—these acts of empire served as a painful reminder that men like Schuyler, Wessells, and Delliuss, while powerful allies and negotiators, were not sincerely the Mohawks' "brethren."

“With greetings from the priest”: An Expanding Underground Exchange Economy

The defendants were still absent, somewhere between Albany and Onondaga, but the court ordered that they be “apprehended and presented according to law.” The eight men prosecuted together for travelling to the Haudenosaunee villages to trade in the summer of 1692 were young (possibly children or teenagers) and seeking a means by which they could support themselves. Instead of making their fortunes among the Haudenosaunee, they declared that, “they have lost by there journey,” and of course now faced further trouble with the court. Without the means to pay their fines, the men testified, “They were willing to give all that they had in the world for liberty to depart from this place to gett a livelihood, since there parents is not able longer to maintain them.” The court had mercy on them and reduced their bonds from £50 to 40s for Johannes Bradt, David Ketelheyn, and their four friends, and for Johannes Claesz and Johannes Luykasz, they reduced the fine to 3s and a piece of eight for the bond. Doubtless the

youth and poverty of the defendants played a role in the court's favorable response to their petition.⁹⁸

The court initially levied the £50 bond against the impoverished young men to ensure they would not trade again for the span of a year and a day, which seems excessive in light of other cases. A year earlier, the court prosecuted Johannes Wendell for a similar crime: he was caught hiring Arnout Cornelisz Viele to trade on his behalf at Onondaga. Two witnesses testified against Wendell, and the court somehow obtained a letter that detailed the arrangement. Still, the wealthy merchant received only an £8 fine plus expenses, without any additional bond demanding that he abstain from the trade for a specified length of time.⁹⁹ Wealth and status—as seen in previous smuggling cases—could help one escape prosecution or mitigate punishment. Youth and poverty were also conditions deserving of mercy, but the law had to be applied firmly enough to let prosecutions serve as a lesson to others. Of all of the behaviors that the court ought to have taken an interest in, however, Johannes Wendell's dealings certainly deserved more scrutiny. Sending an intermediary deep into Iroquoia with trade goods and instructions for the exchanges violated a variety of ordinances as well as the established protocols of the fur trade at Albany. That his status afforded him protection is unsurprising, but the brazenness of the operation, and the evidence against him, are striking.

The Wendells were a powerful merchant family with deep ties to the community. Johannes served in government and was present at several Haudenosaunee diplomatic councils. His nephew, Evert Wendell, served multiple terms in government, practiced law, was appointed

⁹⁸ *AA*, II, 118-119, 119 (quotation).

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 114.

Commissioner for Indian Affairs, and, of course, kept up a significant interest in the fur trade. He and his family had diverse economic ventures that allowed them financial stability and a permanent place in Albany's elite circles, but they kept up a vigorous, almost daily trade in pelts, in transactions both legal and illegal. Evert Wendell's account book, which he kept from 1695-1726, is the oldest surviving record of the Albany fur trade, and it adds considerable nuance and clarification to historians' understandings of eighteenth-century intercultural exchanges.¹⁰⁰

Wendell's records document two significant trends that have only recently received scholarly attention. The first is the remarkable number of Indigenous women who traded with Wendell: 49.6% of the accounts involved a woman, and 57.3% of those accounts involved a Mohawk woman.¹⁰¹ Historians previously assumed that Haudenosaunee gender roles were sharply divided, and that women, while uniquely powerful within Haudenosaunee society, tended to participate in internal-facing activities such as agriculture, household production, and women's councils.¹⁰² The even distribution of men and women in Wendell's accounts indicates gender parity in trade and financial activities, and earlier court cases of smuggling and alcohol sales also mentioned Haudenosaunee women customers, though court records were more sporadic and often did not discuss the Indigenous side of illicit transactions. Recent studies by Jan Noel, Kees-Jan Waterman, and Eugene Tesdahl that use Wendell's accounts and other

¹⁰⁰ Waterman, "To Do Justice to Him and Myself," 1-6.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 48.

¹⁰² See, for example, Elisabeth Tooker, "Women in Iroquois Society," in *Extending the Rafters: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Iroquoian Studies*, edited by Michael K. Foster, Jack Campisi, and Marianne Mithun (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), 109-23; Judith K. Brown, "Economic Organization and the Position of Women among the Iroquois," *Ethnohistory* 17, no. 3 (1970): 151-167.

records from the Canadian and New York borderlands demonstrate the remarkable presence of Indigenous women traders, in small-scale transactions and as integral parts of larger economic networks.¹⁰³

The second trend revealed in Wendell's account book is the number of instances in which escorts, brokers, agents, and peddlers appear in the records. The picture of the fur trade that emerges from the account book is thus a composite of many diffuse exchanges. Relatives and friends introduced Wendell to new traders and vouched for their transactions. Peddlers purchased goods in quantity to resell elsewhere, in their own villages or along the Albany-Montreal corridor. Brokers and agents sold goods on Wendell's behalf, traveling to northern and western spaces outside the bounds of New York or Iroquoia.¹⁰⁴ These brokers allowed Wendell to remain a step removed from transactions that violated imperial borders—particularly during wartime—and helped him profit from far-flung markets not directly accessible in Albany. These methods of wholesale and the use of intermediaries predated Wendell's accounts, and echo the broker system that invited scrutiny during the walking in the woods crisis of 1660.¹⁰⁵

