BABEL ON THE HUDSON: COMMUNITY FORMATION IN DUTCH MANHATTAN

by

Karen Sivertsen

Department of History
Duke University

Date: _______________________
Approved:

___________________________
Peter H. Wood, Supervisor

___________________________
David Barry Gaspar

___________________________
Raymond Gavins

___________________________
Susan Thorne

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Doctor
of Philosophy in the Department of
History in the Graduate School
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2007
ABSTRACT

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Abstract

This dissertation focuses on New Amsterdam, the small port town at the tip of Manhattan Island that became the capital for the Dutch colony of New Netherland. It addresses two of the most entrenched stereotypes regarding New Netherland. One is the popular notion that religion never played an important role in New Netherland, since the colony was built upon commerce and economic considerations. The other is that community life and consciousness was stymied in Manhattan until New Netherland became an English colony. At the root of both stereotypes is the accepted perception that an intense and selfish drive for wealth, financial remuneration and self-advancement was the modus vivendi of New Netherland’s settlers and colonial officials. Consequently, they neither gave much thought to religion nor took time to foster a shared sense of community. The central aim of this dissertation is to demonstrate that Dutch Manhattan did develop a dynamic community life. It resulted from the difficulties encountered by both Europeans and Africans in trying to reconstruct in the New World aspects of societies they had left behind, and from the interactions of members of the Atlantic’s three racial groups in Dutch Manhattan. The other important aim is to demonstrate the role religion played in the community and in community formation by discussing how religion was utilized to determine one’s fitness for community membership and as a tool of colonization. Religion played a key role in the formation of alliances both within and outside the colony, and groups created spaces within the society for individuals to maintain and nurture practices that were not sanctioned by the larger community. This dissertation demonstrates that while the colony had its genesis as a trading venture, religiously infused ideas were at play during the early contact period prior to settlement. Furthermore, once the decision for permanent settlement was made, religion and religious considerations played a
prominent role in the internal contestations for control and figured prominently in the process of community formation. Aside from religion, this dissertation also explores the role of trade, contestations for control both within and outside the colony, and war in shaping and redefining the contours of community in Dutch Manhattan.
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Introduction

The Atlantic World was created by European conquest and exploitation of the Americas and portions of West Africa, and by the intermingling of peoples who shared a proximity to the Atlantic Ocean. The colonial societies that were formed in this new, ocean-connected Atlantic World resulted from the interactions and contestations of Native Americans, Europeans and Africans. These diverse colonies became unique cultural configurations, differing from one another and from the European societies that planted them. European lifeways and ideas were given new meanings, transformed by the exigencies and interactions of settlement life. After crossing the ocean, newcomers from Europe and Africa sought to reconstruct aspects of the societies they had left behind. But the Atlantic World encounter of Europeans, Africans and Native Americans created something new, which was inextricably tied to the working out of their experiences and interactions together. As Richard White reminds us, these contact situations were defined not only by violence, xenophobia, and a “failure to communicate,” they also led to new cultural formations and new understandings. The initial stage of encounter was defined by a rough balance of power between Native Americans and newcomers, the mutual need or desire for what the other possessed, and an inability by either side to mobilize enough force to compel the other to change or depart. While force and violence are hardly foreign to the process of creating and maintaining a “middle ground,” the critical element was mediation during this period of mutual and creative misunderstandings.¹

Not surprisingly, fear, paranoia, guile, dashed hopes, disappointments, death and distrust were all prevalent in this period of initial encounter. During the early years

of settlement, they were as much a part of the emerging society as were hope, trust, mutual understanding, amity and accommodation. After all, Native Americans, Africans and Europeans waged both inter- and intra-group struggles to gain dominance, or simply to survive. In this transforming Atlantic World, decisions of alliance were complex, and the phrase “the enemy of my enemy is my friend,” described much of the lived experience. Also contestations were often about whose vision of the emerging society would be realized. With such high stakes in this encounter, each side utilized all the tools at its disposal, whether technological, cultural or economic.

It is out of this quest for dominance that Dutch New Netherland gained its existence. This dissertation, entitled “Babel On the Hudson: Community Formation in Dutch Manhattan” focuses on New Netherland’s primary colonial center, New Amsterdam (or Dutch Manhattan). When focusing on Dutch Manhattan, one encounters numerous challenges familiar to those doing colonial research in the early modern period. The first challenge is that of extant primary sources. For those hoping to understand the history of the Manhattan-based colony, the great disaster occurred in 1821, when the government of the Netherlands, in an overly zealous fit of housekeeping, sold for scrap paper what remained of the archives of the Dutch East and West India Companies prior to 1700. In 1841, an American agent named John Romeyn Brodhead, working on behalf of New York State, went to the Netherlands in search of documentary material on the Dutch colony and found to his surprise and regret that all the documents and papers belonging to the old East and West India Companies had vanished. E. B. O’Callaghan carried out the important task of translating and compiling the records discovered by Brodhead in various archives in Holland, Britain and France. Since 1861, these have been available to the public in the fifteen-volume collection entitled

Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York.
Fortunately, to fill this evidentiary chasm, scholars have been able to rely on another large mass of relevant documents: the *Ecclesiastical Records of the State of New York* and the official records of the province of New York, which consists of twelve thousand pages dating from the colony’s Dutch period. The records of the province include the colony’s Council Minutes dating from 1638, and correspondences between colonial officials in New Netherland and the Directors of the Dutch West India Company in Holland. While some of the colony’s official records were earlier translated and compiled by Arnold J. F. van Laer, it is only since the 1970s that Charles Gehring, of the New Netherland Project located at the New York State Library, has been translating the bulk of these records, after centuries of its neglect. It is upon all these documents that much of this dissertation relies. Added to this body of evidence is the English translation of other documents that have either been discovered in private collections or have been stumbled upon by Dutch scholars at the National Archives in Holland. Collectively, these documents have been instrumental in assisting scholars to render a more honest portrayal of New Netherland and its inhabitants. The revisions have included some of the most basic facts of the colony, such as Peter Minuit was not the first Director-General of the colony, and also that Jonas Michaëlius was the first Dutch Reformed minister who arrived in 1628. But it also includes providing a more detailed and richer portrayal of the lived experiences of the inhabitants of New Netherland, whether Native American, European or African.

In the past, as a result of the narrow documentary base, many scholars of early New York history have eschewed the Dutch period, limiting their coverage to a perfunctory acknowledgment of early Dutch possession and then a quick fast-forward to the English period. This has left the faulty impression that meaningful New York history began with the period of English colonization, and the period before that was
insignificant. The result has been that New Netherland’s historiography has been dominated by a number of American scholars of Dutch descent, such as Arnold J. F. van Laer, who for them the professional was intertwined with the personal. Their scholarship was motivated as much by the desire to uncover the history of a colony whose capital Manhattan, as one recently published book proclaimed, became the “The Island At The Center of the World,” but also as a personal crusade to rescue the contributions of their ancestors to American society, culture and history.

However, there were also scholars, such as Peter Christoph, Joyce Goodfriend, Charles Gehring, Kenn Stryker-Rodda, and Cynthia J. van Zandt, who saw the potential reward in working in a field that is not yet crowded, and who accepted the challenge to fill the gap left by the omissions and cursory treatment of previous scholars. Also added to this list of emerging scholarship on Dutch New York is the work of an increasing number of Dutch scholars who were either trained in American institutions, have accepted appointments at American institutions or who have been collaborating with scholars in America in order to rescue New York’s early history as a Dutch colony from obscurity. Among these scholars are Mark Meuwese, Janny Venema, Willem Frijhoff, Jaap Jacobs, Eric Nooter, Johannes Postma, Dennis J. Maika, David William Voorhees and Victor Enthoven, to name a few. Collectively, these scholars realize that in order to understand fully the contours and foundation of what unfolded during New York’s English period one needs to fully understand what transpired during its Dutch period – the two are inextricably linked. This dissertation is part of the emerging scholarship seeking to illuminate Manhattan’s important and intriguing Dutch past and contribution to New York’s history.
“Babel On The Hudson” is a study of how religion and religiously infused ideas were deployed in the construction of community in Dutch Manhattan. It begins with the assumption that all settlers, including the representatives of the Dutch Reformed Church and those of the Dutch West India Company, arrived in New Netherland with a pre-existent view of the ideal society. They possessed both a notion of who should be members of the community and the responsibilities of community membership. All settlers, however, did not share the same ideas. One of the major challenges facing every Atlantic World society was how to create bonds of shared values, aspirations and responsibilities. Colonial settlers were not initially unified, nor was it inevitable that they would one day share common interests and fears. Community, like most other things in New World colonies, had to be forged. And religion and religiously infused ideas, it is argued, were part of this forging process.

That Dutch Manhattan was a vibrant and dynamic community sounds like a simple enough assertion. However, a deeply entrenched perception in the historiography of Manhattan, and New Netherland in general, is that it was from the beginning an unorganized, ad hoc settlement, not so much mismanaged as unsupervised; that it was allowed to grow in a state of near anarchy, a veritable picture of perfect disarray until the English came in and began to make it function. One of the central aims of this study is to dispel this notion and demonstrate the complexities that defined Dutch Manhattan’s community life – the difficulties encountered in trying to reconstruct in the New World, aspects of societies left behind; the social, cultural, and communal outcome of the interactions of members of the Atlantic’s three racial groups in Dutch Manhattan; the emergence of factions and disputes; the communal outcome of the various contestations, both within Dutch Manhattan’s society and those with competing European nations and colonies. Another aim of the dissertation, which is
related to the first, is to illuminate the role religion played in the community. Some of the questions addressed are focused on the idea of the fellowship. How did the settlers go about creating religious practices that were responsive to their needs, and what factors affected the unfolding process of religious creation and transformation? Were there spaces within the society for individuals to nurture practices that were not sanctioned by the larger community, and how was religion utilized as a tool of colonization? Did religion play a role in the formation of alliances both within the colony, and, how did religion help to shape relations with inhabitants of other colonies, who were their competitors or even enemies?

One of the most enduring perceptions of New Netherland that this study addresses is the notion that the colony was established primarily around commerce and worldly gain, with religion remaining only an afterthought. The prevailing perception has been that New Netherland began as an economically driven extractive venture aimed at the lucrative fur trade; and that settlement of the colony was reluctantly pursued only as a means of securing the Dutch West India Company’s claim to the region, and ultimately its monopoly of the region’s fur trade. According to this line of argument, because of the economic basis of settlement, religion and religious considerations never figured dominantly in the colony’s history. Contrary to this prevailing argument, this dissertation demonstrates that while the colony had its genesis as a trading venture, once the decision for permanent settlement was made, religion and religious considerations played a prominent role in the internal contestations for control. And as the title of this study indicates, religion also figured prominently in the process of community formation.

Since this study focuses on community formation, it begs the question: What is a community? How is it that the notion of “community” is herein employed?
Anthropologists and sociologists have grappled with the definition of community. For them, human society is founded upon, first, the family, and second, collective or communal activity by groups of families. There are at least three elements that have emerged concerning the definition of community. First, community is a social unit of which space is an integral part. For those who take this approach, “community is a place, a relatively small one.” Next, “community indicates a configuration as to way of life, both as to how people do things and what they want – their institutions and collective goals.” And third, is the notion of collective action. That is, “persons in a community should not only be able to, but frequently do act together in the common concerns of life.” The essentials of community then, are defined in terms of the (1) the space it occupies, (2) the way of life accepted as common by its inhabitants, and (3) the collective actions chosen or forced by conditions upon those inhabitants, and (4) the external associations which, by way of particular persons, link the community to larger social units or societies.  

Although, this definition of community emphasizes the notion of a group of individuals tied together through bonds of shared values, aspirations and responsibilities, colonial settlers were neither by nature unified nor did they inevitably share common interests and fears. Not only permanent settlers, whether African or European, but the more transient European residents in the colonies tended to be occupied with social and political concerns that often pitted them against policy makers in the Metropole, institutional representatives within the colony, and even against other colonized inhabitants. This was true whether one is examining Manhattan, Virginia or New England. Also while space – the occupancy of a given area defined with reference

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to specific boundaries – is an essential element of the understanding of community that
is deployed in this study, those living within such boundaries did not necessarily
constitute communities. All four essential elements of the definition are interrelated.
Spatial boundaries of community are determined by the outer limits of the common way
of life recognized by inhabitants who share common practices and conventions.

The community, therefore, can be said to be bounded by virtue of its recognition
of itself. However, the community, conceived as a self-recognizing area of common life
and action, could and did redefine itself. An important aspect of this process of
redefinition was often determined by whom the civil and religious leaders, and leading
citizens considered legitimate and whom they did not. So, both geographically and
socially, community definition was quite fluid. This fluidity was also as much a
reflection of the unsettled nature of life in the colony and the constant movement of
peoples that defined the Atlantic World, as it was a factor of the frequent contestation of
borders and shifting notions of what constituted the borderlands.

Although the community, as the inhabitants defined it, was subject to change,
from the standpoint of the individual the recognized area of common life and activity –
that is, the community – was spread concentrically outward from the family. The family
was the basis of community, and within the family, individuals were socialized to the
ways of the community. But also, the presence of one’s family within a particular
location and the decision to begin a family were instrumental in anchoring individuals
to the evolving community.

This study consists of nine chapters divided into four parts. Part I entitled “Red,
White and Black,” includes Chapters One through Three. It explores the religious
heritages of Manhattan’s three ethnic groups in the early seventeenth century, using the known details of a representative member of each group to facilitate our understanding of the religious and cultural baggage that each group brought to the encounter situation. In order to understand how each group was transformed by sustained interaction, one must first understand the cultural and ideational background of each group prior to encounter. Therefore, Chapter One examines what is known of Jonas Michaëlius and the religious ideas he brought with him across the Atlantic, as reflected in the extant letters he would later write from Manhattan. In so doing, it attempts to uncover some of the challenges confronting the Dutch in their attempt to create a community and transfer their way of life and their religious beliefs to Manhattan. This chapter argues that the ongoing controversy and division within the Dutch Reformed Church between Remonstrant supporters of Arminius and Counter-Remonstrant proponents of Gomarus had left Jonas Michaëlius and the other Dutch immigrants two divergent views on the subject of church-state relations and the role of religion in the community. These sharply divergent views, along with the ideas about wild men, were imported with the people to Manhattan and helped shape the religious and social milieu and the experiences of the inhabitants, both Native and transplanted.

Chapter Two, entitled “Orson’s World: Native Americans in the Period of Early Dutch Contact,” discusses the religious and cultural heritage of the Native American groups in the vicinity of Manhattan during the early Dutch contact period from 1609 to 1623, when both Natives and Europeans found themselves interacting and negotiating with people from starkly different backgrounds. It relies on research findings of archaeologists, ethnographers, historians and anthropologists. By piecing together diverse bits of evidence, it is possible to reconstruct a reasonable narrative of the broad outlines of life for Orson and Manhattan’s other Native inhabitants during the early
contact period. Focusing upon Orson’s life affords us an invaluable glimpse into the role of religious and cultural worldviews during the early contact period in the vicinity of Manhattan Island. Through a discussion of Orson’s experience it was hoped to gain a better understanding of the often hidden cultural and religious stimuli behind the hostile eruptions that occurred as peoples of differing religious and cultural worldviews struggled to coexist in Manhattan.

Chapter Three, entitled “Anna van Angola’s Heritage,” discusses some of the cultural elements and experiences the enslaved Africans brought to bear in adapting to each other, members of other racial groups, and their new environment. It also discusses the religious heritage and beliefs that they left behind in Africa and later attempted to re-create in Manhattan.\(^3\) Using available Dutch West India Company’s records of Dutch slave raiding activities in Africa and the Americas, and extant baptismal, marriage and land records, an attempt is made to reconstruct some of the contours of the life of Anna van Angola, one of Manhattan’s charter African settlers who arrived in the colony as a slave of the Dutch West India Company. It emphasizes the importance of interaction, both as a means of coping with the traumatic elements of the Middle Passage and later in Manhattan as an impetus to community formation.

Part II, entitled “Early Contact and Settlement,” includes Chapters Four and Five. Chapter Four, entitled “Planting the Seeds of the Old World in Manhattan’s New World Soil,” discusses what transpired both culturally and socially when Native Americans,

Europeans and Africans began living together on a more permanent and sustained basis. It focuses on the initial years between 1624, when the first settlers arrived in New Netherland from Holland, and 1632, when the first ordained minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, Jonas Michaëlius, returned to Holland after serving his term of duty. It argues that like Africans during the Middle Passage, Europeans also experienced varying degrees of trauma, although of a different intensity, during their transatlantic journey. They too stumbled upon social interaction as a means of dealing with the various difficulties of their voyage. Europeans, like Africans, formed relationships and bonds during their transatlantic voyage. It explores the tensions between the desire to reconstruct the religious and cultural past on new soil, and the need to address or take into account various aspects of the new situation. It also looks at the factors that affected the religious experiences and communal life of both Natives and newcomers during this period. While Africans and Europeans sought to reconstruct or recreate familial, community and cultural institutions, Native Americans sought ways to respond creatively to the presence of these newcomers in their midst while maintaining as much of their “old ways” as possible.

Chapter Five, entitled “Factions, Social Control and Religion,” covers the brief period from 1633 to 1638, when Wouter van Twiller was Director-General of the colony. It discusses the internal structure of Manhattan’s evolving community, the various webs of interaction and the spheres of influence during Reverend Everardus Bogardus’ tenure as minister of New Netherland, and the resultant tensions and strains that emerge as part of this stage of community development. It also focuses on the role played by Holland’s divided religious heritage, since two sharply divergent views on the subject of church-state relations served to complicate the process of community formation. Reverend Bogardus hoped to create a harmonious society comprised of European
settlers, enslaved and freed Africans and Native Americans united under the umbrella of the Dutch Reformed Church, but the unsettled nature of the colony and his need to accommodate a multi-ethnic and religiously plural population would frustrate his plans. Chapter Five also argues that the rules of the Middle Ground were still operative during Wouter van Twiller’s administration. And while Richard White’s Middle Ground emphasizes mediation, accommodation and the inability of either side to commandeer enough force to compel the other to change, this chapter exposes the festering anger that existed just beneath the surface of such existence of accommodation. It argues that while the Europeans were fairly unified in their low estimation of Native Americans and Native religion, they were not alone in harboring ethnocentric sentiments during the early settlement period. Native Americans were equally confident that their culture and religion was superior, and the Natives far outnumbered the colonists. One can only imagine the anger, humiliation and frustration felt by the settlers – perceiving themselves superior to the Natives, yet still having to depend on them to meet their basic survival needs, and adding insult to injury they were constantly demeaned and laughed at by the Natives. By the time that Willem Kieft succeeded Wouter van Twiller as Director-General of New Netherland, the Native American-European relationship in Dutch Manhattan had been smoldering for more than a decade and the atmosphere was primed for violent eruption.

Part III, entitled “An Uneasy Connection” includes Chapters Six and Seven. Chapters Six and Seven, respectively entitled “Community Development and the Creation of an Uneasy Connection” and “An Uneasy Connection Unveiled,” span the period 1639-1647. Together, they discuss the war that erupted in 1641, once the facade of peace and accommodation that had marked previous administrations was finally ripped asunder during Willem Kieft’s administration. Kieft’s War, or the First Dutch-
Munsee War, reveals the horrific results that can ensue when anger is allowed to fester for years, especially anger engendered when one’s sense of superiority is blatantly challenged. The factors that led to Kieft’s War are discussed and how it affected community formation and awareness, and the colonists’ self-perception and identity. Chapter Six describes the emerging webs of interactions that existed in the colony between Native Americans and the settlers. It discusses the various means employed by the colonial authorities to bolster the population of settlers, and the factors that created an environment in Manhattan that became ripe for violent explosion. Chapter Seven utilizes the colony’s baptismal and marriage records to discuss various aspects of the emerging community, and how connections and alliances were solidified. It discusses the effect that the increased population had on Native-settler relationships, and the role of the Netherlands’ religious heritage in the fledgling community. It also discusses the ways in which the enslaved Africans went about creating a community within the confines of their lives as enslaved laborers.

Part IV, entitled “Reformation, Rivalries and Relinquishment” includes Chapters Eight and Nine. Chapters Eight and Nine cover the period 1647-1664 and examines Peter Stuyvesant’s attempt to reshape the community in order to create a Calvinist colony in Manhattan. These two chapters are respectively entitled “Community Reformation and Community Contestations” and “Peter Stuyvesant and the Striving for Dutch Hegemony in Manhattan.” Chapter Eight discusses Stuyvesant’s reforming agenda in the colony and its effect on the factions already present in the colony. It demonstrates the increased level of community consciousness that had emerged in the colony after Kieft’s War, and the resulting tensions that erupted between the inhabitants and the officials of the Dutch West India Company, both in New Netherland and in Holland. It also discusses the role that Holland’s divergent religious heritage played in
creating factions that almost succeeded in wrestling control of the colony from the Dutch West India Company. Chapter Nine discusses the colony’s increasingly diverse population and its effect on Stuyvesant’s attempt to reshape the colony into a Calvinist society. It discusses the effect that this diversity had on his plans to reform the society, the internal and external webs of interactions and associations that he was forced to form in order to maintain Dutch control of New Netherland. Together, these two chapters demonstrate that on the eve of the colony’s surrender to English forces, Manhattan was a vibrant but volatile society. Part IV demonstrates that the eventual transfer of control was due both to the superiority of the English forces and the contentious diversity of the inhabitants of New Netherland. They frustrated Stuyvesant’s attempt to establish a firmer Dutch hegemony in the region. On the whole, “Babel On The Hudson” demonstrates that Manhattan was a thriving community whose vibrancy and form was the end result of the interactions between the meeting of three peoples – Africans, Europeans and Native Americans.
I.

RED, WHITE AND BLACK
1. Jonas Michaëlius and The Dutch Religious Heritage

1.1

Sir Walter Raleigh, the Elizabethan adventurer, once asserted that “whosoever commands the sea commands the trade; whosoever commands the trade of the world commands the riches of the world....”¹ For decades, the truth of this statement was borne out in the success of the Spanish empire, which controlled the vast wealth of the New World as a result of the explorations and voyages it underwrote in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. However, during the late sixteenth century a composite of seven small provinces in the Netherlands (Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht, Guelders, Overijssel, Friesland and Groningen) had united in an effort to achieve independence from Spanish domination. During the seventeenth century, a period commonly referred to as the Netherlands’ “Golden Age,” the Dutch Republic experienced enormous and rapid economic growth spurred by its increasing command of the sea and expanding trade network.

The arduous and ongoing revolt for independence from Spain began in the late 1560’s. Within less than three decades, the Netherlands had attained a level of wealth and power that seemed almost miraculous for such a small domain of upstart status. Nothing proved more central to this rapid rise than access to the sea. In the seventeenth century, Amsterdam, the Republic’s chief port, developed into one of Europe’s principal entrepôt in the flow of trade goods. Ships from various Dutch cities around the Zuiderzee participated in this international trade; their incessant burgeoning commerce

helped to strengthen the economic growth of Amsterdam and the surrounding cities. Within Holland’s robust economy, Texel, the largest and southernmost of the Republic’s Frisian Islands, enjoyed a position of great prominence. Texel’s roadstead provided a starting point for many Dutch voyages of discovery, war and trade. Every year, scores of oceangoing ships made final preparations there and awaited advantageous winds to set out to sea. Ships departing from towns on the Zuiderzee dropped anchor at Texel’s roadstead before setting sail for the East Indies, the Americas, Africa, and various European countries. Waiting there for favorable winds became a routine element of departure, but conditions could become dangerous in bad weather. During storms, the crowded roadstead became quite perilous, and it was not uncommon for accidents to occur among the anchored ships. The most notorious disaster occurred on December 24, 1593. Nearly 200 vessels were lost and a thousand people drowned that Christmas Eve, when several ships broke loose from their anchors and collided with other ships.

A generation later, on January 24, 1628, the Dutch ship *Three Kings*, bound for North America, was among the many vessels waiting for suitable weather in Texel’s roadstead. Its destination was Manhattan Island (later called New Amsterdam) in the embryonic Dutch colony of New Netherland. *Three Kings* was waiting in Texel’s roadstead with a large fleet of vessels since a spell of inclement winter weather had prevented its departure. 2 Suddenly, a “great storm” descended on the anchorage, and rumors spread quickly ashore that many had perished “in the port of the fatherland.”

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2 Isaac Newton Phelps Stokes, ed. *The Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498-1909* (Union, New Jersey: The Lawbook Exchange, Ltd., 1998), Vol. 4: 72. “Thunder and wind storms from October until the 23d of January were so frequent that there are few who have witnessed the like before. Ships were seen at the Texel that had three times cut down their masts and set them up again. Finally, after the wind had blown mostly from the west and the north, it veered on the 23d to the north-east, whereof the fleet, 210 strong, took due notice and so put to sea.” See also Jonas Michaelius, *Letter of Reverend Jonas Michaelius* in J. Franklin Jameson, ed. *Narratives of New Netherland, 1609-1664* (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1953), 117-133.

For those huddled on the departing ships, the tempest raised vivid memories of the 1593 disaster.

Among the passengers aboard *Three Kings* was a middle-aged man, Reverend Jonas Michaëlius, his wife of sixteen years, their two young daughters, and a male servant. While the storm might have led some of the other passengers to have misgivings about their stalled voyage, Reverend Michaëlius remained determined to continue. In moments of uncertainty and challenge, he had found comfort in the promises of Romans 8:28. Waiting in Texel aboard the *Three Kings*, he probably repeated it several times to steel his resolve: “For all things work together for good to them that love Him.”4 That the vessel on which he was traveling was christened the *Three Kings* might also have been construed by him as further confirmation that God ordained his mission to Manhattan. For just as the three Kings or Magi of the Nativity story traveled to a distant land and were the first to proclaim the good news of the birth of the long-awaited Jewish Messiah and God-child, so too was he to be the first to proclaim and bring the good news of God to an unfamiliar and, as he would later describe, “wild country, without any society of our order.”5 God, he might have reasoned, would intervene to grant him a safe journey; he would not perish in that storm.

In the midst of this sea of stalled ships, Michaëlius impatiently waited to commence his new life that he believed God had purposefully destined for him. He had agreed to leave behind the familiarity and comfort of Holland to live amongst a strange people on Manhattan Island, ministering to a motley group of Walloons, Dutch, Africans, Native Americans and others of European extraction. It was an unusual assignment, but he may well have felt that every meaningful experience in his life prior to

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4 Eekhof, *Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland*, 108. This verse seems to be a favorite of Michaëlius as he references it repeatedly in his extant letters.

to this had been preparing him for this moment - this assignment. Since his birth in 1584, his life had intersected continuously with wider social, political and religious developments. As the Republic struggled into existence, his own life took some interesting shifts and detours. He had traveled across Europe and visited Africa; now he was setting out with his family for Manhattan.

In addition to the members of his household, Jonas Michaëlius carried with him something unseen by human eyes, which would influence his experience in the New World. Besides his worldly belongings, he also carried the trappings of his Dutch culture: a collection of ideas, mores, and religious beliefs, honed and nurtured in Holland, that he would rely on heavily in grappling with the chaos and challenges of his new frontier home. Born in the shadow of the Republic’s revolt, he was a product of Holland’s Calvinist religious system and the ideas and controversies that reverberated within it. But as the man chosen to be Manhattan’s first ordained minister, he was also a tool in perpetuating that system. In accepting the Dutch West India Company’s assignment, he had anticipated being a powerful instrument used by God to work miraculously in the lives of Manhattan’s inhabitants, both Native and newly settled. His was indeed a critical assignment: he had a mandate from the Consistory of the Dutch Reformed Church in Amsterdam to found and establish the first Dutch Reformed Church in New Netherland. Through him, he believed, the truth and virtues of the Dutch Reformed religion would be spread abroad in the hearts of the inhabitants, rendering them stronger Christians and more serviceable subjects to Holland and the DWIC.

Standing in the driving rain and sleet on the deck of the Three Kings during that stormy winter day in Texel, Jonas Michaëlius, was uncertain about when favorable wind would allow the vessel to leave port. But he was certain about a more personal matter:
that his destination was one towards greatness, purpose and service not only to God, but also to country. In a world full of signs and intimations, perhaps nothing fixed this notion in his mind more firmly than his wife’s “unusual, unexpected” pregnancy. To his seventeenth-century Calvinistic mindset, the event seemed miraculous; for she had always been of a “frail and very delicate constitution” and was now well beyond normal childbearing years. Now pregnant at age fifty, his wife’s unusual fecundity was seen as an omen of favorable blessing and fruitfulness for the pious reverend and his family in New Amsterdam. Her pregnancy seemed also to portend God’s immense favor toward him and his future ministry in New Amsterdam.

In his assignment to New Amsterdam, Jonas Michaëlius might also have seen the glimmering light of a long-awaited opportunity finally to fill the shoes of his father, Jan Michielssz, also called Jan de Michiel. The father had been a prominent figure in the history of the Dutch Republic and the Dutch Reformed Church, and his distinction and service to his country and his faith had been a source of inspiration and advancement in Jonas’ life. But the legacy was also burdensome, for Michaëlius must have realized that his father’s illustrious career eclipsed his own early accomplishments.

During the early years of the Dutch Revolt against Spain, Jonas Michaëlius’ father had been a reliable messenger for William of Orange and his commanding officers. When Spain besieged Haarlem in 1572, he had announced to Prince William initial word of the Republic’s victory over the Spaniards. Later, he traveled to England to have Prince Maurits proclaim Stadtholder. In Church matters, he was chosen as a delegate to several synods, where he was elected to responsible positions. Known for his “tact and character,” he was called upon to intervene in bringing wayward ministers back to an outward life more befitting a disciple of Christ. More than once, authorities

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6 Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 58.
chose him as a mediator in thorny Church matters. Dr. Albert Eekhof, who was a Professor of Church History at Leiden University, would later write that Michaëlius’ father was a man of importance in his days, friend of Sonoy, acquainted with Prince William of Orange, Leicester, Maurits and Marnix of St. Aldegonde, also a true and trustworthy minister of the Gospel, who held many influential posts in the Dutch Reformed Church, who visited England several times, a pioneer of liberty, a true comrade in the battlefield of freedom with William the Silent.\textsuperscript{7}

“A true comrade in the battlefield of freedom with William the Silent?” Would Jonas Michaëlius ever rise to the level of such accomplishments? The jury has not yet rendered a verdict, because not much is known about the intricate details of his career. However, what is certain is that Michaëlius’ own fortunes and the contours of his life form part of a larger narrative, which is the subject of this work – the formation of a Dutch community in Manhattan and the role religion played in its development and evolution. This chapter will examine the known details of Michaëlius’ life and religious ideas, as reflected in his letters. That way, we can uncover some of the challenges confronting the Dutch in their attempt to create a community and transfer their way of life and its accompanying religious beliefs and values to Manhattan. This chapter also discusses aspects of the Dutch religious heritage that helped shape community formation in Dutch Manhattan.

1.2

Decades before Jonas Michaëlius was born, his father had taken part in a series of events that would leave a permanent imprint on the Republic’s religious psyche and Michaëlius’ own firmly held religious beliefs. The introduction of Calvinism into the

\textsuperscript{7} Eekhof, \textit{Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland}, 22.
southern provinces from France had led to the persecution, death and widespread exile of many practitioners. In the 1540s Calvinists from the southern provinces crossed the English Channel and formed exiled communities in London and several towns in England’s Southeast, such as Norwich. Others were received in several cities in the German Empire. From their bases in England and Germany, members of the exiled churches supported the secret Calvinist congregations in the Netherlands, a land controlled by the Catholic Spanish. They printed and smuggled books, and trained and sent back ministers. Their time abroad in exile had made them more ardent and radical Calvinists, and would later help to convince them that the Reformation movement in the Netherlands and the movement for independence were inseparable. After all, was it not their adherence to the Calvinist faith that had resulted in their separation from their homeland and all its cherished familiarity?

The lesser nobility presented the Petition of the Nobility to the regent, Margaret of Parma, on April 5, 1566, demanding that the Inquisition be abolished and the edicts against heresy be suspended. After that many exiled Reformed Dutch, including a significant number of Reformed ministers, returned to the Netherlands. Jan Michielssz, Jonas Michaëlius’ father, appears to have been among the group of returning exiled Calvinists. If the Spanish Crown expected him and his cohort of exiles to be compliant upon returning, it soon realized the contrary. Rather than a peaceful existence, Michielssz and the other exiles organized mass gatherings outside the walls of various cities in Flanders, Brabant, Zeeland and later in Holland. Traveling from Norwich in England, Jan Michielssz preached against the Catholic clergy and helped to publicly propagate the Reformed faith in Flanders. These “hedge-preachers,” as they were dubbed, attracted crowds often reputed to be in the thousands. A striking feature of these mass preachings was the contingent of armed men who accompanied the
preachers. By August 1566 illegal preaching had erupted into violence as Calvinist-led mobs proceeded to ransack and pilfer Catholic churches. What historians have termed the “iconoclastic fury,” or beeldenstorm (as it is known in the Netherlands), swept across the Netherlands. All across the Southern provinces, Calvinist congregations multiplied that summer, and in the Northern provinces, where Calvinist activities had been weak and sporadic, new congregations emerged.

Any exuberance or celebration quickly dissipated in the wake of the approaching army of the third Duke of Alva, Don Fernando Alvarez of Toledo. At sixty years old, he was as fanatical and unswerving in his allegiance to the Spanish Crown and Catholicism as he was in his abhorrence of Protestants. His assault on the Calvinists was harsh, calculated and effective. While Alva had dislodged the Calvinists and sent many again into exile, his activities against Protestants had the undesired result of pushing the Dutch provinces toward an open revolt against the Spanish Crown. Many, including William of Orange, fled to Emden in East Frisia where they planned for the organization of a Reformed Church once the Revolt succeeded. It is possible that Michaëlius’ father was among those who had found a safe haven for the expression and exercise of their Calvinist faith in Germany. In exile, they maintained contact with other Calvinists in the homeland and continued to influence the underground Reformed movement in the hopes of facilitating “unity and mutual support between the dispersed churches under the cross and the refugees abroad.”

In years to come, as a young theology graduate of

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Leiden University, Michaëlius would request a subsidy to continue his studies in Germany, possibly motivated by a desire to be amongst those old exiled communities that had welcomed his father many years before. Furthermore, his earliest appointment as minister was to “one of the ‘Churches under the Cross’ of Brabant.” Perhaps it was sheer coincidence; the extant records do not allow for much certainty. But, it is highly probable that Michaëlius, whether consciously or unconsciously, made these decisions as a result of his father’s indoctrination and his sympathizing with militant Calvinism.

1.3

For a man whose father was at the center of the struggle for independence and who had achieved a level of respect and stature within the Dutch Reformed Church, much was expected of Jonas Michaëlius. Surely, his level of achievement would not fall below that of his father. In 1598, it was the name of his “very worthy father” that made it easy for Michaëlius to receive the necessary recommendations to gain admission to Leiden University, although he had previously “acquired no other knowledge than the grammar of” Latin and Greek, “and...never tasted of any lessons in rhetoric and dissertation.” As Josias Vibo, the rector of the Latin school at Hoorn, explain in his letter of recommendation, “we expect...that this son of a very worthy father will in no wise deteriorate.”

On November 17, 1598, Jonas Michaëlius matriculated at Leiden University for the study of theology. It was a momentous time in which to study at Leiden. In the aftermath of the Reformation and the ongoing battle with Spain for independence, the

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11 Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 40, 94.
12 Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 42.
13 Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 30-31.
Republic was still struggling to find its religious identity. Although a Calvinist nation, the religious identity and the uniformity of the Republic’s religious belief and practice continued to be debated throughout the country. Every decade or so, the dominant intellectual faction prompted a shift in the prevailing cultural and religious ideologies that held sway. As the premier academic institution for the Republic’s political and religious figures, Leiden University was the epicenter of the furious debates on Dutch national and religious identity; these identities were being defined, shaped and re-defined by the vagaries of war and religious conflict.

At Leiden University, Jonas Michaëlius was further steeped in militant Dutch Calvinism, which he probably first imbibed from his father as a young boy. At first, he had no doubt accepted the lofty ideas of this ideology without hesitation. Now, as a young man, Michaëlius learned the philosophical and theological arguments that undergirded those principles. As a result of the war with Spain, for many Netherlands nascent Calvinism was tightly interwoven with the struggle for freedom, probably more so than it would be in later decades. At Leiden, Michaëlius was firmly ensconced in the midst of the Republic’s prominent religious figures and scholars – men “of Calvinistic principles” who were “happy to make great the Truth and to defend her against the jaws of hell, which Truth was comprehended in the Heidelberg Catechism and the Confession of Faith.”

Some of these men included the famous Franciscus Gomarus, rector of the University and professor of Theology, Lucas Trelcatius Junior, and Franciscus Junius, who taught the Old Testament. Junius died in 1602 but was replaced in 1603 by Jacobus Arminius, who later became the leader of the Remonstrant

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14 Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 37.
party. Except for Arminius, these men were hard-line militant Calvinists who thought the Heidelberg Catechism and the Confession of Faith were sacrosanct and therefore sought to preserve and protect them. Gomarus dominated the religious ideas that were taught at Leiden. Students, such as Jonas Michaëlius, who had through their earlier inculcation grown accustomed to viewing the war for independence as part of the nation’s Protestant Reformation movement, believed that the Dutch Republic and orthodox Calvinism were interchangeable.

While the militant Calvinists held sway at Leiden during Michaëlius’ enrollment, that militancy was at all times moderated within the Republic by the pervasive religious heterogeneity and heterodoxy. Jonas Michaëlius grew up in a society where belief in magic, omens and witchcraft were prevalent, but one that managed to escape the panic witch-hunts that gripped most other European societies. In fact, the Republic had ceased routine prosecution of witches long before the rest of its European neighbors. At the popular level, the Dutch people continued to believe in the efficacy of magic and the various forms of witchcraft. They also believed in signs, curses and portents. Every event was imbued with deep significance; nothing was simply coincidental or random. Apparitions, porpoises and beached whales were viewed as ominous signs that needed explanation; all were seen as a “commentary on national fortunes or an augury of crises ahead” and “the stranded whale…figured as a providential messenger.”

While the church ceased pursuing witches through its disciplinary system, it too continued to hold

\[15\] Arminius, the leader and fiery spokesperson for the more humanistic and liberal arm of Dutch Calvinism, arrived at Leiden in 1603, so he probably had very little influence on Michaëlius, who graduated from the University in 1604. Arminius’ influence would be reserved for later generations of theology students.

as a necessary bedrock of the Reformed faith a belief in the power of witches and the ability of the devil to intervene in everyday life.\textsuperscript{17}

The Holland that Reverend Michaëlius knew also stood apart from its other European contemporaries as a sanctuary for a wide variety of religious beliefs and practices. There were Jews, Catholics, and various Protestant denominations, including Mennonites, Lutherans, and Puritans. Catholics constituted a large proportion of the population, but while they enjoyed freedom of conscience they were not allowed freedom of public worship in many cities. They were excluded from political and public offices but were allowed to organize religiously at the local level and conduct services behind closed doors – away from the public space. The Jews on the other hand were allowed to build synagogues and worship freely, particularly in Amsterdam where most resided.\textsuperscript{18} Protestant non-conformists had both freedom of conscience and worship. Only the more radical sects, such as the Arminians and the radical Anabaptists, were restricted.\textsuperscript{19} Such relative liberty and tolerance contrasted sharply with most of Europe, where diverse dissenting religious groups were often confined to a lowlier, more proscribed existence.

In most of contemporary Europe, the political and religious communities were coterminous: membership in one implied membership in the other. While there may have been some social and political advantages to membership of the Dutch Reformed Church, its inability to legally coerce attendance and membership led to a slow growth initially. While Calvin’s Protestant message had emerged from the late 1550s as the

\textsuperscript{17} For a more detailed discussion of witchcraft in the Netherlands see Marijke Gijswejt, ed., \textit{Witchcraft in the Netherlands: From the Fourteenth to the Twentieth Century} (Rotterdam: University of Rotterdam Press, 1991).
\textsuperscript{18} J. L Price, \textit{The Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century} (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998), 99. According to Price, “such toleration could not be acknowledged public policy, but had to be developed in practice and by regular verbal, not written, agreements. For example, the first synagogue was built when there was an official ban in place, and it is clear that the \textit{burgemeesters} must have made it clear that they would take no action.” See also Israel, \textit{The Dutch Republic}, 361-398; Jaap Jacobs, “Between Repression and Approval: Connivance and Tolerance in the Dutch Republic and in New Netherland,” \textit{De Halve Maen} 71 (1998): 51-58.
\textsuperscript{19} For a discussion of the activities of the radical Anabaptists, see Israel, \textit{The Dutch Republic}, 86-91.
dominant strain in Netherlands Protestantism and had been broadly disseminated, many areas of the Republic were as yet little affected even in the early seventeenth century. The Reformed Church in the Netherlands became the official church of the state, being the only public church protected and promoted by all seven provinces in the Republic, the States General and the city councils. Even so, it lacked the power to enforce church attendance and membership. And unlike the state churches in other European nations, the Dutch Reformed Church had no representation in provincial colleges or assemblies. It was well into the seventeenth century before even a bare majority of the Dutch Republic belonged to the official Calvinist church, the Dutch Reformed Church.

The early-seventeenth-century Dutch Republic, therefore, constituted an interesting religious and ethnic mosaic. To further complicate matters, strife between two of Michaëlius’ alma mater’s Reformed theology professors, Franciscus Gomarus and Jacobus Arminius, culminated in the emergence around 1610 of two fiercely opposing groups dubbed “the Remonstrants” and “the Contra-Remonstrants.” At its core, the conflict between these two opposing groups concerned the form of church that was deemed appropriate for heterogeneous Holland. The controversy surfaced soon after Jacobus Arminius was appointed the chair of the University of Leiden’s theology department. Franciscus Gomarus accused him of sharply deviating from the Reformed Church’s orthodox doctrines of predestination. Arminius and his supporters suggested that the Netherlands’ Confession and the Heidelberg catechism be revised to reflect a position more in conformity with universal grace, where salvation was offered to all and the individual exercising his or her free will cooperated in the reception of grace. They were, in effect, seeking to shape the church into one that could eventually embrace most of Holland’s heterogeneous society.
Gomarus and his supporters, on the other hand, regarded the Heidelberg catechism and the Netherlands’ Confession as unalterable statements of the Reformed faith and hoped instead to preserve a church defined by adherence to strict congregational discipline. While they were strategically well placed at the University of Leiden, the most important incubator for Reformed Church ministers, Arminius and his supporters were numerically weak. Still, Gomarus realized that Arminius’ supporters could shape the theological and ecclesiastical thinking of successive generations of ministers and thereby change the church from the inside. Consequently, when the Arminians addressed a remonstrance to the States of Holland asserting their position and asking for protection from persecution, and further gained support from the regents (Dutch civil authorities), the Gomarists felt compelled to act and oppose them.

The “Remonstrance” asserted the Arminians’ beliefs in the authority of the state over the church, called for a revision of the Netherlands Confession and reiterated Arminius’ position on predestination. The regents’ response to the petition was prompted by their disdain for religious persecution and deep distrust of clerical power. They were concerned more with the preservation of peace and order within their communities, and with the pursuit of prosperity, than with religious purity. Therefore, they tended to resist the church’s attempts to dictate and control the agenda of the civil authorities. According to historian George Smith, “the merchant-magistrates of the Netherlands, and especially Amsterdam, retained an unshaken conviction that commerce must outweigh all other considerations in the determination of civil policy.”

Many prominent Dutch merchants held religious sympathies that were non-Reformed, but even those who were of the Reformed faith were not likely to support a Reformed establishment that threatened to suppress religious dissent. As they saw it, religious

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suppression meant that those threatened would sooner or later leave in search of a more hospitable location, and their departure would cost the community in terms of present and future business profits. Consequently, Holland’s political and merchant elites eventually supported the Remonstrants, viewing a doctrinally moderate church as more conducive to communal unity and business profits. Moreover, these elites sensed that the Remonstrants were willing to recognize unequivocally their final authority in both civil and ecclesiastical affairs.

Unlike the Arminians, the Gomarists were insistent that the Church’s doctrines were not the concern of the civil authority and that the Church should not be required by the civil authority to retain ministers who rejected its teachings and doctrinal statements. The Gomarists and their Contra-Remonstrant supporters held that the Church must be autonomous in the areas of doctrine and ecclesiastical polity. As the scholar George Smith explained, believing that “the civil and ecclesiastical realms were inextricably and organically bound together,” they argued that “the magistrates should be open to clerical advice on even the most purely civil matters.”

Ideally, in their vision of a well-functioning society, the “church and state [would] harmoniously work together to preserve society’s good order. The church must preach and teach allegiance to the state, while the state, as the Dutch confession of faith put it, must ‘remove and prevent all idolatry and false worship’.”

The controversy eventually ended with the Contra-Remonstrants as the victors at the Synod of Dordt (1618-19), although the ideas of the Remonstrant faction continued to hold sway in many segments of Dutch society. The first and only national synod of the seventeenth century, the Synod of Dordt (which included delegates from most of the European Reformed churches) condemned the doctrines and teachings of the

21 Smith, Religion and Trade in New Netherland., 131.
22 Smith, Religion and Trade in New Netherland., 131.
Remonstrants and decreed a clear and internationally accepted definition of Calvinist orthodoxy, one that was not in accord with the Remonstrant position. Those ministers who refused to submit to the Synod’s decrees were forbidden to preach. For several successive years after the Synod of Dordt, Holland witnessed the spectacle of Remonstrant supporters and sympathizers being publicly harassed and persecuted with a greater ferocity than even the Catholics. The leader of the Republic, Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, who had sided with the Remonstrants, was subsequently tried and executed as were other members of the ruling elite.

The ongoing controversy and division within the Dutch Reformed Church had made an indelible imprint on Jonas Michaëlius and others who would subsequently migrate to New Netherland. It had left them two distinct and divergent views on the subject of church-state relations and the role of religion in the community. Proponents of the first view stressed the primacy of commerce above all other considerations. As a corollary to the supremacy of commercial interests, the Dutch Reformed church would recognize the civil government’s final authority in both civil and ecclesiastical matters. Also, religious pluralism and de facto toleration of a variety of religious viewpoints were seen as integral components of an ideal state, wherein members of the community were both religiously and ethnically diverse. However, the opponents of this viewpoint saw the Church as possessing absolute theological and ecclesiastical power. Furthermore, they believed the unity of the state required the civil authorities to carefully heed the advice and recommendations of the Reformed ministers even in civil affairs, and the Dutch Reformed Church would operate as the unifying institution in the community. They had hoped that the Dutch Reformed Church would operate more like other state churches in Europe, helping to define membership in the national community. These sharply divergent views were imported with the people to Manhattan and helped shape
the religious and social experiences of the transplanted newcomers, and of the Native inhabitants as well.

1.4

Some of the unseen articles of Reverend Jonas Michaël’s cultural luggage that would also have affected his experiences in Manhattan were his firmly entrenched ideas about Native Americans. Many Europeans, including Michaël, held preconceptions about Native Americans that they later revised but never completely abandoned. Even before they stepped aboard ship, many probably thought they knew whom Native Americans were and what to expect from them. Their ideas would have been formed from Classical and Medieval European notions about non-Europeans in Africa and Asia. From Antiquity to the Middle Ages and beyond, Europeans exhibited a marked ethnocentrism, viewing their own culture, physical appearance and languages as the normative standard by which all others were evaluated. Seeing themselves as inhabiting the center of the civilized world, Europeans had grown accustomed to dividing the world into two camps: “savage” or “civilized.” “Civilized” was invariably interchangeable with “Christian” while “savage” was deemed equivalent to “heathen,” “pagan,” non-European or “non-Christian.” Differences in language, social organization, religion, clothes, weapons, diet, and customs served to mark non-Europeans as monstrous, “uncivilized” and inhuman. These ideas were inextricably linked to Greco-Roman and Medieval European thoughts about monstrous races in Africa and India, and the European wild man.

In Antiquity, stories abounded of Africa and India being the abode of races of sub-human beings or creatures. However, as European geographical knowledge increased and more frequent travel to Africa and Asia made these regions more familiar, the existence of fabulous beings increasingly appeared unlikely. Nevertheless, the cluster of ideas and images surrounding these beings was not completely discarded; instead, it was gradually synthesized into a single figure, the wild man. The wild man and his antecedent “monstrous” races had one major commonality: their manner of life was viewed as incompatible with civilization. The complex of ideas and sentiments concerning the monstrous races and the wild man persisted and was eventually exported to the New World, and each European nationality conflated these ideas in slightly different ways with the Native peoples they encountered.

The myth of the wild man had deep popular roots that were bolstered by a long and robust oral tradition and nurtured by medieval society’s heightened fixation with religious interpretation and order. Although a mythical creature, the wild man also functioned symbolically within medieval society. The wild man came to embody an amalgamation of characteristics from a broad range of human forms that were purported to reside in Ethiopia, India, Libya and other areas remote from Europe. Many of these so-called “monstrous races” simply differed in physical appearance and social practices from western Europeans; they “represented alien yet real cultures existing beyond the boundaries of the European known world from antiquity through the

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Herodotus was one of the first to mention the existence of these races of beings in any great detail in his *Historia*. According to Herodotus, “there dwelled in Libya…wild men and women, besides many other creatures not fabulous.” These “monstrous races” were also discussed in Pliny’s *Natural History*, in the legendary accounts of Alexander the Great, and later in John Mandeville’s *Travels, Marvels of the East* (nos. 1, 2). These writers, and subsequent writers who enlarged upon their work, held a largely pejorative view of these non-Europeans, whom they dubbed “monstrous.”

When Europeans contemplated members of these “monstrous races,” their physical and cultural differences were seen as signs of a cursed state, a declension or corruption of the human species perfected by God. Of course, they imagined that their own physical appearance reflected the idea of the perfect man created by God and embodied by Adam. Medieval writers proffered two explanations for the origins of these “monstrous races.” One view argued that they “were neither an accident in the Creation nor indicative of a failure in God’s plan”; instead they were part of the variety of Creation. The other explanation was that they were “cursed and degenerate, a warning to other men against pride and disobedience,” although a consensus was never reached regarding the nature of their “curse.”

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25 Friedman, *The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought*, 1. As Friedman explains, some were fabulous and bizarre, such as “the Blemmyae or men with faces on their chests.” Some of these more bizarre beings included, cynocephali, headless men, Pygmies, Giants, and people with ears so large that they could sleep in them. See also Bernheimer, *Wild Men in the Middle Ages*, 87-89. Bernheimer believes that “the prototype of this imaginary wild man was not human, but an ape” (89). To substantiate his thesis, he points to statements made by historians of the conquests of Alexander and Roman collectors of facts and oddities, such as Pliny. He says that “according to Pliny there existed in India a race of so-called Choromandi named *silvestres*, what is wild, creatures possessed of hairy bodies, yellow eyes, and canine teeth, who were incapable of speech and could let out only horrible shrieks. These creatures may not have been altogether fabulous, since their description fits a large monkey such as the eastern gibbon. It seems to be generally true that whatever little was known in antiquity about the large anthropoid apes did not suffice to identify them as animals, so that they were usually described as hairy, speechless humans and thus, by implication, as wild men…Before this, in the second century B.C., Agatharchides had described in his book on the Red Sea what may have been chimpanzees, calling them tribes of Ethiopian seed-eaters and wood-eaters. They are identified as monkeys only through their great agility of body, their promiscuity, and their dexterity in using both hands and feet when climbing through the trees.” (87-88).


27 Friedman, *The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought*, 89.
pejorative) view, their outlook did not allow for conceptualizing these other cultures as being at a different stage of development or cultural evolution. For them, “all men had their start at the same time, from the same parents,” and therefore all cultures should resemble each other. Furthermore, they neither had the mindset nor the episteme to comprehend the dynamic nature of culture or to understand that all cultures, including theirs, evolved from primitive to complex - some more rapidly than others. Therefore, any society or culture that diverged significantly from theirs was viewed as degenerate or decadent.

Among those who viewed the “monstrous races” as part of God’s creation was Saint Augustine. His view that they were unenlightened potential Christians who could be brought to the true faith was adopted by some later writers. In his City of God, combining “missionary zeal with the Roman cosmopolitan tolerance of ethnic diversity,” Augustine argued that “all men who worship the same God are encompassed in His universal city.” In his estimation, “there could be no human being who was not part of the divine plan for man.” Of course, this begs the question of whether the “monstrous races” were humans. According to Augustine, reason and descent from Adam defined humanity. Reason separated humanity from beasts, “who only have brute soul and so no religious feelings,” and a descent from Adam was necessary because he embodied God’s idea of a perfect human, whom all others were descended:

Whoever is born anywhere as a human being, that is, as a rational mortal creature, however strange he may appear to our senses in bodily form or colour or motion or utterance, or in any faculty part or quality of his nature whatsoever, let no true believer have any doubt that such

28 Friedman, The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought, 90.
29 Friedman, The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought, 90-91.
an individual is descended from the one who was first created.\textsuperscript{30}

While Saint Augustine and his followers were convinced that rationality and participation in the Adamic ancestry were prerequisites for acceptance into the brotherhood of man and by extension held the potential for acceptance into the “city of God,” folk traditions embraced the alternative notion. Popular belief continued to hold that these beings that departed from Europeans physically and culturally “were hopelessly damned.”\textsuperscript{31}

Although frequent travel to these remote regions of Asia and Africa would disprove the existence of “monstrous races” in these areas, these religiously infused ideas about non-Europeans would persist. Even at the time of Jonas Michaëlius’ voyage to Manhattan, such concepts served to obscure the Dutch people’s view and interaction with Native peoples, especially in America. Columbus, Cortez, Vespucci, Cartier and others had expected and earnestly sought these monstrous beings in the New World. Columbus would write home to Ferdinand and Queen Isabella that while there were no overtly “monstrous” people in America he had discovered peoples whose most immediately notable affinity to the “monstrous races” was their savagery and lack of religion. He asserted that “in these islands I have so far found no human monstrosities, as many expected, on the contrary, among all these people good looks are esteemed...Thus I have neither found monsters nor had any report of any, except...a people...who eat human flesh...they are no more malformed than the others.”\textsuperscript{32}

Regarding their religious life, he noted that they knew “neither sect nor idolatry, with the exception that all believe that the source of all power and goodness is in the sky.”\textsuperscript{33}

\textsuperscript{30} Quoted in Friedman, The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought, 91.
\textsuperscript{31} Friedman, The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought, 92; Husband, The Wild Man, 13.
\textsuperscript{32} Quoted in Friedman, The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought, 199.
\textsuperscript{33} Quoted in Honour, The New Golden Land, 5.
The discovery of the “New World” injected new life into the ideas surrounding the “monstrous races,” as discoverers, conquistadors, and colonizers became convinced that they had discovered not simply an unchartered territory, but one variant of the “monstrous races” – the uncivilized wild man. Smooth and hairless, the physical appearance of the inhabitants of the New World did not readily correspond to that of the wild man. However, their way of life, political and social organization, sexual behavior and culture served to seal in most European minds their connection to this mythical being.

With the discovery of the “New World,” myth was draped in flesh and became reality as many of the ideas about the wild man and his antecedent “monstrous races” became sublimated in Native Americans. Although a mythical being, “the wild man’s wildness had “sociological, biological, psychological, and even metaphysical connotations.” In the Middle Ages,

Wildness meant more…than the shrunken significance of the term would indicate today. The word implied everything that eluded Christian norms and the established framework of Christian society, referring to what was uncanny, unruly, raw, unpredictable, foreign, uncultured, and uncultivated. It included the unfamiliar as well as the unintelligible. Just as the wilderness is the background against which medieval society is delineated, so wildness in the widest sense is the background of God’s lucid order of creation. Man in his unreconstructed state, faraway nations, and savage creatures at home thus came to share the same essential quality....

This “essential quality” enthralled and captivated the imaginations of many Europeans in the Middle Ages and well into the seventeenth-century. The wild man was neither quite human enough to prompt unanimous consensus as to his humanity, nor was he esteemed lowly enough to garner undisputed classification as an animal. He

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34 Bernheimer, Wild Men in the Middle Ages, 19-20.
was thought to be a being compounded of human and animal traits, which had a thick growth of fur upon its naked human anatomy “leaving bare only its face, feet, and hands, at times its knees and elbows, or the breasts of the female of the species.” In some earlier representations, though rarely, he appears naked and hairless. According to Timothy Husband, “before the twelfth century, no accounts describe the wild men as covered with hair.” But during the twelfth century, “hairiness was a visual cipher bestowed upon the medieval wild man to indicate, in part, his existence outside man’s civilized order…. The convention of hairiness…signified not only an uncivilized living condition, but also a debased mental state.”

So ubiquitous was this creature in the Middle Ages that it pervaded medieval art, literature, architecture and daily life. According to Richard Bernheimer, “his place in medieval daily life was assured by the appearance of his image on stove tiles, [playing cards], candlesticks, and drinking cups, and on a larger scale, on house signs, chimneys, and the projecting beams of frame houses. His figure even invaded religious buildings and liturgical books, being found on the borders of illuminated manuscripts, on capitals, choir stalls, baptismal fonts, tomb plates…. “ He was believed to dwell in forests, caves, tree trunks or rocky crags — places normally deemed inappropriate for civilized humans. Whenever he was depicted as living in a constructed dwelling, it was usually a structure fashioned out of tree branches and mud. Lacking the benefit of metallurgy or agriculture, he was forced to eke out a living from hunting and gathering, eating wild berries and fruits, nuts and raw animal flesh. For western Europeans, the wild man was the antithesis of everything that civilized humanity should strive for or esteem. In contrast to civilized man, the wild man was thought to be innately irrational, which was

35 Bernheimer, Wild Men in the Middle Ages, 1.
37 Bernheimer, Wild Men in the Middle Ages, 2.
readily discernible in his inability to reason, his fiercely violent, combative and aggressive behavior (even against his own kind), his lack of intelligible speech, and his apparent failure to comprehend, acknowledge or conceive the one true God. The result was that from the medieval period and beyond, if the average European could not articulate what he meant by "civilized" in positive terms, he could readily do so in negative terms by pointing to the wild man… [Furthermore,] as medieval man became progressively obsessed with a highly ordered social structure, a rational disposition to direct it, and a committed faith in God to sustain it, the wild man came to represent the opposite. Sublimated in the wild man were the preeminent phobias of medieval society – chaos, insanity, and ungodliness.38

The end of the medieval period did not usher in the demise of the wild man’s mythical and symbolic potential. Instead, with the inception of the Renaissance, the wild man and all his related symbols left the confines of popular culture and entered the sphere of “refined” culture.39 According to Roger Bartra, “during the Renaissance wild men fertilized the cultured imagination as they had, perhaps, never done since antiquity. The figure of the wild man escaped the marginal redoubts of popular imagery and was welcomed into the spheres of refined literature, thereby acquiring a complexity and sophistication that was unelaborated in the Middle Ages.”40 He became the subject of theatrical performances and Renaissance literature. However, contrary to the medieval wild man, though still hairy and bestial, he was often depicted as a domesticated servile figure that rendered service and assistance to his civilized neighbors, as Caliban would do in The Tempest, written in 1611 by William Shakespeare. Unlike the Renaissance, the medieval period furnished “no…stories about services

38 Husband, The Wild Man, 5.
39 Bartra, Wild Men in the Looking Glass, 178.
40 Bartra, Wild Men in the Looking Glass, 178.
rendered by the wild man to peasants and country laborers.”41 The image of the wild man that Dutch New Netherlanders conflated with the Native inhabitants was a mixture of the medieval and Renaissance allegory: to some he was a fearsome, combative and violent being whose humanity and potential salvation were doubted; to others he was all these things and even more, but in addition there was also a utilitarian dimension to him as well. He was also seen capable of being of service to civilized humans: he is “capable of tending the wild animals...giving advice about the weather, the harvest prospects, medical herbs...Accordingly he tells the peasants when to sow and to gather the rye....”42

**1.5**

While all European nations shared a heritage of deep popular fascination with the myth of the wild man, the wild man mythology appear to have been more meaningful for Dutch New Netherland than it was for either the French or English colonists in North America. 43 Seventeenth-century Holland, like other European nations, followed the Classical and Medieval European tradition of considering as uncivilized any trait or peoples that happened to differ significantly from its own. Following general European practice, the Dutch referred to the Natives in America as either Indians or simply as “the savages” in official state documents. However, the English minister and founder of neighboring Rhode Island, Roger Williams noted the unique practice amongst the Dutch of referring to the Natives in everyday common

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42 Bernheimer, *Wild Men in the Middle Ages*, 24-25. These are some of the utilitarian roles that Native Americans were to play initially in Dutch Manhattan.
43 It is uncertain whether the wild man had a greater hold on Dutch mentality vis-à-vis general European imaginations. Such a discussion falls outside the confines of this work. Nevertheless, suffice it to say contemporary European settlers noted that New Netherland’s Dutch settlers, contrary to the practice in other nearby English and French colonies referred to the Native peoples as Wilden.
communication as “Wilden” or wild men. Furthermore, Adriaen van der Donck, a Dutch settler and patentee of present-day Yonkers, explained that “although they are composed of different tribes, and speak different tongues, all pass by the appellation of (Wilden) wild men; and this name was given them...at the first discovery of the country....”

According to van der Donck, who published A Description of the New Netherlands in 1653, it was during the early Dutch contact period that the connection between the mythical wild man and Native Americans was solidified. He informs us that “at the first discovery of the country, which for various reasons seems very appropriate,” the Dutch named the Natives “(Wilden) wild men.” What were some of these reasons that collectively made Wilden an “appropriate” Dutch appellation for the Natives? van der Donck was careful to enumerate them for us:

First, on account of their religion, of which they have very little, and that is very strange; and secondly, on account of their marriages, wherein they differ from civilized societies; thirdly, on account of their laws, which are so singular as to deserve the name of wild regulations. And the Christians hold different names necessary to distinguish different nations, such as Turks, Mamelukes, and Barbarians; and as the name of Heathen is very little used in foreign lands, therefore they would not distinguish the native Americans by either of these names; and as they trade in foreign countries with dark and fair coloured people, and with those who resemble ourselves, in distinction from negroes, and as the American tribes are bordering on an olive colour, the name of wild men suits them best. Thus without deliberation...they were called Wild Men...in this manner it has...happened that this people received their national name (emphasis added)....

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41 Roger Williams, A Key into the Language of America (New York: Russell & Russell, 1973), 84.
43 Van der Donck, “A Description of the New Netherlands,” 191.
van der Donck’s discussion makes apparent that the classification of the Natives as Wilden was the outcome of Dutch people vocalizing “their first thoughts” – verbalizing without deliberation the idea that first entered their minds upon seeing Natives. Native Americans differed from Africans and Europeans in their complexion. Moreover, Dutch people (and by extension, “Christians”) did not have a prior familiarity with them through generations of trade relations, as they did with Africans and Muslims (“Turks”).

Looking at the Natives through the lens of the mythological wild man, contemporary Dutch writers concluded that they had little or no religion, no government or law, and no customs to restrain their sexual desire and confine it within the parameters of a monogamous family life molded in the Christian paradigm. One can comprehend the far-reaching consequences of the Dutch idea that Native Americans had “no religion” by considering that the widely accepted Augustinian doctrine held that “knowledge of God, however dim, was the prerequisite and basis for any further mental activity….” For Augustine and other Europeans well into the seventeenth-century, reason and the awareness of God separated humans from beasts, who had no religious feelings. So, if Native Americans had “no religion” as many Dutch writers claimed, this was “a defect which a religious age could not but regard as a decisive obstacle against brotherhood with civilized man.” The Dutch perception that the Natives had no religion was potentially not only an obstacle to them being included in the brotherhood of civilized humanity, but it was also an insurmountable obstacle to

49 Bernheimer, Wild Men in the Middle Ages, 12.
50 Bernheimer, Wild Men in the Middle Ages, 12.
their inclusion as members in Dutch Manhattan’s emerging society. It is apparent that Dutch peoples’ conflation of the Natives with the mythological wild man progressed along a fairly definable path: the Dutch encountered a group of people who physically differed from any they knew previously; they noted that these people also lived in the woods or forests, were adorned in the skins of animals and used weapons similar to those of the mythological wild man. Based on their prior knowledge of the races, the Dutch concluded that these people resembled the wild man although they were not covered in thick fur. As they observed and learned more of the Natives, additional information was filtered through prior beliefs and perceptions they held about wild men. In the end, information that contradicted or belied the Dutch settlers’ initial perception was ignored, misconstrued, or deemed insignificant.

Jonas Michaëlius was not exempt from the pejorative evaluation of the Natives held by many Dutch settlers. In his description and discussion of the Native Americans, he shows himself to be a man who does not mince his words. Regarding Native Americans, he writes, “I find them entirely savage and wild, strangers to all decency, yea, uncivil and stupid as garden stakes, proficient in all wickedness and ungodliness, devilish men, who serve nobody but the Devil....” He does not conclude with this, but continues: “they have so much witchcraft, divination, sorcery and wicked arts, that they can hardly be held in by any bands or locks. They are as thievish and treacherous as they are tall, and in cruelty they are altogether inhuman, more than barbarous, far exceeding the Africans.” Unfortunately, Jonas Michaëlius was not alone in his unflattering evaluation of the Natives. The same feelings of abhorrence for the Native Americans occupying New Netherland expressed by Michaëlius pervaded the public sentiment and marked the conduct of many of the colonists, with only a few exceptions.

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51 Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 132.
Nicolas van Wassenaer, writing in February 1624, declared, “respecting religion we...cannot learn that they have any knowledge of God.... They say that mention was made to their forefathers...of good and evil spirits, to whose honor...they burn fires or sacrifices.” He continues: “as they care nothing for the spiritual, they direct their study to the physical, closely observing the seasons.”

Johannes de Laet, a director of the Dutch West India Company who started a “colony” in New Netherland and published a large folio volume entitled “New World,” wrote that Native Americans “have no religion whatever, nor any divine worship, but serve the Devil; yet not with such ceremonies as the Africans.”

The comments of both de Laet and Michaëlius make it evident that while Africans were still viewed as inferiors, the Dutch deemed them more civilized than Native Americans; Africans were viewed more as potential Christians who could be brought to the true faith and who therefore could potentially be members of Dutch community.

In stark contrast to these Dutch pronouncements, contemporary English writers seemed to hold a slightly higher opinion (religiously) of the Natives. While they also viewed Native Americans as savages who were destined for damnation in their natural state, they still held out the hope of their salvation. According to Roger Williams, “nature knowes no difference between Europe and America in blood, birth, bodies, &c. God having of one blood made all mankind....” The Natives were seen as part of the Adamic line and as such were believed to possess the capacity to share in God’s salvation plan. In contrast, for many Dutch people, as wild men, the Natives’ place

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54 Dutch ideas of Africans will be discussed in more detail in chapter three.

55 Williams, A Key into the Language of America, 133.
within humanity and by extension “the City of God” was uncertain. Even John Smith could assert that “there is...no place discovered to bee so Savage in which the Savages have not a religion...All things that were able to do them hurt beyond their prevention, they adore with their kinde of divine worship.”\textsuperscript{56} In direct refutation of many Dutch contemporaries, Smith further asserts that while “some new great observers will...report, that the people are so bruit, they have no religion, wherein surely they are deceived; for my part, I never heard of any Nation in the world which had not a Religion...”\textsuperscript{57}

1.6

Reverend Jonas Michaëlius survived his voyage, arriving on Manhattan Island on April 7, 1628. He wrote sporadic letters back home to friends in the Fatherland, three of which are still extant. His experiences in Manhattan must have produced marked changes in him, but they could never eradicate or change his past. And what of his past? Though we know too little to enable a richly detailed portrayal of him, his extant letters enable us to fill in certain outlines of his life and to gain invaluable glimpses into the mindset and the religious ideas that this Dutch newcomer held dear. Historian Russell Shorto wrote that Michaëlius “might as well have won a contest for the moodiest, bitchiest resident of New Amsterdam.”\textsuperscript{58} At first glance it seems like a fair criticism, but when Michaëlius’ opinions are viewed through the lens of the religious upheaval in the Dutch Republic and the Dutch religious heritages he carried about in his person, a different perception is gleaned.

\textsuperscript{58} Shorto, \textit{The Island at the Center of the World}, 64.
Reverend Jonas Michaëlius was a man of his times. For him, and other seventeenth-century Europeans, religion was much more than a set of doctrines and rituals adhered to by a group of people; religion was a means of gauging an individual’s or a group’s value system, inherent nature, constitution and worth. What Winthrop Jordan wrote about seventeenth-century Englishmen was also applicable to seventeenth-century Dutchmen. For both Englishmen and Dutchmen, “being a Christian was not merely a matter of subscribing to certain doctrines; it was a quality inherent in oneself and in one’s society. It was interconnected with all the other attributes of normal and proper men....”\(^59\) An individual’s religious affiliation, or lack thereof, was seen as being inseparable from their other characteristics, and a meaningful attribute to determine community membership.

As a Domine in the Dutch Reformed Church and an adherent of militant Calvinism, this characterization must have been even truer for Jonas Michaëlus. His mindset would have been unshakeable; for him to think otherwise was probably tantamount to insanity. The Dutch Revolt against the Catholic Spanish Empire had created a tear in the emergent Republic’s religious and national fabric. During the struggle to mend this cloth, two divergent schools of thought emerged with adherents that were equally passionate about how to define the body politic. One faction sought to include as many people as possible under the umbrella of the fledging nation; tolerance was their rallying call and would be the construct used in determining community membership. The other felt that only by limiting membership to a community of like-minded believers could true, meaningful unity be achieved. Conformity was their rallying cry; those within the community would have to conform to the Dutch Reformed religion or acquiesce to it. Each Dutch migrant to Manhattan espoused one of these

viewpoints to a certain degree. For Reverend Jonas Michaëlius, as the son of a militant Calvinist minister, it was almost inevitable that he would adhere to the latter rather than the former.

Reverend Jonas Michaëlius and other European settlers initially expected that they would be able to import their society to the New World, keeping their way of life intact. And even if the physical circumstances seemed new and strange at first, all the more reason to hold with special firmness the religious heritage that they perforce carried with them. For every settler that religious heritage was the sum total of their religious experiences and the environment in which they grew up. It had imparted structure and significance to their world and the events of their life. Through it they had understood their place in the world and their relationship with others; it had provided them with useful guidelines for determining group and community membership. It is this heritage that many had hoped to re-create in the New World. However, Holland at the time of Manhattan’s Dutch settlement was still struggling to find its clear religious identity. Therefore, it bequeathed to its inhabitants two divergent and conflicting religious traditions, and these in turn would complicate the attempt of settlers to re-create Dutch religion and society in Manhattan. Which of the two traditions would prevail in Manhattan? Would Manhattan’s community be one in which tolerance was the cornerstone or would it be one in which conformity to the Dutch Reformed religion was the basis of community formation? This struggle over the defining attributes of Manhattan’s fledgling community would create a host of factions, pitting colonists against other colonists, Natives against newcomers, the colony’s Director Generals against its Dutch Reformed ministers, the Dutch Reformed Church against the Dutch West India Company, and colonists against the civil and religious institutions in Holland. Furthermore, the reality and exigencies of living in a multi-racial and multi-
ethnic frontier settlement “without a society of their own” would force those who had expected a smooth and uncomplicated cultural transplantation to adjust their expectations drastically.
2. Orson’s World: Native Americans in the Period of Early Dutch Contact

2.1

For the Native Americans in the vicinity of Manhattan Island, September 3, 1609, began like any other day. The men went about fishing and hunting, the women tended the children and busied themselves with food preparation, the young warriors roamed about the forest, and medicine men went about the business of taking care of the infirm. However, sometime in the late morning it became evident to the Natives that this day was unlike any other. As the morning rain and mist dissipated, the news of a floating long house with strangely clad men aboard spread like wildfire throughout the various bands and villages. The unknown floating object was first observed by a group of Natives that were out fishing. Perplexed by the object and its movement, they immediately informed other clan members of what they had witnessed.¹ Almost two centuries later their descendants would recount to John Heckewelder, the Moravian missionary who lived among the Lenape and Munsee peoples from 1754 to 1813, that when their clansmen had subsequently seen the same object they were equally confounded and thought it prudent that they “inform all the Indians on the inhabited islands of what they had seen, and put them on their guard.” Awe was mixed with suspicion. As concern about the curious object grew, runners and watermen were sent

¹ Robert Juet, “Extract from the Journal of the Voyage of the Half-Moon, Henry Hudson, Master, From the Netherlands to the Coast of North America, in the year 1609,” in Collections of the New York Historical Society, Second Series, Volume I (New York, 1841), 322. The Halve Maen approached Sandy Hook but remained anchored within the edge of the bay. On September 4, however, it ventured into the bay; a boat was sent to the shore, where the sailors fished.
“to carry the news to their scattered chiefs, [so] that these might send off in every direction for the warriors to come.”

Concluding that the object was a large house or canoe that was carrying the “great Mannitto” to visit them, the chiefs of the various tribes gathered on Manhattan Island to decide on the proper manner to receive him. According to oral tradition, “between hope and fear, and in confusion,” they ordered the preparation of food, sacrifice and entertainment thought suitable for the approaching deity. But arms were kept ready for all contingencies. By the next day, as the chiefs were observing the approaching vessel on the Highlands of Manhattan Island, they were informed by fresh runners that the floating object was “a house of various colors, and crowded with living creatures…of quite a different color than they are of; that they were also dressed in a different manner from them and that one in particular appeared altogether red.” They concluded that it was indeed “the great Mannitto bringing them some kind of game, such as they had not before” and that the one dressed in red was “the Mannitto himself.”

