NATIVE AMERICANS IN COLONIAL NEW ENGLAND 
AND THE MODERN WORLD-SYSTEM

by

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A dissertation submitted to the

Graduate School-New Brunswick

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Graduate Program in History

Written under the direction of

Allen Howard, Ph.D.

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New Brunswick, New Jersey

MAY 2011
Abstract of the Dissertation

Native Americans in Colonial New England and the Modern World-System

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This dissertation explores through what means, and with what effects on their societies, Native Americans in colonial New England were incorporated into the capitalistic Modern World-System. To do so, it draws from a wide range of primary sources, including a database of over 600 “Indian Deeds” collected from throughout New England. To these raw materials, the dissertation applies French neo-Marxist structuralist theories and Wallersteinian and post-Wallersteinian World-System theories. One particular original contribution is an hypothesis applying the theories of articulation-of-modes-of-production and social reproduction for how Indians were drawn into the fur trade and lost many of their lands to whites as a consequence. Also investigated herein is the step-by-step subsumption of the lives of the Indians under the colonial governmental structures and the exploitation of Indians, once separated from their means of production, as “servants” by English colonists.
Preface and Acknowledgments

This dissertation owes a great deal -- how much can scarcely be overstated -- to Frances Jennings and his powerful little book, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest*. I dedicate it to his memory. Published when its author had reached the ripe old age of 57, after a life devoted to progressive political activism and laboring in the educational trenches, “Invasion of America” did not pull any punches or mince any words about the underlying reality of what had actually happened in the formative colonial years of what would eventually become the United States of America. Jennings took pleasure in ripping through the sanctimonious self-justifications of the early English invaders and of the later-day filiopiestic historians who had been all-too-willing to accept the pronouncements of their forebears at face value. Calling them out as “invaders” of a land belonging to other peoples, rather than “settlers” -- as if the land to which they came were ready and empty -- was in and of itself a major blow in favor of truth-telling. With the zeal and persistence of an investigative reporter like his contemporary I. F. Stone, Jennings dug through the old dusty documents. Revered Founding Fathers and City-on-a-Hill-Builders like John Winthrop were nailed as the sanctioners of horrible atrocities when the Indians stood in the way of their material interests in the fur trade and land jobbing schemes. The Apostle to the Indians, John Eliot, often commended for his dedication to fulfilling the avowed holy mission of the Puritans, was skewered as an accomplice in a “missionary racket” to extract money from English donors and to curry favor with English politicians whose support was sorely needed for Massachusetts Bay against its colonial rivals. On the

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1 Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest* (Chapel Hill: Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture by the University of North Carolina Press, 1975).
other hand, along with validating the cause of the beleaguered Indians, Jennings had some favorable things to say not only about the pacifist Quakers and other non-Puritan dissenters in Rhode Island but also, to some degree, for those *bête noires* of the Puritan colonists, Sir Edmund Andros and the Commissioners appointed by the King to investigate and rectify Puritan misdeeds. In short, icons were taken down from their longstanding places of honor and smashed, and the treatment of early American history was shaken up and turned upside down (or, more properly, turned right-side up). Agree or disagree with the specifics proffered in the book, historians of early America have not been able to write about it in the same way since Jennings published it. Even if unmentioned, it still remains the proverbial elephant in the professional drawing room.

When I first opened the pages of *The Invasion of America* some twenty-five years ago, at the recommendation of a friend, I was already in a mental space that was quite receptive to what Jennings had to say. The lies and deceptions of our elected political leaders around the Vietnam War, exposed in the Pentagon Papers and in other sources, and compounded by the Watergate Affair, had totally undermined my faith acquired from high school civics classes in the honesty and purity of American values. I had come to see – as I still see in the aftermath of the Iraq War and all the lies and deceptions of the Bush Regime and now with a disappointing Obama – its professions of noble purposes at home and abroad as largely reprehensible hypocrisy and sanctimonious cant to provide ideological cover and rationalization for aggressive and exploitative economic motives. Jennings helped to enlighten me that this type of behavior was not some recent kind of deviation or perversion from genuine American values but, sad to say, had been operative from the very beginnings of our history and culture. His book is truly radical, in the original sense of that term of “going to the root.”
Focusing on the New England region, *The Invasion of America* detailed how Native Americans, like more recent colonized peoples in Asia and Africa fighting for their freedom in the mid-20th Century, were drawn willy nilly into the market system and subjected to its “laws of motion” during the tumultuous 17th Century and how their appropriated lands and labors contributed to the overall processes of capitalist accumulation for European monarchs, land-barons and merchants. Jennings analogized these processes with the Enclosure Movement inflicted on peasants contemporaneously in Europe (ironically inducing some of its Anglo-Saxon and Celtic victims to bail-out and head to the “New World” where they participated in the same sort of economic processes, but from the other side as enclosers rather than the enclosed). Thus, with Jennings, at various points we can readily discern a Marxian historical materialist approach to these materials. Jennings had evidently read and assimilated the penultimate section on “Primitive Accumulation” in *Das Kapital* in which Marx described how capital was brought into the world dripping with blood and dirt from every pore. But, as behooved someone who perforce had to make his living and support a family under the frightful McCarthyite purges of academia and elsewhere in the workplace that had transfixed American public life and paralyzed many erstwhile left-wing scholars during the previous couple of decades while he was conducting his research and publishing an occasional paper, Jennings does not make this philosophical debt or connection to Marxism explicit in his great book.

Jennings, nonetheless, as *The Invasion of America* demonstrates, had moved well-beyond one of the major premises of “Orthodox Marxism.” In the context of tearing apart

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2 The choice of which term or terms to use when referring to the indigenous peoples of the Western Hemisphere can lead one into a political and ideological minefield. Mainly I use the term “Indians” in this dissertation rather than “Native Americans” or some other, while cognizant of its problematic nature, because that is what the indigenous peoples in this region under consideration mainly use to refer to themselves today.
the Western ideological construct of “Progress” that relegated “Indians” to the status of “savages” or of people who were still supposedly stuck within the “primitive” evolutionary stage of “barbarism,” Jennings singled out Morgan’s famous work on the Iroquois – and Engels, too, who had drawn extensively from Morgan in his “Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State” – in his trenchant criticisms of the whole lot. On the other hand, Jennings seems to have been little aware, if at all, that there were also strong currents stirring among Marxists during the Sixties, particularly in France, to cleanse Marxism of this teleology, derived from Hegel, that it shared with 19th and 20th Century bourgeois Enlightenment thought. Most important in this regard were the French Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser and his various acolytes among a new generation of structuralist anthropologists, historians, literary theorists and other engaged intellectuals. Nor could Jennings conceivably have been aware of the neo-Marxist World-Systems theories, also largely structuralist in approach, associated with the U.S.-based scholar Immanuel Wallerstein and his followers – in as much as Wallerstein’s book that laid the foundation stones for that intellectual school, the first volume of The Modern World-System, did not appear in print until 1974, the same year as Jennings’s own book. Both schools of left-wing thought would provide interesting new theoretical tools for comprehending the birth pangs and subsequent development of the capitalist mode of production and its “articulation” – to employ a favorite term among the Althusserians – with non-Western, colonized peoples.

In the boot tracks of Francis Jennings, what I am setting out to do in the pages that follow is to apply these theoretical tools and frameworks, where they can be used or modified to fit, to the Indians’ loss of land and liberty. The opening chapter of the dissertation explores the aforementioned theories and how they may have been applied already, if they have, to indigenous peoples under the impact of colonialism. Here I also propose a sort of
synthesis of what I think is useful from both kinds of sources. Chapter Two applies these neo-Marxist theories of political economy to the pre-contact indigenous societies in the Northeastern United States with a focus on those areas of Algonquian-speaking Indians that became the colonies of New England. Chapters Three and Four deal with the European invasion and how the political economies of many of the Indians in that region became articulated to the capitalist mode of production through the fur trade leading thereby to the loss of much of their lands to the white invaders and settlers. Chapter Five explores the related extension of Puritan controls over the bodies and minds of the indigenous peoples through the political and legal processes. The final chapter, Chapter Six, shows how many of the Indians who remained behind in New England fell into the conditions of “servitude” and became sources of capitalist accumulation. In each instance, inspired by the methodology of the Marxist anthropologist Eric Wolf’s masterwork of history writ large, *Europe and the People Without History*, I try to show how there was both accommodation and resistance from the indigenous peoples in the making of this part of our modern world.³

I like “doing” theory, and I do not think my critical description of these theories and its proposed application to Native Americans in New England has been duplicated elsewhere. Nevertheless, grand theorizing aside -- and the gentle reader can take it or leave it as they may see fit without offending the author and choose to skip over the opening chapter lightly if they wish -- the empirical “meat” of this study, where it hopefully breaks some new ground of that sort, is in its compilation and analysis of Indian deeds from throughout the New England colonies. Some six hundred of these deeds, *in toto* or in part, in which Indians transferred ownership of land to English-speaking colonists have been assembled from a

wide range of published and unpublished sources and entered into a computer database (Microsoft Access) and included on an accompanying CD-ROM. This research takes-off from the hope Jennings expressed in his chapter on “The Deed Game” that further archival digging would aid in elucidating the various specific circumstances through which Indians lost their land. The Indian deeds make their textual debut in Chapters Three and Four, after the discussion in Chapter Two of the political economy of the pre-contact Indians of our region. Through using the Indian deeds, along with related sources, I think I have made some original contributions to a greater historical understanding of what befell the Indians, and I invite comments on that by other scholars. Work with these deeds is only in the early stages. An Indian Deeds Project will continue as an endeavor beyond this dissertation, and I am sure that there is much more yet to be gleaned from a close reading and careful analysis of their outwardly dry and often formulaic pages. Even though the process of going through out-of-print books (many of which are now thankfully scanned and full-searchable on Google) and microfilms can be exceedingly tedious, uncovering more of these deeds – which started midway through my research for the dissertation as a whole – has become a fun sort of chase. The historical detective work of trying to piece clues from them together with clues from other primary sources to shed light on what really happened continues to engage me.

It was at Rutgers University that I made my first serious acquaintance with the aforementioned theories, first while participating in a seminar on African history and, then, while conducting a guided independent study – both with Professor Allen Howard. For his original stimulus and for his ongoing kindly support through thick and thin with this dissertation, through all its false starts and misdirections, and for his friendship, I am deeply grateful. The Rutgers History Department and the Center for Historical Analysis ably maestroed by Professor John Gillis proved to be a stimulating environment during my two
years of campus residency, for which I am also thankful. Contact with other mature students in the program, especially the late Ron McGee was highly enjoyable and thought-productive. I don’t think I would have had a similar experience in any other doctoral program. Also, gone but never forgotten is E. P. Thompson, who despised Althusser – I can only wonder if he would have forgiven me -- but taught me the importance of agency as well as of structure. His work inspired me with the calling to rescue the “losers” of history from “the enormous condescension of posterity.” Another old Rutgers faculty I would like to thank specifically is Calvin Martin – wherever he might be these days. While my theoretical approach is considerably different from his own in Keepers of the Game, Professor Martin opened me up to the key place the fur trade played in transforming Indian societies and, moreover, to the need to think about it outside of the proverbial theoretical box. I would also like to give thanks to the other members of my dissertation committee, Dr. Camilla Townsend, Dr. Paul Clemens and my outside reader, friend and theory buddy, Dr. Matt Hannah. Last but certainly not least, much gratitude to my long-suffering life-partner and soul-mate, Judith Sargent. Yes, it’s finally done, and our life together can go on, through new twists and turns, toward different horizons! As the poet saith, “Grow old with me. The best is yet to be.”
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Chapter One: Neo-Marxist Theory and Its Uses

*History lives in the illusion that it can do without theory in the strong sense. . . What acts as theory is its methodology* – Louis Althusser, *Reading Capital*

*The first step we must make if we wish to understand our world is radically to reject any and all distinction between history and social science, and to recognize that we are part of a single discipline of study: the study of human societies as they have historically evolved. There are no generalizations that are not historically time-bound, because there are no systems and no structures that are unchanging. And there is no set or Sequence of social events that is comprehensible without reference to a theoretical construct whose function is to create meaning out of reality.* – Immanuel Wallerstein

Our starting point is some forty years ago. The world-changing social and cultural movements of the 1960s and early 1970s blew fresh, strong winds through the stodgy academic ivory towers in the U.S. and Western Europe. Many new creative impulses arose. Where scholarship and teaching had been seriously stifled during the 1950s by the Cold War environment of consensus politics and McCarthyite repression, some scholars here and there once again dared to apply Marxism and other forms of critical thinking to analyze and deconstruct systems of power, both present and past. And they often linked up with movements challenging systems of power in the real world – with the struggles of people of color, Native Americans, women, gays and lesbians and others formerly overlooked or excluded who were insisting that their histories, too, be included in the making of America.

While scholarship in the U.S., in keeping with its traditional homegrown pragmatism, tended to eschew Grand Theory, scholars on the other side of the Atlantic brought forth a new wave of theorizations in the social sciences. With respect to Marxism, the orthodoxy associated with “really existing socialism” in the Soviet Union was likewise put under scrutiny and criticism. (Partly, this came about as a result of the partial political de-Stalinization and intellectual thaw occurring under Nikita Khrushchev within the Soviet
Fortuitously, a different kind of Marx was rediscovered, often in works previously little-known such as his early humanistic “Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts,” the “Grundrisse” of his middle years – which included writings on non-capitalist modes of production – and the notes and letters of his final years on the ethnography of “primitive” peoples like the Iroquois and on the Russian peasant village communes. These texts offered the tantalizing possibilities of a Marxism that did not prognosticate history as advancing in a more or less inexorable unilinear fashion, in step with the upward growth of the means of production – itself often reduced to material technologies apart from human skills and capacities – as the driving force through a series of economic stages culminating with socialism and communism – and riding roughshod as it did over “primitive” societies.

Capitalism now came to be seen less as in a single country or a set of allied countries, but as a system of economic, social and cultural power playing out much more truly on a world scale, with all the many problems associated with capitalism necessitating global solutions.

There are three particular subsets of this renovated post-Sixties Marxist theory, or “neo-Marxism” as it has sometimes been termed, that I am seeking to apply in this dissertation, where applicable, in order better to illuminate the transformations experienced by indigenous people subjected to white invasion and settlement in colonial New England. One of them is the notion of the “articulation of modes of production” associated with anthropologists who performed their field work on lineage-based societies in French West Africa and who were followers or ideological fellow-travelers of the French Marxist

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philosopher Louis Althusser. A second is the concept of “social reproduction,” associated with another French Marxist anthropologist Claude Meillassoux, a contemporary of the above who likewise did his field work in West Africa. The third is “World-System Theory” propounded by the American neo-Marxist sociologist Immanuel Wallerstein and developed by him and an assortment of like-minded scholars active in a wide variety of fields.