Wendell's fur trade activity increased dramatically during the period of Queen Anne's War (1702-1713), particularly between 1704 and 1710. The imperial war likely played less of a role in his fortunes than did the Haudenosaunee policy of neutrality, however. Anglo-Dutch-

¹⁰³ Noel and Waterman, "Not Confined to the Village Clearings"; Tesdahl, "The Price of Empire"; Noel, "Fertile with fine talk." For Haudenosaunee women's roles more broadly, see Barbara Alice Mann, *Iroquoian Women: The Gantowisas of the Haudenosaunee League* (New York: Peter Lang, 2000).

¹⁰⁴ Waterman, "To Do Justice to Him and Myself," 26-31.

¹⁰⁵ For brokers, carriers, and smuggling along the Albany-Montreal corridor, see Noel, "Fertile with fine talk," 210-214; Tesdahl, "Price of Empire," 82-94; Preston, *Texture of Contact*, 54-59.

Haudenosaunee relations during this era have received considerable attention from historians interested in the crafting of the Grand Settlement of 1701, which ushered in decades of Haudenosaunee neutrality and brought the mourning wars to a close. They have attended primarily to the shifting balance of regional power, Haudenosaunee factions, and the numerous overtures made by and to the French to end a century of devastating violence. Daniel Richter argues that the end of King William's War and the scandals of the Fletcher administration were a low point for the Covenant Chain alliance and thus provided an opening for Francophile leaders to negotiate the settlement with New France. Historians such as Jon Parmenter and, earlier, Matthew Dennis and Allen Trelease, insist that 1701 was a moment of Haudenosaunee ascendancy and a chance to obtain a level of sovereignty they had long sought. Though the Covenant Chain alliance between the English colonies and the Five Nations remained intact, the partnership suffered considerable strain during King William's War.¹⁰⁶ Richter cites New York's internal political crises as the dominant source of turmoil during the war, as well as

¹⁰⁶ For negotiations and Haudenosaunee positions just prior to 1701, see Parmenter, *Edge of the Woods*, 257-271; Hinderaker, *The Two Hendricks*, 64-71; Gilles Havard, *The Great Peace of Montreal of 1701: French-Native Diplomacy in the Seventeenth Century*, translated by Phyllis Aronoff and Howard Scott (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001); Fenton, *Great Law and the Longhouse*, 330-360; José António Brandão, "Your Fyre Shall Burn No More": *Iroquois Policy toward New France and Its Native Allies to 1701* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 105-130; Dennis, *Cultivating a Landscape of Peace*, 268-271; Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 190-213; Richard Aquila, *The Iroquois Restoration: Iroquois Diplomacy on the Colonial Frontier, 1701-1754*, Paperback Edition (1983; Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 70-81; Trelease, *Indian Affairs in Colonial New York*, 332-363; Anthony F. C. Wallace, "Origins of Iroquois Neutrality: The Grand Settlement of 1701," *Pennsylvania History* 24 (1957): 223-235. For the early neutrality era, see Hinderaker, *The Two Hendricks*, 72-108; Fenton, *Great Law and the Longhouse*, 363-381; Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 214-254; Aquila, *Iroquois Restoration*, 85-128.

tensions created by the Dellius scandal, which ultimately jeopardized the English alliance with the Haudenosaunee.¹⁰⁷

Neutrality opened up new possibilities for the fur trade, at least briefly, by expanding mobility throughout Iroquoia, between Montreal and Albany via Kahnawà:ke, and toward the western Great Lakes. The French had feared that the Glorious Revolution would inspire the English to capture New France's western forts and usurp the Great Lakes trade, but it was Haudenosaunee neutrality that first expanded Albany's reach into the western interior, a goal since the time of Kiliaen van Rensselaer and Harmen Meyndertsz van den Bogaert.

Haudenosaunee peoples were the initiators of these changes, their feet and canoes carried many of the goods and pelts to and from Albany, and their kinship networks built exchange networks around and between imperial borders. Albany's principal merchants had to carefully balance the opportunities presented by newly-open markets and the dangers (not to mention disloyalty and legal concerns) of smuggling during wartime.¹⁰⁸

The Wendell account book entries demonstrate the webs of League and Laurentian Haudenosaunee peoples who visited Albany during—and outside—the trading season. In an account started December 27, 1705, Wendell described a new customer as, “A female Mohawk savage from Canada... was here with Thouwenjouw[,] she is a pockmarked savage[,] with greetings from the priest.” Thouwenjouw was a Kahnawà:ke Mohawk, and the woman he escorted likely was, as well. The woman purchased one pair of red duffel stockings and nine

¹⁰⁷ Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 162-163.