According to the eighteenth-century account, they wondered, “Why should he have a white skin?” This great Mannitto “appeared altogether red” adorned in “red clothes, which shone with something they could not account for.”

Contrary to the Natives’ speculation, the intriguing floating object was not the abode of a great Mannitto and his servants. Instead, it was the Dutch East India Company’s ship, the Halve Maen (Half Moon), a vessel of eighty tons with approximately twenty English and Dutch sailors aboard. The man in scarlet, whom the Natives thought was the Manitto, proved to be the ship’s captain, Henry Hudson.

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4 This narrative of the events of September 3, 1609, contains a mixture of information from Robert Juet’s “Journal” and Native American traditional myth about that auspicious event as told to the Moravian
Englishman employed by the Dutch, Hudson had departed from the Dutch port of Texel on April 6, 1609, seeking a northeast passage to the Orient. By sailing north of Scandinavia and Russia instead of following the arduous southeastern and southwestern routes pioneered respectively by de Gama and Magellan, Hudson had hoped to find a shorter path to the spice islands of the East Indies. But frozen waters along Russia’s arctic coast (Novaya Zemlya) forced Hudson to change his direction westward toward New France (Newfoundland) and then southward as far as Chesapeake Bay. Finally, as the *Halve Maen* probed northward along the Atlantic coast in search of some undiscovered Northwest Passage to the Pacific, the ship eventually reached Sandy Hook Bay, near the mouth of the river that now carries Hudson’s name.

At Sandy Hook, on September 4, 1609, the first recorded close contact between Europeans and Native Americans in the vicinity of Manhattan Island occurred, though Verrazano had been in the region more than 80 years before. With Sandy Hook as a backdrop, some Natives, believed to belong to the Navasink band, boarded the vessel and welcomed the strangers with green tobacco. In return, the Natives received beads and knives. The following day, September 5, probably somewhere either on the mainland of New Jersey or near Richmond, Staten Island, the Europeans were again met with warm and cordial reception from the Natives when a group of the men aboard the

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Halve Maen went on land and visited one of the Native settlements. They too were greeted with tobacco and foodstuffs.

These friendly receptions obscure the fact that the moment of contact between Natives in the vicinity of Manhattan Island and Europeans was indeed contact between two very distinct peoples with highly contrasting cultures, each old and complex. Each had a history stretching back into the distant past, and each held entrenched ideas about how the world worked. Both cultures had evolved customs pertaining to acceptable protocols of trade, alliances and interaction. And to a certain extent, both peoples held preconceived notions and expectations about the other. Europeans brought with them to this and other early New World contacts a complex of religiously infused notions about their counterparts. Such preconceptions were inextricably linked to Greco-Roman and medieval European thoughts about monstrous races in Africa and India, and the so-called European wild man. Longstanding images and ideas surrounding the medieval wild man provided a fertile way of viewing the Native peoples in the vicinity of Manhattan Island. They served to color the Dutch people’s perception of Native peoples and shape their early interaction.

However, Europeans were not alone in believing they understood the new people they encountered. As the Natives’ reception of Hudson demonstrates, they too thought they knew who he was and what his intentions and expectations were – tailoring their interaction with him accordingly. As a result of these culturally based preconceptions and differences, it was not uncommon for members of both groups to view the other’s behavior as erratic, and for suspicion to develop as each group grappled to understand the other. Misunderstandings were an inherent and

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unavoidable by-product of these initial encounters. Furthermore, it was not unusual for Europeans and Natives to imbue the same action and event with starkly different significance. What one group might view as innocuous and appropriate, the other would deem disrespectful, hostile or inappropriate. Many Natives’ initial reaction to contact was one of awe and friendly curiosity, where, as Nancy Oestreich Lurie aptly asserted, they “feted, fed and flattered” the Europeans. But such warm reception often deteriorated into mutual suspicion and hostility.⁶

On September 6, the Natives’ reception of Hudson changed from hospitable to hostile. The captain had sent John Coleman, an Englishman, along with four other men in a boat to sound the river. While pursuing this task, they were “set upon by two canoes, the one having twelve, the other fourteen men,” possibly of the Canarsee band.⁷ Repeated volleys of shots were exchanged; the Natives fired rounds of arrows from their bows and Coleman and his companions returned gunshots. In the ensuing melee, Coleman was killed and two others were injured.⁸

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⁸ It is believed that Coleman’s Point marks the location where this violent exchange occurred. George Asher, however, believes that “Hudson’s Colman’s Point and the Colman’s Point or Punt of the early [Dutch] maps, are…probably not identical.” See Juet, “The Third Voyage of Master Henry Hudson,” 80, note 30. Juet does not furnish us with an explanation of the Natives’ apparent unprovoked hostility, leaving us to opine about the Natives’ motivation. It is possible that (1) they were provoked by Coleman and the other crew members; (2) they had heard of the crew members’ past brutalities against the tribal groups in New England just prior to their appearance in Sandy Hook; (3) they were mistreated by other European visitors to the Manhattan area or might have been aware of allied or familiar tribal groups being abused or ill-treated by visiting Europeans. According to Isaac Newton Phelps Stokes, Verrazano might have landed somewhere in the vicinity of Manhattan Island and apparently Dutch sailors and other sailors might have visited the area. See Isaac Newton Phelps Stokes, ed., The Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498-1909 (Union, New Jersey: The Lawbook Exchange, Ltd., 1998), Vol. 4: 10-28. If they were aware of the negative fate of other Native groups at the hands of Hudson’s crewmembers or other Europeans prior to Hudson’s visit, they might have assumed a similar fate. It is possible that they came to view the sudden appearance of Europeans as evil and decided to take decisive measures to repel them. Their response two days later would seem to lend credence to the idea that there was expectation of harm. Two days after they violently attacked Hudson’s men, they boarded the Halve Maen bringing tobacco and maize, as if no violent confrontation had occurred. They had either learned from closely allied or neighboring tribes that Hudson
Although not explicitly stated in the extant records, it is quite possible that among the young braves either involved in the Coleman skirmish or aware of the intricate details surrounding the incident was the young son of a principal sachem known only to us as “Orson,” a name given to him later by Dutch traders. As with his Native contemporaries, most of the precise details of his life are forever lost to us. Since the Natives had only an oral tradition, their own history is forever obscured behind the history of the European explorers, traders and colonists, whose own religious and cultural biases and preconceptions hampered their ability to understand and appreciate Native religious worldviews and culture. Early seventeenth-century Europeans demonstrated little interest in discussing Native Americans, their experiences or culture, except as these may have affected trade, land acquisition, or warfare.

We can never gain a full portrayal of Orson’s life, but his experiences were unusual, and for that reason we know of his existence. The research findings of archaeologists, ethnographers, historians and anthropologists enable us to piece together diverse bits of available evidence to reconstruct a reasonable narrative of the broad outlines of Orson’s life and that of Manhattan’s Native inhabitants during the early contact period. This chapter discusses the religious and cultural heritage of the Native American groups in the vicinity of Manhattan during the early Dutch contact period. It also discusses the religiously based provenance of the Dutch idea about the Native Americans’ place and role in their emerging society in Dutch Manhattan. It seeks to limn a portrayal of the local Native society and culture that was irrevocably disrupted and transformed as a result of European contact and subsequent settlement. Focusing upon Orson’s life affords us an invaluable glimpse into the role of religious and cultural worldviews during the early contact period in the vicinity of Manhattan Island, from and his men were “civil” since appearing in the vicinity of Manhattan Island or felt that retribution for past misdeeds were met by Coleman’s death.
1609 to 1623, when both Natives and Europeans found themselves interacting and negotiating with people from a country “without a society of their order.” Considering Orson’s experience during this period will also better position us to comprehend the often hidden cultural and religious stimuli behind the hostile eruptions that occurred as peoples of widely differing worldviews struggled to coexist in the vicinity of Manhattan Island.

2.2

For more than a dozen years after Hudson’s voyage, the primary focus of the Dutch who visited the region was on establishing trade relations and maximizing profits from the exchange of commodities. Religious considerations were minimized or disregarded, as Dutch merchants, trading companies, and sailors were engaged in worldly trade. No formal religious institutions were established, and no ordained representatives from the Dutch Reformed Church were sent to New Netherland. No attention was given to the religious life of the Native Americans with whom they traded, the Africans who sometimes accompanied the Dutch to facilitate trade relations, or the sailors who risked their lives in uneasy trade negotiations. Instead, trading posts sprang up symbolizing the all-encompassing focus of the Dutch on trade in the Hudson River during this early period.

Dutch men were not in the vicinity of Manhattan Island very long before we are able to see the religious and culturally based notions about the wild man at play in their interaction with Native Americans. Because these Dutch sailors and traders were operating under the influence of their religious and cultural heritage, the early traders and sea captains considered the Natives little better than wild beasts and often “tried to
kidnap some of [them] whenever opportunity offered.” Sometime around 1610 or 1611, on their first visit to the Hudson River, the Dutch captains Hendrick Christiaensen and Adriaen Block brought back to Holland two sons of a principal local sachem. The historical record does not reveal whether they went willingly to Holland, but by the events that transpired upon their return home, it would appear that they went against their will and were possibly kidnapped. Their proper Indian names are forever lost to us. Invoking one of the popular stories from the wild man genre and thereby demonstrating the hold that the wild man mythology had on the Dutch mind, Christiaensen and Block named the two boys Orson and “Valentine,” the principal characters in Valentine and Orson: The Two Sonnes of the Emperor of Greece. Though both characters are sons of a royal family, lost in the woods as a baby, Orson was adopted and raised by a bear. When he is later discovered as an adult, he physically had all the characteristics of the mythical wild man, even the thick fur. He is forcibly captured and “dragged out of his habitat and brought to the castle, there confined, and immediately exposed to the efforts of his captors to return him to full-fledged human status.”

Valentine and Orson is the classic story about the transformation of the wild man into a civilized knight – a transformation that is not completed until he is taught the doctrines of Christianity, which would supposedly enable him to enter into the human family. It is quite possible that the Native Orson and his brother were subjected to similar “civilizing” attempts. Orson’s initial encounter with Europeans occurred in an environment in which both Europeans and Natives tried to use all the cultural,

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10 Valentine is never specifically mentioned as returning home, only Orson.

technological and even geographical knowledge at their disposal to gain a favorable position over the other. In such an environment, Christianity was often skillfully wielded as a tool in many aspects of Native-European interaction. But who was Orson and what were some of the features of his life and society that would have played a decisive role in his encounter with Dutch traders in the vicinity of Manhattan?

Orson was probably a member of the Canarsee band of Natives in the vicinity of Manhattan Island. The Canarsee were one of the many groups of Munsee Indians, whom the English would later call the Delaware. The available records do not specify his age; it only tells us that Orson was a “young man.” At the time of his encounter with Europeans, Orson, like most other Lenape young men was probably noticeably taller than his European counterparts, and well-built with black hair and eyes. As a Canarsee, his clothing was probably quite similar to that of Mahican men, who were closely aligned culturally to the Canarsee. He would have shaved his head with hot stones leaving a roach of stiff black hair two to three inches high and wide running from

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12 Historian Daniel Richter suggests that Orson was probably one of the sons of a Mahican sachem whom Hendrick Christiaensen and Adriaen Block met during their trip to the upper Hudson River in 1613. According to Richter, upon their departure Christiaensen and Block took “Orson” and his brother “Valentine” with them back to Holland and left behind a Dutchman named Jacob Eelkens “with the Mahicans to ensure the safe return of their leader’s sons.” Richter readily admits that there is no documentary evidence for this assertion, but instead points to the fact that Eelkens was appointed as the first commander of the permanent fortified Dutch outpost named Fort Nassau that was constructed in Mahican territory in 1614 as circumstantial evidence. However, the fact that Orson and Valentine were taken to Holland in 1610/1611 and not 1613 as Richter states seriously detracts from the strength of his argument that posits the exchange of individuals to ensure good-will and to facilitate intercultural communication. It is also possible that Eelkens was part of the emerging Dutch trading practice of leaving behind certain crewmembers to continue trading and collecting trade goods while the ships return to Holland as a means of facilitating trading and shortening the amount of time the ships spent in the Hudson River bartering and loading trade goods. Furthermore, if Simon Hart is correct in his assertion based on Dutch Notarial Archival records that Orson was instrumental in attacking and murdering Hendrick Christiaensen aboard his ship, the *Swarte Beer*, in 1619 “near Manhattan or Governors Island and not on the trading post near Albany, as is usually thought,” then it appears more likely that Orson was probably the son of a “principal sachem” in that region of the Hudson River. Since the Montauks were the principal Confederacy in that area, which included the Canarsee, it is highly likely that Orson was a Canarsee, or a closely related or allied group to have carried out an attack within Canarsee territory. 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 for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1992), 88; 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), 19.

13 Contemporary Europeans consistently stated that the Native Americans in the Hudson River basin were tall – noticeably taller than Europeans.
the forehead to the nape of the neck. The rest of his hair that hung from the crown was generally allowed to grow much longer.\textsuperscript{14} In keeping with the ancient Munsee custom, Orson, as a young man would also have painted his face with various pigments, showing a preference for black and red, and tattooed his body with various designs. At first, these markings might represent significant dreams; later they would have recalled his exploits in war. His attire consisted of a robe fashioned from dressed deerskin, or bear, wildcat, or wolf fur, or of the shimmering feathers of the wild turkey, neatly attached to a netted fabric. In addition, he wore breechclouts, leggings and moccasins made from dressed leather. As a warrior, Orson would have worn his knife, tobacco pipe and pouch suspended from his neck and necklaces of dyed deer hair, shell beads or wampum. According to ethnographer Alanson Skinner, “besides his deerskin tobacco pouch with its dyed hair and porcupine quill embroidery and leather fringe, each warrior carried a warclub, carved of wood, with a ball-shaped head set at right angles from the handle, and a six-foot bow and quiver containing flint, bone, or antler tipped arrows.”\textsuperscript{15}

As to language, Orson spoke a Munsee dialect of the Delaware language, and the Canarsee were not alone in this. In addition, the Esopus, Wappinger, Hackensack, Warranawankongs, Rechgawawank, Wiechquaeskeck, Nochpeem, Waoranecks, Tankitekes, Haverstraw, Siwanoy, Sinsink, Tappan, Kichtawank, Matineconck, Navasink, and Massapequa also spoke versions of Munsee dialect. According to classical American ethnohistory, the Delaware were divided into three sub-tribes, each comprising both a clan or totem and a political subdivision. These were reputed to have been the Unami (Turtle), the Unalachtigo (Turkey), and the Minsi (Wolf). However,

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{14} Alanson Skinner, \textit{The Indians of Manhattan Island and Vicinity, Sixth Edition} (New York: The American Museum of Natural History, 1947), 3-5.
  \item \textsuperscript{15} Skinner, \textit{The Indians of Manhattan Island and Vicinity}, 5.
\end{itemize}
based on more recent research findings, the traditional three-fold tribal division has been questioned.\textsuperscript{16} The evidentiary information gleaned from Indian treaties, title deeds, archaeological and ethnological research seems to point instead to thirty or forty autonomous communities in which the clans of the Turkey, Wolf and Turtle dwelled contiguously, primarily composing social rather than political divisions.

According to Herbert C. Kraft, “the names wolf, turtle, and turkey were probably...designations...[that] provided a sense of lineage and belonging, and may have served to regulate the selection of marriage partners and inheritance.”\textsuperscript{17} Allen Trelease hypothesizes that long before Europeans arrived on Manhattan Island, some time in pre-history, a branch of the Delaware separated from the parent stock and migrated northward and eastward. This hypothetical offshoot, he believes, later underwent further divisions and resulted in the Mahican, the Montauk, the Munsee (or Minsi) and Wappinger tribal groupings with which seventeenth-century Europeans became familiar.\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{16} Allen W. Trelease, \textit{Indian Affairs in Colonial New York}, 3. According to the critics of the classical interpretation, the Unami constituted only a single village band abiding on land located on the upper Schuylkill River and the Minsi did not exist until approximately 1694 when a group of Shawnee combined with remnants of local bands on the upper Delaware under that name. See also Herbert C. Kraft, \textit{The Lenape: Archaeology, History, and Ethnography} (Newark: New Jersey Historical Society, 1986), xiii-xvi.

\textsuperscript{17} Kraft, \textit{The Lenape: Archaeology, History, and Ethnography}, xvi.

The Montauks, which included the Canarsee, occupied eastern and central Long Island and were acknowledged by both Europeans and Native Americans as the ruling tribe of Long Island.\footnote{Isaak de Rasière, _Letter of Isaack de Rasiere to Samuel Blommaert_, 1628(?) in J. Franklin Jameson, ed. _Narratives of New Netherland, 1609-1664_ (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1953), 103.} The Mahican, Montauk and Wappinger bands were closely related.\footnote{John R. Swanton, _The Indian Tribes of North America_ (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1952), 41-55; Goddard, “Delaware,” 213.} A century ago, the noted ethnographer John Swanton estimated the Montauk, including the Canarsee, had numbered approximately 6,000 in 1600.\footnote{Swanton, _The Indian Tribes of North America_, 43.} He calculated the Mahican tribe, distributed among approximately forty villages in eastern New York and portions of Massachusetts and Connecticut, to be half as large, or roughly 3,000 persons.\footnote{Swanton, _The Indian Tribes of North America_, 43.} The Wappinger also consisted of about 3,000, comprising approximately eighteen bands, living at various places between the Hudson and Connecticut Rivers and in the interior of the Long Island Sound.\footnote{For population estimate on the eve of European contact, see Trelease, _Indian Affairs in Colonial New York_, 5, and Swanton, _The Indian Tribes of North America_, 43.} Seven of these bands occupied lands from Manhattan Island northward into Dutchess County. An additional thirteen bands lived on Long Island. These Long Island bands were very closely related to the natives in southern New England.

Although sharing a common linguistic stock implied that one shared a common ancestry, customs, dialect and social institutions, such links did not always translate into political and social alliance. While tribal groupings appear important in forming reciprocal relationships, the smaller village communities or bands held greater social and political significance.\footnote{Trelease, _Indian Affairs in Colonial New York_, 2. According to Trelease, “the tribe was chiefly important as an ethnic and geographical subdivision of the linguistic stock, whose members retained a closer cultural (but not necessarily political) relationship among themselves than with more distant Algonquian groups...For the individual the primary unit of society, apart from his family and clan, was his own band, usually composed of from fifty to three hundred persons living in one or more villages.”} It is evident from extant contemporary sources that the band was also the primary political and social unit most familiar to the newly settled
Europeans. According to Isaak de Rasière, Manhattan Island was “inhabited by the old Manhatans [Manhatesen]; they are about 200 to 300 strong, women and men, under different chiefs, whom they call Sackimas.”

While it has traditionally been taught that the original inhabitants of the island of Manhattan were called the Manhattans (or some orthographic variation of this name), there is now conclusive evidence that the name of “Manhattans” was a generic term “designating not only the occupants of the island now called Manhattan, but of Long Island, and the mainland north of Manhattan Island.”

The word “Manhattan” apparently signified island, or in its plural form, islands; and therefore as applied to the people, it signified “the people of the islands.”

Manhattan Island was not a place of permanent settlement for the Native Americans, but was only occupied during certain seasons while hunting and fishing. Two tribal groups utilized Manhattan Island: the Canarsee and the Rechgawawank. While the Rechgawawank “possessed” the upper part of Manhattan Island and the adjacent mainland of New York west of the Bronx, the site of their principal village was situated in Yonkers. The Canarsee “possessed” the southern end of Manhattan Island (where the Dutch established their settlement), Kings County (Brooklyn), Long Island, and the eastern end of Staten Island. As a member of the Canarsee tribal group, Orson probably lived in a permanent village either in Staten Island, Brooklyn or southern Long Island, but also probably hunted or planted tobacco on Manhattan Island.

Within each of these tribal groups, the phratry affiliations were matrilineal – being inherited through the mother. As such, if Orson’s mother was designated a Wolf, then he too would be a Wolf and would therefore be considered related to every other

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25 de Rasière, Letter of Isaack de Rasiere to Samuel Blommaert, 103. Isaak de Rasière was the chief commissary and Secretary of New Amsterdam. He arrived on Manhattan Island in July 1626.

26 Ruttenber, History of the Indian Tribes of Hudson’s River, 77; See also Reginald Pelham Bolton, Indian Life of Long Ago in the City of New York (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1972), 14. According to Bolton, although there are “several references in recorded history to the ‘Manhattans.’ There were no people so known, the natives so described were of other [tribes], and were not known by the name of the Island....”

27 Swanton, The Indian Tribes of North America, 49.
person of the Wolf phratry, no matter how remote the biological relationship. Members of the same phratry would form an important base of fictive kin on which Orson and his siblings learned to rely. Should anything happen to either of his parents, it was the people of his mother’s lineage and phratry that would care for him and his siblings. On the other hand, all members of his father’s phratry, including his father, were considered “in-laws.” If his parents ever “divorced,” it was widely acknowledged that Orson and his siblings would remain with their mother because they were of the same lineage. When Orson began to contemplate marriage, he knew that his mate had to be from a different lineage or phratry. Orson’s life, from birth to death, was centered on these close familial and kinship bonds that gave him his sense of identity and his understanding of his place in his society and the world.

As a child, Orson and his siblings would have lived in his mother’s household and on lands belonging to his mother’s clan. When Orson’s father married his mother, custom required him to leave his own clan and family and reside with his wife’s family. This custom enabled Canarsee women from the same clan to remain together on the same land for generations. If Orson’s father eventually constructed a separate house for Orson’s mother and his siblings, the house and all its furnishings were considered his mother’s property. Although Orson’s father lived with him, because of the strong matrilineal descent and matrilocal dwelling practices it would not have been unusual if his father seemed to be less concerned with Orson and his siblings than with the children of his own biological sisters.  

By this same reasoning, it seems likely that the men of his phratry, possibly his mother’s brothers, would have been responsible for preparing Orson for the

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28 Kraft, *The Lenape*, 134. According to Kraft, “a father might seem to show little concern for his own children, who belonged to his wife’s lineage. A man would be expected to show a greater interest in his sister’s children, [who were] members of his lineage.”
responsibilities of adulthood. As a very young boy Orson probably remained close to his home, assisting his mother and the older women in their garden and helping to gather wild plant foods. During these foraging trips Orson would have become familiar with the medicinal properties of many plants, and learned to distinguish edible and inedible plants. However as he matured, he increasingly spent more time with the men and older boys. His passage from childhood to adult life was ceremonially recognized in a series of special rituals and ceremonies. After these ceremonies, which could last for several months, Orson would have moved away from his parents' home into the household of his maternal aunt or uncle. His aunts, uncles and other maternal relatives taught him all the essential skills of adulthood and manhood. They taught him various tool-making techniques, how to set snares and traps, to shoot bow and arrow adeptly, to fight, to fish, and to track and hunt animals skillfully. Like most Lenape boys, Orson would never forget the day he successfully hunted and killed his first deer, as it was an occasion of great importance. According to Herbert C. Kraft, "custom required that a buck be given to an old man, while a doe was to be presented to an old woman. The recipients then prayed that the boy should always be a successful hunter."\(^{29}\) As was customary, once Orson was consistently successful in hunting and fishing, he was deemed capable of providing for a family and considered eligible for marriage; he would then be encouraged to seek a mate.\(^{30}\)

2.3

The forest was not only the place where Orson would have proved his readiness for manhood by demonstrating continued success in hunting; it was also the place he

\(^{29}\) Kraft, *The Lenape*, 137.

\(^{30}\) Unfortunately, the extant records do not reveal to us whether Orson reached the age of eligibility for marriage.
would have visited in order to discover the supernatural force that would be a
wellspring of success in his life. The Munsee, including the Canarsee, believed that a
guardian spirit obtained in a vision or supernatural experience would be a guiding force
throughout an individual’s life, a cause of success, and an aid and comfort in times of
trouble. Both males and females might experience visions, but since boys and men
engaged in the dangerous pursuits of hunting and warfare, it was thought that they had
a greater need for spiritual protection. A boy approaching his teens was encouraged to
seek a vision and guardian spirit. Some boys, out of a deep sense of conviction, entered
the forest on their own volition. Others, who were more hesitant and lacked such
convictions, were eventually coerced or driven into the woods by relatives.

It is not known which was the motivation for Orson, but like all Canarsee boys
he would have entered the terrifying solitude of the deep woods hoping to communicate
with supernatural beings. Through visions he expected to obtain his guardian spirit or
supernatural helper, whom he believed would bestow upon him power or blessings that
became his primary aid in time of trouble, and the secret of his success. While in the
forest he fasted, prayed and engaged in various privations. This was all done in hopes
that a spirit or Manitto would take pity on him, appear to him in a vision or other
experience, and assume the lifelong responsibility as a protector and spiritual guide. If
he was favored by such visions he would be held in high esteem and become a
prominent leader among his people, possibly a shaman, sachem or warrior chief.
According to Herbert C. Kraft, those who completed the puberty vigil and acquired a
guardian spirit felt favored by the spirits. However, any youth who proved
unsuccessful in finding a spirit that would pity him would consider “himself forsaken,”
or as one who had “nothing upon which he may lean, has no hope of any assistance and is small in his own eyes.”

If Orson recognized and accepted a guardian spirit, then, like other young Canarsee boys, he would make an amulet or fetish to represent it. This he would consider his “god, so sacred that no one [was] allowed to touch it.” Men who were privileged to receive supernatural visions usually composed rhythmic chants and dance songs, referring to their visions, that were performed at the Annual Ceremonies. Dreams and visions obtained by fasting or as a result of purification, formed an integral part of Lenape life and religion. They provided the principle method of communicating with the supernatural world. Dreams were the means by which “the Creator,” whom the Lenape called *Kishelëmukòng*, and other supernatural beings communicated with humans. *Kishelëmukòng* revealed in a dream even the name given to each individual by his or her name-giver. Through dreams and visions, the recipient was afforded the assurance of supernatural guidance in all things. Many aspects of Lenape life, therefore, were affected by dreams.

*Kishelëmukòng* was believed to be the Great Spirit, or Creator, whose goodness was acknowledged and who was thanked for past blessings and petitioned for future assistance. He was seen as “the great chief of all [who] dwells in the twelfth, or highest heaven. He created everything, either with his own hands or through agents sent by him, and all the powers of nature were assigned to their duties by his word.” While *Kishelëmukòng* was the source of all that was good, his counterpart, *Mahtantu* (the Evil One) was responsible for confusion, chaos and evil. He was not like the Judeo-Christian

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31 Kraft, *The Lenape*, 177-178.
32 Kraft, *The Lenape*, 178.
devil, which sought the destruction of human souls. Neither did the concepts of hell and heaven exist in the Munsee religious worldview. However, Mahtantu did wicked and perverse things, which were contrary to the happiness, safety and wellbeing of the Lenape. According to Kraft, “where Kishelêmukòng made edible and useful plants, Mahtantu made useless and sometimes poisonous plants. Where Kishelêmukòng made tasty berries, Mahtantu put thorns on the berry bushes. Mahtantu made tormenting insects such as flies, gnats, mosquitoes, and certain reptiles and poisonous snakes.” The handiwork of both Kishelêmukòng and Mahtantu was manifested everywhere in the Munsee’s world: Kishelêmukòng’s was creative and regenerative; Mahtantu’s was destructive and degenerative.  

Kishelêmukòng watched over his creation from the twelfth heaven, but was no longer personally involved in human affairs. The Lenape believed that Kishelêmukòng created a twelve-tiered universe in which “the firmament, celestial bodies, plants, animals, and all other things had prescribed places and ranks: The earth at the bottom and the realm of the Creator in the twelfth and highest heaven....” From the twelfth heaven, Kishelêmukòng delegated the responsibility for the care and maintenance of all things to a variety of lesser spirits known collectively as manêtuwàk (singular, manêtu).

According to Mark Raymond Harrington, Kishelêmukòng gave

the four quarters of the earth and the winds...to four powerful beings, or manitowuk, namely, Our Grandfather where daylight begins [Muxumsa Wehénjiopàngw], Our Grandmother where it is warm [Uma Shawnaxawësh], Our Grandfather where the sun goes down [Muxumsa Ehêliwsikakw], and Our Grandfather where it is winter [Muxumsa Luwànàntu]. To the Sun [Gickokwita] and the Moon [Piskewëni Kishux], regarded as persons and addressed as Elder Brothers by the Indians, he gave the

35 Kraft, The Lenape, 163.
36 Kraft, The Lenape, 162.
37 There are various orthographic variations of this word, manêtu, manito, manitto, mannito, Mannitto, manêtuwàk, or manitowuk.
duty of providing light, and to our Elder Brothers the Thunders [Pèthakhuweyok], man-like beings with wings, the task of watering the crops, and of protecting the people against the Great Horned Serpents [Maxaxkok] and other water monsters. To the Living Solid Face, or Mask Being [Mësingw], was given charge of all the wild animals; to the Corn Spirit, control over all vegetation, while Our Mother, the Earth, received the task of carrying and feeding the people.38

These manëtuwàk were responsible for their assigned region and the natural events occurring in the four regions, such as the wind, snow, rain, and thunder. People often prayed to them when gathering herbs, preparing medicines, or readying for a hunt.

These powerful spirits, or manëtuwàk, were created by Kishelëmukòng to assist in managing the affairs in the natural world and to enable the Lenape to cope with everyday problems of survival. It was believed that each object in nature contained a manëtu; some were more powerful than others, most were good, but others were capable of great mischief and evil, especially when slighted or offended. The Lenape also feared an evil “being,” Maxaxkok, represented by a horned snake (the Great Horned Serpent). This enormous red snake was reputed to have lived in the ocean until it was killed and dismembered. The dismembered pieces were then “divided among various tribes to be kept as tribal palladia (safeguards).”39 They made sacrifices and buried objects in the ground in its name. However, the only good derived from the evil manëtuwàk, which included the “Great Horned Serpents, monsters living in the rivers and lakes, and the Giant Bear,” were the “charms made of the scales, bone, or horn of the monsters, supposed to bring rain; and…a medicine made from the tooth said to have the power of healing wounds.”40 In addition to the powerful spirits, the natives also

38 Harrington, Religion and Ceremonies of the Lenape, 193.
39 Kraft, The Lenape, 165.
40 Harrington, Religion and Ceremonies of the Lenape, 49.
believed in many lesser spirits, such as “the Small People, the Doll Being ['Ohtas'], the Snow Boy, and the Great Bear.”

Another spirit being that is very prominent in Lenape religion is Mësingw (“the Living Solid Face” or “Keeper of the Game”), guardian of all wild animals. Mësingw was responsible for looking after the animals in the forest and ensuring their health and safety. According to Kraft, Mësingw “was a strange-looking spirit, with a large and round face, the right side colored red and the left black; his body was covered from head to toe with long black hair similar to that of a bear...he could be angry and resentful if not properly revered and feasted.” Lenape women and men felt a special need to placate Mësingw. Men had to hunt deer and other game in his domain, and women and children needed to collect nuts and firewood in the forest. Twelve effigy faces, representing Mësingw, played a central role in the Annual Ceremonies (Xingwikaon) in which the Creator, Kishelëmukòng, is thanked for the bountiful harvest and other benefits received that year. Dances and feasts usually were dedicated to the mask images in the fall or on occasions when it was thought the mask required entertainment and conciliation. The Masked Dance occurred in “the fall of the year because all vegetation is matured at that time, also the hunting season opens with Indians when the leaves of the forest have begun to turn red showing the first tinges of autumn. Deer hides are then said to be thickening and the fur becoming good.”

It is quite possible, based on the oral history recounted to the Moravian missionary John Heckewelder in the eighteenth century, that some of the Natives in the vicinity of Manhattan Island believed that Henry Hudson was the manëtuwàk Mësingw. His face had been tanned somewhat red from exposure to the wind and sun at sea, and

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41 Harrington, Religion and Ceremonies of the Lenape, 193.
42 Kraft, The Lenape, 170.
43 Kraft, The Lenape, 175; Quoted from Frank G. Speck, Oklahoma Delaware Ceremonies, Publications of the Pennsylvania Historical Commission 2 (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical Commission, 1931), 51.
the timing of his arrival coincided with the Natives’ fall ceremonies and rituals for Mësingw. So, it is not surprising that some Natives may have confused Hudson for this manëtuwàk. Additionally, the Natives’ description of the preparations being made for Hudson’s reception resembles closely those made for Mësingw’s ceremonies. For example, according to oral tradition, the Natives were careful that there was “plenty of meat for a sacrifice; the women were required to prepare the best of victuals; idols or images were examined and put in order.” In addition, “a grand dance was supposed not only to be an agreeable entertainment for the Mannitto, but might, with the addition of a sacrifice, contribute towards appeasing him, in case he was angry with them.”

Also, the Natives’ act of greeting Hudson with a gift of tobacco, which they viewed as a sacred herb, appears to correspond to their practice during the Masked Dance of offering some tobacco to the impersonator of Mësingw “when he comes to a house or tent.”

Clearly, those Natives who believed Hudson was Mësingw tailored their interaction with him. Hudson and his men received the respect, honor and reception thought befitting of a powerful spirit.

2.4

Unfortunately, the historical record does not reveal whether Orson believed Hudson was Mësingw, or any other manëtuwàk for that matter. However, what is certain is that Orson’s perception of Hudson and any prior knowledge of Europeans would have shaped his interaction with Hudson and his crew. Of course, Hudson and his crew also held some prior notions about Orson and the other Natives in the vicinity of Manhattan Island. As a result of the preconceived ideas that the Europeans had brought to the encounter, even the Natives’ hospitality and friendliness were viewed

45 Harrington, Religion and Ceremonies of the Lenape, 155-156.
with suspicion. Throughout his journal, Robert Juet repeatedly made this suspicion clear, even while the Natives were at their friendliest, showing them deeds of kindness, and "friendship." Sometime after the *Halve Maen*’s crew had sailed past Nova Scotia, they came across a group of Natives that "shewed [them] great friendship," but Juet and others "could not trust them." Even in acts of "love" the Europeans saw the shadowy, evil hand of betrayal, vengeance and hatred waiting to strike at them and snuff them out. It was this belief that led Hudson’s crew to engage in behavior that was more "savage" than "civilized."

On July 24, according to Juet, "they kept good watch for fear of being betrayed by the people, and perceived where they layd their shallops." On the next day, they took the following actions:

Wee manned our scute with foure muskets and sixe men, and tooke one of their shallops and brought it aboard. Then we manned our boat and scute with twelve men and muskets, and two stone pieces or murderers, and drave the savages from their houses, and tooke the spoyle of them, as they would have done of us [emphasis added].

There is nothing in his account that would indicate that the Natives, by words, gestures or deeds, gave them any cause to suspect harm or ill-will was intended. Yet their constant suspicion and expectation of "betrayal" and treachery led them to behave in ways that were less cordial. The danger in much of the Europeans’ preconceived notions about the Natives is borne out by this event. It foreshadowed the difficulties in racial relationship that were to sporadically disrupt the future colony, even bringing it to the verge of complete dissolution at times.

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47 Juet, “The Third Voyage of Master Henry Hudson,” 45-93. According to Juet: “At night they went on land againe, so wee rode very quiet, but durst not trust them” (79). “The people of the country came aboard of us, making shew of love, and gave us tobacco and Indian wheat, and departed for that night; but we durst not trust them” (81-82). “Then came one of the savages...with many other, thinking to betray us. But wee perceived their intent, and suffered none of them to enter our ship” (90-91).
An important, and oftentimes overlooked, key to understanding why the crewmembers were deeply suspicious of the Natives is found in the popular European myth of the “wild man” and the strong grip it held on the European consciousness. Europeans had a long history of viewing non-Europeans as monstrous, or inhuman. And although geographical knowledge and travels to the Americas had made this region and its peoples more familiar to Europeans, the constellation of ideas and images that surrounded these beings were revised but never completely rejected or abandoned. Henry Hudson and his crewmen, like many Europeans, probably filtered their experiences and perceptions of the Natives through the host of beliefs and images pertaining to the wild man. To some degree, Hudson and his men no doubt believed that they had already met the Native Americans in their European literature, art and folklore. Although the smooth and hairless physical appearance of the Natives did not correspond to that of the traditional depiction of the wild man, Hudson and his crewmembers still tailored the Natives to fit this ideological strait jacket.

[With such a virtually unbroken line of thought from the wild man to the Native peoples, it is no surprise that Hudson and his crewmembers responded to the Natives as they did. The notion of what to expect from the Native inhabitants, and even how they should be treated was already written for them centuries before their voyage.] An intriguing and revealing example of the continuity of ideas through the centuries from the wild man to the Native peoples is an incident that occurred on September 21, 1609, in the upper Hudson River near present-day Albany. According to Juet,

> Our carpenter went on land, and made a fore-yard. And our master and his mate determined to trie some of the chiefe men of the countrey, whether they had any treacherie in them. So they took them downe into the cabin, and gave them so much wine and aqua vitae, that

49 The myth of the “wild man” was surely not the only factor; the accounts of European explorers and prior contact with the Natives of North America also contributed to this atmosphere of suspicion.

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they were all merrie.... In the ende one of them was drunke....

In this incident we see a residue of earlier European wild man tradition and legends that describe “civilized” humans trying to capture the wild man in order to induce him to divulge his secrets. What is interesting is that “the method is always that of making him drunk by pouring wine or...brandy into holes or into the troughs of fountains” where the wild man is known to drink water. “Caught and tied, the wild man buys his freedom by making disclosures,” revealing hidden truths, or by paying a ransom.

As the details of this incident reveal, there was little immediate reason for Hudson and his men to expect “treachery” from the Natives. Prior to this incident, Juet had described these people and the reception accorded them as “friendly.” Yet Hudson and his mate suspected that behind the Natives’ manifestation of “friendliness” lay more sinister intentions. Familiar with the lore of the wild man and the powerlessness of this otherwise ferocious, superhumanly strong and treacherous being when plied with aqua vitae, Hudson and his mate decided that they would reveal the Natives’ true intentions by getting them drunk. Since Natives proved especially susceptible to alcohol’s stupefying effects, the liberal administration, availability and sale of alcohol became an indispensable and prominent component of an incipient (and later generalized) mode of interaction between Europeans and Natives, particularly whenever Europeans needed an added advantage, such as in trade negotiations. Not accustomed to alcohol, Native Americans developed an acute addiction to this

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51 Bernheimer, *Wild Men in the Middle Ages*, 25. As we shall discuss in subsequent chapters, once trade relations were normalized in the Hudson region and also during the period of settlement, ransom was often the means by which Natives were freed – either by offering peltry or wampum beads. Of course this practice only served to frustrate rather than ameliorate or encourage peaceful and amicable race relations. 
52 Juet, “The Third Voyage of Master Henry Hudson”, 83. In this region, Juet described meeting “very loving people, and very old men: where wee were well used.”
substance, which devastated every Native community. 53 Hudson and his crewmembers’ expectation of harm, at times bordering on the absurdly paranoid, even in the face of overt friendliness and “love,” can be explained within the context of the wild man, whose various traits (discussed in Chapter one) had branded him untrustworthy.54 Incidents of suspicion such as these were probably repeated untold times in the vicinity of Manhattan Island. As was often the case, suspicion incited further suspicion, and occasionally when acted upon resulted in disastrous outcomes.

2.5

It was not long after the Halve Maen’s eventual arrival in Holland that new ships were outfitted to sail to the Hudson River in order to trade with the Natives. No [formal] ordained representative of the Dutch Reformed Church accompanied them for their common purpose was to exploit the area’s natural resources rather than to settle. Like the men aboard the Halve Maen, these Dutch sailors and sea-merchants carried similar preconceptions to Manhattan to fit onto the Natives. From approximately 1610 to 1623, Dutch merchants made annual trading voyages to the Hudson River. It was during this early period that the connection between the mythical wild man and Native Americans was solidified for the Dutch.55

Among the many traders visiting within the vicinity of Manhattan Island were Captains Adriaen Block, Cornelis Jacobsen May, Thijs Volckertz Mossel and Hendrick

53 For a discussion of the complex history of alcohol use among Native Americans, its disastrous effects on Native society, and its role in European-Native interaction, see Peter C. Mancall, Deadly Medicine: Indians and Alcohol in Early America (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Pres, 1995).
54 Michael Taussig, Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man: A Study in Terror and Healing (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), 212. According to Taussig, during the “early sixteenth century, the period of the conquest of the New World,” the imagery and idea of the monstrous races/wild man was transformed to a dual view. The earlier view was “replaced by one that saw the monster as foreboding evil – a view associated with an upsurge of popular beliefs that had no place in the official medieval conception of the world. Yet such a sharp change in judgment, from the monster as potential Christian to the monster as the harbinger of evil, should come as no surprise…as ‘the monster has been credited everywhere with the powers of a god or the diabolical forces of evil.”
55 Van der Donck, “A Description of the New Netherlands,” 191.
Christiaensen. These early visitors did not desire to settle permanently in the region; residence was temporary and merely a means of increasing the efficiency of exploiting the abundant peltry. Orson and other Native Americans in Manhattan Island’s environ became factors in world trade as a result of Europe’s demand for the peltry supply from the surrounding forests, which Native Americans had hunted for generations. As the peltry trade increased, Native Americans became increasingly useful to Europeans as traders and suppliers. While Europeans still viewed them as “savages,” the newcomers realized the Natives’ utilitarian potential with each shipment of furs that returned to Holland.

This is the atmosphere in which Orson’s initial encounter with Hendrick Christiaensen and Adriaen Block occurred, where Orson’s value was linked to his potential as a supplier of furs and also as a possible cultural broker between Europeans and Natives. According to historian Marcus Meuwese, Christiaensen and Block probably took Orson and his brother to Holland to train them as interpreters in order to improve their reliability as future cross-cultural negotiators. Furthermore, Meuwese argues, by bringing Natives to Holland, Dutch traders hoped “to impress Native Americans with the civilization and military power of the Republic.” It was also hoped that “the Dutch hosts could introduce their American guests to the ‘true Christian religion.’ In doing so, Dutch Calvinists expected that the Indian interpreters, upon returning to their homelands, would not only function as mediators in diplomatic and economic settings, but also as religious instructors to their own peoples.” If this were true, it would appear that Orson’s experience in Holland paralleled that of his fictional

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56 Marcus P. Meuwese, “‘For the Peace and Well-Being of the Country’: Intercultural Mediators and Dutch-Indian Relations in New Netherland and Dutch Brazil, 1600-1664,” (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Notre Dame, 2003), 72. Similarly, the English had taken two young men, Wanchese and Manteo, from Roanoke to London in the 1580s.
57 Meuwese, “‘For the Peace and Well-Being of the Country,’” 73.
namesake, whose transformation from wild man into a civilized knight was completed only after he embraced Christianity. For some Dutch people, what was true for the fictional Orson was also applicable to New Netherland’s Natives: their journey from a life as “uncivilized” brutes to one of acceptance as true descendants of Adam was inextricably tied to their acceptance of Christianity. Furthermore, only after they accepted Christianity and became “civilized” could they be extended membership into the community. Until such transformation, Native Americans would remain on the periphery of European life, closely interacting with Europeans but never really considered part of their community but seen as representative members of that “wild country without a society” of Dutch order.

One can only imagine Orson’s reaction to being kidnapped and forced to take part in Christiaensen and Block’s ambitious objective of utilizing him and his brother to enhance their economic returns in the region. The Indian brother’s would not have been the first non-Europeans brought back to Holland by Dutch factors to train as native interpreters. Since the late sixteenth century, Dutch ships had carried natives from Africa, Southeast Asia and South America to Holland for aggressive linguistic training. During the 1560s and 1570s, English vessels had brought Inuits from Labrador to the Netherlands to be viewed by the Dutch public. They were paraded at public fairs and other public spaces, the precursors of deformed and exotic human curiosities displayed at modern-day circuses and freak shows. In Amsterdam, countless inns in the

58 For discussion of the Inuits taken to the Netherlands in the 1560s, see William C. Sturtevant and David B. Quinn, “This New Prey: Eskimos in Europe in 1567, 1576, and 1577,” in: Christian F. Feest, ed., *Indians and Europe: An Interdisciplinary Collection of Essays* (orig. published in 1987) (reprint: Lincoln University of Nebraska Press, 1999): 61-140. The Dutch interest in the unknown extended beyond people. Beginning around the mid-sixteenth century, Dutch ships began venturing farther across the oceans. Back home in Holland, the sailors told stories of the many fabulous things they had seen, which prompted enormous public interest in these stories. The crewmembers began bringing some of the exotic animals back home with them; some animals survived the journey, but others died en route and were stuffed. These animals, both live and stuffed, wound up in traveling exhibitions, collectors’ cabinets, menageries and inns.
seventeenth century maintained collections of exotic animals and exhibits of people with physical defects or abnormalities.

Presumably, Orson and his brother would have been the first natives brought back to Holland from North America by Dutch sailors. We know nothing specific about their experience in Holland. Did they find their way to one of the many inns in Amsterdam, where they were put on display? Or were they, like the two Natives from Davis Strait in Canada, presented as exotic curiosities to the Stadtholder Prince Maurits of Nassau at his court in The Hague? It is not yet clear from the historical record. However, what is certain is that, as the first native North Americans to visit Holland, Orson and Valentine would have attracted attention not only from the general public interested in human curiosities but also from men of learning from all over Europe. Learned and scholarly Dutchmen and heads-of-state were familiar with Hans Staden’s Waerachtige Historie en Beschrijvinghe van een Lants in America Ghelegen, Wiens Inwoonders Wilt, Naekt, Seer Godtloos Ende Wtede Menschenters Zijn, one of the first Dutch descriptions of America, written in 1595. Now, with Orson and Valentine’s visit, they had a chance to see Native Americans in person. Perhaps, like the Patuxent Indian, Squanto, who was forcibly taken to Europe from Massachusetts by the English in 1614, Orson and Valentine might have traveled to other European cities besides Amsterdam.

Also clouded in mystery are the details pertaining to how Orson was able to return to his homeland. It is interesting that Valentine is never discussed as returning home with Orson. It is quite plausible that Valentine, like many other indigenous persons who were taken to Europe, quickly died after being exposed to unfamiliar pathogens. Or maybe he was sold to the manager of one of the Amsterdam inns, who in

59 English title: True History and Description of a Country in America, Whose Inhabitants are Savage, Naked, very Godless and Cruel Man-eaters.
Based on the event that transpired after Orson returned to the vicinity of Manhattan Island, it does not appear that the sum total of his trip overseas were particularly positive. According to Nicolaes Wassenaer, the sachem’s son who was named “Orson was a thoroughly wicked fellow, and after his return to his own country was the cause of Hendrick Christiaensen’s death.”

Though not explicitly stated, it seems plausible that Christiaensen’s violent demise was closely related to Orson’s journey to Europe and subsequent return, which enabled him to avenge past wrongs committed by Christiaensen and possibly other Europeans during his visit overseas. It is even possible that Christiaensen’s murder was in retaliation for the death of Valentine. Nevertheless, in the spring of 1619 while Hendrick Christiaensen’s ship the Swarte Beer was lying in the Hudson River near Manhattan Island or Governors Island, several Native Americans came aboard in a surprise attack. Meuwese postulates that possibly Orson “upon returning from the United Provinces, lured Christiaensen and his men into a deadly ambush.”

Most of Christiaensen’s crew was murdered, except five members, who were badly injured. They were able to disperse their Native attackers by firing two shots, one of which killed Orson. Later they made peace with the Natives by offering them a number of knives.

Christiaensen’s death, possibly at the hands of Orson, made it clear that the Dutch experiment in kidnapping native North Americans with the aim of training them as interpreters in the Republic was an utter failure. As Meuwese states, if Orson was instrumental in Christiaensen’s demise, “it helps to explain why the Dutch did not attempt again to take North American Indians to their country for training as

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61 For a discussion of the fate of some Indians taken to Europe from North America, see Carolyn Thomas Foreman, Indians Abroad, 1493-1938 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1943).
63 Meuwese, “‘For the Peace and Well-Being of the Country,’” 79.
That Natives in the vicinity of Manhattan Island, such as Orson, were not interested in going to Holland for an education as intercultural mediators probably stemmed in part from the Munsee social arrangement. Orson lived in a small band with a family-based, matrilineal socioeconomic structure. The absence of a father, brother or husband would have meant the loss of someone to aid in performing the physically demanding tasks of house construction, hunting, canoe building, etc. – tasks expected of men. Such a loss would render this family dependent on the charity of other hunters. It is then not surprising that Native Americans were often unwilling to leave their family behind.

2.6

Although they did not transport their religious institutions, the sailors and merchant sea captains that visited the vicinity of Manhattan Island brought with them their ideas and notions about Native Americans that were nurtured and honed by their European religious and cultural heritage. Consequently, during this early period of Dutch contact, when permanent habitation was deemed unnecessary to the prime goal, one is still able to perceive the influence of the wild man’s imagery and mythology upon Dutch attitudes, ideas and behavior towards Native Americans.

Though they viewed Native Americans as inferior beings, Europeans were not averse to soliciting their assistance or utilizing them when it benefited or advanced their agenda. What was important was how members of Native American groups could facilitate or assist them in garnering the most profit in the fledgling, but competitive fur trade. As De Laet explains, the Natives “are…very serviceable, and allow themselves to be employed in many things for a small compensation; even to performing a long day’s

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64 Meuwese, “For the Peace and Well-Being of the Country,” 79.
journey, in which they discover greater fidelity than could be expected of such a people.” In this statement we see subtle manifestations of ideas regarding the utilitarian potential of the wild man. Furthermore, it appears that Christianity, or specifically the Native Americans’ acceptance of the Christian faith, was an integral element in rendering these groups serviceable to Europeans. De Laet and other Dutch people were convinced that “by associating with Christians” Native Americans “could be imbued with civilized manners and with religion.” This could be successfully effectuated by the settlers employing “their services without violence…and in return accustom them to the worship of the true God and the habits of civilized life.”

Ironically, as the events surrounding Orson’s life demonstrate, the extraordinary hold that the wild man mythology had on the imagination of Dutch men, in part, made it difficult for them to employ the Natives’ services “without violence or abuse” – a fact which foreshadowed the insurmountable obstacle they would later face in accomplishing the other half of De Laet’s plan: that of accustoming “them to the worship of the true God and the habits of civilized life.”

For newcomers, time spent in close proximity to the Native inhabitants around Manhattan Island did not obliterate what their Dutch and European heritage had firmly instilled in them. They believed that Native Americans as wild men, did not have a religion and therefore could not partake in community membership. To those who did see the Natives as possessors of a religion, these religious practices were seen as devil worship, pure and simple. Even when some tried to be “understanding” of Native ways, it was still difficult for them to completely divest themselves of the lingering belief: that these denizens of the wilderness posed a constant threat to civilized society.

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66 De Laet, “From the ‘New World,’” 58.
67 De Laet, “From the ‘New World,’” 58.
Only through either their conversion to the True Faith, their removal or containment, or their decimation could civilization progress as it should. For many, it remained a foregone conclusion that the Natives’ removal from the land or their destruction was inevitable. This is why Adriaen van der Donck could so confidently assert that his 1653 treatise entitled “A Description of the New Netherlands,” would be of tremendous value to posterity. The author sought “to treat…the nature of the original native inhabitants of the land; that after the Christians have multiplied and the natives have disappeared and melted away, a memorial of them may be preserved.”

When their interaction with the Natives went from occasional to frequent, and even later once they settled amongst them, the Dutch did not alter their perception of the Natives or their religious practices. Repeatedly, contemporary Dutch observers confidently stated that the Natives around Manhattan Island either did not have any religion or every observed detail of the Natives’ religious practices was reduced to the rubric of “devil worship.” If Europeans recorded such flawed descriptions of the religious practices of the Natives, who were openly practicing their religion in their traditional homeland and surrounded by the traditional religious officeholders and all the accoutrements of their religious practice and institutions, one wonders about the lacunae in their portrayal of Africans, whose religious practices were more concealed? The secret nature of many of their religious practices have led some scholars to conclude that African men and women transplanted in the foreign soil of Manhattan Island had no recognizable system of religious practices in these early period. Like seventeenth-century Europeans, these scholars place a heavy emphasis on the presence of cathedrals

For example of a Dutch person with a more moderate estimation of the Natives see van der Donck, “A Description of the New Netherlands,” 190.

Van der Donck, “A Description of the New Netherlands,” 190.

Van Wassenaer, Historisch Verhael, 68-69; de Laet, “From the New World,” 49, 50, 57; John de Laet, Extracts From the New World, or A Description of the West Indies. By John de Laet, Director of the Dutch West India Company, &c., Translated from the original Dutch by the Editor in Collections of the New York Historical Society, Second Series (New York: H. Ludwig, 1841), Vol. 1: 312.
and shrines. However, suppose these forms of outward symbols did not play a prominent or essential role in the Africans’ religious practice. Or what if their religious practices were in many respects similar or identical to those of the Dutch? In the next chapter, these and other issues concerning African/African American religious practices and their meaning for integration into early Manhattan’s community will be probed.

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3. Anna van Angola’s Heritage

3.1

Six years before Hendrick Christiaensen’s untimely death at the hands of Orson, he met Jan Rodrigues (or Juan Rodriguez), a recent arrival to New Netherland, whom Christiansen hoped would further facilitate his trade amongst the Natives in the environs of Manhattan Island. Rodrigues was a mulatto from the Spanish colony of Santo Domingo in the West Indies, where he met the Dutch trader Thijs Volchertsz Mossel, captain of the Jonge Tobias, sailing in the service of a group of Amsterdam investors. Serving aboard Captain Thijs Volckertz Mossel’s vessel in 1613, Jan Rodrigues is the first recorded person of African descent to travel to New Netherland. Mossel, who had sailed to the West Indies and Guiana for various Dutch trading companies, had apparently utilized the services of Rodrigues in the past to negotiate with the Natives in these regions.

In many ways, Rodrigues was the quintessential Atlantic creole of the sort described by Ira Berlin in Generations of Captivity: A History of African-American Slaves. According to Berlin, “by their experience and sometimes by their person, they had become part of the three worlds [Africa, Europe and the Americas] that came together in the Atlantic littoral. Familiar with the commerce of the Atlantic, fluent in its new

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languages, and intimate with its trade and cultures, they were cosmopolitan in the fullest sense.”

Like other Atlantic creoles, Rodrigues offered his service as an intermediary, capitalizing on his linguistic skills and familiarity with the Atlantic’s expanding commerce and varied commercial conventions and cultural etiquette. Also useful was the almost chameleon-like manner in which he navigated around and within these various competing cultural groups, adeptly mastering the social intricacies of each culture. These were the qualities that also made Rodrigues valuable to European traders like Thijs Volchertsz Mossel and Hendrick Christiansen. As an interpreter and trading factor for Christiansen in New Netherland, Rodrigues remained in the Hudson River Valley to assist in securing Christiansen’s trading interests.

Later when the Dutch decided upon settlement as a strategic means of securing Holland’s claim to the Hudson’s lucrative peltry trade and in order to maximize the efficiency of peltry exploitation and trade relations, other African creoles arrived in the Hudson region almost simultaneously with the European settlers. Like Rodrigues, these cosmopolitan men and women of African descent were also distinguished by what Berlin describes as their “linguistic dexterity, cultural plasticity and social agility.”

Some, like Rodrigues, arrived as “free” sailors and interpreters. But increasingly, the vast majority arrived as shipboard servants or as enslaved captives taken from Spanish or Portuguese vessels while on the Middle Passage. Still others were captives secured during the looting of Spanish and Portuguese New World coastal settlements. These Africans were just as essential to the success and longevity of the colony as the European men and women who comprised white Manhattan’s charter generations. Despite their

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2 Berlin, Many Thousands Gone, 17. See also Berlin, Generations of Captivity, 23.
4 Berlin, Many Thousands Gone, 17. See also Berlin, Generations of Captivity, 24.
status as enslaved laborers, black Manhattan’s charter generations struggled to integrate
themselves within the inchoate Dutch colony and its emerging community. Like the
settlers of European descent, these men and women of African descent sought to
develop institutions that were responsive to their particular needs and reflected their
shared experience and common cultural sensibilities.

On the tip of Manhattan Island, Atlantic creoles joined ranks with settlers from
various European nations as newcomers living among disparate Native American
bands. Bearing names such as Assento Angola, Anna Negrinne, Anthony Ferdinand,
Anna van Angola, Francisco Cartagena, Anthony van Angola, Jan Primero, Marie
Grande, Anthony Portuguese, Simon Congo, and Paulo d’Angola, they labored
alongside other men and women from Europe to transform the Natives’ Manahatta into
New Amsterdam, the fledgling Dutch outpost in North America. They helped to clear
the land of trees and shrubs, built fortifications, tended fields of tobacco and vegetables,
hunted, fished, and built dwellings. And though their status as enslaved laborers meant
that they faced limited opportunities to maintain their ways of life, they nonetheless
shared with their European counterpart a desire to re-create, as much as possible,
various aspects of their previous existence that they had been forced to leave behind.

Of course there were dramatic differences in the experiences of Africans and
Europeans. However, through an examination of the extant records we are able to
discern the various ways African men and women attempted living on Manhattan to
reassemble the pieces of their lives and to reconstruct the kinship and familial networks
that were essential to their survival. They sought to negotiate within the established
confines of the colonial system for an expansion of their freedom and rights. At the
same time, they worked to create cultural structures that addressed their needs as
enslaved laborers in a strange new land. From the records we are able to learn that
Anthony Ferdinand, a young man from “Cascalis in Portugal,” married Maria van Angola. We find that Anna van Angola decided to remarry after her spouse passed away, as did Marie Grande. We also learn that many Africans chose to have their children baptized in the Dutch Reformed Church; that they availed themselves of the court system to bring suits against other inhabitants; that they petitioned for their freedom; and that several of them became landowners in Manhattan. Such examples hint at the many ways enslaved Africans attempted to adapt to life in Manhattan. This chapter discusses some of the cultural elements and experiences the enslaved Africans brought to bear in adapting to each other, to members of other racial groups, and to their new environment. It also discusses the religious heritage that they left behind in Africa, since many later attempted to revive or re-create their traditional beliefs in Manhattan’s frontier.

3.2

Anna van Angola was one of Manhattan’s charter African settlers. Anna’s journey to Manhattan began somewhere on the coast of Angola, as her name suggests. The majority of the Africans delivered to the New World by the Dutch during the early decades of the seventeenth century were captured from foreign slave vessels during the Middle Passage. The historical record does not reveal the name of the ship on which Anna arrived or provides any details of her experiences during the Atlantic crossing. Whatever her ship or ships, Anna could not have escaped the defining features of the Middle Passage: the violence, the unhealthy living conditions, and the intense loneliness associated with being physically separated from prior meaningful relationships. Like other enslaved Africans forced to endure the transatlantic voyage, Anna did not have the luxury of deciding her eventual destination, or even whether or not she wanted to
make the voyage. As a slave, she was torn away from family, friends, and familiar surroundings. For months on end, she found herself placed in a shifting and alien environment pervaded by death, stench and sickness, with no clear or understandable end in sight.

Additionally, during her transatlantic voyage Anna was probably confined and shackled, maybe to a dead person, in an extremely hot, fetid and cramped quarters; subjected to arbitrary and sometimes brutal force and abuse; subjected to ongoing hunger and thirst; forced to defecate and urinate on herself, because of illness or weakness; laid in her own feces and bodily fluids, and sometimes that of the people around her; and feared that she would die soon, either from disease, hunger or suffocation. Furthermore, as a female slave, Anna was more vulnerable to the abuses of crewmembers. Women proved accessible victims to the sexual predations of crewmembers, who used every means to satisfy their lustful desires. Some women would resolve to leap overboard rather than surrender to such sexual assaults. It was not uncommon for female slaves to be flogged into sexual submission and compliance. No females were safe or excluded; pregnant women and even young girls became targets of sexual predations.5

Even the most strong-willed person would have longed for the familiar during such traumatic and uncertain moments. When Anna van Angola began her Middle Passage journey, she left behind family, friends, political organizations, community leaders and specialists in Africa. She left behind her social status, and any hope of socially advancing in her native society was rendered unattainable or improbable. Instead of the richly nuanced and complexly fashioned life and community of the past, the Middle Passage offered a chaotic and ad hoc basis of existence. During the Middle

Passage, Anna was left to attempt to seize shreds of meaning from her past life to explain and cope with her present situation. Maybe she found nothing in her past that immediately or directly explained her present situation. Or perhaps she was unable to organize her actions or thoughts into some useful coherence that would assist her in the topsy-turvy world of the Middle Passage.

Lacking direct information regarding Anna van Angola’s Middle Passage experience, we are left to glean information from extant Middle Passage accounts and hypothesize about the sorts of mechanisms Anna and other enslaved Africans might have employed in order to cope with the traumatic elements of the Middle Passage. While there were many factors, it is apparent from slave accounts and Middle Passage historiography that social interaction and forming bonds with others were key coping mechanisms. In searching for ways to understand what was happening to them, many enslaved Africans would gradually open up to interacting with their fellow captives. Of course, interactions were predicated upon the ability to communicate with others. That many of Manhattan’s earliest African settlers were gathered from the Kongo-Angola region of Africa probably facilitated communication during their transatlantic voyage. For later generations, however, language was one of the first obstacles that had to be confronted. During the two-month voyage, it is conceivable that these Africans, who were gathered from disparate speech communities, became familiar with phrases or words from other African language groups. Sandwiched among the detailed descriptions of the traumatic elements reported in Olaudah Equiano’s account of his Middle Passage experience are examples of mutual help, sharing and meaningful social
groups – facets of social interaction that Anna van Angola probably also relied on during her own transatlantic crossing.\(^6\)

Unable to explain or understand on his own much of what he was experiencing, young Equiano had to rely on the various cultural-based ideas of his fellow captives. “How were the vessels made to move and stop,” Equiano asked. Lacking the voice of a skilled priest, diviner, or any other community specialists, Equiano and his captives settled for the opinions and ideas of the others. “They could not tell,” but their past cultural experiences had equipped them with a probable explanation and means of structuring a new reality: “there were cloths put upon the masts by the help of the ropes…and then the vessel went on; and the white men had some spell or magic they put in the water when they liked in order to stop the vessel.”\(^7\) Such an explanation, with its heavy emphasis on magic, would have resonated not only with Equiano, but also with other enslaved Africans whose worldview made room for the “magical” and for notions of “spirits.”\(^8\) This simple exchange of ideas demonstrates that no one, except a newborn baby, ever looks at the world with pristine eyes or mind. People experience, edit and respond to the world with a set of learned customs and cultural ways of thinking. Anna and her shipmates were no different. They, like Equiano, would have relied on past learned ways of thinking during the Middle Passage and later in reconstituting their lives in Manhattan.

\(^6\) Vincent Carretta, *Equiano, The African: Biography of a Self-Made Man* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2005), xvi. Although recently discovered evidence uncovered by Vincent Carretta questions the purported African birth of Equiano and therefore his Middle Passage account, Equiano’s account of the Middle Passage is still valuable and relevant because although it might not be his own personal experience it is representative of the experiences of the Africans who might have shared their experiences with him and formed the basis of his narrative. Carretta himself decided that even given the weighty “circumstantial evidence” to the contrary, he had decided to treat Equiano’s Middle Passage account “as if it were true.” We should probably heed Carretta’s instructions to his readers to treat the account as true, but “keep in mind that [it]…may be historical fiction rather than autobiography. For the complete text of Equiano’s narrative, see also Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings; Edited With an Introduction and Notes by Vincent Carretta* (New York: Penguin Books, 1995).

\(^7\) Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings*, 57.

\(^8\) Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings*, 57-58.
Obviously, none of this exchange would have been possible without interaction within the group. Close associations, often a basic prerequisite for the exchange of information, were created during the Middle Passage to replace those destroyed by the forced voyage. These “saltwater” bonds often became as meaningful as ties had been to those left behind. One of the social groups Equiano participated in aboard the slave ship consisted of men he referred to as “countrymen.” These men had provided him with an explanation of the workings of the slave ship, albeit in a fashion imbued with their cultural understanding. Together, they tried to wrap their minds around the horrible situation in which they found themselves, with all its newness and wonderment. They stole food together in order to supplement the meager servings of soupy mush that they were served. When he became overwhelmed by fear and apprehension, they assuaged his fears, and although he does not explicitly mention it, they were probably responsible for helping him transcend those moments when he had given up, moments when he “wished for the last friend, death, to relieve” him.

While Equiano was separated from his biological sister and family, there were some Africans who were fortunate to have had a sibling or relative with them during the Middle Passage. Equiano recalled that “there were several brothers” in the men’s section aboard the vessel on which he traveled. Undoubtedly, having a family member present during such a physically and mentally trying experience could prove invaluable. In the absence of family members, fictive kinship emerged. A group of women became like mothers or older sisters to Equiano, washing and taking care of him, possibly when he became ill. The importance of these fictive kinships has not gone un-noticed by scholars of New World slave societies. In Birth of African American Culture: An

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9 Equiano, The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings, 59.
10 Equiano, The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings, 56.
11 Equiano, The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings, 61.
12 Equiano, The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings, 62.
Anthropological Perspective, Sidney W. Mintz and Richard Price assert that the “bond between shipmates...became a major principle of social organization in widely scattered parts of Afro-America.” In Jamaica, for example, the term “shipmate” became synonymous with “brother” or “sister.”

It is possible that Anna and Manhattan’s African charter settlers formed some of these ties. The early indication of strong family and community networks among Manhattan’s African population might be explained by the formation of close bonds and fictive kinship during the Middle Passage. (This interesting feature of early Black Manhattan life will be discussed in a later chapter.) The appearance of a clearly defined group naming practice, the prevalence of Africans as godparents during baptisms, the petition to adopt an orphaned child, and the apparent group-sanctioned punishment of wrong-doers all point to a robust African American community and culture, which could be explained by factoring in the possibility of these strong shipboard fictive ties.

3.3

Whether or not Anna formed some of these close affective ties during her voyage is debatable, but what is clear is that Anna survived the frightening and horrendous conditions of her voyage. The precise date of her arrival in Manhattan is unknown. However, as a slave from the Kongo-Angola region of Africa her arrival probably occurred sometime between 1623 and 1637, when Dutch slave trading and privateering were virtually synonymous. Beginning in 1623, the Dutch West India Company, or the

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15 In the Dutch Reformed Church’s marriage records, her marriage banns (issued on September 28, 1642) states that she is betrothed to Andries van Angola and that she is the widow of Francisco van Capo Verde. Having had time to marry (and become a widow) by 1642, she was probably among the early arrivals of African descent, which came from 1624-1637. Pieter C. Emmer, “The History of the Dutch Slave Trade, A
“DWIC,” annually dispatched several squadrons of privateering ships to Spanish and Portuguese holdings in West Africa, the Caribbean and the Americas. They captured Spanish and Portuguese merchant ships and confiscated their cargoes. According to Joannes de Laet, one of the Directors of the DWIC, between the years 1623 and 1637 a total of 2,336 enslaved Africans were acquired by the Company in this manner and later sold at various locations in the New World at an average price of 250 guilders, or for the equivalent in provisions and supplies.  

In the years 1623 and 1624, de Laet reports that three ships (the Dolphijn, the Thonijn, and the Bruynvisch) were able to capture 29 Portuguese and Spanish ships and confiscate their property, which included Africans. In 1627, the Kater, the Bruynvisch, and the Phoenix captured seven ships. That these ships customarily visited New Netherland after their privateering ventures may also point to the possibility that some of Manhattan’s earliest inhabitants of African descent arrived as cargo or “conscripted” crewmembers aboard these vessels. The activities of these ships in 1623-1624 and 1627 might give us clues as to the manner in which Anna and many of the first settlers of African descent eventually found their way into Dutch custody and eventually reached the shores of Manhattan Island.  

In 1623, the Dolphin, Thonijn and the Bruynvisch had sailed from Texel to the coast of West Africa as part of a small privateering fleet. After capturing a few Portuguese pataskens or coastal trading vessels, they eventually sailed into the Rio de Congo. 

Bibliographical Survey” The Journal of Economic History Vol. 32, no. 3 (Sept. 1972), 731. Emmer argues that the period 1623-1636 “Dutch slave trade and privateering were the same.” Also, according to Henk den Heijer, “privateering was initially one of the pillars of the WIC.” This continued until “after the last attempt to capture a Spanish ‘silverfleet’ failed in 1640, WIC directors called a halt to privateering expeditions, because they lacked the funds to continue.” Henk den Heijer, “The Dutch West India Company, 1621-1791” in Johannes Postma and Victor Enthoven, eds., Riches From Atlantic Commerce: Dutch Transatlantic Trade and Shipping, 1585-1817 (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2003), 91, 93.

16 Joannes de Laet, Iaerlyck Verhael: van de Verrichtinghen der Geocrtoyeerde Wesst-Indische Compagnie in derthien Boecken ‘S-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1931),103. Excerpts of this text were translated for the author by Weijer Loosecaat Vermeer. 
17 de Laet, Iaerlyck Verhael, 105.
Somewhere below Cabo Ledo, on June 9, they captured an empty patasken sailing from Sao Paolo de Luanda with four Portuguese and ten blacks. Later that evening they captured three more Portuguese pataskens in the Rio de Coansa and chased two more onto the shore, where they broke up in pieces. The next day, on June 10, they “chopped up two of the captured pataskens…and put all the sick Portuguese who could not do duties and set her course straight for Luanda.” Afterwards, the Bruynvisch, Dolphijn, Thonijn and the Sao Juan (one of the captured pataskens) sailed again towards Sao Paolo.

On June 14, the fleet was engaged in a heated battle with various Portuguese ships. The Dutch fleet lost three men, who were taken as prisoners by the Portuguese and seven were injured, but they managed to take some prisoners and captured more ships. The commander of the Dutch fleet decided to request a prisoner swap: in exchange for the return of the three imprisoned Dutchmen, he offered “three times as many Portuguese.” But, “the governor and bishop of Loanda did not concede to this request and demanded for the three prisoners all the Portuguese and blacks and also two ships in mint condition.” On June 18, one of the ships was ransomed for 1,866 guilders in gold and silver and the other for 1,938 guilders. The situation seems to have been resolved without the divulgence of the Africans, who were apparently incorporated into the crew of the Dutch fleet. Later, we are informed that the fleet sailed on in the area around Corimba and bought provisions, including “some Farinha for her blacks.” And on July 9, they captured another prize (the S. Francisco) and manned her with a skipper, eight men and four blacks, leaving six with the original fleet.

In 1627, the Bruynvisch was again part of a fleet of Dutch vessels engaged in privateering. On January 22, 1627, a Dutch squadron of three ships consisting of the Ter

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18 de Laet, Iaerlyck Verhael, 110. 
19 de Laet, Iaerlyck Verhael, 112. 
20 de Laet, Iaerlyck Verhael, 120.
Veere, Leeuwinne and the Vlieghende Draeck left Holland in the employ of the Dutch West Indies Company to bring 36 colonists and their cargo to Brazil.\textsuperscript{21} They also had a letter of Marque, which permitted them to capture and plunder Spanish merchant ships. After dispatching the colonists, the fleet sailed toward the Caribbean to engage in privateering, where on May 4 they encountered two other Dutch ships, the Kater and the Bruynvisch, who decided to accompany them in their privateering activities.\textsuperscript{22} Sometime around May 10, the squadron captured a Portuguese slaver that was heavily damaged and leaking. The slaver had sailed from Sao Tome with 225 slaves aboard. They took 22 of “the best” Africans and let the ship go on its way. They may have decided on this course of action because they did not want to take on the added responsibility of providing food for such a large cargo, not to mention the added responsibility of providing security to keep such a large cache of Africans and their Portuguese enslavers in check. Also, because the ship was severely damaged, the Bruynvisch’s captain could not man her with a skipper and members of his own crew as the captain of the Dutch fleet had done in 1624 after capturing the S. Francisco.

On June 10, the fleet split up, possibly to increase their chances of meeting Spanish/Portuguese vessels. Three ships (the Bruynvisch, the Leeuwinne and the Vlieghende Draeck) sailed along the south coast of Jamaica and the other two ships (Ter Veere and the Kater) sailed along the south coast of Cuba. The fleet continued to engage in privateering along the coast of the neighboring Spanish colonies, intercepting any Spanish vessels they encountered. On July 8, they encountered two large Spanish merchant ships. After a fierce battle with cannon fire and hand grenades, the Dutchmen

\textsuperscript{21} de Laet, Iaerlyck Verhael, 16. Hendrick Jakobsz Lucifer was the Admiral and Skipper of Ter Veere, Jan Pietersz was the Vice-Admiral and Skipper of the Leeuwinne, and Galeyn van Stapels was the Skipper of the Vlieghenden Draeck.

\textsuperscript{22} de Laet, Iaerlyck Verhael, 21. Jochem Gijsz was the Captain of the Kater and Jan Reyersz Swart was the Captain of the Bruynvisch.
were finally able to board the Spanish vessels. Some of the captured Spaniards of the *St. Anthony* (one of the Spanish ships) were put aboard the frigate and allowed to go free. After this engagement the squadron sailed towards the channel of the Bahamas and unloaded some cases of indigo on the coast of Florida.

Some of the remaining Spaniards were sent to Havana with the *Bruynvisch*. The rest of the squadron sailed towards Holland, arriving there on September 5. The *Bruynvisch* remained at the Cabo Corrientes, scouting along the Cuban coast near Havana, but decided not to risk an attack due to intelligence gathered from a few Spanish prisoners aboard. Instead, the ship sailed towards New Netherland where it anchored in the mouth of the North (Hudson) River on August 20. Prior to sailing for Holland at the end of September the *Bruynvisch* probably unloaded some or all of the Africans captured and additional cargo at New Amsterdam, just as the other ships of the squadron had done on the coast of Florida prior to their return trip home. The *Bruynvisch* arrived in Texel on October 25.