Let us now take each one of these theories in turn, checking with each to see in relation to which problems arising in the practice of scholars trying to make greater sense of the world or in relation to which previous shortcomings in existing theories they originated – and then how they have been applied in ways that might be useful for the purposes of this dissertation. We will also want to try to discern whether it might be possible, not just to pick and choose elements out of these theories where they seem useable, but to make some kind of synthesis of these genealogically distinct but equally intriguing neo-Marxist approaches.

**Althusser’s Copernican Revolution in Marxism**

Even though his name is relatively little heard nowadays in academia, it is impossible to overestimate the intellectual influence of Louis Althusser on the young radical generation of scholars and activists associated with the 1968 “Days of May” in France. His influence subsequently spread and took root in the Anglophone world, especially within cultural studies but in other fields as well. Althusser was a professional philosopher who taught for many years at the École Normale Supérieure in Paris. He was also a longtime member of the French Communist Party, long one of the most slavishly pro-Soviet in Western Europe. But Althusser went his own ways in Marxist theory that separated himself and his followers from Stalinist orthodoxy – and from the prevailing anti-Stalinist Marxist humanism of his times.
Among other matters, he took strong exception to the teleological approach to history which saw humanity as marching through a series of successive economic stages from “primitive communism” to slavery to feudalism to capitalism to socialism and finally communism.

These selfsame “modes of production,” meaning ways in which societies were organized economically, had indeed been described and discussed by Marx, at least in an analytical sense. In laying out their theory of historical materialism, Marx and Engels had argued that any reasonable analysis of human societies has to take as its starting point their economic foundation -- how in the pursuit of the means of their existence people come together in certain historically-specific economic relationships. But Engels, after Marx’s death, emphasized correctly against erstwhile “Marxists” that the two of them believed that the production and reproduction of life was only the “ultimately” determining factor. Moreover, in a number of his writings, Marx himself had postulated multiple pathways of human development, including reversals and break-downs (“socialism or barbarism”). These caveats and qualifying observations, however, were largely buried and forgotten in the economistic Marxism that served as the official doctrine of the Second and Third Internationals. As Althusser once put it famously, or infamously, citing Marx (and Freud) as thinking about it in this way, history was “a process without a subject”\(^2\) There is no Hegelian “Spirit” – in whatever idealist or materialist form – underlying and motivating history. However, the contrary choice of approaches advocated by Althusser was certainly not an empiricism yielding a muddle of one damn thing after another. Rather, it was an approach, as Althusser argued that Marx himself had set out to do his analysis of the

capitalist mode, in which it is possible to comprehend in theory the structural underpinnings of societies and how, due to class struggle and other human practices, these structures can change -- if not advance – over time. This was then a moment when France was experiencing an arch popularity for the “structuralism” of the greatest anthropologist of the day, Claude Lévi-Strauss (who also claimed a Marxist affinity.)³ In this overall intellectual milieu, Althusser and his followers, somewhat uncomfortably to themselves because of their theoretical differences with Lévi-Strauss, became known as “Marxist structuralists.”⁴

Rejecting Marx’s earlier humanistic works as unscientific and “pre-Marxist” since still riddled with Hegelianisms, Althusser, along with his junior collaborator, Étienne Balibar and other grad students, undertook in the early 1960s a close textual reading of *Das Kapital*. From this masterwork of Marx’s mature years, they sought to extract the general principles of what constituted that fundamental category in Marxist historical explanation, the “mode of production” – something that Marx had never done more than sketchily in all his voluminous writings and which lapse had led to numerous controversies among Marxists.⁵

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⁵ The closest Marx himself ever came to providing a coherent definition of “mode of production” was in the famous, much-discussed and debated brief passage in his 1859 “Preface” to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, the first published iteration of what became *Das Kapital*: “In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation,
Here the heavy lifting was performed by Balibar. From Marx’s description of capitalism, Balibar in a section of the collaborative book, *Reading Capital*, identifies three basic components of a mode of production: the laborer, the means of production (tools, machines, etc.), and the non-worker who appropriates surplus labor from the laborer. “Articulation” appears here as a foundational concept. These components are said to be connected or “articulated” in two distinct, interlocking ways: a property relationship involving some form of exploitation of the laborers and a relationship in how the actual labor process is organized and carried out.\(^6\) Balibar claims that by varying and rearranging these three basic components and the two forms of articulation, it is possible to lay out all the modes of production theoretically -- including some that have never existed, or may never exist, in the real world.\(^7\)

A central tenet of Orthodox Marxism has been that the economic “base” incorporating the means and relations of production causally determines more or less directly the characteristics of a society’s ideological and political “superstructure.” While there might be some lag time, changes in the economic base, such as the invention of new, more productive technologies -- Orthodox Marxism often falls into a technological determinism --


\(^7\) The theoretically possible configurations of modes of production were subsequently worked out by British Marxist sociologists, Barry Hindess and Paul Q. Hirst in *Pre-Capitalist Modes of Production* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975). They later issued an “auto-critique” for their “theoreticism” without regards to the real world in *Mode of Production and Social Formation: An Auto-Critique of Precapitalist Modes of Production* (London: Macmillan, 1977).
necessarily bring about corresponding changes in the political and ideological superstructure. The Althusserians rejected such a linear, mechanical form of causality. Influenced by his earlier studies of Spinoza, Althusser produced his own twist on the thorny conundrum of what Marx, who had relatively little to say about it, had meant by the “correspondence” of base and superstructure. Here “articulation” again played a role. According to Althusser, a “social formation” (the Althusserian term for a society) consists of various and contradictory “instances” or “practices” – economic, ideological, political, and theoretical -- which are combined or “articulated” with each other and have mutual effects within the structured system as a whole, the totality of the effects on each other being what constitutes the structural whole. These different “practices” possess some relative autonomy and even have their own different “times” which can lead to uneven development. Borrowing a term from Freudian psychoanalysis, Althusser called this complex relationship, “overdetermination.” However, this should not be taken as meaning, trivially, that everything is related to everything else, as in some New Age nostrum about “oneness.” A structure is always a “structure in dominance” in which the economic practice (following the injunction from Engels) is ultimately determinant but only in “the last instance” (which Althusser says provocatively, at one point in his writings, never actually comes!). Sometimes this economic determination of the social formation might be direct. At other times, such as in non-capitalist societies where politics or religion or kinship are predominant, its determination may be indirect – by determining whatever “instance” is dominant instead. But it is always present. In this way, through what Althusser referred to as “structural causality” – which

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8 With respect to the inner structural workings of non-capitalist societies and the “overdetermination” in them of the economic “instance,” Althusser and Balibar drew heavily upon only a single one of Marx’s footnotes to Capital. In this footnote, Marx responded to a criticism of his 1859 “Preface” to the Critique of
he saw as Marx’s own true form of theoretical causality when it had shed its Hegelian integuments -- the prevailing relations of production in any given society are reproduced.\textsuperscript{9}

Marx had sketched out, or at least given name to, at various points in his writings a number of different modes of production that existed prior to the capitalist mode.\textsuperscript{10} But, as Althusser pointed out, Marx had never provided a general theory for the transition of one mode into another. For Althusser, societal transformations are “conjunctural” as well as structural. Playing a card he knew would be hard to trump among his fellow Communists, Althusser invoked the Bolshevik Revolution as a paradigmatic example of how societal transformations can come about. Tsarist Russia was a largely peasant country where modern industry was only spottily developed – and certainly much less so than in England or Germany. Yet, paradoxically, this is where the first successful proletarian revolution

\textit{Political Economy} that appeared in a German newspaper in the United States (where Marx had expatriate friends from the abortive German Revolution of 1848 and followers active in the labor movement). Marx was accused by his critic, based on his reading of the famous passage about base and superstructure, to think mistakenly that economics determines all societies, whereas his critic affirms that in Middle Ages Catholicism and in Greek and Roman times politics “reigned supreme.” Not without some of the withering sarcasm he held in reserve for these expressions of what he felt was unwarranted stupidity, Marx replied to his critic: “In the first place it strikes one as an odd thing for any one to suppose that these well-worn phrases about the middle ages and the ancient world are unknown to anyone else. This much, however, is clear, that the middle ages could not live on Catholicism, nor the ancient world on politics. On the contrary, it is the mode in which they gained a livelihood that explains why here politics, and there Catholicism, played the chief part. For the rest, it requires but a slight acquaintance with the history of the Roman republic, for example, to be aware that its secret history is the history of its landed property. On the other hand, Don Quixote long ago paid the penalty for wrongly imagining that knight errantry was compatible with all economic forms of society.” Marx, \textit{Capital}, vol. 1, footnote 34.

\textsuperscript{9}Althusser contrasts his notion of “structural causality” not only with “mechanical causality” but also with “expressive causality”, the former being associated with Orthodox Marxism and the later with Hegel and Hegelian Marxists such as Lukacs and his concept of “totality.” “Expressive causality” is said to occur in a structure where all the parts are expressive of some underlying essence, a notion which Althusser firmly rejects. “Expressive causality” has its roots in the thinking of Lacan. An accessible description of these forms of causality as seen by Althusser may be found in Robert Paul Resch, \textit{Althusser and the Renewal of Marxist Social Theory} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 33-82.

\textsuperscript{10} The most important place in his writings where Marx sketched out various non-capitalist modes of production is found in the section of his massive 1857-58 notebook, the \textit{Grundrisse}, known as “The Formen.” This remained unpublished and untranslated until the mid-20th Century. See Karl Marx, \textit{Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations}, ed. E. J. Hobsbawm (New York: International Publishers, 1965), 79.
appeared. This happened, citing Lenin, due to the fact that Russia was the “weakest link” in the chain of imperialist states where “a vast accumulation of ‘contradictions’ [had] come into play in the same court, some of which are radically heterogeneous—of different origins, different sense, different levels and points of application—but which nevertheless ‘group themselves’ into a ruptural unity.” Here Althusser no doubt had in mind such factors as the weakness and corruption of the Romanov dynasty leading to a legitimacy crisis streets brought on by the Great War, with the disintegration of the Russian military and civilian privations leading people to take to the streets and topple the tsar. These various contradictions, Althusser hastened to add -- we might suppose so as not to be labeled as too greatly unorthodox -- were “animated” by the general economic contradiction of capitalism. But for Althusser “overdetermination” through a variety of factors, both internal and external to a given society, is the key to getting a grasp on what is making human history happen.11

“Articulation,” a term borrowed by Althusser from Lacan, was employed conceptually by the Althusserians in yet one further sense to elucidate historical change.12

Social formations might have more than a single mode of production, especially during a

11Althusser, “Contradiction and Overdetermination” in For Marx (New York,: Pantheon Books, 1969), 87-128. Althusser also cites as support for his patently less-than-orthodox theoretical approach the historical and political articles of Marx and Engels themselves: “They reveal the basic notion that the contradiction between Capital and Labour is never simple, but always specified by the historically concrete forms and circumstances in which it is exercised. It is specified by the forms of the superstructure (the State, the dominant ideology, religion, politically organized movements, etc); specified by the internal and external historical situation which determines it as on the one hand a function of the national past (completed or ‘relapsed’ bourgeois revolution, feudal exploitation eliminated wholly, partially or not at all, local ‘customs’, specific national traditions, even the ‘particular style’ of political struggles and behaviour, etc. . .), and on the other as functions of the existing world context (what dominates it: competition of capitalist nations, or ‘imperialist internationalism’ or competition within imperialism, etc), many of these phenomena deriving from the ‘law of uneven development’ in Lenin’s sense.” Ibid, 27.

12Lacan was Althusser’s therapist. Althusser and his associates called their interpretation of Marx a “symptomatic” reading with a term borrowed from psychoanalysis because they as analysts were looking for the lacunae and “absences” in the self-knowledge of the “patient”, Marx in this case, and filling them in with their structural analysis.
transitional period. These modes would “articulate” somehow with each other, with one mode dominating the other or others. That sort of concept, it should be noted, was not unknown in Marx. In an important but unpublished section of Das Kapital, “Die Resultat,” Marx described how the capitalist mode of production did not emerge abruptly from artisanal production under feudalism. First, capitalist relations of production “subsumed” laborers who produced for the market but who still continued to use the existing forms of production and means of production. We can think here of the home-based putting-out system. Then, at some point, some merchants-turned-industrialists created forms of production more in accordance with their needs to maximize profits. We can think here of the factory system in which wage-workers are employed operating machines and other new technologies. Marx calls the former situation, the “formal subsumption” of labor by capitalism and the latter, its “real subsumption.” In any case, as Balibar sees it in looking at societies in a more overall kind of way, one mode of production articulated with another could provide the conditions for the continued reproduction of the mode of production with which it was articulated. Or, it could provide the conditions for the transformation of the existing social formation into another kind of social formation altogether. Thus Balibar’s approach differs from that of Orthodox Marxism in which each society has a single mode of production and where each society and mode of production is supplanted by one other society and mode of production.

It is this last-mentioned notion of the “articulation of modes of production” that was taken up eagerly by a young set of French anthropologists who applied it to their field work,

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13 This chapter, the proposed sixth chapter in manuscript, “Results of the Immediate Process of Production,” was finally published in English as an appendix to the Penguin Classics edition of Capital, vol. 1 in 1976, pp. 949-1084.
mainly conducted among peoples in the former French colonies of West and Central Africa.\textsuperscript{14} And it is the one most readily useful to us here. As the anthropologists found out in quite a few cases under colonialism, African labor had not been proletarianized through its contact with capitalism nor the land transformed into a commodity – as might have been expected according to the tenets of Orthodox Marxism (and modernization theory). Pre-existing forms of production, such as small-scale family production and the use of slaves and pawns, had been preserved, at least for the time being, and encased within capitalist relations that tied their local societies with the vagaries of distant metropolitan markets.\textsuperscript{15} While these anthropologists sometimes took issue with each other around the finer points of Marxist theory, they were all agreed that such forms of production could not be construed as fossils or relicts of pre-capitalist or non-capitalist modes of production – as both Orthodox Marxists and liberal social theorists maintained was the case with respect to Third World “underdevelopment” and the failures of those non-Western economies to “take-off.”\textsuperscript{16}

The most impactful work of Althusserian structuralist anthropology, at least in the

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\textsuperscript{16} Indeed, as Carolyn Brown and Marcel van der Linden point out, these old sorts of assumptions have been challenged again in the late 20\textsuperscript{th} and early 21\textsuperscript{st} Centuries which, with various forms of human trafficking, have seen a “resurgence of classical, dependency (World-System) and Marxist modes of production theories” that have been applied to Africa in particular, see Frederick Cooper, “Africa and the World Economy,” \textit{African Studies Review} 24, no. 2 (1981): 1-86.
English-speaking world because it was translated early on, was Emmanuel Terray’s *Marxism and Primitive Societies*. This small volume contained two essays. After reviewing what Engels had to say about “primitive” societies, Terray set out in the second part to reinterpret Claude Meillassoux’s pioneering historical materialist work from the early 1960s on the Guro, a segmentary lineage-based society in Côte d'Ivoire, using the Althusserian concepts and terminology from *Reading Capital*, an approach to which Terray had become converted from an earlier interest in Lévi-Strauss’s structuralism. (Segmentary lineage-based societies consist of the descendants of a common ancestor, real or putative, which can sometimes fission into segments and then replicate the original society at another physical location, which not infrequently happened in Africa where there was an abundance of land. They lack – or, perhaps more accurately, benefit from not having – a strong central political authority.) To do so, Terray undertook a systematic inventory of the different kinds of labor processes and forms of cooperation, as organized by gender and age, to be found within the Guro social formation. Following Balibar’s typology, he then classified them according to the means and relations of production and the relations of distribution, along with associated

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18 On Emmanuel Terray’s intellectual background and his motivation for undertaking a close reading and critique of Meillassoux’s work on the Guro, see François Dosse, *History of Structuralism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997) Vol 2, 168-170. Terray had done did his field work in the Côte d'Ivoire. Meillassoux, although appreciating Terray’s attention, apparently reacted with some ambivalence to the Althusserian reading of his work. For an unsympathetic defense of a more orthodox (Soviet) version of historical materialism against Terray’s Althusserian version, see Yu. I. Semenov, “Marxism and 'Primitive' Societies,” *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 5, no. 2 (1975): 201-213.