¹⁰⁸ For designs on the western trade, see *LIR*, 168-169, 177-178, 196-197; *DRCHNY*, IX, 743, 763; Armour, *Merchants of Albany*, 91-93, 106-107; Norton, *Fur Trade in Colonial New York*, 133-134, 155-158. For Haudenosaunee neutrality and the expansion of mobility and trade, see Parmenter, *Edge of the Woods*, 262-263; Preston, *Texture of Contact*, 54-59.

bars of lead. She brought along her son, WaerhoesRoodee, who later returned alone in January to purchase a coat. He put down an axe for security on the coat, which his mother retrieved in March. The mother returned at the opening of the trading season in May, paid three beavers and one partial pelt, “so that we are even.” Later in May, Wendell opened a new account for the woman, who was accompanied by her mother. She purchased four bottles of rum and her mother purchased one pair of stockings and a shirt. Wendell also extended them credit to pay Jelles van Voorst, a man from Schenectady who drove them to Albany. After a few more purchases that year, the woman and her son settled their account with Wendell in full.¹⁰⁹

The woman’s account offers a snapshot of wider exchange networks and trading behaviors. She traveled with other Kahnawà:ke peoples to Albany, and one introduced her to Wendell, who extended her credit. She then allowed her son to trade on her account, and she brought her mother along, as well. In the winter, they traded small amounts on credit, and in the summer, during the trading season, they were able to pay off their debts and have enough left over to make a few, more substantial purchases. Their multiple comings and goings reflect the increased mobility among Iroquoia, New York, and New France, though they likely stayed in either Albany or Schenectady during that year’s trading season. An intermediary—and former apprentice of the Wendell family—Jelles van Voorst, brought them from Schenectady to Albany, which was in violation of the ordinances.¹¹⁰ Doubtless, he was acting as a trade broker for Wendell. He lived in Schenectady and probably greeted traders arriving there via the Mohawk River, offered to drive them to Albany, and delivered them to Wendell for a small fee. The

¹⁰⁹ Accounts dated “1705 27 December” and “1706 May 9,” folio 62, Waterman, “*To Do Justice to Him and Myself*,” 164, 236n169 (Thouwenjouw/Tojonjow/Touyenijouw).

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 257n444.

transactions, though seemingly so mundane, contain multiple illegalities written into the account book. The trade with Indigenous peoples from New France during wartime, the use of a broker to lure individuals to Wendell and away from his competitors, the rum purchased by the Mohawk woman—these actions were all illicit or, at the very least, frowned upon by Albany's government. They further reveal the ways in which the underground exchange economy flourished, and perhaps even expanded, during the era of Haudenosaunee neutrality.

They also implicate a wealthy, reputable member of Albany's elite in the illicit trade. Due to the dearth of extant account books from the seventeenth century, it is difficult to discern whether smuggling was a relatively new activity for Albany's elite merchants at the beginning of the eighteenth century or whether they had consistently broken their own laws for decades. As discussed in chapters two and three, the ordinances were most often enforced against poor/middling traders, women, and individuals living and trading in frontier spaces, such as the Catskills/Esopus region and, later, Schenectady. Elite men rarely prosecuted other elite men for violating trade ordinances—with the exception of the seemingly-manufactured trade broker crisis of 1660—and when they did, they often settled the cases or reduced the charges or punishment, as in the case of arms smuggling by Michiel Jansz described in Chapter One. Indeed, in a case from 1700 (after King William's War but before the final settlement of neutrality), Peter Schuyler sued Johannes Luykase for the sum of 44s plus court costs. The disputed account was for 44 gallons of rum, "which they had of Hendrik Hanse and Retailed in the Sinneka's Country." These transactions were of dubious legality; just months earlier the court had renewed the ordinances against the use of trade brokers. Schuyler was confident enough that he sued Luykase in open court, though the justices seemed a bit annoyed at the flaunting of the

regulations before the court and required that Schuyler pay the cost of the trial.¹¹¹ Luykasse's position as a broker for exchanges among the Seneca raises the question of whether he and his friends served in that capacity when they were prosecuted in 1692 and, if so, for whom they were working.

At least some of Wendell's peers conducted illegal trade, though the proportion of elite merchants involved in smuggling is unclear. Whether smugglers or not, they maintained communications and intelligence networks among New York, Iroquoia, and New France along smuggling routes that, during wartime, made Albany a vitally important space in the war effort. Haudenosaunee neutrality meant that Albany was entirely spared from the actual fighting of Queen Anne's War, whose battlefields mainly encompassed the borderlands of northern New England. Though a potential attack always loomed over Albany after 1689/90, the town did not have as much to fear as long as the Haudenosaunee maintained their dual alliance with New York and New France. Still, Albany's leading citizens were not outwardly disloyal to the English empire, despite all of the smuggled furs and rum passing through men like Wendell's homes. Peter Schuyler, though no longer mayor, regularly provided the colonial government with intelligence gleaned from rumors he heard about impending attacks on New England and the doings of the French governor.¹¹²

¹¹¹ *AA*, IV, 110-111 (renewal of trade ordinances), 115 (case against Luykasse).