It is quite possible that Anna was among those that arrived on Manhattan aboard the *Bruynvisch* in 1627. Prior to Article XXX of the *Charter of Freedoms and Exemptions* in 1629, the Dutch West India Company appears to have been uninterested in supplying New Netherland with enslaved African labor. The following year, in February 1630, the first shipment of slaves sanctioned by the DWIC arrived in New Netherland, consisting of fifty Africans (twenty men and thirty women) captured from a Portuguese

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23 Robert J. Swan, “First Africans into New Netherland, 1625 or 1626?,” *De Halve Maen* 66 (1993), 75-82. While it is certain that New Netherland’s first recorded inhabitant of African descent was Jan Rodrigues in 1613, the date of the arrival of the first shipment of enslaved Africans to New Amsterdam is still mired in uncertainty. Robert Swan discovered to his surprise that unlike the shipment of the first “twenty and odd” Africans to Jamestown, Virginia, there are no known extant records detailing the specific events surrounding the arrival of Manhattan’s first enslaved immigrants. Swan suggests that scholars should view the traditionally held possible arrival dates more critically since “a 1625 or 1626 date is not supported by the enriching evidence” lately uncovered (p. 82).

24 The *Charter of Freedoms and Exemptions* of 1629 states that “The Company will endeavor to supply the colonists with as many blacks as it possibly can, on the condition hereafter to be made, without however being bound to do so to a greater extent or for a longer time than it shall see fit.”
prize. We know, however, from inferences made from various historical documents, that there were Africans in Manhattan before this 1630 shipment. One document is the oft-quoted *Emancipation Act* of February 25, 1644, freeing eleven African men and their wives. This measure states that the eleven “served the Company 18 to 19 years,” and were seeking “to be liberated from their servitude, and set at liberty” particularly since they “have been long…promised their Freedom.” According to this petition, their “service” to the Company probably commenced in either 1625 or 1626.\(^{25}\)

The other document that points to the presence of Africans in Manhattan prior to 1630 is the August 11, 1628 letter of the Reverend Jonas Michaëlius, Manhattan’s first ordained Dutch Reformed minister, in which he complains about the ineptitude of the “Angola slave women” as maid servants.\(^{26}\) In the same letter he also complained about the Africans speaking “jeeringly” and “scoffingly” about the Christian Creator. Reverend Michaëlius used the Dutch phrase *d’Africanen* (African) instead of *d’Africaninne* (African women), which suggests that he was not referring only to slave women, but to both men and women. This seems to indicate that there were also African men present in the colony when he wrote this letter.\(^{27}\) Michaëlius had only reached Manhattan four months earlier, on April 7, 1628, so African men and women, including at least several women from Angola, were apparently present in the colony

\(^{25}\) E.B. O’Callaghan, *Laws and Ordinances of New Netherland, 1638-1674* (New York: Weed, Parsons & Company, 1868), 36. The “Act” emancipating the eleven slaves was passed on February 25, 1644, which gives us the 1625 or 1626 dates. However, if the “18 to 19 years” service was taken verbatim from the original petition and the petition was penned and presented to the Director and Council prior to 1644, then it is possible that the eleven arrived in the colony before 1625, possibly as early as 1624 when the first European settlers arrived. Petitions were written in a book, but that book is no longer extant. See Charles Gehring, *ed.*, *Council Minutes 1655-1656* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1999), 176n. Gehring indicates that “the book of petitions no longer exists.” It was not uncommon for it to take a few months before the Council actually made a final determination on a petition.


\(^{27}\) Eekhof, *Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland*, 120. In the same letter, Michaëlius used the Dutch word *slavinnen* to indicate that he was referring to slave women (123). This should call into question any argument regarding a possible post-1628 initial shipment of African men to the colony.
prior to his arrival. It is difficult to say with certainty, but perhaps Anna van Angola was one of the Angolan women Michaël found so woefully inadequate to assist him in his household.

3.4

Arriving on the shores of Manhattan Island, Anna and other Africans found themselves separated from the cultural matrix that had previously sustained them and the delicate web of symbolic identifications available to them in normal times; most even lost their names and were forced to take on new ones. Family and friendship ties had been broken; their world of meanings had imploded. Although their deeply nuanced cultural past was shattered, important shards of their past life were carried into this foreign social context and later gave meaning and significance to new associations. In order to accomplish this, Anna and the group of Manhattan’s early Africans gradually had to identify positively with the other Africans they encountered on Manhattan, just as they had done with their shipmates during the Middle Passage. They had to complete a journey of the self away from withdrawal towards some form of active involvement with each other, their surroundings, and the Europeans and Native Americans in their midst. New identities had to be formed and a new cultural matrix had to be created that reflected and responded to the emerging needs of this disparate group of Africans.

In terms of religion, in order to understand what was later created in Manhattan’s social environment, we must first understand the religious world that Anna and her African contemporaries left behind, since salvaged remnants, brought into their new environment, would contribute to the creation of early Manhattan’s rich
spiritual mosaic, where Native American, European and African religious practices intermixed.

Anna and the Africans that constituted Manhattan’s “charter generation” arrived primarily from the Kongo-Angola region of Africa. The peoples of this region believed that the “powers” that inhabited the other world were responsible for all the good and evil experienced in this world; essentially all power and authority in this world derived from the other. The sixteenth and seventeenth-century Kongo peoples believed that these powers were divided in three distinct categories or dimensions: the named dead, or ancestors; mbumba and the water and earth spirits; and nkadi mpemba and the sky spirits. According to Anne Hilton, “these categories may be distinguished by their spheres of influence, and to some extent by the type of object which ‘contained’ them in this world, the nature of the rituals which activated them and the role configurations of the participants.”

Elaborate rituals surrounded the veneration of the dead, of whom it was believed had the power to bless or curse the living. The goal of these rituals was “to detach the survivor from the immediate influence of the dead person and to ensure that the ghost of the dead did not return to haunt the living.” These rituals were primarily performed at gravesites located in special woods or thickets called infinda. Objects were placed on these grave sites to inform onlookers of the name and status of the deceased: “chairs,


30 Hilton, The Kingdom of Kongo, 10.
bows, arrows, horns, cups and other utensils were placed on the graves of title-holders; skulls of wild beast on the tombs of hunters; musical instruments on those of musicians; baskets of roots and herbs on those of curers, hammers, bellows, anvils and a crown on those of smiths."31 These gravesites were located in remote areas, away from dense population, such as in the forest or woods.

While the ancestors were believed to have the power to bless or curse the living, the spirits of the mbumba dimension were thought to govern or have influence over fertility. Like the spirits of the ancestors, the spirits and powers of mbumba were thought to be pervasively present and ambivalent, but unlike the spirits of the ancestors, those of the mbumba dimension represented the natural world and rewarded with fecundity and health, behavior that was believed to be in harmony with nature. According to Anne Hilton, “in the seventeenth century mbumba literally meant fecund, and the rites of nkimba mbumba cult…appear to have concerned fertility.”32 The beliefs surrounding the spirits or powers of this dimension were expressed in a group of ideas and rituals centered around a “giant snake, water, trees, fire and fertility rites as well as individual water and earth spirits.”33 The inhabitants of the Kongo-Angola region made offerings to these spirits whenever they “approached water, crossed a ford with a strong current, fished, traveled along paths, stumbled unexpectedly on odd stones and pieces of wood, gave a gift of palm wine, or witnessed a crackling fire.”34 Often-times nkisi (fetishes) representing these spirits were hung in an nsanda tree.

Furthermore, it was believed that these spirits of the mbumba dimension were incarnated into human forms. They believed “that when water or earth spirits wished to pass into human existence, they chose their parents from people that ventured near the

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31 Hilton, The Kingdom of Kongo, 11. See also Thompson, Flash of the Spirit, ___.
water. They were then born nine months later as human oddities – albinos, dwarfs, twins or cripples.”

For the seventeenth century Kongo-Angola, “albinos, dwarfs, pigmies, children born with crippled feet, twins, and children born feet first, [were] all considered incarnations of the water and earth spirits. They were ‘venerated by all’ and played a crucial role in the rites of the mbumba dimension.” In the instance where someone was born with a physical abnormality or oddity, the individual himself was considered an nkisi (fetish), or a corporeal container of the spirit power. As such, the child itself was viewed as the nkisi and “its mother (and, in the case of twins, the father too), were initiated as nganga” (priest) who would assist in establishing and overseeing the ritual prescriptions surrounding the births of other such spirits.

However, these spirits also selected “normal” men and women to manifest their power as specialized healers, who would attempt to bring the patient back into harmony with the natural world by imposing special ritual prescriptions. These individuals were thought to be chosen by the spirits of the mbumba dimension when the spirit manifested itself to the individual in the form of an unusually shaped object of the natural world, “such as a stone, a piece of bizarrely shaped wood, or a grain found near water.” These mundane objects were deemed to be the vessels of the spirit power, nkisi. Once the chosen individual possessed the valued nkisi, he or she was initiated into its use as an nganga, and was able to be possessed by the spirit.

The dimension of nkadi mpemba and the sky spirits was analytically distinct from that of mbumba and the water and earth spirits. Whereas the powers of the mbumba dimension were centered on fertility and health, the powers of the nkadi mpemba

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35 Hilton, The Kingdom of Kongo, 15.
36 Hilton, The Kingdom of Kongo, 15.
37 Hilton, The Kingdom of Kongo, 15.
38 Hilton, The Kingdom of Kongo, 15.
dimension were concerned more with manipulating the natural and spiritual world in order to benefit materially. For this reason, *mbumba* cults tend to be of a more public and communal type, benefiting the whole community, whereas those of the *nkadi mpemba* were individually focused. For example, while there were curers in both the *mbumba* and the *nkadi mpemba* dimensions, those of the *mbumba* dimension, “imposed ritual prescriptions in order to bring the individual into harmony with the natural world,” while those of the *nkadi mpemba* dimension “used medicinal herbs, human reasoning and imitative magic to counter the malevolence, whether natural or human, that had caused the illness.”

Many *nkadi mpemba* type *nganga* were sought out to provide various services besides curing illnesses, such as protection against evil and misfortune and securing good fortune for their clientele. The resultant effect was that *nkadi mpemba’s* “ambiguous nature meant that in helping one individual it might harm another and it could only benefit the community as a whole if it was used positively as an adjunct to a legitimate role, notably that of chief.”

The *nganga* and the *nkisi* of the *mbumba* and the *nkadi mpemba* dimensions were also different. Whereas both men and women were eligible to be initiated as *mbumba* type *nganga* (priests), the *nkadi mpemba* type *nganga* were exclusively male. Unlike the *mbumba* type *nganga*, these *nganga* were not normally possessed by the spirit power but manipulated the spirit power believed to be lodged in the various *nkisi* they possessed. Their *nkisi* were also markedly different: those of the *mbumba* dimension consisted of

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41 Hilton, *The Kingdom of Kongo*, 17. Like those of the *mbumba* dimension, the *nkadi mpemba* type *nganga* were oftentimes specialists. The *nganga ngombe*, were “the diviners, who, in addition to foretelling the future, sought out *ndoki*-witches...The *nganga mbau*,...administered an ordeal by hot iron to discover thieves.” According to Hilton, “the *nganga mpungu*...raised morale by appearing in battle wherever the combat was most furious. His *nkisi* protected him against swords and arrows, but since he was considered vulnerable to poisoned arrows, he was supported by a specialist in counter-poisons and by a third *nganga*, who could, if necessary, treat them both...Certain *nganga* sold objects called *irikua* to protect children from witchcraft and disease, and statues called *milungu*...to protect women against disease and wild animals. Others sold *nkisi* to protect the foundations of houses, to kill thieves, to protect the crops...”
either natural objects found near bodies of water or humans themselves, but those of the nkadi mpemba dimension were fashioned by the nganga himself “who placed appropriate materials such as ‘small stones, feathers, herbs and similar things’ in either a small sack or a piece of sculpted wood. The sacks were called nkisi mi mafuta. The sculptures were called nkisi mi biteke. The nkisi mi biteke included animals, birds, humans, and monsters. Some were ‘scarcely carved at all’.”

For Europeans, accustomed to elaborate public houses of worship (grand cathedrals, churches, etc.) and whose understanding of the sacred excluded natural objects and animals, Kongo-Angola religious and ceremonial life probably posed huge problems of comprehension. While there were some regional shrines with public ceremonies and ministers, according to the historian John Thornton, “often these shrines were not public and monumental” but instead involved “a complex of ingredients, statuary, and pictures, and placed in large pots, sometimes buried in the ground, and frequently kept in small houses in woods, graveyards, or even in the center of towns.”

It is not difficult to understand how Europeans could overlook or ignore these religious practices and symbols when they appear in New World societies, focusing instead on practices that bore a closer resemblance to their understanding of what constitutes proper worship, the sacred, and religious life.

To complicate further our understanding of Kongo-Angola religious practices in the early seventeenth century, some of New Amsterdam’s early Africans had already began the process of adopting religious and cultural ideas apart from their “traditional” practices and beliefs prior to leaving Africa. As Atlantic creoles, with their characteristic cultural plasticity, many of them had probably began making “cosmological

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43 Hilton, The Kingdom of Kongo, 17.
44 Thornton, “Religious and Ceremonial Life in the Kongo and Mbundu Areas,” 78.
adjustments and ritual changes” prior to landing in New Amsterdam. Small clusters of African Christian communities were slowly cropping up on Africa’s west coast near European trading factories and settlements in Sierra Leone, Upper Guinea, the Gold Coast and Kongo-Angola region. It is possible that some of Manhattan’s early African settlers had begun mixing Christianity with their traditional polytheistic religion while still in Africa.

Some local African leaders (chieftains or kings), like the Kongo’s King Nzinga a Nkuwu in 1491, accepted Christian baptisms and even insisted that their subjects “convert.” Also, in the first decade of the sixteenth century in the same location, King Afonso established Christianity as a royal cult, using it to distinguish his reign from his predecessors by claiming a unique source of authority for himself. According to Wyatt MacGaffey, “in Kongo terms, Christianity was a new means to approach the highest nzambi, whose existing representative, the king, felt that his powers were threatened by the multiplication of lesser nzambi (shrines, charms) controlled by his nominal subordinates.”

According to Thornton, “by the early seventeenth century…most of the people in Kongo identified themselves as Christians,” although European clergy “disparaged Kongo Christianity because Kongo’s version of the faith contained substantial elements from its original religion.” In general, most Kongo viewed the role of the Christian priests as one of “performing sacraments.” As a result, many “regularly attended Mass…They baptized their children, took Christian names, wore the cross, and described themselves as Christian.” However, to the dismay of the Catholic priests and

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European missionaries, “they also continued to visit their ancestors’ graves and seek luck, health, and blessing. They respected the territorial deities that they sometimes came to identify also as Christian Saints…and resisted attempts of missionaries to describe all these activities as witchcraft.”⁴⁹ Not surprisingly, their embrace of Christianity rarely involved any fundamental religious shifts, and the institutional frameworks persisted that gave meaning to the nkisi and the system of the nganga. It was these ideas that Anna and other Kongo-Angolan Africans brought from their homeland, through the travail of the Middle Passage and later to Manhattan Island.

3.5

While Sidney W. Mintz and Richard Price view the Middle Passage as the initial phase in the “birth of African-American culture,” there are other scholars who are of the opinion that the most salient feature of the Middle Passage culturally was its destructive nature. They are quite correct that the Middle Passage severed enslaved Africans’ ties to all prior connections – cultural and otherwise. The fragmentation or shattering of cultural traditions was admittedly one of the definitive features of the Middle Passage. That this loss was deeply felt and was part of the trauma of the Middle Passage is also true. They are also correct when they assert that traditional African religious systems were destroyed as “systems.” Enslaved Africans could not have transferred whole (or intact) religious systems to the New World. Mintz and Price argue cogently, that enslaved Africans were able to transport “immense quantities of [cultural] knowledge and information.” Nevertheless,

they were not able to transfer the human complement of their traditional institutions to the New World. Members of ethnic groups of differing status, yes; but different status systems, no; Priests and priestesses, yes; but

⁴⁹ Thornton, “Religious and Ceremonial Life in the Kongo and Mbundu Areas,” 84.
priesthoods and temples, no; Princes and Princesses, yes, but courts and monarchies, no.50

Not even the Europeans, migrating voluntarily, were able to transfer whole systems of their prior culture and society to the Americas intact and unchanged. Furthermore, diasporan Africans everywhere were unable to reconstruct and re-establish intact the societies from which they were taken and to which they were tied. Instead, from the shattered pieces of their past, they often created original social and cultural forms that were similar yet at the same time different from the African ones.

Despite the merits of these scholars’ assessment of the Middle Passage, what is missing from their discourse, and what was emphasized in this chapter, is a recognition that the enslaved Africans’ separation from their culture and “traditional collective means of comprehending life” was only the initial phase of the cultural creative process.51 While the Middle Passage robbed enslaved Africans of their prior collective means of understanding life and loss, they were beginning the process of creating a new collective during the Middle Passage. Even in the midst of the Middle Passage’s destructive and bewildering milieu, reconstructive processes were beginning to breath new life and meaning into the fragmented shards of the old. By focusing solely on the destructive features of the Middle Passage, these scholars lose sight of its reconstructive elements and the fullness of the enslaved Africans’ experience.

Equiano’s Narrative reveals that he experienced moments where all hope seemed to have been extinguished. Yet, he was able to discover ways of rekindling this vital flame. He recalled “the shrieks of the women,” that had punctuated the “scene of horror” aboard the slave ship, but there were also the women who washed him and

probably nurtured him back to health. He no longer had family members to rely on, but he discovered “countrymen” and caring women who had taken the place of his absent family. He remembered the stench and heat of the pestilential hold, but he also recalled the flying fishes that had filled him with amazement. He remembered his bewilderment in being unable to explain the movement of the ship, but he also recalled that his fellow shipmates offered him an explanation that resonated with his cultural worldview and understanding. For Anna, just as for Equiano, the experience of trauma was probably offset by other more viable occurrences that enabled her to cope and transcend the horrors of the Middle Passage.

Arriving in Manhattan’s frontier settlement, Anna and her African contemporaries would continue the pattern of interaction and creative adaptation that they commenced during the Middle Passage. In Manhattan they would eventually create new family ties, biological and fictive, a new community and new cultural forms. And the community they created would be separated from, but also simultaneously submerged within, the larger white community of Dutch Manhattan. Of course, the cultural forms created in the New World, although similar in many ways to the African forms they left behind, had to be different if they were to be responsive to the enslaved Africans’ new situation and social position. Ultimately, the social and cultural forms Anna and Manhattan’s early African settlers would create depended on Manhattan’s social and cultural milieu and the outcome of their inter-group and intra-group interactions.

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52 Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings*, 55.
II.

EARLY CONTACT AND SETTLEMENT
4. Planting the Seeds of the Old World in Manhattan’s New World Soil

4.1

Two representatives of Manhattan’s charter generations, Anna van Angola and Catalina Trico lived in New Amsterdam for almost the entire duration of its existence as a Dutch possession.¹ Catalina was among the settlers whose motivation for migration to New Netherland was described by Gulielmus Baudartius:

> Inasmuch as the multitude of people, not only natives but foreigners, who are seeking a livelihood in the United Provinces is very great, so that where one stiver is to be earned there are ten hands ready to seize it, especially in Holland which is the reservoir of divers kingdoms and countries. Many are obliged, on this account, to go in search of other lands and residences where they can obtain a living more easily and at less expense. Accordingly, in the year 1624...divers families went from Holland to Virginia in the West Indies....²

Trico was eighteen years old when she was persuaded by the promise of land in exchange for six years service to cast her lot with the other Walloon settlers traveling to New Netherland on the Dutch West India Company’s vessels, the Eendracht and the Nieu Nederlandt in 1624.³ Catalina was married to Joris Rapalje, a nineteen-year old

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¹ T. H. Breen, “Creative Adaptations: Peoples and Cultures” in Jack P. Greene and J. R. Poole, ed. Colonial British America: Essays in the New History of the Early Modern Era (Baltimore: he Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), 205. According to T. H. Breen, representatives of the charter generation “exercised considerable influence over subsequent generations...by making decisions about institutional forms about the treatment of other races, [and] about the allocation of natural resources.” Additionally, the “charter settlers established customs and traditions, exploitative labor systems, and normative patterns of behavior.”
³ The Walloons were French-speaking Belgians. For a discussion of the distinction between the Walloons and Huguenots, see Bertrand van Ruymbke, “The Walloon and Huguenot Elements in New Netherland and Seventeenth-Century New York: Identity, History, and Memory,” in Joyce D. Goodfriend, ed., Revisiting New Netherland: Perspectives on Early Dutch America (Brill: Leiden, 2005), 41-54. For a discussion of the
Flemish textile worker, four days before their ship departed Amsterdam on January 21, 1624. Four other women who traveled in the same vessel with Catalina were later married at sea during the voyage. Anna van Angola would marry years after she arrived in Manhattan.

Both Anna and Catalina later gave birth to several children, and both presented their children for baptism in the Dutch Reformed Church. Both women began their residence in the service of the Dutch West India Company, and each worked to eke out an existence from the land while both raising a family. Eventually, they both became landowners and experienced moments of joy and disappointment that ushered forth from being pioneer settlers in a foreign land. But beyond these intriguing similarities, the life stories of these two seventeenth-century neighbors diverge in significant ways. Their surnames hint at the root of their divergent experiences: one was from Angola and arrived in Manhattan as an enslaved laborer, while the other was a French Walloon from the Dutch Republic. This contrast in backgrounds meant that there would be palpable differences in their experiences as each worked to reassemble and fortify the delicate web of family, religious and community life that she had left behind.

However, as constituents of the party of vanguard settlers, Anna van Angola and Catalina Trico were members of a group that was positioned, by virtue of their time of arrival, to shape the cultural patterns of later arrivals. As historian T. H. Breen points out, both African and European members of the charter generation “established rules for interaction, decided what customs would be carried to the New World, and determined


5 Anna was married on September 28, 1642 to Andries van Angola. However, according to the marriage records, she was previously married to Francisco van Capo Verde (Cape Verde), who presumably died sometime before. It is not known when she married Francisco or whether she bore any children for him. See Samuel Purple, ed. Records of the Reformed Dutch Church in New Amsterdam and New York, Marriages from 11 December 1639 to 26 August 1801 (New York: New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, 1890), 11.
the terms under which newcomers would be incorporated into their societies.”

Subsequent arrivals, therefore, faced the dual challenge of adjusting to a foreign land and also to the settlers, both European and African, who were already there. It is apparent, however, that in adjusting to their new homes and in seeking creative ways to adjust to all the vagaries of pioneer life all settlers, both Africans and Europeans were forced into two distinct types of social interaction the moment they arrived in Manhattan. They had to interact with peoples of their own racial group who were of various ethnic backgrounds, and they also had to interact with members of other racial groups, who were themselves quite diverse.

One major point of distinction between Anna and Catalina clearly involved expectations. Anna van Angola and her African contemporaries, unlike Catalina Trico, Jonas Michaëluius (who arrived in the colony some years after Trico) and other European immigrants, did not have the luxury of believing that their journey was towards a better life or greater economic freedom. The enslaved settlers of African descent had to devise new religious structures that would prove responsive to their various needs and to the demands that their status as unfree laborers made on them.

Of course, European settlers also faced many difficulties in transplanting to Dutch Manhattan elements of the culture and life they left behind. As Sidney Mintz and Richard Price remind us in The Birth of African-American Culture, “no group, no matter how well-equipped or how free to choose, can transfer its way of life and the accompanying beliefs and values intact from one locale to another. The conditions of transfer, as well as the characteristics of the host setting...will inevitably limit the variety and strength of effective transfers.”

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6 T. H. Breen, “Creative Adaptations: Peoples and Cultures,” 204.
enjoyed by the Europeans did not, in and of itself, “guarantee greater success in cultural transmission, even though freedom made maintaining some cultural forms much easier.”

In different ways, members of Manhattan’s Black and white charter generations faced problems in re-establishing institutions that were responsive to the needs of their everyday lives – chief among these institutions were religion and family. But in order for these institutions to prosper, it was first necessary to create stable community life. Communal existence somehow had to be rescued from the flux, destruction and disruption that often characterized settlement life.

Pioneer life was, by its very nature, disorderly and filled with difficulties and uncertainty. There were the starving times, when life was reduced to a brutal struggle for day-to-day survival; infant mortality was extremely high; and the rate at which husbands and wives became widowers and widows must have made death an uneasy but familiar part of life. Many of the settlers were people whose lives, prior to embarking on their voyage to Manhattan, were already marked by flux and disorder; they had been previously uprooted and their lives had already deviated from the settled patterns of stable societies. The trying experience of pioneer life further exacerbated these pre-existent tensions. The experience of transplantation in a strange land, surrounded by Natives with customs and norms dramatically different than their own, further heightened the sensation of “strange-ness.”

Although the Natives in the vicinity of Manhattan Island did not sail thousands of miles across the Atlantic to a distant land, the world they lived in was dramatically different than the one they knew before Europeans and Africans “discovered” the “New World.” The arrival of European explorers and their African aides in the region in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had irrevocably transformed Native American

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existence. Long-standing cultural patterns and habits were permanently disrupted by alien diseases, new European technology and trade products, and land-hungry settlers bent on transforming the land to approximate the home they left behind. These three factors, along with others, combined to drastically alter the physical, social and cultural milieu, compelling Native American groups to make changes to their ways of life and seek out creative responses to their altered existence. As James H. Merrell so cogently argues, these intrusions had thrust Native Americans “into a situation no less alien than what European immigrants and African slaves found...The result was a kaleidoscopic array of migrations from ancient territories and mergers with nearby peoples.” Like the enslaved Africans, Native Americans “were compelled to construct new societies from the splintered remnants of the old.”

This chapter tells the story of what happened when Native Americans, Europeans and Africans began living together on a more permanent and sustained basis between 1624, when the first settlers arrived in New Netherland from Holland, and 1632, when the first ordained minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, Jonas Michaëlius, returned to Holland after serving his term of duty. It explores the tensions between the desire to reconstruct the religious and cultural past on new soil and the need to address or take into account various aspects of the new situation. Although it is one story, it has three deeply interwoven and closely linked plots and storylines flowing out from the experiences of Dutch Manhattan’s three cultural groups. While it is true that it is a story in which “Europeans were the colonizers, Africans the enslaved, and Indians the dispossessed,” the complexities and richness of the story become evident when all three plots, arising from these distinct positions, are allowed to unfold in interaction with the

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others. After all, interaction was the driving force behind this fascinating story; it was through interaction that cultural information was shared, worldviews were transformed, and the dialectical relationship between the social and the religious (or cultural) was made most evident.

4.2

Traveling by sea in the seventeenth century was indeed an inherently perilous undertaking. In *The Island at the Center of the World*, Russell Shorto reminds us that New Netherland’s first settlers from Europe, arriving “by tens and twenties…in the years 1624 and 1625 [in]…well-crafted but still frightfully vulnerable wooden vessels,” experienced hardships during their voyage. Most of them traveled “in the narrow and rheumatic below-decks, with pigs rooting and sheep bleating hollowly at every slamming swell, with the animal reek and their own odors of sickness and sour filth, each clutching his or her satchel of elixirs to ward off the plague, the devil, shipwreck, and ‘the bloody flux.’”  

In some respects, the conditions of life on the vessels from Europe mirrored those aboard the ships transporting Manhattan’s African charter group. European migrants faced the challenges of inclement weather and the possibility of being intercepted by privateers. Either of these occurrences would have required the passengers to remain below deck in the already cramped and fetid quarters. The difficulties of transportation were often compounded for children and pregnant women, many giving birth prior to reaching their destination. The ships were laden with tools, supplies and provisions for the voyage, livestock, and other items the colonists would require in establishing and

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11 Merrell, “The Indians’ New World,” 43.
sustaining their settlement. Accommodations were therefore always incommodious and never pleasant. These challenging conditions that prompted anxious travelers to fluctuate between “the two poles of hope and fear.”

The experiences of Reverend Jonas Michaëlius during his voyage were typical of the challenges faced by many European settlers traveling to the New World. The first problem was the inclement weather. Repeated storms added weeks to his journey so the voyage lasted for ten weeks, rather than the customary six to eight weeks. The discomfort of constant tossing was compounded by cramped quarters and frequent sickness. In addition, food was poor and supplies were limited. At such times, when hope and excitement were replaced with increased regret and apprehension, there must have been moments when he no doubt questioned his decision to leave Holland and felt that even his faith in the benevolence and protection of God was being tested. While he and his children were quite ill during the transatlantic journey, he feared most for his wife, who was pregnant at age fifty. For the minister, her “unusual and unexpected fruitfulness” seemed an omen of favorable blessing for the family. However, as the voyage progressed from days to weeks, her worsening health probably became an increase cause for concern. For Michaëlius and the other early settlers to New Netherland, the conditions of life aboard the ship and the circumstances of the transatlantic crossing were often so unpleasant that the uncertainty of their survival was evident enough that not even “a betting man would likely lay money on.”

Few would recover quickly, or at all, from the difficulties of traveling in cramped and pestilential quarters for weeks at sea. Many who had, like Catalina Trico and Joris

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13 Shorto, *The Island at the Center of the World*, 37.
15 Russell Shorto, *The Island at the Center of the World*, 41.
Rapalje, married at sea or just prior to departing Europe would arrive at their destination as widows or widowers. Some would lose a beloved child, friend, sibling or parent. Death and sickness did not discriminate – they were unwanted passengers aboard the voyages of both European and African settlers to the New World. Some who survived the crossing would finally succumb to death’s cold grip within the first few days or weeks after arriving to their New World destination. Still others would fall prey to the foreign disease environment, contracting illnesses their immune systems were ill prepared to combat. Catalina and Joris Rapalje managed to arrive safely in New Netherland, going on to enjoy a long and fruitful marriage. But unfortunately, the journey proved to be perilous for Michaëlius’ wife, who died shortly after she arrived on Manhattan Island.

It was with a sense of relief to have arrived safely, combined with feelings of despair, bewilderment and trepidation that Jonas Michaëlius finally disembarked on April 7, 1628, in the Dutch frontier settlement. When he was finally able to compose his first letter to Holland, it was as one trying to reassemble the pieces of his fragile existence. He had been enthusiastically staring into the unknown, hoping to see blessing and good fortune smiling at him, only to be shocked at the faces of disenchantment and disillusionment that now surrounded him. He needed desperately to “unburden” himself, to buoy his spirit and “not let” his own “courage fail.” Yet he still wondered why “the Lord himself has done this.” He poignantly summed up his disappointment: “There lies our conceit…there lies our hope; for it seemed to us…after many tribulations extending over some years, we should have been in a position to
enjoy life a little better.” But his taxing transatlantic voyage to New Netherland had reminded him that “the Lord’s thoughts were not as [his] thoughts.”

The grief, disappointment and regret experienced by Jonas Michaëlius were probably not uncommon among settlers to Manhattan Island. The journey to Manhattan resulted in enormous shocks in the personal and social relationships of both Africans and Europeans. Jonas Michaëlius' religious faith had equipped him with the balm to soothe his wounded soul, acting as a brake to what was probably at times an overflowing of grief that threatened to send him descending into utter despair. The same faith that would mentally equip him to carry out the duties of his office also helped him cope with the death of his spouse.

Dorothy Hayden Truscott, in referring to the shipboard experiences of the Dutch settlers, wrote that, “I have known men who do not believe in God, but they are not men who have sailed the oceans of this world.” For some who survived the hardships of the voyage, their faith in God and in His deliverance was strengthened. Even those who lost loved ones during the voyage might also have arrived in the New World with a deepened faith or a sense of greater purpose. In an age in which belief in signs, witchcraft, curses and spells were still quite prevalent, it is not difficult to imagine that other European settlers, besides the widowed Dutch Reformed minister, also stumbled upon the religious or spiritual in seeking significance to their own misfortune. While Manhattan's early European settlers might not have been imbued, like their New England contemporaries, with a collective sense of a divinely ordained “errand in the wilderness” to create a society that would be an example to the whole world, a veritable “city upon a hill,” the fact of their survival at sea where others perished might have

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16 Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 108.
implied to many a sort of selection – a selection not simply for survival but for prosperity, greatness, something extraordinary or special. According to historian Oscar Handlin, “in no other way could these people account for the experience but by the conclusion that somehow they had been chosen to depart from the ways of ordinary men and to become in their own lives extraordinary for some special purpose.” Their survival, then, was seen as an indication that “there was a profound importance to their coming.”

Also, since some of the deepest friendships are often forged in adversity, one can safely conjecture that the hardships of the voyage must have cemented many friendships. Pregnant women might have formed lasting friendships with those who assisted them during childbirth; connections were formed with those who might have offered aid during bouts of sickness; and words of encouragement from someone during moments of despair was often enough to tear down the barrier that one normally constructs in interacting with complete strangers. Slowly, something not unlike that experienced by the motley Africans forcibly shipped to Manhattan during their transatlantic journey was taking shape amongst the European settlers. Gradually, through interaction prompted by the exigencies of the voyage, men and women who ordinarily would have nothing to do with each other were beginning to discover commonalities; the shared experience of traveling for weeks together under trying circumstances probably resulted in the formation of a “bond” between some passengers – a bond that few other human experiences were capable of creating. At the very least, 

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19 Mintz and Price, The Birth of African-American Culture, 43-44. Specifically, what is meant here is Mintz and Price’s statement that “certain simple but significant cooperative efforts which, in retrospect, may be viewed as the true beginnings of African-American culture and society.” While these first settlers from Europe did not have to endure the grisly traumatic elements that have come to define the Middle Passage, they too were engaged in a process of developing new social ties and bonds during their voyage. These bonds would later be essential for the formation of their society.
while they might have began their voyage as strangers, by journey’s end they no longer viewed their shipmates as strangers but as peoples whose futures were knitted together with their own.

4.3

Setting foot on *terra firma*, the settlers continued to engage in a process of developing and strengthening the social and affective ties necessary for the creation of social cohesion, community formation and a shared culture. Babies were born to several couples and marriages were solemnized and later consummated, marking the start of an embryonic social network amongst the settlers. Such events also signified the settlers’ resolve to construct bonds that anchored them in the New World and move them along the path of creating a semblance of the normalcy they left behind in the Old World. In 1625, Catalina and Joris welcomed the birth of their first child, Sarah, who is reputed to be the “first born Christian daughter of New Netherland.” Sarah would be the first of eleven Rapalje children to be born and baptized by Catalina and Joris in the Dutch Reformed Church. It is not known whether Anna van Angola had embraced Christianity prior to her transatlantic voyage, but her decision to have her marriage sanctioned by the Dutch Reformed Church and later to have her children baptized by the Dutch Reformed minister might indicate that she probably attached some meaning to these Christian rites and ceremonies. She might have been one of those Angolans who embraced certain aspects of Catholicism and had incorporated Christian marriage and baptismal rites into her existing African religious practice and beliefs.21

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21 What these rites could have meant for Anna and other Africans will be discussed in Chapter Six.
It is possible that Jonas Michaëlius performed the marriage rites for Anna’s marriage to her first husband, Francisco van Capo Verde. It is also possible that, just as in Holland, secular magistrates, such as Director-General Peter Minuit, could have solemnized Francisco and Anna’s union. Peter Minuit probably made his first visit to New Netherland among the party of initial settlers in 1624, with Catalina Trico, Joris Rapalje, and Sebastiaen Jansen Crol (Bastiaen Jansz Krol), New Netherland’s first comforter of the sick. In 1624, Minuit arrived in New Netherland in a private “volunteer” capacity, not as Director-General, a settler, or a Company official. Instead, he visited New Netherland to scout trade opportunities, and in this capacity he was able to gather valuable information about the land that would later prove helpful to him in his role as Director-General.

After his initial visit, Peter Minuit returned to Amsterdam to report his findings and deliver samples of herbs and other local commodities that might be of interest to his benefactors in Holland. He sailed from Texel again on January 9, 1626, on the Sea-Mew and arrived in New Netherland on May 4, 1626. And although he arrived again as a private scout, the council of settlers met and soon voted him their new Director-General.

Aside from his marriage to Anna, nothing is known of Francisco. As his name suggests, he was probably from Cape Verde and arrived in Manhattan, like Anna, as part of a Spanish or Portuguese cargo seized by Dutch privateers. Although it is difficult to say with absolute certainty, it is possible that Anna van Capoverde who was married to Anthony Angola at New Amsterdam’s Dutch Reformed Church on March 14, 1653, was the daughter of Anna van Angola and Francisco Capo Verde. Anna van Angola would go on to have other children with Andries van Angola.

Willem Frijhoff, “Identity Achievement, Education, and Social Legitimation in Early Modern Dutch Society: The Case of Evert Willemsz (1622-1623)” in Embodied Belief: Ten Essays on Religious Culture in Dutch History (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2002), 86-87. According to Willem Frijhoff, comforters of the sick “did not require university training” as they “fulfilled minor church offices in Calvinist communities. In town, they served as an auxiliary to ministers; aboard, they performed some basic community services and functioned as a source of moral authority, representing, in effect, the spiritual power.” It was also “the normal path to the sacred ministry for so-called Duytsche clercken (‘Dutch clerics’), young men who wanted to become ministers of the Word, but who had no schooling and were unable to read the ancient languages of the Bible...They were allowed to study the Bible and the learned or pious Protestant writers in preparation for the holy ministry. For many young people, this profession served as a kind of working scholarship, a part-time job with enough spare time for study.”
in the place of Willem Verhulst (or van Hulst). Verhulst was, on account of his bad behavior, deposed by the Council of New Netherland and sent back to Holland with his wife on September 23, 1626, on the ship the Wapen van Amsterdam. In his new role as Director-General, Minuit acted quickly to make changes to the settlement pattern that reflected the knowledge of the land he obtained as a private scout. Prior to Minuit’s administration, the few settlers (amounting to less than 100 people) were dispersed across hundreds of miles: there was a group of settlers on Noten (Nut) Island (Governor’s Island), another group settled near the Fresh (Connecticut) River, a third group was sent to the South (Delaware) River, and the fourth group sailed up the North (Hudson) River and founded Fort Orange. Minuit made the important decision in 1626 to purchase Manhattan Island from the local Natives (possibly the Canarsee) for sixty guilders worth of trading goods and consolidated the permanent settlement there.

Catalina and the other European settlers arrived in New Netherland during an ongoing and escalating contest over territorial dominance and cultural space. The Mohawks, Mahicans, Susquehannocks and “French Indians,” had been extending their hegemony over large territories and groups of people by expropriating or redefining the

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24 E. B. O’Callaghan, *The Documentary History of the State of New York*, 3: 28. Van Laer, trans. and ed. *Documents Relating to New Netherland* 1624-1626, xx, indicates that this excerpt was from Nicolaes Janszoon van Wassenaer, *Historisch Verhael*: Cornelis May of Hoorn was New Netherland’s first Director in 1624 and Willem van Hulst was the second in 1625, which means that Peter Minuit was the third Director-General.

25 See statements of Catalina Trico regarding distribution of original settlers in van Laer, trans., *Documents Relating to New Netherland* 1624-1626, xix-xxi. See also Shorto, *The Island at the Center of the World*, 43.

26 His decision was probably also influenced by the news of the grisly death by the Mohawks in spring 1626 of Daniel van Crieckenbeeck, the commander of Fort Orange, three settlers and twenty-four Mahican allies. The Mohawks devoured one of the men, Tymen Bouwensz., “after having well roasted him.” Three men escaped – “two Portuguese and a Hollander from Hoorn. One of the Portuguese was wounded by an arrow in the back whilst swimming.” See Nicolaes Janszoon van Wassenaer, *Historisch Verhael*, in J. Franklin Jameson, ed. *Narratives of New Netherland, 1609-1664* (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1953), 84-85.
cultural spaces of conquered groups or reducing them to a tributary relationship.\textsuperscript{27}

Several historians believe that the Mohawk-Mahican war of the mid-1620s was a direct response to the European-introduced fur trade. According to these scholars, the Mohawks “attacked the Mahicans to force open a desperately needed corridor to the Dutch trading post at Fort Orange; to obtain the trade goods on which they had become dependent; to control and restrict, when necessary, the access of surrounding Indians to the trade at Fort Orange; and to put themselves in the best possible position to pirate furs that other Indians carried to the French on the St. Lawrence River.”\textsuperscript{28} However, William Starna and José Brandão question these prevailing claims and instead argue that the actions of the Mohawks during the Mohawk-Mahican war “were but a continuation of the enmity that characterized Indian relationships throughout the St. Lawrence and the lower Great Lakes region, and…were only loosely tied to any of the economic concerns of the fur trade.”\textsuperscript{29}

Still, Starna and Brandão admit that the fur trade played a significant role in the evolution of Iroquois (Mohawk) military and diplomatic policies, as firearms purchased with furs were used to overpower and dominate other Native groups.\textsuperscript{30} The European presence had already begun to alter the Natives’ hegemonic structure and society. When the dust settled after each conflict, many Natives had to leave their ancestral homelands either as captives or part of a group migration; others faced the arduous task

\textsuperscript{27} “French Indians” refers to the Huron-Petuns, Abenakis, Ottawa Valley Algonquins and Montagnais.
\textsuperscript{28} William A. Starna and José Antonio Brandão, “From the Mohawk-Mahican War to the Beaver Wars: Questioning the Pattern,” Ethnohistory 51:4 (Fall 2004), 725.
\textsuperscript{29} Starna and Brandão, “From the Mohawk-Mahican War to the Beaver Wars,” 740. Based on a re-examination and juxtaposition of extant contemporary French and Dutch sources, Starna and Brandão argue that the sources do not corroborate “the European-derived ‘economic motives’ that many historians claim to have been” the underlying origin of the Mohawk-Mahican War. Rather, they believe that the sources demonstrate that “the Mohawks had not been poorly positioned to take advantage of the early seventeenth-century trade; they did not make a peace with the French Indians in 1624 with the intention to then attack the Mahicans and seize control of the trade at Fort Orange; and they did not blockade the Champlain Valley to prevent the French Indians from trading with the Dutch.”
\textsuperscript{30} Starna and Brandão, “From the Mohawk-Mahican War to the Beaver Wars,” 740.
of harmonizing discordant peoples into pre-existing family and group structures. Sometime in early to mid-July 1626, Mahican warriors from the vicinity of Albany, accompanied by the Dutch commander at Fort Orange (Daniel Crieckenbeeck) and other settlers under the aegis of the Dutch West India Company, made the disastrous decision to march against the Mohawks. A short distance from the fort, a party of Mohawks overwhelmed the Mahicans and their Dutch allies in a deadly and devastating battle. As was customary, the Mohawks probably took captives to replace group members who were killed in the conflict. The Mahicans had to move their settlement further away from the Mohawks. Under the direction of Peter Minuit, Catalina and her fellow settlers had to move from their Fort Orange (Albany) settlement, leaving behind ten to twelve men in the Company’s service. So in 1626, Catalina, Joris, and the other colonists that had settled at Fort Orange were relocated to Manhattan Island. Here Catalina and Joris Rapalje would later become some of the first landowners on the southern tip of Manhattan.

Once settled on Manhattan, the small cadre of colonists began the arduous task of clearing the land, planting crops, constructing palisade defenses and houses, and normalizing relations with the local Native Americans. Jan Huygen, Minuit’s brother-in-law who was also formerly an elder in the Dutch Reformed Church of Cleves, arrived in Manhattan on July 28, 1626, on the *Wapen van Amsterdam*, together with Isaack de Rasière, chief commercial agent for the Dutch West India Company and secretary of the province. Huygen had been examined by the Consistory of Amsterdam on April 2, 1626, and recommended for service as a comforter of the sick at New Amsterdam. Huygen’s instructions were probably similar, if not identical, to those of Bastiaen Jansz.

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31 Van Laer, trans., *Documents Relating to New Netherland 1624-1626*, xxiii. According to van Laer, it is highly probable that permanent settlement had already commenced on Manhattan Island prior to Minuit’s arrival in May 1626 and subsequent purchase of the island from the Natives.
Krol, the other comforter of the sick stationed at Fort Orange. He was to “properly serve” the community by “the ministration of holy baptism, in reading sermons, prayers, and in visiting the sick…and instruct the Indians in the Christian religion out of God’s Holy Word.” As per instructions, Huygen conducted religious services on Sundays by reading to the people sermons or “chapters from the Scriptures or from books by authors of the Reformed religion.” Dutch newcomers continued in this manner while awaiting the arrival of an ordained minister. Minuit hired François Molemaecker to build a horse-mill and construct a spacious room over the mill, “sufficient to accommodate a large congregation.”

In 1628, on the eve of the Reverend Jonas Michaëlius’ arrival, there were approximately 200-300 Native Americans living in “Indian villages” in the vicinity of Manhattan Island and about 270 non-Native inhabitants on Manhattan Island. While not much is known about the layout of the “Indian villages,” we know that the Dutch had constructed six boweries or large farms and approximately thirty “ordinary” houses on the lower tip of Manhattan Island. The thirty “ordinary houses” were occupied by the other settlers and located along the southern extremity of Manhattan Island near the strand of the East River. According to Jonas Michaëlius, the settlers were just beginning to build new (more permanent) houses in place of the “mean hovels,” huts made of the bark of trees, cots and even holes, in which they were previously dwelling. The first
structure that would have caught Reverend Michaëlius’ attention upon his approach to Manhattan Island was invariably the windmill. Although not one of the first buildings to be constructed, it now stood high above the houses, dominating the landscape. Visible from the bay, it was one of the few structures that gave the settlement a touch of Holland, and another mill was clearly in the works. According to Michaëlius, “they are making a windmill to saw lumber and we also have a gristmill,” apparently the same one constructed by François Molemaecker. The new wind-driven saw mill, he further informs us, was being erected “for the purpose of exporting to the Fatherland whole cargoes of timber fit for building houses and ships.” It is clear that by 1628, as the Dutch community took shape, the settlers were recreating various features of the society they had left behind in Holland.

Writing back home to friends and acquaintances, one anonymous settler displayed the strong desire, probably shared by many European newcomers, to transplant their culture and ways of life in New Netherland:

We were much gratified on arriving in this country; Here we found beautiful rivers, bubbling fountains flowing down into the valleys; basins of running waters in the flatlands, agreeable fruits in the woods, such as strawberries, pigeon berries, walnuts, and also...wild grapes. The woods abound with acorns for feeding hogs, and with venison. There is considerable fish in the rivers; good tillage land; here is, especially, free coming and going, without fear of the naked natives of the country. Had we cows, hogs, and other cattle fit for food...we would not wish to return to Holland, for whatever we desire in the paradise of Holland, is here to be found.

According to this settler, the only thing missing that would help to approximate life as closely as possible to that in Holland was livestock “fit for food.” Michaëlius would also make similar complaints, stressing that he “cannot say, whether or not, [he]...

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38 Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 137.
39 Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 110.
shall remain [in New Netherland] any longer after [his] three years have expired,” but would be guided in the decision “by the fruits of [his] ministration, and the convenience [he] finds in living [in Manhattan] with [his] family.” These conveniences included, but were not limited to: “supplies of butter and milk...horses and cows, and the industrious workers for the building of house and forts, and to make...farming more profitable, in order [to provide]... sufficient dairy produce and crops.” And finally, “the domestic animals, especially pigs and sheep....”

In the process of recreating these cultural spaces on Manhattan Island, Native American cultural spaces were displaced, obliterated or incorporated. In some instances, new names were given to particular places, the existing landscape was transformed and maps were drawn demonstrating the boundaries of newly divided territories. In other instances, old Native American trails, walkways or land were incorporated, but given new names and new usages – all in an attempt to establish mastery over the land and imprint Dutch pattern of ownership and culture upon the physical space. The Dutch drive for mastery, both over the physical spaces and the cultural arena, though a principal force in their settlement activities, did not proceed uncontested. Their attempt at mastery invariably involved concessions to, or borrowings from, the non-European cultural groups who continued to exert their influence in various ways.

Furthermore, while Reverend Michaëlius and other European settlers might have expected that they would be able to import their society along with its civilization intact or to transform radically their surroundings to approximate life in Holland, the reality and exigencies of the frontier settlement would force them to adjust their thinking. Like the enslaved Africans, the European settlers had to adapt and accommodate to a new

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41 Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 109.
environment. Their social organization would be shaped by their isolation and dispersion throughout a vast country, and their distance and remoteness from Holland and the rest of Europe. To complicate matters further, the heterogeneous nature (both religiously and ethnically) of the subsequent European settlers to New Amsterdam created a settlement in which the forces of cohesion were oftentimes weaker than the forces of divisiveness. Faced with the reality of his situation in this new frontier community, what he described as “a wild country without any society of our order,” Reverend Jonas Michaëlius decided, like other Europeans settlers before and after him, to “bear [his] cross patiently…knowing that all things must work together for good to them that love God.”42 But as the person entrusted to propagate the Gospel and perpetuate Holland’s Reformed religion in New Netherland, Jonas Michaëlius also prayed to “the Lord” that neither the personal difficulties and setbacks he had faced thus far “nor through any other [future] trial” would he “lose the courage [he] need[ed] so much in [his] ministry, in order that [his] work…may be successful.”43

4.4

One of the first things Reverend Michaëlius did after his arrival was to begin the task of establishing the Dutch Reformed Church. Peter Minuit and Jan Huygen were chosen as elders, and with Michaëlius and Bastiaen Jansz. Krol New Netherland’s first consistory was formed. Fifty communicants, consisting of both Walloons and Dutch,

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42 Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 138, 128. See also Jonas Michaëlius, Letter of Jonas Michaëlius, 1628 in J. Franklin Jameson, ed. Narratives of New Netherland, 1609-1664 (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1953), 132, 122. Although Michaëlius described “the country” of New Netherland as being “good and pleasant,” because of all the strange-ness and difficulties of settlement life and the significant ways that life in New Netherland departed from the life he knew back in Holland, it is apparent from his letter that he missed many of the conveniences and familiarity of his life in Holland. In his first letter home, he implored Reverend Adrianus Smoutius that “if it shall not be convenient for your Reverence or any of the Reverend Brethren to write to me a letter concerning matters which might be important in any degree to me, without any society of our order…” (132-133).

broke bread during the administration of the first Lord’s Supper. This move to form a consistory and gather for Communion was an important key in the process of creating a community with a sense of group cohesion and identification. Gradually, individual settlers progressed from viewing themselves as merely part of a collection of people to becoming members of a corporate unit with a shared orientation and commonly held values – a community. According to Reverend Michaëlarius, several of the settlers “made their first confession of faith…and others exhibited their church certificates.” But Michaëlarius soon discovered, just as other settlers probably eventually did during their time in Manhattan, that “one cannot observe strictly all the usual formalities in making a beginning under such [pioneer] circumstances.” Some of the settlers left their church certificates behind in Holland, “not thinking that a church would be formed and established” in New Netherland, while others lost their certificates in a “general conflagration.” Adjustments had to be made to deal with these unique circumstances. It was decided that those who lost their church certificates would be “admitted upon the satisfactory testimony of others to whom this was known, and also upon their daily good deportment.”

This reliance on their “daily good deportment” implies the willingness of these inhabitants to subordinate their selfish impulses to the community; it implies a shared willingness or agreement to conform and to cause others to conform to a set of religiously based norms or rules of proper conduct and interaction. And it signals the attempt of Dutch Manhattan’s religious authority, Jonas Michaëlarius, to insinuate religiously defined notions of proper morals and etiquette into the standards for group cohesion and community formation. But any attempt to define community membership along strict religious lines would have been rejected by the settlers and the Director-

44 Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlarius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 130.
General. Dutch Manhattan was still loosely settled, and society was still defined more by flux than stability. To the extent that people attempted to create cohesion during this time, it appears that cohesion was sought more within ethnic (and then religious) lines. So, the Dutch-speaking settlers were striving to form cohesion, while at the same time the French-speaking Walloons would have felt a deeper connection and cohesion. (The Africans in turn were themselves undergoing the process of building group cohesion.) The first Communion was an attempt to bring the Dutch-speaking Reformed Christians together. Manhattan’s society seemed to have consisted more of several groups of inhabitants who had not yet felt a strong bond to each other, or even to Manhattan per se. Many like Michaëlius, probably, intended to remain in the colony as long as it was convenient – not yet decided to commit fully to permanent settlement. Michaëlius’ first celebration of the Lord’s Supper seems to recognize this ad hoc social arrangement. The society he portrays consisted of a group of concentric circles with members of the Dutch Reformed Church at the center. They reached out first to other non-Reformed groups of Europeans, and then to Africans who were baptized or able to take part in the religious services. Further toward the periphery stood Native Americans who were under the authority of Europeans as either household slaves or servants and then the larger communities of Native American tribes.

The change regarding church certificates was not the only way that the early services diverged from those the settlers were accustomed to in Holland. For example, Catalina and the other French-speaking settlers had to contend with having Sunday services in Dutch. However, they must have been content to learn that the Lord’s Supper would be administered “to them in the French language, and according to the
French mode, with a sermon preceding." If any adjustments were made to accommodate the English, Portuguese and Spanish-speaking African and European settlers, Michaëlius did not mention it in any of his extant letters. No doubt French and Dutch speaking peoples actively partook of the Lord’s Supper and the Sunday services while others listened from the edges and gradually learned different tongues. Also, within the Dutch Reformed Church, baptism and marriage rites were available for all who were part of the “community of faith,” which included all Christians, both Catholic and Protestant. However, the Lord’s Supper, or Communion, was intended for only members of the Dutch Reformed Church. The Communion table was reserved for only the elect.

However, Dutch Manhattan’s inchoate community consisted of many others who were not part of “the elect.” In his estimation, these other European inhabitants were “for the most part, rather rough and unrestrained.” As for those whom he termed the “common people,” he said that “many…would have liked to make a living, and even to get rich, in idleness, rather than by hard work, saying, they had not come to work, that as far as working is concerned, they might as well have staid at home.”

Would Catalina and Joris Rapalje have been included in Michaëlius’s assessment of the “common people”? It is difficult to say, since he did not specifically refer to anyone by name. Nevertheless, in stark contrast, Michaëlius thought the members of the Council

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45 Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 130.
46 Charles H. Parker, The Reformation of Community: Social Welfare and Calvinist Charity in Holland, 1572-1620 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 125. According to Parker, “since Calvinists identified the Eucharistic community as the pure assembly of saints, it was necessary for Reformed ministers to defend the Lord’s Table from human corruption. To that end consistories labored to reconcile, ‘sinners’ with the community; if reconciliation failed, the sinner faced exclusion from the communion table.”
47 Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 129.
48 Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 111.
49 Jasper Danckaerts, “Journal of Jasper Danckaerts, 1679-1680” in Bartlett Burleigh James and J. Franklin Jameson, eds., Original Narratives of Early American History: Journal of Jasper Danckaerts, 1679-1680 (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1913), 76. Decades later when the two Labadist missionaries, Jasper Danckaerts and Peter Sluyter visited New Netherland, upon meeting Catalina they described her as being “worldly-minded, with mere bonte” (“with mere human goodness”), living with her whole heart, as well as body, among her
of New Netherland, were “good people, who [were], however, for the most part simple.” With such a low opinion of most of his fellow European settlers, Michaëlius felt that he would have “little objection to serve them in any difficult or dubious affair with good advice.” It is this willingness to offer “good advice” that will eventually frustrate his efforts “to separate carefully the ecclesiastical from the civil matters,” although he readily admits that ecclesiastical and civil matters “must not be mixed but kept separate, in order to prevent all confusion and disorder.”

Regarding the Native Americans, Michaëlius thought they were “savage,” “wild,” “indecent,” “uncivil,” “stupid,” “wicked,” “ungodly,” “devilish,” “cruel,” and “inhuman.” In short, they were “Wilden” or “unnatural men,” whom he doubted possessed “the proper principia religionis and vestigia legis naturae” necessary in order to “be led to the true knowledge of God and of the Mediator Christ.” As a result, he concluded that the best approach to reach them religiously had to be two-pronged. First, he suggested that the Consistory “leave the parents as they are, and begin with the children, who are still young…But they ought in youth to be separated… from their whole nation” before they became accustomed “to the heathenish tricks and devilries, which of itself are kneaded in their hearts by nature by a just judgment of God.” Upon separation, the children were then to be instructed in speaking, reading and writing Dutch and also the fundamentals of the Dutch Reformed religion. However, they were also to be encouraged to speak their native language among themselves in order that they might one day return to their Native communities as missionaries. This part of the progeny, which now number 145, and will soon reach 150.” It would appear that they did not believe that she was very religious or interested in the things of God, although she was a good woman.

Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 131.
Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 131.
Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 132.
Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 133-134.
plan encountered obvious practical difficulties, as Native women were not willing to part with their children.

The second prong of Michaëlis’ proselytizing approach was prayer. Prayer seemed all “the more necessary” since, as he believed, the condition of the Natives resulted from “the wrath and curse of God, resting till now upon this unhappy people.” As such, he thought very little else could be done without the divine will and intervention of God: “perchance God may finally have mercy upon them, that the fulness of the heathen may be gradually brought in and the salvation of our God may be here also seen among these wild and savage men.”

It is not known whether Michaëlis received any success from this proselytizing approach, but it appears that he might have attempted to put his plan into effect. This assumption is supported by his statement that Native “parents have a strong affection for their children, and are very loth to part with them, and when this happens, as has already been proved [emphasis added], the parents are never fully contented, but take them away stealthily, or induce them to run away.”

Besides the strong bond between mother and child, Native women were probably not inclined to part with their children because of the traditional Lenape social arrangement. The Natives in the vicinity of Manhattan Island lived in small bands within a family-based, matrilineal socioeconomic structure. Each individual had an important role and place in the family, and the absence of a member could affect the division of labor or the survival of the family lineage. Michaëlis apparently did not understand this aspect of Native American culture.

Jonas Michaëlis still believed that Native society had some redeeming values, but these were all utilitarian in nature – related to the Natives’ possession of valuable trading goods and land. The Natives were useful - to the extent that they assisted the

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54 Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlis, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 134-135.
55 Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlis, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 134.
Europeans in the wilderness. According to him, “the savages” would “bring some things” for the settlers that assisted in their survival. But Michaëlius valued the Natives’ raw land more than their foodstuffs and trade goods. He was of the opinion that “for a small sum of money” the Dutch could purchase from the Natives “a large quantity of land.” And if the Natives did not want to sell, there were “enough old and new causes to be found for taking possession of their land…by way of confiscation, on account of much treachery and many offences committed against” the Dutch by the Natives. Furthermore, he believed this to be part of a conscious imperial plan, for these offenses “have never been forgiven them, nor adjusted by any treaty, but have been reserved for a certain purpose, at the propitious time, to make use of them, to the advantage of the Company and of this place.” He had only been in the colony for four months when he proffered this observation for an existing strategy for gaining the Natives’ land. It remains unclear whether this was a prevalent idea among the settlers or an unwritten policy of the Company or the Director-General? Unfortunately, we may never know with any great degree of certainty.

Reverend Jonas Michaëlius seems to have held out much greater hope for the Africans – or at least it appears he may have thought they possessed “the proper principia religionis and vestigia legis naturae.” He stated that he had “as yet been able to discover hardly a single good point” about the Natives “except that they do not speak so jeeringly and so scoffingly of the godlike and glorious majesty of their Creator as the Africans dare to do.” But he quickly counters that it may be because the Natives “have

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56 Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 136. He is referring here to food, etc.
57 Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 110.
58 See Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 136. That this was probably not a passing idea of his, but something he had given serious thought or possibly discussed with other European settlers, is indicated by his repetition of this line of argument in another of his extant letters. He reiterates the argument: “For there are convenient places near at hand which can be easily protected and are very suitable, which can be bought from the savages for a trifle, or could be occupied without risk, because we have more than enough claims, which have never been abandoned, but have been always reserved for that purpose.”
not such a certain knowledge of Him, or none at all.”\textsuperscript{59} It is possible that the distinction Michaëlius makes between Africans and Native Americans is related to the traditional understanding Europeans held of barbarians and wild men. According to Roger Bartra, for Europeans, “wild men were not an allegory of barbarians.” He continues:

The barbarity of non-Christian peoples consisted in powerful political formations that made war in order to conquer the territories of Christendom. Medieval men understood [that]...wars waged by barbarians were the continuation of a policy and a government radically hostile to the European Christian...Even though the idea of barbarity conserved connotations of brutality and ferocity, it was applied principally to the infidels who refused to hear the word of the Christian god, or had never heard it. Stubborn or ignorant, these barbarians were convertible to the Christian faith...But the warlike violence of the wild men was radically different, because it did not emanate from any infidel or perverse form of politics or religion. The wild men lacked a form of government; their violence was not exercised in the name of strange customs, pagan gods, or barbarian forms of authority or law...\textsuperscript{60}

Among other things, Bartra’s explanation might enable us to understand better why contemporary Dutch writers consistently asserted that Native Americans “have no religion whatever, nor any divine worship, but serve the Devil; yet not with such ceremonies as the Africans.”\textsuperscript{61} It would appear that in terms of religion and religious ceremonies, these writers believed that Africans were superior to Native Americans. While Native Americans were wild men (or \textit{Wilden}, as they refer to them), the Africans were barbarians, whose culture or society included a sense of religion and religious worship. Some of these writers were probably aware of the diplomatic relationships

\textsuperscript{59} Eekhoef, Jonas Michaëlius, \textit{Founder of the Church in New Netherland}, 132.
\textsuperscript{61} Johan De Laet, “From the ‘New World,’” in J. Franklin Jameson, ed., \textit{Narratives of New Netherland, 1609-1664} (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1953), 49. De Laet repeated this point, observing (p. 57) that Native Americans “have no sense of religion, no worship of God; they indeed pay homage to the Devil, but not so solemnly nor with such precise ceremonies as the Africans do.”
between several African states and Europeans nations. For them, the Africans, unlike Manhattan’s Native groups, had lived in societies whose political structures (although not their religious systems) more resembled their own. And the Africans, in turn, were from societies that had various institutional structures that Europeans could recognize as corollaries of “civilized” society. As such, they stood a better chance at community membership than the Natives.

It appears that Reverend Michaëlius, and possibly other Dutch settlers, also believed that as Wilden men, Native Americans did not possess a religion, but as barbarians African people did. The Native “could not even be looked upon as an infidel who, while too stubborn to accept the Christian revelation, was at least capable of some distorted misconception of God.” Instead, it was believed that like the wild man the Native “did not worship idolatrously because he did not worship at all.” Though the failure to embrace Christianity by both the Africans and Native Americans was attributable to the wiles of the Devil, many contemporary Dutch writers tended to view the Devil as being singularly responsible for the Native’s religious shortcomings. As a “barbarian,” the African’s own stubbornness and his government also shared in the culpability for his religious failings. This is probably partially the root of Michaëlius’ marked annoyance at the Africans for speaking “jeeringly” and “scoffingly” about the Judeo-Christian God. It would appear that whoever these Africans were, they still embraced traditional African religious beliefs. So while these Africans had the potential to become part of the elect segment of the community, they stubbornly resisted.

It is difficult to determine the extent to which other European settlers shared Michaëlius’ opinions of Africans and Native Americans; the known extant records do

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62 They probably read about or were familiar with African Muslims or Blackamoors (Black Moors).
not allow us to say with any level of great certainty. While these low opinions he espoused must have affected the effectiveness of his ministry, it appears that the greatest blow to his ministry was his specific religious ideology that would ultimately incite a conflict between himself and Minuit. Reverend Michaëlius was strongly influenced by the orthodox (Contra-Remonstrant) arm of the Dutch Reformed Church, which sought to establish and protect the ecclesiastical primacy of the Reformed Church and its ministers, even above the secular or civil authority. Accordingly, he felt the civil authorities were to heed the advice and recommendations of the Reformed ministers, even in civil affairs. But in a frontier environment, it did not take long before those at the head of the civil government to realize that the distance between Holland and New Netherland had made them virtual rulers in their own little kingdom; not even the protestations of a church representative could convince them to desist from any real or apparent abuses.

The initial hope Reverend Michaëlius expressed for the separation of religious and civil matters in New Netherland could not be realized with such views on the supremacy of the ecclesiastical body, especially not with the distance from Holland imbuing the civil authorities with a sense of their own supremacy. And while the conflict began with Michaëlius admonishing Peter Minuit and some members of his council who were attempting to enrich themselves at the cost of the Company, the question of authority gradually became the central issue. What emerged was a conflict rife with competing visions of state-church authority, the Christian community, and the shape of Dutch Manhattan’s larger community. In a letter written in September 1630 Michaëlius describes Minuit as “a slippery man, who under the treacherous mask of honesty is a compound of all iniquity and wickedness. For he is accustomed to the lies, of which he is full…he is not free from fornication, the most cruel oppressor of the
innocent.” Furthermore, as for Minuit’s council, he felt that “they also oppress the innocent, and they live so outrageously that they seem not only to be wicked, but even to propagate wickedness.” Michaëlius explains that initially he kept silent, but when the actions of Minuit and his council were transparent enough he decided the time was right to correct them.

Admittedly, Reverend Michaëlius’ complaint against Director Minuit and his Council can also be viewed as an indication of the inability of the settlers to transfer intact Dutch moral sensibilities to Manhattan during this early period. Drunkenness, greed, fornication, fist fighting, adultery, lewdness, and other “moral failings” were so commonplace that neither the bands of law nor religion appeared strong enough to curtail them. That even Director Minuit was accused of blatant fornication should not be surprising. Nevertheless, it was Michaëlius’ firmly held views on the primacy of the Dutch Reformed Church that prompted him to confront Minuit and his Council, ultimately resulting in conflict.

As a result of their sharply divergent views on church-state relations, the differences of opinion Reverend Michaëlius had with Minuit and other civil figures escalated into an all-embracing conflict that poisoned Michaëlius’ ministry among Manhattan’s inhabitants. On September 16, 1630, in a letter to Kiliaen van Rensselaer, Symon Dircksz. Pos (a New Netherland Council member) wrote that “the minister Jonas Michielsz. is very energetic here stirring up the fire...he ought to be a mediator in God’s church and community, but he seems to me to be the contrary.” There are no extant accounts indicating how this conflict affected either Catalina, Anna or the other settlers, but by Michaëlius’ own admission, the initial gains he made in founding and expanding

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64 Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 68.
the Reformed Church “gradually vanished through” the efforts of Director Minuit, who had achieved some success in putting him into “disfavor with the people.” It would appear, then, that the disharmonious religious milieu and the exigencies of living in a frontier community conspired together to influence the efficacy of Reverend Michaëlius’ ministry, prompting him to anxiously await the day he could be “freed from the unbearable yoke” of his work in New Netherland and finally “called back to the fatherland.”

4.5

In such a highly charged environment, what sorts of opportunities were available for Europeans, Africans and Native Americans to interact in ways that held significance for group cohesion and cultural development? Interaction between Natives and individuals from the other groups was somewhat hampered by the language barrier. And although many of the Dutch and possibly Africans were capable of communicating with the Natives to carry out trade, their mastery of Native languages seldom went beyond that. The linguistic situation between Africans and Europeans appears to have been somewhat better. Some of the enslaved Africans probably had a rudimentary knowledge of at least one European language, although not necessarily Dutch. Also long years of Spanish rule had also equipped many Dutch settlers with the ability to speak or understand Spanish or possibly its sister tongue Portuguese, which would have facilitated communication between these Dutch settlers and those African and European settlers familiar with Spanish and Portuguese.

While the interaction between Africans and Europeans was important, for Africans the most significant encounters during these formative years of cultural

66 Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 68-69.
67 Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 69.
reinvention and recreation were the intra-group interaction between peoples of African descent. With a significant proportion of the enslaved Africans sharing a Kongo-Angola provenance, the ethnic backgrounds of the Africans were not as heterogeneous as it would be in later years, which meant that tribal rivalries, cultural differences and the barriers to communication were probably not as pronounced. This, in turn, meant that the obstacles to the creation of new cultural patterns and group cohesion among the group of Africans in Manhattan were less formidable as they would be for later generations of African imports.

Unfortunately, not much is known about the inter-group or intra-group interactions of Manhattan’s enslaved Africans. However, it would appear that with very few exceptions, Europeans were primarily interested in the African’s capacity for work. As a result, most of what we know today about the experiences of enslaved Africans during the initial settlement period is filtered through the prism of labor relations and the execution of work duties. Unless they committed a heinous crime or were themselves the victims of a criminal act, very little mention was made of Blacks in the extant historical records. Because they were brought to Manhattan as enslaved laborers, much (although not all) of the variety and nature of the Africans’ encounter with Europeans occurred within the parameters of work.

In early Manhattan’s frontier setting, enslaved peoples of African descent more often than not were to be found laboring alongside members of other races; race relations and cultural boundaries were fluid and unpredictable because they had not yet hardened into the racialized mold more familiar to later generations. From 1624-1632, it would appear that neither individuals nor the Dutch West India Company had yet formulated precise rules or rigid etiquette for interracial interaction. Boundaries based solely upon the basis of race were not yet drawn; the days of the slave codes, which
codified the slave status, and proscriptive laws regulating the interaction between those of European descent and other racial groups, were some time in the future.

Furthermore, the unsettled nature of the settlement allowed slaves a degree of latitude rarely enjoyed by later generations in Manhattan’s more established society, with its slave laws and other formalized rules for interracial encounters. These circumstances, peculiar to the early stages of settlement, allowed for cultural borrowings and exchanges to occur in ways that would become less common in later years.68

Enslaved Africans’ work responsibilities included clearing the land for agriculture, constructing houses or temporary dwellings, tending animals, growing tobacco on Manhattan’s scant tobacco plantations, caring for sick or infirm masters, cooking, fishing, hunting, gathering timber, and many other brute and manual labor that sustained the colony. Many of these tasks were probably performed with only minimum contact with Europeans or Natives, but others required recurrent or uninterrupted social interaction with those outside the slave community. As Ira Berlin and Philip D. Morgan have argued, “so central was labor in the slaves’ experience” that it “determined, in large measure, the course of their lives.”69 The slaves’ work regimen influenced the relationship between Native, Europeans and Africans, circumscribed the lives of enslaved Africans, molded the emerging slave community, and, in turn, helped to shape and inform the slaves’ nascent culture. This embryonic culture perforce took shape at the confluence of the requirements of the slaves’ work schedule and the

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68 Peter H. Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina From 1670 Through the Stono Rebellion* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1974), 97. In explaining the social fluidity and lack of rigid etiquette for interracial encounters, Wood, in his study of colonial South Carolina, states that “common hardships and the continuing shortage of hands put the different races, as well as separate sexes, upon a more equal footing than they would see in subsequent generations.” Just as in colonial South Carolina, shortages of labor had allowed the races and the sexes to interact in ways more closely resembling equality than they would in later years.

opportunities the established labor system afforded enslaved Africans to interact with each other and those outside their group.70

Though we are hampered by the lack of extant evidence for the period in question due to the destruction of the records of the Dutch West India Company in the nineteenth-century, we can speculate on some of the forms of interaction that were probably involved in the growth of Manhattan’s diverse religions and cultures. Such speculations about cultural borrowings and interactions, of course, are made with the assumption that boundaries were fairly open and porous and that under these conditions each encounter between peoples of different races had the potential to be one where cultural knowledge was exchanged. How deeply these exchanges transformed the cultural cores of a particular group depended on what was accepted and incorporated by members of the evolving community. In terms of religion, we can probably safely speculate that some of the earliest religious exchanges centered on sickness or death. In an environment where all three racial groups had to cope with unfamiliar diseases and where death was a frequent visitor in the colony, it is highly probable that Manhattan’s inhabitants found themselves accepting countless religiously based alien healing practices.

As a result of their close contact, enslaved Africans were ideally positioned to influence the healing practices and spiritual life of their European masters. Still years before the arrival of Hans Kiersteed and Tryn Jonas, New Netherland’s first doctor and midwife respectively, it is highly probable that European settlers had to accept healing or medical assistance from the Africans charged with assisting them in their household or living with them as artisan or farm laborers. And even if there were present in Manhattan traditional European medical practitioners, seventeenth century medical

knowledge was severely limited and effective treatment knowledge of many New World diseases hardly existed. While for Africans the methods utilized to cure illnesses were viewed as part of their spiritual practices and rituals, some European settlers would probably select the efficacious healing elements while discarding or rejecting the spiritual underpinnings of these healing practices.

Within the group of enslaved Africans one might imagine individual slaves looking back to their past in the Kongo-Angola region of Africa or their creole communities in New World Spanish or Portuguese societies trying to recall how healers dealt with illnesses. The attempt to address the needs of the infirm or dying would have probably prompted the exchange of ritual information between members of the group, creating a body of healing knowledge, the most efficacious of which would probably be passed along to future African American generations. One can imagine those from the Kongo-Angola region of Africa trying to discover whether there was a nganga (priest) of the mbumba or nkadi mpemba dimensions among the group. Maybe someone remembered the particular herbs that were used and shared this knowledge with the group. Perhaps one of the men had been successful in healing one of his fellow slaves. His success was noted within the group, paving the way for him to set himself up as a nganga of the nkadi mpemba dimension. In the event of such a scenario, he would then have fashioned his nkisi placing appropriate materials such as “small stones, feathers, herbs and similar things in either a small sack or a piece of sculpted wood.” In this way, he would have created his nkisi mi mafuta sack or carved his nkisi mi biteke sculptures that would become essential tools of his trade.