19 The concept was put forward originally by Marshall D. Sahlins in “The Segmentary Lineage: An Organisation of Predatory Expansion,” *American Anthropologist* 63, no. 2 (1961), 322-345. Sahlins was at that time a Marxist before turning into a post-structuralist.
political and ideological characteristics, to obtain a “complete concept” of the modes of production. Rather than finding a single mixed mode of production with the members of the society engaged in some hunting and some farming, Terray identified two “articulated” modes of production among the Guro – a “tribal-village mode” in hunting characterized by a voluntary and egalitarian labor process and a sharing of the catch among the (exclusively) male participants alongside a “lineage mode” in agriculture where it was the elders who typically organized kinship-based work teams and allocated the products – although ownership of the land and other means of production remained collective. Terray argued that viewing segmentary lineage-based societies as being constituted through the articulation of more than one mode of production makes it more possible, through the combinations of the various elements Balibar identified from his close-reading of *Das Kapital*, to make greater sense out of the enormous diversity found among such societies in Africa – and elsewhere.

Terray next set out to apply the same Althusserian articulation-of-modes-of-production model to the Abron Kingdom of Gyaman – it, too, once in the former French colony of Côte d’Ivoire. Here, in a polity established by outsiders, a slave-based mode of production came into being and co-existed with an older domestic, kin-based mode of production consisting of free peasants belonging to the original ethnic group, the Kulango. The new Abron aristocracy largely respected Kulango customs, not interfering with the

agricultural relations of production but only appropriating a portion of the economic surplus (along with expecting assistance from their subjects in military endeavors). However, the Abron aristocracy’s main source of income came not from that source but through the ownership of enslaved foreigners acquired through trade or warfare who toiled away in the mines producing gold for external trade. Slave labor was used to acquire “on the one hand the luxury goods which served as material basis for their social superiority and, on the other hand goods – captives, weapons – which enabled regular reproduction of the social formation.” In the social formation of the Abron Kingdom, the functioning of the lineage mode in agriculture was subordinated to the reproduction of slavery. The key notion for us to take from Terray’s theorizing here – one that can be utilized in this dissertation – is that the articulation of modes of production can come about as the result of an external imposition, not only as in the case of the Guro through an internal process of development.

Another young Althusserian anthropologist was Pierre-Philippe Rey who conducted his ethnographic research in the Congo and Togo. Rey theorized a further type of articulation of the modes of production – an articulation coming from the subsumption and domination of indigenous non-capitalist modes of production by the capitalist mode of production. Rey’s observed from his studies and other cases that this is a process that goes through three basic stages. First, as often seen in the African situation, there is an initial link that takes place

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21 Aidan Foster-Carter, "The Modes of Production Controversy," New Left Review no. 107 (1978): 55-67 provides a good critical evaluation of the arguments presented in Rey’s, Les Alliances De Classes: Sur L’articulation Des Modes De Production, Suivi De Materialisme Historique Et Luttes De Classes (Paris: F. Maspero, 1973). To arrive at this three-stage model, rather than using African examples, Rey worked backwards from the historical development of capitalism in Europe, the only place where the capitalist mode of production emerged from within rather than being imported, as in Africa and other parts of the Third World, from without. (Specifically, he worked with Marx’s analysis of the genesis of capitalist “ground-rent” – that is, rent obtained from landed property – found in Das Kapital, volume three, part six.) This transformation was unique, Rey argued, due to the fact that the reproduction of the feudal mode of production present in England came to be articulated fortuitously with the reproduction of the rising and expanding capitalist mode of production. In the
through “chains of exchange” between European merchants and African local elites in which the non-capitalist mode may be reinforced rather than disturbed. New desirable prestige goods become available in trade, which the elders in the indigenous lineage-based societies use to show-off enhancing their prestige and to conduct social reproduction. At the same time, in a relationship that is beneficial to both parties involved, the European traders acquire agricultural raw materials and sources of labor that are useful for the expanded reproduction of the capitalist mode. In Rey’s second stage, the balance alters significantly in the favor of the outsiders, often through the application of “extra-economic force”, i.e. the violence of colonialism and the imposition of wage-labor on the Africans, such as through a requirement to earn cash in order to pay hut taxes to the colonial government. At this stage, capitalist relations of production subordinate the non-capitalist mode to their own reproduction. Finally, in Rey’s third stage, one still in process in post-colonial Africa, the former indigenous mode of production is eradicated and replaced by full-blown capitalist relations of production -- characterized by mechanization and the use of Africans as wage-workers.

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Before proceeding further, it is worth posing the question: What, if any, is the role early stage of articulation, both feudal landowners and industrial capitalists benefitted from a symbiotic relationship. Landowners could receive higher rents on their land by turning out peasants and switching to wool production to supply the new textile mills, while capitalists for their part received the gift of labor power in the form of the dispossessed peasants without having to bear the full costs of its reproduction themselves. Capitalism gradually took over the rural areas and put ground-rent on its own profit-making basis. Elsewhere, however, at other times and places, the process was never so seamless in character; extra-economic force – violence – has been required to open up the door and implant capitalist relations of production in other societies and cultures. Still, according to Ray, the same basic three stages of articulation have been followed more or less. Pierre-Philippe Rey "The Lineage Mode of Production: Comment on 'Le Marxisme devant les societes primitives', by Emmanuel Terray," Critique of Anthropology, 1, no. 3 (1975): 35-36. A good critical synopsis of Rey’s arguments about ground rent may be found in Barbara Bradby, "The Destruction of the Natural Economy," Economy and Society 4 (1975): 142-152.
allotted to human agency in this kind of neo-Marxist structuralist approach? Were living, breathing, flesh-and-blood human beings merely the “bearers” of roles assigned in social structures? Marx in Das Kapital, at least for analytical purposes, had treated people as if they were no more than “the personification of economic categories, the bearers [Träger] of particular class-relations and interests.” Rey charged Terry, and by inference Althusser, with presenting a theoretical model that was static, lacking in dynamism. In Rey’s model, what happens with “articulation” is not an inexorable given but also involves a great deal of struggle – “combat”, Rey calls it pointedly-- as well as alliances between the classes of the articulated modes. The exigencies of these interactions, Rey says, is what can lead to differing real historical outcomes. In Althusser there is without a doubt a tendency to take social structures as a be-all and end-all (which was not necessarily the case for Marx who spilled a great deal of ink analyzing particular historical events such as the Civil War in the U.S. as a newspaper correspondent for the New York Tribune). For Althusser (and Balibar) individual human subjects are no more than role players on the stage of history – in a drama without a playwright. In my own view, the most helpful way to look at social structures is dialectically – both as the products of individual and collective human praxis and as

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22 Rey crossed swords with Terray over various theoretical issues pertaining to segmentary lineage-based societies, while praising Terray’s work for its innovatory nature. Rey agreed with Meillassoux that the control by the elders over reproduction is what determines their control over production rather than the other way around. Rey, "Class Contradiction in Lineage Societies," Critique of Anthropology 13/14 (1979): 41-60. G. Dupré and Rey, “Reflections on the Pertinence of a Theory of Exchange” in The Articulation of Modes of Production: Essays from "Economy and Society" ed., Harold Wolpe (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980): 128-160. Rey found strong support with one society he examined for Meillassoux’s view that elders were able to exercise authority by controlling bride-wealth. A point of contention among these various French Marxist anthropologists is whether or not the elders exploited juniors in these lineage-based societies. Rey concluded in the affirmative and was able to win over Terray to his position.

23 In some of Althusser’s later works, responding to criticisms from the likes of E.P. Thompson and under the influence of the Chinese Cultural Revolution where students and workers responded to Mao’s call to take action against bureaucrats and “capitalist-roaders,” Althusser tended to put somewhat greater emphasis on class struggle.
 constraints on and enablers of human praxis. At times, especially when a system is in flux, people may make a lot of their own history. But for long periods of historical time, individuals one after another occupy particular roles in society, some performing these roles better than others, but from which they deviate at their peril (job loss, jail, etc.). And, in truth, most of us do not ordinarily push the limits inherited from the past or try to think, much less to act, outside of the structural cages that we find ourselves placed in from birth. People change while the roles continue largely unaltered. So, as Marx and Althusser did, it does make a great deal of sense to try to identify the script and “laws of motion” of social structures – just so long as we do not dismiss from mind their origins and ongoing sustenance in human praxis. This is especially true if we have an interest, as I certainly do, in locating the Archimedean leverage points where change to a better world than this can be hastened.

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Most of the various case studies that have been sought to apply the Althusserian concept of “articulation” to various non-capitalist kinship-based societies, both as they are internally and in their relationship to colonialism, have involved African and Asian societies. But two scholars, the Canadian anthropologists Adrian Tanner and James McDonald, have also applied the concept in interesting and informative ways to indigenous societies here on the North American continent. The Mistassini Cree hunters and trappers of northern Quebec addressed by Adrian Tanner in his monograph, Bringing Home Animals, entered into dealings with Europeans traders, first French and then English, in the 18th Century. Even

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24 Adrian Tanner, Bringing Home Animals: Religious Ideology and Mode of Production of the Mistassini Cree Hunters (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1979). Tanner built his model from the pioneering Marxist ethnographical work of Eleanor Leacock in the 1950s on post-contact change from producing use
today, some of the Cree continue to work in much the same sort of putting-out system producing furs for the world market. Tanner postulates the presence among the Cree, in the aftermath of contact, of two modes of production that are distinguishable from each other not only by their different relations of production but from the different labor processes involved. One is the “domestic mode,” in which Cree hunters persist in obtaining game for their own sustenance and in which their life-ways and spiritual practices remain largely autonomous from whites. The other is the capitalist mode in which Cree go out into the bush and set traps for beaver and other fur-bearing animals. While hunting and trapping is a traditional Cree activity, it has become one conducted primarily for exchange rather than for use and is now one in which the native participants are subject to the domination of outside forces -- although not totally, in as much as their labor cooperation is necessary (and because they remain owners of the land). In actual social practice, according to Tanner, there are two “alternative social formations,” with the Cree seemlessly moving back and forth between them. These are separated from each other in time and space, with the former being focused in the bush consisting of smaller family bands hunting and trapping during the long winter months and the latter focused in larger population concentrations in the settlements during the summer (where some of the Cree today also engage in wage-labor and are recipients of government welfare payments). Moreover, each setting has an accompanying religious ideology -- shamanistic in the bush and Christian in the settlements -- as part of social reproduction, although not reducible to the functional needs of Cree production. Tanner’s

values to producing exchange values undergone by another far northern Canadian hunting people, the Montagnais-Naskapi, to which Tanner added the insights of Emmanuel Terray on West African societies and their articulated modes of production. See Eleanor Burke Leacock, *The Montagnais "Hunting Territory" and the Fur Trade* (Menesha Wis.: American Anthropological Association, 1954).
structural analysis of the Cree is relevant to many, if not all, Native Americans in New England, who, as we shall see, were also drawn into dependency on the capitalist system via the fur trade but who maintained for a time some aspects of their original way of life.

Also employing the articulation-of-modes-of-production model is James Andrew McDonald, who has studied the Tsimshian, a fishing, hunting and gathering lineage-based society in northwestern British Columbia. According to McDonald, the relations of production in Tsimshian society were restructured by capitalist development but “without transforming the economy ‘effectively and entirely’ into a capitalist economy.” This happened through the traditional native activity of fishing. When the first white fur traders arrived on the scene in the 1830s, native fishers, hunters, and foragers supplied them with an important portion of their diet. In exchange, natives obtained prestige goods and other items such as traps and cloth for their use. In this way, the relationship was mutually beneficial at first. Then, when salmon canneries sprung up along the coast starting in the 1870s to provide an inexpensive source of protein for the hungry workers tending machines for long hours-on-end in Britain’s booming factories and mills, Indians benefitted as commercial fishermen – while still employing their traditional methods. But restrictive Canadian government controls and new private property arrangements were imposed discriminating against Indian fisheries. Indigenous ownership rights to land and aquatic resources were suppressed by military force, and small reserves were created. In place of a mutually-beneficial articulation, Indian labor was now subsumed under capitalist relations of production, with many native women and children being relegated to the status of part-

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time piece-workers in the salmon canneries. Some minor chiefs were able to enhance their status as labor contractors, but the remaining native fishers had trouble keeping up with costly new white-introduced fishing technologies and by and large fell out of the occupation.

Thus, through an articulation of the Tsimshian society with the emerging world economy, aided and abetted by the actions of the colonial state, cheap fish was furnished by Indian labor -- fish which helped to lower the reproduction costs of British labor and to boost profits for far-away capitalists and contributed to accumulation on a world-scale. At the same time, the Indians became progressively “underdeveloped.” Some Indians became loggers for pay rather than trade or they have taken other paying jobs for whites, while continuing to derive part of their living, especially during periods of unemployment, from the land. While the internal structures are still not fully transformed, capitalism has become hegemonic over the indigenous societies. McDonald’s’s work on the Tsimshian, while certainly not directly transferrable in all of its details, seems highly relevant to the situation of some Native Americans in New England, who, as we shall see, after an initial stage in which they fed and otherwise gave vital succor to the white newcomers, then having lost access to their own principle means of production, the land, and becoming dependent on imported goods only obtainable through monetary transactions in the marketplace, turned to at least part-time wage-work producing surplus value for the non-Indian owners of the means of production and, in some cases, for the European metropole in the greater Atlantic system.