¹¹² *LIR*, 195, 200, 220. I consider the question of Dutch elite loyalty during King William's and Queen Anne's Wars in Erin Kramer, "Prisoners and Profiteers: Commerce and Imperial Loyalty on the Albany Frontier, 1689-1713," in *Sharing Pasts: Dutch Americans through Four Centuries*, edited by Henk Aay, Janny Venema, and Dennis Voskuil (Holland, MI: Van Raalte Press, 2017), 149-163.

Elites deployed the same routes that carried French Canadians and Laurentian Mohawks to Albany in the service of prisoner exchanges. In 1702, a group of New England justices of the peace wrote a letter to Peter Schuyler meant to serve as a passport for three Frenchmen accompanied by “a French Girle Captivated from Canada by the Indians.” The justices had negotiated and paid for her safe return, and the Frenchmen transported her back home. To do so, they had to travel through Albany, and the letter would allow them safe passage without raising suspicions.¹¹³ Similarly, the Reverend John Williams sent multiple messages to New France aimed at retrieving his daughter, Eunice, after she was captured and taken to Kahnawà:ke in the Deerfield raid of 1704. He used illicit fur trading routes as conduits for negotiation, but Eunice was adopted into Mohawk society and did not return to New England.¹¹⁴

In a remarkable letter from the closing years of the war, the governor of French Canada, Philippe de Rigaud Vaudreuil, wrote to Kiliaen van Rensselaer (the son of Maria and Jeremias, who had become the lord of the manor of Rensselaerswijck) with details of prisoner exchanges he hoped to conduct. He explained to Van Rensselaer that one of the members of the raiding party against Haverhill, Massachusetts, a man named Le Feur, was rumored to be alive and well and kept in the home of Joseph Hawley. In exchange for Le Feur’s safe return, he released a New England resident named John Arms. “I desire you to facilitate these Exchanges knowing by

¹¹³ Letter from New England Justices of the Peace to Colonel Schuyler, October 1, 1702, American Indian Collection, MS 322, Box 1, Folder 1, NYHS.

¹¹⁴ *LIR*, 201. For John and Eunice Williams, see John Williams, “The Redeemed Captive Returning to Zion, 1707,” in *Captive Histories: English, French, and Native Narratives of the 1704 Deerfield Raid*, edited by Evan Haefeli and Kevin Sweeney (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2006), 89-157; Haefeli and Sweeney, *Captors and Captives*, especially 143-163; John Demos, *The Unredeemed Captive: A Family Story from Early America* (New York: Knopf, 1994), 91-92, 131-133, 167-168.

all your Letters Your [Generosity] and Christian inclinations. I am sure my self you'll take the best Methods for Effecting thereof," he wrote. In other parts of the letter, Vaudreuil implied that he was not in communication with the governor or commanders of New York and thus had to rely on his correspondence with Albany to conduct the delicate prisoner negotiations.¹¹⁵ Just as they had done in King William's War, Albany's elites managed the conduct of the war and its sensitive diplomacy themselves, reaching out to French officials, and acting as intermediaries in prisoner exchanges between French Canada and New England.

For most of Albany's townspeople, wartime meant heightened fears, greater restrictions, the financial burden of heavy taxes, the nuisance of quartering soldiers, and the risk of accident. The town government became preoccupied with fire hazards, issuing multiple ordinances regarding chimneys, stacks of hay, the cleanliness of the streets, the availability of water, and admonishing the inhabitants to leave the hooks and ladder at the church, where they were stored in case of an emergency.¹¹⁶ War made Albany a literal powder keg; the presence of excess gunpowder carried an extreme risk of fire or explosion. After all, accidents did happen. John Cook, who resided with a woman named Catelyntie Abrahamsz, was killed when a cannon exploded at the fort in 1694. Abrahamsz petitioned the court for letters of administration to settle Cook's estate and, presumably, dispose of his effects.¹¹⁷ Though Albany's elites

¹¹⁵ Philippe de Rigaud Vaudreuil to [Kiliaen van Rensselaer], [ca. late 1709 or 1710], Van Rensselaer Manor Papers, Box 9, Folder 48, New York State Library, Albany, NY. The letter is badly fire damaged and does not include a date or address. Its presence among the correspondence of Kiliaen van Rensselaer suggests that the letter was addressed to him, but it may have been intended for someone else.

¹¹⁶ See, for example, *AA*, IV, 111-112 (fire masters to inspect chimneys), 112 (clear the streets), 122 (hooks and ladders).