Because the nganga of the mbumba dimension were initiated into the cult after being selected by the spirits either by the spirits manifesting itself to the individual in

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the form of an unusually shaped object of the natural world, “such as a stone, a piece of bizarrely shaped wood, or a grain found near water,” or by possessing the individual who was then born with a physical abnormality (“albinos, dwarfs, twins or cripples”), it was probably more likely that Manhattan’s hypothetical nganga would be of the nkadi mpemba dimension. Unless by some chance there was a nganga of the mbumba dimension present among the group, who would then assist in establishing and overseeing the ritual prescriptions surrounding the births of other such spirits or the initiation of individuals purportedly chosen by the spirits, then it would be highly unlikely or very difficult for these types of ngangas to proliferate in the colony. Not hampered by such a ritualized structure probably would have eased the way for ngangas of the nkadi mpemba dimension to be the dominant form of priests (ngangas). In time, while the ritual healing practice and the influence and power of the healer within the community would continue, the words “nganga,” “nkadi mpemba,” and “mbumba,” and what they signified would eventually vanish from common usage or knowledge. Furthermore, members of the slave community from other regions besides Kongo-Angola would also add ritual information from their cultural background that would eventually become integrated into the corpus of accepted ritual knowledge that came to comprise the emerging community religion and healing practice.

Whether our imaginary or speculative priest was of the mbumba or the nkadi mpemba dimension, in attempting to heal his patient he would face the daunting task of locating the proper herbs or its substitute in Manhattan’s strange new environment. And this is where interaction and communication with members of the various Native

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72 Anne Hilton, The Kingdom of Kongo, 15.
73 If we assume that the surnames of the Blacks in the Dutch Reformed Church of New Amsterdam’s Baptismal and Marriage Records are a fairly good representation or cross-section of the total enslaved population, then it becomes apparent that although a significant proportion of the slaves were from the Kongo-Angola region of African, there were also some slaves who originated from Cape Verde, Sao Tome, Guinea, Cartagena, and the Spanish West Indies. These types of intra-group exchanges were also facilitated by the similarities in healing practices among the various African ethnic groups.
American communities became important. Native Americans frequented Manhattan’s settlement not only to trade, but also to visit friends who were also settlers. Some of the Native American women became sexually involved with some of the Dutch settlers. Also, several settlers utilized the services of Native Americans, either as household assistants or to help them in daily jobs and tasks. It is possible that some of the enslaved Africans may have befriended Native Americans, who being familiar with the region would have assisted them in locating healing herbs and other practical information for taking care of the infirm. For both Native Americans and Africans, religious ritual was closely associated with medical practice. Also, certain aspects of African religious practice would have resonated with Native Americans (and vice versa), which would further assist in facilitating ritual exchanges between the two groups. Additionally, it is also possible that there were also enslaved Natives, who like the enslaved Africans, arrived in Manhattan after being captured from Spanish ships by

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74 Jasper Danckaerts, “Journal of Jasper Danckaerts, 1679-1680,” 76. In 1679 when the Labadist missionaries Jasper Danckaerts and Peter Sluyter visited Manhattan, the old people with whom they stayed related that in the early period when they first arrived in the area “it was a dear time; no provisions could be obtained, and they suffered great want, so that they were reduced to the last extremity; that God the Lord then raised up this Indian, [Tantaqué, whom they called Jasper] who went out fishing daily in order to bring fish to them every day when he caught a good mess, which he always did. If, when he came to the house, he found it alone, and they were out working in the fields, he did not fail, but opened the door, laid the fish on the floor, and proceeded on his way. For this reason these people possess great affection for him…He never comes to the Manhatans without visiting them and eating with them…”

75 Arnold J. F. van Laer, trans., New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch; Volume IV, Council Minutes, 1638-1649 (Baltimore, Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1974), 33. Nicolaes Coorn is charged with having “at divers times…Indian women and Negresses sleep entire nights with him in his bed, in the presence of all the soldiers.” Hans Steen is accused of being a whoremonger because “at the guardhouse he has committed fornication” on a few occasions with Indian women. Apparently, he gave the women a small brandy keg and some of the Company’s gunpowder (45).

76 Berthold Fernow, ed., Records of New Amsterdam, from 1653 to 1674 Anno Domini Volume I (originally published New York, 1897; Reprinted, Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1976), 11. One of the first ordinances passed by Peter Stuyvesant in 1648 was one ensuring that the settlers would pay Native Americans their wages so that no dispute would arise from lack of remuneration. It stated that “some inhabitants of New Netherland set the natives to work and use them in their service, but let them go unrewarded after the work is done. This ordinance points to the prevalence of Native American wage laborers in the colony.

77 Elaine G. Breslaw, Tituba, Reluctant Witch of Salem: Devilish Indians and Puritan Fantasies (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 50. According to Elaine Breslaw, there were some similarities between African cultural features and those of American Indians. For example, “the African association of music and dance with religious ceremonies, the use of drums and other beating instruments, the nighttime occurrence of these rituals with many engaging in social interaction.” Furthermore, Breslaw believes that all of these practices “would have resonated with familiarity even the peculiarities of musical rhythm and body language differed.”
privateers. Some were captured in war, while others were probably kidnapped or brought from the West Indies. They would have the same social status as the enslaved Africans – both, therefore, meeting on terms of equality as bound laborers. Slaves of African descent would have been in close and intimate contact with these Natives. Through such a close contact, cultural and religious information would have indubitably flowed between Native Americans and enslaved Africans.

4.6

The types of social interaction within which cultural borrowings occurred between Natives and Europeans differed markedly from those between Europeans and Africans. For the Europeans, their main interaction with the Natives was not defined by the master-slave relationship, and they had to approach the surrounding Natives diplomatically in the interest of forming political alliances. While Europeans were primarily interested in the Africans’ capacity for work, they were interested in the Natives’ ability to assist them in deriving profit from the land and surviving in the foreign environment. Consequently, during the early settlement period cultural exchanges between Natives and Europeans primarily occurred as a result of the Europeans’ need for trade goods and technical survival skills. The Natives taught the settlers “how to make snowshoes, how to produce warm garments from pelts, [and]

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78 Robert J. Swan, “First Africans into New Netherland, 1625 or 1626?,” De Halve Maen Vol. 56, no. 4(1993): 79. Swan implies that at least one of the Dutch West India slaves, Mayken, might have been of Native American ancestry. He states that “she possibly had Indian features, for the name Mayken was used by Nicolaes van Wassenaer for the Mohican tribe in his Journal for 1624.” If he is correct, it is doubtful that she would have been from a local Algonquin or Iroquoian tribe. It is more likely that she was from a distant North American, South American or Caribbean tribe. However, since other Dutch settlers also named their children Mayken, it is probably likely that the name was a Dutch diminutive for Maria and not a reference to Indian ancestry.

79 Tituba, the notorious Indian “witch” of the Salem witch-hunt was apparently an Arawak Indian from Guiana, and not of African or mixed ancestry. For a full discussion of Tituba and her role in the 1692 Salem witch trials see Breslaw, Tituba, Reluctant Witch of Salem. According to Breslaw, Tituba was probably kidnapped from Guiana and brought to Barbados and sold as a slave; and from Barbados, she eventually wound up in Massachusetts.
how to find their way in the forest.” The Natives probably also shared their knowledge of the local herbs in order to aid the newcomers when they were ill. Even Reverend Michaël was impressed with the efficacy of the medicinal herbs. Writing home to the Amsterdam Consistory, he excitedly explained that in New Netherland there were “roots, plants and herbs, both for eating and medicinal purposes, and with which wonderful cures can be effected, it would take too long to tell.” However, he was confident that they had already “obtained some knowledge thereof and will be able to obtain from others further information.”

One can imagine that during Michaël’s period of “seasoning,” other settlers probably informed him about the Natives’ herbal medicines or a Native healer might have personally aided him.

Neither the acceptance of Native practical knowledge by the Europeans nor the acceptance of European trade items by the Natives dramatically altered these contrasting cultures. It appears that the same can not be said regarding the acceptance and incorporation of the other’s religious practice. In terms of the Natives’ receptivity to Christian doctrines, based on Michaël’s comments it is apparent that neither the Natives nor the Europeans understood the other’s religion. In an attempt to explain the concept of the Christian God, Europeans tended to refer to Him as the “most high Sackiema,” which must have been very confusing for the Natives. As Reverend Michaël explains, “If we speak to them of God, it appears to them like a dream, and we are compelled to speak of Him, not under the name of Menetto, whom they know

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80 Breen, “Creative Adaptations: Peoples and Cultures,” 220.
81 Eekhof, Jonas Michaël, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 137. It is possible that Michaël is referring to Peter Minuit. Minuit quite possibly had gathered information on Native American herbal practices during his time in the colony as a scout in the employ of factions in Holland.
82 Breen, “Creative Adaptations: Peoples and Cultures,” 220. According to Breen, even in the extreme instances when Europeans “found the Indian way of life so alluring that they took up permanent residence in native American villages,” such adoption of Native American “customs did not threaten [European] culture.” In the same manner, Native Americans approached European material culture with the same utilitarian perspective. They adopted the cloth, beads, trinkets, guns, kettles and other metal goods into their daily routine.
and serve, for that would be blasphemy.” Instead, Michaëlïus and other European settlers decided to speak of God as the “most high Sackiema, by which name [the Natives], having no king, call those who have the command over several hundred among them.” But when the Natives hear it, “some begin to mutter and shake their heads, as if it were a silly fable, and others in order to get out of the difficulty with honour and friendship, will say Orith, that is good.” Such responses were a source of frustration to Michaëlïus, who as a result wondered “by what means” was he “to prepare this people for salvation, or to make a salutary breach among them?”

Michaëlïus failed to comprehend the problem with utilizing such a concept of God in his proselytizing efforts. Decades later Tantaqué, a Hackensack Indian who was affectionately named Jasper by the Dutch settlers, would explain what the Natives believed. He said that the most High “remains above, and does not trouble himself with the earth or earthly things, because he does nothing except what is good; but Maneto, who also is a sakemacker, is here below, and governs all, and punishes and torments those men who do evil.” Speaking as an “old man” of eighty years old, he further explained that the Natives “do not know or speak to this sakemacker, but Maneto” who they knew and spoke to, whereas Europeans “who can read and write, know and converse with this sakemacker.”

Tantaqué had managed to formulate an explanation that maintained the supremacy of his traditional Native religion. He had also devised an explanation that addressed the reason for the differences between Christianity and Native religions: Christians were addressing their worship to Kishelëmukòng, who was above and far removed from the everyday events and lives of the Native while Native Americans were addressing Manitto “who they knew.” Since they did not personally know or worship this “most high Sackiema,” then they did not have to obey him in the

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83 Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlïus, Founder of the Church in New Netherland, 132-133.
same way that Europeans did. The “most high Sackiema,” had given Europeans certain rules and laws to obey which he had not given the Native Americans. Probably in order to live peaceably with the newcomers, whenever possible the Natives responded to the Dutch cordially and tried to avoid offending them; in an attempt to disguise their disdain or disapproval of European culture, the Native response was often muted—unlike the enslaved Africans who were quite vocal about their religious disagreement with Michaëlius, speaking “jeeringly” and “scoffingly.”

4.7

The settling of Manhattan brought together three disparate racial groups (each involving diverse languages and ethnicities) who were forced to adjust to a strange new environment. The newcomers, Africans and Europeans, hoped to reconstruct as closely as possible the various features of their lives that they had left behind in the Old World. Forcibly transported to Manhattan to work as enslaved laborers, the Africans faced greater challenges, in comparison to their European counterparts, in accomplishing this cultural goal. They were irrevocably severed from their past that had provided them with meaning and a sense of self. They had survived the dreaded Middle Passage, which was often marked by arbitrary abuse, disease, death, hunger, and filth. Just as they had relied on each other to transcend the Middle Passage, so too would they need to interact socially, both with each other and with those in the other racial groups in order to adjust to their new life in the New World.

For the Africans, belonging to one owner (the Dutch West India Company) no doubt assisted them in gradually bonding and forming a community. This probably allowed for a greater concentration of enslaved individuals within a more restricted

85 During the early years of settlement, only the Dutch West India Company was allowed to own African slaves.
space. And although the Company tended to hire-out slaves to private individuals, this policy probably offered the Africans a similar weakening of social control that later defined urban slave life; it offered the enslaved a semblance of liberty they did not enjoy in more widely dispersed settlements. In their coming and going, the Africans would encounter each other, meet at the local pubs, meet secretly in the wooded area, etc. The slave trade continually renewed the sources of cultural life by establishing continuous contact between seasoned slaves and the new arrivals, which might have also included priests and medicine men. In this way, throughout the entire Dutch period, African religious values were continuously rejuvenated.

The challenges facing the European settlers were different from those confronting the Africans. However, the European settlers also had to interact both with peoples within their ethnically diverse racial group and with members of other racial groups, who were themselves multiethnic. Interaction was the key to survival in the wilderness, but interaction was also essential in order to reconstruct in the New World the various cultural structures and institutions they would need in order to approximate the lives and communities they left behind. And although they had greater freedom than the enslaved Africans in transferring their culture and recreating familiar patterns of life in Manhattan, they too were not able to transfer their cultures intact (unchanged) to the New World. The realities and demands of pioneer life and the outcome of their interaction with each other and other group members forced Europeans to alter their expectations and creatively adapt in ways they might not have thought necessary prior to migrating.

And although the Native Americans were already present in the vicinity of Manhattan prior to the newcomers' arrival, they too had to find ways of coping with the changes in their societies wrought by the appearance of Africans and Europeans in their
midst. For them the challenge was to maintain contact with the newcomers, in order to understand them better, while at the same time preserving as much of their old ways, cultural patterns and communal life as possible. While the need to survive in the wilderness was a motivating factor for the Africans and Europeans to seek out and interact with the Native Americans, the Native Americans’ motivation for interaction with the other racial groups were prompted primarily by a desire for trade goods.

The twin variables of survival and trade appear to have been two of the main factors encouraging inter-group interactions and exchanges during the early settlement period. Although there were other forces at work as well, these two factors were powerful forces in the encounter scenario. In addition ethnocentrism appears to be one of the greatest potential obstacles to peaceful inter-group interaction and exchanges. Africans, Europeans, and Native Americans generally regarded themselves, their religion and culture as being superior to those of the other groups. Africans and Native Americans could be as ethnocentric as Europeans in their views of the other two groups. Like Europeans, they too attempted to incorporate members of the other groups into pre-existing frameworks and ideologies. The Europeans’ ethnocentrism is readily discernible from the abundant written materials they left behind, such as the Reverend Jonas Michaëlius’ extant letters. African and Native American ethnocentrism can be discerned from the sparse available accounts of verbal exchanges between Europeans and members of these two groups. Reverend Michaëlius’ description of the Africans jeering and scoffing during his attempt to share the Gospel is a blatant indication of the Africans’ sense of cultural and religious superiority vis-à-vis Michaëlius and his culture.

And though the Natives were not as openly condescending towards Michaëlius, there are available evidence demonstrating that they held less than flattering views
about Europeans and their culture. Ironically, the European settlers’ reliance on Native Americans for survival techniques and food items might have contributed to the Natives’ sense of superiority in regards to Europeans. According to Cornelius J. Jaenen, whose findings are based on French interaction with Native Americans in New York and Canada, “apart from concessions to [European] material civilization, technology, and military force, [Native Americans apparently] felt equal to, or superior to, the Europeans at the time of contact in the seventeenth century.” Because Europeans tended “to adopt to some degree their ways of living, traveling, hunting, and fighting, and to rely heavily on them for their economic and military success confirmed them in their belief that their way of life had advantages over” European lifestyle.

To the extent that these ethnocentric ideas shaped inter-group interactions, they were an obstacle to inter-group cultural exchanges and borrowings in the early settlement period but also in later years when the colony became more established. They were a hindrance to the creative responses and adaptations that was at the core of the community formation and the religious transformative process unfolding in early Manhattan. For the later periods of Dutch rule in Manhattan (particularly after 1638), where more extant data is available, attempt will be made to map out more specifically this process of community formation and the role that religion and religious transformation played in it.

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86 See Cornelius J. Jaenen, “Amerindian Views of French Culture in the Seventeenth Century,” in Peter C. Mancall and James H. Merrell, eds, American Encounters: Natives and Newcomers from European Contact to Indian Removal, 1500-1850 (New York: Routledge, 2000), 69-95. According to Jaenen, the Natives generally regarded Frenchmen “as physically inferior, as weak and unfitted to stand up to the rigors of arduous canoe journeys, hunting expeditions, and forest warfare…In addition to reproaching Frenchmen for their physical weakness, the Amerindians found them ugly, especially because of their excessive hairiness, and their frequent deformities and infirmities.” (76-77).
5. Factions, Social Control and Religion

5.1

Whatever career notions Everardus Bogardus may have had upon entering Leiden University changed when he left abruptly after only three years. Single and twenty-three years of age, it was probably as much his love of adventure as his devotion to Calvinism that prompted his departure. But there was also the prestige that came from being a representative of the Dutch Reformed Church in foreign holdings. On September 9, 1630, Bogardus abandoned his studies at Leiden and offered his services for a post in Guinea, West Africa as a “comforter of the sick” (ziekentrooster) under the authority of the Consistory of Amsterdam.\(^1\) Returning to Holland from Guinea in 1632 with good references, he was admitted to the ministry by the Classis of Amsterdam after preaching a test sermon on Galatians 5:16: “So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.”\(^2\)

Presumably, his time in Guinea had equipped him with insights into how one might resist “the desires of the sinful nature.” After all, a man of Bogardus’ theological leanings probably felt certain he had witnessed in Africa some of “the acts of the sinful nature” delineated in Galatians chapter 5, namely: “sexual immorality,

\(^1\) Willem Frijhoff, “Identity Achievement, Education, and Social Legitimation in Early Modern Dutch Society: The Case of Evert Willemz (1622-1623),” in Willem Frijhoff, ed., Embodied Belief: Ten Essays on Religious Culture in Dutch History (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2002), 86-87. According to Frijhoff, working as a comforter of the sick “was actually the normal path to the sacred ministry for… young men who wanted to become ministers of the Word, but who had not schooling and were unable to read the ancient languages of the Bible. As comforters of the sick, they were allowed to study the Bible and the learned or pious Protestant writers in preparation for the holy ministry. For many young people, this profession served as a kind of working scholarship, part-time job with enough spare time for study.”

\(^2\) New International Version. See also Ecclesiastical Records of the State of New York, published by the State under the supervision of Hugh Hastings, State Historian (Albany: James B. Lyon, State Printer, 1901), Vol. 1: 82. According to the Ecclesiastical Records, on June 14, 1632, Everardus Bogardus “treated a proposition (preached a sermon) on the words of Paul, Gal. 5:16 – Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh – and was thereupon admitted to the examination. Conrad Clevius who was examined with him…and both are to be promoted (ordained) to the Holy Ministry.”
impurity…debauchery…idolatry and witchcraft.” Unfortunately, he probably would not have realized that some of his own personal failings were also enumerated in this same chapter of Galatians – “hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness…and the like” – failings that would further thwart the growth of the Dutch Reformed Church in Manhattan, contribute toward disrupting the civil affairs of the colony, and frustrate the process of community formation.3

Arriving in Manhattan sometime in the spring of 1633 aboard the Soutbergh, ("Salt Mountain") Bogardus would have shared very little with Jonas Michaëlius besides his experience in Guinea and his attachment to orthodox Calvinism.4 Like the man whom he was to succeed as minister at New Amsterdam, Everardus Bogardus (born Evert Willemszen Bogaert in 1607) believed that the Dutch Reformed Church and its exponents were the highest source of moral authority, higher even than the secular authority of the Dutch West India Company and its directors.5 He would be one of the youngest ordained ministers stationed at Manhattan during its existence as a Dutch trading post. At twenty-six years old, he had not yet left the youthful world of bachelorhood to enter into one of marital responsibility, but he was old enough to have experienced some of life's satisfactions, regrets, and controversies.6

3 Galatians 5:19-21.
4 Ecclesiastical Records of the State of New York, published by the State under the supervision of Hugh Hastings, State Historian (Albany: James B. Lyon, State Printer, 1901), Vol. 1:84. Citing a “Note from Brodhead” as to the arrival of Wouter van Twiller and Domine Bogardus, the Ecclesiastical Records state that “van Twiller arrived at Manhattan in April, 1633, having sailed on the Company ship ‘Soutberg.’” However, Stokes’ Iconography states that van Twiller and Bogardus arrived at New Amsterdam sometime during the month of March 1633. See Isaac Newton Phelps Stokes, Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498-1909, (Union, New Jersey: The Lawbook Exchange, Ltd., 1998), Vol. IV: 79.
6 Simon Schama, The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age (New York: Vintage Books, 1997), 436. According to Simon Schama, “the mean age of first marriage for women in seventeenth-century Amsterdam was twenty-four to twenty-eight (though in the early seventeenth century half of all brides were twenty to twenty-four) and eighteen was probably considered the age of sexual maturity.” For men the mean age was probably higher. So at twenty-six years of age and single, Bogardus would not have been uncommon.
A little more than a decade before his voyage to New Netherland, Bogardus had found himself at the center of a religious debate in the town of Woerden. At issue were the ability of the local religious leaders to authenticate his own spiritual experiences as a fifteen-year-old during the summer of 1622 and the following winter. At the time, Bogardus, having lost his parents and stepfather, was living at the local orphanage with his older brother and two younger half-brothers. This orphanage, established during the years immediately following the Calvinist penetration of the Netherlands, functioned as one of the main local agencies of Calvinization. Bogardus was also in the process of completing his two-year apprenticeship with Master Gijsbert Aelbertsz., the local tailor.

Without the assistance of a local family network and restricted by his educational background, young Evert Bogardus could hardly expect to rise to a place of prominence in Dutch society. It may have been his realization of this sad fact, maybe his need for attention, or perhaps an encounter with the divine (as Evert and his supporters proclaimed) that set into motion the events that began to unfold in 1622. Whatever the underlying causality, from June 30 to September 8, 1622, Evert Bogardus apparently lost his ability to hear and speak and, occasionally, to see.\(^7\) In this condition, he reputedly had a visitation from an angel of the Lord who explained the meaning of his physical affliction: “he must convert people and admonish them to repent, to deliver themselves from their sins.” In essence, the angel was declaring that Evert’s true calling was the ministry and not that of a tailor.

Additionally, Bogardus later went into a trancelike state where he engaged in a long period of ecstatic writing that aggregately expressed a “very simplified form of belief in the double predestination, as defended by orthodox Calvinism and confirmed in 1618-1619 by the Synod of Dordrecht: the bad are damned, and the good are elected. But God will punish even the good if they do not publicly behave as his perfect faithful.” Furthermore, according to historian Willem Frijhoff, who has studied the case of Evert Bogardus extensively, Bogardus’ text reveals a commitment to orthodox Calvinism. Evert’s affliction and later healing was seen as proof of his election by God; through his suffering and later healing, he was transformed from a lowly young boy into a messenger and minister of God.

Through a series of examinations by the local ruling Calvinists and subsequent published testimonials, Evert was able to achieve gradual legitimacy among the dominant orthodox Calvinist party at Woerden. Bogardus’ deliverance from his affliction served to radically change the course of his life, allowing him entrance to a career path that was previously virtually inaccessible for an orphan of his economic stature and social connections. It procured him powerful friends and connections where there were none and opportunities that were previously unimaginable. Three days after his “recovery,” the magistracy of Woerden permitted Bogardus to leave his

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9 Frijhoff, “The Healing of a Lay Saint,” 4. According to Frijhoff, “Evert’s texts...reveal a form of youthful radicalism that links with the firm positions of the predestinarians and is more easily satisfied by the pious and straightforward intolerance of orthodox Calvinism than by the political accommodations of Arminian latitudinarianism and humanist toleration.”
10 Willem Frijhoff, “Signs and Wonders in Seventeenth-Century Holland,” in Willem Frijhoff, ed., Embodied Belief: Ten Essays on Religious Culture in Dutch History (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2002), 139-140. The eventual legitimization of Bogardus’ experience supports Frijhoff’s argument that “until far into the early modern era, Catholics and Protestants still largely shared a similar physical and symbolic mental universe. Their perception of natural phenomena and their stories about the causalities of the earthly and heavenly world continues to largely support one another, despite treaties, sermons, and warnings from theologians on both sides. In order to be convinced of this, one only needs to confront their reactions regarding the preternatural or the apparent interventions of heaven in this world: magic and witchcraft, comets and eclipses, angels and demons. In fact...for the Catholics as well as the Protestants, signs and wonders publicly addressed the intentions of God, and in this way revealed the ordinary meaning of the perceived extraordinary.”
apprenticeship at the tailor’s shop and attend the local Latin school. Four years later, Woerden’s local organist was hired to teach Evert music, and in 1627 the Woerden magistracy offered Bogardus the town scholarship at Leiden University where he was allowed to continue his education in the humanities and prepare for his theological studies. Years later, his experience would also prove instrumental in convincing the Amsterdam consistory to send him to Guinea as a comforter of the sick and then as an ordained minister to New Netherland.¹¹

Evert’s experience as a fifteen-year-old boy demonstrated the ability of individuals to seize opportunities available within Holland’s existing social patterns and structures to alter the course of his or her life and career, or fashion a new identity that enabled them to achieve personal ambitions along divergent routes. In many respects, the outline of Evert Bogardus’ life mirrored that of his flock at Manhattan. His journey to Manhattan offered him the chance to improve his financial and, therefore, social standing significantly. Like many of the early settlers, Evert had arrived in Manhattan without family or fortune. And though he might have intended to return to Holland after his initial contract, there was a gradual shift in his outlook from his arrival on Manhattan in 1633 to his death in a shipwreck off the coast of Wales in 1647. Arriving with few personal possessions besides the clothes on his back, Bogardus would rise to become one of the few fortunate owners of Manhattan’s prized real estate. He later married the widow of a deceased colonist and started a family, siring four sons. These changes increasingly shifted his vested interests from Holland to New Netherland. He would become a pioneer colonist, adopting the positions, sensibilities and perspectives of the settlers.

Partly because Everardus Bogardus had decided to cast his lot with that of the colonists, his service with the Dutch Reformed Church from 1633-1647 (under two Director-Generals, Wouter van Twiller and Willem Kieft) was marked by a series of acrimonious disputes. Like the conflict between Peter Minuit and Jonas Michaëlius, these disputes reflected the divergent religious schools of thought in Holland regarding the relationship between the church and civic authorities. Influenced more by orthodox Calvinists who tried to establish ecclesiastical primacy, Bogardus felt solely responsible for defining and upholding the colony’s moral standard. His sense of responsibility led him to communicate publicly his opposition to the civic authorities for alleged misconduct or incompetence. As a minister in the Dutch Reformed Church in New Netherland, he experienced the distance from Holland, the slow rate of communication with authorities in Amsterdam, and autonomy from the close scrutiny of Dutch church and state. As “the supreme moral leader,” his situation afforded him the opportunity to put his particular stamp on Manhattan’s evolving community. The broad struggle between Bogardus and successive Director-Generals was not simply a “church-state” conflict, because the dispute over authority connoted a deeper disagreement. His quarrel with Wouter van Twiller and Willem Kieft arose out of competing visions regarding the very nature of the emerging Christian community and the larger Manhattan.

Manhattan’s religious and social landscape had changed significantly since Jonas Michaëlius’ arrival, and it would change even further during Reverend Bogardus’ fourteen-year tenure. Many of the harsh features of pioneer life were slowly disappearing; durable physical dwellings and some legal structures were gradually emerging. However, with regard to the region’s indigenous residents, the colony’s

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ecclesiastical and civic authorities during Wouter van Twiller’s administration were still bound to a policy and pattern of accommodation. They sensed the colony’s continued strategic and numerical weakness vis-à-vis the surrounding Native communities. Inevitably, this continuing need to act within an accommodationist framework affected Reverend Bogardus’ attempt to shape the colony’s religious and social community.¹³

This chapter discusses the internal structure of Manhattan’s evolving community, the various webs of interaction and the spheres of influence during Everardus Bogardus’ tenure as minister of New Netherland in Wouter van Twiller’s administration (1633-1638) and the resultant tensions and strains that emerge as part of this process of community development. It also focuses on the role played by Holland’s religious heritage of two sharply divergent views on the subject of church-state relations in the complicated process of community formation and community cohesion.

Although Reverend Bogardus might have hoped to create a harmonious society comprising of European settlers, enslaved and freed Africans and Native Americans united under the umbrella of the Dutch Reformed Church, the unsettled nature of the colony, and his need to accommodate a multi-ethnic and religiously plural population would frustrate his plans.

¹³ In many ways, the narrative of community formation that unfolds during Wouter van Twiller’s administration mirrors that of the fictionalized world of William Golding’s *The Lord of the Flies*. Golding wrote his fictional novel about a group of well-behaved boys who were stranded on an island and subsequently attempted to govern themselves. Their attempt at self-governance fails disastrously as order quickly deteriorates into a violent struggle for power between two of the boys. *While Lord of the Flies* is a commentary on the controversial subjects of human nature and individual welfare versus the common good, it is also a wonderful fictional depiction of some of the forces that are at play in colonies separated from state authorities by the watery chasm of the Atlantic Ocean. Like the boys in Golding’s fictional island, Manhattan’s settlers witnessed their hopes of living in an ordered, stable and cohesive society slowly slip away in the face of yet another struggle for dominance and relevance in Manhattan’s inchoate society.
5.2

Almost a year after the departure of the squabbling Peter Minuit and Reverend Jonas Michaëlïus for Holland on the ironically-named *Eendracht* ("Unity"), the *Soutbergh* brought their replacements, Wouter van Twiller and Reverend Everardus Bogardus, to the shores of Manhattan in March 1633. While *Unity* was indeed an ironic name for a vessel transporting Minuit and Michaëlïus, would *Salt Mountain* prove to be a more appropriate name for the ship transporting the newly appointed director general and Dutch Reformed Domine? Wouter van Twiller was a young clerk in the Dutch West India Company’s Amsterdam office who was apparently tapped for the important task of governing New Netherland because of his marriage to a niece of Kiliaen van Rensselaer, the Patroon of Rensselaerswyck. Would a van Twiller and Bogardus team be a better catalyst for unity and a force to preserve the faltering colony? If the colonists had hoped that the change in the civil and ecclesiastical leadership would usher in more harmonious times – that van Twiller and Bogardus would act like "salt" to preserve and improve the colony – then they were sorely disappointed by the disputes and in-fighting that erupted during their tenure.  

The voyage aboard the *Soutbergh* was, like most transatlantic voyages during the seventeenth century, long and risky. The ship, which was outfitted with twenty guns 

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14 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: Doubleday, 2004), 52. Unfortunately, the official records for this period of New Netherland’s history is virtually nonexistent, so we are forced to rely on scant extant sources. As Shorto explains, “for those hoping to understand the history of the Manhattan-based colony, the great disaster took place in 1821, when the government of the Netherlands, in a truly unfortunate fit of housekeeping...sold for scrap paper what remained of the archives of the Dutch East and West India companies prior to 1700. Eighteen years later, an American agent named John Romeyn Brodhead, working on behalf of New York State, went to the Netherlands in search of documentary material on the Dutch colony, and found to his ‘surprise, mortification, and regret’ that all of it – eighty thousand pounds of records –had vanished.” See also John Peters, “Volunteers for the Wilderness: the Walloon Petitioners of 1621 and the Voyage of the *Nieu Nederlandt* to the Hudson River in 1624,” *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society* XXIV (1987), 421-433. According to Peters, “nearly all the earliest records of the Dutch West India Company went down in shipwrecks, went up in burning buildings, or were sold as waste paper shortly before the historian sent from New York to search for historical documents was able to save them” (421-422).
and manned by a military force of one hundred and four soldiers, was almost captured by “Turks.” During this encounter with “the Turks,” according to a memorial written on November 25, 1633, by Kiliaen van Rensselaer to the Assembly of the XIX of the West India Company, “the few calves” he had transported “on the upper deck” for his Rensselaerswijk colony “were all thrown overboard.” However, before arriving at Manhattan the Soutbergh managed to capture a Spanish caravel, the St. Martin, which was loaded with sugar. The long and perilous voyage probably afforded van Twiller and Bogardus time to become acquainted, and like many shipmates they might even have developed a level of amity and comradeship.

The Manhattan that greeted van Twiller and Bogardus consisted of several private houses. Some of the harsh features of pioneer life that Minuit and Michaëlius had to endure had disappeared with the development of a more settled rhythm to life; but by no means had all elements of frontier living been eradicated. While van Twiller and Bogardus still had to contend with a high death rate, their lives in Manhattan were marked by a greater material comfort than that enjoyed by Minuit and Michaëlius. There was even a semblance of a village center that included five large stone houses, used as shops by the Dutch West India Company. Wouter van Twiller would add to these structures during his tenure as director-general. The new buildings added by his administration included a new bakery, a small house for the mid-wife, a guardhouse, and a church with a house and a stable behind it. Now the community residents would have assistance during childbirth and fresh baked bread, the absence of which had been deeply felt by Michaëlius and other European immigrants. At last, there

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would be a more comfortable place to worship on Sundays than the loft above the gristmill.

Also sailing aboard the *Soutbergh* with van Twiller and Bogardus was Adam Roelandsen, Manhattan’s first schoolmaster. With the arrival of Roelandsen, “the youth” were finally afforded the possibility of being instructed “in reading, writing, ciphering, and arithmetic, with all zeal and diligence.” According to the instructions given to schoolmasters by the Classis of Amsterdam, Roelandsen was also “to implant the fundamental principles of the true Christian Religion and salvation, by means of catechizing” and “teach them the customary Forms of Prayers, and also to accustom them to pray.” And finally, he was “to give heed to their manners,” bringing them “as far as possible to modesty and propriety.”

The dramatic changes made to Manhattan’s landscape during Wouter van Twiller’s administration in order to meet the needs of the expanding colony are apparent on the map of Joan Vingboom completed in 1639. While the Vingboom map has widened our knowledge of Manhattan’s landowners during Wouter van Twiller’s administration, it does very little to enlarge our knowledge of van Twiller himself, or the socio-religious experiences of the inhabitants of Manhattan during his administration. Whatever else might be said about Wouter van Twiller, it is apparent from other extant

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19 A. J. F. van Laer, “Letters of Wouter van Twiller,” *New York History* Vol. L No. 4 (1969), 47. It is uncertain whether Roelandsen’s voyage at this time to Manhattan was in the capacity of schoolmaster. In an extant letter written by van Twiller to the DWIC in 1636, he states that Reverend Bogardus has requested a schoolteacher to instruct the children of the Dutch and Africans, who are steadily increasing.


21 See Joan Vingboom map of Manhattan in the Appendix. The Joan Vingboom map coupled with information that historians have been able to gather about Manhattan’s twenty-odd boweries and plantations have widened our knowledge of Manhattan’s landowners during Wouter van Twiller’s administration. To some extent, when carefully examined as a historical document, the Vingboom map may prove to be a potentially valuable data for the scholar seeking to rehabilitate the reputation of Wouter van Twiller – those desirous of demonstrating that he was more than the “incompetent” colonial administrator, “drunk and...nonleader.” The map captures a growing colony, indicating that, despite the charges against him, Wouter van Twiller was able to foster an environment in which the gains and improvements made by his predecessor, Peter Minuit, were either maintained or built upon. One would think that a colonial administrator of his purported incompetence would have left the young colony in a state of deeper declension.
sources that he must have shared Everardus Bogardus’s penchant for the dramatic and predilection for controversies. If indeed Bogardus and van Twiller had developed a friendship during their transatlantic crossing, their experience in Manhattan clearly altered their relationship. It is possible that van Twiller’s penchant for alcohol and lack of leadership and administrative skills might have ignited his dispute with Bogardus.

In a letter written to Wouter van Twiller on June 17, 1634, Reverend Everardus Bogardus referred to van Twiller as “an incarnate villain, a child of the Devil, whose buck goats are better than he, and promise[d] him that [he] would so pitch into him from the pulpit on the following Sunday that both [van Twiller] and his bulwarks would tremble.” In response, van Twiller promised swift retribution. In a drunken stupor van Twiller tried to make good on his promise by chasing Bogardus in the streets of Manhattan with a drawn knife. Surprisingly, this charged exchange did not appear to have escalated into the prolonged acrimonious feud and public squabbling that would later define Bogardus’ relationship with van Twiller’s successor, Willem Kieft.

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Perhaps Wouter van Twiller and the Reverend Everardus Bogardus did indeed form a friendship during those months aboard the Soutbergh which helped to mitigate the conflict; or perhaps the two avid drinkers might have reached a rapprochement over

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22 Shorto, The Island at the Center of the World, 81. According to Shorto, “immediately upon arrival in Manhattan, Wouter van Twiller set about proving himself a drunk and a nonleader. At times he even managed to combine the two traits.”
23 Quirinus Breen, “Domine Everhardus Bogardus,” Church History Vol. II, No. 2 (June 1933), 80. According to Breen, Wouter van Twiller “appears to have behaved in a manner which did not help...Frequently in his cups, loud-mouthed, tactless, he invited opposition, inspired no respect...consorted with sots...he made his presence so obnoxious that after three years he was dismissed.”
26 Jaap Jacobs, New Netherland, 277. According to Jacobs, “there are indications that van Twiller’s behavior improved later on, [because]...the number of complaints about him grew fewer in the later years of his time in New Netherland.”
drinks at one of Manhattan’s taverns and groggeries; or maybe van Twiller and Bogardus set aside their disagreement and united to confront a common rival, Lubbert van Dincklagen, New Netherland’s schout-fiscal.\textsuperscript{27} In 1636, van Dincklagen wrote to the Classis of Amsterdam complaining of Reverend Bogardus’ “bad government of the Church, as well as his conduct and walk.”\textsuperscript{28} Simultaneously, he also lodged a complaint with the States General criticizing van Twiller for neglecting his duties and being unfaithful to the Dutch West India Company.\textsuperscript{29}

The available historical records do not reveal the specific circumstances that precipitated van Dincklagen’s opposition. However, Wouter van Twiller responded to the conflict with van Dincklagen by withholding his salary and Reverend Everardus Bogardus excommunicated from the church. Neither the Classis of Amsterdam nor the Dutch West India Company, seem to have taken van Dincklagen’s accusations seriously, and the DWIC shrugged off repeated requests from the States General that van Dincklagen be paid his three years in back salary.\textsuperscript{30} Consequently, although Lubbert van Dincklagen remained in Holland lobbying for a favorable resolution to his complaints, it appears that as late as 1644 a satisfactory response and closure remained elusive. And though he again petitioned the Classis of Amsterdam on March 19, 1640, that he “be relieved from his excommunication,” its members did not respond to this specific request. Instead, instead they agreed to “verbally…request the President of the

\textsuperscript{27} Breen, “Domine Everhardus Bogardus,”, 80-81. See also Jaap Jacobs, New Netherland, 277.
\textsuperscript{28} Ecclesiastical Records, Vol. 1: 87.
\textsuperscript{29} J. L. Price, The Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998), 164. The States General was “the chief organ of central government, consisting of delegations from the states of each of the seven provinces of the Republic.”
\textsuperscript{30} For the States General and the West India Company’s responses to van Dincklagen’s petition see E. B. O’Callaghan, M. D., Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York (Albany: Weed, Parsons and Company, Printers, 1856), 1: 100-103, 117, 126, 136-139. For the Classis of Amsterdam’s handling of van Dincklagen’s complaints and requests, see Ecclesiastical, Vol. 1: 87-88, 126-127, 129, 149-152, 181. The last entry touching upon the van Dincklagen complaints was made on April 4, 1644, wherein van Dincklagen requested “that complaints which might be renewedly made against him, should be made known to him, that he might answer them. Also that Rev. Bogardus be summoned hither. It was resolved to await the arrival of Rev. Everardus Bogardus, and then to summon Lubbert van Dincklagen” (181).
schepens, (aldermen or justices), that the occurrence referred to should not operate to
the withholding of his salary.” One can understand van Dincklagen’s concern that his
excommunication by Reverend Bogardus and the New Amsterdam consistory would
not be “publicly posted…to his injury, or be made to work to his prejudice.”

Excommunication was the most extreme form of sanction in the Dutch Reformed
Church. Even in Holland, with its religiously heterogeneous and comparatively tolerant
atmosphere, this action could have had wide-ranging negative repercussions that
proved prejudicial to him in business endeavors.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, church discipline within the Dutch
Reformed Church allowed for only two means of being excluded from membership:
death or excommunication. Those who sought to withdraw from the Reformed Church,
either verbally or in writing, were still deemed to be part of the Church and remained
under the official supervision of the consistory “in order to bring them back to the
sheepfold of Christ.” According to Arie Theodorus van Deursen, who has written
extensively on seventeenth-century Dutch popular culture and religion, when members
of the Reformed Church did not respond to admonition, “then the normal procedure for
church discipline [was] followed, even when they demonstrate themselves to be
indifferent. When such disciplinary cases came up, they were to be proceeded with
right up to excommunication. Even when the person who had withdrawn moved to
another location, the consistory of that new town was expected to continue the discipline
process through to excommunication or repentance.”

The road leading to one’s eventual excommunication was apparently quite long, and involved a series of patient

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32 Rev. Dr. Roger Dean Anderson, Reformed Church Polity Concerning Withdrawal of Church Membership,
written 1999 (p. 3). Quoted from Acts of the Classis of Haarlem, 21 June 1606 by A. Th. van Deursen, Bavianen
appeals to the “wayward.” In other words, it does not appear to be a means of discipline that a consistory would resort to hastily.

After the Synod of Dort in 1618/19, which marked the ascendancy of Contra-Remonstrant (orthodox Calvinism) over Remonstrant (Arminian Calvinism), those people who adhered to the Remonstrant variant of Calvinism were subjected to church discipline and a few were eventually excommunicated, in some locale. However, within the Republic, Amsterdam was not one of the towns where the Consistory readily resorted to such punitive measures. It is possible that Bogardus and the New Netherland consistory moved to excommunicate van Dincklagen because he espoused beliefs that fell outside the bounds of “orthodox” Calvinism. Precedence in the Dutch Reformed Church indicated that a consistory could rely on a very limited available line of justification for resorting to excommunicating a member, which would explain the infrequency with which it occurred in Holland. That Bogardus and the New Netherland consistory (under Bogardus’ leadership) were probably hasty in their decision to excommunicate van Dincklagen might explain why the “case appear[ed] very peculiar to many” of the members of the Classis of Amsterdam. van Dincklagen did not want to leave the Reformed Church, petitioning instead to have his excommunication lifted so that he might be reinstated as a full member. This fact, plus the perplexity expressed by the Classis, might lend weight to the argument that the conflict was prompted by profound differences on the question of state-church authority or van Dincklagen’s adherence to liberal Calvinism.

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33 Some Dutch scholars believe that van Dincklagen and Bogardus’s differing view on state-church authority probably engendered the conflict. See Jaap Jacobs, New Netherland, 277-278. Jacobs states that in Wegen van Evert Willemsz. Een Hollands weeskind op zoek naar zichzelf, 1607-1647, Willem Frijhoff “suggests that the conflict between van Dincklagen and Bogardus was concentrated on the question of what was more important in the colony: the religious or the secular authority.”

In his complaint to the Classis, van Dincklagen claimed that he was “excommunicated by the machinations of Rev. Everardus Bogaert” and that “subsequently, such proceedings were instituted against him, that, in order to escape them, he had been forced to hide himself in the wilderness, where, for days at a time, he had been compelled to sustain himself by the grass of the field, through lack of necessary food.” The immediate question that comes to mind is what sort of “proceedings” could Reverend Bogardus and the New Amsterdam Consistory have instituted against van Dincklagen to prompt him to live in the wilderness and eat “the grass of the field” like King Nebuchadnezzar of the Bible. Was physical harm a possible outcome of these “proceedings” or was van Dincklagen’s statement mere hyperbole uttered to sway the members of the Classis of Amsterdam? Or was van Dincklagen purposely invoking the biblical story to construct a parallel connection between himself and King Nebuchadnezzar? In the biblical account, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylonia had his royal authority taken away from him and was driven away from the people and made to live with wild animals and eat grass like cattle until he acknowledged “that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes.” van Dincklagen might have wanted to convince the Classis that, like King Nebuchadnezzar, he had his authority (as schout-fiscal) taken away from him because he refused to “acknowledge that the [Reverend Bogardus and by extension, the Dutch Reformed Church] is sovereign over” New Netherland.

In any event, whatever was the underlying intent of van Dincklagen’s accusations, not to be outdone, the Reverend Bogardus responded in a manner that pandered to the desire of the Classis to see the Dutch Reformed Church firmly established and expanded in the colonies, “not only among [their] own nationality, but

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36 See Daniel 4:24-37.
also among the blind heathen in America.” It is highly likely that when Bogardus submitted “a certificate...and extract from his Church Book” highlighting the conversions of Africans as part of his defense he had hoped that the religious authorities would conclude that someone so effectively utilized by God amongst “those blind heathens” could not be guilty of “bad government of the Church, as well as...conduct and walk.” One might say that this was a bold gamble by Reverend Bogardus. But Bogardus was so confident in the strength of his defense that he urged the New Amsterdam Consistory to ask that his material submitted in response to van Dincklagen’s complaint would be “placed over against Lubbert Dincklagen.” Indeed, how would the Classis of Amsterdam judge a fellow-laborer who seemed primed to deliver “those blind heathens...from the thick darkness of their idolatries and the service of the devil, and brought to the knowledge and fear of the true God and Saviour, to the glory of His name and their own salvation”? In the end, Bogardus’ gamble paid off. The Classis proclaimed its overwhelming support for him, asserting that they “shall not fail to defend the honor of...our honored colleague.”

5.4

The van Dincklagen incident is a story of one man’s unfortunate face-off against New Netherland’s civil and ecclesiastical authorities, but it also serves as a window into

39 It would take several years and the assignment of a new director-general in New Netherland before van Dincklagen would receive a satisfactory resolution. In light of the unfavorable reports of Everardus Bogardus the Company would later receive from van Twiller’s successor, Willem Kieft, and his Council, van Dincklagen was reinstated to an official position almost a dozen years after his complaint against van Twiller and Bogardus. As a gesture of belated justice, van Dincklagen was chosen by the company to succeed Willem Kieft, when he was recalled after the disastrous war Kieft incited against the Natives. However, when Peter Stuyvesant, who had demonstrated the capacity for superb leadership in Curaçao, had unexpectedly recovered from his amputation, van Dincklagen was instead appointed Vice-Director-General in Peter Stuyvesant’s administration. It was indeed a belated gesture of exoneration.
the religious milieu and experiences of the settlers in early Manhattan during Wouter van Twiller’s administration. On the one hand, it reveals the extent of Reverend Bogardus’ influence and power in the colony, and the severe manner in which he was prepared to deal with those whose religious beliefs diverged from orthodox Calvinism. But, on the other hand, it is also a tale of an attempt by one man, albeit an influential man, to decide what form of Calvinism would be nurtured in New Netherland, and to determine the standards by which settlers would be tolerated in the society. The leading representatives of the Church and the “State,” Reverend Bogardus and Wouter van Twiller respectively, each displayed a keen interest in shaping the social landscape of the colony and implementing their vision of society. Both Bogardus and van Twiller, as Jaap Jacobs reminds us, probably subscribed to the prevalent contemporary European notion that those in a community should adhere to a single, unifying religion.

Furthermore, both the directors of the Dutch West India Company and the Amsterdam Consistory of the Dutch Reformed Church were of the opinion that heterodoxy would more quickly lead to chaos in the fledgling colony than in the established Dutch Republic, and thus in turn necessitated a concerted effort to protect unity in Dutch Manhattan. And unity meant conforming to the Dutch Reformed Church, either by becoming active members or by acquiescing to its dominance in the colony.

However, while both Bogardus and van Twiller may have felt that allowing a multiplicity of religious views would endanger the stability of the society by leading to chaos, provoking God’s anger, and possibly causing any number of natural disasters, there were considerable variations in the strength of their commitment to these ideas. As the head of the civil government, Wouter van Twiller’s responsibility to maintain and

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41 Jacobs, “Between Repression and Approval,” 51-52.
encourage the prosperity and peace of the colony lessened the depth of his commitment to thwart heterodoxy in an ethnically and religiously heterogeneous colony such as New Netherland.

A diverse array of Europeans availed themselves of the Dutch West India Company’s generous incentives for migration, and made a pledge for a six-year sojourn in New Netherland to work for the Company in exchange for the rights to own land, conduct trade within the colony for profit, and exercise freedom of conscience in private worship.42 Joining Catalina Trico and the other Walloons and Huguenots in New Amsterdam were Danes, Norwegians, Swedes, Germans, English, French, Flemings, Portuguese, Spanish, and Bohemians.43 Ironically, the heterogeneity of the colony was one of the qualities that underscored its quintessential Dutchness. Arguably, Holland was possibly Europe’s first crucible for examining the “melting pot” theory. The multi-ethnic characteristic of Holland would lead Willem Frijhoff to assert that “Holland was not simply a nation of homebred peasants” but “a society of immigrants, both migrants from other towns and villages or from other provinces within the Dutch Republic and strangers from without.”44 As he sees it, both in the Netherlands and in New Netherland the term Dutch then “was not really an ethnic but a cultural notion.” It referred “not so much to people having a common origin, speaking the same language…but much more to people of different origins sharing the same social system with the same cultural values and who…had agreed to adopt and assimilate as their

43 Willem Frijhoff, “New Views on the Dutch Period of New York” de Halve Maen Vol. LXXI No. 2 (1998), 30. According to Frijhoff, during the Dutch period, “very few” of Manhattan’s “inhabitants came from the province of Holland.” See also, David Steven Cohen, “How Dutch Were the Dutch of New Netherland?,” New York History Vol. LXII No. 1 (1981), 51-57. Cohen asserts that, “the emphasis of both American and European historians...on the single province of Holland has masked the fact that the majority of the Dutch immigrants came from other provinces. And...almost half the immigrants to New Netherland were not from the Netherlands, but from places adjacent to the Netherlands.”(60).
own the cultural rules that had been defined and were operative in the Netherlands.”

But in New Netherland the cultural values and rules were redefined by the ruling authorities and altered to address the exigencies of settlement life; settlement life had left them in a liminal state between one set of structural relationships and expectation and another that was still being formed.

It should then not be surprising that *eendracht*, or concord, became such an important goal and a fixation of Holland’s civic and religious leaders. For civic and religious leaders, unity represented the quest for internal social cohesion and public order. Both in the Netherlands and in New Netherland, there were often disagreements as to the best means of attaining *eendracht*. While social structures, bonds and networks were present in the Dutch Republic to unite its disparate ethnic and religious groups, New Netherland in the 1630s and early 1640s was still in the incipient stages of forging the corporate institutions and social patterns necessary for the creation of social cohesion. It was a rough society where piracy, drunkenness, prostitution, theft, adultery, fornication, homicide, and fighting were commonplace. While the population of settlers increased, Manhattan’s society was still in constant movement. Frequently, people migrated with the intent to remain permanently, only to alter their plans later and return “home.” For many, Manhattan was still not “home,” not a place where they had resolved to put down lasting roots. Instead, theirs was an experiment, trial sojourn in the wilderness. Whatever financial gains were made would be taken back to Holland and enjoyed. In their sojourn, they established social webs of interaction and patterns of association, but these practical links were not strong enough to create in them a sense of shared values, aspirations, and responsibilities. Few, therefore, proved willing to put the common good above their own individual welfare.

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Self-gratification, not concord, was the driving force for many in New Netherland – at times even at the risk of the colony’s survival. The settlers, for example, were not averse to trading even with the enemy, resulting in “great injury and prejudice” to the colony’s trade. From the colony’s inception settlers challenged the Dutch West India Company’s trading monopoly, and this self-interest continued under the van Twiller administration. In frustration, Wouter van Twiller complained in vain to the DWIC about the colonists trading with English usurpers and making individual profits against the interests of the Republic and the colony. Dutch Manhattan was indeed a factious community where conflicts, illegal trading, disorderliness and improprieties were rampant. In desperation, Wouter van Twiller wrote home to the Directors of the Dutch West India Company seeking authority from that body to “apply the rod of justice” as a remedy. As Director-General of the colony, van Twiller still had to return transgressors of the law to the Dutch authorities in Holland for punishment. He believed, however, that if he had the authority to punish weightier crimes in the colony, then he would stand an improved chance of reigning in the forces of discord and criminality that threatened the very existence of the colony.

In the end, van Twiller seemed to lack the authority and the necessary skill to manage the unruly, segmented colony. Furthermore, the delicate checks and balances that operated between the civil and ecclesiastical authorities in the Dutch Republic to produce the much sought after eendracht did not exist in New Netherland in the van

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47 Van Laer, “Letters of Wouter van Twiller,” 47. These two letters inadvertently discovered by van Laer at the Algemeen Rijksarchief at the Hague comprise some of the few direct communications from Director van Twiller that are still extant. Van Twiller complained that “from time to time English barkentines with English supercargoes come here and bring with them various goods, which they trade or sell to our people, both those in the employ of the Company and free men, and this can not well be prevented as it is done by night and at unseasonable hours and in inaccessible places, and this tends to the great injury and prejudice of our trade.”
During the van Twiller administration, Reverend Everardus Bogardus had grown accustomed to a degree of influence in the colony that would also place him in opposition to van Twiller’s successor, Willem Kieft. It is apparent from the van Dincklagen event and the antagonistic exchanges between Bogardus and van Twiller that Wouter van Twiller’s drunken leadership left Reverend Bogardus’s influence in the colony virtually unchecked and allowed the ecclesiastical authorities to exert a greater level of influence and control within the community than it would in later decades. Arguably, it also gave religious authorities a greater influence in the colony than they held in the Dutch Republic and placed the colony’s religious development on a path that diverged from that in the metropole.

Overall, it seems safe to assume that Reverend Bogardus was fairly free to shape the colony’s religious identity along the lines of those supported by the Counter-Remonstrants in Holland. It was a vision of society in which the Dutch Reformed Church and its ordained representatives wielded final authority in both civil and ecclesiastical affairs and where the unity of the state required civil authorities to carefully heed the advice and recommendations of the Reformed ministers. Unity of religious faith was deemed an indispensable precondition for social order. Furthermore, it was a vision of society in which the Church would not only instill and determine the moral standard for the colonists but would also unite the heterogeneous population of settlers. Those who supported the Counter-Remonstrant agenda had hoped to create a central place in society for the Dutch Reformed Church, where it would be not simply the protected Church, but the state Church, operating not as it did in Holland but as the established Church did in other European societies. But, if the Church was to become a unifying force in Dutch Manhattan wherein the community shared a set of commonly
held values and orientation, Bogardus’ actions towards van Dincklagen was a signal that “orthodox” Calvinism would form the foundation of those values and orientation.

5.5

Certainly, Reverend Bogardus was best positioned to influence the religious practice of those who were members of the Dutch Reformed Church. Just as in Holland, Dutch Reformed ministers and the local Consistory exercised authority over the habits and behavior of church members via church discipline. However, it was obviously impossible to hurl threats of excommunication at non-members, since they were not susceptible to church discipline. So while Bogardus might have felt that it was in the best interest of the colony and the commonwealth that all the settlers be regulated and made to conform to the orthodox variant of Calvinism, how could he influence the religious practices or behavior of non-members or those who did not participate in the rites of the Dutch Reformed Church? Although unintentional, in their attempt to control the flow of migration to Dutch Manhattan, the Dutch West India Company assisted Reverend Bogardus in this effort. Assuming that Wouter van Twiller’s instructions from the directors of the DWIC were similar to Willem Verhulst’s, van Twiller would have expelled “from the colony” and returned to Holland “all adulterers and adulteresses…and useless persons among the Christians…and any one [who] show an unruly, wanton, or disobedient spirit, without being willing to listen to admonition.” It seems likely, based on the additional instruction that the director must enable the colony’s religious representative to “perform his duties in conformity with the authorization and instructions given him by the Consistory, maintain him in proper respect,” and also to “prevent all idolatry, in order that the name of God and of our Lord

50 Van Laer, trans., Documents Relating to New Netherland, 39.
and Saviour Jesus Christ be not blasphemed therein by any one and the Lord’s Sabbath be not violated,” that idolaters, blasphemers and violators of the Sabbath could potentially be deemed transgressors of the law.\footnote{Van Laer, trans., \textit{Documents Relating to New Netherland}, 36. See also Dr. Albert Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, \textit{Founder of the Church in New Netherland; His Life and Work; Together with the Facsimile, Transcription and English Translation of an Extensive Unknown Autograph Latin Letter} (Leyden: A. W. Sijthoff’s Publishing Company, 1926), 111. Reverend Jonas Michaëlius hinted at the Company’s practice of re-shipping to Holland unwanted or troublesome settlers.}

Furthermore, built into the procedure to gain approval for migration to Dutch Manhattan was a weeding-out process concerned with rejecting such “undesirables” as “blasphemers.” In drafting the “Provisional Regulations for the Colonists” the Assembly of the Dutch West India Company took the precaution to specifically instruct the colonists that they were to “practice no other form of divine worship than that of the Reformed religion as at present practiced” in the Dutch Republic. This would have ensured that the majority of the European settlers were either supporters of the Dutch Reformed Church, held religious beliefs that were similar to the Reformed faith in most respects, or at the minimum was not hostile to the Reformed Church.\footnote{Van Laer, trans., \textit{Documents Relating to New Netherland}, 2-3. The Provisional Regulations for the Colonists stated that the colonists “shall within their territory practice no other form of divine worship than that of the Reformed religion as at present practiced here in this country and...if any one among them or within their jurisdiction should...revile or blaspheme the name of God...he shall...be punished by the Commander and his Council.” Besides whipping and other types of corporal punishment, the respective person was also subject to banishment from the colony.} However, even given such a strong endorsement, there was a limit to the Company’s support of religious orthodoxy in New Netherland. The directors of the DWIC often had to strike a practical balance between supporting the establishment of the Dutch Reformed Church and allowing greater religious tolerance, particularly in instances when religious prohibition was deemed a greater threat to peace and unity in the community, foreign trade, or future migration to the struggling colony.\footnote{Jacobs, “Between Repression and Approval,” 55.}

In the colony, other factors and Company policy assisted Reverend Bogardus and the New Netherland Consistory in shaping religious practices and the religious

\footnote{Jacobs, “Between Repression and Approval,” 55.}
milieu. The enervated civil authority under Wouter van Twiller’s leadership, the small number of inhabitants, and the disciplinary and regulatory procedures established by the Company and civil authorities, would have contributed to smoothing the way for the Church to exert a greater level of influence and control within the community than it would in later decades. In comparison to people living at Fort Orange, settlers in Manhattan lived much closer to the colony’s social centers of power that decided over their fate in many respects. Furthermore, in a society where the European settlers did not have a monopoly of power in relation to the Natives, where the balance of power had not yet tilted as it would later in favor of the colonists, the group of settlers as a body had a protective function for the individual settler that was indispensable. In a strange land, in a society that was still struggling to establish itself firmly, people still faced a precarious existence; a completely isolated person had no great chance of survival. The group of settlers was not only a survival unit because it afforded each individual settler a relatively high level of physical security, but because it was also supposed to provide protection from violence and succor in infirmity. The high survival value of the group and group living for each individual member arguably would have been a strong incentive for a certain amount of group conformity. Furthermore, with a population of less than one thousand colonial inhabitants in Manhattan, surrounded by strange Natives, it was easier for the authorities to maintain vigilance over the community and even ensure a greater degree of public conformity through public vigilance and networks of communication.

Of course, this is not to say that people did not commit crimes or that they behaved exactly as the authorities instructed; van Twiller’s complaints to the Directors of the DWIC attests to this. But, neither does it mean that group life was more peaceful and free of conflicts than it would during later administrations when greater energy and
effort was expended to ensure that laws and ordinances were obeyed. Rather, it proposes that it was easier for the authorities to discover a person who transgressed the law or society’s standards, whether or not they decided to do something about it. Even during this period of Manhattan’s history when many of its inhabitants had still not determined to forsake Europe and make Manhattan their permanent “home,” there still was a modicum of social conformity. That laws were disobeyed and the colony was defined by disorder did not necessarily mean that there did not exist a meaningful degree of public conformity. As will be discussed in Chapter 8, the onus for a great part of the disorder and unlawfulness can be attributed to the lax enforcement of the laws and ordinances, the low penalty for breaking the laws, and the high rate of leniency for those found guilty of crimes.\footnote{Berthold Fernow, ed., Records of New Amsterdam, from 1653 to 1674 Anno Domini Volume I (originally published New York, 1897; Reprinted, Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1976), 35. Director-General Peter Stuyvesant and his Council asserted that “the laws and ordinances were generally transgressed “for the sake of a single insulting word, because of the smallness of the fine, imposed by the former ordinance. This is proved b the fact, that some people do not hesitate, to say even in the presence of the Officer: ‘oh, it costs only one pound Flemish n wampum.”}

However, in order to utilize effectively the disciplinary and regulatory procedures established by the Company and civil authorities to the Church’s benefit, Reverend Everardus Bogardus and the Consistory had to rely on members of the general public – even those who were not members of the church or churchgoers. And although Manhattan may have had a larger group of non-members than church members, many of the non-members were themselves probably not irreligious. Seventeenth-century people were overwhelmingly religious; irreligiousness and atheisms were not dominant mindsets. Many of these unchurched were probably as likely to pray and believe in God as the churched, although there was no explicit social basis for their religious beliefs and sentiments, as their religion remain largely unexpressed in public situations. Furthermore, all of the world’s great religions impose
sacred obligations towards the divine, and specify moral demands concerning relations of the adherents towards one another. Consequently, the vast majority of European settlers would have held similar moral values, which would serve to bind them into a sort of moral community, essentially a cohesive group sharing a system of religiously-based beliefs and norms. Friends, foes, family members, neighbors, acquaintances, strangers, employers, and employees, who were all members of the moral community if not the Dutch Reformed religious community, assisted in extending the reach of both civil and Dutch Reformed Church authorities into the personal lives of the inhabitants. Every member of the public was a potential informant of behavior, practices or speech that transgressed civil laws or orthodox Christian social and moral conventions.

Things said or done in private were brought into the public arena, and statements said in jest or slips of tongue were imbued with weightier significance as those with personal grudges, vendettas or who felt offended offered the authorities incriminating testimonies. And although neither the Council Minutes during Wouter van Twiller’s administration nor Reverend Bogardus’s Letterbook are still extant, the available Council Minutes during Director Willem Kieft and Peter Stuyvesant’s (van Twiller’s successor) administrations reflect the types of transgressions that would have been subject to official disciplinary or regulatory sanctions. These included fornication, adultery, slander, and “privately or publicly, directly or indirectly, by abuse or calumny offend[ing] the director …council” or clergy.\textsuperscript{55} Although the Council Minutes document instances of usurpation of civil laws, they also reveal the symbiotic relationship that existed between ordinary or lay members of the community and the colony’s leadership authorities; it illustrates the extent to which the ecclesiastical and civil authorities were

dependent on members of the community under their dominion to provide them with intelligence.

Even in Dutch Manhattan’s settlement society, there existed networks of moral regulation and social control woven into the fabric of everyday life. One might wonder why social order appeared so elusive during van Twiller’s administration if there existed functioning and effective networks of moral regulation and social control. To achieve absolute moral integration, Manhattan would have had to be dominated by an intense form of religion that reached into all aspects of people’s lives, knitting them into a tightly organized sacred community. This, of course, was not Manhattan. Manhattan was a loosely structured secular society. In such a society, religiousness and moral behavior are likely to be performed in situations and settings where it is endorsed by the social environment. Religious or moral ideas are empowered to produce conformity only to the extent that these ideas are sustained through interaction and accepted by the majority of the community as a valid basis for action. In other words, settlers each formed and sustained their own interpretations of Manhattan’s norms as a part of their daily interactions with other settlers.

If during these interactions it is discovered that certain religious or moral ideas are not esteemed, then these considerations will rarely enter into the process by which norms and behaviors are accepted or justified, even though the religious or civic authorities might encourage them. For example, while many settlers would agree that drunkenness and stealing should be discouraged, economic expediency and the exigencies of settlement life in Manhattan prompted many to engage in the practice of plying Natives with alcohol in order to make them more compliant during trade negotiations and also to rob them of their precious valuables (skins or wampum). And although the civil authorities had passed several laws forbidding this practice, it
continued unabated. What is most telling is that one of the main reasons given for its prevalence was that “everyone does it.” In such a community, the ideas of a deeply religious person would be restrained by group indifference, and individual religiousness would tend to become a very compartmentalized component of the individual’s life, surfacing only in specific situations such as Church. In a society whose genesis was as a trade entrepôt frequented and inhabited by freebooting sailors, pirates and the like, it should not be surprising that van Twiller’s administration would have to contend with eradicating piracy, fornication, drunkenness and a host of bawdy behavior in the colony. When there are many such persons in a community, their behavior will generate high rates of deviant behavior. Coupled with the distance from Holland, many people felt free to engage in behavior they normally would not exhibit in Holland.

How then did social control operate in such a society? Although it was expected that the officers of the Church should protect the integrity of the community by enforcing its moral norms and executing its mission, it was the cooperative agency of the collective moral community and the authority of the civil authorities that made

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56 Arnold J. F. van Laer, trans., Register of the Provincial Secretary, 1642-1647 (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1974), 254. Even Catalina Trico was accused of being a “wampum thief.” Trico filed a complaint against Paulus van der Beeke for slander, alleging that he called her “a whore and a seawant thief.” Jasper Dankers and Peter Suyter, Journal of a Voyage to New York and a Tour in Several of the American Colonies in 1679-80 (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, Inc., 1966), 152-153. When Dankers and Suyter visited Manhattan, they witnessed the continuation of the practice of plying the Indians with alcohol in order to gain a favorable position in trade. They explained that whenever the settlers “see an Indian enter the house, who they know has any money, they immediately set about getting hold of him, giving him rum to drink, whereby he is soon caught and becomes half a fool … they do not rest until they have cajoled him out of all his money, or most of it….” Even though everyone knows it is against the law to give alcohol to the Natives, everyone does it and incorporate the practice in their trade routine with Natives in order to gain an advantage. Failure to continue with the practice would mean that they are intentionally placing themselves at a disadvantage in trade. For many, this would compromise their very existence in the colony.

57 To a certain extent it can be argued that these pre-settlement (pre-1624) sailors, pirates and temporary inhabitants had established some of the rules of interactions, rules which did not readily conform to the DWIC’s subsequent efforts to encourage a peaceful and thriving settlement in New Netherland. It was also these earlier established rules of interaction that the civil authorities tried unsuccessfully to alter during Wouter van Twiller’s administration. Away from social and religious constraints in Holland, most of these sailors and traders engaged in behavior they normally would not if family members and relevant social structures to deter deviance surrounded them. People tend to conform to societal norms only to the extent that they are restrained by their attachments. Most people will conform, most of the time, in order to retain the good opinion of those to whom are attached and to protect these valued relationships. Living in a society that is best defined by its loose attachments, individuals felt free to deviate, since there were few or no serious attachments to restrain their deviant behavior.
discipline and social regulation possible – to the extent that there was social regulation and discipline. Mechanisms for regulation were subsumed within a highly interactive social network of families and neighbors who were brought into daily contact and thereby creating a familiar social environment where everyone knew everyone else. During this everyday informal discursive matrix, people kept an eye on their neighbors, gossiped about them, held grudges against them, and made friends with others. The colony’s Council Minutes teem with cases introduced by complaints about injustice or maltreatment inflicted upon them by others. And although the Council Minutes from Wouter van Twiller’s administration are not extant, the information available from his successor’s Council Minutes is probably indicative of the types of allegations and disputes which van Twiller had to mediate. Many of these cases involved sexual impropriety or disputes among neighbors, but others could be as trivial as name-calling. At times the Minutes read less like the complaints of adults and more like the tattling of young children, as people reported any perceived affront to the Council for expiation. But why would anyone, particularly common people, avail themselves of this very public attempt at recompense? According to Charles H. Parker, the frantic level of recriminations and counter-allegations was not “indicative of a grass-roots commitment to confessional Calvinism…but an attempt to protect their sense of honor.” Church members, common folks, lay leadership, civic leaders, the clergy, and even the Director-General participated in this process. In this face-to-face society, where most people

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58 Unfortunately, neither the notes from the Church council or consistory nor the letterbooks of the Reverends Jonas Michaëlius and Everardus Bogardus are extant.
60 There were various instances where both Willem Kieft and Everardus Bogardus filed complaints against other colonists to protect their reputations. See Arnold J. F. van Laer, trans., Council Minutes, 1638-1649 (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1974) Vol. IV, 13. Reverend Bogardus filed two suits of slander, both for himself and his wife, against Anthony van Salee and his wife, Griet Reyniers. 176-177, the fiscal brought a suit of slander on behalf of Director-General Kieft against Hendrick Jansen who allegedly stated that “The woman who gave birth to the director is a whore.”
were familiar with everyone else, honor was a measurement of an individual’s worth in relation to recognized and accepted societal norms. Honor was part of an individual’s assessment of self-worth based on one’s social standing and reputation for social virtue. Consequently, individuals were constantly preoccupied with honor and shame and were vigilant to report any perceived assault on one’s honor as a strategy to restore or protect one’s honor and punish the offender, actual or perceived. The concern for one’s honor was also a double-edged sword because while it provided the Church consistory and the civic Council with information on aberrant behaviors, it also had the potential to embroil the civic and ecclesiastical authorities in protracted disputes over both the validity of the charges and the appropriate means of public penance. This might explain van Dincklagen’s concern that his excommunication could be prejudicial to him in his business endeavors. For Lubbertus van Dincklagen, and possibly for many others in New Amsterdam, admittance to the communion table and membership in the Dutch Reformed Church were tantamount to a declaration of one’s honor and constituted an affirmation of one’s morality, dignity and trustworthiness. It is understandable why van Dincklagen went to such lengths, over many years, to have his excommunication lifted.

5.6

The extant data surrounding the van Dincklagen affair also reveal that there were changes or shifts in the religious activities of Africans during van Twiller’s administration. It is intriguing that their “conversion” was instrumental in securing an advantageous position for Reverend Everardus Bogardus with Holland’s Reformed Church authorities vis-à-vis van Dincklagen. It seems safe to assume that the Classis

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61 Parker, The Reformation of Community, 130.
would not have been so easily moved to support strongly Bogardus if the numbers of possible African “converts” were small. Probably a significant enough number of Africans had demonstrated some level of interest in the Dutch Reformed Church, possibly by participating in Dutch Reformed baptismal or marriage rites. Written in 1636, Wouter van Twiller’s letter implies that a sizable contingent of Africans had demonstrated interest in the rites and services offered by the Dutch Reformed Church. Van Twiller explains that “Domine E. Bogardus…has very earnestly requested us to secure a schoolmaster to teach and train the youth of both Dutch and blacks, in the knowledge of Jesus Christ and to serve also as sexton and precentor.”

It is intriguing that van Twiller does not mention Native American children, and their omission suggests several possible interpretations. First, it may indicate that there were no Native American children to teach and train in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. This could have been a result of an intentional failure on the part of Reverend Everardus Bogardus to proselytize the Natives or it could also indicate the failure of his ministry to convert Native Americans to Christianity. Still, it could also indicate the unwillingness of Natives to embrace Christianity or allow their children to be taught Christian doctrines. A second interpretation of van Twiller’s request is that as the Director-General he felt a sense of responsibility for the welfare of the Company’s slaves and their children and that this sense of responsibility might have also extended to their spiritual well-being. Another interpretation of van Twiller’s omission of Native American children in his request for a schoolmaster is that whereas he might have considered Africans as part of the community he did not extend this privilege to Native Americans. This might possibly be due, as discussed in previous chapters, to the distinction the Dutch settlers made between barbarians and wild men – the Africans as

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barbarians and the Natives as wild men or “Wilden.” As barbarians, the Africans and their children held the potential of converting to Christianity and assimilating into the community, but as wild men the road to assimilation was thornier for Native Americans and held many uncontrollable variables. Cynthia van Zandt has also noted that although Native Americans were an important and routine presence in Manhattan, “they were not regarded by Dutch colonial officials as being members of New Netherland’s society, nor were they thought to be governed by the laws of the colony to the same degree as colonists, servants, and slaves.” What were the repercussions of such an understanding of community membership for the religious experiences of Native Americans and enslaved Africans?

For Native Americans it meant that during the van Twiller administration, they were still fairly successful at neutralizing European cultural encroachment especially within the religious arena. The Native-European relationship during Wouter van Twiller’s administration was best characterized by contestation and negotiation rather than by European overwhelming domination. Power in the Hudson region was still very fluid, shifting often with no one group possessing unchallenged power for long. The power structure had not yet solidified into the dichotomy of dominant European versus weakened and subservient Native. The survival of the colony was still very uncertain, and the settlers were still dependent on the Natives, a fact that gave the Indians leverage in the economic and cultural arena. Wouter van Twiller and the settlers in New Netherland had to master the skills of cross-cultural negotiation and exchange in order to continue to exist during this period of uncertain prospects. During van Twiller’s administration, the Natives “afforded every assistance to” the Dutch settlers, even furnishing “provisions to several of the Company’s servants…until

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supplies were received.” It is clear that the settlers were still very dependent on the Natives. Indeed, in various ways the Native groups remained in a position of dominance, a fact that angered many of the colonists.

Survival in the early years of any colony meant that settlers had to rely upon people, information, food, supplies and trade-goods from other places. For the colonists of Manhattan and the extensive New Netherland region, fur trading constituted their entire reason for existing. The United Provinces had moved to establish settlements in order to stake a more secure claim to the region’s valuable fur trade. Dutch officials sought to position people to extract the rich pelts through fur trading alliances with the local Natives. For years the Iroquoian Natives in the Mohawk Valley would travel east down the Valley bearing heavy loads of beaver pelts and animal fur to trade with the settlers at Fort Orange. The Mohawks had alliances with the Dutch settlers in New Netherland, including Manhattan, but also with the Munsee (Lenape) Natives in the vicinity of Manhattan. From Fort Orange, the trade goods were then shipped down the Hudson River to Manhattan where they would then be transported to Holland.