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As with Althusserianism more generally, the above kinds of Marxist structuralist approaches to theorizing societies fell heavily out of popularity by the 1980s among most
anthropologists, in favor of Gertzian “thick description” or a post-modernist cultural approach such as that espoused by the once-Marxist, James Clifford. Partly, this fall from grace may have had to do with the shame attendant upon Althusser’s murder of his wife in 1980 and his confinement to mental health care, although I would argue that this change was more largely a reflection – social being determining consciousness, as it were – of the disappointment felt by many, if not all, in the 1968 Generation, as time wore on, in the prospects of serious, world-changing revolutionary politics. Admittedly, many anthropologists had always been dubious, even scornful, and found it an intellectual fad of limited usefulness at best, especially given the diversity displayed among African societies.

Recently, however, there has been some picking-up of interest again in Althusser and his ideas. For instance, the New England-based labor economist Richard McIntyre has expressed a feeling of some surprise at the “almost total lack of effort put into developing articulation concepts in the analysis of European, North American, or Japanese social formations.” In my view, irregardless of whatever may be the fate of “structural causality,”

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26. The full explanatory story of the rapid rise and precipitous fall of the structural Marxist paradigm associated with Althusser and his brilliant acolytes in various scholarly disciplines still needs to be written. One recent effort to explain its fall from grace and to call for its redemption from being considered as passé, is Stephen Nugent, “Some Reflections on Anthropological Structural Marxism,” *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 13, no. 2 (2007): 419-431. Nugent observes: “The decline of anthropological structural Marxism (hereafter ASM) may be an example of an explanatory theory being sidelined not as a weak theory, but as the wrong kind of theory, ‘wrong’ in the sense that it challenges a prevailing interpretative holism. Its explanations do not just amount to new additions to the literature, but they supersede other explanations in a way that stretches some aspects of anthropological holism intolerably.” For examples of a recent revival of interest among a few other anthropologists and archaeologists, see Dean J. Saitta, "Dialoguing with the Ghost of Marx," *Critique of Anthropology* 25, no. 1 (2005): 27-35; C. R. Menzies and A. A. Marcus, "Renewing the Vision: Marxism and Anthropology in the 21st Century," *Journal of Marxism and Interdisciplinary Inquiry* 1, no. 1 (2007): 1-5; C. R. Menzies and A. A. Marcus, "Towards a Class Struggle Anthropology, ibid, 14-39.

“overdetermination,” and all the rest of Althusser’s philosophical constructs in the ever-shifting trade winds of academia, the concept of the articulation of modes of production remains a valuable theoretical insight. As we shall see in subsequent chapters, it is most definitely one that we can apply with value to our subjects, the indigenous societies of New England, to enable us to pose new sorts of questions that would enhance our understanding of their history, particularly in their responses to the European invasion and occupation.

Meillassoux and Social Reproduction

Side-by-side with the Althusserians and commonly engaged in mutual dialogue was another important and influential French neo-Marxist anthropologist, Claude Meillassoux. While he has often been lumped with the others, Meillassoux followed his own intellectual trajectory. His ideas had different intellectual origins than theirs and his theoretical views were distinctive. For one thing, he did not start out as a student of Lévi-Strauss or of Althusser. Meillassoux was a grad student in the late 1950s of the French anthropologist of Africa, Georges Balandier, who had been influenced by British functionalism. He first came to Marxism by experiencing capitalism first-hand in the United States. Meillassoux then broke into the scholarly limelight with the publication of an essay in 1960 followed up by a monograph in 1964 on the Guro, a farming and hunting segmentary lineage-based society of the Côte d'Ivoire on whom he had conducted his doctoral fieldwork. Meillassoux’s

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28 See also Andrew Davidson, "Mode of Production: Impasse or Passe?" *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 19, no 3 (1989): 243-278. Davidson argued at that time that the announcement of the death of the articulation of mode of production theories was highly premature but that they needed to be reworked on the basis much more concrete historical research. I concur. I hope this dissertation will make such a contribution.

scholarly project, beginning with the seminal 1960 essay, was ever after to develop a “general model for the explanation of economic phenomena in traditional self-sustaining societies”, an effort that he increasingly framed in Marxist mode of production constructs and couched in a Marxist structuralist terminology – but one he explored in his own individual manner. Emmanuel Terray praised Meillassoux’s work on the Guro saying that it “may prove to be a turning point in the history of anthropology” for having been the first by any researcher, aside from Soviet ethnologists, to “apply the categories of historical materialism to a specific ‘primitive’ society.” As we have seen, in many ways, the whole later Althusserian structuralist discourse on segmentary lineage-based societies, starting with Terray’s own little book, was a commentary on the work performed by Meillassoux.

Meillassoux’s best-known work by far is Femmes, greniers et capitaux (1975)

and Relations of Production” in David Seddon, ed., Relations of Production: Marxist Approaches to Economic Anthropology (London Totowa, N.J.: Cass, 1978), 289-330. Some background on Meillassoux’s life and work may be found in Mahir Saul, “Claude Meillassoux, 1925-2005,” American Anthropologist 107, No. 4 (2005): 753-757 and Joel S. Kahn, “Marxist Anthropology and Segmentary Societies: A Review of the Literature” in Joel S. Kahn and Josep R. Llobera, eds., The Anthropology of Pre-Capitalist Societies (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1981), 58-65. Unlike many other neo-Marxist anthropologists who have taken these as their principle starting point, Meillassoux had little regard for the “superficial” taxonomy of pre-capitalist societies and the “simple” view of the history of the family that are to be found in the part of Marx’s Grundrisse called “The Formen,” a notebook which was not published until the 20th century. “Marx did not try, as he did for capitalism, to find out the law of the inner functioning of pre-capitalist formations or, except for feudalism to capitalism, of their transformations.” Instead, and in this way paralleling the Althusserians, Meillassouxx set out to take as the model for his analysis of pre-capitalist societies, their internal processes and forms of societal transformation from the “thorough investigation into the mechanisms and laws of capitalist development” that Marx made in his main published work, Das Kapital. See Meillassoux, “From Reproduction to Production: A Marxist Approach to Economic Anthropology,” Economy and Society 1 (1972): 96-97.


31 See Joel S. Kahn, “Marxist Anthropology and Segmentary Societies: A Review of the Literature” in The Anthropology of Pre-Capitalist Societies, ed. Joel S. Kahn and Josep R. Llobera (Atlantic Highlands NJ, Humanities Press, 1981), 57-88. Emmanuel Terray’s essay “Historical Materialism and Segmentary Lineage-Based Societies” was essentially an attempt to rework and reformulate Meillassoux’s research on the Guro into Althusserian mode of production conceptual constructs and terminology. The basic content difference is that while Meillassoux saw only a single mode of production, Terry saw two articulated modes of production among the Guro: a hunting mode of production and a more communal agricultural mode of production. Emmanuel Terray, Marxism and “Primitive” Societies: Two Studies (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 93-186.
translated into English as *Maidens, Meal and Money* (1981). In it and in a number of short related essays, Meillassoux advanced a number of points that became important in neo-Marxist anthropological theory pertaining to reproduction.\(^{32}\) One point greatly germane to our concerns with the subject of this dissertation is, that with pre-capitalist societies such as the Guro, the “mode of reproduction” may be as important, or perhaps even more important, than the mode of production. Commonly, when Marx and Engels discussed what they called “our conception of history”, they paired production with reproduction, both biological and social.\(^{33}\) Engels put it this way: “According to the materialist conception of history, the ultimately determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life.”\(^{34}\) Moreover, after Marx’s passing, Engels – drawing upon the work of Louis Henry Morgan and other top ethnologists of the day – tried to sort out of the forms of kinship and reproduction and their relationship to economic and political forms.\(^{35}\) Nevertheless, on the

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\(^{33}\) Social as opposed to biological reproduction involves everything else that may be required, such as skills training and ideological indoctrination, in order to produce the labor force’s next generation and to reproduce the relations of production. Even under full-fledged capitalism, much of social reproduction is performed in the domestic sphere, outside the operation of the law of value, and most often by women. This, too, is a species of “articulation.”


whole, as Meillassoux noted in his book, “little attention was given by historical materialism to this problem.” Meillassoux’s contributions in filling this lacuna have been substantial.

Hunting and gathering societies, along with simple agricultural societies, may be able to succeed as more or less self-sustaining, small-scale productive units. And this is how such societies with “stone age economies” were theorized by Marshall Sahlins in his structuralist Marxist phase. However, as Meillassoux pointed out, societies having a “domestic mode of production” being able to reproduce on their own apart from and without the involvement of other similar groups, is quite another matter indeed. Because of the unpredictability within a numerically modest social unit of having the suitable types of individuals in age and sex present at a given time to become mates and to produce children to carry on the society, such groups of necessity have to enter into broader connections for the voluntary movement of persons or for the more institutionalized exchange of potential mates with other groups.

Such a “reproductive imperative” may lead to further societal effects. Sometimes it entails warfare, as societies launch raids on other societies to capture nubile women for reproductive uses. (In the societies that have achieved agriculture, women are valued doubly – not only as the “producers of the producers” but also as the chief agricultural producers.) Adoptions into fictive kinship relations may also take place from outside the local group. Furthermore, Meillassoux argued that, unlike the case with capitalism that was investigated so thoroughly by Marx, it is not control over the means of production but control over reproduction that has enabled dominating elites and eventually exploitative classes in some

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37 Meillassoux makes the distinction between hunting and gathering societies in which these movements are voluntary and agricultural societies in which exchanges are institutionalized within the framework of kinship relations.
of these societies to develop. Hunting and gathering societies are largely egalitarian, based on their form of production, in which nature, in Marx’s distinction, is the “subject” rather than the “instrument” of human labor. They belong to what Marx called “primitive communism” in which the products are generally shared and consumed among the group members within a short amount of time. But the practice of agriculture, when it arises, necessitates a much greater degree of social coordination and planning over time, in which the organizational role of elders with their accumulated knowledge and societal memories can rise to the forefront. Even so, within these societies, the knowledge of how to conduct agriculture, because of its elementary character, is not so easily monopolized. Likewise, access to arable land may be hard to control because it is so readily available. So from their initial role exerted in matters of organizing the processes of production, elders may turn into “regulators” not only of basic biological reproduction but also of social reproduction.

Concern over reproduction becomes paramount – not only for reproduction of subsistence but also reproduction of the productive unit itself allowing the producers to benefit in the future from their past labour. Now the reproduction of the unit, both biologically and structurally, is assured through the control of women considered as the physiological agent of production of the producer. . . .The control of women and matrimonial policy generate a new pattern of circulation between communities and not only within them. Many ‘aberrant’ phenomena in the so-called ‘exchange’ system of these societies can be explained when considered in this light, as are the notions of gift, value, reciprocity and dowery, as well as the social properties of goods and wealth, which are qualitatively different from . . .

‘merchandise’ or ‘capital.’ The matrimonial policy of the agricultural community encourages kinship to develop as the model-pattern of all social relationships. \(^{39}\)

Under these conditions, ambitious male elders may come to dominate juniors. And a particular lineage may emerge holding itself to be “senior,” that is, closer in descent to the ancestral founder and thus superior to all others. Control over reproduction may in some cases then carry on to the development of a full-blown class-based society. Meillassoux hypothesized the fateful historical step: “All the economic and social prerogatives of the elder are transferred to the dominant class, usually an aristocratic lineage. Prestations due to the elder become tributes due to the lord who may also gain control over the matrimonial policy of the community, and eventually over the means of production – land.” \(^{40}\)

Is reproduction truly the key element in the life of these “primitive” societies and behind their immanent developmental tendencies? This became a matter of some debate among the French neo-Marxist structuralist theorists. Meillassoux had made an excellent argument based on updated historical materialist principles. But Terray in his appreciation and critique of Meillassoux argued that the power relations in these kinds of segmentary lineage-based societies are still determined first and foremost by the relations of production rather than by the relations of reproduction. Control over reproduction and the circulation of women, “the producers of producers,” through the distribution of bridewealth and other prestige items, while an important element of these societies, is itself derived from the elders’ near-monopoly in external trade involving such items and from their control over production, with certain specialists being set to work by the elders as the producers of some of those


\(^{40}\) Ibid, 101.
items. Rey, on the other hand, agreed with Meillassoux that the control by the elders over reproduction is what determines their control over production rather than the other way around. Rey found strong support with one African society he examined for Meillassoux’s view that elders were able to exercise authority by controlling bride-wealth. However, other anthropologists working with African societies pointed out that bridewealth is not necessarily all that important in the first place. Another point of contention among these various French Marxist anthropologists was whether or not the elders exploited juniors in these lineage-based societies. Rey concluded in the affirmative and was able to win over Terray to his position. Juniors and women perform the agricultural work, some of whose product is appropriated by the elders. Terray concurred with Meillassoux, however, that this was not an exploitative class type of relationship – for the reasons already cited above – i.e., that the elders’ role as “controllers” of the means of production is organizationally functional for the society and because (male) youth coming of age have the potential to be promoted into elders eventually themselves, if they go along with the system as it is structured.

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42 Revisiting his book and the controversies it spurred some years later, Terray changed his view that there was no exploitation among the Guro. Now he finds himself in agreement with Dupre and Rey (see below), who had argued otherwise. Elders exploit cadets and men exploit women, and thus economic classes of a sort can be said to exist. Following a distinction made by Marx when contrasting peasants with proletarians, these are classes “in themselves” and not self-conscious classes “for themselves” capable of collective action on their own behalf which occur in a pure form only under capitalism. Terray also stated in this same “self-criticism” that, while he should have given greater attention to reproduction in his analysis and that by doing so he would have been enabled to more adequately explain the articulation of the two modes of production he identified among the Guro, he remains convinced that those like Meillassoux who give primacy to reproduction are deviating from Marx’s views that production is primary rather than “circulation” and “exchange” in the manner of the views of bourgeois economists rejected by Marx. For Terray, the control of the elders over matrimonial exchange is predicated on their control over production. He also emphasizes the conflictual and contradictory character of reproductive processes against what he sees is a dangerous tendency to relapse into functionalism and to reduce every social phenomenon to the presumed “needs” of reproduction. Emmanuel Terray, "On Exploitation: Elements of an Autocritique," Critique of Anthropology 4 (1979): 29-39. Similar arguments had
In any case, whether we agree with him that the “mode of reproduction” is structurally fundamental, Meillassoux has pointed us in the right direction for seeing how reproduction and production can and do interact. In segmentary and other sorts of kinship-based societies lacking modern contractual relations and norms, relations with other groups are often initiated and mediated through gift-giving, not only of utilitarian items but of prestige goods charged with symbolic meanings. Here we might think of the famous Kula Ring described by Malinowski. Meillassoux analyzes the gifting and circulation of durable and prestigious non-productive goods as bridewealth in conjunction with the exchange of women. This practice, he says, seems to have originated as a way to maintain equivalence among different groups by providing compensation for the loss of women’s labor and reproductive capacity. But, as Meillassoux pointed out, its use also at the same time holds the potential to undermine social equality -- if ambitious elders are able to gain control over it and withhold it or pass it out when they wish to chasten or reward their juniors. Additionally, the power of the elders, as with any system of power over others comes to be reinforced by ideology – perhaps especially important in these circumstances because disaffected persons can sometimes segment, i.e., split to a new locale escaping elder control.