¹¹⁷ *AA*, II, 131.

complained incessantly to the colonial government about the burdens of financing the war effort from their own coffers, they also benefitted from imperial conflicts and took pride in Albany's role in attempting to defeat the French in Canada. The crown bestowed honors upon them—Peter Schuyler achieved the rank of colonel during King William's War—and elites used symbolic gestures to show their support of the wars. In 1709, Schuyler wrote a receipt for Kiliaen van Rensselaer for a loan he made in service of a planned Canadian expedition: "one pece of Brass ordnance Carr[y]ing a ball of three... [c]ast att Amsterdam in the year of our Lord one thousand [six hundr]ed and thirty, having the West India Companys arms."¹¹⁸ Van Rensselaer donated his heirloom cannon to serve the Albany-led Canada expedition; Cook died in an accidental explosion and left his landlady to sort out his affairs. English soldiers, Albany's poor, and, of course, Haudenosaunee peoples had to bear the brunt of the wars' costs, violence, even accidents and misfortunes. For the region's elite, imperial wars presented opportunities for glory and demonstrations of loyalty that mitigated the financial expenses of armed conflict.

Though wartime heaped its share of burdens on Albany's poor and middling residents, the trade ordinances and their enforcement were somewhat relaxed during the early Anglo-French wars. The overall structure of the region's political economy and trade regulations ultimately endured, but the era saw some attempts to repeal portions of the laws, only to have them renewed when peace returned to the region. One notable change was that Mohawk and "River" Indians were now excepted from the prohibition against having Native peoples in one's

¹¹⁸ Certificate of Colonel Schuyler concerning ordnance taken from the estate of Kiliaen van Rensselaer, August 25, 1709, Van Rensselaer Manor Papers, Box 24, Folder 8, New York State Library, Albany, NY.

home, whereas before only sachems had been exempted from the policy.¹¹⁹ This change was a significant benefit to all who participated in the small-scale, intimate exchange economy with Albany's closest neighbors, and prosecutions for illegal trading seem to have declined as a result. The exemption was perhaps a small gesture to the overtaxed populace, and it represented the fur trade's changing geography. Elites now set their sights on the new markets opening up to Albany's north and west, and monopolizing all commerce with their neighbors—by that point, a tiny fraction of the trade—was no longer necessary.¹²⁰ Further, the wartime needs of alliance and military support encouraged some intercultural social barriers to break down, as demonstrated by Dellius's missionary efforts and the planned settlement of Tiononodorge.

In the period between the wars, the town decided to rehabilitate the Indigenous lodging houses that had fallen into disrepair. The sorry state of the houses led town leaders to loosen the enforcement of trade ordinances, but with King William's War over, they sought to reestablish the social boundaries that had been relaxed in wartime. Evert Wendell petitioned the court to ask that a new lodging house be built closer to his home, but the court flatly declined his request. When it came time to repair the existing houses, Wendell refused to pay his share, telling the court that the two existing houses, being on the other side of town from his home, were "Prejudicial to him." The justices fined him 9s and issued a warrant in case he was unwilling to pay the fee.¹²¹ Even such a blatant act of insolence earned Wendell the bare minimum

¹¹⁹ See, for example, *AA*, V, 177-118. The "River Indians" were, at that time, a diverse group of Mahicans, Munsee-speaking peoples, and New England's Indigenous refugees living in Schaghticoke. For more on these groups in the early eighteenth century, see Tom Arne Midtrød, *The Memory of All Ancient Customs: Native American Diplomacy in the Colonial Hudson Valley* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012), 122-165.

¹²⁰ Norton, *Fur Trade in Colonial New York*, 152-173; Trelease, *Indian Affairs in Colonial New York*, 356-363.

¹²¹ *AA*, IV, 177 (petition); *AA*, V, 117-120, 118 (quotation).

punishment, just as his uncle had received a nominal fine for hiring a broker to trade at Onondaga. Elites, it seems, could defy the court's orders, expand their access to markets through smuggling, and avoid prosecution by relying on their reputation and status to keep them out of trouble.

Conclusion

Continuity was like gravity for colonial Albany; it always pulled the town toward the status quo even during periods that ought to have been characterized by upheaval and transformation. The era of Anglo-French wars was no different. The dramatic standoff during Leisler's uprising did not result in lasting change for the town, and the members of the convention remained in power for much of King William's War. The same men who orchestrated the standoff were determined to maintain their roles in town leadership, and they successfully localized the organization and management of the war effort from Albany after the attack on Schenectady. At the same time, Peter Schuyler, Dirck Wessells, and Domine Godefridus Dellius undertook efforts to change the essence of the Albany-Mohawk relationship through religious conversion, to demonstrate Mohawk dependency in the planned resettlement at Tiononodorage, and, eventually, the scheming toward the complete absorption of Mohawk lands into the town. These machinations failed and were quickly papered over by Bellomont's promises to the Mohawks that they would have their land forever. His lies took years to come to light, but once revealed, Mohawks swiftly resisted the crown's authority to grant their territory to the Palatines, forcing Governor Hunter to acknowledge their ownership of the parcels. Bellomont and other colonial officials may have assumed they could take advantage of the

confusion surrounding the grants to keep the land for the crown, but the Mohawks did not forget his promises.