But in 1634 the traffic in fur suddenly dried up, causing deep concern; the very existence of the colony was in jeopardy. Wouter van Twiller would have known that the sudden disruption in the trade could only mean that the French had infiltrated the Mohawk territory and had succeeding in forging an alliance with the Natives to rival the one the Dutch had long established with them. In order to re-establish this crucial trade alliance and salvage the fur trade and the colony’s existence, van Twiller commissioned

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65 O’Callaghan, ed., Documents Relative to the Colonial History, 263-264. Aware of their weak position vis-à-vis the Indians, some of the leading inhabitants would implore the States General in Holland to take steps to remedy the situation, arguing that the Indians “were ten times, yea, more than that, stronger than “the colonists. If among other things, their population was encouraged to increase, then, they argued, the Indians “would never think or dream of daring to offer us any insult.”
Harmen van den Bogaert, Jeronimus dela Croix and Willem Thomassen to travel to the Mohawk villages and convince them that the Dutch were superior trading partners.

Accompanied by five Mohawk guides, the three Dutchmen left Fort Orange on December 11, 1634, carrying knives, scissors and other trade items intended as presents for the Mohawk sachems. Van den Bogaert’s journal from this crucial voyage has survived. It provides a significant glimpse of Mohawk shamans performing religious rituals in an attempt to cure smallpox, which was beginning to wreak havoc on Native communities in the region. His journal also presents a surprising view of Native Americans as dominant partners in their relationship with their European clients. At one village a tribal leader berated them for not offering better gifts. He presented the gifts that the French retinue had offered in order to demonstrate that the gifts of van den Bogaert and the Dutch were comparatively inadequate. Surrounded by more than forty Natives in the small room, the tribal leader continued to insult van den Bogaert and his companions, calling them “scoundrels.” His loud and animated invective was a symbolic statement of power, aimed at humiliating the relatively impotent Dutch representatives. His verbal assault became so intense and frightening that it caused Willem Thomassen, a hardened Dutch sailor, to erupt into tears. When van den Bogaert responded by shouting back, the Natives burst into laughter and urged them not to be angry. An elderly man then stepped forward to feel van den Bogaert’s heart. After he announced that van den Bogaert was not afraid, six leaders of the village stepped forward and presented him with a beaver coat. It was a signal that business discussions could commence.

67 Harmen Meyndertszen van den Bogaert, “Narrative of a Journey into the Mohawk and Oneida Country,” in NNN, 150. It appears that it was a common occurrence for the Indians to laugh at the Dutch settlers. They called them “liars,” “scoundrels,” and “cowards.” See “Journal of New Netherland,” in NNN, 274.
The Mohawks indicated that they preferred to maintain relations with the Dutch because they feared the Hurons, with whom the French were allied. So far the Mohawks, the Dutch would act as a corrective to the Huron-French alliance, helping to even out the power relationships in the Hudson region. But while they saw the Dutch as "brothers," the Natives clearly felt that they were the dominant "sibling." And as the dominant "brother," they made it clear that they would only re-establish their trade and political alliance with the Dutch if they received four hands of sewant and four hands of cloth for each beaver pelt. Well positioned to play off French interests against Dutch interests, the Mohawks did not regard themselves as the weaker party in their budding relationship with the Dutch. They had defeated a Dutch-Algonquian force in 1626 and subjugated some of the Munsee groups in the Manhattan region to tributaries. If anything, it would appear that whatever imbalances there might have been in their relationship with the Dutch settlers during Wouter van Twiller's administration, the scale tipped heavily in the favor of the Mohawks, pointing to them as the more dominant party in the alliance. It is significant that it was the Mohawks and not the colonists who determined the terms of the relationship. Possibly, the Mohawks saw the European colonists as clients and tributaries rather than equal partners in a mutually beneficial alliance.

What was the Mohawks' relationship with Director General Wouter van Twiller? How did they view him? There is other, more circumstantial evidence, which may

68 O'Callaghan, ed., Documents Relative to the Colonial History, Volume I, 260. Natives Americans were apt to address European delegates, especially during treaties and trade negotiations, with names of fictive kinship, such as "Brother" or "Father." It is significant that during the Dutch period, delegates, such as the Director-Generals, were consistently referred to as "Brothers." Later, when the power relationship shifted in the settlers' favor during the eighteenth century, Native American tribal groups consistently referred to the English Governor in colonial New York as "Father." This shift in assigned appellation is related to the weakened position of the Natives and their increased dependence on Europeans. For an example from the Dutch period, see E.B. O'Callaghan, History of New Netherland; or New York Under the Dutch, Second Edition (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1848), I:391. For eighteenth century examples, see O'Callaghan, ed., Documents Relative to the Colonial History, IV:97

69 While the English referred to the little beads that the Indians of the Manhattan region and New England produced as "wampums," the Dutch called these beads "sewant."
possibly point to the need to reconsider van Twiller and his administration’s contribution to the colony. According to the “Report of the Board of Accounts on New Netherland,” drafted during the next administration in 1643, when relations had taken a drastic turn for the worse under van Twiller’s successor, Willem Kieft, it was proffered that the “Indians are in no way to be pacified (as they themselves declare…) until the Director [Kieft] is removed thence, calling daily for Wouter, Wouter – meaning Wouter van Twiller.” This statement indicates the high regard the Natives quite possibly held for young Director-General van Twiller. Also, the Natives’ amicable relationship with van Twiller and respect with which they had for him might explain their willingness to deed such vast areas of land to him (including, Staten Island, Wards Island, Nut Island, Randalls and Island). Furthermore, it is intriguing, particularly in light of the comparatively belligerent and inharmonious state of the Native-settler relationship under Willem Kieft’s administration, that there were no significant wars between the colonists and the Natives during Wouter van Twiller’s tenure. In 1643, when the colonists, under Kieft’s instructions, began an imprudent war with the Natives, their position vis-à-vis the Natives was virtually unchanged. Yet, van Twiller’s tenure was comparatively peaceful. Additionally, extant letters written by Wouter van Twiller to the directors of the Dutch West India Company in Amsterdam in 1636 show van Twiller conducting himself a more competent administrator than he has been portrayed. As more information that sheds light on the events of his administration is discovered, it

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70 O’Callaghan, ed., Documents Relative to the Colonial History I:151.
71 See Stokes, Iconography of Manhattan Island, Vol. IV: 83-85. Stokes discusses two letters (one dated March 22, 1636 and the other August 14, 1636). The August 1636 letter was discovered by A. F. van Laer in the Records of the West India Company. See also, Shorto, The Island at the Center of the World, 82. Shorto states that Dutch historian Jaap Jacobs has discovered a letter in the Dutch National Archives, written by Wouter van Twiller in 1635 which shows “van Twiller building a fort on the Connecticut River (the earliest documentation for the settlement of what would become Hartford), holding the English at bay, and trying to deal with his unruly population” and as stated before “acting…like the colonial administrator he was supposed to be.”
appears quite likely that an able scholar will be able to provide a more balanced portrayal, if not a complete rehabilitation, of Wouter van Twiller in the historiography.

5.7

What can the van den Bogaert account tell us about Native American religious expressions? Did contact with Europeans dramatically change the religious practices of Native Americans before the end of van Twiller’s tenure as Director-General? While the material culture of Native Americans was already being changed by the addition of European trade goods – such as the “two knives, two pairs of scissors, and a few awls and needles” presented by Harmen van den Bogaert to the Mohawk sachem – it would appear that they had maintained their belief in the efficacy of their shamans and their various gods.²² As discussed in previous chapters, every group involved in the encounter in Manhattan – Natives, Europeans and Africans – sought to incorporate new beneficial knowledge gleaned from contact with other cultures while at the same time protecting those kinds of knowledge deemed most important for their own survival as a distinct group. As Jonas Michaëlius had discovered, language was one of the forms of information Manhattan’s Natives deemed important to protect. But it was also important to shield spiritual knowledge or knowledge of sacred things from outsiders in order to preserve a group’s culture. The balance of power between Native Americans and the European settlers in the Hudson region was not yet firmly in the hands of the colonizers; native groups still had tremendous leverage and power in their interaction and negotiation with Europeans. And as the account with Harmen van den Bogaert has demonstrated, quite often Native groups were the superior partners in their alliances

with Europeans. This position vis-à-vis Europeans would also work to assist Native
groups in maintaining their religious practices.

While enslaved Africans were probably also interested in protecting knowledge
of sacred practices and beliefs, their status as slaves, particularly as slaves of the Dutch
West India Company, meant that their experience would be markedly different from
that of the Native Americans. The enslaved Africans’ position as an acknowledged part
of the inchoate community meant that Reverend Everardus Bogardus would have
focused greater attention in proselytizing them, especially their children. He would
have taken special care to make sure that parents were encouraged to baptize their
children and sexual relationships were sanctified by the exchange of marriage vows. At
this period of the colony’s history, the vast majority, if not all, of the slaves belonged to
the Dutch West India Company and were either hired out by the Company or engaged
in various improvements project in the colony; the Company had not yet seen fit to end
their monopoly on slaveholding and extend the privilege of purchasing slaves to the
colonists. Moreover, Wouter van Twiller and Everardus Bogardus would have taken
special care to ensure that the Company’s slaves were instructed spiritually. The
instructions given by both the Dutch West India Company and the Dutch Reformed
Church were clear that it was the duty of both the Director-General and the minister to
encourage and foster an environment in which the Dutch Reformed faith would
flourish, particularly among the heathens and non-believers, such as the Africans. Also,
unlike the situation with Native groups, there were no diplomatic, safety, or survival
issues to impede any planned proselytizing agenda. Furthermore, because many of the

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The extant marriage and baptismal records from New Amsterdam’s Dutch Reformed Church, indicates
that Reverend Bogardus had baptized and married many Africans and their children. It is intriguing that
almost all the slaves on the marriage and baptismal rolls belong to the Company. Even at a later period
when there were clearly slaves who belonged to private owners, Company slaves and their progeny still
comprise the bulk, if not the entirety, of those baptized and married in the Dutch Reformed Church. This
aspect of the enslaved African experience will be discussed in subsequent chapters.
Company’s slaves were from the Kongo-Angola region of Africa, they might have had some exposure or familiarity with Christianity and might not have necessarily objected to Christian instructions or even taking part in Christian marriage and baptismal rites. If the authorities thought that religion was the glue or source of unity within Manhattan’s diverse heterogeneous society, then some Africans’ familiarity with Christianity would have allowed them recognition as potential members of the developing community members.

Although Reverends Everardus Bogardus and Jonas Michaëlius embraced the more militant wing of Calvinism, there were subtle differences that set their tenures apart. Unlike Michaëlius, Bogardus appeared less inclined to make class-based distinctions. Whereas Michaëlius’ s discussion about the “common” people might indicate a tendency to separate his parishioners into groups of “us” and “them” based on class and social standing, it might also indicate Michaëlius’ difficulty in connecting with his parishioners. While Bogardus was not immune to class considerations, he appeared to have intended, as best as was possible, to allow religion to act as one of the fundamental factors for community membership. It is uncertain whom Michaëlius baptized or even whether Africans were included among the list of those he baptized. However, his complaint about the “scoffing” Africans, the lazy Angolan slave women whose assistance in his household he refused, and his history of placing a primacy on proselytizing children to the exclusion of adults, would tend to support a greater unwillingness on his part to baptize adult Africans or to take aggressive steps to ensure their religious incorporation into the community. He seemed to have decided fairly soon after arriving in the colony that any attempt to proselytize the adult Africans was an exercise in futility. For him, religion was probably less a means of gaining unity or community building and more a means of separating oneself from “others” – of
demarcating “us” from “them,” the “elect” and chosen from those who were not. To make matters worse, Michaëlius never seemed to entertain the notion of permanently relocating to Manhattan; his time in Manhattan was a temporary sojourn until he could serve out his appointed time. He had no meaningful attachment to the colonists or the colony. As a result, there were probably many instances in which he saw the colonists in contradiction to himself; they constituted part of the “others.” Reverend Michaëlius would therefore not have been concerned with the unifying potential of religion, although both he and Bogardus were orthodox Calvinists. The difference in their view on the role of religion in the colony was influenced not by their religious orthodoxy, but by class-based distinctions. Unlike Michaëlius, Reverend Everardus Bogardus seemed to have been open to using religion as a means of bringing the enslaved Africans into the “community” of Christians. Both New Amsterdam’s marriage and baptismal records during Bogardus’ tenure as Dutch Reformed minister attest to his desire to extend “community” membership to the Africans.

The extant copies of New Amsterdam’s Dutch Reformed baptismal and marriage records that date from September 1638 reveal that Reverend Bogardus baptized 50 Africans and married 20 couples where at least one partner was of African descent. He even appeared as a witness on May 8, 1644 for the baptism of Philippe Swartinne’s daughter, Anna. It meant that many enslaved Africans were exposed to the Dutch Reformed variant of Protestant Christian tenets. Of course, this did not mean that the enslaved Africans had abandoned their traditional African religious practices and replaced them entirely with Christian ones. African religions are additive, and

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74 See “Baptisms from 1639 to 1730 in the Reformed Dutch Church, New York,” in *Collections of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society*, vol. 2 (1901, reprinted 1968), 21, 230, 242, 256, 274, 291. Also see “Marriages from 1639 to 1801 in the Reformed Dutch Church, New Amsterdam-New York City,” in *Collections of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society*, vol. 9 (1940), 77, 135.

75 “Baptisms from 1639 to 1730 in the Reformed Dutch Church, New York,” in *Collections of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society*, vol. 2 (1901, reprinted 1968), 17-21. It is possible that Philippe Swartinne was Reverend Bogardus’ slave, or a Company slave assigned to work in the minister’s house.
therefore, aspects of Christianity would have been merged with their religious practices; it is these aspects of their religion which Reverend Michaël found so objectionable, leading the Africans to “jeer” and “scoff” at his presentation of orthodox Christianity. Individual Africans would have determined what aspects of Christian religious practices were incorporated into their religiosity. Furthermore, their separation into ghettos, as indicated by the Joan Vingboom map, would have allowed Africa to remain a dominant wellspring for religious activities.

5.8

While the Europeans were fairly unified in their low estimation of Native Americans and Native religion, as discussed in previous chapters, they were not alone in harboring ethnocentric sentiments during the early settlement period. Native Americans were equally confident that their culture and religion was superior and therefore did not see the need to abandon their traditional religious practices. While Europeans might have felt that they were superior to the Natives, their actual power in the colony vis-à-vis the Natives belies that purported superiority. During Wouter van Twiller’s administration the colonists were still in the uneasy position of being dependent on the Native Americans when supplies were low. Also numerically, the Natives far outnumbered the colonists. The Europeans, contrary to their presumption of superiority, constantly found themselves the butt of Native American ridicule. The colonists complained about the Natives laughing at them and ridiculing them. The Natives apparently found humor in, among other things, the settlers’ promise that more people were to migrate and join them in building the colony. As few colonists arrived and others left the colony, contributing to the constant movement of people in and out of the colony, the Natives laughed and proclaimed that “the Dutch do nothing but lie.”
Another insult leveled by the Native Americans was that the Dutch might indeed “be something on water, but of no account on land.” Many colonists apparently thought these “indiscreetly uttered” remarks were the height of “insolence” on the part of the Native Americans.\(^7\)\(^6\) One can only imagine the anger, humiliation and frustration felt by the settlers – perceiving themselves superior to the Natives, yet still having to depend on them to meet their basic survival needs, and adding insult to injury they were constantly demeaned and laughed at by the Natives. This strange and unstable state of affair must have created an awkward and confusing mental and social situation, at the very least. When one adds to this already prickly situation the complaints about unpardoned wrongs, the resultant situation is extremely volatile and could prove potentially explosive if wielded by a Director-General not as sensitive as van Twiller was to the settlers’ very precarious position in Manhattan.

Fortunately, the colonists’ comparatively smaller numbers in comparison to the Natives had caused the colonial officials to advise restraint rather than seek reprisal for perceived Native American wrongdoings, whether minor incidents, such as stealing, or more serious ones, such as murder. However, Michaëlius had mentioned, after only four months in the colony, the frustration the colonists felt regarding their inability to seek “proper” redress for perceived abuses perpetrated by Native Americans. Their frustration continued, possibly unabated, to the end of Wouter van Twiller’s administration – for years insults were compounded upon insults, and past wrongs were left unpunished, unpardoned and unforgiven, accumulated over many years.

By the time that Willem Kieft succeeded Wouter van Twiller as Director-General of New Netherland, there was so much anger festering beneath the surface of the Native American-European relationship in Dutch Manhattan that the atmosphere was primed

\(^7\)\(^6\) O’Callaghan, ed., Documents Relative to the Colonial History, 163. See also “Journal of New Netherland,” in NNN, 274.
for violent eruption. When the facade of peace and accommodation that had marked both Peter Minuit and Wouter van Twiller’s administration is finally ripped asunder during Willem Kieft’s administration to reveal the horrific and perverted face created when anger is allowed to fester for years, especially anger engendered when one’s sense of superiority is blatantly challenged, both Native Americans and Europeans seemed surprised at its violent potential. Admittedly, the colonists’ emotions probably ran the gamut from those who held nothing but contempt and hatred for the Natives – and would therefore not hesitate to exterminate the Natives if they could – to those who were more accommodationist in their approach to Native Americans – such as David Pietersen de Vries, who permitted the Natives to sleep in his house, although he resented having to do so at times. But the bulk of the colonists probably fell somewhere between these two poles. Nevertheless, there were those even among the liberal segment of Dutch Manhattan’s society who felt that if the population was much larger, then they would be better positioned to defeat the Natives in battle, silence their insults, and make the Natives “wipe their chops.”77 It is these sentiments and the settlers’ uneasy connection with the surrounding Natives that were at the root of Kieft’s War, discussed in the next chapters.

III.

AN UNEASY CONNECTION
6. Community Development and the Creation of an Uneasy Connection

6.1

February 22, 1643. The settlers around Fort Amsterdam on Manhattan Island were alarmed by the sudden presence of approximately four hundred frightened Wieckquaeskeck Indians, who had been suddenly roused from their slumber. Apparently, a group of eighty or ninety Mahican and Mohawk Indians from Fort Orange, in the upper Hudson River area, had taken advantage of the night’s darkness to mount a brutal surprise attack on the unsuspecting Wieckqueskecks. In one sudden swoop, the Mahicans and Mohawks had descended on the quiet Wieckquaeskeck villages with guns blazing. As the gunshots rang out through the night and the arrows pierced the darkness, several Wieckqueskecks were murdered in their sleep. Others, quickly rousing from their slumber probably knew immediately the cause of the alarm. Some might have been aware of their people’s inability to provide the expected tributary payments to the Mahicans and Mohawks. Since it was apparently the first time that they missed their payment after they made the tributary agreement with the Mohawks and Mahicans, there was probably some uncertainty as to the exact form that the

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1 Some sources state that it was a force of Mohawks, while others say Mahicans. However, the position taken here is that the attackers were probably a combined force of Mahicans and Mohawks, which would explain the various accounts listing one or other of the Upper Hudson River tribes. By 1643, the Mahicans and Mohawks had formed an alliance, which included combining to subjugate the Munsee-speaking tribes in the Lower Hudson River in order to gain access to the valuable wampum needed to purchase guns and powder, which they in turn utilized to continue their battle against the French Hurons and Susquehannocks. For a discussion of this alliance to subjugate the Munsee-speaking Indians in the vicinity of Manhattan Island, see T. J. Brasser, “Mahican,” in Bruce G. Trigger, ed. Handbook of North American Indians: Northeast, Volume 15 (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1978), 202-204. For an account of the events of the attack see David Pieterszen de Vries, “Korte Historiael, ende Journaels Aenteychkeninge van verscheydens Voyagiens in de vier deelen des Wereldts-Rondv” (1655), in J. Franklin Jameson, ed., Narratives of New Netherland (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1953), 225-229. See also David Pieterszen de Vries, “Extracts from the Voyages of David Pieterszen de Vries,” Dr. G. Troost, trans., in Collections of the New York Historical Society Second Series Volume I (New York: H. Ludwig, 1841), 267-273. While de Vries was residing in New Netherland at the time of the attack his account of the attack was plagiarized from the anonymously written “Breeden-Raedt” or “Broad Advice.” See Henry C. Murphy, trans., “Broad Advice to the United Netherland Provinces” (1649), (Ithaca: Cornell University Library, 1993).
response would take. They might have heard whispers or rumors that the Mahicans and Mohawks, who the Dutch settlers had amply supplied with guns and powder, were less than pleased with their failure to make the agreed upon payment of wampum. If so, they would have expected some sort of retaliation – a response that had to be memorable if it were to achieve its intent to deter future noncompliance. But when and exactly how it would occur? No one knew, and all were apparently shocked by its swiftness, when it did arrive.

With no time to gather their belongings or food, many Wieckquaeskeck families left hurriedly, some leaving behind moccasins and others leaving with their babies in their arms, not being able to strap them to their carrying boards. Some of those who were not swift enough were cut down as they made their retreat. Others who were caught making their escape were marched back to the Mahican and Mohawk villages, as dozens of men, women and children became captives. Once there, the Wieckquaeskeck men were probably tortured before being killed; the more fortunate were adopted into the group. Trudging through the woods in Manhattan’s bitter cold night, those that escaped the initial assault finally arrived among the Dutch settlers – tired, panting, adrenaline still rushing, frantic, probably feeling that they had barely managed to survive with their lives intact. They asked for shelter and refuge, hoping that maybe Director-General Willem Kieft, Wouter Van Twiller’s successor, would have compassion on them, particularly since they had been making tributary payments to the Dutch ostensibly to ensure their protection from potential enemies. They found shelter, food and warmth among some of the settlers on Staten Island, Manhattan and Pavonia. The next morning, still afraid to return to their own villages, they decided to remain in temporary tents at Pavonia across the Hudson River, Corlaers Hook on Manhattan Island and on Long Island with friendly Native groups. Here, they might have
reasoned, they would be able to remain secure until possible negotiations were concluded with the Mahicans and Mohawks.

During the first nights after the attack, on February 23 and 24, they probably slept in peace and might have begun to feel as though their place among the settlers would guarantee them continued safety, possibly until the spring when they would be able to meet with their enemies to the north and negotiate a more permanent peace agreement. But that was not to be. During the night of February 25, many of the settlers at Fort Amsterdam saw the gunshots lighting the night and heard the “great shrieking” of the Wieckqueskecks again being murdered in the dark. The renewed attack irrevocably nullified any thought of peaceful existence until spring. According to one account, “infants were torn from their mother’s breasts, and hacked to pieces in the presence of the parents, and the pieces thrown into the fire and in the water, and other sucklings, being bound to small boards, were cut, stuck, and pierced, and miserably massacred in a manner to move a heart of stone.” Those who escaped the massacre and had thought it safe to come out of their hiding places in the morning to seek food and warmth “were murdered in cold blood and tossed into the fire or the water.” It was said that some appeared at the Dutch settlements “with their hands, some with their legs cut off, and some holding their entrails in their arms, and others had such terrible cuts and gashes.”

In another account it was said that at the victor’s settlement, some of the men who carried out the attack and one of the elderly women took pleasure in kicking about the severed heads of the Wieckqueskecks that were brought back as trophies.

Such gruesome scenes of violence were typical in Native American inter-tribal warfare; but the attack on the Wieckqueskecks during the night of February 25 was not

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carried out by a joint Mohawk-Mahican force, neither did another powerful Native American group accomplish it. That it was done by Dutch settlers and carried out with the sanction of the Director-General is one of the most intriguing and perplexing aspects of Willem Kieft’s administration. The slaughter was only one of many skirmishes or battles during Kieft’s War. The War was the defining moment in Kieft’s administration, overshadowing and erasing all the previous accomplishments and advances achieved during his tenure. It was also one of the defining moments of Manhattan’s history as a Dutch holding. This chapter investigates the social interactions between the settlers and the Native Americans and their changing relationship in order to limn the social climate that made Kieft’s War possible.

6.2

In order to understand the full magnitude of the devastation wrought by Kieft’s War and why it occurred when it did, we must first understand the state of the settlement before the War and Willem Kieft’s background since he presided over the colony at the time. The first significant change that seemed to have affected both the Native-settler power relations in the colony and the nature of the general interaction between the Natives and the settler was that Willem Kieft was assigned the new Director-General of the colony. Possibly as a result of Lubbertus Van Dincklagen’s complaint, Wouter Van Twiller was recalled to Holland because of charges of purported mismanagement of the colony. While Van Twiller’s drinking and lack of leadership experience made him a less effective leader, he would prove a more adept negotiator with the Native Americans, able to maneuver more skillfully across the middle ground than his successor, Willem Kieft. Although he did not start a family in New Netherland,
Van Twiller had planted financial roots there, purchasing real estate and investing his money in various economic dealings. This seemed to tie his economic future to the well-being of the colony and the settlers, and demonstrated that he had a more than transitory stake in the colony. Willem Kieft, however, like many other colonial officials, had apparently considered his appointment a temporary assignment. From the outset, he was a mere sojourner in New Amsterdam and did not intend to establish permanent financial or familial roots in New Netherland. So his stake in the colony was even less than Van Twiller’s. He had expected to return to Holland in the summer of 1643 at the end of this assignment, but the War that he had engendered against the Natives forced him to remain in the colony. When he finally left Manhattan aboard the *Princess Amelia*, he apparently took all his belongings, indicating that he did not intend on returning to live in New Amsterdam.

Kieft’s background provides some clue as to why he would be reluctant to leave all the trappings of his life in Holland behind for a new and uncertain start in New Netherland. Willem Kieft was born on Saturday, August 24, 1602, the youngest son of the established and influential Amsterdam merchant Gerrit Willemsz. and Machtelt Jans, and was baptized in the Old Church on September 10, 1602. So, on September 1637 when Willem Kieft was appointed Director-General of New Netherland, replacing Wouter Van Twiller, he was only thirty-five years old and only a few years older than Reverend Everardus Bogardus, who would become his main opponent in Manhattan.\(^4\) According to one scholar, Willem’s decision to eschew usage of the patronymic Willem Gerritsz, which was contrary to contemporary customs, signaled his “ambition to

pertain to the rising new bourgeoisie or the regent class.”5 From the beginning, Willem Kieft was educated to be a merchant. So, as a very young boy, Kieft imbibed the sensibilities, ideas and strivings of Amsterdam’s regents and merchant class. After completing Latin school, he was then apparently sent to La Rochelle for a practical education or apprenticeship as a merchant.6

In 1632 or 1633, Willem Kieft was forced to flee La Rochelle after becoming bankrupt, and he was allegedly hanged in effigy as a sign of dishonor.7 Bankrupt merchants had to regain their honor, and their financial and social credit. According to historian Willem Frijhoff, Kieft decided to volunteer to do charity work to restore his honor and credit. In this capacity, he served as a negotiator on behalf of relatives of captives to redeem enslaved Christians from Turkish captivity in North Africa.8 Captain David Pietersz de Vries would later accuse Kieft of redeeming the captives with the lowest ransoms and pocketing the remaining funds, leaving those with high ransoms in captivity.9

Despite these scurrilous accusations, his name arose when the Directors of the DWIC were searching for a replacement for Wouter Van Twiller in 1636. Elias de Raedt, a Amsterdam merchant and close associate of Kieft’s extensive merchant family,

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5 Willem Frijhoff, “Neglected Networks,” 160. According to Frijhoff, Willem’s father always called himself Gerrit Willemsz., never Gerrit Kieft and his son Jan, who took over the family business, was mostly known as “Jan Gerritsz or Jan Gerretsen, seldom Jan Gerritsz Kieft.” And, “it was only the younger son Willem who called himself straightforwardly Willem Kieft, and…never used the patronymic form Willem Gerritsz alone.” This, Frijhoff argues, “testifies in itself to his sense of identity in a dynastic family vision: rejecting his patronymic name for a family name.”

6 For a discussion of Kieft’s youth, see Willem Frijhoff, “Neglected Networks,” 167-171.

7 For a discussion of the charges that he fled bankruptcy and that he mismanaged money to free enslaved Christians from “Turkish” captivity, see Willem Frijhoff, “Neglected Networks,” 171-177.


9 Willem Frijhoff, “Neglected Networks,” 175. Frijhoff believes that de Vries’ accusation probably had no basis in reality. He argues that while Kieft “was often blamed for his lack of competence, his excess of ambition, his pride or anger, his want of faith or humanity…he was from the outset one of the very scarce faithful and non-corrupt Company officers, and that reputation may well have contributed to his appointment and maintenance by the WIC directors.”
proposed his appointment to the States General. Clearly, by 1636 Kieft had been able to regain whatever honor his business misadventure in La Rochelle had destroyed. He received the post, perhaps because (unlike the other Director-Generals before him) he could claim membership in a kinship network at the highest level of society. In New Netherland, Kieft was far above the social class of the common people. Even the wealthier settlers, like Kiliaen van Rensselaer, offered him the respect due a Dutch regent, addressing him as “Heer Commandeur.” Since Kieft considered himself a member of the regent, or emerging aristocratic merchant class, he probably shared their concept of sovereign power, wherein sovereignty was vested in the local governments, where his family was closely connected.

Kieft probably also shared the regents’ ideology, which was influenced by commercial expediencies and benefits rather than religion. It was not that he was irreligious, but he would have embraced the liberal variant of Calvinism and expressed a desire to see the church subordinate to the state. Like most Dutch regents, Kieft would not have been prepared to share his sovereign power with the authorities of the Dutch Reformed Church, the States General in Holland, and most certainly not the settlers. Both his concept of sovereign power and his ideas on state-church relationship meant that he was distrustful of the church and its ministers’ ambitions to control the civic government, and equally suspicious of the commonalty and their democratic aspirations. Additionally, his sense of superiority above the settlers was probably only exceeded by his feeling of being superior to the Natives and Africans in his midst.

Together, these ideas – about state-church relationship, sovereignty, and the inhabitants

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10 It is also likely that Michiel Pauw (a first cousin of Willem Kieft’s father, founder of the patroonship Pavonia in New Netherland, and who along with de Raedt was also a director of the DWIC) may have encouraged de Raedt to propose his second cousin, Willem Kieft for the position.

11 Willem Frijhoff, “Neglected Networks,” 197. According to Frijhoff, “during Willem Kieft’s lifetime, virtually all the members of his kinship network [had] reach[ed] their social zenith. They obtain the highest offices in city and state, buy a manor or a seigniory, build town and country-houses, get a knighthood from a foreign prince, and adopt a truly aristocratic lifestyle.”
– formed the corpus of beliefs that underscore some of the difficulties Kieft later experienced in New Netherland: his conflict with Reverend Everardus Bogardus, his conflict with the settlers and his War against the Natives in Manhattan.

While it is true that Willem Kieft’s background, social ideologies and training had made him ill-qualified to be Director-General in an upstart Dutch colony in the New World, there were also other factors that made it more likely that his tenure would be marred with troubles. Increased concerns with territorial claims and competition from both England and Sweden induced the States General in 1638 to encourage the DWIC to shift the way it structured New Netherland, which ultimately contributed to heightening the tensions between the Native American groups and the settlers in the vicinity of Manhattan Island. The members of the States General and some of the Directors of the DWIC had concluded that it was a mistake to transport only Company dependents to New Netherland. Such a policy, they believed, had served to stymie the progress and growth of the colony. Thus, the States General proposed that the Company relinquish control of New Netherlands and agree to convert it to a colony of Holland. Control of the colony would be wrested from the DWIC and placed instead under the auspices of the States General. Obviously, this planned shift did not sit well with many of the Directors of the Dutch West India Company.

Meanwhile, New Netherland’s patroons (Michael Paauw, Kiliaen Van Rensselaer and Samuel Blommaert), who had considerable influence in the DWIC, proposed that the States General expand their privileges and exemptions, which would include extending their access to free trade in the regions throughout and around New Netherland, providing them a greater access to African slaves and migrants from Holland to serve as laborers, granting them a monopoly over a wider territory, investing them with greater feudal powers so that they are able to govern their patroonship independent of the DWIC, and granting them a longer timeframe to settle their

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The patroons also made the controversial suggestion that all immigrants should be required to settle within the boundaries of the various patroonships under the jurisdiction of the patroons. This was so offensive to the States General who had become concerned “that the population in New Netherland does not only not increase as it ought, but even that the population which had been commenced is decreasing.” So concerned were they that they instructed the DWIC to open up the new land to competition.

Additionally, in 1639, the Dutch West India Company was enjoined to surrender its monopoly in the fur trade, allowing individual colonists to trade legally with the Native Americans. In 1640, the DWIC issued a new set of Freedoms and Exemptions which included a new clause promising two hundred acres of land to any person who transported five or more people to live in the colony. The effect of these two changes was immediately noticeable in the surge in migration, both from the English colonies (in Virginia, Maryland and New England) and from Europe. Rich and poor, educated and unlettered headed for the Dutch areas of control. With them came David De Vries, Adrian Van der Donck and Cornelis Melyn, who planted a colony on Staten Island and became a fulcrum in leveraging the colony’s future.

New Netherland witnessed a surge in both permanent and itinerant migrants. Some sought new land to settle, but many others arrived intending to trade with the various groups of Native Americans in New Netherland. The DWIC also promised to “exert itself to provide the Patroons and Colonists, on their order, with as many Blacks as possible,” so it can be safely assumed that the population of enslaved Africans also increased during this period, although there are no firm population data to provide clear

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confirmation. The English, coming mostly from New England, were probably among the most numerous migrants. They created the thriving village of Stratford on the west bank of the Housatonic River, settled Norwalk and Greenwich further west on the Long Island Sound and threatened to push on to the Hudson River. To the south, the Swedes began planting settlements on the Delaware River. In response to these encroachments on territory deemed part of New Netherland, Director-General Kieft began setting up a defensive perimeter in 1640. He purchased from the Natives all the small islands near Norwalk and the domain westward, almost the entire land mass of present-day Westchester County and nearly all of the present-day Queens County on Long Island.\textsuperscript{14} Within this defensive perimeter, Kieft allowed various English dissidents from New England to establish settlements and he also allotted land grants to various African families, enabling a fledgling African American community to take root in Dutch Manhattan.

The growth of New Netherland was exponential. By 1646, Kieft reportedly told Father Isaac Jogues, a Jesuit priest visiting from New France, that eighteen different languages were spoken on Manhattan among a population of just “four or five hundred men.”\textsuperscript{15} Some estimates place the Dutch portion of the population at fifty percent, with the other major nationalities and ethnicities being German, English, African, Scandinavian and French. By all appearances the town was thriving, but Manhattan

\textsuperscript{14} The purpose of these new land purchases was first to strengthen the original Dutch claim to New Netherland, which was based on the right of discovery through Henry Hudson’s voyage and the subsequent voyages of Cornelis May and Adriaen Block, against Swedish and English claims. The second purpose was that once settled, these outlying lands would act as a shield for New Amsterdam, protecting the settlers in the event of an Indian attack. The third purpose of Kieft’s land purchase was to meet the needs of the burgeoning European migration to the colony.

was still the size of a small village during Kieft’s tenure; and with the increase in population, it became a small village where larger social pressures were looming.

6.3

Not surprisingly, this sudden wave of new immigration led to increased tensions between the settlers and the Native American inhabitants. There were also conflicts between Native American groups and amongst the settlers themselves. Both intra-group and inter-group conflicts erupted over land use, theft and issues of verbal and physical abuse. Protests arose regarding increased usage of alcohol during trade negotiations and other dishonest trading practices. Such conflicts led to increased anger, violence and even murder within the colony. The Council Minutes for the period abound with examples of physical fighting, bickering, name calling, and accusations of various forms of licentiousness amongst the inhabitants. Probably the most frequent cases before the Council were those concerned with protecting one’s honor and disputes about money.

On April 29, 1638, Anthony Jansen de Vees was involved in a case of slander as a plaintiff against Hendrick Jansen.\(^6\) While this case was eventually dismissed on June 3, 1638, because Anthony Jansen de Vees (also known as van Salee) was only able to procure one witness to support his claim, this would prove to be one of many times that

\(^6\) Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., Register of the Provincial Secretary, 1638-1642. New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch, Volume I (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1974), 11. Hendrick Jansen had apparently called Anthony Jansen “a Turk, a rascal and horned beast.” Anthony Jansen was also known as Anthony Jansen van Salee, Anthony Jansen de Vees, Anthony van Salle, Anthony de Vaes, Anthony de Fes and Anthony the Turk. According to Van Laer, his many surnames possibly refers to a “seaport of Morocco. In other places Anthony Jansen is called from Vaes, Vees, or Fes, meaning Fez, the principal city of Morocco. Occasionally, he is referred to as ‘the Turk’, as on the Vingboom map of “Manatus,” of 1639, on which his name appears as ‘Anthoni du Turk’. The inference is that he had been a captive among the Barbary pirates, or else, that he was born at Salee and was the son of a Dutch sailor who had turned pirate, it being not uncommon in those days for Dutch sailors bound for Mediterranean ports to desert and to join the piratical ships which infested the Barbary coast.” Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., NYHM: Dutch, I: 10. The latter seems more likely, that he was born at Salee, the offspring of a Dutch father and a Moroccan woman based on testimony given by Lysbeth Dircks.
he would appear before the Council, either as a plaintiff or a defendant, and sometimes he would appear with his wife, Grietje Reyniers.\(^{17}\) Even Reverend Bogardus and one of the colony’s settlers of African descent, Anthony Portuguese, lodged complaints against the couple.\(^ {18}\) As a punishment, van Salee was “forbidden to carry any arms, whatever they may be called…with the exception of a knife and an axe.” Also, he was enjoined to “refrain from giving the least offense to Domine Bogardus either by word or deed, on pain of corporal punishment.” Additionally, he was further “condemned to pay a fine of fl. 12 for the benefit of the fiscal.”\(^ {19}\) This punishment did not have the desired effect, and Van Salee and Grietje Reyniers were subsequently banished forever from “the jurisdiction of New Netherland within the space of six months.”\(^ {20}\)

Sixteen affidavits were presented regarding the couple’s “comportment and conduct.” Not only were they seen coming “out of the consistory, being drunk,” but Anthony had pointed a loaded pistol at the foreman of the enslaved Africans, Jacob Stoffelsen. Not to be outdone by her husband, Grietje Reyniers received the ire and scorn of the settlers because of her refusal to conduct herself “quietly and piously as behooves Christians.” According to witnesses, while on the ship coming to New Netherland “she pulled the shirts of some sailors out of their breeches.” Later, “in her

\(^{17}\) It appears to have been a legal requirement in New Netherland “as a general basis of law, [that] all truth shall be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.” Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., *Council Minutes, 1638-1649, New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch, Volume IV* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1974), 447. At the request of Reverend Everardus Bogardus, Lysbeth Dircks testified that Grietje Reyniers invited her to “assist her in her confinement” as midwife, and when the baby was born Grietje asked her “whom did the child resemble, was it like Andries Hudde, or her husband, Anthony Jansen?” In response, Dircks asserted, “if you do not know who the father is, how should I know? However, the child is brown.” That the child was “brown” would indicate that Anthony Jansen was probably of African descent since Grietje was French. Between 1638 and 1639, Anthony and Grietje were involved in over ten separate litigations. See Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., *NYHM: Dutch, IV* 5, 6, 9, 13, 25-29, 32, 35, 41, 45-46.

\(^{18}\) Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., *NYHM: Dutch, IV* 26, 35. Reverend Bogardus filed a complaint of slander against Van Salee because Van Salee and his wife had publicly stated that Bogardus has “taken a false oath” (26). Anthony “the Portuguese” demanded reparation for damage that Van Salee’s dog caused to his hog (35).

\(^{19}\) Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., *NYHM: Dutch, IV* 27.

\(^{20}\) Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., *NYHM: Dutch, IV* 46-47. Although they were supposed to be banished from New Netherland, it appears that they were allowed to remain in New Netherland, but forced to leave Manhattan Island, selling their property and removing across the river where they were among the first landowners in modern day Brooklyn.
house” she reportedly “measured the male members of three sailors on a broomstick.” It was also charged “that during her confinement she asked the midwife whom does the child resemble, Anthony or [Andries] Hudden? Furthermore,…she even went so far as to call out in the fort, I have long enough been the whore of the nobility, now I want to be the rabble’s whore....” 21

The decision to banish the couple from Manhattan does not appear to be due to the seriousness of the accusations against them, but seems to have been influenced by the frequency at which the two found themselves at odds with the colony’s authorities and the commonalty, and the very public display of their transgressions. The wife of Englishman Thomas Beeche, was also caught “dishonorably manipulating the male member” of another man, Richard Gitcher, while her husband was asleep in the chair, but she was not banished from the colony. 22 Thomas Beeche, in an attempt to protect the honor of his wife, filed a slander suit on May 19, 1639, against Willem Willemsen, who had apparently accused Beeche’s wife of committing adultery. But the case ended in default as Willemsen was able to provide corroborating testimony from Pieter Breyley. 23

21 Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., NYHM: Dutch, IV: 46-47. Grietje was probably referring to Andries Hudden in her assertion about being the “whore of the nobility.” Since she inquired from the midwife whether the child resembles Hudden or Anthony, it is safe to assume that Grietje had a sexual relationship with Hudden. Andries Hudden was the son of Rutgert Hudden, the burgomaster of Campen. The marriage banns of Andries Hudden and Geertruyt Bornstra were entered at Amsterdam on January 6, 1639, three months before Grietje and Anthony were banished from Manhattan. Grietje might have hoped or thought that Hudden would marry her; the fact that he did not would have triggered her angry outburst at the fort. See Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., NYHM: Dutch, I: 235.

22 The name of Beeche’s wife is never mentioned in any of the allegations against her in this slander case, but we learn from another case that Thomas Smith was married to “Nan Beets, the widow of Thomas Beets, or Beeche.” From this we can deduce that Beeche’s wife was Nan. Nan is also referred to as Nanna, Nanne and Anna. Thomas Smith was apparently indebted to Isaac Allerton, because his marriage contract with Nanne contains a promissory note, wherein he promised to pay Nan Beets seven hundred and fifty guilders, which she had paid Isaac Allerton for him. Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., NYHM: Dutch, I: 313-314. In an earlier case Harmen Meyndertsz van den Bogaert provided testimony that on August 26, 1638 while a group of the settlers including Thomas and Nan Bescher were “merry at the house of Claes Cornelisen,” despite her husband’s presence Nan “fumbled at the front of the breeches of most all of those who were present.” Embarrassed and jealous, Thomas requested her to go home with him. When she refused to go home, Thomas “struck his wife and Master Geerlyn.” Other witnesses provided corroborating testimonies to demonstrate Nan’s wayward character. See Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., NYHM: Dutch, I: 54-57.

23 Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., NYHM: Dutch, IV: 49. In the records, Thomas Beeche is referred to as Tomas Bescher, Tomas Bescher, and Tones Bescher, but he apparently signed his name as “Thomas Beeche.” On May 19, 1639, Willemsen claimed that sometime “in.
Even without Breyley’s testimony it seemed that Mr. Beeche’s case would have ended in victory for Willemsen, because a few days later, on May 25, 1639, Edward Wilson, another Englishman lodged a complaint with the Council that he witnessed Mrs. Beeche committing adultery with Francis Lastley when her husband “was out shooting.” Nan Beeche, like Grietje Reyniers, had committed acts unbecoming of a “Christian,” yet Beeche was treated differently. It is possible that as a result of the overt public nature of Grietje’s transgressions, a stronger punishment was deemed necessary. Anthony and Grietje seem to be thumbing their noses at the authorities, willfully usurping both the civic and religious authorities and running afoul of the sensibilities of the colonists. In the end, it was arguably the overt, public and unrepentant nature of their transgressions that justified the Council responding with the full force of the law.

The case of Anthony Van Salee and Grietje Reyniers indicates the manner in which the authorities in New Netherland during Kieft’s administration had determined to deal with those who threatened the public peace and eendracht. Director-General Kieft seemed to have heeded the Directors of the DWIC’s instructions that “every man shall...
be free to live up to his own in peace and decorum; provided he avoid frequenting any forbidden assemblies or conventicles...and further abstain from all public scandals and offences, which the magistrate is charged to prevent by all fitting reproofs and admonitions....”

Anthony and Grietje had become public nuisances by disturbing the peace of the colony. Not only had they not conducted themselves “quietly and piously,” but they had managed to “disturb and shock the few inhabitants” at Manhattan.

However, while the Council undoubtedly found Nan Beeche’s actions reprehensible, they did not deem her to be a threat to peace and concord in the community. Therefore, she was not punished as harshly as the law permitted. It was not, as one might suppose, that Willem Kieft and the Council had simply given Nan Beeche a slap on the wrist, but in their decision to hold back the full force of the law in dealing with her transgressions they were engaging in the Dutch practice of *connivance* or “winking at” her indiscretions.

In many of the cities of Holland during the seventeenth century, certain aberrant practices, including non-Reformed religious worship, were permitted or overlooked by the civil authorities if they were hidden from public view.

A policy of *connivance* allowed Lutherans, Puritans, Anabaptists, Catholics, and Remonstrants to flourish in many cities of Holland and in New Netherland during Kieft’s administration. Such a policy was in accord with the ideology of the Remonstrant wing of Dutch Calvinism, which concluded that vigorous repression would potentially be a greater threat to concord and foreign trade than *connivance*.

Drunkenness, fornication, and adultery were dealt with by *connivance*, but transgressions such as rape, sodomy or homosexuality, murder and crimes committed

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28 For a general discussion of this practice and its relevance for community formation and concord see Jaap Jacobs, “Between Repression and Approval: Connivance and Tolerance in the Dutch Republic and in New Netherland,” *de Halve Maen* 71 (Fall 1998), 51-58.
29 Father Isaac Jogues, “Novum Belgium,” in *NNN*, 260. Father Jogues noted the prevalence of non-Reformed groups in New Netherland during his visit to Manhattan.
against someone’s body or property were deemed so egregious that the full force of the law was brought to bear upon those guilty of committing such acts. In 1638, when Jan Gysbertsen committed the first recorded murder in Manhattan, it was evident that murders and the latter group of crimes were given greater weight because they were deemed committed against “the highest majesty of God and his supreme rulers as well as against the blood relations of the deceased…all of which in a land of justice can in no wise be tolerated or suffered but ought to be punished with all rigor as an example to others.”

Drunkenness, adultery and fornication were certainly deemed to be crimes against God, but during Kieft’s administration they were often subject to connivance. In contrast, murder, theft or rape were non-consensual acts committed against another person, and as such were seen as more threatening to concord within the community. However, sodomy, whether forced or by consent, was judged especially harshly. Sodomy is the one instance in which Kieft and the Council felt that a severe punishment

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31 Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., NYHM: Dutch, IV: 24-25. Jan Gysbertsen from Rotterdam was found guilty of killing Gerrit Jansen, gunner, on May 15, 1638 in a knife fight. Gysbertsen, apparently fled from justice. If apprehended, he was to be punished “by the sword in such way that death shall ensue, with confiscation of all his movable and immovable property, none excepted, and including all his earned monthly wages which are due him by the West India Company, the just half to be paid to the widow of the deceased Gerrit Jansz or his heirs, one quarter part of the Company and one quarter part to the fiscal.” He was convicted based on the testimonies of Thomas Hall and Egbert van Borsum. See Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., NYHM: Dutch, IV: 51-53.

32 This is very different than the understanding of crime and punishment that was operative during the administration of Peter Stuyvesant, Willem Kieft’s successor. While Kieft was influenced by the Remonstrant variant of Dutch Calvinism, Stuyvesant, as will be discussed in the next chapter, was influenced by the orthodox Counter-Remonstrant wing of Dutch Calvinism. Stuyvesant and his Council were less likely to connive with those guilty of transgressing the law. An example of how Kieft and Stuyvesant’s divergent religious leanings affected the way that people who went afoul of the law and the community’s sensibilities were dealt with is seen in the case of Elizabeth Feax. See Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., NYHM: Dutch, IV: 486-487. Like Nan Beeche, Elizabeth Feax had committed adultery with Willem Hallet during Kieft’s administration and was not banished. However, on account of her adultery her husband, Robbert Feax, was legally permitted to divorce her. Stuyvesant and his Council, however, thought it “contrary to all good laws and the order issued by them” that after her divorce, Feax was permitted to continue to live and keep company with Hallet. Witnesses had declared that Feax had also had “carnal conversation” with Hallet, and had given birth to his child. “Out of special favor” to her children, Stuyvesant and his Council allowed Feax to “dwell and live at Groenwits [Greenwich]…provided that she remain separated both as to bed and board and common intercourse from her lover, Willem Hallet, and abstains from keeping company with him, on pain of corporal punishment.” Although she was divorced, Feax’s lover, Hallet, was banished from the jurisdiction of New Netherland and was ordered to leave one month from the date (March 6, 1649) on pain of corporal punishment. Additionally, his property and effects were to be “confiscated for the benefit and advantage of his child procured by her.”
was necessary “in order that the wrath of God may not descend upon” the colony “as it did upon Sodom.” On June 25, 1646, members of Manhattan’s African community accused Jan Creoly, a slave of the Dutch West India Company, of “having committed sodomy by force with a boy of about ten years, named Manuel Congo,” who was also a DWIC slave. During examination, Creoly not only confessed to forcefully committing sodomy on the young boy, but also revealed that he “had also committed the said heinous and abominable crime on the island of Curaçao.” In a judgment that was loaded with biblical references, which in itself is a stark departure from the Council’s sentencing for other crimes, it was determined that Jan Creoly was “not worthy to associate with mankind and the crime…may not be tolerated or suffered, in order that the wrath of God may not descend upon us as it did upon Sodom.” As punishment, Jan Creoly was to be “brought to the place of justice to be strangled there to death and his body to be burned to ashes, as an example to others.”

Although both Jan Creoly and Manuel Congo asserted that the “crime…was committed by force and violence…without the consent of the boy,” Kieft and the Council stated that the law affirms that “a person with whom sodomy has been committed deserves to be put to death.” However, because of Manuel’s youth and his innocence, they commanded Manuel to be “brought to the place where Jan Creoly shall be executed and that he be tied to a post, with wood piled around him, and be made to view the execution and be beaten with rods.” The Council’s judgment, in effect, harshly punished Manuel, a victim, for a crime committed against him. The harshness of Director-General Kieft and the Council’s ruling in the Jan Creoly case have led some

33 Berthold Fernow, ed., Records of New Amsterdam, from 1653 to 1674 Anno Domini Volume I (originally published New York, 1897; Reprinted, Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1976), 1. Kieft and the Council members during his administration tend not to emphasize “the wrath of God” as a reason for their judgment or legal ordinances. This too was different than in practices during Stuyvesant’s administration, where even drunkenness was expressly stated as being in “contempt of Gods holy laws and ordinances.”
scholars to conjecture that it was due to the race of the people involved. There is no evidence to support such an assumption; instead it appears that the severity of the punishment, both for the victim and the culprit, was motivated by a desire to avert “the wrath of God” from falling on the community.

Moreover, as is demonstrated in another case involving Africans, Kieft and his Council were willing to extend their policy of connivance to the offenders in a murder case, because it was deemed more conducive to public concord than to punish the perpetrators to the full extent of the law. On January 17, 1641, nine of the Company’s slaves were charged with murdering another DWIC slave, Jan Premero, on January 6, in the woods near their houses. The usual statements about the crime being against the “laws of God and man” were made. However, when the men were questioned to determine who was the leader in the assault and who struck the deadly blow, the defendants unanimously asserted that “they did not know, except that they committed the deed together.” Consequently, they were ordered to draw lots to determine which of them would be hanged for the crime. The lot fell upon Manuel of Gerrit de Reus, known as “Ris Manuel” (or “Big Manuel”). However, on January 24, 1641 when the sentence was carried out, the two “good ropes” that were placed around Manuel’s neck broke when he was pushed off the ladder by the executioner. Seeing this, the community protested and requested leniency. Kieft and the Council in “consideration of the request of the community” decided to grant Manuel “his life and pardoned him and all the other Negroes, on promise of good behavior and willing service.” Although the law required that a murderer be executed, in order to appease the community and

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39 Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., *NYHM: Dutch*, IV: 100. These men would later become part of Manhattan’s emerging freed black community.
maintain public concord, Kieft and the Council decided to show leniency. Of course, it remains a possibility that this entire drama of miraculous intervention and public forgiveness was orchestrated by the authorities in order to protect (but also intimidate) the valuable human property of the Company.

6.4

Just as with Big Manuel’s case, there were various instances where Dutch settlers assisted Native Americans involved in disputes with other settlers. In such instances, the settlers’ support to the Munsees was a means of maintaining peaceful co-existence in the colony. Conflicts between the Dutch and Native Americans erupted as a result of the lawless character of many of the colonists. Moreover, during Kieft’s administration, the wild man tradition continued to shape the Dutch settlers’ attitudes towards Native Americans. They felt, for example, that the Natives had to rely on European witnesses if they were to prevail in legal proceedings. While there were several instances in which Africans prevailed in their legal complaints against European settlers without relying on European witnesses. For example, Pedro Negretto prevailed in a complaint he filed demanding payment from Jan Celes (defendant) for the “trouble he has taken in tending the defendant’s hogs.” In contrast, it appears to have been a policy during Kieft’s administration to prohibit Native Americans from initiating suits against European settlers. If Natives were to prevail in court, they needed to secure two or more European witnesses to substantiate their accusations. Such a provision makes it clear that the Dutch authorities did not extend the full rights of citizens to the Natives, because they still viewed them as lawless Wilden. Furthermore, those who had sexual liaisons with

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41 Adriaen Van der Donck, “A Description of the New Netherland, Comprehending the Fruitfulness and Natural Advantages of the Country, and the Desirable Opportunities Which it Presents, Within Itself, and from Abroad, for The Subsistence of Man; Which are Not Surpassed Elsewhere. Together with Remarks on
Native Americans were judged as unfit witnesses in court proceedings. Consequently, Jan Damen was able to bar successfully the testimony of Jan Platneus by alleging that he was “incompetent to give any testimony, because he has committed adultery with Indian women.” When Claes, the cabin boy of the yacht *West Indies Raven*, threw “down a squaw on the path near the Fresh Water and then sit on her” with the intent of...
cutting “the belt which the said squaw had around her waist,” the Native American woman could not bring a claim against Claes. Instead, it was Philip Gerritsen and the schout-fiscal, Ulrich Lupolt, who filed the complaint against Claes.

The Indians’ inability to seek redress against Dutch settlers within the colony’s legal system, independent of European witnesses if necessary, had assisted in fueling many of the conflicts between Natives and settlers. Aware of the legal vulnerability of the Natives, it had become common for the settlers to physically abuse and mistreat them. Claes, the cabin boy’s, actions were not an uncommon occurrence. There were other colonists, such as Jonas Jonasz, who made it a common practice to “chase Indians and beat them with his sword and also by force to take away and steal their sewant which they were carrying in their pouches.” These types of abuses against the Natives multiplied as European settlements increased and Manhattan’s population grew.

Desiring to avoid competition from other colonists, many newcomers opted to settle away from the more densely populated town of New Amsterdam. Instead, they lived in outlying areas, so that they could trade more easily with the Natives.

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43 Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., NYHM: Dutch, IV: 52. See also Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., NYHM: Dutch, I: 177. There were several people within the colony who could act as interpreters for Natives in legal proceedings, such as Cornelis van Tienhoven, the secretary of the colony who had lived with a band of Munsee and was alleged to be quite fluent in their language. By this time, there were also other settlers who were born in the colony and spent a lot of time with the Natives, such as Sara Rapalje, Catalina Trico’s daughter and the first “Christian” girl to be born in New Netherland; Director-General Peter Stuyvesant, Willem Kieft’s successor, used Rapalje’s service as a translator.

44 The schout-fiscal had a vested interest in filing these complaints because he usually receives a “reward” or fee from the cases he successfully adjudicates.

45 Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., NYHM: Dutch, IV: 484. Many of these acts were committed by the soldier and sailors, men like Cors Pietersz, who the schout-fiscal accused of assaulting a Munsee man, stealing his sewant and cloth and then throwing him overboard. Cors claimed that he had “never seen the Indians…much less taken from them any seawan or cloth,” but he was found guilty based on the testimony of two European witnesses. See Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., NYHM: Dutch, IV: 29-30. Another case involved Sergeant Jeuriaen Rudolff. See Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., NYHM: Dutch, IV: 65.

46 “Journal of New Netherland,” in NNN, 273. The author argues that Kieft’s war stems from the freedom granted to the settlers to trade with the Natives; the liberty to trade led to the growth in population, which in turn led to the War. As a result of the liberty, “every one thought that now the time had come to make his fortune, withdrew himself from his comrade, as if holding him suspect and the enemy of his gains, and sought communication with the Indians from whom it appeared his profit was to be derived. That created first a division of power of dangerous consequence, in opposition to Their High Mightinesses’ motto – [Eendracht maakt macht, union makes strength]….”
Jogues observed that when he visited Manhattan in 1643, the inhabitants were “scattered here and there on the river, above and below, as the beauty and convenience of the spot has invited each to settle.” Away from the watchful gaze of the provincial authorities, the settlers took the liberty to trade with the Indians without paying the required duties to the DWIC. Adrian van der Donck noted in 1655 that “most of the trade of the Hudson River” was centered in the “city of New Amsterdam, on the island of Manhattan.” The settlers traded various European-made items for fur, sewant, and food. The lucrative trade in fur was centered around the beaver pelts that were “mostly taken far inland, there being few of them near the settlements.” Therefore the inland tribes who were closest to beaver supply, “particularly…the black Minquas…the Senecas…the Maquas, and the Rondaxes or French Indians, who are also called Euyrons (Hurons),” had a more dominant position in trade negotiations. Many of the settlers purportedly traveled “far into the country, more than seventy or eighty miles from the river and sea-shore” to procure the valuable pelts. There they met natives from the inland tribes who had come “more than ten and twenty days’ journey from the interior, and who have been farther off to catch beavers.”

Clearly, by 1639 most of the Indians who came to New Amsterdam with furs were no longer the Munsees; Manhattan’s major fur suppliers were the Mohawks (Maquas), Susquehannocks (Minquas) and Mahicans. Some Munsee groups, however, were able to maintain their importance as trade partners by supplying sewant (wampum) or foodstuffs. Even during Kieft’s administration, the Dutch maintained a robust trade with the Munsees in corn. Adriaen Van der Donck informs us that the

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47 Father Isaac Jogues, “Novum Belgium,” in NNN, 262. During the war, the Council noted that “our settlers are scattered here over a distance of 10 miles east and west and 7 miles south and north,” and stressed the difficulty such dispersed residences presented with regard to protecting the settlements. Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., NYHM: Dutch, IV: 288.
48 Adriaen Van der Donck, “A Description of the New Netherlands,” 142.
49 Adriaen Van der Donck, “A Description of the New Netherlands,” 209.
50 Adriaen Van der Donck, “A Description of the New Netherlands,” 138.
Indians “bring to us their fur trade, worth tons of gold…to which may be added the grain and provision trade, which we proudly enjoy.”\textsuperscript{51} This trade in foodstuffs was fueled and necessitated by the rocky and nutrient-deficient soil located in the immediate vicinity of Manhattan.\textsuperscript{52} Although the records do not indicate the exact extent of the trade, it is significant to note that the Dutch continued to rely on the Munsees to supplement their own supply of grain.

In return for corn, the Indians acquired European-made goods, such as duffels, which supplemented animal skins in traditional native apparel. However, the Indians also began to adopt European-style clothing. According to van der Donck, whereas the Indians formerly had been strangers to white linen, by the 1640s they began “to wear shirts, which they buy from our people, and those they frequently wear without washing until the same are worn out.”\textsuperscript{53} While this statement suggests that the Indians were becoming increasingly dependent on European-made trade goods, it was the illicit trade in alcohol that would have the most serious ramifications for the struggling Native American communities in the vicinity of Manhattan Island. However, even without the widespread illegal trade, alcohol was readily available in the colony for European consumption, which made it increasingly easy for Native Americans to purchase it.

\textsuperscript{51} Adriaen Van der Donck, “A Description of the New Netherlands,” 236. For specific references to the grain and maize trade during Willem Kieft’s administration, see: Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., \textit{NYHM: Dutch}, I: 231-232, 441-442.\textsuperscript{52} It is apparent from the complaint of early Dutch settlers that on lower Manhattan Island’s coastal plains and in certain interior regions, the soil was rocky, sandy and subject to drought, and without the aid of irrigation the soils in other areas were thin and infertile, lacking sufficient moisture to support the crops to full maturity. In giving his assessment of the land on the southern end of Manhattan, Jonas Michaëlius wrote: “true, this island is the key and principal stronghold of the country, and needs to be settled first, as is already done; but it is somewhat less fertile than other spots, and gives more trouble....” See “1628 August 8. Jonas Michaëlius to Joannes van Foreest at Hoorn,” in Albert Eekhof, ed., \textit{Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland} (Leyden: A. W. Sijthoff’s Publishing Company, 1926), 109. See also Isaack De Rasière, “Isaack de Rasière to Samuel Blommaert, (1628?),” in J. Franklin Jameson, ed., \textit{Narratives of New Netherland, 1609-1664} (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1953), 104 and Jaspar Dankers and Peter Sluyter, \textit{Journal of a Voyage to New York and a Tour in Several of the American Colonies in 1679-80} (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, Inc., 1966), 136. As late as 1650, Cornelius Van Tienhoven advised new immigrants to travel with enough food supplies for at least two to three years because “it is found by experience in New Netherland, that farmers can with difficulty obtain from the soil enough to provide themselves with necessary victuals and support.” E. B. O’Callaghan, ed., \textit{DRCHNY}, Volume I: 369. Early Dutch sources were consistent in their assessment that the land on the northern end of the island was good, but the land occupied by the settlers on lower Manhattan was sandy, rocky, troublesome and not as fertile.\textsuperscript{53} Adriaen Van der Donck, “A Description of the New Netherlands,” 196.
By one account, “a fourth part of the city of New Amsterdam consisted of grogshops and houses where nothing is to be got but tobacco and beer.”

Many of the settlers had transformed portions of their dwellings into taverns in order to profit from the lucrative trade. Van der Donck noticed the tendency of many Indians to abuse alcohol, and “drink to excess, when they become insolent and troublesome, and are malicious.”

Director-General Kieft and the Council tried to curb these tendencies by prohibiting the sale of intoxicating beverages to the Natives. What most concerned Van der Donck and the Dutch settlers was the violence and disorder that often ensued from intoxicated Indians. That this trade had more serious effects on the individual Indian is indisputable to us today, but unfortunately there is little extant evidence to indicate alcohol’s transforming effect within the Indian communities as a whole during the Dutch period. We do, however, learn from the extant records about the pervasiveness of alcohol in New Amsterdam. They show that numerous Dutch men are wantonly spending “their daily earnings, but also when out of money pawning the goods serving to the necessities of their families” to obtain money to spend in the taverns. In this way they “obtain the means of continuing their usual drinking bouts. Their wives and children suffer in consequence and become a burden to the Deaconry and City.”

If alcohol use was already having such detrimental effects among the settlers, most of whom were already very familiar with alcohol, we can only imagine the

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55 Adriaen Van der Donck, “A Description of the New Netherlands,” 192.
56 The Ordinance, which was published on June 18, 1643, declared that those who sold “strong liquors” to the Natives “shall for the first offense forfeit fl. 25; for the second offense double the amount; and for the third time be arbitrarily punished.” Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., NYHM: Dutch, IV: 196.
57 According to the Ordinance, “many tapsters and tavernkeepers, who to keep their business going detain such persons, as for their own sake and advantage would better attend to their occupations and protect their families honorably with God’s help, but cannot make up their minds to it, because of the pleasures they find in drinking…” Berthold Fernow, ed., Records of New Amsterdam, I:35. The practice had become so commonplace that Peter Stuyvesant’s Council were prompted to pass an ordinance forbidding “all tapsters and tavernkeepers to receive in pawn any goods, of whatever nature they may be, such as clothing, furniture or the like, and to sell drinks thereof under the penalty of 25 fl. the first time, of 50 fl. the second time with a suspension of their business for 6 weeks and for the third offence closure of the place and restitution of the pawned property.”
havoc it was wreaking in Native American communities. As we will see in Kieft’s War, the Natives’ proclivity to drink to complete inebriation often led to violence and bloodshed.

6.5

While the ramifications of the sewant trade were probably not as serious for Native American communities as the trade in alcohol, the increased production and commodification of sewant altered Native American work patterns and changed the manufacture impetus from that of ceremonial gift-giving and reciprocal exchange between Native American groups to simple economic exchange. By the 1640s, both the Dutch and the neighboring English were actively regulating the value for sewant in their respective colonies, protecting its status as an established local currency that served both Native American and settler societies in a manner shaped by both peoples. Europeans had transformed and accommodated the usage of sewant to serve a wholly economic purpose, but Native Americans had determined its valuation in trade goods. The trade

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58 For a discussion of the influence of alcohol on Native Americans and their communities, see Peter C. Mancall, Deadly Medicine: Indians and Alcohol in Early America (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995). Mancall argues many Native Americans consumed large amounts of alcohol as a means of escape. He further asserts that their frequent overdrinking to utter inebriation, and their pervasive addiction to alcohol, did not stem from a genetic disposition but rather derived from many other factors, such as incorporating alcohol into various rituals. The topic is still a matter of debate.


60 As a result of its value and status in trade, the production of sewant was significantly escalated during Kieft’s administration without uniformity in the qualities. Thus, the Dutch tried to safeguard the integrity of sewant as legal tender by setting a low valuation for the “unpolished stuff” while simultaneously securing higher prices for the “Manhattan seawan.” According to this ordinance, “the price of the well polished seawan shall remain as before, to wit, four [beads] for one stiver, provided it be strung.” Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., NYHM: Dutch, IV: 107. See also Harmen Meyndertsz van der Bogaert, “Narrative of a Journey Into the Mohawk and Oneida Country, 1634-1635,” in J. Franklin Jameson, ed., Narratives of New Netherland, 1609-1634 (New York: Barnes& Noble, Inc., 1953), 151. During Harmen Meyndertsz van der Bogaert’s journey to the Mohawk settlement, the leading sachems were interested to learn “whether they were to have four hands of seawan or not for their skins.” He was assured that if the Dutch would give them four hands of sewant then the Mohawks would not sell their furs to any other nation. It is during these types of trade negotiations that the inland tribes determined the price they were willing to accept for the furs that the Dutch desired. Lynn Ceci has also noted that “the French learned that these beads were ‘esteemed more highly’ than trade goods by northern fur suppliers, who would buy them ‘very dear.’” Lynn Ceci, “Native Wampum,” 55.
triangle that emerged in the Hudson River region dictated that European-made trade goods, such as duffels, were sent from Holland by the DWIC and other investors to be traded for sewant with the various coastal Munsee tribes in the vicinity of Manhattan, who were the main producers of the valuable bead. Next the sewant, which the inland tribes coveted, were transported inland to the Mohawks, Mahicans and Susquehannocks and exchanged for furs; and finally, the furs were transported back to Fort Orange and New Amsterdam and then shipped to Holland, enriching the coffers of the DWIC and other Dutch investors.\footnote{This New Netherland triangular trade route was described by Lynn Ceci. See Lynn Ceci, “Native Wampum,” 58.}

As long as European demand for fur continued, fur-bearing animals remained plentiful and quality sewant was produced in abundance, this triangular trade could persist without having many violent repercussions for the Munsees in the vicinity of Manhattan. However, after several decades of escalating fur trading in the Hudson River, the beaver were hunted almost to extinction in the Manhattan Island region and were severely depleted in the areas near the Mohawk settlements. The Mohawks and Mahicans were forced to seek new hunting territory to secure more furs, in order to obtain sewant. Moving further inland for fur meant that they would have to trespass on the enemy territory of the French Indians, which ultimately led to open warfare. This, in turn, necessitated more weapons to fight these enemy tribes. Since the currency for guns was sewant, the Mohawks and Mahicans resolved to demand forcefully tribute from weaker Munsee and Wappinger tribes in the Lower Hudson River. It is not difficult to imagine the anger and frustration these tribes in the vicinity of Manhattan Island probably felt towards the Dutch, particularly when one considers the refusal by officials of the DWIC to sell them weapons while simultaneously providing guns to their enemies to the north. They undoubtedly felt that the Dutch were indirectly threatening
their economic and political sovereignty. Gradually, the relationship between the Dutch and the Munsees, their erstwhile extremely valuable trade partners, became increasingly strained, exacerbated by bitterness, suppressed hatred, anger and possibly even a sense of betrayal.

The Munsees and Wappingers, facing an increasingly marginalized position struggled to cope with the new dominant order in the Hudson River Valley. Without significant quantities of furs to trade and facing the imminent possibility of diverting control of the sewant trade to the Upper Hudson River Indians through forced tributary payments, these coastal groups were reduced to trading foodstuffs and their land. With each passing year, the Munsees and Wappingers were faced with adjusting to the expanding settler population that was rapidly converting traditional hunting land into farms. In turn, this escalation in contact led to a rise in disputes over land use. Land problems were compounded by the fact that the initial inhabitants often retained a right of continued usage residence and usage even after “selling” grounds to the colonists. A deed of January 15, 1639, indicates that although the Munsees were selling their land to the settlers, they reserved the right to “remain upon the aforesaid land, plant corn, fish, hunt and make a living there as well as they can.”

From the foundation of the colony, it was customary for the Natives to continue to use the land they deeded to the settlers.

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62 Charles T. Gehring, trans. and ed., Land Papers. New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch Volumes GG, HH and II (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1980), 9. This 1639 deed should not be construed as a sign that the Munsees were signifying a complete acceptance and accommodation to their position as subservient dependents of the Dutch, or the Mohawks and Mahicans for that matter. The 1639 deed was probably quite similar to the 1626 deed Peter Minuit negotiated for Manhattan Island – both allowed the Native Americans to maintain control of the land, while securing an alliance for mutual security and protection with the Dutch. These forms of alliances were necessary for all Native groups, and were arguably the raison d’être for the emergence of such Native American confederacies as the Iroquois Confederacy. Furthermore, the 1626 and 1639 deeds’ granting of usufructuary rights to the Dutch did in no way relinquish the Natives’ rights to the land, but from the Natives’ perspective was a means of sealing the new alliance. It is through these extensive alliances that Native groups who were not independently powerful could shore up their power base when needed, such as when attacked.
On Manhattan Island, for example, the Natives maintained a local tobacco field for several decades after they had sold the land to Peter Minuit. It is the Natives' continued usage of deeded land that incited many of the disputes. The Munsee utilized the land to grow foodstuffs, such as corn, beans, and squash, which formed a major part of their diet and also became an increasing part of the goods they traded with the settlers for European commodities. However, since the Natives did not enclose their fields, their crops were vulnerable to the predations of European livestock, particularly pigs, which were permitted to forage freely. One author asserted in his journal that “as the cattle usually roamed through the woods without a herdsman, they frequently came into the corn of Indians which was unfenced on all sides, committing great damage there; this led to frequent complaints on their part and finally to revenge on the cattle without sparing even the horses.” To remedy the situation, the Director-General and Council enacted a law commanding the inhabitants “whose lands adjoin plantations of the savages to have their horses, cows, hogs, goats and sheep herded or else to prevent them by fences or otherwise from damaging the corn of the Indians....” But legal remedies proved insufficient. Europeans continued to complain that the Natives’ semi-wild dogs often attacked their free-ranging livestock,

63 There was a plot of land on Manhattan called Sapohanikan that the Natives continued to utilize. Sapohanikan (or Sappokanikan), which means “tobacco plantation,” lacked a nearby source of fresh water, and so was probably appropriately described by Reginald Pelham Bolton as “a place of trade on the shore of the Hudson River, between Bethune and Horatio Streets in Greenwich Village.” Reginald Pelham Bolton, Indian Life of Long Ago in the City of New York (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1972), 133. Some scholars have mistakenly thought that this was the site of an Indian village, probably thinking that crops other than tobacco were cultivated there. According to Ann McMullen of the National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, tobacco required a different level of care than the food crops cultivated by Native American women and was grown by their men while they were away on fishing or hunting trips (telephone conversation, November 2, 2004). Like the Iroquois and Narragansetts, among the Munsees “it was the men’s job to fish, make war, and...grow tobacco.” See Nan A. Rothschild, Colonial Encounters in a Native American Landscape: The Spanish and Dutch in North America (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 2003), 66. According to Dean Snow, the “men raised a strong tobacco (Nicotiana rustica) by simply scattering the seeds in the spring and drying the leaves over the fire in the fall.” See Dean R. Snow, The Iroquois (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, 1994), 69-70.
particularly their sheep and calves. Eventually, the simmering tensions would boil over into open conflict.

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65 For a general discussion of the disputes arising from the close proximity of the colonists’ farms with Native American settlements and farmlands, see James Homer Williams, “Great Doggs and Mischievous Cattle: Domesticated Animals and Indian-European Relations in New Netherland and New York,” New York History 86, no. 3 (July 1995): 245-264. See also the impressive broader work of Virginia DeJohn Anderson, Creatures of Empire: How Domestic Animals Transformed Early America (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).
7. An Uneasy Connection Unveiled

7.1

The colonial officials observed with concern the settlers’ mounting level of contention with the Indians, caused by the close proximity of their settlements and the recent revocation of the DWIC’s monopoly on trade with the Natives. They believed that this freedom to trade had led to the dispersed settlement around Manhattan. Dispersed weakened the possibility for concord within the colony by turning the colonists into competitors and making it difficult to keep every one secure when trouble arose with the Natives. One of the officials claimed that the scattered nature of the settlements had “produced altogether too much familiarity with the Indians.” This, in turn,

brought forth contempt, usually the father of hate—not being satisfied merely with taking them into their houses in the customary manner, but attracting them by extraordinary attention, such as admitting them to the table, laying napkins before them, presenting wine to them and more of that kind of thing, which they did not receive like Esop’s man, but as their due and desert, insomuch that they were not content but began to hate when such civilities were not shewn them.¹

Inherent in this description are elements of the uneasy connection steadily unfolding between the Munsee and the Dutch settlers in the vicinity of Manhattan Island. The Dutch believed they had been more than generous towards the Natives and had treated them with hospitality. In return, the Natives appeared to repay this kindness with disdain and even hatred.