Pierre Philippe Rey and his collaborator Georges Dupré made a similar point about the centrality of exchange in reproducing the conditions of production in lineage societies


with reference to the Congolese societies they had studied. They added to Meillassoux’s identification of the manipulation by elders of bridewealth coming from outside sources, the acquisition of slaves as a means for elites to reinforce their lineages and to render juniors compliant, perhaps even more effectively than with any marital exchanges. Moreover, as Rey and Dupré saw it, lineage societies in the Congo articulated with capitalist societies via the slave trade in which Europeans were able to supply prestige goods for “traditional” forms of social reproduction and thus played upon the pre-existing internal contradictions in the lineage societies between juniors and seniors in order to obtain slaves. Over time, elites became dependent upon these external sources of goods in place of homemade craft items. Thus, through domination first of the forms of social reproduction, colonial merchants came to dominate whole societies and were able to institute full capitalist relations of production.

In Maidens, Meal and Money, Meillassoux also made the valuable point that capitalists, when they first appear on the scene, may perceive the benefits of retaining “traditional” forms of social reproduction because it lowers their costs. Here Meillassoux referred to the case of migratory labor in the mines of southern Africa, where their native villages back in their places of origin provide “social security” for the workers. However, although his argument might seem to fit, Meillassoux is not an “articulationist.” Meillassoux argued that rather than there being a “dual economy” under colonialism, one sector “primitive” and the other sector “modern,” these phenomena exist within one integrated, 

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44 Georges Dupré and Pierre-Philippe Rey, “Reflections on the Pertinence of a Theory of Exchange,” in The Articulation of Modes of Production: Essays from "Economy and Society", ed. H. Wolpe (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980), 128-160. A bone of contention between Rey and Dupré on the one hand and Meillassoux on the other was whether the relationship between elders and juniors in lineage societies was one of exploitation. The former contended that it was exploitative while Meillassoux contended that it was not exploitative because in time many of the juniors would become elders themselves. Another issue in this discourse was whether the elders could be said to constitute a true class in the classical Marxist sense.
organic capitalistic economy. Moreover, this all tied in with Meillassoux’s argument, building off of the insights of Rosa Luxemburg on the forces lying behind imperialism, that the exploitation and destruction of non-capitalist peoples is not simply part of a transitory stage of “Primitive Accumulation,” as Marx implied – one consisting of the assault on and looting of non-Western societies that was left behind when capitalism was able to emerge from its nascent conditions as a mode of production to stand on its own societal footing – but is an ongoing brutal process throughout capitalism’s existence, right up to the present day.

Meillassoux’s insight about the key role played by prestige goods in social reproduction and in producing and validating status and rank within kinship-based societies has been developed and debated by other scholars in the Marxist tradition and applied to case-studies of societies, both prehistoric and historic. Some have applied the model to Neolithic and Bronze Age European societies while others, in the tracks of the above, applied it to other recent African societies. 45 Operating in a related field, the social reproduction model involving prestige goods has also been applied by Marxian archaeologists to a few prehistoric Native Americans societies. For the Mississippian mound-building societies in

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the Southeast (flourished 800 to 1500 CE), Michael Nassaney hypothesizes that emerging elites – “big men” – monopolized maize, when it was still an uncommon item, as a high status or ceremonial food, along with the quartz crystals found at the sites and objects of longer-distance exchange such as copper, mica, galena and conch shells. Elites, he proposes, sought to control surpluses and mobilize labor apart from kinship relations. In the way, “points of tension” came into being in the “communal mode of production” which may have “strained the logic of egalitarianism.” The mysterious decline of the great centers of Mississippian culture such as Cahokia indicates to Nassaney the inability of the elites to sustain their positions of authority using these means when supplies of prestige goods were interrupted. Nassaney finds commoner resistance to elite rule suggested by the abrupt cessation of mound building and the reorganization of settlements in these societies as shown archaeologically. The point Nassaney makes about non-linear, back and forth motion is a valuable one when looking at the evolution, or processual development, of societies from one economic and political “stage,” degree of “complexity”, or set of conditions, to another.

Another example of the influence of Meillassoux in this regard is the work of the archaeologist Barbara Bender. Bender has extended Meillassoux’s argument to hunters and gatherers (whom Meillassoux tended to view, using the language of Lévi-Strauss, as “cold”

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46 Michael S. Nassaney, “Communal Societies and the Emergence of Elites in the Prehistoric American Southeast,” in Lords of the Southeast: Social Inequality and the Native Elites of Southeastern North America, ed. Alex W. Barker and Timothy R. Pauketat, Archeological papers of the American Anthropological Association no. 3 (Washington, D.C.: American Anthropological Association, 1992), 111-143. On the other hand, James Bayman does not find the “Prestige Goods Economic Model” readily applicable to the irrigation agriculture, mound-building Hohokam culture, the remains of which he studies in the Southwest. In their case, marine shells acquired through direction procurement or through down-the-line trade with coastal peoples and worked by Hohokam artisans bracelets and other ornaments were widely distributed. In Bayman’s interpretation, this is a sign that they were used in social reproduction to mark corporate identity, not to set apart the elite. He suggests that control of rituals rather than control of objects may have been the source of power among the Hohokam. James M. Bayman, “Hohokam Craft Economies and the Materialization of Power,” Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory 9, no. 1 (March 2002): 69-95.
societies; he seemed oblivious to the existence of complex hunter-gatherers like the Indians of the Pacific Northwest). The transport of prestige goods of all sorts, Bender points out, was widespread among peoples in eastern North America, going back as early as the fifth millennium. Bender sees evidence in the appearance of the mound-building pre-agricultural Adena and Hopewell of the Ohio Valley of the same sorts of processes involving the control by elders of prestige goods, often *exotica* coming from great distances – she lists “western Great Lakes native copper and hematite, Upper Mississippian galena, Atlantic steatite, eastern Pennsylvanian jasper, Canadian chalcedony and black slate, New York State chert, Riverine striped slate and hornstone, and shells from the Atlantic and Gulf coasts” -- that were needed for rituals that were essential to the success of social reproduction. Similarly to Nassaney, Bender thinks these societies may have collapsed when the sources of prestige goods that enabled greater complexity to develop were interrupted because of mounting subsistence troubles and demographic pressures or for some other unknown reasons.47

The work of both Nassaney and Bender on the role of prestige goods in social reproduction in these societies, gives us much to think about when we come to consider the histories of native peoples in New England, who are the focus of this dissertation. As we shall see, all these Algonquian-speaking peoples shared some common cultural characteristics, and ours enjoyed connections with Midwestern societies. It is likely that we will be able to draw some inferences about influences and discern parallel developments.

Meillassoux paid most attention to the role of bridewealth. But, as other

anthropologists have shown, there are various other instances when prestige goods play a role in social reproduction. For example, prestige goods may be awarded by elites to followers for loyalty or bravery in battle. Prestige goods may be used in initiation ceremonies or assessed as penalties for misdeeds. Prestige goods, sometimes specially made and “killed,” often accompany the bodies of the elite, and sometimes of commoners, to the afterlife. Prestige goods can also be taken out of circulation through feasts and potlatch ceremonies sponsored by members of the elite, both validating their power and maintaining the scarcity of those items. Non-elite persons may also, by luck or pluck, find ways to leverage access to prestige goods for their own advancement. Meillassoux used the example of iron introduced by merchants into African societies to discuss the possible destabilizing effects of this exchange on internal relations – in this case, if juniors who controlled food production find themselves able to trade food directly with merchants for iron circumventing the elites.48

On the whole, however, Meillassoux nowhere ever much interrogated how prestige goods are produced and become available in the first place – whether manufactured internally to the societies by juniors or special craftspersons or obtained through trade or via other connections with external sources. Through just what means do the goods end up in the hands of the elite?49 And why, we must ask, are certain items vested with extraordinary


49 For a Marxian analysis of the employment of craftspersons by elites to manufacture prestige goods to enhance their status, see Peter Peregrine, “Some Political Aspects of Craft Specialization,” World Archaeology 23, no. 1 (June 1991): 1-11. To test his hypotheses, Peregrine, an archaeologist, uses comparative data from the Mississippian mound-building chiefdoms in North America that he studies. His conclusion: “These analyses provide an objective confirmation that advances in craft specialization are related to increases in political centralization. The more centralized societies tend to employ more complex personal ornaments (having a greater number of elements, designs, or production steps than less complex ornaments), many of which require significant labor investments and sophisticated techniques to produce - labor and technical knowledge that would require, or at least foster, craft specialization.”
powers beyond those of ordinary consumption goods? Although there are some objects such as shell beads that widely take on that role, the identity of the prestige goods often varies from society to society (which may enable a certain “leveraging” to take place in prestige goods from one society to another), and each instance of their use in social reproduction requires specific investigation. Moreover, as several of Meillassoux’s critics have pointed out, his type-society, the Guro, was scarcely isolated economically but was involved in an extensive trading network. Still, regardless of any lapses and limitations, Meillassoux’s work is replete with possibilities. Indeed, as we shall see in the next section, the spatial dimension missing in his work has been taken up by some of the World-Systems theorists.

World-System Theories

World-Systems Theory or “World-Systems Analysis”, as one of its main founders and leading practitioners Immanuel Wallerstein would prefer it to be called, emerged in the early 1970s. Wallerstein, a sociologist by profession, identifies himself as a Marxist. Yet, his theories about the way the world, particularly the modern world, works are also different in a number of important and interesting ways from what is to be found in and excavated from the Marxist canon. Orthodox Marxism has viewed capitalism as imperialistic by nature,


at least in its ultimate stage. But, in this old view, the sucking out of resources and labor was something that capitalism did to nations and peoples who were basically outside of its orbit. One of the basic important insights of Wallerstein and other World-Systems theorists, such as Samir Amin and Andre Gunder Frank, has been that imperialism can be best understood as occurring, after an initial absorption or incorporation phase, within the System itself and not with respect to a geographical area that is somehow external to it. Indeed, all modern history is explained first and foremost economically and politically by these theorists with reference to the Modern World-System as a whole entity and not just to particular events.

Wallerstein first introduced World-Systems Analysis to the world with the publication in 1974 of *The Modern World-System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*, the opening volley of a projected work of four volumes culminating, in chronological order, with the consolidation of the System and its revolutionary discontents in the 20th Century. (Only the first three projected volumes have appeared in print as of yet.) Wallerstein also has an Africanist background. But, along with his early formative African field-work experiences, Wallerstein’s intellectual development has been greatly influenced by his encounters with the French Annales historian Fernand Braudel’s tackling of socio-economic history structurally and on a grand scale. Of particular influence was Braudel’s magisterial three volume work, *Civilization and* |

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Capitalism: 15th to 18th Century. The think tank founded by Wallerstein at SUNY-Binghamton is named the “Fernand Braudel Center,” and it is considered by Wallerstein, in spite of some evident differences between Braudel’s approach and Wallerstein’s own, to be following and developing the broad thrust of Braudel’s holistic historical work through its sponsorship of conferences – often leading to books compiled from the conference papers – and through the publication since 1977 of its quarterly theoretical journal, Review.

In the view of Wallerstein and his acolytes, we live now in the Modern World-System, a single integrated “world-economy,” all parts of which are subject to the same general laws of motion. Although it consists of many diverse cultural parts, it is a system that has come to be internally divided geographically according to a single tripartite international division of labor. First, there are a set of powerful metropole or “core” countries producing more advanced, manufactured goods where “free”, higher-waged and skilled labor predominates. Second, there are politically-weak “peripheral” countries and regions producing raw materials where coerced, low-wage forms of labor such as slavery and serfdom predominate. (These are often colonies or former colonies.) Third, there are “semi-peripheral” countries and regions which share some characteristics with each of the aforementioned and are, generally-speaking, situated geographically in-between them,

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exploiting the periphery and being exploited, in turn, by the core. The economies in all three zones are driven by the selfsame forces of capitalist accumulation. That being the case, Wallerstein feels justified in calling all surplus-takers of whatever sort in the modern world, “capitalists,” and all those being exploited regardless of the form of labor, “proletarians.”

In other words, unlike the articulationists, there is only a single capitalist mode of production.