In 1703, six years after the Delliuss scandal unfolded, Schuyler, Wessells, John Johnson Bleecker, and Johannes Abel purchased land adjacent to Rensselaerswijck that stretched, “into the woods far [four?] English miles.” The land was not within Iroquoia, nor did it threaten Albany’s monopoly, and thus the town assented to the sale, the record of which was signed by Albert Ryckman, the mayor, and Johannes Cuyler, a justice of the peace.¹²² Schuyler and his colleagues had finally obtained an expansive land grant to satisfy their financial interests, even if their larger designs of reorienting the Hudson River region had to be put aside. Just as their forebears had done, Albany’s elite merchants reinvested their fur trade profits into land, which had long surpassed furs as the region’s most valuable commodity. Despite the town’s remarkable continuity over a century of trade and sixty years of settlement, change was headed to Albany and the upper Hudson River region, where the land itself would become a diplomatic battleground. Haudenosaunee peoples who, by 1713 had enjoyed a decade of neutrality, faced increasing pressure to sell their lands, as demonstrated by the efforts to grant Mohawk territories to the Palatines. Such pressures would only grow exponentially in the coming decades.¹²³

In the trade ordinances, the signs of changes to come were just starting to appear. In 1703, the mayor and aldermen issued a proclamation outlawing the practice of selling liquor to

¹²² Agreement concerning the bounds of West Hook, Johannes Cuyler, October 2, 1703, American Indian Collection MS 322, Box 1, Folder 2, NYHS.

¹²³ Daniel K. Richter, *Before the Revolution: America’s Ancient Past* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2011), 369-383; Preston, *Texture of Contact*, 116-146; Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 271-275. For Indigenous conceptions of “native space” and the battle for sovereignty in the eighteenth century, see Lisa Brooks, *The Common Pot: The Recovery of Native Space in the Northeast* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), especially 64-162.

Native peoples and using their clothing or arms as security. The ordinance came during a brief moment when the alcohol trade was legalized—it would vacillate between licit and illicit throughout the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries—but the town government drew a line when it came to actually taking the clothes off of Indigenous peoples’ backs, a practice “to the great disadvantage of her Majesties interest and the good of this Country.”¹²⁴ The ordinance is striking because of the sorrowful transactions it depicts, images of men and women willing to secure their alcohol debts with their own clothing and personal firearms. Laws such as this one underscore the ways in which European imperialism rent asunder the fabric of Indigenous societies, and the Haudenosaunee were no exception to the devastation of colonialism, though they were able to mitigate its worst effects longer than other nations.¹²⁵ For all the stability created by Albany’s status quo—the peculiar two-tiered system of political economy that developed out of the region’s early economic contests—the presence of Dutch and English peoples in the upper Hudson River region would inevitably alter the trajectory of the lives of Haudenosaunee peoples, even after they achieved neutrality in 1701.

The late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries ushered in a crucially important era for the underground level of the region’s political economy. In a time when scandal threatened the foundations of the Anglo-Dutch-Haudenosaunee partnership, when war and rivalry sought to carve up the region into defined territories of imperial power containing loyal subjects and subjugated peoples, the Haudenosaunee created in their neutrality policy a release valve for the upper Hudson River region. Haudenosaunee neutrality opened up new potential markets for

¹²⁴ *AA*, IV, 181.

¹²⁵ Peter C. Mancall, *Deadly Medicine: Indians and Alcohol in Early America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), 91-100, 155-164; Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 263-269.

smugglers, and even Albany's elite merchants became active participants in an underground exchange economy that knitted together Laurentian and League Haudenosaunee peoples, western Native peoples, and Euro-American settlers. The town's leadership deployed these networks to circulate intelligence, negotiate peace, and broker prisoner exchanges. Albany's smuggling networks provided the town with a crucial advantage that ensured local leaders would maintain their authority over the war effort. Indeed, new smuggling networks created a counterpoint to empire by resisting the territorial boundaries worked out in London and Paris and the policies directed from New York. They maintained, through the interconnected Indigenous conceptions of trade and diplomacy, informal bonds that nurtured their partnerships when imperial wars tested the loyalties of alliance. With the British and French empires pulling the Haudenosaunee in either direction, trying to convince them to join one side or the other, smugglers worked within Haudenosaunee neutrality and autonomy to maintain ties with Albany.¹²⁶ When the formal level of regional authority and diplomacy became too chaotic, the underground exchange economy was there, just as it has always been, to stabilize relationships and nurture the bonds of peace on the smallest, most intimate levels.

¹²⁶ For smuggling, neutrality, and diplomacy in the years following Queen Anne's War, see Tesdahl, "Price of Empire," especially 50-62, 95-162. See also Noel, "'Fertile with Fine Talk,'" 208-216; Norton, *Fur Trade in Colonial New York*, 121-151.