The Munsee perspective, however, was that their erstwhile trade partners, whom they had welcomed on their lands, had multiplied like locusts. Increasingly, the

newcomers seemed to constitute a threat to the very existence of the tribe. The pressure from Dutch settlers, combined with the Mohawk-Mahican onslaught, left the Munsee caught between the proverbial “rock and a hard place.” Feeling trapped in this manner, they did what they believed would best secure their interests with the least risk of bloodshed; they placed “themselves under the protection” of the Dutch West India Company, expecting “all possible assistance and favor by their representative in this country.”

It was a gamble for the continued survival of the Munsee peoples in a region that confident outsiders now claimed as New Netherland. As long as both sides accommodated the other, the strained peace and amity that underscored their uneasy connection was maintained and bloodshed averted. However, the combination of pressures could not be denied: the settlers’ thirst for land, the depleted beaver supply, and the Dutch practice of restricting the weapons trade to the Upper Hudson River tribes and excluding the Munsee. All these factors underpinned the movement towards war, but the shift from accommodation to open violence also turned upon the persistent influence exerted by the wild man mythology in New Netherland and the conflicting notions of community.

For many years, the settlers had bemoaned their “smaller number” vis-à-vis the Indians. It had forced them to swallow their pride and withstand the “insufferable arrogance of the Natives,” in order to avoid open conflicts. The motto of the DWIC was *eendracht maakt macht*, or union makes strength. But complaints of the settlers make clear that they acknowledged the power of a related truism: *bevolking maak macht*, or population makes strength. The Indians in their midst were numerically superior for the moment, but many settlers felt that a shift in relative numbers would allow them to assert at last their own sense of cultural superiority over the Indians that they had felt

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from the outset. They were convinced that if New Netherland had a “sufficient population” it would be able “to support, sustain, and defend itself against Indians.” So convinced were they regarding the link between population and strength that they had even calculated the number of inhabitants that would be necessary in order to achieve a shift in the power relations in New Netherland. In a petition submitted to the States General in Holland in 1649, the leading members of the community had asserted that “were there a thousand or fifteen hundred inhabitants in New Netherland, or even more, the Indians…would never think or dream of daring to offer us any insult.”

The colony was finally able to boast a population of about “a thousand or fifteen hundred” during Kieft’s administration. Now, with the population of the colony increasing, the settlers began to “dread neither Indians nor other enemies.” For the settlers, a large population meant that they could defend themselves against possible attacks, but more importantly, they could silence the Indians’ taunting, jeering and “insolence.” Also, a large population would enable them to match their might against any perceived wrongdoing or use of force by the Munsees. No longer would they have to hold their tongues when the Munsees teased them about being “no account on land,” no longer would they have to accept the slaying of their people by the Munsees. With a significant population increase, they could determine the terms of negotiation and the terms of interaction. The settlers made a clear connection between population strength in their ongoing tension with the Munsees. Once the settler population finally swelled, it is probably not a coincidence that the settlers decided to move preemptively against the Munsees.

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4 E. B. O’Callaghan, ed., _DRCHNY_, Volume I: 264. And although this petition was authored in the aftermath of Kieft’s War, the awareness of an ideal numerical goal for the population was shared by many settlers before the eruption of the war.
5 E. B. O’Callaghan, ed., _DRCHNY_, Volume I: 261. In the 1649 Remonstrance, which is believed to be authored by Adrian van der Donck and signed by the representatives of the “Communalty,” it is evident the connection that the inhabitants made between population, power and safety.
6 “Journal of New Netherland,” in _NNN_, 274.
Although it was clear that for the settlers, population meant strength, it was not apparent how they defined unity or thought it could be achieved in a heterogeneous society. Did they equate strength with unity; did they believe that once a large population had provided them with strength, then that strength would somehow lead to unity? It is difficult to glean from the extant records. What is evident is that the settlers also saw a correlation between a sizable population and improved trade. In the 1649 Remonstrance to the States General, some of the leading inhabitants of the colony made the argument that “after population shall have increased” they would be able to “carry on a very large trade.”

The population of the colony was not increasing as readily as it could, they argued, because of the import and export duties that the DWIC placed on items. They further asserted that “there is not a man in New Netherland who does not believe, that the duty is the cause of the intolerable scarcity, and of the disorder and want of population there.” According to this line of reasoning, “by the abolition of the duty, New Netherland would obtain and acquire: 1, population; 2, great trade; 3, reasonable profit on all goods and wares; 4, internal peace; 5, security from all foreign and domestic attacks...in addition to all the advantages which flow from these principal points.”

It is apparent from this line of reasoning that trade and security were deemed two extremely desirable and beneficial corollaries of a large population. However, as one of the settlers made clear, while “the liberty to trade with the Indians” led to an increase in population, it was also one of the causes of the colony’s ruin. Rather than leading to a greater sense of unity, the freedom to trade (for which the 1639 Freedom and

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Exemptions provided) added to the elements of divisiveness in the colony. Settlers were already divided by religion, language, ethnicity, and race. With the inauguration of the new freedoms for trading, the settler “thought that now the time had come to make his fortune, withdrew himself from his comrade, as if holding him suspect and the enemy of his gains, and sought communication with the Indians from whom it appeared his profit was to be derived.” In this manner, trade became one of the forces of divisiveness. During earlier administrations some level of unity was possible, when the settlers had defined themselves and their colony as being diametrically contrary to the Indians. Open trade and the ensuing connection it created between individual settler-trader and the surrounding Munsee groups had gradually rendered such definitions untenable.

This trade relationship was different from that found in the early contact period between ship captains and Native Americans in the Manhattan area. With this new trade relationship, many of the settlers lived with the Indians in their villages, or the Indians stayed with the traders in their houses in the Dutch settlements in order to conduct trade. There was one recorded instance where the Dutch trader, sea captain and patroon of Staten Island, David Pieterszen de Vries, returned to his little cottage to find five Indians sleeping there. This practice of living together formed the basis for a new level of familiarity. Where amity appeared between the colonists and the Indians, it shifted their perception of each other. The Indians no longer viewed all Dutch settlers as liars, and the Dutch settlers increasingly separated the Indians into two divisions: “good” and “bad,” or “friendly” and “unfriendly.”

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11 For the most part, during the early contact and settlement period (before the monopoly on the fur trade was lifted) sea captains and representatives of trading factions conducted trade aboard ships or at the forts; it does not appear that living amongst the natives was a widespread practice. Probably the one known exception to this was when Adriaen Block and the crew of the Tiger remained in the vicinity of Manhattan to construct the Onrust with the assistance of the native inhabitants, when their ship burned.
12 David Pieterszen de Vries, “Extracts from the Voyages,” 267.
13 While the settlers had determined that all Indians were not the same, this new understanding did not lead to a complete rejection of the perception of the Indians as wilden. Despite his familiarity with the Native
However, the settlers also made a distinction between those Indians they considered “friendly.” The settlers’ relationship with the Indians in New Netherland had left them with two conflicting, yet inextricably linked, perceptions. Their relationship with the Munsees in the vicinity of Manhattan Island was quite different from that with the Indians in the vicinity of Fort Orange (modern day Albany). The Mahicans and Mohawks near Fort Orange lived in more fortified communities and were seen as powerful, and even fierce allies of the Dutch, while the settlers characterized those near Manhattan Island as “lambs,” so peaceful were they that it was deemed unnecessary to build a strong fort for protection against any possible assault from them.  

If we consider the image of the mythological wild man that the Dutch had conflated with New Netherland’s natives, it can be argued that the Indians at Fort Orange and those around Manhattan Island were two different sides of the same Dutch portrayal. As discussed in previous chapters, for the Dutch settlers, the wild man was both fierce and violent, but also serviceable and helpful; the Dutch perception of New Netherland’s Indians was a merging of both medieval and Renaissance representations of the wild man.  

It is apparent that the Natives in the vicinity of Manhattan Island were viewed through the lens of the Renaissance portrayal of the wild man, while those around Fort Orange in the Upper Hudson region were perceived as having more of the qualities of Americans in Manhattan, David Pieterszen de Vries still concluded that the Indians’ “disposition is bad” and that “they are very revengeful; resembling the Italians.” David Pieterszen de Vries, “Korte Historiaeel,” 217. A. J. F. van Laer, trans., *Documents Relating to New Netherland 1624-1626 in the Henry E. Huntington Library* (San Marino, California: The Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, 1924), xxiii. When the Dutch first settled Manhattan, it was thought that they should build a fort to protect themselves against possible attack from the Indians in the vicinity. However, afterwards the need for a fort was deemed less necessary. Although Fort Amsterdam was constructed to protect the settlement from possible English invasion, it was never maintained. Throughout Manhattan’s entire Dutch period, there were complaints by both the settlers and the Director-Generals about the walls of Fort Amsterdam being more like a “mole-hill” rather than a fort.  

Richard Bernheimer, *Wild Men in the Middle Ages: A Study in Art, Sentiment, and Demonology* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952), 24-25. While both medieval and Renaissance representations portrayed the wild man as savage, violent, heathenish, and devoid of religion, the Renaissance period saw portrayals of the more utilitarian possibilities of the wild man – he assists the peasants in planting, shares his knowledge of herbs and hunting. The friendly or “good” Indians often provided these types of services for the settlers.
the medieval representations of the wild man. It is not being argued here that the Dutch viewed the Indians in the vicinity of Manhattan as being incapable of violence or savagery; David Pieterszen de Vries and Adriaen van der Donck’s description of them does not support such a conclusion. The Dutch were more apt to focus on the utilitarian potential of the Munsees around Manhattan Island while emphasizing the fierceness of the Indians near Fort Orange, even though the Mohawks and Mahicans were rendering a valuable service by supplying them with lucrative furs. Both groups of Native Americans were viewed as savage and violent, but whereas the savagery and violence of those near Manhattan were latent, that of the Indians around Fort Orange were overt. Also, while both groups of Indians were perceived as serviceable to the Dutch, the service of the Fort Orange Indians was mediated through violence and probably explains the Dutch settlers’ divergent trade policy with both groups of Indians – why the Dutch willingly provided the Indians at Fort Orange with ammunition while simultaneously denying it to those in the vicinity of Manhattan Island; it was argued, both by contemporary Dutch and Indians, that the Indians at Fort Orange needed the weapons to defeat their French Indian enemies in their quest to procure the valuable furs the Dutch desired.

7.3

While the settlers’ trade relationship had altered or refined their perception of the Indians, it also engendered fierce competition between the settlers, serving to divide

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16 Both de Vries and van der Donck assert that the Indians are “revengeful.” See David Pieterszen de Vries, “Korte Historiael,” 217; and Adriaen van der Donck, “Representation of New Netherland,” in J. Franklin Jameson, ed., 301. Van der Donck assert that “the desire of revenge appears to be born in them.”

17 E. B. O’Callaghan, History of New Netherland; or New York Under the Dutch Volume II Second Edition (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1848), 391-393. Of course, the Mohawks and Mahicans did not confine their usage of firearms against the French Indians, but also used them to subjugate the less powerful Munsees and Wappingers near Manhattan Island. This, as stated previously, was also a source of the tension between the Munsees and the Dutch.
rather than unify them. One of the defining qualities of Manhattan, and perhaps New Netherland in general, was the prevalence of trade. Trade has been a prominent feature of Manhattan since the settlement’s inception. In 1628, Reverend Jonas Michaëlius commented on the prevalent practice of the settlers’ trading with the Indians, although he was uncertain “whether it was permitted by the laws of the Company.” Years later, in 1650, Nicasius de Sille, councilor to Director-General Peter Stuyvesant, proffered his view of Manhattan that “everyone is a trader here.” When it came to trading, occupational labels had little meaning; many settlers, tailors, smiths, farmers, bakers – supplemented their income with proceeds from trading. Joris Rapalje, Catalina Trico’s husband, owned a tavern in Manhattan, but he also brokered grain for farmers at Rensselaerswyck and worked as a chief boatswain for the DWIC. Hendrick Jansen, tailor, supplied the sailors anchored in the harbor with merchandise from his brewery.

Women also participated in this pervasive trading. In 1628, Isaack de Rasière complained to the Directors of the DWIC about the wives of Wolfert Gerritsz and Jacob Lourissz, who were usurping the Company’s monopoly on fur trade. Gerritsz’s wife had apparently approached de Rasière with two otters. When he offered her three guilders, ten stivers for the pelts, she refused and instead asked for five guilders. He rejected her offer, but when he discovered that Jacob Lourissz’s wife had offered her five

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21 Dennis Maika, “Commerce and Community,” 38.
guilders, “to prevent the otters from being purloined,” de Rasière was forced “to give her the five guilders.”

While competition rather than cooperation generally defined trade relations among the colonists, some settlers did develop close business ties and partnerships with other inhabitants in Manhattan. These ties were often reflected in the baptismal records of the Dutch Reformed Church in New Amsterdam. Within the Dutch Reformed Church, baptism was viewed as a means of adoption into the Christian Church or the Christian family, and as such was extended to children of Christian parents, irrespective of parents’ membership in the Dutch Reformed Church. Although churches were free to restrict access to the Communion table to the small circle of the elect, they were expected to baptize the entire community of Christians. Furthermore, although Church laws state that parents and sponsors (god-parents/witnesses) were to be present at the baptism of their children, these acts were not strictly enforced in Holland and thus were not “very strenuously insisted on” in New Netherland either.

The effect was that godparents were given equal weight in baptismal ceremonies, in terms of being able to accept responsibility for the religious upbringing of the child and “fulfil the promises made in regard to the children...bound by the Word of God.” Therefore, it was after careful consideration that parents selected their children’s godparents, and many decided to accept the responsibility of godparents. Taking on

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25 Hugh Hastings, ed., ERNY, I: 430. Apparently, in New Netherland, they had even permitted young children to present babies for baptism. According to Reverend Johannes Megapolensis and Samuel Drisius, “sometimes there are bastards presented for baptism, who have no known father. Some charged to be the father, deny it. In such cases, others have been known to interpose, and to present the illegitimate child. Subsequently we noticed that young persons, who could hardly carry the child, and who had scarcely more knowledge of religion, baptism, and the vows, than the child itself, brought and presented other young children for baptism. Whereupon it was resolved and published from the pulpit, that no half grown youths should present other young children for baptism; but that it should only be done by those who had arrived at years of discretion...” (429-430).
such a weighty responsibility “bound by the Word of God” was a fairly concrete
indication of a strong connection between the parties involved.\textsuperscript{26} The frequency with
which trade or business partners appeared as witnesses at baptisms indicates that strong
connections were created as a result of trade relationships.\textsuperscript{27}

Govert Loockermans first arrived in Manhattan in 1633 as a sixteen-year-old
employee of the DWIC. In 1639, after he left the employ of the Company, he became the
agent for the influential and wealthy Amsterdam merchant family, the Verbrugges.

Loockermans traded in Albany, New England, Virginia and Delaware with Indians and
European settlers. Through his trade networks he developed connections with other
local merchants, such as Isaac Allerton, Oloff Stevenson van Cortlandt and Jacob van
Couwenhoven.\textsuperscript{28} On March 17, 1652, when he presented his son Jacob for baptism, Jacob
van Couwenhoven, Pieter Prins, and Annetje Loockermans stood as witnesses.\textsuperscript{29}

\textsuperscript{26} Hugh Hastings, ed., \textit{ERNY}, I: 430. Apparently, in New Netherland, they had even permitted young
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should present other young children for baptism; but that it should only be done by those who had arrived
at years of discretion…” (429-430).

\textsuperscript{27} See “Baptisms in the Dutch Reformed Church of New Amsterdam and New York City dated December
25, 1639 to December 27, 1730,” in New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, \textit{Record} 2 (1890), 10-41.

\textsuperscript{28} These connections were also sealed in marriages between members of these various families. For
marriage records see “Marriages in the Dutch Reformed Church of New Amsterdam and New York City,
1639 to 1801,” in New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, \textit{Record} 9 (1901): 17, 18, 26, 29. It is not
surprising that Loockermans married Gillis Verbrugge’s widowed niece, Adrianje Jans. Also, Oloff
Stevenson van Cortlandt married Loockermans’ sister, Anna, and Jacob van Couwenhoven married
Adrianje Loockermans’ sister, Hester Jans. Couwenhoven and van Cortlandt were also connected to the
Verbrugge family through trade. See David William Voorhees, “First Families,” in \textit{Seaport, New York’s
History Magazine}, vol. xxxvi, no. 1 (Fall 2001), 17. When Govert Loockermans died in 1671, he was one of the
wealthiest men in colonial New York. For a discussion of Loockermans’ spectacular rags to riches story see
David M. Riker, “Govert Loockermans: Free Merchant of New Amsterdam,” \textit{De Halve Maen} Vol. LIV, no. 2
(June, 1981). Loockerman’s relationship to the Verbrugge family is discussed in Oliver Rink, \textit{Holland on the
Hudson}, 177-180.

\textsuperscript{29} In 1643, all three were blessed with children and stood as witnesses at their children’s baptism. On May
10, 1643, van Cortlandt’s son, Stephanus, was baptized with Govert Loockermans as witness. On September 6,
1643 when van Couwenhoven’s daughter, Lysbeth, was baptized Govert Loockermans stood again as
witness, and on September 27, 1643 Jacob van Couwenhoven returned the favor, standing as witness at
Jannetje’s baptism, the daughter of Govert Loockerman. See, “Baptisms in the Dutch Reformed Church of
New Amsterdam and New York City dated December 25, 1639 to December 27, 1730,” in New York
Genealogical and Biographical Society, \textit{Record} 2 (1890), 12.
Some of the colony’s Director-Generals, including Willem Kieft and Peter Stuyvesant, also had close ties to other settlers through trade relationships. Stuyvesant was quite discreet with his business transactions that blurred the line between his private activities and public roles, but in one instance Kieft openly speculated in a privateering contract. In 1644, the Director-General Kieft and the Council commissioned the frigate *La Garce*, commanded by Captain Willem Albertsen Blauvelt, to “go privateering against the enemies of the High and Mighty Lords the States General.”

When Blauvelt was seeking financing for another expedition, as a result of the past successful voyages, Director-General Kieft purchased a “just eighth share.” Other Manhattan investors included Jan Damen, Jacob Wolphertson van Couwenhoven, Martin Cregier, Jacob Stoffelsen, Hendrick Jacobsen PaterVaer, Hendrick Arentsen, Cristiaen Pietersen Rams, Willem DeKey, Adriaen Dirksen, Augustin Heermans, Harmen Meyndertszen van den Bogaert, Cornelis Antonisen, Cornelis Teunisen and Harmanus Bogardus. Shortly after, Director-General Kieft stood as witness at the baptism of Martin Cregier’s son, Willem.

Manhattan’s Dutch settlers also used fellow workers or their own employers as godparents. When his first son, Balthazar Lazarus, was baptized on October 13, 1647, Director-General Peter Stuyvesant asked some of the members of his Council to stand as witnesses: Lubbert Dincklagen, Jan de La Montagne, Brian Nuton, Commissary Keyser, Paulus Leendertszen and Cornelis van Tienhoven. Although it seemed like a strange request to the Directors of the DWIC, in 1648 Director-General Stuyvesant requested the

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32 “Baptisms in the Dutch Reformed Church,” *Record* 2 (1890), 12.
Directors of the Company to be the “godfather” to his second son, Willem. Although the Directors normally rejected “for certain good reasons” invitations to be “godfather of any children,” they decided to grant Peter Stuyvesant his request. With receipt of their approval, Stuyvesant was able to signal to the Directors his commitment to the Company, but also secure for his son a favored position with the Company.

7.4

Manhattan’s European settlers were not alone in utilizing the ceremonies of the Dutch Reformed Church to forge connections. The burgeoning population of enslaved Africans also availed themselves of the marriage and baptismal rites of the Dutch Reformed Church in order to create enduring connections to replace the kinship networks that were severed by the transatlantic slave trade. In Article 35 of the Synod of North Holland’s *Church Regulations for the East and West Indies* that was written in 1629, in response to the question “whether it could be understood as approved, in the case of children whom they do not as yet find to be fit for baptism and whose parents are heathen, that a blessing and confirmation might be used, with the laying on of hands, instead of baptism,” it was decided that “what was proposed, ought not to be done. Such a practice was not Christian, and was not in conformity with the Word of God.” The Synod explained that “adoption into the Christian Church in such a way, would produce evil consequences, and could in no sense be justified by the example of Christ’s laying his hands upon the children of the Jews; inasmuch as those children were partakers of the covenant.” Furthermore, they concluded instead that rather than

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33 “Baptisms in the Dutch Reformed Church,” *Record* 2 (1890), 15.
34 Charles T. Gehring, ed., *Correspondence, 1647-1653* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2000), 72. The Directors asked for his son’s name so that they could “have it properly registered that the Company, when in a better financial condition, may be reminded to reciprocate this honor by a keepsake.”
confirming the children, they “should be diligently instructed in the fundamental
doctrines of Christianity.”

It is evident from the Synod’s decision that the children of unbaptized Africans
could not be baptized, or even confirmed, without instruction in the fundamental
doctrines of Christianity. From September 1639, when the extant baptism records of
New Amsterdam’s Dutch Reformed Church begin, until August 1647, when the
Reverend Everardus Bogardus departed for Holland aboard the Princess Amelia, he
baptized thirty-nine children of African descent. It is possible that, like Reverend
Michael Zyperius in Curaçao, Reverend Bogardus decided once he was able to
determine that the parents were previously baptized he “also baptized their
children…for fear that otherwise they might” revert to Catholicism. Given the Synod’s
explicit instructions regarding baptizing Indians and Africans, the fact that so many
Africans in New Netherland succeeded in having their children baptized and even
bothered to have their marriages consecrated by the Dutch Reformed minister meant
that Manhattan’s religious authorities had concluded that they met the requirements for
the administration of these rites. Their familiarity with and introduction to Christian
rites had set these Africans apart from other enslaved Africans who were not baptized
prior to being enslaved by the Dutch. Furthermore, it is argued here that their treatment

35 Hugh Hastings, ed., ERNY, I: 76-77. Furthermore, in 1661, the Classis of Amsterdam stated that “no one,
who is an adult, is admitted to baptism without previous confession of his faith. Accordingly the adult
Negroes and Indians must also be previously instructed and make confession of their faith before Holy
Baptism may be administered to them. As to their children…as long as the parents are actually heathen,
although they were baptized in the gross, (by wholesale, by the Papists), the children may not be baptized,
unless the parents pass over to Christianity, and abandon heathenism.” Ibid., 508. The Classis reiterated the
earlier stance of the Synod of Holland, but with a stricter position regarding parents who refuse to “abandon
heathenism.” For a count of the number of people of African descent who availed themselves of baptism
and marriage in the Dutch Reformed Church see Robert Swan, “Slaves and Slaveholding, in Dutch New
37 Since the vast majority of the enslaved Africans arriving in Manhattan were either from the Kongo-Angola
region of West Africa or various New World Spanish and Portuguese colonies, it is plausible that some had
been exposed to Catholicism either in Africa or during the course of their transatlantic voyage. It was not
until 1654 that the first cargo of enslaved Africans would arrive direct from other areas of Africa. Robert
Thornton, Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1680. (New York: Cambridge
by the Dutch authorities in Manhattan was influenced by their ability to convince successfully New Netherland’s civil and religious authorities that they had received Christian baptism prior to their migration to Manhattan.

However, it also appears that many of these enslaved Africans continued to adhere to traditional African beliefs. Why then did they submit their children for baptism? A letter written to the Classis of Amsterdam by the Reverend Henricus Selyns, one of the Dutch Reformed ministers at Manhattan, provides some clues as to the Africans’ motivation. Selyns reported that

the negroes occasionally request, that we should baptize their children, but we have refused to do so, partly on account of their lack of knowledge and of faith, and partly because of the worldly and perverse aims on the part of said negroes. They wanted nothing else than to deliver their children from bodily slavery, without striving for piety and christian virtues…Not to administer baptism among them for the reasons given, is also the custom among our colleagues.

These Africans, whose children Selyn rejected for baptism, might have been aware of the idea that held currency in some New World societies that Christians could not or should not be enslaved. It appears that many of Manhattan’s enslaved Africans viewed baptism as a means of ensuring freedom for themselves and their descendants. As enslaved laborers, what was most important to Manhattan’s African inhabitants was freedom; baptism was one means of attaining freedom and being fully able to determine one’s future.

*This argument is based on Reverend Jonas Michaëlius’ complaints about Africans speaking jeeringly of their Creator. See Albert Eekhof, ed., *Jonas Michaëlius*, 132. Church membership in the Dutch Reformed Church is probably a more accurate gauge of the Africans’ attachment to the Reformed faith. While several people of African descent were married in the Dutch Reformed Church and many of their children were presented for baptism between 1639 and 1664, only six Africans were actually listed on the Church’s membership roll during that same period. See Robert Swan, “Slaves and Slaveholding in Dutch New York,” 58. According to Swart, “the most conclusive evidence that Blacks were not admitted into the Dutch church is demonstrated by church membership records. A list of members was kept from 1649-683. Only one, Susanna Negrin was a communicant before 1660. Six Blacks were enumerated from 1675; Solomoon Pieters, 1677; Claes Emanuel, 1679; and two from Domine Selyn’s list, Susanna Negrinne and Thomas d’Moor, 1686.”

Furthermore, just as with the larger European settlers, baptism signaled that there was a strong connection between parents, children and witnesses. For Africans, whose transatlantic voyage had forever separated them from their past kinship ties, baptismal and marriage ceremonies signaled their resolve to re-create these important bonds to survive in Manhattan. One case demonstrating the close connection between the parents and the godparents, is that of Domingo Anthony and Emanuel Swarger.  

Domingo Anthony appears in the records with different names, since the Dutch diminutive of “Domingo” or “Anthony” is often used or misspelled. (Domingo is rendered as Dominicus, Mincus, Dominicus or Domincus. Anthony appears as Teunis, Douroens, Thoni, Theunis, Thys, Tijs, Tice, Deis, Dees, or Dies.) Emanuel was also shortened to Manuel. On January 27, 1641, Emanuel Swarger presented his son Dominicus for baptism. This child apparently died before 1648, because in that year “Emanuel – brother in law of Van Angola” presented Dominicus for baptism. It was common Dutch practice for the next baby born after a child died to take the deceased child’s name if the newborn was of the same sex. In any event, On November 10, 1641, Dominco Douroens presented his son Emanuel for baptism. That they took pains to name their children after each other was significant. From October 2, 1639, several African fathers presented their children for baptism, and were joined by other Africans who stood as godparents, thus securing for their descendants the possibility of freedom in the future and an extended kinship network to watch over them.  

The name “Swarger” means brother-in-law. It is uncertain whether Emanuel was Domingo’s brother-in-law, given their close connection in the baptismal record, or whether the name refers to Manuel’s previous employer. Little Manuel, or Emanuel Trompetter (not the same person as Emanuel Swarger), was also known as Manuel Minuit, indicating that he worked with the late Director-General Peter Minuit. It is possible that the Company assigned Emanuel Swarger to work with Peter Minuit’s brother-in-law, Jan Huygen, who was one of the first comforter of the sick at Manhattan. Jan Huygen was Minuit’s “Swarger,” and he might have been known as “Swarger” during Minuit’s administration. Hence, Emanuel would have been known as Emanuel Swarger, in the same fashion that “Big Manuel” was also known as Manuel Gerrit de Roux, signifying that he was assigned to one of the settlers during Minuit’s administration, Gerrit de Roux (or Reux). See “Baptisms in the Dutch Reformed Church,” Record 2 (1890), 11, 15.  

However, the list of Africans should not be construed as being exhaustive, or representing the total Black population of Manhattan. Almost all the slaves listed were Company slaves. After 1644, the slave trade to Africa was opened up to the settlers, which led to more colonists owning slaves and utilizing slave labor in their homes and on their farms. Furthermore, since only the baptismal records from September 1639 are still extant, very little is known about those Africans baptized or married before then, or those who decided not to partake in these Christian rites. Later, when the requirements for baptism became more stringent, the number of baptisms of people of African descent plummeted from fifty-seven during the period 1639-1654 to only one in 1655-1664.\footnote{\cite{Swan1990}}

The extant Baptismal Records present some interesting patterns that shed light on the creation of an African community in Manhattan. Firstly, the godparents were almost
always Africans or of African descent; on the rare occasions when the witnesses were not of African descent, they were usually neighbors. Peter St. Anthony presented Barent Jan for baptism on October 2, 1639, and Dominco Anthony, Jan Francoys, Tryntje Van Camp, Susanna D’Angola stood as godparents.\textsuperscript{43} That same year, Dominco Deis presented his daughter, Tryntie, for baptism, and Anthony Fernando, “Portagees” and Tryntje Jans stood as godparents.\textsuperscript{44} The presence of Tryntje Jans (van Camp) at these baptisms represents some of the few instances where a European appears as a witness at a baptism for a child of African descent.\textsuperscript{45} Tryntje had probably served as the midwife, assisting the mother during labor. Also, Susanna D’Angola appears to have possibly been a midwife as well, possibly trained by or working with Tryntje. Susanna appears as a witness at the baptisms of other children of African descent, where she is listed as Susanna Negrinne (which was transcribed incorrectly and written as Ederinne), Susanna Simons, or Susanna van Angola. Her possible role as a midwife or assistant to Tryntje van Camp explains her presence as a witness on March 25, 1640, at the baptism of Jan Suyderken’s son, Gerrit; it is the only time that someone of African descent appears as a witness for a child of European descent. Furthermore, on this occasion Tryntje Van Camp appears alongside her as a witness as well.

Both the given and the surnames of the Africans listed in the \textit{Baptismal Records} indicate that they belonged to the group of Atlantic creoles described by historian Ira

\textsuperscript{43} “Baptisms in the Dutch Reformed Church,” \textit{Record} 2 (1890), 10. On July 13, 1643, Domingo Anthony was one of the first person of African descent in the extant records that was granted land in Manhattan. Manuel Trompetter and Catalina (widow of Jochem Anthony) were also granted land in 1643. See Charles T. Gehring, trans. and ed., \textit{Land Papers}, 24.

\textsuperscript{44} Tryntje Van Camp and Tryntie Jans refer to the same person, but she is not the same person as Tryn Jonas. Although Tryn Jonas was the official midwife of the DWIC, other women also filled the role of midwife in the colony: Lysbeth Dircks, Anneken Bogardus (Reverend Bogardus’ wife), Anneken Loockermans, Rachel Vigne and Tryntje van Camp.

\textsuperscript{45} Reverend Everardus Bogardus appears with the wife of Anthony trumpeter, Anthony van Angola and Emanuel Congo as witnesses at the baptism of Anna, Philippe Swartinne’s daughter. When Marcus Emanuel presented his triplets (Jan, Maryse and Anna) for baptism, his neighbors, Thomas Hall and his wife, Frans Barentsz, Elizabeth Thorisen, and Willem Barentsz. and his wife stood in as godparents.
A further indication of their status as Atlantic creoles was their selection of European names for their children; all of the children in the baptismal records have distinctly non-African names. The most common male names (both given and surnames) were Anthony, Jan, Domingo and Emanuel (Manuel), and the most popular female names were Marie (or a derivative of it – Maryse, Maria, Mary, or Mayken), Anna and Catharina (or its derivative or diminutive – such as, Tryntie). It also appears that these were the names of the Africans that were most frequently cited in the colony’s Council Minutes, bringing suits against Dutch settlers, petitioning for freedom, petitioning for land, giving testimonies for other Africans so that they would prevail in their legal suits, and translating for other Africans in court cases. In 1662, the Council heard the case of Andries Jochemsen, a white colonist accused of having his tavern open on Sunday during the hours of divine service. His three customers were all members of Manhattan’s enslaved African community – Matthew, Swan and Frans. All testified that they had not begun drinking until services were letting out. Other settlers of European descent often used this line of defense in order to evade conviction under the colony’s prohibition against drinking during the times of the service. On the strength of their testimony, the tapster was freed. In another case Manuel Pieters and Pieter Tambour were called to make a statement on behalf of Domingo Angola concerning an incident of more than a year earlier. They reported that, with the consent of the excise farmer, Domingo had taken a half barrel of beer and some food to a Saturday night party that

47 Domingo was called to translate for Jan Angola in his suit where he and Wolfert Webber were accusing each other of stealing firewood; That Jan needed a translator after living in the colony for many years indicates that he was still not conversant in or did not understand Dutch very well.
48 What is also interesting is that all three men were married in the Dutch Reformed Church and presented their children for baptism, yet it is evident that on Sundays, they were not attending services. Again, it speaks to the meaning of baptism and the Dutch Reformed marriage rites for these men, demonstrating that participation in these ceremonies did not necessarily mean that one is attached to the Church. Church membership is probably a better representation of attachment.
lasted into Sunday morning, at which time they had asked the homeowner if they owed him anything, and he said they did not. This testimony was apparently sufficient to obviate the need for a court hearing.⁴⁹

Aside from showing that these Africans were quite skilled in navigating their way successfully within the colonial structure, these episodes also demonstrate that there were spaces in the lives of enslaved Africans to allow for bonds of friendship to be fostered – that they were learning how to create a niche within the system for experiences and activities that were responsive to their particular needs. Furthermore, these cases also show that some of the names most popular in the baptismal records coincidentally also belonged to the Africans who appeared to have mastered many of the skills necessary to get ahead in the colony. It is this mastery that might have gained them positions of leadership within the emerging community. In any event, that many parents chose to assign these names to their children indicates that the names of children were carefully selected to draw a connection with and an awareness of the leaders in Manhattan’s fledgling African community.⁵⁰

Like Jan Rodrigues, who arrived in the colony before them, these Africans were also distinguished by their “linguistic dexterity, cultural plasticity and social agility.”⁵¹ As Atlantic creoles they were adept at navigating within the Atlantic’s various competing cultural groups and adept at mastering the social intricacies of each culture in order to gain a favorable position for themselves. Besides recognizing baptism as a possible means of emancipation, there were free members in the community who understood that the colonial authorities were apt to free orphaned slave children if

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⁴⁹ For a discussion of all these cases see Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., NYHM: Dutch, I: 23, IV: 35, 53, 60, 62, 208-209.
someone from the freed community was willing to provide for the child, as a “foster” parent. Thus in 1663, Domingo Angola successfully petitioned that Christina, the baptized orphan of Manuel Trompeter and his wife, Antoyna, be set free as he was willing to provide for her. On March 15, 1655, Anthony Matysen, a freed African, and his wife filed a suit against Egberts van Borsum for lack of payment. At issue was an agreement between the African couple and van Borsum and his wife to rear a child of the van Borsum’s slave woman, who was probably deceased and may well have died in childbirth. The African couple had agreed to nurse the child, who was apparently an infant. What is interesting in this case is that rather than seeking remuneration that was owed, the Matysens requested that “the child be declared free,” at which point they would intend to rear the child at their expense. The Matysens were not successful in their suit, because van Borsum’s wife gave testimony that she had “bargained with pltf’s wife for the child for one year at least, and had not refused her payment of what she promised her in the presence of other negroes.” Anthony and his wife were enjoined to “deliver the negro child up to defendant, and that Egbert van Borsum shall pay what he promised at the time.”

Although their attempt to free the infant was not successful, the Matysens’ case demonstrates that once Manhattan’s enslaved Africans had secured freedom, they did not fail to use every means at their disposal to extend the same status to the younger generation.

Consider the case concerning the family of Little Anthony, a black man who was still a slave when he married Lucie d’Angola on May 5, 1641. Their son, who was also named Anthony, was baptized on July 30, 1643. Perhaps as a result of difficulties experienced during childbirth, Lucie died four weeks post-partum. The father, Little

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52 Berthold Fernow, ed., Records of New Amsterdam, I: 298.
Anthony, was apparently unable to provide for his son and he was therefore raised by Dorothy Angola, his godmother.\textsuperscript{54} Little Anthony, the father, later died in 1648, and his son remained with Dorothy. Dorothy’s husband subsequently died and she remarried Emanuel Pieters (also known as Little Manuel or Manuel Minuit) in 1653. In 1661 Dorothy and Emanuel petitioned Director General Pieter Stuyvesant and Council to declare their “foster” son free “so that he could inherit by last will and testament.” After recounting how they had cared for him as their own, giving him motherly affection and raising him without burden or expense of the colonial authorities, Emanuel and Dorothy requested that he may be declared by your noble honors to be a free person.\textsuperscript{55} With its two-pronged approach – focusing on inheritance rights and parental care – their petition was approved. Little Anthony was later deeded land on Manhattan, joining the ranks of freed Black landowners.

The petitions on behalf of Christina, Anthony and the van Borsum’s infant slave demonstrate that children of Manhattan’s enslaved African community were surrounded by a support network of biological and fictive kin, who assumed responsibility for their welfare. However, as enslaved laborers, it is evident that what was most important to the community was securing freedom for the next generation. While it is apparent from Reverend Henricus Selyn’s comment in the \textit{Ecclesiastical Records} that many Africans utilized Christian baptism as a means of securing freedom for themselves and their progeny, it is also possible that the marriage rites of the Dutch Reformed Church also served the same purpose. In one of its earliest extant instructions, the Directors of the Dutch West India Company enjoined the colony’s Director-General that “whosoever shall contract marriage on sea or land shall

\textsuperscript{54} This case also demonstrates the importance of the godparents and fictive kin in the community and specifically in the lives of the children.

immediately be discharged from the Company’s service…and from that moment be regarded as a free man and colonist.”\textsuperscript{56} This is indeed a very intriguing stipulation, one that probably distinguishes New Netherland from other colonies and might also explain why New Netherland initially turned to enslaved laborers although its raison d’être and economy did not rely on producing a labor-intensive crop.\textsuperscript{57} As a result of this policy the Africans might have viewed marriage in the Dutch Reformed Church as yet another means of eventually gaining freedom.

So on May 5, 1641, Anthony van Angola, widower of Catalina van Angola marries Lucie D’Angola, the widow of Laurens van Angola. On November 24, 1641 Jan Fort Orangien, widower of Magdalena van Angola marries Marie Grande, widower of the murdered Jan Premier. On February 26, 1642 Emanuel van Angola marries Phizithaen D’Angool, the widow of Leen Laurens. Ten days later, Franciscio van Angola marries Palassa van Angola, the widow of Francisco d’Angola. And on September 28, 1642, Andries van Angola marries Anna van Angola, the widower of Francisco van Capo Verde.\textsuperscript{58} It is possible that Anna van Angola and the other Africans who availed themselves of marriage in the Dutch Reformed Church, viewed it as a

\textsuperscript{56} A. J. F. van Laer, trans. and ed., \textit{Documents Relating to New Netherland, 1624-1626 in the Henry E. Huntington Library} (San Marino, California: The Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, 1924), 125-126. The Directors’ instructions further explain that once discharged from the Company’s service, these erstwhile employees
\textsuperscript{57} Since marriage dissolved the contractual obligations of the Company’s servants to the Company, then it would explain why the colony might have experienced a shortage in labor and would resort to using labor for the Company as a means of punishing the colony’s wrongdoers. On Thursday, February 3, 1639 Gysbert Cornelissen was “condemned to the usual punishment of trouble makers.” This meant that he was “to work with the Negroes for the Company until such time as the first sloop shall sail for the South River and to serve the Company there.” See Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., \textit{Council Minutes, 1638-1649, New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch}, Volume IV (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1974), 37. It might also explain why some of the Company’s soldiers refused to “comply with…repairing Fort Amsterdam,” refusing “to lend a helping hand, although they were offered as much as 10 stivers a day, with express promise of receiving a stiver or two more if they worked well and faithfully.” See Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, eds., \textit{Council Minutes, 1638-1649, NYHM}, Volume IV: 54. It certainly could not have been because the wages were too low since normal daily wages for “a strong, healthy man” was “8 stivers a day and his board.” See A. J. F. van Laer, trans. and ed., \textit{Documents Relating to New Netherland}, 140.
\textsuperscript{58} There are more cases of widows or widowers remarrying in the early extant marriage record than in later years. It is uncertain whether the structure of reporting marriages in the colony changed in the later period of the colony’s history, but there is a notable tapering off of widows and widowers in the records.
strategic move to increase the likelihood that both they and their children would one day be free. Of course, it is not being implied that genuine affection did not exist between the couple or that their union was only a means to an end. That their relationship was one of true affection is attested by the birth of children after the marriage. Just as there were Africans in the community who did not baptize their children, so too were there Africans who did not solemnize their union in a Christian marriage. That Anna van Angola and other Africans decided to marry in the Dutch Reformed Church meant that they placed certain significance or value in the marriage ceremony. It is argued that for many, marriage in the Dutch Reformed Church signified freedom for their descendants and themselves, which was of paramount importance for those who were enslaved. To attain freedom, the enslaved Africans utilized every means available within Manhattan’s colonial structure. It should, then, not be surprising that those who could claim familiarity with Christianity utilized the rites of the Dutch Reformed Church in order to secure a more favored position for themselves and their progeny in the colony, and ultimately freedom.

7.5

Against this background of community development, one policy that the Dutch settlers had long pursued was increasingly inflaming the Indian populations. The settlers’ partiality for the Mohawks and Mahicans, with whom the Dutch had traded at Fort Orange, aroused the jealousy of other Lower Hudson River tribes. From the colony’s earliest years of settlement, Isaack de Rasière, the colony’s commissary and Secretary, had made it a policy that the Indians should be “well treated, each according to his station and disposition.” Under his guidance, particular care was taken in trade negotiations with “two different nations” to ensure that “one is not shown more favor than the other, of which they are very jealous...All of which should from time to time be
looked into, to prevent discontent and to keep all the nations devoted to” the Dutch settlers.\textsuperscript{59} This was a prudent policy, one that apparently was not followed during Willem Kieft’s administration. Furthermore, the Directors of the DWIC were concerned that the Indians “see that both in civil and criminal cases” New Netherland’s officials were careful to “do justice without regard to persons.” Consequently, they gave the colony’s Director-Generals strict instructions for dealing with the eventuality if any settlers suffered “violence or be wronged by any Indian or native either in his person or with regard to the property entrusted to him.” They were enjoined to notify the tribe to whom such Indian belongs of the wrong done and the person who committed it, demanding that he be punished therefore and that our people be notified of the punishment [and advising them] that in default thereof we shall, for our protection and the maintenance of justice, seek to get hold of the delinquent and have him punished by the Council according to his deserts and as will be right and reasonable.\textsuperscript{60}

This policy did not lead to the desired effect, as the Indians had a very different means of dealing with wrongdoings; under the Native American system of justice payments were made to the wronged party to “remove” the transgression. Such a system of “justice” was not recognized by the colonists and only served to anger them when the Indians did not comply with their request to submit the suspected wrongdoer to European-defined and determined forms of punishment. Moreover, although the Directors also expressed the desire that if any settler “commits any wrong against the Indians or the natives, he shall be punished as the circumstances of his crime require,” the practice of barring the testimony of Indians in court cases unless it was corroborated by another European settler invariably nullified this instruction.\textsuperscript{61} The result was that

the Indians were angered by the prevalent dishonesty of the settlers who bilked them when they were drunk and the apparent acquiescence and silence of the Director-General and the colonial authorities when these crimes were committed.

In the midst of this tense environment, Director-General Kieft and his Council in September 1639, asserting that “the Company is put to great expense both in building fortifications and in supporting soldiers and sailors,” made an imprudent attempt to tax the Indians for the maintenance of the Dutch militia and the Fort on the grounds that the Dutch soldiers were protecting the Indians around Manhattan Island from “their enemies.” This “contribution” was to be in the “form of skins, maize and seawan.” They further threatened that those “nations which is not in a friendly way disposed to make such contribution it shall be urged to do so in the most suitable manner.”

Viewing this new law as a further attempt by the Kieft administration to extend Dutch rule upon the local tribes, one sachem sent back a sharp reply, warning the Dutch not to attempt to collect such “contributions.” It was evident that this new tribute law had incensed many of the local Indians. The following spring, the Raritans, a band of Munsee Indians who lived in villages in northern New Jersey west of Staten Island, boarded the Dutch trading yacht, Peace, and insulted the crew by bringing squirrel pelts to trade instead of beaver, and slapping a crew member in the face with them. It is possible that this vessel was not only there for the purpose of trading, but also with the

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63 Henry C. Murphy, trans., “Broad Advice,” 253-254. The Indians argued that “they did not consider themselves bound to contribute to the director or the Netherlanders: 1. Not for the purpose of maintaining the soldiers, as they did them no service when they were engaged in war with other tribes; that they...could be killed a thousand times before any tidings could come to the fort, which was situated far from them, much less could they be rescued by the soldiers, or seconded in time by them. 2...that they had allowed [the Dutch] to take possession of the country peaceably; that they had never demanded any thing for it; and that [the Dutch] were indebted to them for that reason, and not they to [them]. 3...that when [the Dutch] having lost a certain ship there, had built another new ship, they had assisted [them] with provisions and all kinds of necessaries, and had taken care of them for two winters, until the ship was finished, for which [the Dutch] were indebted to them, and not they to [the Dutch]. 4. Wherefore, they asked, for what reason should they give [the Dutch] maize for nothing, when they paid for every thing they came to buy of [the Dutch], as much as [they] asked?...”
intent of collecting “contributions” from the Indians. The Dutch feared for their lives, but were able to escape before anyone was hurt. This “insolence” had angered Kieft and his officials, who were then intent on finding an excuse to punish the Raritans in order to protect “the reputation of the Lords States General, the respect and interests of the honorable Company, and the safety of” the settlers’ “lives and cattle.” Shortly after this incident, when some hogs were killed on Staten Island, the Dutch were quick to blame the Raritans, connecting the two events, although it was later discovered that the hogs were stolen by other settlers. Director-General Kieft charged the innocent Raritans with the crime and sent “50 soldiers and 20 sailors, together with the secretary and the sergeant,” armed with muskets and pikes, across the harbor “to attack them, to cut down their corn and to make as many prisoners as they can, unless they willingly come to an agreement and make reparation.” When Secretary Cornelis van Tienhoven arrived with the troops to demand payment of the tribute, the Indians refused to relinquish payment. The troops then requested that they be allowed to “kill and plunder.” According to David Pieterszen de Vries, Secretary Cornelis van Tienhoven stated that he had no orders to do so and left the troops, “protesting against any injury which should happen by reason of their disobedience and violation of orders.” However soon after he left, the troops killed several Raritans, including the brother of the sachem. One of the soldiers, Govert Loockermans, was reputed to have “tortured the chief’s brother in his private parts with a piece of split wood” before killing him.

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64 David Pieterszen de Vries, “Korte Historiael,” 208. Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Styker-Rodda, eds., NYHM: Dutch, IV: 87. It is stated that “this spring, anon 1640, it happened that [the Raritans] attempted to capture our sloop which had but three men on board, to kill the crew and to take the cargo, but through the grace of God this was courageously prevented, the Indians being driven again from board, with the loss of only our canoe, whereupon they came to Staten Island, shot some of the Company’s hogs and plundered the house of the Negro. Wishing to obtain satisfaction thereof, we notified them to come here to indemnify us, but they laughed at us.”


Kieft had probably concluded that a show of power, would deter the Indians, but the tactic backfired. Instead of acquiescing the Raritans retaliated. They burned and ruined de Vries’ Staten Island settlement and killed four of his workmen. They also murdered any settlers they met in the forests. Furthermore, neighboring Munsee tribes who were allies of the Raritans were angered and refused to pay tribute any longer. Kieft’s reaction to the growing hostilities was to outlaw the Raritans and eliminate them through genocide.\textsuperscript{67} He placed a bounty of 10 fathoms of sewant on the head of each Raritan who was killed. It was not an effective policy, as many of the local Indians were allied. However, in November, Pacham, a sachem from another Munsee group, the Tankitekes, and “who was great with the governor at the fort” brought Kieft a stick with a hand whose owner was never verified, claiming that “it was the hand of the chief who had killed or shot with arrows” the Dutch men on Staten Island. He further explained that he had carried out this act “because he loved the Swannekens…who were his best friends.”\textsuperscript{68}

Soon, however, other heads would roll. In 1641, another incident, which while unrelated to the sequence of events surrounding the Raritans served to intensify tensions between the Dutch and the Munsee groups around Manhattan. Many years earlier, prior to the settlement of New Netherland some Dutch traders had murdered an Indian from the Wieckquaeskeck tribe north of Manhattan. His nephew, who was then a young boy, vowed revenge. In 1641, amid the growing tension, the boy (who was now grown) attacked Claes Swits in his wheelwright shop at the north end of Manhattan Island. While Swits was bent over retrieving tradegoods, the young Indian seized an axe and almost cut the worker’s head from his body. The Indian returned to his tribe in


\textsuperscript{68} David Pieterszen de Vries, “Korte Historiael,” in \textit{NNN}, 208.
triumph, carrying the worker’s scalp. The murder that was committed on the Wieckquaeskeck road years earlier thus became an element in the grim logic of retribution that often governs culture clashes, as one event triggers another, across space and time, leading to greater, bloodier reprisals. Director-General Kieft ordered the murderer turned over, but the sachem refused to give him up, saying “that he was sorry that twenty Christians had not been murdered and that this Indian had only “rightfully avenged “the death of his uncle who…had been slain by the Dutch twenty-one years before.”

Kieft was determined to punish the Wieckqueskecks the way he had the Raritans, but he needed the sanction of the community. Kieft may also have become aware of the tenuousness of his position amongst the colonists. Consequently, he enjoined the settlers to select twelve men who were “empowered…to resolve on everything with the Director and Council.” They would be the voice of the people and assist him in making decisions regarding how to deal with the Natives. Without becoming aware of it, Kieft in effect created the first representative assembly in New Netherlands. David Pieterszen de Vries was chosen president. Through the Council of the Twelve Select Men, the inhabitants were extended a voice in governing the colony. Furthermore, it had united them as a group, and encouraged them in their expectation that their wishes and vision for the colony would be given weight in deciding the course of the government and the future of the colony. Kieft convened these twelve representatives in November 1641, and put forth three proposals for their consideration: “First. Is it not right and proper to punish the scandalous murder lately perpetrated by a savage on Claes Swits.” It was further asked that if the murderer’s tribe did not

70 “Journal of New Netherland,” in NNN, 415. The Twelve Select Men included “Jacques Bentyn, [Maryn Adriaensen], Jan Damen, Hendrick [Jansen], tailor, David Pietersen [de Vries], Jacob Stoffelsen, Abraham Molenaer, Frederick Lubberson, [Jochim Pietersen], Jacob van…. Gerrit Dircks, George Rapalie, Abraham Planck.”
surrender him to the Dutch was “it not right to destroy the whole village to which” the
Indian belongs. Next, it was asked “in what manner and at what time should it be
done?” Finally, it was asked “by whom shall it be executed?”

The Twelve resolved that war should be commenced if the murderer was refused, but that the attack should “be made in the harvest when the Indians were hunting.”

However, in the meanwhile in order to not cause the Indians to be suspicious “a friendly traffic” should be “carried…until the maize trade be over, and until an opportunity and God’s will be made manifest.” It was suggested that the Director send a sloop as much as three times in order to demand peaceably the surrender of the murderer “for the purpose of lulling the suspicions of the Indians without any threats.” However, once the Indians were out hunting, the settlers would form two war parties and “the Director shall personally lead the expedition” “to harass” the Indians “from two directions; and that the Director shall employ hereunto as many of the strongest and most active of the Negroes as he can conveniently spare and provide them with a small ax and half-pike.”

It is evident that the Twelve Select representatives agreed that declaring war against the Indians was a viable response, but they were awaiting the opportune time to execute their plan.

When Kieft again summoned the Twelve delegates later in November to ascertain whether they thought it advisable, “as the time and opportunity now present themselves to surprise the Indians” only one man thought that “war cannot be carried out successfully as the undertaking against the Raretangs came to a standstill.” All of the

24 Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Styker-Rodda, eds., NYHM: Dutch, IV: 126. Joachim Pieterszen Kuyter “says that it will be best to have patience and to lull the Indians to sleep. Jaques Bentyn says that it will be best to kill the Indians so as to fill them with fear. Jan Eversen says that he does not think it advisable to undertake anything against the savages but to lull them to sleep so as to avoid
other representatives were in favor of war, differing only in when such an action should be engendered. Jaques Bentyn and Abraham Pieterszen were the most hawkish, calling for killing or exterminating the Indians in order to “fill them with fear.” The dominant opinion, however, was that the Director-General and Council would “watch for the proper time and opportunity, it being understood that the barbarous murder must be revenged for the sake and security of our lives.” But there was an important stipulation that “if anything be undertaken…everyone will be notified as promptly as possible….75

Many obstacles prevented the execution of the representatives' proposal. Finally in 1642 “it was resolved to avenge the perpetrated outrage.”76 Instead of leading the attack against the Indians as the Twelve suggested, Kieft acted on February 25 by sending an expedition against the Wieckquaeskecks in Westchester County under the leadership of Ensign Hendrick van Dyck. This expedition was thwarted when the soldiers were lost en route “in consequence of the darkness of the night.”77 Eventually, the Indians signed a treaty, once they realized that they had only narrowly escaped death at the hands of the Dutch settlers. The Wieckquaeskecks promised to “deliver up the murderer or inflict justice themselves…but did not keep their word.”78

While these events were unfolding, another situation developed across the Hudson involving yet another Munsee group, the Hackensack Indians, who were already irritated over a questionable takeover of their land by Myndert Myndertz van der Horst. Van der Horst had apparently settled on the land against the advice of Director-General Kieft and without the approval of the Indians. Van der Horst’s cattle had destroyed the Hackensacks’ garden and provision ground. This had created a lot of

tension between the Indians and the settlers. Some Hackensack Indians killed an Englishman, one of David Pieterszen de Vries’ servants. A few days later, the son of one of the Hackensack sachems was invited to Van der Horst’s house and sold him brandy and then stole his beaver-skin coat when he had fallen into an alcoholic induced stupor. When the Indian woke up and discovered his coat missing, he shot an arrow that killed a Dutch man who was thatching the roof of van der Horst’s house. Kieft, of course, demanded the surrender of the murderer, even promising a reward, only to get the usual response: “a scoffing answer” and laughter. Furthermore, the Hackensacks asserted that the murderer had fled to the Tantiketes, another Munsee group that lived “a two day’s journey.”

The frequent eruption in violence was unnerving to the settlers, serving to increase their distrust and paranoia. What was further unsettling was that after Ensign Hendrick van Dyck’s failed expedition, the settlers now faced the realization that their practice of “having the Indians daily in their houses” was tantamount to living with and entertaining their enemies. This thought was given further credence when the Narragansett sachem from Rhode Island, Miantonomi, visited the Native American villages on Long Island during the summer of 1642 with one hundred of his warriors to recruit allies for a war against the Mohegans in Connecticut. Tensions were further aggravated, as Kieft and the settlers out of paranoia misinterpreted Miantonomi’s intention and became convinced that a secret uprising was being organized against the Dutch and English. They saw the treacherous intentions of the Indians behind every unexplained or extraordinary event. They claimed that “some of the neighboring Indians attempted to set our powder on fire.” Not succeeding in this “devilry,” it was

even proffered that the Indians attempted “to poison the Director or to enchant him by their devilry.”

As winter arrived tension and paranoia increased, leading to deeper distrust and disunity. United under their representative body, many in the “Commonalty” increasingly felt that their interests and opinions about the best means of dealing with the Indians diverged from that of Director-General Kieft’s; they “seriously distrusting the Director.” As a result of his inaction, some of the inhabitants began to suspect and accuse him “of conniving with the Indians,” arguing “that an attempt was [made] to sell Christian blood.” Consequently, they resolved that although “the will of the entire Commonalty was surrendered to” Director-General Kieft, “inasmuch as he would not avenge blood, they would do it, be the consequence what it may.” Hoping to satisfy the settlers, Kieft informed Pacham, the sachem of the Haverstraws, another Munsee group, “who interested himself in this matter, warning him that [the Dutch] should wait no longer inasmuch as no satisfaction had been given.” But Kieft continued to wait for a sign.

For many, including Kieft, the events that unfolded in February 1643 seem to satisfy the requirements of the Twelve Select Men who had decided that “friendly intercourse” be maintained with the Indians “until the opportunity presents itself and the will of God be made manifest.” In February when the Mohawks and Mahicans attacked the Wieckquaeskeck, causing them to flee to the houses of the “Christians” on Manhattan Island, the Dutch initially “humanely received” them. They were “half dead of cold and hunger,” and the Dutch settlers supported them “for fourteen days; even some of the Director’s corn was sent to them.” Although not mentioned in the known

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extant records, it is possible that some of the colonists considered whether the time was right to strike them, even as they “humanely received” them. But no action was taken, and it even appears that the Indians might have returned to their villages, because the records state that “a short time after, another panic seized” the Wieckquaeskeck, which caused them to fly to divers places in the vicinity of the Dutch.” This time, however, they fled with the Hackensacks to the vicinity of Fort Amsterdam and at Pavonia. It must have seemed like a gift from God, that the tribes that had been the source of the past conflicts were helplessly gathered amongst the Dutch. Indeed, there were those who felt that “God had wreaked vengeance on those of the Witquescheck,” by allowing their enemies to attack them, causing them to flee. Additionally, they also saw the hand of God in the Indians’ sudden reappearance amongst them; it was the long-awaited sign from God that “the opportunity” was at hand for the colonists “to wreak vengeance” upon their Indian enemies “for the innocent blood” they had shed and their countless other acts of “insolence.”

On that cold night in February 1643, the Indian fugitives at Pavonia and others at Corlaer’s Hook on Manhattan were asleep. Induced by three of the Twelve, who had signed the petition for war in the name of all the Twelve, Kieft finally received sanction for his desire to “wipe the mouths of the savages.” He promptly ordered two armed parties out from the Fort. One group went north to butcher the refugees at Corlaer’s Hook. They set upon the unsuspecting Indians and proceeded to indiscriminately kill forty of them. Another group of armed men was sent to Pavonia. Silently crossing the river, the Dutch invaded the encampment and turned the snow red with the blood of men, women and children. It is said that David Pieterszen de Vries watched the fighting

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and flames from the wall of Fort Amsterdam. He reported that the sky was lit with the
fires from their tents. Between 100 and 110 Wieckquaeskeck and Wappinger were
murdered that night in what was a prelude to Kieft’s War. 85 De Vries reportedly told
Director-General Kieft, who had remained in safety at the fort, that he had commenced
the ruin of the colony by ordering the murder of Indians “without warning the
inhabitants in the open lands, that each one might take care of himself against the
retaliation of the savages,” because while he aimed to exterminate the Indians “he could
not kill all.” 86 Kieft ignored de Vries. When the Dutch troops returned to the fort with
30 prisoners and the heads of a number of Indians on their pikes, he shook their bloody
hands delightedly, praised them and gave them presents. The soldiers, it was reported,
also used the severed heads to play kickball. 87

Any celebration on the part of some Dutch settlers was short-lived. The
massacres had the effect of bringing the Munsee tribes together in common cause
against the Dutch. Kieft had seriously underestimated the strength of the Indians. He
had reasoned that in order to permanently “restore peace and quiet throughout the land,
the Indians who had waged war” against the Dutch “should be wholly destroyed and
exterminated.” However, estimating that the numbers of their Indian enemies were
“not above three hundred strong,” Kieft concluded that their extermination could be
accomplished with “one hundred and fifty soldiers, armed with muskets and coats of
mail, and provided with sufficient munitions of war.” 88 More than seven different tribes
formed an alliance to assist the Hackensacks, Wieckquaeskecks and Tappans in
attacking outlying Dutch farms and settlements. 89 The settlers on Manhattan were

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86 David Pieterszen de Vries, “Korte Historiael,” in NNN, 227. For a discussion of some of the events of
Kieft’s War see Henry C. Murphy, “Broad Advice,” 254-259.
forced to withdraw into Fort Amsterdam. The settlers on Long Island petitioned for permission to attack and slay the Indians living near their settlement, but Kieft denied them their request since those Indians had done the Dutch “no harm and showed” them “every friendship. (Yea, had even voluntarily killed some of the Raritans,” who were enemies of the Dutch. Against Kieft’s orders, the settlers attacked the village of the Long Island Indians, killed two Indians, and stole their maize. This served to spread the war to the Munsees on western Long Island. By the end of winter, twenty tribes had consolidated in the fight against the Dutch.

The colonists must have been amazed at the maelstrom that had been unleashed. However, David Pieterszen de Vries believed the situation might still be salvaged. That spring, De Vries convinced sixteen Munsee sachems to sit down in a meeting with Governor Kieft. Still denouncing the Dutch as “corn thieves,” they agreed to a truce and sent envoys to the Tappans and Hackensacks urging them to do the same. The Wappingers were not satisfied, however, and the fighting resumed during the fall of 1643. Led by Pacham, the Tantikete sachem, the Indians’ attack became more strategic, aimed at decimating the entire colony. They seized boats sailing from Fort Orange with beavers, killed several other settlers under the pretense of coming to trade, and attacked and burnt several boweries, “not by open violence, but by stealthily creeping through the bush with fire in hand, and in this way igniting the roofs.” The settlers lamented that “nothing was...heard but murders; most of which were committed under pretense of coming to put Christians on their guard.” Kieft may have become aware he had unleashed a whirlwind of terror. On September 13, 1643, he again asked the prominent

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91 For a discussion of the peace negotiations with the Long Island tribes, see David Pieterszen de Vries, “Korte Historiael,” in _NNN_, 229-232.


family heads to create a new counsel, calling the group the Council of Eight Men. Instead of sanctioning Kieft’s actions, however, the Eight sought an expanded role in New Amsterdam’s government and, ultimately, petitioning the States General for relief or independence from Kieft and the authority of the Dutch West India Company.\footnote{E. B. O’Callaghan, _DRCHNY_, Vol. I: 153-155, 190-203.}

The Eight Men assembled on October 6, 1643 and drafted a proposal demanding that Kieft send delegates to the English colony in New England “to request an auxiliary force of one hundred and fifty men, for whose pay a bill of Exchange should be given for twenty-five thousand guilders; that N. Netherland should be mortgaged to the English as security for the payment thereof.”\footnote{E. B. O’Callaghan, _DRCHNY_, Vol. I: 185.} With this payment, John Underhill, mercenary and veteran of the recent Pequot War, was hired and the Dutch offensive was renewed in the spring of 1644. After an unsuccessful expedition against the Raritans on Staten Island, the English and Dutch combined strategically to decimate the Canarsee, Massapequa and other Indians living on the western end of Long Island. Captain Underhill brought with him two companies of 120 to 150 volunteers and Mohegan scouts. Underhill’s company proceeded to kill over 500 Indian men, women and children on Long Island. Kieft then declared a day of thanksgiving. Other attacks followed against. Underhill’s army also attacked Indian encampments north of Stamford, Connecticut, killing some 700 people before sunrise on a single day. During Kieft’s War, Captain Underhill again fulfilled his reputation as the “scourge of the Indians” and exercised his unusual Christian belief that “Scripture declareth women and children must perish with their parents.”\footnote{For a discussion of John Underhill and his activities during the Pequot War see, Michael LeRoy Oberg, _Uncas: First of the Mohegans_ (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 67-68.} By the time the Indian sachems came to make peace at Fort Amsterdam, they and their allies had purportedly lost at least 1,600
of their people in the fighting. The Dutch still had their hands bound, however, because the Munsees, who had suffered more than 1,000 dead, refused to stop fighting. 97

By the summer of the following year, the Dutch and Wappingers used the Mahicans’ influence to establish a tenuous peace. The Munsees, realizing their tribe was threatened with extinction, finally agreed to terms. A treaty, brokered by the Mohawks and Mahicans, and signed on August 30, 1645. 98 It made the Wappingers and western Munsees subjects of the Mahicans, forcing them to pay an enormous annual tribute of wampum to the Mahicans. This agreement effectively put the Mahicans (and indirectly the Mohawks, to whom the Mahicans paid tribute according to the treaty of 1628) in control of the wampum trade on Long Island. Insultingly, the Mahicans did not collect the tribute personally, but used the Wappingers as collection agents. 99

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By August 30, 1645, Kieft’s War had ended and on August 31, 1645 a day of general thanksgiving was planned for September 6. 100 Peace was celebrated, but it was a bitter sweet celebration. Many of those who did not leave to return to the Fatherland had succumbed during the war. Manhattan was left with only 100 white male settlers. Much about the war had shocked the settlers: the surprising strength of the Indians; the rampant acts of brutality, especially by the settlers who were supposed to be civilized Christians; and the devastation and destruction it left behind. During the celebration of peace, the cannons were fired; one of the cannons, a six-pounder, exploded killing Jacobsen Roy, a gunner. Many in the community wondered what this mis-firing meant

98 For the full details of the treaty see Arnold J. F. Van Laer, trans., and Kenneth Scott and Kenn Styker-Rodda, eds., NYHM: Dutch, IV: 278-280.  
99 For a discussion of the August 1645 treaty see Allen W. Trelease, Indian Affairs in Colonial New York: The Seventeenth Century (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 82-84.  
– was it a sign from God, of his displeasure with them; was He signifying His unwillingness to grant them peace unless they cleansed themselves from the sins of the war?

It seems that there were many who felt the need to be cleansed. Although the writer of the anti-Kieft pamphlet entitled *Broad Advice to the United Netherland Provinces* is unknown, it is apparent that it was written to not only to condemn Willem Kieft but also to alleviate a sense of wrongdoing. It begins and ends with biblical admonitions. Opening with verses Isaiah Chapter 1, it admonishes the Netherlanders that “your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.” For the writer, God was beckoning to the Dutch settlers: “Come now…saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” How the colonists decided to deal with the events of Kieft’s War, the writer felt, held significance not only for the “fatherless,” “the widow,” or the “oppressed,” but it could determine much about the colony’s future, even its very existence: “if you be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land’ But if you refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”

—Henry C. Murphy, trans., “Broad Advice,” 239. Quoted from Isaiah 1: 12-20. Although the writer of the “Broad Advice” is unknown, Henry Murphy proffers the opinion that “judging from the work itself, we may reasonably attribute it to Cornelis Melyn himself, whose cause it so zealously espouses; or to his dictation, as he had returned to Holland, on his banishment from New Netherland, at the time of the publication, and was a native of Antwerp, where it was printed.” However, the heavy emphasis on religious arguments, suggests that the writer was a devout Christian. If so, then Joachim Pietersen Kuyter seems like a more likely candidate for its authorship, as his contemporaries often described him as a devout Christian and he was in Holland at the same time traveling with Melyn. Furthermore, the particular care that is taken in defending Reverend Everardus Bogardus, suggests also that a devout member of New Amsterdam’s Dutch Reformed Church wrote it. Since Kuyter was an Elder of the Church and one of the members of New Amsterdam’s consistory, he seems like a more apt candidate for the pamphlet’s authorship. Finally, the manner in which the verses from Isaiah seem to imply a personal admonition from God, a sense of personal guilt, indicating that perhaps the writer took part in some of the massacres, again points to Joachim Pietersen Kuyter, who accompanied Captain Underhill as the captain of the forces ofburghers during the massacre of the Long Island, Staten Island and New England Indians. These were some of the most bloodiest battles, with the greatest amount of Native American casualties. One can understand
What could the colonists do? How could they respond to the admonition that came from “the mouth of the Lord?” The Counsel of Eight, upon whom the settlers now relied, had no legal executive power that Director-General Kieft felt compelled to recognize. The war had brought them together as a people and a community. Those who stayed behind and did not flee, those who did not retreat to the safety of Holland, felt a closeness, a level of amity that is probably similar to that shared by men in battle. More than ever, they had concluded that their futures, their hopes and vision for Manhattan, their new home, were not the same as those of the Company and its representative Director-General Kieft. Their plans were often frustrated by Governor Kieft. When the Eight protested his methods of taxation, Kieft declared, “in this country, I am my own master and may do as I please.”

In response to the will of the people the Eight sent a petition to the authorities in Holland, but not to the Directors of the DWIC; it was sent to the States General advising them of the critical situation and asking for Kieft’s recall. One year later, on July 28, 1646, Governor Kieft was ordered to return to Holland and respond to charges against him, and to explain his actions during the War. Reverend Everardus Bogardus was one of the enraged colonists, calling the Director-General “a child of the devil” from the pulpit. On one occasion, Bogardus said that if Kieft would not behave himself he would give him such a “shake from the pulpit the next Sabbath as would make him tremble like a bowl of jelly.” This tongue-lashing resulted in Kieft refusing to attend services and set into motion a feud between the colony’s civil and religious authority at a time when unity was sorely needed. At issue, once again, was Willem Kieft and Everardus Bogardus’ divergent views on

why he would want to “cleanse” his hands or why he would feel that he had blood on his hands and needed to be washed as white as snow.

church-state authority. Director-General Kieft and his “Council” took the Remonstrant position that the civic authorities were sovereign, exercising final authority in both civil and ecclesiastical affairs. On the other hand, Reverend Bogardus espoused the views of the Counter-Remonstrants that while the Dutch Reformed Church must remain autonomous from the State in the areas of doctrine and ecclesiastical polity, the civil and ecclesiastical realms of the society were inextricably linked and that state authorities should be open to advice from the ecclesiastical authorities even on the most purely civil matters. Ideally, Bogardus envisioned a harmonious society where the civil authorities would support the sovereignty of the Dutch Reformed Church and faith above all others and would also obey the advice of the religious authorities in order to preserve society’s order. Kieft, however, held to the opinion that since the civil authorities were sovereign, it was the duty of the religious authorities to support the agenda, policies and authority of the civil authorities unequivocally from the pulpit.

The brutality of the war and the subsequent devastation it wrought upon the colony had incensed Bogardus. Like the other colonists, Bogardus had a vested interest in the future of the colony. He was a landowner, he was married in the colony, he sired several children, and for all intents and purposes he had cast his future with the future and well-being of the colony. Now, the colony was decimated, and like the leading burghers of the community, he held Director-General Kieft responsible. His opinions and decisions were as much influenced by his views on church-state authority as it was by the fact that he was a settler. He did not, like Kieft, intend to return to Holland. He had made his wealth in the colony; he gained prestige, wealth, and power, beyond what

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he could have possessed in Holland. And like the leading burghers, Bogardus was
sought Kieft’s recall.

But, Kieft’s recall did not satisfy the settlers and silence the discussions about the
war. The end of the war signaled the beginning of a contest for meaning. There were
those who felt that Kieft had to be punished in order for the colony to flourish. Many
others were outraged – many settlers felt that the Natives had got the best of them in
decimating the colony, some spoke of the shame and lowered perception that others
(English, Swedes and Indians) had of the Dutch after the war. However, the vast
majority of people felt that the barbarity and savagery of the war had to be explained.
However, when one considers that after the massacre during the night of February 25,
several of the settlers had petitioned Kieft to attack the Munsees living on Long Island,
who had remained peaceful towards them during all the tension, it becomes quite
difficult to place all the blame for the war on Kieft’s shoulders; particularly when one
considers that Kieft refused to sanction violence against these Long Island Indians.

Considering these points, one cannot help but to wonder whether there would be
as great an outrage by the Dutch, both in the colony and in the Fatherland, if Kieft had
been successful in his decimation of the Natives – if the Natives had not come so close to
eliminating the Dutch settlement at the tip of Manhattan Island and bring to a close the
Dutch colonial experimentation in North America? That these Wilden – these inferior,
“stupid,” “uncivil,” wilden, as Reverend Jonas Michaëlius described the Natives – had
been so successful in “taking charge of the colony,” had to be explained. Did it mean
that the Indians were superior to the Dutch, since they mastered them in battle? The

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108 See Henry C. Murphy, trans., “Broad Advice.” The entire pamphlet, it can be argued, was published
because of the shame the author felt regarding the events of Kieft’s War.
110 Albert Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland; His Life and Work;
Together with the Facsimile, Transcription and English Translation of an Extensive Unknown Autograph
Dutch settlers’ seventeenth century worldview and epistemology could not allow such an explanation to take firm shape in their minds. Nothing in their past understandings about themselves and about Native Americans, non-Christians and especially non-Europeans, could have provided such a thought with enough force to sustain it, that it might grow to be more than just a fleeting notion of a mere vapor of an idea. No, such a thought it seems likely would have been suffocated, banished and eradicated from the mind before it even took firm root. Instead, the settlers turned to one of the few explanations that allowed them to maintain their sense of superiority: God had selected to use the gross things of the world, these *Wilden*, to punish them for their sinfulness.\(^1\)

In this, the minister was also culpable; he was to set an example, but the settlers and the DWIC argued that his drinking, arguing, dissolute life was helping to bring God’s righteous judgment on the colony.\(^2\) And although the Councilmen and burghers were no friends of Willem Kieft, the events of the War had made it now very necessary that Reverend Bogardus repent and change his ways. In the past, they had overlooked his drinking and dissolute life, and they had sided with him against Lubbertus van Dincklagen when as schout-fiscal van Dincklagen charged Bogardus with mismanaging the affairs of the church. Now, the war had changed everything. They could no longer ignore such behavior, especially among the leading men of the colony. Their outspoken condemnation of Reverend Bogardus signaled a shift in the larger community’s acceptance of certain behavior.