Thus, the basic unit of analysis for Wallerstein and his intellectual fellow travelers is a “system” and not the civilizations or societies or nations or states or tribes traditionally preferred by social scientists. Although much of Wallerstein’s historical writing concerns how it originated in Europe in early modern times and spread from there to other parts of the world, the capitalistic Modern World-System is not the only type of system ever to have existed. In addition to World Economies (of which there many have been earlier non-capitalist examples), there are two other kinds of pre-modern systems in Wallerstein’s typology: (1) “Mini-Systems” which are small, self-contained hunting and gathering or simple agricultural societies based on economic reciprocity and, on the whole, not very long-lasting before being absorbed by other systems; and (2) “World-Empires” such as classical Rome or China in which the political and economic structures for extracting tribute for the benefit of a ruling elite are more or less coterminous, with only a single central polity in

55 In Wallerstein’s view, slavery and serfdom where they have existed in recent centuries in some parts of the world, generally on the periphery, are not separate modes nor remnants or hold-overs of earlier societies. In spite of any superficial resembles, they are quite modern forms of the exploitation of labor operating within the single capitalist mode of production. Wallerstein makes this point most strongly and cogently through the case of the so-called “Second Serfdom” in Eastern Europe, where serfdom, paradoxically from the standpoint of concepts of “modernization” and unilinear progress both mainstream liberal and orthodox Marxist, was reestablished and expanded as a consequence of industrialization and urbanization in the European core of the emerging system which required greater imports of food and agricultural raw materials in what Marx calls “primitive accumulation” from the periphery. Immanuel Wallerstein, “The Rise and Future Demise of the World Capitalist System: Concepts for Comparative Analysis,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 16, no. 4 (1974): 400; *The Modern World-System*, I: 94-102.
place – even though the world-empires may have featured tremendous cultural diversity. These two latter forms dominated the world from roughly 8,000 B.C.E. to 1500 CE, when the Modern World-System emerged and has been in the process ever since of absorbing all the other mini-systems and world-empires into its octopus-like embraces. Though vague on what this might look like, but Wallerstein also postulates the coming into being at some point in the relatively near future, out of the contradictions of the world-economy’s “anti-systemic movements”, of a socialist World-System.56

As with the various neo-Marxist structuralist anthropologists and archaeologists whose acquaintance we have already made, World-Systems theorists consider their work to be a further development or refinement and renewal of Marxism, which had become ossified into a dogma and deployed as a quasi-state religion during the Stalinist period. Wallerstein and his fellow travelers, however, are as much influenced by the work of the 20th Century radical but non-Marxian economist Karl Polanyi -- at least with respect to his typology of societies -- as they are by Marx’s thinking on how societies work. Polanyi, who became the founder of the “substantivist” school in economic anthropology, distinguished and classified societies based not on their modes of production as did Marx – primitive communal, slave, Asiatic, feudal, capitalist, socialist and so on – but, in a tripartite typology using their prevailing forms of distribution and exchange. More egalitarian “primitive” human societies

56 Good summaries of these foundational concepts for World-Systems Theory (or “Analysis”) may be found in Immanuel Wallerstein, “World-Systems Analysis,” The Essential Wallerstein (New York: The New Press, 2000), 129-148 and Thomas R Shannon, An Introduction to the World System Perspective, 2nd ed. (Boulder, Col.: Westview, 1996). Wallerstein acknowledges that there have been other world-economies in the past besides the present one, although Wallerstein has relatively little to say about their character except that generally they have not been very stable and have typically broken down and turned instead into world-empires. Wallerstein suggests the possibility in the last-mentioned essay that other forms of systems beyond these three or four may yet be discovered. Wallerstein is of the opinion that the former Soviet Union, China and other examples of “really-existing socialism”, rather than representing examples of a genuinely alternative socialist mode of production, were actually part and parcel of the capitalistic Modern World-System.
practiced “reciprocity” through the sharing, gift-giving and possibly barter of some surplus products. More complex societies with states, until the advent of the modern age, have been predicated on the flow of surpluses to an authoritarian center through the collection of taxes and tribute to support ruling elites and to provide for some public redistribution. In these societies, trade, mostly with the exterior when it took place, was never a huge focus. Feudalism in Western Europe was a combination of forms of reciprocity and redistribution. Modern capitalistic societies, the third type, are where trade and commodity relations have come to predominate, through a radical process of severing people from the land that Polanyi calls “The Great Transformation”, in a putatively self-regulating or “free” market. (Polanyi shows how the latter characteristic has never really been the case, except mythologically, since society invariably has been forced to undertake measures to ameliorate and rein in the destructive, anti-social tendencies let loose by market relations.)

Wallerstein’s “mini-systems” are homologous with Polanyi’s first type, Wallerstein’s “world-empires” with his second type and the Modern World-System with the third. Overall, unlike Marx but certainly in common with Polanyi and indeed consciously so, Wallerstein takes exchange relations (or the lack thereof) rather than the means and relations of production as his analytical starting point. Thus, the contemporary World-System, the capitalist “World-Economy”, is characterized by him – and distinguished from all other systems – most

57 Karl Polanyi’s most important book in which he lays-out this typology and advances this argument about capitalism is The Great Transformation (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1944). For more on the substantivist school of economics, see also Polanyi’s edited Trade and Market in the Early Empires: Economies in History and Theory (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1957).

fundamentally by the prevalence of production for exchange on the market, especially in the world market, and not so centrally, although Wallerstein acknowledges its importance, by the exploitation of wage-labor. Even so, Wallerstein generally couches his theory in Marxist structuralist terminology including occasional usage of the term, “mode of production.”

How then did the Modern World-System become divided up spatially and established functionally in such a way involving a core, periphery and semi-periphery? In Wallerstein’s schema, small initial differences or “edges” between regions present already in the “Long Sixteenth Century” enlarged over time and were locked more or less into place as the core exploited the periphery through the processes of unequal exchange. This was backed up by its greater political and military clout. Here Wallerstein invokes the theoretical work of Arrighi Emmanuel, a Greek Marxist economist who argued forcefully in the early 1970s that, contrary to Ricardo’s widely-accepted notion of “comparative advantage” in which both parties are said to benefit from the unhindered workings of “free trade”, “unequal exchange” between nations and regions is the result of the ordinary behavior of international trade under capitalism. Given the relative immobility of labor compared to the high degree of mobility of capital among nations, differentials in wage levels become the main determining factor underlying the ongoing processes of underdevelopment. Just as Marx pulled aside the ideological veil that concealed how behind the apparent free exchange between wage worker and the owner of capital lay a particular form of exploitation, Arrighi tries to show how, independent of the direct plundering of the earlier colonial period and the harmful

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59 Wallerstein has often been challenged on his fidelity to the true tenets of Marxism and has tended to respond to his critics rather testily. For the sake of legitimacy, Wallerstein reproduces a quote from Marx that capitalism dates “from the creation in the sixteenth century of a world-embracing commerce and a world-embracing market.” (Capital, vol. 1, chapter 4) Wallerstein, The Modern World-System, vol. 1, 77.
monopolistic practices by First World corporations, behind the appearance of international trade lies the steady, ineluctable transfer of surplus from the peripheries to the core. This drain from the periphery is predicated on the low wages of the periphery versus the higher wages of the core for equivalent work. As long as these wage differences persist, one region gets steadily richer, the other poorer. Emmanuel asserts that his theory complements Marx’s understanding of the exploitation of labor in class relations inside of the industrializing nations by demonstrating a basic mechanism for the exploitation of “proletarian nations” by the nations of the developed world. In Emmanuel’s conceptualization taken up by Wallerstein, there are two basic, overlapping and interlocking kinds of exploitation in the Modern World-System: The capitalists exploit the workers within each particular nation-state and, concurrently, the developed world as a whole exploits the underdeveloped world.60

How do Wallersteinians define the boundaries of a World-System? What does one look for in the way of a World-System’s internal characteristics? In this day and age of “globalization,” the Modern World-System is indeed a “world system” in the ordinary sense that it blankets virtually the entire planet. Nonetheless, referring to these three entities named

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60 Arighi Emmanuel, Unequal Exchange: A Study of the Imperialism of Trade (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972). According to Emmanuel, unequal exchanges not only provides the economic foundation not only for the rise of a privileged “labor aristocracy” but successful battles for wage increases among workers in the developed world undermine the possibilities for international labor solidarity by making workers poorer in the developing countries.

This notion of different wage levels being the basis of underdevelopment was originally put forward by Raul Prebisch, a classically-trained Argentinian economist who was working for the UN, based on his earlier experiences with advising the Argentine government during the Great Depression, took issue with the prevailing economic “wisdom” on the benefits of Riccardo’s free-trade theory of “comparative advantage” and first put forward during the 1940s a conception of inherently unequal relations in terms of trade between an industrialized center and periphery producing agricultural and other raw materials within a single economic system. Britain first and now the U.S. was that center vis a vis a Latin American periphery. Workers in the center are better organized than those in the periphery and can push more successfully for higher wages and a better standard of living. Joseph L. Love, “Raul Prebisch and the Origins of the Doctrine of Unequal Exchange,” Latin American Research Review 15, No. 3 (1980): 375-405 and “The Origins of Dependency Analysis,” Journal of Latin American Studies 22, No. 1 (1990): 143-168.
above as three different forms of “World Systems” should not be taken necessarily to imply anything about their geographical scope. Denoting them as “World-Systems” means, more precisely, that each system is largely self-contained and operating under its own structural dynamics that primarily determine its developmental or evolutionary course. Thus, each is basically a “world” in and of itself. States, nations, tribes and other societal units analyzed by social scientists are to be approached and understood first and foremost, in Wallerstein’s view, as being sub-units of the given World-System as a whole.\(^{61}\) Trade, in terms of its kind and extent, is a chief defining and demarcating factor. According to Wallerstein, inside the boundaries of a World-System we can expect to find a dense network of trade (or redistribution) and one that is predominantly in “essential” bulk items. Trade “involves a significant transfer of surplus, given that a world-economy is based on a capitalist mode of production. It is trade that responds to the world-market of the world-economy.” Trade outside the system is not so extensive. It largely consists of what Wallerstein terms “preciosities” (i.e., luxury goods), a trade which Wallerstein believes is largely lacking in systemic effects. “This is not capitalist exchange and is in fact dispensable exchange.” (Wallerstein does acknowledge that the distinction between necessities and preciosities has culturally variable meanings.) More, trade within a capitalist world-economy can be seen to weaken the state structure of peripheral countries and the commercial bourgeoisie of the periphery. Trade with the outside of the system does not necessarily have that same effect.\(^{62}\)

As we have seen, the articulation-of-modes-of-production theorists have much of


importance to share concerning how one society can be dominated and incorporated by another and how this has happened in the making of the modern world. What about the World-Systems theorists? In general theoretical terms, Wallerstein and his colleague Terrence Hopkins lay out in a short 1987 monograph how they see the incorporation into the modern capitalist world-economy of zones formerly lying outside of it. Incorporation of new zones into the World-System is one of a set of responses undertaken by capitalists in the core – in a necessary “restructuring” of the world-economy – to longer-term economic downturns or contractions. (Wallerstein relates these downturns, which are far more serious and long-lasting than those of the ordinary business cycle and come in “spurts,” to the 50 or 60-year “waves” of economic expansion and contraction supposedly intrinsic to capitalism that were identified by the early 20th Century Russian economist, Nikolai Kondratiev and named after him.) “Incorporation has the effect of creating new production zones with low-cost labor, which then feeds simultaneously the ability of the world-economy to expand economically and the possibility of a renewed higher share of global surplus


64 The mechanism by which a long upturn is slowed down is very simple. At some point, some of what is produced cannot be sold as easily as before, and hence competition becomes more acute. This leads to price-cutting or other modes of activity which hurt sellers in the short run and exacerbate their mutual relations. It also leads to intensified search for monopolies over restricted zones which also exacerbates their mutual relations. At some point some producers must drop out of the market. We have thereby begun another round of relative concentration of productive activity. We have also begun another round of rising unemployment. In a sense, on a small scale, this is what occurs in each short-term "business cycle." What distinguishes the long-term cycles is that such simple price and monopoly adjustments are inadequate to resolve the dilemmas. Greater restructuring of the world-economy is required. This greater restructuring seems to have been regularly composed of a four-part package, made up of two balanced pairs: relocation of old productive activities, and initiation of new product cycles; political redistribution of surplus-value to some segments of the world working class, and expansion of the geographical loci included in the division of labor in the capitalist world-economy. This fourth process is what we are calling "incorporation." The four parts of the package fit together, and it would be a mistake to single out any one of them as the explanation of the ultimate upturn (or renewal of the expansion of the world-economy)." Terrence K. Hopkins and Immanuel Wallerstein, et al, "Incorporation into the World-Economy: How the World-System Expands," Review (Fernand Braudel Center) 10, no. 5/6 (1987): 768.
accumulation going to the high accumulators.” The question of just which outside zones get incorporated as peripheries and which do not get incorporated is determined by the economics of transport and communications from the European core standpoint and by the degree of military resistance made possible by the technologies available to the states or possessed by peoples on the outside of the System. There is little historical agency provided otherwise for those who are on the outside, unlike there is with the articulationist theories.

Now that we have described the Wallersteinian theoretical approach in general, let’s see what of value its practitioners may have to share with us specifically concerning the incorporation of the Americas and their inhabitants into the Modern World-System. Wallerstein, in the first volume of his masterwork, *The Modern World-System*, aside from a little bit here and there about the employment of indigenous populations as forced labor in Hispanic America on *encomiendas* and *haciendas* and in the silver-producing *mita* at Potosi, has relatively little to say about Native Americans in any sense. Moreover, he looks at those few instances purely from the perspective of the presumed “needs” and economic calculations of the European or neo-European capitalists, local chieftains being “coopted” at best into “the political system as intermediary agents of the Crown and the Spanish settlers.” In the second volume of *The Modern World-System*, Wallerstein takes up the history of capitalism launched in the first volume and tracks it from 1600 through 1750, a time period of overall economic contraction that was characterized by a struggle for political and economic hegemony within the core among Holland, Britain and France. It is here that Wallerstein introduces the reader, albeit in a highly cursory fashion, to the English-speaking North American colonies that would eventually make up the United States. The newly-founded tobacco-growing, export-oriented, forced-labor colonies of Virginia and Maryland
are fitted by him into his typology as parts of a new peripheral region of the capitalist world-economy that comes into being in the 17th Century and which Wallerstein calls the “extended Caribbean.” Following on the original periphery of the Modern World-System that existed in southern Europe and Hispanic America, Wallerstein sees this as a new periphery for the World-System encompassing a huge area from northeast Brazil to Maryland. In this region, forms of non-white coerced labor predominated and were used to produce sugar, tobacco and gold (from Brazil) for European markets, thus redistributing substantial amounts of surplus-value from the periphery to the northern European core.⁶⁵

The other colonies on the North American mainland, though formed at more or less the same time, are described by Wallerstein during their early decades as being outside the World-System altogether (“with the exception perhaps of New Amsterdam as a strategic and commercial outpost of the Dutch world network”). Despite being founded decades earlier, the New England colonies do not come into the World-System at all until the 1660s! (Prior to that time, Wallerstein apparently considers them to have been autochthonous “mini-systems,” although he nowhere says so explicitly.) Due to the imposition of the Navigation Acts, these colonies, along with the Middle Atlantic Restoration-era colonies, were incorporated at that time into the capitalist world-economy as a subordinate semi-periphery without ever previously having been a periphery. Still, aside from shipbuilding and acting as commercial middlemen in the Triangular Trade, these colonies “produced little of use to sell to England in the seventeenth century and were too small to be much of a market for

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⁶⁵ Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System II: Mercantilism and the Consolidation of the European World-Economy, 1600-1750* (New York: Academic Press, 1980), 163-175, 236-241. Wallerstein says the boundaries of the world-system remained largely unchanged from its founding in 1500 to 1750 but its internal labor, political and cultural configuration went through changes from 1600 to 1750 as a consequence of cycles of economic expansion and contraction. The locations of core, semi-periphery, and periphery changed somewhat as did how the surplus was appropriated. Ibid, 8-9.
Later, during the 18th Century, they were assigned, as it were, the role by the British colonial authorities of supplying the Crown with vital naval stores, which apparently qualify them, in his key structural indicator of “bulk commodities,” for being in a World-System. This little bit, covering perhaps a few pages in toto, is all that Wallerstein has to offer us concerning the economic structures and early history of the English-speaking North American colonies. French-speaking Canada is engaged with even less. Predictably, given his theoretical perspective on what really counts, Wallerstein puts the beaver hat fur trade into the luxury goods category, thus rendering New France part of an area external to the World-System. Moreover, in his scattered discussions of the the North American colonies – in whatever the context is, including the fur trade – Wallerstein fails to engage with the presence, much less the history-making capabilities, of the indigenous populations. However, as we shall see there are some other World-System theorists following in Wallerstein’s pioneering train who do so engage the indigenous and, in doing so, provide us with a couple of more useful working models for theorizing about the Algonquian-speaking Indians in New England and their developing relationships to the Modern World-System.