EPILOGUE: ON FORGERIES AND ANCIENT HOUSES (1613-2013)

I embarked on my archival research in Albany in 2013, at an unusual time when the Dutch-Haudenosaunee relationship of the seventeenth century made its way into local newspaper headlines. A planned celebration of the Tawagonshi Treaty's four-hundredth anniversary frustrated local and prominent historians who had, in 1987, declared the treaty a fake. They believed their extensive analysis of the treaty document—a Photostat copy and a transcription from the text's originator—had closed the “final chapter” on the matter, but the treaty and the promises it contained remained, for the Onondaga, important evidence of Haudenosaunee sovereignty during the colonial era. The Onondaga keep the document now, and maintain that it is the earliest example of formal agreement between the Haudenosaunee nations and European colonists.¹

The controversy that swirled around the document reopened old wounds and revived conversations about Indigenous ways of knowing, about colonial texts juxtaposed with oral histories and traditions, about autonomy and betrayal. The debates that took place around the anniversary transported the participants back to the pain and betrayal of the seventeenth century. Declaring the treaty fake, from the Onondaga perspective, evoked the same kind of trickery used by Delliis and Schuyler, Bellomont and Fletcher, to declare that something the Haudenosaunee

¹ James M. Odatto, “Is Wampum Proof of Deal,” *Albany Times Union*, January 1, 2013, Van Loon Collection, New York State Library, Albany, NY; Robert Venables and Onondaga Nation, “An Analysis of the 1613 Tawagonshi Treaty,” September 9, 2012, <http://www.onondaganation.org/history/2012/an-analysis-of-the-1613-tawagonshi-treaty/> (accessed 4/1/2018); Glenn Coin, “400 years later, a legendary Iroquois treaty comes under attack,” August 9, 2012, http://www.syracuse.com/news/index.ssf/2012/08/400_years_later_a_legendary_ir.html (accessed 2/13/2013); Charles Gehring, William A. Starna, and William N. Fenton, “The Tawagonshi Treaty of 1613: The Final Chapter,” *New York History* 68, no. 4 (October 1987): 373–93.

knew to be true was not, in fact, true, according to the official, accepted documentary record.²

Anger clouded the discussions of the Tawagonshi Treaty in 2013, and the question of a single document's authenticity spoiled a moment when Albany and the Haudenosaunee nations might have engaged in a conversation about their shared history. Historians could have been vital participants in a public reckoning with the messy past instead of conjuring the long history of Euro-American betrayal.

A group of historians and historical linguists chose to debate various aspects of the Tawagonshi Treaty in an issue of the *Journal of Early American History*—an academic, rather than public, setting. They considered the treaty text and its peculiarities of language, the history of Dutch treaty-making and agreement in the early seventeenth century, the oral traditions and documented examples of Haudenosaunee peoples referring to the spirit of the agreement if not the treaty text itself.³ Jon Parmenter, who wrote an essay contributing to this academic conversation, reproduces examples of *kaswentha* recitations from various points in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries to demonstrate the remarkable continuity with which Haudenosaunee leaders articulated their longstanding relationship with colonists in the upper Hudson River region. With the examples of *kaswentha* recitations, he traces a single lineage of tradition and language of partnership from the Dutch to the English to the United

² Jon Parmenter, "The Meaning of *Kaswentha* and the Two Row Wampum Belt in Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) History: Can Indigenous Oral Tradition be Reconciled with the Documentary Record?" *Journal of Early American History* 3, no. 1 (2013): 98-99.

³ Harrie Hermkens, Jan Noordegraaf, and Nicoline van der Sijs, "The Tawagonshi Tale: Can Linguistic Analysis Prove the Tawagonshi Treaty to be a Forgery?" *Journal of Early American History* 3, no. 1 (2013): 9-42; Mark Meuwese, "The States General and the Stadholder: Dutch Diplomatic Practices in the Atlantic World before the West India Company," *Journal of Early American History* 3, no. 1 (2013): 43-58; Paul Otto, "Wampum, Tawagonshi, and the Two Row Belt," *Journal of Early American History* 3, no. 1 (2013): 110-125.

States. His analysis of *kaswentha* recitations concludes that the Haudenosaunee conceived of their relationship to the Euro-Americans on their borders in terms of two ships or canoes gliding alongside one another, and that these conceptions are in agreement with a wampum belt known as the Two-Row Wampum, as well as the basic structure of the Tawagonshi Treaty. The myopic focus on a single forged text, he argues, misses the long history of Haudenosaunee peoples describing their agreements using the same language, repeating the same themes and imagery over and over again. The treaty is beside the point, then, because the *kaswentha* tradition is evidence enough of the agreements made in the early decades of Dutch colonization in the upper Hudson River region.⁴

The anger and controversy, the academic and public debates that spoke past each other—all of these emotional conversations missed an opportunity to ask a question that has troubled me since I first sat down with the Fort Orange court records in Albany and Evert Wendell's account books in New York City: did the agreements articulated in *kaswentha* recitations and the Two-Row Wampum agree with the partnerships that bound seventeenth-century individuals to one another in their daily lives? The Tawagonshi commemoration ceremony included sailing two ships, running parallel to one another, down the Hudson River to New York City. This gesture reflected an ideal version of Haudenosaunee-Dutch partnerships agreed to among leaders and threaded into the Two-Row Wampum. These ideals were but one facet of the relationships that made Albany the "ancient house" of negotiation and council, trade and diplomacy, contest and intimacy, however. The Two-Row Wampum typified the upper level of the region's political

⁴ Parmenter, "The Meaning of *Kaswentha*," 94-98 (analysis), 100-109 (recitations).

economy: the formal agreements reached at diplomatic meetings that enshrined the ideal of social distance.