On May 11, 1647, the new Director-General, Peter Stuyvesant, arrived to replace Director-General Kieft. However, so much had changed in the colony – particularly in the minds of the colonists. Stuyvesant was inheriting a colony and a group of

\(^{111}\) E. B. O’Callaghan, *DRCHNY*, Vol. I: 190. According to the Eight Men, “Almighty God finally, through his righteous judgment, hath in this current year kindled around us the fire of an Indian war in which not only numbers of innocent people, men, women and children, have been murdered in their houses and at their work, and swept into captivity (whereby this place with all its inhabitants is come to the greatest ruin).”

inhabitants that were very different from the ones that greeted Kieft when he first arrived in the colony. These settlers had seen the potential of Manhattan – they experienced the benefits of a growing population, they experienced the security of a more settled colony, they had created roots that were thriving (economic, social, and communal), they experienced a flourishing colony – only to have that prematurely ripped from them. It made them angry, and this anger fueled their resolve to see Kieft punished for his actions.
IV.

REFORMATION, RIVALRIES AND RELINQUISHMENT
8. Community Reformation and Community Contestations

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The sun rose on March 29, 1647, to reveal a large peculiar white object steadily floating in the cold waters of the North (Hudson) River near Fort Orange. The ice that had transformed the northern stretches of the river into a frozen expanse in the winter had probably only recently begun to break up with the arrival of spring, allowing ships, and, also a remarkable white whale to move upriver. The unusual appearance of the whale incited “great amazement” among “most all of the inhabitants.” For some, it was simply a “strange” occurrence to be explained by looking towards natural causations. But to others, probably the majority, it had ominous, almost supernatural, significance, as a religious portent, a commentary on domestic fortunes, or a warning of future disaster. In describing the perplexing sight, Anthony de Hooges, secretary of the local patroonship of Rensselaerswyck, stated that “a certain fish appeared” from downriver “and swam past us a certain distance up to the sand bars and came back towards evening, going down past us again.” He continued, “It seemed very strange to us because there are many sand bars between us and Manhattan, and also because it was snow-white, such as no one among us has ever seen; especially…because it covered a distance of 20 [Dutch] miles of fresh water in contrast to salt water, which is its element. Only God knows what it means.”

It would appear that de Hooges sided with those who believed there was a supernatural explanation to the appearance of the white whale at Fort Orange. He added ominously, “on the same evening that this fish appeared before us, we had the

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first thunder and lightening of the year.” Furthermore, there was a repeat occurrence
three weeks later. On April 19 “another fish appeared…around noon before Fort
Orange with the high water.”

For Anthony de Hooges and countless other settlers both
at Fort Orange and Manhattan Island, the appearance of the whales coupled with the
timing of the first lightening and thunder was nothing less than a divine message, with
the whale playing the role of the “snow-white” providential messenger. It is well
known that whales were often viewed as significant portents by the Dutch. But is
seemed unclear was whether this particular messenger warned of future woes or
imminent blessings.

On that spring day in 1647 there was much that the inhabitants of Manhattan
had to be uncertain about. Some felt that the atrocities committed during Director-
General Willem Kieft’s administration cried out for divine retribution. They claimed
that factions, wars, vendettas and quarrels had brought the colony to the brink of
destruction. As a result of the recent wars and disturbances trade had been abruptly
interrupted and had not yet recovered fully. Moreover, rampant smuggling,
lawlessness, dissension, licentiousness and disorder marred the colony. Symbolically,
even the fort on Manhattan was crumbling and needed to be rebuilt from the ground up.
In other words, the colony was a picture of neglect and poor administration. But there
was some hope: the Directors of the Dutch West India Company had commissioned a
new Director-General for New Netherland on July 28, 1646. After several disappointing
Director-Generals, the Directors selected someone whom they believed would be loyal

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3 Simon Schama, The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age (New York: Vintage Books, 1997), 134-135. According to Schama, while these appearances “could be used for commentary on domestic as well as foreign strife,…it was between 1570 and 1650 that they made their mark in prints, doggerel verses and moral-polemical broadsides. And this was exactly the formative period when a Dutch culture was being shaped by the apprehensions and uncertainties of war and religious conflict. Hence it is not surprising to find the beached whale repeatedly taken as a commentary on national fortunes or an augury of crises ahead.”
to the Company and would finally be able to cure all of New Netherland’s woes. They needed someone who would not seek to enrich himself at the expense of the Company, and who could finally bring law and order to the faltering American colony. Hopefully, he would be someone who understood the fragile position of the Dutch in North America and would take the proper steps to strengthen their position vis-à-vis other European nations and the various Native groups. And if the members of the Dutch Reformed Church’s Consistory of Amsterdam had a say in the matter, the new leader should also loyal to the Dutch Reformed Church, a devout Calvinist who embraced the doctrines of the Reformed faith and who would seek to promote the firm establishment of the Dutch Reformed Church in New Netherland.

The man eventually selected for the difficult task was Petrus Stuyvesant. When he sailed from the Texel on Christmas 1646, he represented the future hopes not only of the Dutch West India Company, but of the Dutch Reformed Church and the dispirited colonists of Manhattan as well. Stuyvesant had been born in 1612, the first child of Margaretha Hardenstein and Balthasar Stuyvesant, the orthodox Counter-Remonstrant militant Calvinist minister from Dokkum. Like his father, Petrus was also an orthodox Calvinist. Stuyvesant attended the University at Franeker, a strict and militant Calvinist institution. His family and educational background, and even his marriage to Judith Bayard (the daughter of a Dutch Reformed minister), had marked Stuyvesant as a

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5 Jaap Jacobs, “Like Father, Like Son?,” 229. According to Jacobs, “Franeker…was more than other Dutch universities a Counter-Remonstrant bulwark.” Apparently, “the university at Franeker had been founded by the States of Friesland in 1585 with the aim of educating new ministers for the Calvinist Reformed Church in its territory…Over the gate of the university a motto, flanked by the arms of Friesland, the stadtholder and the city of Franeker, was chiseled into stone: ‘Christo et Ecclesiæ’ [for Christ and the Church]. It was a battle cry, heralding the militant brand of Calvinism that the founders hoped would spread throughout Friesland. In comparison with the university of Leiden, founded ten years earlier, Franeker was a strict Calvinist institution. The Franeker professors of theology were more orthodox than those at Leiden, and the influence of Counter-Remonstrantism with its emphasis on predestination was greater” (208).
devout Calvinist – which the Amsterdam Consistory would have viewed with immense approval.\textsuperscript{6}

Although his devotion to Calvinism did not translate into an eventual career as a minister, he did the next best thing – he joined the anti-Spanish Dutch West India Company in 1632 or 1633.\textsuperscript{7} Petrus Stuyvesant’s first assignments were in Brazil, where he received several promotions after attracting the attention of Company officers because of his diligence. He was then promoted to the position of supplies officer in Curaçao in 1638. In 1643, as a result of the death of Jan Claeszoon van Campen, the Director of the island and commander of the Dutch political and military operations in the Caribbean, Stuyvesant was appointed Director of the island. Under Stuyvesant’s aegis, Curaçao was transformed from a lax and chaotic tropical outpost to an example of what was possible when Dutch order and efficiency was ably applied. Curaçao was a significant appointment for the young man, since Holland was fighting fierce and bloody battles with Spain in the Caribbean and South America as part of its attempt to weaken the Spanish empire and ultimately gain outright independence in 1648. In Curaçao, Russell Shorto explains, Stuyvesant oversaw “with militaristic efficiency an army of suppliers, privateers, traders and couriers passing between Manhattan and Curaçao as the Dutch sought to solidify their New World holdings.” And though he did not know it at the time, his experience in Curaçao would prove valuable in his future assignment as Director-General of New Netherland, because in Curaçao, “he was plugged into the communication network that ran through…the circle of trade moving from the Netherlands to western Africa to Brazil and the Caribbean, then to New

\textsuperscript{6} Jaap Jacobs, “Like Father, Like Son?,” 235.
\textsuperscript{7} Jaap Jacobs, “Like Father, Like Son?,” 235.
Amsterdam and back to Europe…and in this way he began to involve himself in the affairs of the Manhattan-based colony."\(^8\)

In 1644, the DWIC ordered Stuyvesant to capture the island of Saint Martin from the Spanish, though most of his experience with the DWIC had been as an administrative agent. The fact that the Company had been willing to entrust him with such an important endeavor, despite his lack of military experience, spoke volumes about the high regard in which they held him. Owing to faulty intelligence, Stuyvesant was unsuccessful in his attempt to retake the tiny Caribbean island from the Spanish. During the battle, his right leg was badly injured and had to be amputated. When the scar began festering in the tropical heat and failed to heal properly, he had to return to Holland to recuperate. It was then that he met Judith Bayard, marrying her on August 13, 1645.\(^9\)

During his tenure with the DWIC, Stuyvesant had demonstrated to the Directors that he was a man capable of bringing order and efficiency to chaos and ill management. He had also exhibited an unwavering commitment to the furtherance of the goals of the DWIC. He possessed the sort of devotion to the Company that was difficult to find in a world where most men signed up with the DWIC in order to seek their own fortunes, often at the expense of the Company. Despite his failed campaign in Saint Martin, Stuyvesant had convinced the Directors of the DWIC that he was a Company man and a leader.

His military experience in the Americas reinforced his pre-existing respect for authority, something that his Calvinist minister father had certainly emphasized. In the military, failure to follow orders and yield to those in authority could lead to very

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\(^9\) Russell Shorto, *The Island at the Center of the World*, 154n.
serious consequences. His military experience imbued him with a rigid sense of discipline and drew out his ability – and perhaps his need – to govern as an authoritarian master. But his orthodox Calvinist background had emphasized the idea that God was the author of order, not chaos. The Calvinist God had established every person in his or her station in life; chaos ensued when people failed to yield to those whom He had placed in authority over them. In this system of authority, the laws, doctrines and teachings of the Judeo-Christian God were supreme. A leader’s instructions were to be disobeyed only if it contradicted the teachings, instructions, or doctrines of the Christian God and the furtherance of His Church. As with Daniel, Shadrach, Meschach and Abednego in the Old Testament, only then would disobedience be excusable.\(^1\) Stuyvesant apparently felt that he was always careful that his instructions were not in conflict with God’s laws. Therefore, he always expected nothing less than unwavering obedience to his orders. If he were to succeed in carrying out the Company’s instructions, rescue the colony from the brink of extinction, and bring prosperity to the colony through God’s blessings, then nothing but an unquestionable deference to his orders, unflinching faith in his instructions and vision, and obedience to the Dutch Reformed (or as he saw it, “true and Scriptural”) variant of Christianity would be expected from Stuyvesant’s newly adopted “children,” the colonists.

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\(^1\) Peter Stuyvesant was careful to follow the instructions of the Dutch West India Company and to protect its interest in America. The available records demonstrate, however, that he only wavered in his obedience when he thought the DWIC’s orders did not protect the pure and true “Scriptural” Dutch Reformed Church. For example, when the members of the Dutch West India Company instructed him to permit Jews to settle on equal terms with Christians, or that Lutherans and the many Dutch and English dissidents (Quakers, Anabaptists, etc.) should be allowed to practice their faith unmolested.
On May 11, 1647, with much fanfare and great anticipation, most of Manhattan’s inhabitants congregated along the banks of the East River, waiting to greet and get a first glance at the man whom they hoped would place the faltering colony on more firm foundation.\textsuperscript{11} The colony Peter Stuyvesant inherited was a shell of its former self – significantly diminished in every respect from its previous stature when Willem Kieft first arrived in Manhattan as Director-General. Such was the ruin wrought by the mal-administration of Willem Kieft that it was estimated that the entire population of New Netherland (in the Hudson River, the Connecticut River and the Delaware River combined) had dwindled to less than one thousand inhabitants in 1646, a significant drop from 1643 when it numbered three thousand. The male population in the vicinity of Manhattan was reduced to a mere hundred souls. In contrast to this picture of declension and stagnation, the New England colonies whose settlement had commenced at almost the same time as New Netherland had managed to flourish and boasted a population of about sixty thousand.\textsuperscript{12}

The Directors of the Dutch West India Company had appointed Peter Stuyvesant Director-General of New Netherland with responsibility also for Curaçao, Bonaire and Amba. To avert some of the abuses that stemmed from Kieft’s nearly unrestricted authority, the Company had insisted that the Director-General share the duties of administering all civil and military affairs with the Vice-Director and the Fiscal. Lubbertus van Dincklagen had managed to find his way back to New Netherland as the

\textsuperscript{11} Isaac Newton Phelps Stokes, ed. \textit{The Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498-1909} (Union, New Jersey: The Lawbook Exchange, Ltd., 1998), Volume I, 113. Assert that most of the inhabitants of the town had assembled when Director-General Stuyvesant landed.

Vice-Director and Hendrick van Dyck was appointed Fiscal. All three officers, (the Fiscal, Vice-Director, and the Director-General) were enjoined to take special care that the English did not further encroach upon the Company’s territory. They were also directed to do everything in their power to pacify the Natives and to restore friendly relations with them, but no firearms or ammunitions were to be sold to them, under any circumstance. Aside from these two gentlemen, accompanying Stuyvesant to New Netherland were his wife, Judith Bayard, his sister Anneke and her three sons, and the remainder of New Netherland’s new Council members. These were Captain Bryan Newton who had served under Stuyvesant at Curaçao, Adriaen Keyser, the commissary and Jesmer Thomas, a captain in the Dutch navy. Also traveling aboard the same vessel was the Reverend Johannes Backerus, who had been the Dutch Reformed minister on Curaçao for the past five years; he would later replace Everardus Bogardus at Stuyvesant’s request.

Among those gathered to welcome Peter Stuyvesant, Willem Kieft must have felt intense yet conflicting emotions. On the one hand, Kieft would have been gratified to have the weighty responsibility of governing the colony shouldered by another. In the aftermath of his imprudent war with the Natives, his safety was threatened both by Natives and colonists. He probably had not had a good night’s rest in months, afraid of

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13 E. B. O’Callaghan, ed., Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York: Procured in Holland, England and France, by John Romeyn Brodhead, Esq. Volume I (New York: Weed, Parsons and Company, Printers, 1856), 179. It is apparent from Lubbertus Van Dincklagen’s new and influential appointment as Vice-Director that he had found favor among the members of the States-General and probably eventually successful in having his excommunication lifted. That the members of the States General considered him for the post of Director-General before the DWIC selected Peter Stuyvesant, is further proof of the favorable resolution of his dispute with Wouter van Twiller and the then deceased Everardus Bogardus. For an extract of the letter where van Dincklagen is suggested for the position of Director-General see E. B. O’Callaghan, ed., DRCHNY, 149. In the aftermath of Kieft’s War and prompted by the petition of the Commonalty’s representative body, the Eight Men, the members of the States General resolved to “recall the Director [Willem Kieft] in order that he defend himself, and to send back in his stead with a temporary commission, Lubbertus van Dinslaken who has been formerly there as fiscal, and who is favorite with the Indians.” The same document further states that “this Assembly, on its part, shall represent to the Amsterdam Chamber [of the DWIC], what persons, in addition to the Director, ought to be recalled; and that Lubbertus van Dincklagen, may be provisionally sent thither in the said Director’s place, with such order and instruction as they shall judge to be provisionally for the best advantage of affairs there.”
retribution from any number of colonists who had blamed him for their now destitute condition, not to mention the irrepressible young braves who were likely to retaliate despite the truce brokered with the local sachems. Yet, despite relief from these unpleasant considerations, Kieft might also have been fearful of possible mistreatment by the new authorities. Would he be allowed to pass the leadership torch to Stuyvesant while maintaining his dignity, or would he be publicly humiliated and berated?

Perhaps in an attempt to ensure recognition and respect, Kieft made the bewildering and impetuous decision to offer a farewell speech, in which he thanked the inhabitants profusely for their devotion to him. If he had hoped that affable words would convince those present to allow him to go quietly without demonstrating their disdain for him and his leadership, he was gravely mistaken. The loud jeers and angry response, which only subsided after Stuyvesant intervened to quiet the undisciplined crowd, must have been a huge embarrassment for Kieft. Though Peter Stuyvesant promised to do justice to all and govern them “as a father his children,” the high premium that he placed on deference to authority would have caused the faces of the main antagonists and rabble-rousers to be indelible etched in his mind.14

Looking beyond the throng of people gathered in order to survey the condition of the colony’s capital where he would make his new abode, Stuyvesant confronted a poignant picture of destruction. Kieft’s wars had consumed Manhattan’s flourishing landscape and had left in its place a macabre scene. The decaying carcasses of farm animals, “the piles of ashes from the burnt houses, barns, barracks and other buildings, and the bones of the cattle” would have moved him to sympathize with the colonists’ plight.15 Even with a cursory glance, he would have seen the obvious losses endured by

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14 E. B. O’Callaghan, ed., DRCHNY, 446.
15 E. B. O’Callaghan, ed., DRCHNY, 205.
the colonists – losses so extensive that it would have moved him to be desirous of implementing measures to ameliorate their situation.

Although the devastation was great, settlement of the colony was still only concentrated on a small portion of land on the southern tip of Manhattan Island when the new Director-General arrived. Stuyvesant found about one hundred and fifty houses and seven hundred people at New Amsterdam, but less than one hundred permanent citizens were capable of bearing arms. The vast majority of the people lived near Fort Amsterdam and the East River. The “town” was bounded on the south by Fort Amsterdam and present-day Whitehall Street, and on the east by present-day Pearl Street. It was intersected near the middle by the waterway on present-day Broad Street. Only three streets had been roughly paved with cobblestones while the others were muddy and uneven.

Drunkenness, knife fights, drunken brawls, theft, smuggling, “profanation of the Lord’s name and Sabbath, the public and common cursing even by children along the streets,” and a general sense of disorder was rampant. The only drainage in the “town” was a gutter in the middle of the street where the “inhabitants throw their rubbish, filth, ashes, dead animals and such like things…to the great inconvenience of the community.” Poorly constructed “pigpens” and out-houses were situated directly to the front of streets, diffusing unpleasant odors. Horses, cows, goats, pigs and other livestock were allowed to roam free in the streets and unenclosed grounds. And the few remaining houses were set so irregularly situated that it was apparent that very little thought to orderliness or symmetry went into their final placement. Amid such signs of decadence, disorder and division, Stuyvesant had an arduous task before him to rebuild the colony and promote a more enduring community. The Herculean nature of the

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chore made him conclude that success was only possible with the direct assistance of his God.17

Not everyone who gathered at the wharf to welcome Petrus Stuyvesant was eager to obey him as an autocratic Calvinist father. After Willem Kieft’s disastrous leadership, many of the colonists, were ready to shape Manhattan, and New Netherland, to conform to their own vision. They had come to see Manhattan as home and had invested their physical, emotional, and financial resources. They were ready to exercise a greater degree of autonomy over their futures, and they had their own ideas of what was best for their futures and that of the colony. Many felt ready to assert social and political independence from their institutional parents, the Director-General and the Dutch West India Company that he represented. What exactly would Stuyvesant’s promise of father-like leadership and guidance mean for the enslaved Africans, Portuguese, Natives, Dutch, Bohemians, English, Germans, Danes, Norwegians, Catholics and Jews that had come to call Manhattan home was left to be seen. What sort of environment would he foster to enable this varied group to maintain or create a religious, social and community life that was responsive to their needs? How did his religious and leadership ideology affect the unfolding process of community formation? And how would the members of these disparate groups respond to his leadership – would they facilitate or frustrate his attempt to create a firmer of Dutch hegemony in the region?

17 Berthold Fernow, ed., Records of New Amsterdam, 48. Before the meeting of Stuyvesant’s Council, while God was thanked for making them “rulers of the people in this place,” it was also acknowledged that “we are not worthy of this honor, we are also too weak and unfit to discharge this trust, unless Thou, of God, gives us assistance....”
8.3

Stuyvesant knew that a lot needed to be done in order to rebuild the colony, foster community and transform New Netherland into a profitable venture for the DWIC. The new Director-General and his Council, therefore, moved quickly to establish changes. They hoped to alter the colony to be a stronger community and to approximate better the society they had left behind in Holland. To achieve that end, Stuyvesant introduced numerous new regulations. Streets were paved and roads improved, fire and police departments were established, taxes were imposed on imported wines and liquors (both as a means to supply the town’s coffers and as a punitive or restrictive measure), and a system of taxation upon both exports and imports was introduced to replenish the treasury. In addition, fire wardens and chimney inspectors were elected, proprietors of vacant lots were commanded to improve them within nine months, inhabitants were ordered to “move closer together in villages, neighborhoods and hamlets,” and a location and day was established for Market each week. Furthermore, an Orphans Court was established and Orphanmasters were appointed, surveyors were elected to regulate the soundness and location of houses, and a schedule for street cleaning was agreed upon, along with diverse additional measures to ensure a more orderly and smooth operation of the colony. Through the many laws and ordinances, Stuyvesant’s vision for the colony was made evident and his influence was felt in the lives of the inhabitants. He clearly intended to alter every aspect of the colony and to transform the lives of the inhabitants as well. Laws were passed to govern even the most mundane aspects of the settlers’ lives, such as the slaughtering of animals and how breads and cakes were to be baked.

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19 Berthold Fernow, ed., Records of New Amsterdam, 14.
The barrage of laws passed during Stuyvesant’s administration aimed at everything from “beautifying” the colony, “promoting the increase of population,” and maintaining “the general peace and rest of the good inhabitants,” to fostering trade, preventing frauds, and encouraging practices that conform “to the general political and ecclesiastical rules” of Holland. Again and again, the Council implemented laws aimed at preventing practices that could lead to heresies and schisms, or that could bring down the wrath and punishment of God.\(^2\) The insolent outburst at the wharf upon his arrival in the colony had revealed to Stuyvesant the “rebellious” nature of New Netherland’s inhabitants, helping to seal in his mind the necessary remedy he had to administer in order to restore the dilapidated and anarchic colony.\(^2\)

Consequently, as Stuyvesant saw it, one of his primary goals was to bring order to the chaotic colony – the kind of order that would avert the punishment of God. He would achieve this by transforming New Netherland into his ideal society, one in which each citizen was aware of his or her station in life. It would be a stratified society where discipline, order and obedience to authority were the principle hallmarks – the citizens would be comfortable in their “station” in life, showing proper deference to their social “betters” and “superiors.” Equally important, the citizens would demonstrate a reverence and fear of God in their daily activities and interactions; they would seek to appease God, encourage His blessings and avert His righteous punishment by abstaining from sin. In short, Peter Stuyvesant’s ideal society would be one where the military’s rigid commitment to discipline and authority was successfully integrated with the God-focused motivation found in the church. Stuyvesant felt strongly that the Christian religion, specifically the Dutch Reformed variant, must be the basis of all

potential prosperity. But this utopian vision for Manhattan’s rough society would prove an impossible goal to achieve.

Although Stuyvesant was determined that drunkenness, Sabbath-breaking, and brawling must cease, when he set out to regulate the morals of the people by numerous proclamations he obviously did not yet fully comprehend or appreciate the extent to which the colonists had diverged from their counterparts in Holland, and especially from Stuyvesant himself. But in time he would learn. He was not long in the colony before he noticed the strong hold that alcohol had on the inhabitants, both Native and newly settled. His first proclamations established the bar closing hour at nine in the evening instead of ten, and imposed strong penalties for knife fighting and Sunday drinking. Although Stuyvesant had spent many years in the Navy aboard ships and in isolated trading posts with bawdy sailors and freebooters, those years did not inure him to condone drinking and rabble-rousing on the Sabbath.

Stuyvesant was obviously grieved to observe “the insolence of some” of the inhabitants “when drunk, their quarrelling, fighting and hitting each other even on the Lords day of rest.” It was such signs of what he thought was, “the disregard, nay, contempt of God’s holy law and ordinances” that prompted the proclamation to “keep holy in His honor His day of Rest, the Sabbath, and forbid all bodily injury and murder…to the end, that instead of God’s curse falling upon” the colony they “may receive His blessing.” The punishment, he apparently thought, had to be as severe as the crime: loss of license and heavy fines for tapsters breaking the law and the person consuming alcohol; a half-year at hard labor on bread and water or a hundred-guilder fine for drawing a knife. The fine was tripled and hard labor was extended to one year

and a half if a wound was inflicted.\textsuperscript{23} This he hoped would eradicate drunkenness among the colonists.

Controlling the consumption of alcohol by Natives would not be as easy and required a different strategy. Native Americans had always moved freely through Manhattan, and they and traded with the colonists. Many of them even worked as laborers or were employed as servants in the homes of colonists. But apparently they were often defrauded of their wages, a decree was issued punishing with a fine those who neglected to pay Indian wages. Many of the colonists had come to regard the selling of alcohol to the Natives as one of the least expensive means of procuring a fortune in furs and sewants.\textsuperscript{24} Theft, property damage and personal violence were quite often the result of the Natives’ intoxication. Willem Kieft had tried to curb the colonists’ tendency of plying the Natives with alcohol by issuing two ordinances against the practice, but it continued. So Stuyvesant issued an ordinance with even stronger penalties. The fine was increased to five hundred guilders plus the costs of damage done by inebriated Indians.\textsuperscript{25}

Within a year, Stuyvesant had to reissue the ordinance, adding corporal punishments to the penalty explaining that “we see and observe daily drunken Indians run along the Manhattans” and that the people who reside at a distance suffer serious annoyance from drunken Indians, whence new troubles and wars are to be

\textsuperscript{23} This law was promulgated on the last day of May 1647, only days after Stuyvesant’s arrival in the colony. See also E. B. O’Callaghan, ed., \textit{DRCHNY}, 147. The punishment was more severe than that meted out in Holland for similar transgressions. In Holland, drawing a knife during a fight was punished by a twelve-guilder fine or six weeks’ imprisonment on bread and beer at the prisoner’s expense, and the punishment was only doubled when blood was drawn.

\textsuperscript{24} “Sewant” was the Dutch name for wampum. Berthold Fernow, ed., \textit{Records of New Amsterdam}, 6. Stuyvesant claimed that “this way of earning a living and the easily made profits therefrom please many and divert them from their first calling, trade and occupation, so that they become tapsters and that one full fourth of the City of New Amsterdam has been turned into taverns for the sale of brandy, tobacco or beer. This causes not only the neglect of honest handicraft and business, but also the debauching of the common man and the Company’s servants and...the young people from childhood up, who seeing the improper proceedings of their parents and imitating them leave the path of virtue and become disorderly.”

\textsuperscript{25} Berthold Fernow, ed., \textit{Records of New Amsterdam}, 3. This law was promulgated on July 1, 1647.
apprehended.” After the promulgation of the new ordinance, Sander Toursen and his wife were banished from the colony and condemned to return to Holland aboard the ship *de Waagh* “as an example to other brandy sellers to the Indians,” demonstrating the determination of the authorities to enforce the law. The new law, while not completely eradicating the practice, must have diminished the practice because it was not until 1656, in the aftermath of an attack upon Manhattan by northern Indians, that a new ordinance was promulgated against selling alcohol to the Natives.\(^2\) And this time, “all the higher and lower officials, free and salaried employees of the Company and the inhabitants of this Province” were admonished to “discover this so dangerous and damnable” practice. Otherwise, if it is found that they “knew of and did not report such slaves to Indians, they are to pay one half of the fine.”\(^2\) Despite all these efforts, this practice continued, though abated. As long as there were Indians who wanted alcohol, there were colonists willing to seek creative means of providing them with it.

Stuyvesant also had to reissue the ordinance against “desecrating the Sabbath” in 1648 and again in 1656. That year, the ordinance was renewed and “amplified” to state that “henceforth a sermon from God’s Word shall be preached in the afternoon, as in the forenoon, with the usual Christian prayers and thanksgiving.” It was “requested and charged” of “all officials, subjects and vassals to attend at these services.” All the Company’s servants were ordered to attend the services. Additionally, all business and social activity was prohibited during the Sabbath, “whether in house, cellar, ship, street

\(^2\) Berthold Fernow, ed., *Records of New Amsterdam*, 25. The new ordinance stated that “nobody, whatever his position or business may be, shall sell, exchange, give, fetch or cause to be fetched in or out of the house, on land or water, from any yacht, ship, boat or canoe, cart or wagon, by whatever name it may be called, directly or indirectly any beer, wine, brandy or other strong waters to any Indian under the penalty of 500 fl. and besides arbitrary bodily punishment as well as banishment from the country.” To usurp the older ordinances, some of the colonists had resorted to “suttering and selling of…liquors along the river by yachts, barks, scows, ships and canoes, going up and down.” On the Toursens see Charles T. Gehring, ed. *Council Minutes, 1655-1656* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1995), 295.

or market,” under penalty of heavy fine and confiscation of goods and merchandise.28
Similar proclamations were issued in 1658 after the rattle-watch was organized,
imposing a fine of ten stuyvers on anyone “heard to blaspheme the name of God” and
two guilders for any who “attempt to fight when on watch or tries to draw off from the
watch for the purpose of fighting.”29 The independent-minded colonists who were not
accustomed to so much regulation in New Netherland chafed under these new
ordinances, restrictions and proclamations. Arent van Curler, a prominent Manhattan
merchant, would with mock horror write home to a friend in Holland that “Stuyvesant
is starting a whole reformation here.”30

Unfortunately, several causes tended to encourage the colonists’ continued
affront and disregard for the ordinances and stymied efforts to “reform” the society.
Those entrusted with the responsibility of enforcing the ordinances were also guilty of
committing the outlawed behavior. Indeed, the law as enforced by Hendrick van Dyck
and later Cornelius van Tienhoven, Stuyvesant’s two early-appointed schout-fiscals, can
be regarded as minor impediments. They were the law enforcement officers who did
not enforce the laws Stuyvesant issued. Both men were fond of beer and brandy,
whether on or off duty. They were not likely to act on breaches of the drinking law or
desecration of the Sabbath if their own cups were kept full.31 In dismay, Stuyvesant
would later complain to the Classis of Amsterdam that “the people are grown very wild
and loose in their morals.”32 The Reverend Johannes Backerus was equally appalled at

28 Berthold Fernow, ed., Records of New Amsterdam, 9, 24.
30 Quoted in H. Kessler and Eugene Rachlis, Peter Stuyvesant and His New York: A Biography of a Man and a
City (New York: Random House, 1959), 68.
31 Van Dyck was schout-fiscal for five years, after which time Stuyvesant removed him because of
drunkenness and appointed van Tienhoven in his place. But according to van Dyck, van Tienhoven also
suffered from the same debility. Van Dyck accused Tienhoven of “frequently com[ing] out of the tavern so
full that he could not get no further, and was forced to lie down in the gutter” instead. E. B. O’Callaghan,
32 Charles T. Gehring, ed., Correspondence, 1647-1653, 54.
the spiritual condition of the colonists, but he also thought that “in order to best help the church of God…and resist a bad world,” the next minister should focus on the “children; for many of the older people are so far depraved that they are now ashamed to learn anything good.” The Classis of Amsterdam offered its assessment that the bulk of the responsibility for the moral laxity was “the weakness of the late director and the neglect of his duties by the preacher,” Reverend Everardus Bogardus.

While disappointed that his ordinances did not have quite the anticipated results, Stuyvesant moved undeterred in his drive to reshape New Netherland, especially its capital, Manhattan. He moved to encourage people to settle in the colony and thereby assist in promoting the growth of a community. One of the impediments to permanent settlement was the difficulty the colonists experienced in making a living through honest trade and business. This was made especially onerous by the intrusion of foreign traders, who sailed north past New Amsterdam and outbid the settlers in trading for Indian furs at Fort Orange. Even in Manhattan these foreign usurpers, who kept no “fire and light,” siphoned away business and reaped profits that belonged to New Netherland’s citizens. Realizing the injury that these foreign traders, who bore no share in the expense of government, created for permanent settlers, Stuyvesant and his Council limited the right of trade to recognized citizens. On the face, this appears to be an attempt to introduce to New Netherland the important Dutch law of “Burgher recht,” or municipal freedom, which conferred special privileges on the natives and residents of commercial cities. In Amsterdam, for example, the exclusive rights to trade in the city were bestowed by law to its inhabitants that were burghers, either by “birth, purchase, intermarriage, or by a vote of the city.” All of these inhabitants enjoyed the same

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33 Hugh Hastings, ed., ERNY, Volume I, 236.
34 Charles T. Gehring, ed., Correspondence, 1647-1653, 54.
36 E. B. O’Callaghan, ed., DRCHNY, Volume I, 263.
commercial, political and legal privileges “with this difference only, that native citizens acquired them immediately on becoming of age and registering their names; the others, after the lapse of a year from the time of their enrolment.”

However, in New Amsterdam, Stuyvesant and the members of the Council used the burgher system not only to establish a distinction between citizens or community members and foreigners, but also to create a stratified community. In New Amsterdam the burghery was divided into two classes, “Great and Small,” with the distinction that the wealthy was enrolled on the list of “the Great” by paying the sum of five hundred guilders. “The Great Citizens” alone would be invested with the monopoly of all offices and the “exemption from confiscation and attainder in case of conviction for capital offences,” while “the Small Citizens” conveyed “only freedom of trade, and the privilege of being received into the respective guilds.”

The Great Citizens were to be: (1) past and present Council members, burgomasters and schepens in the town with their descendants in the male line; (2) former and present ministers of the gospel and officers of the militia, with their descendants in the male line; and (3) other persons could obtain the distinction by paying fifty guilders. The Small Citizens were to be: (1) all natives of the city and foreigners who resided and have kept “fire and light” in the city for one year and six weeks; (2) all who have married daughters of burghers; and (3) all who have opened a store, exercised any business within the city or salaried servants of the

37 E. B. O’Callaghan, History of New Netherland, Vol. II, Second Edition, 339-340. In Holland, the Burgher right “conferred on the citizen freedom of trade and exemption from toll, and opened to him all offices under the city government. If wronged or injured when from home, it ensured him protection; secured him from suits of law by a fellow burgher beyond the city’s jurisdiction, and if arrested in the public service, it guaranteed him redress as the city’s expense. A Dutch burgher could not be arrested or imprisoned if he could procure bail, nor indicted, nor tried for any offence after the term of one year. He was saved from attaindant of blood and confiscation of property, if found guilty on a capital charge, for ‘he could not forfeit for any crime more than his life and one hundred guilders.’ Females...could also share in burgher right...however: if acquired by purchase, they could enjoy it only while spinsters or widow; they lost it if married to those who were not themselves burghers, and their children, like those of Jewish burghers, did not inherit the parent’s privilege. On the decease of the husband, the mother became reintegrated in her municipal privileges.”

38 E. B. O’Callaghan, History of New Netherland, 340-341.
Company, and paid to the burgomasters twenty-five guilders.\textsuperscript{39} Very few of the people considered the rank of “Great Citizen” to be worth fifty guilders, particularly since there was small hope of ever attaining public office. The names on the list of “Great Citizens” were therefore nearly all of persons who had held public office. Others were content to enroll as “Small Citizens” in order to gain the privilege of conducting business.\textsuperscript{40}

The distinction made between “Great Citizens” and “Small Citizens” conformed to Stuyvesant’s sense of social stratification – that in an ordered society there should be those, who by virtue of birth or wealth, should be esteemed as better than others, and consequently endowed with the right to lead and hold authority over those of inferior status. Most colonists had migrated to New Amsterdam with very little else as assets aside from good health and industriousness. However, by Stuyvesant’s machinations, some citizens, who in the Netherlands could not claim any exclusive pretensions based on birth or riches, could now claim membership in Manhattan’s emerging “aristocracy” and leadership class. It was part of Stuyvesant’s attempt to create order in Manhattan’s society. He hoped to create the types of distinctions that make people aware of their station in life, aware of who their “betters” are, and aware of those to whom proper deference is due. To the devout Calvinist mind, God had demonstrated His favor on those whom he had predestined to be born in certain families and blessed financially. While, Stuyvesant would have admitted that there were other ways that God could bless those whom He favored – such as by bestowing on them health, peace, happiness and long life – (monetary) prosperity still trumped all these others. Without wealth, it might be argued, all the other blessings could not really be enjoyed, and as for happiness,

\textsuperscript{39} E. B. O’Callaghan, \textit{History of New Netherland}, 341.  
\textsuperscript{40} Berthold Fernow, ed., \textit{Records of New Amsterdam}, 46. In 1661, it was ordered that “all those, who absent themselves from here for four consecutive months, without keeping here fire and light, shall lose their Burgerright and therefore, when they return must buy it anew.”
could one really be happy without wealth and if someone were happy and poor, wealth could only augment that happiness several fold.\footnote{This line of thinking, one might argue, is exemplified not only in Calvinistic sects but also in Protestant Christianity as a whole. However, Calvinism, with its emphasis on discipline/order, predestination and wealth arguably saw a deeper embrace of this line of argument.}

It should, then, not be surprising that when the Dutch Burgher right system crossed the Atlantic as a tool of Stuyvesant’s contrivances for the colony, that it underwent profound divergences from its original intent and formulation in Holland. These divergences would fall along the lines of distinctions based on wealth, where wealth has a privileged position.\footnote{Interestingly, wealth was not the only way in which New Amsterdam’s Burgher right system differed from that of the Fatherland’s. There were also gendered differences, or distinctions along lines of gender. In Holland, women received the right in identical manner to men – they could inherit it from their parents, they could pass on the right to their children and they did not lose the right if they married someone who did not possess the right. But in New Amsterdam it was not so. Stuyvesant was clear that only male children could inherit the right from their father, and in turn pass it on to their sons. And while women could purchase the right, they could not pass it on to their children or husband if he was not a burgher.} Stuyvesant, a devout Calvinist, used his power and influence in the colony as Director General to try to reshape the colony in his own image: God-fearing, honest, hardworking, abstemious, and ordered. However, while the settlers of Manhattan did not entirely eschew these virtues, they valued above all else a concept of personal liberty, “democracy” and tolerance that was not found in the teachings of Calvin nor espoused by Stuyvesant. Their priorities, vision for the colony and the things they privileged often diverged from Stuyvesant’s. Additionally, the leading citizens had a stubborn determination as unyielding as Stuyvesant’s, which served to frustrate Stuyvesant’s attempt to successfully form his “ideal” society.

\textbf{8.4}

Less than two months after his arrival, Stuyvesant encountered his first clash with his “children,” the leading men and self-proclaimed representative voice of the settlers. The colony desperately needed to be rebuilt, but in his attempt to complete the
many outstanding public works projects Stuyvesant was hampered by lack of funds. The colony’s treasury was almost empty and port duties trickled in slowly. Confronted with this difficulty, Stuyvesant decided to issue a tax on wines and liquors. The money would be used to repair the crumbling fort and to complete construction of the unfinished church that had begun in 1642. Funds would also pay to erect a pier that would facilitate the loading and unloading of ships, and to construct piling along the shoreline to prevent erosion by the river. But the measure immediately aroused discontent among the colonists.

To assuage the opposition, Stuyvesant was obliged to make concessions that allowed the colonists a representative voice in the government. In September 1647, he established a Board of Nine Men, a sort of privy council, to advise the Director General and Council, but not to legislate. An election was ordered and eighteen “of the most notable, reasonable, honest and respectable persons” in the colony were chosen, from whom Stuyvesant was to select nine to constitute the first Board of Nine Men. The first Board was comprised of Augustine Heermans, Arnoldus van Hardenberg, Govert Loockermans, Jan Jansen Dam, Jacob Wolfertsen (van Couwenhoven), Hendrick Kip, Machyel Janssen, Jan Evertsen Bout, and Thomas Hall. Three members were to sit in rotation to hear civil suits, and the litigants were given the right of appeal to the Council. Six members were to retire annually, and their places to be taken by six others who were appointed by Stuyvesant from a list of twelve of the “most notable citizens” named by the Commonalty.\(^\text{43}\) Thus, Stuyvesant, who could attend the Board and act as president

\(^{43}\) In the Council Minutes and also in petitions to the Director-General, the public is referred to as the “Commonalty.”
when it convened, largely chose the Board of Nine Men. Also, since the Board convened “until lawfully repealed” by Stuyvesant, he could dispense with it if he chose.44

While Stuyvesant could probably view as a victory his first conflict with the colonists, he would not be so fortunate with his next contest, which excited great dissatisfaction in the colony and formed the beginning of a long series of dissensions and oppositions between the Director-General and the colonists. The case of Joachim Pietersen Kuyter and Cornelis Melyn exemplified the fundamental differences and source of contestation between the colonists and Stuyvesant that marred his administration. Joachim Pietersen Kuyter had arrived in New Netherland in 1639, at the age of forty-two, with his family, livestock and herdsmen, eventually settling into life as a farmer on his farm Zegendael – or Vale of Blessing. In subsequent years, Kuyter rose to prominence in the colony as a member of both Committees during Willem Kieft’s administration. Cornelis Melyn first visited New Netherland in 1638 as supercargo on a Dutch West India Company ship. He returned to Holland and sought the patroonship of Staten Island, which was neglected by David de Vries, the original grant holder. In 1641 Melyn transported forty-one people, to colonize Staten Island. Homes were constructed, and the land was ploughed, but just as they were prepared to reap the benefits of their hard work the Natives attacked during Kieft’s war. Both Kuyter and Melyn had lost everything as a result of Kieft’s war and were intent that Kieft be held responsible for his imprudent war with the Natives.

Joachim Pietersen Kuyter and Cornelis Melyn were the authors of a long letter of grievances to the West India Company that indicted Kieft for his part in instigating the war; it was this letter that was thought primarily responsible for Kieft’s recall. However, they were not satisfied to have him recalled. There were rumors that Kieft was

44 Even with these deficiencies, the concession was a great step toward the representation of the people in public affairs, and prepared the way for better things to come later.
departing the colony with untold fortunes. Additionally, it was being circulated in the colony’s active rumor mill that Kieft had written and sent to Holland, as part as his defense, a slender book detailing his version of the origins of the war and that his version was filled with embellishments. Aware of the tendency of the Dutch West India Company to cover its mistakes and mete out mild reproofs when chastising past Director-Generals, Melyn and Kuyter were confident that Willem Kieft’s punishment would not be comparable to the devastation and destruction he had wrought in the fledgling colony. Kuyter and Melyn decided that they had to gather strong evidence to counter Kieft’s defense before he departed for Holland. They had probably hoped that Stuyvesant’s initial promise to “govern them as a father his children,” was an indication that he would look at the evidence with impartial eyes – at least more impartial than the Directors of the Dutch West India Company. So, three weeks after Stuyvesant’s arrival, they drew up their charges against Kieft, which amounted to requesting the newly arrived Director-General to hear the charges against Kieft, examining the evidence against him and recording the testimony of witnesses.

But Stuyvesant was unconcerned with the errors of the past. He saw his administration as a fresh start, and he was impatient to implement his plans and vision for the colony. The Melyn-Kuyter case seemed an irritating distraction. Consequently, when presented with their charges against Willem Kieft, Stuyvesant told his Council that he had no authority to examine Kieft’s administration, and referred them instead to the States-General in Holland. So, the petition was rejected and Melyn and Kuyter,

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45 E. B. O’Callaghan, ed., *DRCHNY*, Volume I, 206. In their petition to Peter Stuyvesant, Melyn and Kuyter stated that Reverend Everardus Bogardus and Secretary Cornelis van Tienhoven both read the book “for the purpose of punctuating it” and in disgust “flung it from the table on account of the nonsense they found in it in regard to the war.” In their initial petition to the Amsterdam Chamber of the Dutch West India Company, Melyn and Kuyter stated that they were aware that Director Kieft “sent to the Lords, by the *Blue Cock*, a Book...in which he dilates at length on the origin of the war. On that subject it contains as many lies as lines; as [they were] informed by the Minister and others who have read it; and from [their] time to his, as few facts as leaves.” (p. 212).
while disappointed, prepared instead to continue their battle in Amsterdam and The Hague. Within a few days after Stuyvesant and the Council dismissed the case, Kieft poised from his perceived victory, accused Melyn and Kuyter of being “pestilent and seditious persons” who had prepared false accusations against him to the Dutch West India Company and had forged the names of members of the Committee of Eight.\footnote{E. B. O’Callaghan, ed., *DRCHNY*, Volume I, 209.} He in turn asked that they be banished from the colony for sedition. Instead of dismissing the case against Kuyter and Melyn as he had done their case against Kieft, Stuyvesant used Kieft’s indictment as an opportunity to demonstrate his authority, and in turn to impress upon Kuyter, Melyn and the Commonalty that deference is due those in authority, even an unworthy and ineffective leader such as Willem Kieft.\footnote{E. B. O’Callaghan, ed., *DRCHNY*, Volume I, 145.} Stuyvesant viewed the case as a potential challenge to his own role as Director-General. Stuyvesant and the Council gave Melyn and Kuyter forty-eight hours in which to respond to Kieft’s charges.

Not surprisingly, the case went to trial, and although Joachim Pietersen and Cornelis Melyn had presented very eloquent and reasoned responses to Kieft’s charges, Stuyvesant was not deterred. To make matters worse, Stuyvesant rejected the indictment of Hendrick van Dyck, the schout-fiscal, and instead prepared his own indictment against Melyn and Kuyter. In assigning the Director-General and Council the duty of both judge and prosecutor in the case, Stuyvesant demonstrated to the Commonalty his impartiality and that his sympathies lay not with them but with Kieft, whom they despised and blamed for their impoverished condition. When the smoke cleared, Cornelis Melyn was banished for seven years and Joachim Pietersen for three years.\footnote{Stuyvesant initially sought the death sentence for Melyn and perpetual banishment for Kuyter.} The verdict was extremely unpopular with the colonists, many who had
identified with Kuyter and Melyn. In response to what they felt was a betrayal of their initial trust in the Director-General, many colonists gradually transferred onto Stuyvesant their anger, frustration and irritation with Kieft. Stuyvesant with his authoritative style of leadership, for many, became the personification of what was wrong with the colony. By July 1647, when the verdict was pronounced, the amity the colonists had displayed on Stuyvesant’s arrival in May had dissipated. Out of this case came organized opposition to Stuyvesant’s rule, and out of it also came his determination to rule more firmly. It established a precedent and a pattern for both Stuyvesant and Manhattan’s colonists.

However, both Melyn and Kuyter were determined not to let the case rest with their banishment; they had invested too much of their time and money in New Netherland and had lost almost all their personal property, and now with the verdict they stood to lose their reputations as well. They thought it unconscionable and were determined to seek vindication. They decided to take Stuyvesant’s initial suggestion and submit their case before the States-General itself. Furthermore, the past experience of other colonists, such as Lubbertus van Dincklagen, had alerted them to the strong likelihood that the Dutch West India Company would support Stuyvesant’s decision. They realized that if they were to receive justice they would have to appeal to an even higher authority. Weeks before he and Joachim Kuyter were to board the Princess Amelia for the Netherlands, Cornelis Melyn spoke optimistically in the streets and taverns of Manhattan of the revenge that would be theirs once they were in the Fatherland.

8.5

One hundred and twenty passengers boarded the Princess Amelia that departed Manhattan on August 1647 for its voyage to Amsterdam. Aboard were Cornelis Melyn,
Joachim Kuyter, William Kieft, and the Reverend Everardus Bogardus. All were returning to The Netherlands to either give an account of their behavior in the colony, their experiences during the years of war with the Natives and the role they played (if any) in the long conflict that almost obliterated the colony; and all, in one way or another, were seeking vindication. But not all would succeed. Sixteen weeks after the Princess Amelia left Manhattan, a miscalculation by the captain during a storm resulted in the ship’s bitter end in the Bristol Channel on September 27, 1647. The ship was torn apart, throwing passengers and cargo into the sea. Except for some waterlogged beaver skins, the ships’ contents were lost. Willem Kieft, the Reverend Everardus Bogardus and Cornelis Melyn’s six-year-old son were among those who drowned. However, Joachim Pietersen Kuyter and Cornelis Melyn were among the approximately forty survivors.

Most people familiar with the events that transpired in New Netherland in the 1640s probably had an opinion about the significance of the shipwreck. Was it or was it not divine judgment? For Governor John Winthrop of Massachusetts, who had little use for Willem Kieft when he lived, there was no doubt that Kieft’s violent death was the “observable hand of God against the Dutch of New Netherland.” On Manhattan, once word got back, there was no mourning for Kieft. A story that was engendered by Cornelis Melyn spread and became part of New Amsterdam’s legend that at the moment the ship was foundering, Kieft sought out Melyn and Kuyter and said, “Friends, I have done you wrong. Can you forgive me?” The legend does not record the response he received, but it would be surprising if the two men did not see their survival as evidence of a higher will – as a vindication from Almighty God Himself. Likewise, the drownings must have appeared as divine judgment on the administration of Willem Kieft and the spiritually bankrupt life of the Reverend Everardus Bogardus.

Melyn and Kuyter managed to retrieve enough documents from the wreckage to support their case against banishment in The Hague. It took several more months, however, before they could replace lost or water-ruined papers. It would be April 1648 before the States-General would reach a decision on their appeal.50

Kuyter and Melyn must have received the States-General’s decision to rescind their banishment with great rejoicing. The States General gave Kuyter and Melyn more than they asked for; they received “a Mandamus in case of appeal” and a passport

“requesting all Kings, Princes, Potentates, Republics, Parliaments, States and Deputies, being with Us and these United Netherlands in friendship, alliance and neutrality; also, their admirals, lieutenants and vice admirals, captains and commanders to allow said Joachim Pietersz Kuyter and Cornelis Melyn to prosecute their voyage to New Netherland.” The Passport also commanded “all admirals, lieutenants and vice-admirals, captains lieutenants, commanders and common soldiers and sailors, being directly in” Dutch service “to afford and lend to” Pietersen and Melyn “in prosecution of their aforesaid voyage to New Netherland, all help, assistance and address, and to this end to convey and transport them as passengers, and at their own cost, in the respective ships under their command, if by them thereunto requested.”51 The Mandamus had a clause suspending the sentence which Peter Stuyvesant and his Council had pronounced against Melyn and Kuyter on July 25, 1647, and it granted Melyn and Kuyter liberty, “pending the case in appeal,” to return to “New Netherland and use and enjoy their property there free and unmolested, the same as other colonists and inhabitants.” 52 Furthermore, Peter Stuyvesant and all the Council members were summoned to appear in person, or send attorneys on their behalf, before the States

General to defend or renounce their actions in banishing Kuyter and Melyn. Melyn, Kuyter and their supporters were probably gleaming with satisfaction at the strength of the support they received from the members of the States General. It was probably difficult for them to contain their excitement as they packed to return to New Netherland – mandamus, letter of recall for the Director-General and Council, and Passport with the seal of the Prince of Orange in hand – quite a reversal of fortune. Indeed, they had left Manhattan as alleged “pestilent and seditious persons” and were returning declared “good patriots and proprietors of New Netherland.”

Joachim Pietersen Kuyter and Cornelis Melyn returned triumphantly from Holland at a critical juncture in the colony’s history – in the midst of the third major conflict between Stuyvesant and the colonists. Stuyvesant had managed to weather the storms of several conflicts with the members of the first Board of Nine Men. These conflicts continued with the second Board of Nine Men. Appointed in 1649, the Nine Men were unanimously against Stuyvesant; it was comprised of Adriaen van der Donck (as President), Augustine Heerman, Arnoldus van Hardenburgh, Govert Loockermans, Oloff Stevensen van Courtlandt, Hendrick Hendricksen Kip, Michael Jansen, Elbert Elbertsen and Jacob Wolfertsen van Couwenhoven. In July 1649, they petitioned the States General, seeking redress for their “distressed circumstances” and “the poor condition of this country.” A memorial of the complaints and requests of the citizens was drawn up and signed on behalf of the Commonalty, and Adriaen van der Donck, Jacob Wolfertsen van Couwenhoven and Jan Evertsen Bout were chosen as “delegates and agents” to present it to the States General. Stuyvesant selected van Tienhoven to represent him and respond to the accusations before the College of the XIX and the States-General.

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54 E. B. O’Callaghan, ed., DRCHNY, Volume I: 258.
The Nine Men decided among themselves that reform in the administration of the province was imperatively needed; abuses must be corrected, and a more popular government secured. During the first years of Stuyvesant’s administration there was an upsurge in immigration from Holland; the ravages of Kieft’s wars were steadily repaired; boweries were repopulated; and with the growth in trade, merchants both in Amsterdam and New Amsterdam stood to benefit. However, with returning prosperity the colonists grew increasingly restless under the commercial rule of the Dutch West India Company and began to resent the arbitrary domination of Director Stuyvesant. Without the Dutch West India Company and its representative, the Director-General, the petitioners felt that the colony could potentially far outpace the New England colonies both in population and profitable trade. These Dutchmen wished to transport to their adopted country the cherished political institutions of the Fatherland – institutions which they hoped would give them the power to shape the colony to conform to their vision and image. The delegates complained that New Netherland had “attained a very poor and low condition” because of “(1) unsuitable government; (2) scanty Privileges and Exemptions; (3) onerous imposts of duties, exactions and such likes; (4) long continued war; (5) the loss of the Princess Amelia; (6) superabundance of Scots and Chinese (that is petty traders); want of farmers and farm servants; (7) great dearth in general; (8) insufferable arrogance of the Natives or Indians, arising from [the colonists’] smaller number, etc.” Furthermore, they accused Stuyvesant of selling ammunition to the Natives while forbidding the settlers to do the same; of monopolizing various branches of trade for his own benefit; and of possessing a tyrannical demeanor in his interactions with the colonists.

56 The last accusation was well founded; the others were probably mistaken as is demonstrated by the various correspondences from the Directors of the Amsterdam Chamber of the Dutch West India Company.
On arriving in Holland, van der Donck wisely perceived the necessity of arousing some public interest in his mission, without which the States-General, occupied with greater affairs, might accord the delegates from New Netherland but slight attention. With this object, he published his *Vertoogh*, a book that set forth the history of the settlement of the Dutch colonies in North America, with many interesting facts concerning their progress and necessities. The plan was eminently successful. The book was so widely read and excited so much attention that the Amsterdam Chamber of the West India Company wrote to Stuyvesant declaring that “the name of New Netherland, was scarcely ever mentioned before, and now it would seem as if heaven and earth were interested in it.”

Cornelis van Tienhoven’s defense of Stuyvesant relied upon discrediting the motives of the popular party. “Arnoldus van Hardenberg,” he sneered, “knew how to charge the colonists well for his wares.” Oloff Stevensen (van Courtlandt) having gone out as a common soldier, had been promoted by Kieft to be commissary of the store; “he has profited by the Company’s service, and is endeavoring to give his benefactor the pay of the world, – that is, evil for good.” Elbert Elbertsen was in the Company’s debt, from which he would like to escape; Govert Loockermans owed his prosperity to the Company, and should support it. Hendrick Kip, he said, was a tailor who had lost nothing, presumably, because he had nothing to lose. This line of defense could not have much effect, as van Tienhoven soon discredited himself altogether by being

to Director-General Stuyvesant. The Directors of the Amsterdam Chamber gave Stuyvesant specific instructions to carry out these activities. See Charles T. Gehring, ed., *Correspondence, 1647-1653* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2000) and Charles T. Gehring, ed., *Correspondence, 1654-1658* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2003). See also, E. B. O’Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York; Procured in Holland, England and France, by John Romeyn Brodhead, Esq. Volume I* (New York: Weed, Parsons and Company, Printers, 1856), 260-261. The petitioners requested that in order to address these issues favorably and bring the colony on a secure footing, (1) New Netherland should be supplied with “sufficient population to enable it to support, sustain and defend itself against Indians and others who may disturb and invade it.”

57 Charles T. Gehring, ed., *Correspondence, 1647-1653*, 84.
arrested and convicted for licentious and immoral conduct while in Holland, after presenting Stuyvesant’s defense to the members of the States General.

After numerous postponements, instigated by the members of the Dutch West India Company, at last, in the beginning of 1653, Adriaen van der Donck and his companions were ready to return to New Amsterdam with the hard-earned fruits of their labors in Holland. The West India Company had long successfully opposed them. However, the collapse of van Tienhoven, the continued support in the form of petitions and various statements sent to the delegates from New Amsterdam, and the persistent appeals by Adriaen van der Donck, Jan Evertsen Bout, and Cornelis van Couwenhoven to the States-General finally gained them victory. The result: the government of New Amsterdam was henceforth to be conducted by two burgomasters, five schepens, and a schout, or sheriff, after the manner of the towns of the Netherlands. These offices were directed to be filled by election. But Stuyvesant, disregarding the orders of the States-General to that effect, took it upon himself to fill them by his own appointment. The first burgomasters were Arendt van Hatten and Martin Cregier; the schepens, Wilhelm Beeckman, Paulus Leendertsen van der Grist, Maximilian van Gheel, Allard Anthony, Pieter Wolferts van Couwenhoven; and Jacob Kip was the first secretary to the magistrates. Van Tienhoven, however, was made the fiscal, which greatly dissatisfied the colonists. It is not surprising that none of those men to whose efforts the great reform was chiefly due were appointed to office. Thus began municipal government on

58 Charles T. Gehring, ed., *Correspondence, 1647-1653*, 149.
59 Some scholars who are familiar with all the problems that van Tienhoven had engendered in the colony and his other questionable practices have wondered why Stuyvesant continued to support him. It is apparent from the *Correspondence* that Stuyvesant had written to the Directors of the Amsterdam Chamber sought van Tienhoven’s recall. See Charles T. Gehring, ed., *Correspondence, 1647-1653*, 106. While it was a source a great dissatisfaction to the Commonalty, it was the members of the Amsterdam Chamber and not Stuyvesant (as commonly thought) that decided to continue Cornelis van Tienhoven in the office of fiscal. Charles T. Gehring, ed., *Correspondence, 1654-1658*, 12.
Manhattan Island, where burgomasters and schepens conducted the city’s affairs until control of the colony was passed to the English.

At the same time that the States General granted the reforms requested by van der Donck and his companions, they commanded Stuyvesant to return to Holland to answer the accusations that had been made against him. Events that would act as a brake to van der Donck’s meteoric public career were quickly unfolding in the straits of Dover between Dutch and English fleets. It was said that the crew aboard the *White Water*, while off the Waal, had witnessed “signs and wonders in the heavens portending the approach of events which were about to convulse the world” — events that would forever change van der Donck and New Netherland’s fortunes. \(^6\) War had erupted between England and the Netherlands, and so it was then deemed a matter of the first importance that someone with military experience should govern New Netherland. Stuyvesant’s hand, too heavy in times of peace, was now needed at the helm to navigate New Netherland through the prevailing storm. Yielding to the force of circumstances, the States-General rescinded their order for Stuyvesant’s recall. Thus Stuyvesant narrowly escaped the threatened humiliation. It was probably with great disappointment that van der Donck received the news that Stuyvesant would no longer be recalled. On the one hand, thanks to his publicity efforts in Holland, New Amsterdam was placed on the path to have representative government, but the opportunity van der Donck had hoped for shaping the colony by removing the DWIC and its system of Director-Generalship from the colony was proving to be illusive. Rather than returning to Manhattan with the prospect of exchanging his position as President of the Commonalty for one of direct leadership in the new colonial government, on May 26, 1653 van der Donck was instead placed in the humiliating

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\(^6\) Hugh Hastings, ed., *ERNY*, Volume I, 311. This mirage was deemed to foretell the war between England and Holland.
position of resigning his commission and “promising upon arrival in New Netherland and taking up residence there, to accept no office whatever it may be, but rather to live in private peacefully and quietly as a common inhabitant, submitting to the orders and commands of the Company or those enacted by its director.”

For months, he had been for Stuyvesant and the DWIC a roaring lion on the verge of devouring them, and now thanks to the eruption of the First Anglo-Dutch War he was declawed – rendered ineffectual – and sent packing back to his country estate in New Netherland, a broken shell of his former self. What a revolution of fortune.

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9. Peter Stuyvesant and The Striving for Dutch Hegemony in Manhattan

9.1

While Adriaen van der Donck was barred from taking any leadership role in the new representative government that he was so instrumental in bringing about, he could take some comfort in the fact that New Netherland was finally beginning to flourish as a result of his brainchild. After the establishment of municipal government in New Amsterdam, emigration from Holland increased considerably. Many people decided to migrate to New Netherland, motivated by the publication of van der Donck’s *Description of New Netherland* and the prospect of owning land, and prompted by the new incentives for emigration sponsored by the Directors of the Dutch West India Company. Migration to New Netherland had increased to such a fever pitch that van der Donck himself would complain about these “land-hungry people” who had, during his absence from New Netherland, begun settling on his private lands located in present-day Yonkers.¹ While New Netherland’s population was finally increasing, New England’s still surpassed that of New Netherland by ten to one. A survey of the city of New Amsterdam was made in 1656, which showed that there were one hundred and twenty houses, and a population of one thousand souls.²

The growth in population, while welcomed, created new problems for Stuyvesant and his administration. For one thing, they had to decide who would be embraced as part of the community and what role religious affiliation would play in this decision. In order to survive as a colony in the face of impending attacks from the

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¹ Charles T. Gehring, ed., *Correspondence, 1647-1653*, 205.
surrounding Native tribes and other European colonies, the Dutch were compelled to jeopardize their long-term survival and security as a Dutch colony for the sake of the more immediate future. So both Stuyvesant and the DWIC grudgingly tolerated and accommodated an increasing number of English settlers in New Netherland. And while there were prominent Englishmen sitting as members of Stuyvesant’s Council, the Directors in Amsterdam were careful to inform Stuyvesant that they “cannot however consent to give them a preeminence in the council, for [they] consider that dangerous.”

Both Peter Stuyvesant and the Directors of the Amsterdam Chamber viewed with misgivings the increasing presence of the English in New Netherland. With mounting tensions between England and Holland, both in America and Europe, the decision to permit so many English settlers to settle within their colony was seen as tantamount to allowing wolves to peacefully roam unmolested among a flock of sheep. Although Stuyvesant had masterfully negotiated a settlement of New Netherland’s border with the governors of New England, the English settlers within New Netherland were still viewed as potential sources of betrayal. Many English settlers assimilated into the Dutch community, receiving equal rights with other Dutch citizens. However, there were also a few English villages on Long Island whose residents, while swearing allegiance to the Netherlands and the Reformed Church and promising also to comport themselves according to the laws of the colony, were viewed with suspicion and their allegiance to both New Netherland and Holland were seen as extremely tenuous. In the 1650s as the population grew and religious diversity increased in these English settlements, the English settlers became a source of conflict for Stuyvesant and the Dutch West India Company.

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3 Charles T. Gehring, ed., Correspondence, 1647-1653, 144.
But the English were not the only source of tension and challenge to Stuyvesant’s vision for New Netherland. He viewed his victory over Adriaen van der Donck, plus the renewed confidence and support that both the States General and the DWIC had demonstrated in him, as representing a mandate for him to carry out his plans for New Netherland.  

New Netherland’s previous Director-Generals had, in order to attract potential settlers, permitted religious practices that diverged from the Dutch Reformed faith. This had allowed certain aberrant non-Reformed religious sects – Quakers, Anabaptists, Lutherans, and Catholics – to take root on Long Island and Manhattan. For thirty years after the settlement of Long Island no church was built on Long Island, the people depended upon the Dutch Reformed minister at New Amsterdam for spiritual aid. But, what were these, predominantly English, people to do who did not embrace the doctrines of the Dutch Reformed Church? They would not have felt comfortable attending services in the Dutch Reformed Church, both because of doctrinal and linguistic considerations. However, Stuyvesant, who was zealously devoted to the Reformed church, and resolved to maintain a Dutch colony where unity in religion was a hallmark of the community, actively promoted the Reformed Church and took actions against the non-Reformed inhabitants of Manhattan and Long Island.

9.2

It was the Lutherans who would first decide to push the envelope and inundate all levels of the Dutch government in 1653 – the Director General, States General, and

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4 E. B. O’Callaghan, ed., Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York; Procured in Holland, England and France, by John Romeyn Brodhead, Esq. Volume I (New York: Weed, Parsons and Company, Printers, 1856), 134. Stuyvesant appears to believe that when he was appointed to the position as Director-General, the Company would allow him certain freedom to do whatever needed to be done in order to make the colony profitable, secure, and Dutch. His victory over van der Donck and others would have bolstered his perception that the Directors and the States General were content with his leadership agenda in the colony.
the Amsterdam Chamber of the Dutch West India Company – with petitions requesting permission “to call a Lutheran Minister out of Holland, and also to organize separately and publicly a congregation and church.” Manhattans Dutch Reformed ministers feared that if the Lutherans’ requests were granted then it would injure the stability and growth of the Dutch Reformed Church and lead to “the diminution of hearers of the Word of God, and the increase of dissensions,” which would further “pave the way for other sects, so that in time [New Netherland] would become a receptacle for all sorts of heretics and fanatics.” As they saw it, as long as the Reformed Church is the only Church allowed a public presence, then anyone who wishes to attend public worship would be compelled to attend the Reformed Church and would possibly eventually lead to an increase in the membership of the Church. The Directors of the Amsterdam Chamber of the DWIC were very clear that they thought it imprudent for Stuyvesant to acquiesce to the Lutherans’ requests. They recommended that Stuyvesant use “all possible but moderate means in order to induce [the Lutherans] to listen and finally join the Reformed Church and thus live in greater love and harmony” in the colony.  So determined were the members of the DWIC that the Lutherans not succeed in their plans that they promised that if the States General were inclined to grant the Lutherans’ request then “they would give opposing reasons” and “bind themselves to resist the request of the Lutherans.”

7 Charles T. Gehring, ed., Correspondence, 1654-1658, 6. They were unequivocal in their denial of the Lutherans’ petition. Writing to Stuyvesant they stated that “we have decided absolutely to deny the request made by some of our inhabitants, adherents of the Augsburg confession, for a preacher and free exercise of their religion, pursuant to the custom hitherto observed by us and the East India Company, on account of the consequences arising therefrom, and we recommend to you also not to receive any similar petitions, but rather to turn them off in the most civil and least offensive way and to employ all possible but moderate means in order to induce them to listen and finally join the Reformed church and thus live in greater love and harmony among themselves.” Of course, they probably placed much emphasis on “moderate” — and moderation was not a quality that Stuyvesant had demonstrated.
The DWIC, Manhattan’s Dutch Reformed ministers and the Classis of Amsterdam were united in their prediction that religious disasters would ensue if the Lutherans were permitted public practice. They all point to the possibility that Papists, Anabaptists and English Independents would make similar petitions, and the colony would soon “become a Babel of confusion, instead of remaining a united and peaceful people.”

Strongly supported by the Classis of Amsterdam, New Amsterdam’s two Dutch ministers (Reverends Samuel Drisius and Johannes Megapolensis) and the Directors of the Amsterdam Chamber of the Dutch West India Company, Stuyvesant not surprisingly denied the request of New Netherland’s Lutherans. For three years the Lutherans bristled under the thought that they had to attend the Reformed Church. As Paulus Schrick, the leader of the Lutherans, explained, “they are Lutherans, and will remain such, because their parents and ancestors were Lutherans.” However, when they lodged their complaint, the Lutherans stated that their main source of discomfort was differences in the Dutch Reformed baptism formulation.

So, three years later they again petitioned the DWIC for permission to call a Lutheran minister to Manhattan and worship publicly.

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9 Hugh Hastings, ed., ERNY, Volume I, 387. The members of the DWIC feared that “the Mennonites, as well as the English Independents, who are numerous there, might seek to introduce like public assemblies.” (p. 320).

10 Hugh Hastings, ed., ERNY, Volume I, 428-429. Manhattan’s Lutherans had separated from the Dutch Reformed Church and entered a complaint with the Directors of the DWIC because they objected to certain words used in the administration of baptism, and parents were compelled to be present when their children are presented for baptism. While denied by the Reformed ministers, the Lutherans stated that in the Formula of Baptism, the parents or sponsors are asked “whether the doctrines taught ‘here’ in this church, according to the Synod of Dort, are the true doctrines.” It is the use of the word “here” which they found objectionable. Additionally, the ministers denied that they compelled parents and sponsors to be present at the baptism of their children. Instead they explained that “sometimes there are bastards presented for baptism, who have no known father. Some charged to be the father deny it. In such cases others have been known to interpose, and to present the illegitimate child. Subsequently [they] noticed that young person, who could hardly carry the child, and who had scarcely more knowledge of religion, baptism, and the vows, than the child itself, brought and presented other young children for baptism; but that it should only be done by those who had arrived at years of discretion; that it was the special duty of parents, if at home, to present their own children for baptism....”
Fortunately, for them, this time the political tide had turned in the Lutherans’ favor. With the loss of Brazil as a Dutch colony in 1654 and the associated loss of profits from the Brazilian trade, the members of the Dutch West India Company turned their attention and focused their energies on making New Netherland more profitable. With this new focus came the understanding that “the growth and prosperity” of New Netherland “depends principally upon the population and the cultivation of the soil,” and as such it became paramount that “the influx of free people should not be impeded, but rather encouraged by resolute and honest measures.”\(^1\) The very growth of the colony depended on accommodating potential inhabitants from various non-Reformed backgrounds and upon the removal of any edicts that may hinder free migration. The DWIC’s desire for prosperity, not to mention survival of the colony, breached the protective walls around Dutch Calvinism in New Netherland. This shift in policy commenced an acrimonious struggle between Stuyvesant and the Directors of the Amsterdam Chamber of the DWIC over the substance of the colony’s religious milieu. In the balance were piety, prosperity and power – financial power and power to shape the religious and social contours of the colony.

Stuyvesant defined the battlefield when he issued a proclamation forbidding anyone from holding a religious meeting not in harmony with the Reformed Church.\(^2\) Any preacher who should violate this Ordinance was to be subjected to a penalty of one hundred pounds, and anyone who should attend such a meeting was to be punished by a penalty of twenty-five pounds. When the Lutherans tried to get a meeting room for

\(^{11}\) Charles T. Gehring, ed., *Correspondence, 1654-1658*, 15, 29.

\(^{12}\) Charles T. Gehring, ed., *Correspondence, 1654-1658*, 209. The ordinance stated that “the director general and council aforesaid hereby expressly forbid all such conventicles and meetings, whether public or private, differing from the customary and not only lawful but scripturally founded and ordained meetings of the Reformed divine service, as observed and enforced according to the synod of Dordrecht in this country, in our fatherland, and other Reformed churches in Europe, under penalty of one hundred pounds Flemish to be forfeited by all those who, being unqualified, assume, either on Sundays or other days, any office whether of preacher, reader or singer, in such meetings whether public or private, differing from the customary and lawful....”
services, Stuyvesant prevented it. When they procured a Lutheran minister from Holland, the Reverend John Ernestus Gutwasser, Stuyvesant and the Council made life so uncomfortable for him that he had to go into hiding. Once discovered, he was promptly arrested and sent back to the Netherlands on the first ship.\textsuperscript{13} To have one group of non-conformists publicly practicing their faith at liberty was to invite the presence of others; the idea was unconscionable and offensive to Peter Stuyvesant’s sense of order. For Stuyvesant and his supporters, the final result of the battle with the Lutherans would determine the outcome of future battles with other non-Reformed sects. There was also a lot at stake for the DWIC. The West India Company blamed Stuyvesant for persecuting the Lutherans, on grounds of both policy and principle. To retard the growth of a commercial colony on account of a “needless preciseness” on the subject of baptism was an act of folly; nor was it in accordance with the Christian spirit, the DWIC now argued. So the Lutherans, who were law-abiding persons, were allowed liberty of worship. Although the West India Company had initially supported Stuyvesant’s ordinance against the worship of other religious sects, they now censured him for overzealous adherence to religious orthodoxy at the expense, they thought, of political expedience and the desperately needed growth of the colony. The reality of colonial migration forced the Directors of the DWIC to reconsider their commitment to a uniform public religious practice. But Stuyvesant was too rigid to bend under the sway of such expediencies. Furthermore, according to Reverends Samuel Drisius and Johannes Megapolensis, because of his zeal for the Reformed religion Stuyvesant “would rather relinquish his office than grant permission in this matter, since it is contrary to the first article of his commission, which was confirmed by him with an oath.

\textsuperscript{13} Hugh Hastings, ed., \textit{ERNY}, Volume I, 449.
not to permit any other than the Reformed doctrine.” While that might be true, it seems more likely, since Stuyvesant was apparently not averse to renege on other areas of his commission, that he was more motivated by his disdain for non-Reformed sects and his determination to maintain public religious conformity in New Netherland.

Once again, the divergent Dutch religious heritages that were proposed by the tolerant Remonstrant and the conservative orthodox Counter-Remonstrant wings of Dutch Calvinism were creating factions in New Netherland’s capital, Manhattan. The settlers of New Netherland most often clung to the political and religious traditions of the Remonstrants. The Remonstrant variant of Calvinism was more tolerant of religious and ethnic differences. If Adriaen van der Donck was correct that one of the primary impediments to settlement was the less than favorable report of previous settlers disseminated in Holland upon their return home, then it is quite likely that attempts to curtail religious heterogeneity and establish conformity in public practice would have formed part of the settlers’ bad report. Despite the forceful admonition of the Directors of the DWIC that the Lutherans be allowed to practice their religion in private and that the Dutch Reformed ministers change the baptism formulation to accommodate the Lutherans, Stuyvesant and his supporters continued their intolerant policies. The end result was that the Lutherans eventually capitulated and joined the Dutch Reformed

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15 Stuyvesant was apparently either diverting some of the DWIC funds to himself or engaging in questionable accounting practices, of which he did not want the Directors to know. The Directors of the Amsterdam Chamber requested innumerable times that Stuyvesant send copies of the accounts books. He was able to successfully evade them for many years, and when he did send it, it was still incomplete. See Charles T. Gehring, ed., Correspondence, 1647-1653, 113, 147. See also, Charles T. Gehring, ed., Correspondence, 1654-1658, 7, 87. On one occasion he was caught withholding information about dyewoods that were transported aboard a Company ship to the warehouse at New Amsterdam. He was either using Company ships to carry-on his own trade or stealing Company trade goods.
16 E. B. O’Callaghan, ed., DRCHNY, Volume I, 156.
17 Charles T. Gehring, ed., Correspondence, 1654-1658, 93. The Directors wrote to Stuyvesant explaining that they “would also have been better pleased, if [he] had not posted the placard against the Lutherans…and committed them to prison, for it has always been [their] intention, to deal with them quietly and peacefully. Hereafter [he] will therefore not post such or similar placards without [their] knowledge, but [he] must pass it over quietly and let them have free religious exercises in their houses.”
Church. It was in glee and with a sense of pride and victory that Reverends Megapolensis and Drisius wrote home to the Classis of Amsterdam that after Gutwasser’s forced departure “there is now again quietness among the people and the Lutherans again go to church, as they were formerly accustomed to do.” Furthermore, “one of their principal men, [Paul Schrick], the *causa movens*, in the bringing over of this preacher...is now one of the most punctual attendants, and has his pew near to the pulpit.” Despite the DWIC’s new focus on tolerance, Stuyvesant’s desire that the Dutch Reformed faith should constitute part of the hallmark of the emerging community ultimately prevailed.