Wallerstein and his theoretical approach have been criticized on a number of grounds – although even those who have found some faults, or even a lot of things to disagree with, in Wallerstein’s theorizing have frequently praised him for the breadth of his vision and for

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how his work has stimulated a wider range of thinking and research. Many critics have averred that Wallerstein offers explanations for social and historical change too much from the top-down, or too exclusively from a position operating at a global level, rather than looking at the nature of societies as being determined by internal class relations and class struggle and operating in some kind of dialectic between the local and the more macro-levels. The Marxist anthropologist Eric Wolf, in his own magisterial work of global history and theorizing, *Europe and the People Without History*, praises Wallerstein (and another important World-System Theory pioneer, Andre Gunder Frank) for having “replaced the fruitless debates about modernization with a sophisticated and theoretically oriented account of how capitalism evolved and spread, an evolution and spread of intertwined and yet differentiated relationships.” At the same time, Wolf takes Wallerstein and Frank sternly to task for omitting from their consideration, with their almost exclusively top-down focus, the “range and variety” of populations in the periphery and “of their modes of existence before European expansion and the advent of capitalism, and of the manner in which these modes were penetrated, subordinated, destroyed, or absorbed, first by the growing market and

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subsequently by industrial capitalism.” Accordingly, Wolf takes the importance of the fur trade much more seriously than Wallerstein. He makes a whole chapter-length analysis of both its impacts on indigenous peoples – including the Abenaki, Hurons, Iroquois and others in the Northeast -- and how their involvement in the fur trade, although it was ultimately under the sway of the Europeans, contributed to the overall rise of global capitalism.

Another common complaint from those defending a more orthodox Marxist position (including Wolf) has been that Wallerstein is no genuine Marxist, in as much as more in keeping with classical and neo-classical economists, Wallerstein takes production for profit in the marketplace as the primary defining characteristic of capitalism rather than the wage-labor relationship. They can cite where Marx in the third volume of Das Kapital clearly spells out how the “innermost secret” of any economic form lies in its productive relations, in the “specific economic form, in which unpaid surplus-labour is pumped out of direct producers.” Or, Wallerstein’s critics can refer us to the equally pellucid passage in the introduction to the Grundrisse where Marx lays out his general methodological view on the relationship of exchange and distribution. Marx unquestionably sees production as primary -- and capitalism as a system characterized above all and most essentially not by the commodization of goods and circulation as “exchange-values” but by the exploitation of

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70 Eric Wolf, Europe and the People without History (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 21-23.

71 Ibid, 158-194.

72 Karl Marx, Capital Vol. III Part VI, Chapter 47 on “Genesis of Capitalist Ground-Rent.”

wage-laborers, capitalism’s primary set of its “direct producers.” Moreover, as Wolf points out, the capitalist system in Marx’s view, has had two successive historical stages: first, one characterized by merchant capital and then one ruled over by industrial capital, which was capitalism in and for itself. For Wallerstein, it’s all one and the same with the expansion of market relations. But which of the two stages we are dealing with may well have differing consequences for interactions between the global center and its peripheries, both at home and abroad. Hence those differences have to be kept in mind when pursuing our own analysis.

Certainly, Wallerstein’s approach must be modified with regards to “preciosities.” A number of the subsequent efforts made to apply -- and to reconfigure, if found necessary -- the World-Systems Analysis of Wallerstein to non-capitalist societies have been greatly influenced by a short essay written by anthropologist Jean Schneider which came out in Peasant Studies only a few years after the appearance of Wallerstein’s initial seminal work. While Schneider praises Wallerstein’s contributions toward a greater understanding of the “energy drainage” from peripheral areas into the core leading to and exacerbating “enormous gaps in wealth and power,” she argues that Wallerstein’s model is much too narrowly focused on modern European history and is not applicable, in its existing form, to pre-modern or pre-capitalist societies whether in Europe or in other parts of the world.

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74 Karl Marx, Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy (Rough Draft) (London: Penguin Books, 1973), 83-111. Wallerstein has generally ceded to his critics the Marx quotation-citing one-upmanship, arguing rather weakly in my opinion that his approach is closer to the “spirit” if not necessarily to the “letter” of Marx.


76 Jean Schneider, "Was There a Pre-Capitalist World-System?" Journal of Peasant Studies 6 (1977): 20-28. Along with the criticisms described here, Schneider also argues, albeit without providing many supporting details, that Wallerstein ignores environmental factors which helped to give shape to the emerging Modern World-System. Wolf, above, quotes approvingly from Schneider’s essay.
Specifically, Schneider argues that Wallerstein is mistaken when he makes such a sharp
differentiation between the production and circulation of staple commodities and that of so-
called “preciosities” in relations between core and periphery and from what happens between
a World-System as a whole and what is external to it. In addition, Wallerstein is wrong to
claim that, in the exchange of preciosities, one partner does not gain at the expense of the
other. As Schneider construes it, Wallerstein in his history of early modern European
development is being perverse when he so callously dismisses the importance of the quest
for luxury goods, especially spices and precious metals which lured the Portuguese and
others to the Orient. Schneider argues that this kind of trade had broader, deeper social and
economic effects than merely serving to feed the whims and appetites of Europe’s elite.
Moreover, Schneider argues that to take seriously these kinds of transfers of “preciosities”
and their concomitant social effects is critical for arriving at any valid understanding of pre-
capitalist or non-capitalist societies, where such transfers often loom very large in cultural
importance. Among other things, she says, luxury goods were employed as gifts to
accumulate power through relationships of clientism; they were used to mobilize energy and
labor, to diminish or mute class struggle and, as in the case of the Chinese imperial state, as
a key instrument of foreign policy. Rivalry over them also fueled some pre-modern wars.77

In demeaning preciosities, Wallerstein also misses out with regards to Africa. In his
outstanding (and partly-Marxian) study of the slave trade in West Central Africa worth

77 Schneider postulates the existence of a pre-capitalist World Economy where, predicated on the drain
of its bullion (a “preciosity” for Wallerstein), Europe was a periphery to a core consisting of the “older, better
established civilizations of the Levant and Asia,” which exported textiles to Europe. European development
into a core was promoted by efforts to manufacture their own cloth and stem the bleeding of bullion. She offers
this schema in place of Wallerstein’s unconvincing effort to explain European expansion as a quest for staples
in the form of food stuffs needed due to the Fourteenth Century “Crisis of Feudalism”. A pre-European World
Economy centered on the Orient has been described very ably by Janet L Abu-Lughod, Before European
looking at for useable ideas, Joseph C. Miller shows how imported prestige goods were the entry point in that region for merchant capitalist relations.\textsuperscript{78} African rulers and leaders of lineages used these goods to enhance their own status, such as by showing off imported articles of clothing, and they distributed some of these goods to build up their clientage bases in societies where control over labor and not of land was the key to economic and social power. Initially, they traded articles of relatively low-value or little labor cost such as elephant tusks and honeybee wax. But from there a slippery slope of dependency led more and more of them to sell human beings which, along with gold, was what was most desired by the European traders. Violent conflicts intensified in the hunt for marketable bodies. New leaders and polities also emerged as a consequence and as a result of the inability of older rulers to monopolize trade in prestige goods. Thus, it was trade in prestige goods and not bulk goods that led to the incorporation of the region into the Modern World-System – and the loss of millions of people in the trans-Atlantic slave trade. In the terminology of the French neo-Marxist structuralist anthropologists, this is how articulation of the two modes took place with new, alluring prestige goods playing, first, a role in sustaining “traditional” forms of social reproduction and then setting in motion processes that led to the destructive transformation of those societies. Their approach is superior in that regard to Wallerstein’s.

Fortunately, as better models for how we might apply a general World-Systems type approach to New England and what happened to the native populations here, there are individual studies by practitioners of the approach for three of the other regions of the North American continent: Thomas Hall’s on the Southwest, Wilma Dunaway’s on the

Appalachians Southeast, and Denys Delâge’s on the French Northeast. All three take seriously the role of native peoples in the making of the history in their respective regions, and they raise the question and offer answers about how the dependency of those native peoples to the Modern World-System came about. While Dunaway’s study is a pretty orthodox application of Wallerstein’s theoretical constructs to her chosen region, Hall and Delâge make use of those constructs but advance some theoretically interesting variations of their own with respect to their regions. Let’s look at each one of these authors in turn.

Wilma Dunaway upholds Wallerstein’s distinction between trade in “preciosities” and “basic” commodities. She also adheres closely to Wallerstein’s basic chronology of incorporation. The Appalachian Southeast region only began to be incorporated, albeit unevenly, into the Modern World-System as a part of Wallerstein’s extended Caribbean periphery after the 1660s. Prior to that time, notwithstanding incursions by Spanish conquistadors and the introduction of diseases that devastated native populations and some trade in foreign manufactured goods such as axes, beads and mirrors, the Appalachian Southeast remained an area external to the System. It was when English settlers established colonies along the coast, in the context of rivalries with the Spanish and French, that the Cherokee and other indigenous peoples of the interior began to be drawn into the System and were made dependent on its commodities via the trade in deerskins, ginseng, and human slaves hunted and trapped by the Indians. As she figures them, deerskins were not luxury items (as we might regard them today and which would disqualify them in a Wallersteinian

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analysis) but were of enormous value at that time in Europe, where fur-bearing animals were scarce, providing leather not only for gloves and other elite fashions but used to "fuel" the leathering-making industry for more quotidian uses, as well as for making military uniforms and paraphernalia for the many European wars. Into the middle 18th Century, well after major exports in rice and naval stores had become established in South Carolina and Georgia, the export of deerskins remained an significant profitable enterprise for the colonies. In return for deerskins, white traders bought sugar, rum and tobacco from sources elsewhere in the same extended Caribbean periphery, some of which could then be used for obtaining additional deerskins in traffic with the Indians. Indians – the Cherokee are Dunaway’s principal example -- became increasingly dependent on these trade goods and on textiles, iron tools and other manufactured items from the World-System’s European core.\(^80\)

Through these processes of incorporation, the original communal and mixed subsistence mode of production of the Cherokee was eliminated in rather short order. So, too, was the former "ultra-democratic" system of tribal governance in favor of a more centralized polity that was more amenable to British control and to the needs of articulation with the World-System. Many Cherokee were reduced to a condition of debt-peonage. Inter-

\(^80\)For more on the key importance Dunaway assigns to the colonial trade in deerskins between the settlers and the indigenous in shaping the articulation of this region to the world-economy, see Dunaway, "The Southern Fur Trade and the Incorporation of Southern Appalachia into the World-Economy, 1690-1763," Review (Fernand Braudel Center) 17, no. 2 (1994): 215-242. This essay was reshaped into the second chapter of her book. Here Dunaway contrasts the deerskin trade in this region with the fur-trade in the northern colonies. "As world-marketing of African slaves expanded, Appalachian deerskins became much more essential to the core than Indian laborers. In contrast to their northern counterparts, the Cherokees did not produce luxury furs; rather the southern Indians provided to the world-market the raw commodities needed to fuel the European leather manufacturing industry. By the 15\(^\text{th}\) century, there was a shortage of fur-bearing animals in Europe; thus America deerskins were cheaper than other hides to use in the production of shoes, gloves, jackets, artisan aprons, book covers, box and trunk coverings, and a wide variety of products in demand for daily use. In addition, deerskins were in demand for production of military uniforms and equipment used by troops in European wars. Deerskins were important enough to core manufacturing that Great Britain put them on the list of 'enumerated' items her colonies only to ship them to British ports. Consequently, deerskins were the most stable economic product of the southern colonies before the Revolutionary War." (pp. 226-7)
tribal warfare also intensified with the introduction of firearms and due to the machinations of the colonial rivals, English, Spanish and French. Gender roles were transformed, males working less in agriculture because of the siren call of hunting and warfare and women were forced to pick up the slack – with women having the additional arduous labor of preparing the greater volumes of hides for sale rather than for use. “Through articulation with extensive commodity chains, Southern Appalachia was inexorably hooked into the orbit of the world-economy is such a way that it virtually [could] no longer escape.” Basic native skills were lost; there could be no return to the former condition of self-sufficiency. Within little more than a half-century following the onset of the trade, the Cherokee, Dunaway argues, could no longer make their lives independently of the English.\textsuperscript{81} World-Systems Analysis, Dunaway concludes, has multiple advantages over other approaches that equate capitalism with participation in exchange (neo-classical economics) or as characterized by the transformation of labor into a commodity and bought and sold for wages, above all within factories (orthodox Marxist economics). The latter’s “narrow framing” of what capitalism is leaves unexplained, she says, a variety of other forms of labor that have come into existence under capitalism, particularly in the rural, agrarian setting. Moreover, Dunaway argues that those who have tried to address the “transition question” heretofore have largely

\textsuperscript{81}Dunaway is quoting Immanuel Wallerstein, The Modern World-System III: The Second Era of Great Expansion of the Capitalist World-Economy, 1730s-1840s (New York: Academic Press, 1989), 130. In the later sections of her book, Dunaway demonstrates convincingly, by drawing upon extensive statistical and archival materials, that the poverty and proverbial economic and cultural “backwardness” of Southern Appalachia – think “hillbillies” – were the inverse result of its progressive incorporation as a “fringe” of the periphery within the overall capitalist division of labor of the emerging Modern World-system. Surpluses flowed heavily out of the region straight into the hands of absentee owners and through the processes of unequal change because of the lower wages (if any, as was not the case for slaves) that prevailed in this region.
left Native Americans out of the picture. Wilma Dunaway’s work on Southern Appalachia provides a useful model, at least on spatial grounds, for theorizing about New England.

Thomas D. Hall’s 1989 monograph, *Social Change in the Southwest, 1350-1880*, which is based on his Ph.D. dissertation, traces the evolution of the Southwest from a periphery of the core civilizations of Mesoamerica to becoming what he calls a “periphery of a periphery” – first a periphery of New Spain and then of an independent Mexico on to the take-over of this region from Mexico, first through means of trade relationships and then by military means, by the United States. At each step along the way, Hall illuminates how intertwined global, regional and local relationships accompanied that overall incorporation.

“At least three levels of social change shaped the incorporation of the Southwest into the European world-system. First the evolving world-economy brought internal changes to the states that had imperial control of the Southwest. Second, the actions of these states produced changes at the indigenous non-state societies as they were incorporated. Third, the interaction between and among non-state societies shaped the incorporation process.”