Throughout the seventeenth century, individual Mohawks such as Karehadée, who secured her debt to Evert Wendell with six wampum strings in 1699, decided for themselves how best to conduct exchanges and diplomacy with the empires on their borders. They persisted in buying alcohol long after alcohol sales to Native peoples were outlawed in New Netherland. They encouraged the settlement of Schenectady just north and west of Albany, closer to existing Mohawk villages, and several Mohawk families moved to the town, converted to Christianity, and built lives among the Dutch. When the French burned Schenectady in 1689/90, still more Mohawks proposed a new village in which they could live nearer to Albany and receive religious instruction. Although these individuals likely felt the same sense of Haudenosaunee autonomy as their leaders—as some of their speeches would imply—they chose not to lead parallel lives toward parallel futures. Instead, they preferred the intimate exchanges and the relationships they built with informal diplomacy. They continued to trade wampum, even after the English declared its use in trade illegal and limited its function in interethnic encounter to formal diplomacy, exemplified by the Two-Row belt.

Colonial Albany looks different when considered in the context of the whole seventeenth century. It was an “ancient house” built according to local conditions, with its own, distinct political economy emerging over time as a result of contested authority to govern commerce and intimate exchanges that bound individual colonists and Indigenous peoples to one another. The two levels of political economy—large and small, formal and informal—struck a powerful balance that had to be maintained through consistent, local efforts on the part of elite merchants, poor/middling traders, and Mohawk leaders and individuals. The two levels were in constant

tension, and they created stability. The Two-Row Wampum and Karihadee's six wampum strings illustrate this concept of the dual-level political economy in tension and balance. The Two-Row Wampum was a necessary agreement, negotiated and renegotiated, disputed and smoothed over, among elite merchants and Mohawk leaders, that codified the notion of parallel lives and laid the foundation for Haudenosaunee autonomy enacted in 1701. At the same time, Karihadee's wampum strings bound her to Wendell, and him to an intimate form of exchange defined by Haudenosaunee notions of trade and the relationships it constructed and nourished. Elites and Mohawk leaders may have contested Karihadee's and Wendell's forms of agreement, but individual Mohawks and Dutch smugglers kept building these small-scale, informal alliances long after such transactions were declared illegal.

It may seem surprising that a place defined by contested authority and smuggling could rise to a position of such power in the borders between empires. The secret of Albany's balance lay in its ability, from the moment of its founding, to define its political economy according to particular local conditions. The ambivalence of the West India Company, the rupture from the United Provinces after English conquest, the ongoing Haudenosaunee mourning wars—all of these seventeenth-century events might have created upheaval and turmoil in the Dutch village, but they had the effect of isolating Beverwijck/Albany from larger imperial structures and allowing residents and Indigenous peoples to construct their own "ancient house."

In the case of wampum, the physical record speaks when the documentary record is silent, highlighting the persistence of the underground exchange economy. Archaeologists digging at the KeyCorp site in downtown Albany discovered among pottery and other expected objects of everyday life the implements of wampum manufacture, fragments of clam and conch shells, and a store of actual wampum beads. Dated to the mid-eighteenth century, this

archaeological evidence demonstrates that poor people living in the almshouse of the Dutch Reformed Church manufactured wampum decades after British colonial officials outlawed the trade. Archaeologists found similar evidence at the site of the blockhouse, which housed soldiers stationed at the fort.⁵ Wampum manufactured by Albany's poor and its soldiers would eventually end up in the hands of women like Karehadée and known smugglers like Wendell. They kept an exchange system alive outside the surveillance of colonial leaders and local magistrates, maintaining their small-scale transactions and intimate diplomacy. Their trade continued to knit individuals to one another, long after leaders assumed they had eradicated these troublesome exchanges and forged an understanding of parallel paths toward separate futures. Monopolies would never truly monopolize the trade, and the decisions of individuals limited the implementation of formal treaties and policies of social distance. The arrangements of parallel lives, of ships passing alongside one another, could not supplant the construction of Albany as the "ancient house" built from beaver pelts, casks of rum, and wampum strings.

⁵ Elizabeth S. Peña, "Making 'Money' The Old-Fashioned Way: Eighteenth-Century Wampum Production in Albany," in *People, Places, and Material Things: Historical Archaeology of Albany, New York*, ed. Charles L. Fisher, New York State Museum Bulletin #499 (Albany: University of the State of New York, 2003), 122-127.

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