9.3

Even before the difficulties with the Lutherans had been resolved, the English, whose numbers on Long Island had increased substantially, began creating problems for Stuyvesant. While they had agreed to settle in New Netherland and obey the laws and ordinances of the colony, they were not given the right to nominate their own magistrates. However, some of them usurped this by electing and appointing magistrates, as they pleased, without regard to their religion. Some, especially the people of Gravesend, were said to have elected “libertines and Anabaptists, which [was] decidedly against the laws of the Netherlands.”

While Stuyvesant had treated the Anabaptists on Long Island with comparative mildness, he could not endure the Quakers. As a Calvinist, the Quakers were obnoxious to him, but as the Director-General their methods of proselytizing offended him much more; particularly offensive were their obstinacy. In 1657 there arrived some Quakers arrived at Manhattan, traveling from Barbados to Rhode Island -- that “sink of England,

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where all kinds of scum dwell,” as the Domines Megapolensis and Drisius described it.20 As these Quakers went about the streets of Manhattan, they drew large crowds as they harangued against “steeple-houses,” the priesthood, and the colonial authorities in general. The inhabitants of New Amsterdam stood about in perplexed amazement at the exhorters. Nothing could be better calculated to incite the wrath of Stuyvesant than such scenes of disorder. Two of the women-preachers were thrown into prison, and later sent away from the colony, with their hands tied behind them, on the first ship bound for Rhode Island. But a man named Robert Hodgson, who was arrested for preaching at Hempstead, was more aggravating and obstinate in his conduct. First, when he was arraigned in court in New Amsterdam, he angered Director-General Stuyvesant by refusing to remove his hat, which was his way of showing respect to God alone. Stuyvesant ordered that Hodgson be chained to a wheelbarrow, and compelled to work on the roads; a black man, quite possibly one of the Company’s African slaves, accompanied Hodgson armed with a whip. However, Hodgson’s spirit proved difficult to break, and he continued to preach to the passers-by from his wheelbarrow. Not wanting to countenance such overt disobedience, Stuyvesant ordered him hung by the hands, and severely beaten. It was only after Mrs. Anna Bayard, Stuyvesant’s sister, interceded for the unfortunate Quaker minister that he was released and banished from the colony.

It is not certain that the Directors of the DWIC were aware of the Hodgson affair, but we know their response to Stuyvesant’s treatment of John Bowne, another Quaker who was an old resident of Flushing. Since John Bowne was a resident of the colony, unlike Hodgson, Stuyvesant had decided to send him to Holland for his “offense.” However, the West India Company would not permit it. Instead, they ordered

Stuyvesant to “let every one remain free as long as he is modest, moderate, his political conduct irreproachable, and as long as he does not offend others or oppose the government.” This was the time-honored custom of the magistrates of Amsterdam: “Tread thus in their steps, and we doubt not you will be blessed.” But their advice fell on deaf ears, as Stuyvesant continued in his “Reformation” of the colony. The Directors’ argument that “a considerable influx of people” would proceed from such a policy and “maxim of moderation” did not convince Stuyvesant to change his policy because he was convinced that the appearance of Quakers, “raising up, and propagating a new, unheard of, abominable Heresy” in the colony was a “palpable sign” of God’s just punishment for the colonists’ “thankless use of temporal blessings.” As such, the Quakers were not to be permitted to settle in the colony and would not be accepted into the community.

Stuyvesant was even more hostile towards the colony’s Jewish settlers. In 1654, New Netherland received its first Jewish settlers who fled after Brazil was captured by Portugal. This was still centuries before many Christians came to agree that Christian eschatology was clear that God was not finished with the Jewish people and the nation of Israel – that He had not turned His back on His “chosen people” and made a new covenant, paid for and written in the crucified blood of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. And, it was still centuries before many Christians would believe that their hopes, futures and position in Eternity was inextricably linked to the future of the Jewish people. Seventeenth-century Christians did not yet believe, as later generations would centuries later, that not only the Jews, but Pontius Pilate, and all of humanity were

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21 Hugh Hastings, ed., ERNY, Volume I, 530. The Directors argue that “although we heartily desire, that these and other sectarians remained away from there, yet as they do not, we doubt very much, whether we can proceed against them rigorously without diminishing the population and stopping immigration, which must be favored at a so tender stage of the country’s existence. You may therefore shut your eyes....”

responsible for Christ’s suffering and crucifixion. It would definitely be a stretch for Stuyvesant and others of his religious leaning to believe, as many modern day Christians do, that ultimately God Himself was to blame for Christ’s death; that God had willed and predetermined the crucifixion in the Garden of Eden the moment Adam and Eve sinned in order to one day reconcile humanity to Himself. Instead, Stuyvesant was of a time when most Christians viewed the Jewish people as the murderer of the Messiah. And as murderers, they were not to be accommodated in the community – especially not given social and legal rights that would place them and Judaism on a par with Christians and Christianity. With such a mindset Stuyvesant refused to heed the DWIC’s orders that the recently migrated Jews should be accepted into the colony on an equal footing with other Protestant settlers.

The DWIC was concerned more with the preservation of peace and order within their colony, and with the pursuit of prosperity, than with religious purity. For the Directors of the DWIC, commerce ultimately outweighed all other considerations in the determination of civil policy. Stuyvesant, however, was intent that the Jews not share in any of the benefits of community members. Every attempt that was made by a Jewish settler to take part in community life was blocked by Stuyvesant and his Council: when a Jewish settler attempted to purchase a house, Stuyvesant quickly moved to nullify the sale and place the house on public auction again. When another petitioned to open a bakery, Stuyvesant grudgingly permitted him with the stipulation that he could sell his goods only behind closed doors. When a group of Jewish settlers sought to show their loyalty to the wider community by volunteering to serve in the militia, they were flatly rejected.23 As far as Stuyvesant was concerned, there was no room in the colony for the

Jews. He ignored the fervent warnings of the Directors of the DWIC about the possible detrimental consequences of his policy for the colony’s long-term survival and population growth.

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As much as the Jews and Quakers challenged Stuyvesant’s sensibilities about proper membership into the emerging community, New Netherland’s Native Americans and Swedes challenged the very existence of the colony. The small Swedish colony on the Delaware River (or South River) that was established by Peter Minuit in 1638 had grown considerably and had overwhelmed the tenuous Dutch settlement in the region. By 1649, the Dutch included the Swedes and Indians among their enumerated list of “enemies.” There was no question that they stood outside the defined parameters of the community. For Stuyvesant and the Dutch settlers, the enemies of New Netherland were “Indians” and others who “come from out side, or from one side, as Pirates, Englishmen, Swedes, or such like.”24 The increasing number of enslaved Africans in the colony did not fall within the defined limits of these internal or external agitators that threatened the very existence of the colony. Furthermore, while there were many English settlers within New Netherland that had taken an oath of allegiance to the DWIC and the Dutch colonial government, this statement indicates that for many Dutch settlers, these erstwhile English subjects were viewed with suspicion. And as for the

24 E. B. O’Callaghan, ed., *DRCHNY*, Volume I (New York: Weed, Parsons and Company, Printers, 1856), 269. Regarding the Natives, it was asserted with confidence that they “are of little consequence; were there one thousand or two thousand men more than there are now, the natives would be obliged to forego and suppress all their arrogance and designs.” It is clear that even after the disastrous results of Kieft’s War, the Dutch settlers were still intent on suppressing the “arrogance” of the Natives. The bitterness and anger that was the very motivation for Kieft’s War was still there, lying dormant. It is also apparent that only the utter submission, extermination or removal of the Natives would satisfy this anger stemming from their unrealized sense of superiority.
Native Americans, Stuyvesant did not hesitate to make it known that he would “esteem the blood of one...Christian more than 100 Indians.”\textsuperscript{25} Not only were they enemies of the Dutch, but Stuyvesant had clearly conflated his value of the Native Americans as human beings, his value of Native Americans as potential members of the community and his estimation of their religion – in the end they were found wanting.

In late 1654 and early 1655, the activities of the Swedes at the Delaware River and the Native Americans in the vicinity of Manhattan Island would combine to jeopardize the continued existence of the Dutch settlement around Manhattan. The Swedes had controlled the most favorable location for trading with the Natives in the Delaware River and had grown in numbers. The Swedish settlement in the Delaware River had severely tested the Dutch claims to the region, which was never successfully settled or strongly held. Stuyvesant had recently decided to weaken the defenses at Fort Casimir’s (the Dutch trading fort in the Delaware River) in favor of strengthening Manhattan against a possible attack from New England during the first Anglo-Dutch War. Aware that Stuyvesant lacked the military power to deter him, in 1654, the governor of the Swedish settlement, Captain Johan Rising, took advantage of the superior Swedish strength in the Delaware River Valley to capture the Dutch Fort Casimir, commanded by Gerrit Bicker. The few Dutch settlers still present in the settlement were permitted to remain under Swedish rule, and Rising changed the name of the fort to Fort Trinity. This left the Netherlands without any significant presence in the Delaware River region.

Temper flared once the news of these proceedings reached New Amsterdam and then Holland. Stuyvesant was visibly angry, and Manhattan’s burghers, who had gathered about Fort Amsterdam to denounce the loss of Fort Casimir, shared Stuyvesant’s rage. But the Director-General did not have the means, financial or

military, to take aggressive measures. Instead, he had to settle with writing an
indignant account of the event to the Dutch West India Company, pleading for
assistance. The Directors of the DWIC ordered Stuyvesant to eliminate the Swedish
colony. To ensure Stuyvesant’s success in his expedition against New Sweden, the
DWIC commissioned two armed ships. The Directors advised Stuyvesant that he
could now use his troops on Manhattan more freely, since peace with England had been
proclaimed. Enlistments were pushed with great energy both in New Netherland and
Holland. August 25, 1655, was set apart by Directory-General Stuyvesant and the
Council of New Netherland as a day of fasting, thanksgiving and prayer “to ask God
with humble hearts, not only that he may continue his general and special blessings,
mercies and benefits, but also…that He will please to bless the intended expedition,
undertaken solely for the better security and progress of this province.” Preparations
were made at New Amsterdam for the enterprise, and all possible secrecy was observed
with the purpose of surprising the Swedes.

On Sunday September 5, 1655, after the morning sermon, the sails were unfurled
and the little squadron of seven vessels, consisting of a force of six or seven hundred
men, put to sea. Councilor Nicasius de Sille and Domine Megapolensis, as chaplain,
accompanied Director-General Stuyvesant, who commanded the expedition. With
drums beating on deck, Stuyvesant arrived in the Delaware River on September 10,
sailing directly beneath the Swedish guns at Fort Trinity. The Swedish commander,
Sven Skute, clearly surprised by the appearance of the Dutch fleet with all its

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26 Charles T. Gehring, ed., Correspondence, 1654-1658, 36,42. In response to the news from Director-General
Stuyvesant of the loss of the DWIC’s fort in the South River, the Directors stated that “your honor must do
your utmost to revenge this misfortune not only by restoring matters to their former condition, but also by
driving the Swedes at the same time from the river, as they did us;...” Furthermore, they asserted that “we
do not know what has astonished us most: that the newly arrived Swedish troops have endeavored to take
our fort on the South River or that our commander has surrendered it so infamously. This cannot be
tolerated;...”

accompanying military pomp, froze and did not give the order to fire. Stuyvesant’s Dutch fleet was therefore allowed to enter New Sweden uncontested and land north of Fort Trinity, which Sven Skute surrendered at the first summons. With their advantageous position, the Dutch were able to cut the coastal road to Fort Christina (present-day Wilmington), isolating Johan Rising and the fledgling Swedish settlement around the fort. Not willing to surrender, Rising held out for twelve days in Fort Christina.

For a few days, the opponents exchanged shots, with little injury on either side. Then, having made a show of resistance, Rising finally yielded to the superior Dutch force, after days of negotiation. The Swedes were allowed to remain in their settlements upon taking the oath of allegiance to Holland and to the government and council of New Netherland. Domine Megapolensis, who had traveled as chaplain, preached a thanksgiving sermon, thanking God for the swift and relatively bloodless victory. But the Dutch had little time to celebrate, for Stuyvesant received news that quickly ended the joyous occasion. A dispatch from Manhattan informed Stuyvesant of the colony’s peril and implored him to return speedily. As a result the close of negotiations on the Delaware River was hurried, allowing the Swedes to procure more favorable terms of capitulation than they probably would otherwise have obtained.

9.5

On September 15, 1655, with Stuyvesant and virtually all of New Netherland’s military force absent from Manhattan, over six hundred armed Native Americans in sixty-four canoes stealthily landed at Fort Amsterdam on Manhattan Island. Under the

28 Scholars have traditionally referred to the 1655 attack on Manhattan and the surrounding environ the Peach War, a name derived from an incident in which the colony’s former fiscal Hendrick van Dyck shot a Native American woman who was purloining peaches from his orchard. In recent years, scholars have
taken to referring to this eruption in open hostility as the Second Dutch-Munsee War. See Paul Otto, The Dutch-Munsee Encounter in America: The Struggle for Sovereignty in the Hudson Valley (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006). “Kieft’s War” was coined the First Dutch-Munsee War and the Second Dutch-Munsee War (known also as “Peach War”) was fought from 1655 and the Third Dutch-Munsee War (known also as “Esopus War”) was fought in 1659-1660 and 1663-1664. It was thought that the murder of the Indian woman had aroused the Natives’ outrage and resentment, and then prompted them to seek revenge. More recently, however, scholars have argued that the attack on Manhattan and the settlements in the surrounding area was closely linked to the Dutch seizure of New Sweden. See Cynthia Jean van Zandt, “Negotiating Settlement: Colonialism, Cultural Exchange, and Conflict in Early Colonial Atlantic North America, 1580-1660” (Ph.D. diss., University of Connecticut, 1998), 130-131. Taking seriously certain statements made by Johan Rising and some Swedish colonists at the time that the two conflicts were indeed related, van Zandt has argued that “not only were the Dutch conquest of Nye Sverige [New Sweden] and the Native American attack on Manhattan in 1655 related events, they were different aspects of the same event.” Van Zandt asserts that the Susquehannocks attacked Manhattan in order to exact revenge upon the Dutch once they discovered that they had captured New Sweden. The force of her argument relies heavily on the theory, which she spends much time fleshing out, that the relationship between the settlers at New Sweden and the Susquehannocks was one of client and protector. The Susquehannocks, as protectors of the Swedish colonists, attacked Manhattan to exact revenge for their weaker clients or tributaries, the Swedish settlers. Furthermore, in yet another twist, perceiving New Netherland as a “client colony of Iroquoia,” their paramount enemies, an attack on Manhattan allowed the Susquehannocks, she argues, to exact revenge on the Dutch. The Susquehannocks had suffered great losses in wars in 1652 with the Iroquois located in the upper Hudson River region near Fort Orange. Therefore, she argues, an attack on Manhattan also allowed the Susquehannocks “to strike a blow against an important Iroquois client, and thus exact some revenge on the Iroquois as well — …sending an indirect but heavily symbolic message to the Haudenosaunee [Iroquois], without having to attack them directly.”

Cynthia van Zandt’s explanation is intriguing. However, when one reads the extant accounts of the 1655 attack given by the Dutch survivors of the attack, there are some questions that her explanation does not address. Among other things, if it was the Natives’ intent to exact revenge directly on the Mohawks by attacking the settlers at Manhattan, why did they not attack them right after arriving on the Island instead of running “fully armed through the streets in large troops, breaking into the house of [many of the burghers]…busting the lock from the door; threatening and beating the people as they forcibly searched the house, claiming to be looking for Northern Indians”? There seems to be some validity to the Natives’ assertion that their intent was to seek “Northern Indians.” The settlers were at a significant disadvantage, and a hostile surprise attack by the Natives could have potentially resulted in the total decimation of New Amsterdam. And yet, the Natives did not immediately attack and did not capitalize on their advantageous position vis-à-vis the settlers. Furthermore, some of the same sources that state that the Susquehannocks (Maquas) were the chief instigators also list the Mohawks (Maquas) as taking part in the raid, making it less likely that the Susquehannocks were seeking revenge against the Mohawks. See Charles T. Gehring, ed., New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch, Volumes XVIII-XIX, Delaware Papers (Dutch Period) (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co, Inc., 1981), 35-36. It was Thomas Willet, who had informed the settlers that the attack force “consisted of Maquas, Mahikanders, the Indians of the North River from above to below…and others.” He further informed the colonists that “the great chief of the Minquas has been here conferring on some matters with all the afore-mentioned Indians; he thinks that the Swedes have had him bribe these Indians, and that it is through Swedish instigation that these troubles have befallen us…” But it would appear that the Susquehannock sachem was in the area only after the attack occurred. And the Susquehannocks, who had wanted access to the Dutch, but was prevented by the Mahicans and Mohawks, benefited greatly from the Dutch seizure of New Sweden because they now had direct access to the Dutch on the Delaware River. Moreover, that the attack force went to Pavonia and Staten Island after leaving Manhattan could also support their claim of looking for “Northern Indians.” In 1643, when several hundred “Northern Indians” fled from the onslaught of Mahicans seeking tributary payments, they took refuge on Manhattan, Staten Island and Pavonia with friendly Natives and in the homes of European traders like David Pieterszen de Vries, who because of their occupation often acted as cross-cultural brokers and mediators and were on friendly terms with the local Natives. It might then explain why the settlements on Manhattan, Pavonia and Staten Island were again targeted for search and subsequent attack and also why the houses of men like Isaac Allerton, someone who operated as a cross-cultural broker between the various Native groups and settlers in New England, Virginia, New Netherland and New Sweden, and was quite friendly with the local Natives, would have been singled out for search. The Natives’ actions upon arriving on Manhattan lend credence to Stuyvesant’s assertion that “the Indians, when they first arrived…had no other intention than to wage war on the Indians on the eastern end of Long Island…and that careless
dark cover of night, the Natives crept through the silent streets. Once their presence became known, it was unclear what their intentions were. Yet although they were ideally positioned to destroy the town and its inhabitants, many of whom were still sleeping, they made no hostile attack. The only demonstrated hostility was that they entered the homes of some of the inhabitants and harangued them. Aware of their reduced numbers and the small number of soldiers at the fort, the colonists made no resistance to the plundering of their houses. Gradually the other inhabitants were awakened, and the principal burghers quickly assembled within the fort to decide a course of action. The town’s burghers sought to defuse the situation and to come to a peaceable agreement with the Natives. Several of the expedition’s leading sachems were asked to convene before the burghers, and when asked the nature and intent of their visit, the sachems responded that they were looking for “Northern Indians.” Furthermore, the band of warriors promised to withdraw immediately to Nut Island, (now Governor’s Island) and await the result of a conference between the burghers and the sachems.

It is not certain what was the trigger, but a quarrel ensued between one of the Native American warriors and the colony’s late fiscal Hendrick van Dyck. In the mêlée that erupted, van Dyck was pierced in the bosom with an arrow and Captain Paulus Leendertsen van der Grist was struck with an axe. The cry of murder then rang through observation and the all too hasty rashness of some intemperate individuals have diverted the Indians and given rise to the sad consequences and excessive losses.” See Charles T. Gehring, ed., Council Minutes, 1655-1656 (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1995), 132. It is possible that after searching the Dutch settlements for “Northern Indians,” the attack force intended to wage war on their allies on eastern Long Island, but was diverted from this plan by the unanticipated hostile exchange with the Dutch.

It is uncertain which tribal groups comprised the attack force. While Thomas Willet (see note above) stated that Maquas (Mohawks), Mahikanders (Mahicans), the Indians of the North River, and possibly the Minquas (Susquehannocks) had comprised the attack force, O’Callaghan states the “a party of savages, Mohegans, Pachamis, with others from Esopus, Hackingsack, Tappan, Stamford and Onkeway, as far east as Connecticut…landed suddenly before daybreak, in sixty-four canoes….” E. B. O’Callaghan, History of New Netherland; or New York Under the Dutch Vol. II (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1848), 290.

the streets, as a general alarm was sounded. The few soldiers that Stuyvesant had left behind to guard the fort rushed out to engage the Natives, and a fierce battle ensued. The Natives were driven back to their canoes, but not before three of their warriors were killed and left behind in the streets. Five of the colonists, including van Dyck, were also killed and three were wounded.

Although they were driven back, the Natives did not leave the vicinity, but instead crossed over to Pavonia, on the other side of the Hudson River, and then to Staten Island. There, for three days they had free range with scarcely any opposition, as the inhabitants had only since Stuyvesant’s arrival as Director-General commenced rebuilding their settlements that were destroyed during Kieft’s War. What happened there was too well known to the people on Manhattan Island, who stood on the shore and watched the flames arise from the ravaged boweries. At the end of the three days, Pavonia and Staten Island had been devastated. According to Stuyvesant, “forty people were killed; 100 people, mostly women and children, taken prisoner; twenty-eight farms destroyed, including the loss of 500 head of cattle and 12,000 skipples of grain.”

The inhabitants from the surrounding area fled to Fort Amsterdam for protection. The settlements on Long Island, Pavonia and Staten Island were once again abandoned in fear, and, as during Kieft’s War, prowling bands of Natives wandered over Manhattan Island, burning and destroying everything in their path. At Rensselaerswyck and Fort Orange, no trouble was experienced. When knowledge of the hostilities at New Amsterdam was received there, the Dutch settlers quickly moved to conciliate the Mohawks and convince them to remain neutral.

Stuyvesant returned as soon as the news reached him. He moved swiftly to secure the colony from further attacks from the Natives and prepare for any hostilities.

The outlying farmers were instructed to mend their fences and better secure their properties, soldiers were sent to the outer settlements to assist in preparations for heightened security and protection, and an ordinance was passed prohibiting the excursions of small parties into the countryside in order to prevent further Dutch casualties and prisoners. In addition, the captains of vessels in the harbor were forbidden to leave under pain of severe fine, new taxes were imposed to raise the necessary funds to strengthen the fortifications, and every man capable of bearing arms was forced into the militia.

In the midst of all this energetic action, however, the Indians sued for peace. In defense of their actions, they argued that they had been provoked. Furthermore, winter was approaching and they wanted to be with their families and tend to the needs of their family members. Moreover, although the prisoners in their possession had increased their negotiating strength, with provisions increasingly scarce their captives were also steadily becoming an unwanted encumbrance. Pennekech, the Hackensack sachem and minor speaker for the Munsee on Long Island, sent one of the prisoners, Captain Adriaen Pos, who probably had some influence in the colony as superintendent of Staten Island, to propose the ransom of those captured for a stipulated amount of powder and balls. On the same day that Captain Pos delivered Pennekech’s ransom terms, Cornelis Mourissen and Steven Necker were also sent with terms for ransoming six settlers who were attacked and taken hostage by a group of thirty Natives of unknown tribal origins. But, the Council and Director-General decided not to pay the demanded ransom. For the six captives, the Natives were requesting “20 measures of cloth, 20 double handfuls of gunpowder, 10 staves of lead, 10 kettles, 2 guns, 3 swords, 20 fathoms of sewant, 90 knives, 10 pairs of shoes, 10 pairs of stockings, 10 adzes, 10
axes, and 20 tobacco pipes." After debating and weighing many aspects of the issue, Stuyvesant and the Council members decided to reject the ransom terms because they reasoned that if the other Natives, who had captured seventy-three of the settlers, “heard that so much had been paid...they would want to have an extraordinary sum.”

Instead of seeking new vengeance and prolonging the war indefinitely as Willem Kieft had done, Director-General Stuyvesant granted a peace and accepted Pennekech’s offer. On October 17, Pennekech returned fourteen Dutch settlers (men, women and children) with Captain Pos “as a token of good faith and intention,” with the request that a gift of powder and ball might be sent to him. Stuyvesant sent him the gunpowder and ball as requested, and two Native captives with the promise that more ammunition would be given should the other Dutch captives be returned. Stuyvesant’s decision to capitulate proved prudent, for as a result there was no renewal of war during the remainder of his tenure as Director-General on the part of the tribes in the immediate vicinity of New Amsterdam. Later, Pennekech was instrumental in convincing other sachems to release their captives for a similar exchange of gunpowder and lead. It was

32 Charles T. Gehring, ed., Council Minutes, 1655-1656 (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1995), 96. As will be discussed later, these requested items demonstrate the Natives’ dependence on European items and their increased reliance on articles of European material culture.


34 While Stuyvesant had decided to offer the local Native groups guns and powder, he simultaneously instituted a policy aimed at maintaining Dutch dominance over firearms. At the same time that he was offering ammunitions to cement trade alliances and secure peace with the surrounding Natives, Stuyvesant and the Council had passed laws prohibiting gunsmiths from repairing guns owned by Native Americans. See Charles T. Gehring, ed., Council Minutes, 1655-1656 (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1995), 135.


Some scholars have tended towards an interpretation that presents the Natives’ willingness to enter into peace negotiations with the Dutch as being tantamount to acceptance of Dutch sovereignty. See Paul Otto, The Dutch-Munsee Encounter in America: The Struggle for Sovereignty in the Hudson Valley (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006), 126, 142. However, this study takes the perspective that suing for peace does not necessarily mean that a tribal group accepted Dutch sovereignty, but was often a means of temporarily effectuating a decrease in hostilities to allow one to regain strength and regroup for a later attack. Furthermore, in an era when all the technological, cultural and negotiation tools available at one’s disposal were utilized to secure an advantageous position, the decision to enter peace negotiation was oftentimes prompted by the need to forward one’s plans or secure one’s position in the ever-shifting contested landscape of the Atlantic World. Take for example the Mohegan chief Uncas, whose people were closely allied to the Mahicans, and his relationship with the New England. In 1638, after it was discovered that he had absorbed into his tribe some of the Pequots, whom the English had just defeated with his assistance,
agreed that twenty-eight additional prisoners would be released for seventy-eight pounds of powder, and forty staves of lead. The governor sent the requested amount, and hoping to instill their generosity, he added an additional thirty-five pounds of powder and ten staves of lead as a “gift.” But instead, the Natives returned the agreed upon twenty-eight prisoners and no more, probably because they did not have any more captives in their possession. The remaining captives were being held by the “Highland Indians” in the vicinity of Westchester (Vreedlandt) and Onckeway (Fairfield, Connecticut) and Stamford, and according to one of these Natives, although their prisoners “were a burden to them because they had to feed them; nevertheless they kept them, knowing full well and understanding that the Dutch would have to leave them in peace as long as the prisoners were among them.”

Governor John Winthrop demanded that he relinquish control of the captives and allow them to be sold as slaves. Uncas initially refused, but when he realized that his refusal had called into question his trustworthiness, he relented and made an impassioned plea to Winthrop: “This heart,” he told Winthrop, laying his hand on his breast, “is not mine, but yours; I have no men; they are all yours; command me any difficult thing, I will do it; I will not believe any Indians’ word against the English; and if any many shall kill an Englishman, I will put him to death, were he never so dear to me.” See Michael LeRoy Oberg, Uncas: First of the Mohegans (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 79. One would assume that with such a strongly-stated support that Uncas and the Mohegans had accepted English sovereignty. But that was not the case. Years later when John Winthrop’s son attempted to establish a settlement at Nameag in the Pequot country, who were now under tributary protection of the Mohegans, Uncas demonstrated that while he was willing to accommodate English presence and rule in the region, he did not accept English sovereignty – especially not sovereignty over the Mohegans. See, Michael LeRoy Oberg, Uncas, 116-118. Uncas descended on the settlement with an attack force and proceeded to assault the settlers bodily. And although he later apologized for his actions when Winthrop’s son complained to his father, Uncas made it quite clear that the settlers had provoked his ire because they did not have permission to settle there. Who then was in control – Uncas or Winthrop? That there is no clear answer to this query is part of the fascination and conundrum of interactions and negotiations on the middle ground. And during the Dutch period, the middle ground was still operative. Successful negotiations and peaceful co-existence depended on both Natives and Europeans acknowledging and accepting that they cannot achieve their goals through force, and also in attempting to understand the world and the reasoning of the other, assimilating enough to put toward furthering their own goal. See Richard White, The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 52, 100-101. Stuyvesant had to learn the value of gift-giving in Native American culture and its centrality in cementing alliances, garnering influence, creating obligation, establishing status and covering transgressions.

Stuyvesant’s decision to send additional guns and powder also marked a departure from the tactics and policies of Willem Kieft. Stuyvesant proved himself a more adroit negotiator on the middle ground. Unlike Kieft, Stuyvesant understood the need to present gifts to the local sachems to distribute among his people clearing the path to the confirmation of peace.

Called Westchester by the English settlers, and Vreedlandt/Oostdorp by the Dutch. Additionally, the “Highland Indians” were also referred to as the “Esopus Indians” and the “Wieckquaeskeck Indians” (various manner of spelling this name have survived in the extant historical records as well). By March 1656
9.6

The Esopus Indians remained in enmity with the Dutch settlers. It is quite possible that the English settlers in New England or maybe the Mahicans, with whom they were allied, were meeting their need for gunpowder and lead. Consequently, the prospect of acquiring European ammunitions from the Dutch in exchange for returning their captives did not induce them to sue for peace. While the Cornelis Tienhoven advised him to commence war against the Natives, Stuyvesant thought such recourse imprudent because he was uncertain of its legality or whether the colony was “strong enough…to carry it on and bring it to a satisfactory conclusion.” He thought it most prudent for the colonists “to begin at the source” of the dispute – themselves – because “general sins are the cause of general punishments.” Next, Stuyvesant felt that the other effective recourse available to him was to order the settlers, who were scattered widely on farms and plantations and thereby peculiarly exposed to attacks, to assemble and unite themselves in villages before the ensuing spring, as he said “our New England neighbors” have done. He also ordered the construction of a blockhouse at Hackensack and Wieckquaeskeck near the best and most suitable lands to serve as a place of retreat in the event of war. Furthermore, the Natives were to be provided with a trading place outside of or next to Manhattan, and were not allowed to spend the night, either in Manhattan or any of the other villages or settlements, except in a

Stuyvesant had successfully negotiated the return of all the captives except some of the children and three elderly persons. In 1657, a few children still remained in captivity, possibly adopted into the Munsee bands. Charles T. Gehring, ed., Council Minutes, 1655-1656, 113. La Montagne and Nicasius de Sille also thought that war should be pursued, however they both thought it should be postponed until a later time when they were more prepared militarily and financially. Charles T. Gehring, ed., Council Minutes, 1655-1656, 113. It was his opinion that “common and public sins such as drunkenness, profanation of the Lord’s name and Sabbath, the public and common cursing even by children along the streets, the gatherings of sectarians and other disorderly groups, be countered and promptly prosecuted by the renewal of good regulations and laws.” Charles T. Gehring, ed., Council Minutes, 1655-1656, 185.
separate place. And they were not to be allowed to enter any villages or settlements with weapons on penalty of seizure and forfeiture of said weapons. In November 1655, a retinue of seven Natives from Long Island visited Manhattan claiming Tachpausaan, the Massapequa sachem, and Wyandanch, the Montauk sachem, on the eastern tip of Long Island, had sent “a small bunch of sewant...with the request that it please be accepted as a token of their friendship and as assurance that whenever [the Dutch] needed their sachem or his people, that [they] had only to summon them and they would be ready at all times.” Among the entourage was Adam, who spoke very good English. They proclaimed that none of the tribes on Long Island had participated in the attack, and that their people had been at war for almost twelve years with the tribes that attacked Manhattan earlier that year, which included the tribes living behind Onckeway (Fairfield, Connecticut) and Stamford in the Fresh River. Stuyvesant accepted their gift and offer of friendship, marking the first time that the Dutch had entered into such an alliance with any of the local groups since 1626.

It is noteworthy that 1655 marked the last time that a Native American war party attacked Manhattan or the immediate surrounding areas (Staten Island, Pavonia, Brooklyn and Long Island). Stuyvesant’s decision to effectively keep the Natives at arm’s length, prohibiting them from staying in the settlements and proscribing their day-to-day interaction with the colonists, seem to have achieved its desired intent. At

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43 In 1626, Daniel Crieckenbeek, and other settlers under the aegis of the Dutch West India Company, against Company policy had formed an alliance with the Mahicans, who were engaged in open and on-going conflict with the Mohawks, and made the disastrous decision to march against the Mohawks. They were severely defeated by the Mohawks. Further alliances were discouraged by the DWIC. This defeat probably fueled many of the Natives' accusations of Dutch cowardice, etc. The Long Island tribes' extension of friendship was instrumental in the Third Dutch-Munsee, as they marched victoriously with Dutch military forces against the Esopus Indians. See Nicolaes Janszoon van Wassenaer, “Historisch Verhael,” in J. Franklin Jameson, ed. Narratives of New Netherland, 1609-1664 (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1953), 84-85.
the same time, a policy of purchasing land and inducing Natives groups to cede land to
the Dutch had resulted in pushing Manhattan’s frontier further north and away from the
areas of dense settlement. Esopus became the new frontier, where the settlers made
complaints about Native American “insolence” and hostile confrontations occurred. In
1658, another disastrous war erupted, which affected only the town of Esopus and
involved these same “Highland Indians.” The Third Dutch-Munsee War began in 1659
and again the usual course of fighting and burning continued intermittently until 1663
when Stuyvesant traveled in person to settle the disputes and put an end to a state of
hostility. However, while he was holding a conference with the sachems, the young
warriors suddenly fired the village, and began to massacre the settlers. After this
treachery, Stuyvesant abandoned peaceful methods and pursued a course of battle until
the surviving remnant of the tribe was glad to sue for peace. The troubles were
terminated by treaty in 1664 and marked the last treaty made between the Dutch and the
Native American tribes in New Netherland before the English control of the colony.
With the termination of each dispute, the Natives were asked to cede more land to the
Dutch and remove their settlements further away from the Europeans, because, as
Stuyvesant argues, “it is not good for [them] to reside so near the Swannekins.”
The Esopus Indians finally negotiated a peace agreement with Stuyvesant in May 1664, three
months before the English invasion appeared in Manhattan’s harbor demanding the
surrender of New Netherland.

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44 E. B. O’Callaghan, History of New Netherland, Volume II, 360. Swannekins was the Indian word for the
Dutch settlers, meaning “salty people,” according to Charles Gehring, “inferring that Europeans were white
as salt.” Charles T. Gehring, ed., Council Minutes, 1655-1656, 103.
In the aftermath of the 1655 attack, it is evident that after the dust had settled, the shock and alarm had dissipated, people were seeking ways to move on, and a lot had changed in Manhattan’s community. The Second Dutch-Munsee War of 1655 revealed certain interesting information about Manhattan’s community, but as the last war that the Dutch and Native Americans fought on Manhattan it also marks a point in time when Dutch-Munsee and inter-tribal relationships and interactions were irrevocably changed. This change was not simply just an immediate result of the War, but was the result of the working out of many of the policies of Director-General Stuyvesant and the end result of many of the various contestations in the colony – contestations for power, for one’s vision to prevail, and for the direction of the colony. Furthermore, this change was not only in the relationships of the peoples, but also in the landscape, how they viewed their neighbors and how people understood their place in the developing society.

Physically, it was easy to see how the colony had changed. From a picture of total neglect and decimation, Manhattan developed into a thriving city. When Peter Stuyvesant arrived in the colony, the houses of New Amsterdam that were still standing after Kieft’s War were nearly all poorly built of wood. With the return of peace and prosperity the town was gradually rebuilt and by 1664, when the Dutch rule terminated, there were about two hundred and fifty houses, of which a considerable number were of a substantial character. Small colored bricks, and black and yellow roofing tiles, were imported from Holland and used by the wealthier Dutch citizens to construct their houses.

Although immigrants to Manhattan would still have many sources of instability with which to contend, the changes within the colony would have enabled them to feel more at home in the wilderness than previous immigrants. Never having known Europe, the native-born generations were even more likely to accept as a way of life the disorder and precariousness that troubled their immigrant forebears. Many of these children learned the Munsee language and felt more at ease with the Natives than did previous generations. Furthermore, unlike their predecessors new immigrants were probably less pressed by the absence of certain cultural elements that had been left behind in Europe because of all the changes made in the colony to approximate Dutch society. The conflicts between Director-General Stuyvesant and the Dutch colonists were in part a result of divergent views on which aspect of Dutch society should prevail in the colony.

While Stuyvesant was most interested in creating a strict Calvinist strong-hold in Manhattan along the lines of the Counter-Remonstrants, the burgomasters and schepens, as representatives of the commonalty, were interested in a version of Calvinism that did not chafe the sensibilities of the many non-Dutch Reformed citizens in the colony; they clung more to the liberal Remonstrant variant of Calvinism. They were interested in the encouraging the popular aspects of their Dutch Reformed faith that could find resonance with other Christians. These included the various festivals and celebrations that were part of the religious calendar of the Dutch Reformed Church. These festivals included Kerstyd – Christmas; Nieuw Jar – New Year’s Day; Pinxter – Whitsuntide; Paas – Passover; and Saint Nicholas Day. For two or three weeks after Christmas the public offices were closed and the burghers and their families spent much of their time in firing guns, beating drums, dancing, card-playing, playing at bowls or nine-pins, and in drinking beer. Also, Mayday was observed so boisterously that the
burgomasters provided that damage done to property during its celebration should be reported to them, and reparation would be made. These boisterous celebrations had set the stage for a contest between Stuyvesant and members of the Council at the fort, and the complaisant magistrates at the Stadt Huys as to the toleration of these public amusements. Stuyvesant and the Council issued a proclamation to deter these celebrations.  

This order may have modified, but it did not suppress, the popular ebullition of spirits. It was this, more popular, aspect of Dutch Calvinism that appeared to have been embraced by non-Dutch Reformed members of the community, including the enslaved Africans. The enslaved Africans and their descendants appropriated these festivals and transformed them into practices that were meaningful to them, celebrating Pinxter long after it had cease to be practiced among the white inhabitants of New York.

As with their appropriation of Pinxter celebrations, Manhattan’s African inhabitants had continued to find spaces within the emerging community and society where they could create for themselves a community and community institutions that were responsive to their needs, whether physical or spiritual. As a group whose

46 Berthold Fernow, ed., Records of New Amsterdam, Volume I,18. The proclamation declared that “We have learned by experience that on New Years Day and on Mayday the firing of guns, the planting of Maypoles, and the intemperate drinking cause, besides the useless waste of powder, much drunkenness and other insolent practices with sad accidents of bodily injury and to prevent this in the future the Director General and Council strictly forbid within the Province of New Netherland, the firing of guns on New Years and Mayday, the planting of Maypoles, the noisy beating of drums and the treating with wines, brandy, or beer and they do so, to prevent further mishaps, under a fine of 12 fl. for the first time, double the amount for the second time and arbitrary correction for the third offense, to be divided 1/3 to the officer, 1/3 to the poor and 1/3 for the informer.”

47 In fact, a game called “Pulling the Goose” was introduced at New Amsterdam in 1654. A goose with head and neck smeared with grease was suspended between two poles. Men rode at full gallop and tried to grasp it as they passed. Stuyvesant forbade this game, pronouncing it “an unprofitable, heathenish, and popish festival, and a pernicious custom.” Some settlers who were caught “pulling the goose” after the prohibition were fined and imprisoned, “in order to prevent more sins, debaucheries, and calamities.” The burgomasters remonstrated consistently against these severe punitive measures.

48 Although the extant records for the Dutch period do not reveal information on the African/African American celebration of Pinxter during the Dutch period, there is scant evidence from the English period that the Africans had transformed the celebration of Pinxter into a distinct African American practice.
position in the community was one as enslaved laborers, during Stuyvesant’s administration, Blacks continued to do the arduous tasks pertaining to colony building – constructing support walls, paving streets, cutting wood and preparing the land for new construction of houses, etc. Blacks were also used to bolster the colony’s military force in times of War, both during the First and Third Dutch-Munsee Wars. And as discussed in the previous chapter, by 1661 there was a marked drop in the number of baptisms and marriages of Africans in the Dutch Reformed Church, indicating a shift in the Church’s policy regarding extending these rites to Africans. Increasingly, Africans were deemed “insincere” in their desire to be baptized, only seeking worldly instead of spiritual benefits, according to Reverend Henricus Selyns.

For Natives, who were never extended the “privilege” of baptism, religiously their experience during Stuyvesant’s administration mirrored that under previous Director-Generals. No concerted effort was made by the ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church to proselytize the Natives. The ministers to inclined to conclude that “we can say but little of the conversion of the heathens…and see no way to accomplish it, until they are subdued by the numbers and power of our people, and reduced to some sort of civilization….“49 Reverend Johannes Megapolensis and Samuel Drisius’ only attempt at conversion and proselytizing ended in complete failure. An Indian, whom they had spent much time proselytizing for two years and whom they had hoped “might do some good among the Indians” later “took to drinking brandy…pawned the Bible, and turned,” they concluded “into a regular beast, doing more harm than good among the Indians.” He was instructed in the fundamental principles of the Dutch Reformed faith, and “answered publicly in church and can repeat the Commandments,”

but once he returned to his people, he reverted to his old practices. Since Megapolensis and Drisius had also taught him read and write Dutch “very well,” it might be that his intent was to gain an intricate knowledge of Dutch and religious instruction was deemed the most conducive means to achieving that goal. However, it could also be that his interest in Christianity was genuine, but once he returned to his tribe, and possibly facing ostracism and criticism it proved difficult to adhere to the foreign practices and rituals.

Whatever the reason behind his reversion, it was representative of the experience of most Native Americans by the end of the Dutch period. On the whole, though they experienced diminished numbers, due to epidemics, diseases and wars, they were still able to maintain the traditional forms of their religion. However, there were probably changes in individual religious practice. As wars and diseases led to the incorporation and merging of different groups, religious practices were shared and adapted, forming new forms and new practices. Additionally, as the fur supply in the immediate vicinity of Manhattan was depleted and the Dutch became increasingly dependent of wampum as currency, greater pressure was placed on the Munsee tribes of Long Island and the Lower Hudson region to produce these valuable beads, causing even greater shift in the usage of these beads within their religious practices to the production of these beads for the marketplace.

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52 Medicinal practices of Europeans were also adapted by Native Americans. In New England, we read of Ninigret, the Niantic sachem, traveling to Manhattan to “be cured of disease. He having heard of a French physician who could heal him; that he gave wampum to the doctor, and some to the governor....” See William Dunlap, History of the New Netherlands, Province of New York, and State of New York, to the Adoption of the Federal Constitution, Volume I (New York: Carter & Thorp, Exchange Place, 1839), 98.
The Natives and Africans were not the only ones changed by their experience under Director-General Stuyvesant; Stuyvesant himself was changed. Part of that change was due to his decision to build a permanent life in the colony, leaving behind Holland and embracing Manhattan as his new home. While Stuyvesant began his administration viewing his interests as being united with that of the Company’s, the extant correspondences appear that as he becomes more firmly planted in the colony, not simply as a representative of the Dutch West India Company, but as a colonists, sharing many of the bourgeois visions of the colony’s leading burghers, there is a detectable change in his behavior towards the colonists. In the beginning, the colonists portrayed him as a despot, but by the end he had change to being open to listening to the advice of his colonists, taking a more conciliatory and gentle approach in his leadership. He became more concerned about the minutiae of the colonists’ day-to-day experiences, because as a colonist, those small and seemingly insignificant things also affected him. It was not long before the Directors of the DWIC noticed a change in his leadership style and the things with which he was concerned.

In a letter from the Directors at Amsterdam to Stuyvesant, they note that they were “surprised, that [he] amuse [himself] with protests and counter protests against the municipal officers concerning matters of so little importance as for instance the pews and seats in the church.” And when Stuyvesant apparently expressed some concern and was moved by compassion, as were the colonists, about the French that were captured by the Mohawks and desired to do something to aid them, the Directors coldly responded that “we are sorry to hear that the Maquas had invaded the territory of the French in Canada and captured 8 or 9 Christians, for whom they are said to demand a large ransom or they would cruelly torture them, which excited your compassion. That
is quite proper for all Christians, but every one is bound to take care of himself and his own people.” As in this situation, Stuyvesant increasingly went against the recommendations of the Directors, doing what he felt was in the best interest of the community.

Also, when Stuyvesant met with some of the English settlers who had lodged a complaint about some difficulties and inconveniences they were experiencing, the Director thought it unwise. They actually thought that he should have responded in the arbitrary fashion that he was initially predisposed to do when he first arrived in the colony. The Directors wrote that “we think that you should have proceeded rigorously against the ringleaders of this work, and not to have meddled with it so far, as to answer protests by counter protests and then let it pass without further notice. For as it is highly arrogant for inhabitants to protest against their government, so do the authorities prostitute their office, when they protest against their subjects without punishing them according to the situation and exigencies of the case.”

The shift in Stuyvesant interaction with the inhabitants was also noted in the letter he penned to them from the Delaware River during expedition against New Sweden. After informing the Council members and burgurers of their success in taking Fort Casimir, he proceeds to let them know that he is awaiting “your honors’ advice and opinions on the first and last orders and instructions from the directors concerning that point.” It is a very different Stuyvesant that we find in the extant records by 1655. The old Stuyvesant would not have sought the advice of the burgurers and Council. And when he learns of the attack on Manhattan, he wrote a response that indicates a

53 Charles T. Gehring, ed., Correspondence, 1647-1653, 110.
54 Charles T. Gehring, ed., Correspondence, 1654-1658, 11.
tenderness towards the community, one that was not there in the first few years after he arrived in Manhattan. He stated:

These few lines serve as a preface to the enclosed capitulation [and]...will be dispatched as quickly as possible in order to encourage my saddened wife, children and sisters, and my distressed and sorrowful subjects; praying meanwhile to God that He may temper wind and weather to such an extent that we be allowed to return speedily to you and to them according to your request. We, therefore, ask and also firmly trust that you, my household, and beloved community shall humbly pray to God, after which we have no doubt that the Lord God shall quickly return me to them... 

Stuyvesant was transformed in other ways by this experience in Manhattan. He had learned that there were good Indians and bad Indians. But there were still some ambivalence in his ability to accept that notion that “good” Indians were completely trustworthy. One the one had, while he was willing to trust the Long Island Indians enough to allow them to march with him in battle, this trust was not complete or total, because if it were he would not have thought it prudent to prohibit ALL Indians from staying overnight in the settlements or brandishing guns. So, in the end, for him, good and bad Indians were untrustworthy, although to different degrees, and so for safety’s sake all had to be kept out of the community’s inner-sanctum, the Fort. He also learned that his own people, the settlers, could not be completely trusted, and were often themselves threats to the safety and ongoing existence of the colony. Many of these people were initially trusted and welcomed into the community because they were Christians or Dutch, but later he must have been shocked and disappointed to learn that

57 E. B. O'Callaghan, ed., DRCHNY, Volume I, 210. The Swedes took over Fort Casimir and chased the Dutch away, Cornelis Melyn (a burgher) being charged with treason, Cornelis Tienhoven (a Council member, and fiscal) being charged with inciting the Indians by cheating them, the English settlers who were found plotting with the Natives, and the statements about spies in their midst.
these people were the colony’s worst enemies, guilty of “unchristian-like” machinations against the colony.

All this had served to invert and render invalid many of his pre-existent ideas about alliances, potential friendships, groups that were trustworthy and honest – ideas that were deeply influenced by his religious outlook and worldview. It would not be surprising that like Stuyvesant, many of Manhattan’s European settlers had found themselves adjusting their worldview and perceptions, and embracing a newly emergent episteme that was wrought by their experiences in Manhattan’s frontier and shaped by the exigencies of settlement life. Part of this emergent episteme was that all settlers were not good and honest (specifically, vis-à-vis the Natives) and all Natives were not necessarily bad or even liars, for that matter. This new understanding was probably at the root of his decision to allow, for the first time, the court testimonies of Native Americans against whites to be equal to that of white testimonies.  

He had also learned that while he could not depend on other “Christian” nations to join them in combat against their enemies, when hostile Indians attacked the local tribes proved willing, useful and effective allies.

It is the policies that he initiated as a result of these lessons learned and changes he experienced in his perspective and understanding that seemed to have earned him the respect of, not only the settlers, but also the Native Americans, who dubbed him “the Great Sachem.” Finally, these changes in his personality and episteme was also noticeable during the English siege of Manhattan, as he yielded to the advice of the

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58 Berthold Fernow, ed., Records of New Amsterdam, Volume I, 11. The proclamation stated that “Director General and Council warn all inhabitants, who owe anything to an Indian for wages or otherwise, to pay it without dispute and if in the future they employ savages, they shall be held liable to pay upon the evidence and complaint of Indians, (who for good reason shall be considered credible witnesses in such cases), under the penalty of such a fine, as the circumstances shall indicate as proper.”

59 It is significant that they called him “the Great Sachem,” it demonstrated a high level of respect, especially when we consider that during Kieft’s administration they tended to chide the colonists, telling them that they did not have a sachem.
leading burghers, the Council members and the Dutch Reformed ministers to surrender rather than fight the English fleet assembling in Manhattan’s waterway. In some sense, then, Stuyvesant capitulated first to his subjects’ wishes before he capitulated to the English – thus ended the Dutch rule of Manhattan.
10. Epilogue

10.1

Kieft’s War (the First Dutch-Munsee War) had called into question the validity of many of the assumptions about the wild man that the Dutch had foisted upon the Natives. After the Second Dutch-Munsee War, the Dutch had concluded that while the Natives were still uncivilized, savage and heathenish they could be worthy comrades, not in the mold of the serviceable wild man as embraced by Kieft, but as trustworthy allies in heated battle.¹ But the Natives were still savages, and as savages they were not to be incorporated into the community until they had divested themselves of their savagery and become civilized by accepting Christianity, living in villages and farms like the European settlers and by approximating European dress. In the 1650s and early 1660s, Dutch Manhattanites still held out hope that Native Americans could become civilized and one day be welcomed into the fold of the community.² Increasingly, this type of civilizing effort was viewed as the only means or hope for the Natives to survive as a people. Adriaen van der Donck had long anticipated the eventual removal, disappearance or “melting away,” as he says, of the Natives if they remained in their

¹ A distinction is being made here between Kieft’s decision to tell the local sachems that they should bring in the heads of hostile Natives, and Stuyvesant’s decision later to march in battle with a joint Dutch-Munsee force against other Munsee-speaking groups. Implicit in Kieft’s request is the lingering perception of Native Americans as serviceable wild men. Stuyvesant’s decision, on the other hand, implies a level of trust and amity that is simply not found in Kieft’s. When entities become allies and march out together in battle there is an intense level of trust that is inherent in that decision – that one is essentially entrusting one’s life and survival to the other, that one is dependent on the other to hold rank and not flee when and if the battle becomes heated and unbearable, and that one will not be betrayed or abandoned by the other even if victory in battle is proving elusive.

² Jaspar Dankers and Peter Sluyter, Journal of a Voyage to New York (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, Inc., 1966), 149-153. While it is outside the periodization of this study, it would appear that the longer Native American groups existed on the periphery of creole European society in America trying to maintain their traditional religion, culture and way of life, the more they were increasingly viewed as being unable to ever truly be a part of the emerging community and nation-state because their savagery as inherent and inbred – regardless of whether that savagery was deemed “noble” or otherwise. Increasingly, as creole Europeans’ understanding about what it means to be European and white changed, so too did their sense of what it means to be civilized. By the 1750s, it was no longer sufficient to embrace Christianity and approximate European mode of dress and farming. Their savagery was seen as incurable by Christianity, but rendered manageable; Christianity could tame, but could not completely eradicate the Natives’ savageness.
However, it was Stuyvesant who would commence the policy of Native removal from the land they occupied since the 1620s. With previous land purchases, the Natives still retained the right to use the land; they were not wholly removed from it and it was this one might argue that lend to conflicts engendered by the encroachment of livestock in Native crops. Presented as an expedient measure to assure Dutch Manhattan’s future security and the diminution of Dutch-Munsee violence, Stuyvesant encouraged a policy of purchasing Native land and insisting that the tribal groups remove to new settlements further away from European settlements. In so doing, he had pushed Dutch Manhattan’s frontier further north and into the interior and created spaces that underscored the Natives status as outsiders – outsiders with the potential to be hostile.

However, even this new policy of removal did not emerge in a vacuum, but was part of the lessons learned as settlers in a strange new world. Many Dutch had looked with envy at the thriving English colonies in New England. And by the close of Stuyvesant’s administration, they had come to see that there was a value in emulating their New England neighbors. As they looked north to New England, they saw thriving settlements – in terms of the increase in population, the reproduction of physical elements English material culture and bourgeois society, and the establishment of European social, religious and political institutions – and in their minds they had made a

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3 Adriaen van der Donck, “A Description of the New Netherlands, Comprehending the Fruitfulness and Natural Advantages of the Country, and the Desirable Opportunities Which it Presents, Within Itself, and from Abroad, for The Subsistence of Man; Which are Not Surpassed Elsewhere. Together with Remarks on the Character and Peculiar Customs of the Savages, or Natives of the Land;” in Collections of the New York Historical Society Second Series Volume 1 (New York: H. Ludwig, 1841), 190.
5 These included constructing tradehouses outside the fort, insisting that no Natives be permitted to remain overnight in any of the settlements under penalty of punishment, etc. See Charles T. Gehring, ed., Council Minutes, 1655-1656 (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1995), 134.
connection between these outward signs of “development” and what they thought was the English success in dealing with the Native “problem.”

It is noteworthy that unlike the English in New England, the Dutch, throughout their entire period of possession of New Netherland, had never taken the role as mediators in Native inter-tribal disputes. After the Pequot War, the New England colonists had secured the agreement of the Narragansett and Mohegan-Pequotsthat they would never commence a battle against another tribe unless first entering into mediation with the English as mediators for peace and reconciliation. This sort of agreement, however, was not part of the peace treaties signed by Stuyvesant or other Director-Generals, neither in the First Dutch Munsee or Second Dutch-Munsee Wars. Instead, the Dutch required that “in case anyone of us [meaning Dutch] or them [Natives] should be killed in some mishap that war should not begin against one another before and until reparations and accommodations have been demanded, which having been refused one should not be able to judge that the war against them is lawful, and in particular against those...who were together in this incident.” Furthermore, unlike the French, who encouraged a relationship where they were deemed as “Fathers” of the various Native American groups under their protection, the Dutch were always

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6 See David Pieterszen de Vries, “Extracts from the Voyages of David Pieterszen de Vries,” in *Collections of the New York Historical Society, Second Series* (New York: H. Ludwig, 1841), Vol. 1: 265. Compare David Pieterszen de Vries’ discussion with Directory-General Kieft regarding the lack of a “proper” church in New Amsterdam and then decades later in Stuyvesant’s time when both Stuyvesant and the leading members in the community pointed to the New England society as a model to emulate. De Vries had argued that “in New England, on the contrary, the first thing that they did when they had built some dwellings, was to erect a fine church. We ought to do the same; it being supposed that the West India Company were very zealous in protecting the reformed (Calvinist) church....” Later Stuyvesant would encourage the settling in hamlets and villages as “in the manner of the English.” Berthold Fernow, ed., *Records of New Amsterdam, from 1653 to 1674 Anno Domini* Volume I (originally published New York, 1897; Reprinted, Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1976), 19-20. Also see, Charles T. Gehring, ed., *Council Minutes, 1655-1656* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1995), 185. In the aftermath of the Second Dutch-Munsee War, Cornelis van Tienhoven, in an impassioned plea to Stuyvesant and the other Council members to commence war against the Munsee groups had argued that “it would be just and necessary...to punish and subject the Indians, by the grace of God, through force of arms, because we have examples among our neighbors living to the east [Connecticut] and south [Virginia] of us that they would never be able to live securely before and until the Indian nation had been subjugated and forced into submission.” Charles T. Gehring, ed., *Council Minutes, 1655-1656*, 143. Tienhoven’s comments are a veiled reference to the Pequot War in 1637.

referred to “Brothers,” both by the Munsee and the Mohawks at Fort Orange. Before
the close of the Dutch period, there is some indication that if New Netherland had
remained in Dutch possession the leaders of the government would eventually be
forced, as part of the demands of the middle ground, to play the same role as mediators
that the French had so adeptly performed in New France. In 1659, the Mohawks, the
Dutch colony’s most formidable ally, had suggested to the Dutch representatives that
the Dutch “ought to consider how the French behave towards their Indians, when they
are in need. They should act by us in the same manner...” Later, we see Stuyvesant
and his representatives encouraging the Mohawks to live peaceably with the Minquas
(Susquehannocks).

It is possible that the Dutch reluctance to play this role of peace maker and
mediation broker was related to the lack of a strong missionary zeal among the Dutch
for the Native Americans in their midst. As discussed in previous chapters, it is not that
the Dutch did not desire the Natives' conversion, but it would appear that the Dutch
Reformed ministers and the New Netherland religious authorities had all but concluded
that the Natives could not be converted through human efforts. Like Reverend Jonas
Michaëlius, they had concluded that until God decides to remove the darkness from
them, all human effort at proselytizing would end in failure. It does not appear from
the extant records that Everardus Bogardus was successful in converting any Natives.
The record of subsequent Dutch Reformed ministers stationed at Manhattan – Johan

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8 E. B. O’Callaghan, *History of New Netherland*, 391. During the discussion between the Dutch and the
Mohawks, both parties referred to the other as “Brothers.”
10 Albert Eekhof, *Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland; His Life and Work; Together with the
Facsimile, Transcription and English Translation of an Extensive Unknown Autograph Latin Letter* (Leyden: A. W.
Sijthoff’s Publishing Company, 1926), 134-135. Jonas Michaelius made it clear that he believed that the
condition of the Natives resulted from “the wrath and curse of God, resting till now upon this unhappy
people.” As such, he thought very little else could be done without the divine will and intervention of God
– that “perchance God may finally have mercy upon them, that the fulness of the heathen may be gradually
brought in and the salvation of our God may be here also seen among these wild and savage men.”
Megapolensis, Samuel Drisius, Samuel Megapolensis and Henricus Selyns – appear equally abysmal. New Netherland’s Dutch Reformed ministers had unanimously declared the Natives’ unreachable and the Dutch consistently held to a policy of remaining neutral in Native disputes, even to the point of eschewing a position as mediator in potential hostile inter-tribal disputes. It appears that the Dutch had concluded that the Native disputes and savage warfare stood far outside the realm of Dutch-ness and proper civilization, and was part of their natural state that Dutch interference could not alter.¹¹

When Manhattan went from being a Dutch stronghold to being an English colony, this was one of the noticeable differences in the relationship between the local tribes and the European settlers. The shift in governments marked a shift in relationship – where the settlers went from being “Brothers” to being “Fathers”; the English Governors were still “great Sachems,” but they were also referred to as “Father” and increasingly played the paternalistic role of “Father” and mediator between his “children.” Furthermore, probably as a reflection of their paternalistic role as “Father” or maybe because of the diplomatic and trade relationship they had with the Natives, the English in 1674 passed a series of laws prohibiting the enslavement of Native Americans in New York. At the same time, there was a tightening of the laws for maintaining and protection the enslavement of Africans. While the perception of the Natives was improving that of the Africans, both enslaved and freed, was depreciating. This change could be due to the different ideas the English held about Blacks and Indians upon contact, but it might also be due to the shift in the area of slave provenance from the Kongo-Angola region, where many of the slaves at least had a vague

¹¹ The one time that the Dutch diverged from this policy ended disastrously when Daniel van Crieckenbeek and other settlers were killed, butcheted and/or eaten by the Mohawks. See Nicolaes Janszoon van Wassenaer, “Historisch Verhael,” in J. Franklin Jameson, ed., Narratives of New Netherland, 1609-1664 (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1953), 84-85.
familiarity with Christianity, to other areas where their exposure to Christianity was minimal, if at all.

As for the Protestant Europeans, the shift to English governance proved an improvement to the restrictions under Director-General Stuyvesant. These Protestant sects were eventually able to establish public churches, calling their own ministers to administer the sacraments and rites, and perform services in a manner they found acceptable. Even the Quakers were eventually allowed to thrive on Long Island, establishing a church in Flushing, Queens that is still extant and active today. The Catholic and Jews also discovered a measured improvement in their freedom of worship under the English. And although the Jewish community still faced some difficulties in receiving permission to establish synagogues, they found that in terms of the social and community arena, their position had improved appreciably. It is only during the English period that we are able to see the means employed by some of the members of these sects to survive unmolested. Some of the families who were members of the Dutch Reformed Church, reaping benefits from Church membership, quickly declared themselves Catholic after the transfer of power to the English, indicating that their membership was part of strategy for survival within the community.

Looking beyond the Dutch period into the period of English domination it is apparent that while the Dutch had left the English a legacy to build upon in the continuing process of community formation, the English faced similar but also new challenges in their quest to transform Manhattan (and New York) into a reflection of the society they left behind. In 1664 when Stuyvesant surrendered control of the colony to the Dutch fleet, there were two hundred and twenty houses and a population of fifteen hundred. The inhabitants of Rensselaerswyck and the other Dutch towns had experienced similar increase. Ten years later there were three thousand people on
Manhattan Island and at the end of the seventeenth century the population had increased to four thousand four hundred. Another century and the population of New York reached sixty thousand. Even as the colony continued to experience phenomenal growth, just as it had during the Dutch period, religion continued to play a role in the discourse on proper community, and there were various forms of contestations, leading one scholar to conclude that New Yorkers were a “factious people.”

Also, like the Dutch, the English had to contend with an extremely diverse community. In the end, community formation in both Dutch and English Manhattan would prove to be a process that was deeply related to inter-group and intra-group interactions of Africans, Europeans and Natives, and the meanings and understanding that resulted from those interactions.

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Appendix – Joan Vingboom’s Map

Beginning during Peter Minuit’s administration, the Company had established six boweries, or farms. Other private farms and plantations later dotted the Manhattan landscape, giving it a more settled appearance. According to Edward van Winkle, recording secretary of the Holland Society of New York and author of *Manhattan 1624-1639*, the Dutch tended to make a distinction between a “plantation and a bouwerie or farm.” Apparently, “on a farm everything in the line of agriculture was raised, while on a plantation only tobacco or Indian corn was cultivated, preparatory to turning it into a farm. Plantations were usually small, seldom exceeding five acres in extent, and gradually were developed into farms.”

Once buildings were erected and the Dutch West India Company furnished certain livestock, the six Company boweries were leased to various tenants. According to Nicolaes Janszoon van Wassenaer, the Dutch historian and compiler of the *Historisch Verhael*, besides owning the land upon which these tenant farmers worked and lived the Company also owned “the cows; but the milk remains to the profit of the farmer [who] sells it to those who receive their wages for work every week.”

Scholars have been able to discover much about the occupants of these six original Company boweries. During his administration, Peter Minuit and the koopman, Isaak de Rasière, occupied bowery number one, also known as “the Company farm” or “the Noble Company’s Great Bouwery” during their stay in New Netherland.  

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1 A copy of this map is included in Edward van Winkle, *Manhattan 1624-1639* (New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1916).
3 Nicolaes Janszoon van Wassenaer, “*Historisch Verhael*,” in *NNN*, 84.
4 The koopman was the commercial agent. All bowery and plantation numbers used herein were taken from the Vingboom map of 1639.
would also occupy this bowery during his administration. It is here that van Twiller would authorize the construction of a "very good barn, dwelling house, boathouse, and brewery covered with tiles." On April 22, 1638, the newly appointed Director of New Netherland, Willem Kieft, leased to the outgoing Director Wouter van Twiller bowery Number one.

Bowery number two was located to the south of bowery number one and was occupied by Peter Bijlvelt (or Bylevelt) who was one of Governor Peter Minuit’s Council of five. However, shortly before van Twiller’s arrival in the colony, Peter Bijlvelt sold to Kiliaen van Rensselaer the animal increase of this farm and later occupied bowery number three on July 20, 1632. Sometime prior to 1630 until July 1632, bowery number three was leased and occupied by Wolfert Gerrets (Wolfert Gerritsz “van Couwenhoven”). From July 1632, when it was leased and occupied by Peter Bylvelt, it was often referred to as Bylvelt’s Bowery, until February 1634 when apparently Wouter van Twiller operated this farm between until 1639. On May 18, 1639, Director Willem Kieft leased it to Leendert Arentsen de Grauw.

Jehan Ydes or Gerrit Theusz de Reux (de Reus) occupied bowery number four in 1626. Gerrit de Reus probably returned to Holland at some point, because he returns to New Netherland on de Soutbergh in 1632 accompanied by four laborers to establish a farm on Blommaerts Kill near Albany for Kiliaen van Rensselaer. During Gerrit Theusz de Reux’s absence from Manhattan Jehan Ydes managed bowery number four. Jacop Walichs (van Winkel) occupied bowery number five from 1624 to 1636 and Dr. Pieter van de Linde occupied it in 1642. A surgeon by training, Pieter van de Linde arrived in

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6 Edward van Winkle, Manhattan 1624-1639, 5.
Manhattan in 1638 on the ship *Love*. In Manhattan, van de Linde also held positions as the inspector of tobacco, schoolmaster, and the clerk of the Dutch Reformed Church.

Bowery number six was known as Geurdt van Gelder’s farm. Wolphert Gerritsen van Couwenhoven operated this bowery from July 1632 until July 1638, when Abraham Pietersen Gorter leased it from Director Willem Kieft in 1639. Of the six Company boweries, numbers one and two were reputed to be on the best lands while the soil on the other four boweries were reputed to be sandy; which would explain why numbers one and two were occupied by those within the colonial administration.⁷

In 1639, bowery number seven, which was north of “Smith’s Valley” or “The Swamp” (“The Salt Meadow”) was occupied by Thomas Sanders, the blacksmith, and operated as a plantation. However, previous occupants, Evert Focken and Rutger Hendriksen van Soest, operated it as a bowery from 1630 until 1634. During Thomas Sanders’ occupancy, bowery number seven was also referred to as “Mallesmuts berch” (crazy Smith’s hill), which implies that Thomas Sanders probably had a reputation for lunacy or irrational behavior.

Bowery number eight was occupied in 1639 by old Jan (John Seals). Old Jan’s farm was north of Anneke Jans’ farm (number 21) and north of present-day Canal Street. Jan Lampo and Cornelius van Voorst occupied it prior to 1627. Jan Lampo, who was New Netherland’s first Schout-fiscal (sheriff and attorney-general), returned to Holland with Peter Minuit on the *Unity* in 1632; and Cornelius van Voorst moved to Michiel Pauw’s patroonship, Pavonia, in New Jersey in 1632. Bowery number nine, which measured eight morgens (sixteen acres), was the plantation of Jan Pietersen Slot. Plantation number ten, also known as *Sappokanikan Bouwerie* and later as *Bossen Bouwerie*, was Wouter van Twiller’s tobacco plantation. The farmhouse was reputedly the first

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house to be erected north of present-day Canal Street and marked the beginning of what
would become Greenwich Village.

Edward Fiscock occupied plantation eleven, described as a farm “on the North
River, near the plantation heretofore possessed by Tonis Nysen in a deed to Maryn
Adriaensen.” Mr. Lesle de Neve Sinx (Francis Lastley) leased half of bowery twelve on
December 17, 1638 from Edward Wilson. Plantation thirteen was the plantation of
Thomas Bets (Bescher). Bescher gained an interest in this plantation because he held the
mortgage of Oloff Stevensen van Cortlandt, who later married Anneke Jans, Govert
Loockermans’ sister and Everardus Bogardus’ wife. Bescher occupied it for some time
prior to his death on April 27, 1641. On November 20, 1639, he leased plantation thirteen
to Abraham Newman and Pieter Breyle. Later, he also leased it to John Wood.
Plantation fourteen, called “Walenstyn,” because Jacob Walich previously occupied it,
was in 1639 known as Jan van Rotterdam’s plantation. Plantation fifteen was occupied
by Hendrick Pietersen, which is described in a deed to Adrian Petersen dated February 3,
1640, as being located near “reed valley.”

Edward Fiscock utilized plantation sixteen as a brewery. Fiscock was among the
many English people who were living in New Netherland. According to Edward van
Winkel, Fiscock “was a ‘farmer’ (boere) and a ‘baker’ (backer) by trade.” He occupied
plantation sixteen with “Hans Hansen (Bergen) and Maryn Adriaensen, all of whom
transferred the property on November 20, 162 to Thomas Hall,” who was also from
England. Plantation seventeen was occupied by Jacobus van Corlaer (van Curler). The
Native Americans called this plot of land Nechtans, but the Dutch renamed it Corlaers
Hoeck. Two houses were constructed on this plantation, possibly by Jacob Corlaer. On

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8 Edward van Winkle, Manhattan 1624-1639, 11.
9 Edward van Winkle, Manhattan 1624-1639, 13.
September 28, 1640, Corlaer leased the plantation to William Hendriesen and Gysbert Cornelissen.

Farm number eighteen was purchased by Cornelius van Tienhoven in the fall of 1638 on the behalf of Coenraet van Keulen, an Amsterdam merchant. Prior to his ownership, it was known as the Otterspoor farm and leased by Jacob Corlaer. On January 25, 1639, Claes Corneliszen Swits leased this farm from van Tienhoven. Dr. Johannes Mousnier de La Montagne (Montanye), who was married to Rachel de Forest, daughter of Jesse de Forest, owned farm number nineteen. It was originally called Muscoota, but was later called Vredendal.

Farm number twenty, located on Great Barents or Wards Island, was owned by Wouter van Twiller. Van Twiller purchased the title to Wards Island and Randalls Island (which the Natives called “Tenkenas” and “Minnahanonck” respectively) from Sachems, Heyseys and Numers. The “Quarters set aside for The Blacks, the Company’s Slaves” was opposite Randalls Island. Farm twenty-one was owned by Anneke Jans, who later married Domine Everardus Bogardus. Positioned along the North River, it apparently extended north-south from present-day Warren Street to Canal Street; and to the Kalck-Hook on the east. Farm twenty-two was occupied by Anthony Jansen van Salee (aka Anthony “the Turk”) prior to 1639, however he and his wife, Griet Reyniers, were banished from New Amsterdam for being disturbers of the public peace. Farm twenty-three was occupied by Jan Claesen of Coedyck, who was married to Lysbeth Jans.

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1 Edward van Winkle, *Manhattan 1624-1639*, 13. Van Winkel state that the islands purchased were Wards and Blackwells Islands, and that Blackwells was called “Minnahanonck.” However according to Stokes, “Varckens (now Blackwells) Island was being farmed before Jan. 24, 1639, by Jan Claessen Alteras, and we learn from a report of referees, of Aug. 30, 1642, that improvements were made on the island by him…It was not Minnahanonck, as has been generally supposed, for that was the name of Randalls Island.” Isaac Newton Phelps Stokes, *Iconography of Manhattan*, Vol. IV: 89. Regarding the purchase of the two islands, Stokes’ entry for July 16, 1637 states that “Two Indian chiefs of Mareckewick (Brooklyn), appearing before Director van Twiller and his council, make acknowledgment of a deed to van Twiller of ‘the two islands, situate in the Hellegat,’ the larger called Tenkenas [now Wards Island] and the smaller Minnahanonck” (now Randalls Island). Isaac Newton Phelps Stokes, *Iconography of Manhattan Island*, Vol. IV: 86.
Plantation twenty-four was occupied by Davit Provoost, who was the “Provoost” of the garrison. Plantation twenty-five, that also had a brewery, was occupied by Hendric (Jansen) the Tailor. Hendric Jansen transferred the house, barn, and land (except the brewery and kettles therein) to Maryn Adriaensen. Maryn Adriaensen later transferred the land to Jan Damen and Hendric Jansen transferred the remainder with the brewery to William Adriaensen the Cooper. Tymen Jansz (Jansen) occupied plantation twenty-six sometime prior to 1639.
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Biography

KAREN SIVERTSEN

CURRICULUM VITAE

EDUCATION

Duke University, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Durham, NC

PhD: History, May 2007

Dissertation Advisor: Peter H. Wood

Fields of Concentration: African American History, Colonial American History, Comparative Slave Societies/the Black Atlantic, and Cultural Anthropology

MA: History, 1998

New York University, College of Arts and Sciences, New York, NY

BA: History, cum laude, 1991

Minor: Psychology

TEACHING AND ADVISING EXPERIENCE

Adjunct Lecturer Fordham University, New York, NY 2006 - 2007

Course Titles “Introduction to Modern American History”

Adjunct Lecturer Manhattan College, Bronx, NY Fall 2006

Course Titles “Great Issues in American History”

Teaching Assistant Duke University, Durham, NC 1998 - 1999
Course Titles “Early American History” survey course (1500-1877), “Modern Britain”, “International Comparative Studies”

HONORS AND FELLOWSHIPS


Phi Alpha Theta Membership Conferred, New York University, Nu-Lamba Chapter, 1990.

PUBLICATIONS

“Transcending the ‘Floating Tombs’: Trauma and Transcendence During the Middle Passage” under revision for the Journal of Interdisciplinary History.