Hall contributes an important refinement to Wallerstein’s basic typology of core, periphery and semi-periphery, one that is especially relevant to the conceptualizing of relations with indigenous peoples. As Hall sees it, there is not merely a single peripheral type. Rather, there are three forms of peripheries that exist in a continuum with increasing degrees of interactivity between the core and the periphery in the processes of incorporation into the World-System: First, there is an initial “contact periphery” in which mutual effects

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are weak. This is followed, in terms of greater market articulation and the mutual impact of the core and the periphery on each other, by a “marginal periphery” (or “zone of refuge”). This kind of periphery may remain stagnant economically but still be important, nonetheless, to the core for political reasons. Finally, comes a “full-blown periphery” showing the classic “development of underdevelopment.” This typology, Hall believes, provides for a greater degree of explanatory power than Wallerstein’s either/or distinction of which outlying societies are being, or have been, incorporated into the World-System. For instance, the fur trade which had such profound effects on many Native American societies can now be addressed with more seriousness and depth. Hall also makes the very useful point – one worth keeping in mind – that social changes depend on the interaction of both exogenous factors (the “mode of exchange”) and endogenous factors (the “mode of production”).

With these amendments to World-Systems Theory, Hall outlines the history of the Southwestern region briefly as follows: The Spanish entry into the Southwest starting in the 1530s, while of relatively little significance to the Spanish themselves after they were unable to locate and plunder a golden Eldorado, had major impacts on the native populations. The introduction of guns and horses intensified conflicts among native groups such as the Apache and Comanche, whom the Spanish and later Mexicans played off against each other. During the first several centuries, the region moved slowly and incrementally from a marginal to a more peripheral relationship. Then conquest of the region from Mexico by the U.S. -- a strong capitalist state rather than a weak peripheral one -- brought a qualitative leap in

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integration and domination. All the far-flung territories came now under state control even with power over areas that were marginally incorporated before. Nomadic peoples’ subsistence way of life was eliminated and they were forced onto reservations – although, once the region was secured by the U.S., some indigenous groups had somewhat more of a breathing space to adapt to the changed circumstances because the main interest of whites was newly-acquired California with the Southwest only as a land-bridge. Through the Spanish, Mexican and U.S. eras, incorporation increased but remained episodic and sporadic, never becoming what Hall considers to be a full-blown or dependent periphery even through the later decades of the 19th Century. This schema, too, has potential explanatory power for what happened with peripheralization in our region of concern in colonial New England.

Denys Delâge brings into his narrative the Dutch colonialists along the Hudson and, to some lesser extent, the English colonists in New England. But Delâge focuses his World-System study on the linked history of the French and the Iroquoian-speaking peoples of the Northeast, above all, the Hurons — and the means through which they were incorporated into the Modern World-System. Drawing extensively from evidence in Bruce Trigger’s classic ethnohistory on the Hurons, Delâge starts by describing the conditions that led to the emergence of capitalism in Europe and the relative strengths and weaknesses of the Dutch, English, and French. Then he turns his attention to the lives and political economies of the native people before the large-scale disruptions that came with the arrival of the Europeans. Generosity was central to the Huron society – it being, along with courage shown in war, the principle way to acquire social prestige – and rituals and feasts were important forms of redistribution. Exchange was an extension of gift-giving, although within it lay latent the seeds of inequality because of differential access by those involved in trade to goods from
The Hurons from their homeland on Georgian Bay were connected to a vast network of trails that brought them wampum and many other valued items from as far away as the Atlantic seaboard and the Gulf of Mexico. Well before the Hurons encountered any Europeans in the flesh, they had received European goods through the pre-existing trade routes. Using many of these same interconnections, the Hurons for a time—before they were felled by diseases brought by the whites and attacks by the Iroquois—were able to play an economically prominent middleman role in the French fur trade. Located in a favorable climatic zone, they did so by stepping up their production of maize in order to exchange it for furs with other Indians to the west and the north, which could then be traded with the French. Delâge does not quibble about whether beaver pelts and other furs counted as “preciosities” or “bulk commodities.” Through the fur trade, the Hurons and other Indians became a periphery, first economically and then politically and culturally of the World-System, and they thereby entered into relationships of increasing dependency from which they could not extricate themselves. Huron-French trading usually took the ceremonial form of traditional Huron gift-giving made to cement alliances, which the French went along with. But, for the French, the principle interest was in furs as a profitable commodity. The French had “decoded” the Indian system of exchange and had leveraged it for their own benefit. They turned the Indians’s practice of time-based reciprocity into book-credit. For their part, the Hurons were shocked at the greediness and cupidity they saw displayed by the traders.

Following Wallerstein, Delâge describes the relationship of the French and Indians in the fur trade as one of “unequal exchange.” The relationship was definitely unfair due to the lack of transparency. Indians generally were clueless about how much their furs were worth in Europe. Because of the lack of transparency involved with distant exchanges, Delâge thinks there may have been “unequal exchange” among Indian tribes. However, in the sense of Arghiri Emmanuel, I would suggest these were not yet unequal exchanges based on differences in labor productivity—i.e., on the number of hours of labor that went into commensurable products—which requires a system based on money as the universal equivalent.
Incorporation into the Modern World-System induced profound changes in native societies. Indians quickly abandoned their pots, stone tools and weapons in favor of superior European-made metal ones obtained through the fur trade – which, in turn, required more production of furs, the only thing Indians had that the Europeans wanted (except their souls, in the case of missionaries). A more commercial mentality took root and spread. As with the Cherokee, women’s workloads in processing the pelts and producing more food increased. Externally, as the mounting pressures on the beaver and other fur-bearing populations led to their rapid depletion, destructive “beaver wars” were fought to secure new sources of supply. (Wars previously were generally not fought so much over economic issues.) Now war chiefs acquired greater power over civil chiefs. Those Indians like the Mohawks, ones who were able to acquire firearms from whites, aggressively seized the advantage over their rivals in the fur trade. Early on among the Hurons, as a conscious effort to try to mitigate the effects of the fur trade with Europeans in undermining the society’s egalitarian social balance, chiefs who were not directly involved in the trade themselves were put in charge of its management. Trade was opened up to all tribal members, instead of just those discoverers of a new trade route or connection. Even so, chiefs, who had previously operated by persuasion and consensus-building among their constituents, acquired greater wealth and social standing from the gifts that were offered to them by prospective traders before they set out. Again, an effort was made to compensate for these changes bringing about inequities – through a step-up in ceremonial redistributive activities. Still, the Huron society did not survive in any significant way resembling what it had been like before.  

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86 Denys Delâge, *Bitter Feast: Amerindians and Europeans in Northeastern North America, 1600-64* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1993), 52-57, 78-162. Specifically, the Hurons were destroyed by disease epidemics brought by the white traders and missionaries and thru repeated assaults by the gun-toting Iroquois who wanted
Delâge has little to say about the Algonquian-speaking Indians of New England. However, his observations about what happened with the Hurons, Mohawks and others are quite pertinent in suggesting possible similar patterns to look for elsewhere where indigenous peoples were incorporated specifically through the fur trade into the Modern World-System. As we shall see, the fur trade was one of the principle means through which this incorporation took place in New England, leading to the loss of land and livelihoods.

Besides the three above regional studies for North America, a number of anthropologists and archaeologists have applied some variation of Wallerstein’s World-Systems analysis to pre-Columbian Mesoamerica. Notably, all of them have made modifications to the original Eurocentric model under the influence of Jean Schneider’s essay validating the role of preciosities. In their work, archaeologists Richard Blanton and Gary Feinman paint a vivid picture of peripheral areas providing the luxury goods such as chocolate desired by the elites of core states like Teotihuacan and the Mayan city-states — which the urban elites used to enhance their grandeur in public rituals and to reward their followers and to mobilize their labor. Obtaining these preciosities proved to have been a major factor leading to war among states and to their rise and fall, a commonplace regional occurrence. In short, prestige goods, Feinman believes, had “systemic-defining properties,” and a number of other scholars of the peoples and history of this region have followed suit with their own particular analyses of a Mesoamerican World-System defined in this kind of

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way. To take another interesting example, anthropologists R. A. Pailes and Joseph Whitecotton proposed the prior existence of a non-capitalist World Economy – not a World Empire because it was never dominated for long by a single tribute-drawing imperial state – centered in central Mexico which drew in goods from over a vast region, including portions of the American Southwest. In a 1992 essay published by the Fernand Braudel Center’s *Review*, Feinman along with fellow Mesoamerican prehistorian Linda Nicholas and Southwestern archaeologist Stedman Upham undertook a survey of the current state of scholarly applications of World-System Theory, already a considerable number, to social relations in the “macroregion” in which they work. They admit finding substantial benefits with the Wallersteinian theoretical approach over diffusionist and developmentalist approaches for examining economic interactions in the “grand scale.” Nevertheless, they recommend modifications of the sort proposed by Schneider in order to take into fuller

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89 Richard A. Pailes and Joseph W. Whitecotton (1979), “The Greater Southwest and Mesoamerican ‘World’ System: An Exploratory Model of Frontier Relationship” in *The Frontier: Comparative Studies*, vol. 2, eds. W. W. Savage and S. I. Thompson, 105-121 (Norman: University of Nebraska Press, 1979). This essay was preceded by a conference paper along the same lines given in 1975, barely a year after Wallerstein’s initial volume had come out. See also Joseph W. Whitecotton and Richard A. Pailes, “New World Precolumbian World-Systems” in *Ripples in the Chichimec Sea: New Considerations of Southwestern-Mesoamerican Interactions*, eds. Frances J. Mathien and Randall H. McGuire (Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press, 1986), 183-204 in which they reply to the criticism that they do not take trade in preciosities seriously enough. They argue, contrary to other interpretations, that relations of Mesoamerican states with the cultures of the Southwest involved more substantial trade than merely the exchange of preciosities among the respective elites, that it was a peripheral area being exploited through the transfer of raw materials – which might be perishable and not show up much if at all in the archaeological record – to the Mesoamerican core.
account the impact of trade and tribute in “preciosities” in these non-capitalist societies.90

As with the social reproduction model we looked at above, World-Systems Theory has also been applied by some scholars to the mound-building Mississippian societies of mid-continent North America – which may have stood, some scholars have postulated, in some kind of peripheral relationship via sea or land routes to a distant Mesoamerican core.91

Regardless of that relationship or not, the question of how core/periphery relations were

90 Steadman Upham, Gary M. Feinman, Linda M. Nicholas, "New Perspectives on the Southwest and Highland Mesoamerica: A Macregional Approach," *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 15, no. 3 (1992): 427-451. Upham, Feinman and Nicholas find from their own studies simpler regional connections existing among Southwestern societies, which were smaller and more dispersed than those in Mesoamerica. However, “specific settlement clusters” before the arrival of the Spanish were linked in “large regional alliances” through which numerous articles of trade circulated, a large part of this trade also being in preciosities binding together local elites. The authors believe that Pailes and Whitecotton apply an “overly mechanistic” version of World-Systems Theory with “an undue attention to the spatial aspects of economic interaction at the expense of system structure and the specific nature of the goods exchanged.” For them, what is more important are the “organizational parameters and ‘content’ of the system and . . . explaining the full range of sociopolitical and economic variation within and between our culture areas.” As power centers within the prehistoric world economy waxed and waned, the points of contact between the Southwest and Mesoamerica changed over time and that, for instance, must be taken into account, as must asynchronous cultural developments. Some of the most interesting discussions around core-periphery relations and the possible applicability of World-Systems Theory in the region influenced by the Mesoamerican core have taken place among archaeologists concerning a large pueblo now called “Casas Grande” (or Paquimé) in Mexico’s northwestern Chihuahua state. The site seems to have been, during its 13th and 14th Century heyday, a main cultural intermediary and economic conduit for Mesoamerican prestige goods such as shells, copper items, and macaws feathers passing into the Anasazi communities like Chaco Canyon to obtain turquoise and perhaps more perishable items from northern people for re-export to the south. See Charles C. Di Peso, *Casas Grandes: A Fallen Trading Center of the Gran Chichimeca* (Dragoon, AR: Amerind Foundation, 1974); Di Peso, “The Northern Sector of the Mesoamerican World-system” in *Forgotten Places and Things: Archaeological Perspectives on American History*, ed. E. A. Ward (Albuquerque: Center for Anthropological Studies, 1983), 11-22. An excellent overview of the controversies that have swirled around the nature of Casas Grande and Di Peso’s hypothesis, including the role of those scholars who have applied World-Systems Theory, may be found in Michael E. Whalen and Paul E. Minnis, *Casas Grandes and its Hinterland: Prehistoric Regional Organization in Northwest Mexico* (Tucson, University of Arizona Press, 2001), especially chapters 1 and 2 (pp. 3-58). The extent and degree of exogenous Mesoamerican influences on Southwestern indigenous societies versus internal or more near-by factors for change is an ongoing matter of debate. See Randall H. McGuire, "The Mesoamerican Connection in the Southwest," *Kiva*, 46, no. ½ (1980): 3-38; “The Greater Southwest as a Periphery of Mesoamerica” in *Centre and Periphery: Comparative Studies in Archaeology*, ed. Timothy C. Champion London, Unwin Hyman: 1989), 40-66.

91 Archaeological evidence showing some cultural traits in common is suggestive but far from definitive. Useful on this issue, although not engaging directly with the World-Systems or core/periphery discourse, is Charles R. Cobb, Jeffrey Maymon, Randall H. McGuire, “Feathered, Horned, and Antlered Serpents: Mesoamerican Connections with the Southwest and Southeast” in *Great Towns and Regional Polities in the American Southwest and Southeast*, ed. J. E. Neitzel (Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 1999), 165-181.
deployed within the Mississippian cultural zone itself has been investigated and theorized by Marxist anthropologist Peter Peregrine. Peregrine, moving in a direction we like, uses social reproduction theory to supplement World-Systems Theory. Peregrine believes that the “extraordinary political power” of chiefs in these societies (which were organized as chiefdoms rather than states) such as in the large settlement at Cahokia, the core of the “Mississippian System” strategically located near where the Missouri joins the Mississippi, derived from their control over the manufacture and trade of prestige goods. These prestige goods were the means of social reproduction required for ceremonial change-of-life occasions such as initiations and marriages in these kinship-based societies and the basis for rivalries among persons and lineages for political legitimacy. From core geographical centers such as Cahokia, regional trade could be controlled and agricultural production intensified by elites. Peregrine postulates that disruptions of trade might have underlain the decline of these societies, causing a legitimacy crisis, the abandonment of Cahokia during the 1300s, and the collapse of the core-periphery Mississippian World-System.92

How did the Mississippian World-System, if that is indeed what it was, influence and shape the lives of indigenous peoples in other more distant parts of North America? Was

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there some kind of identifiable parallel in this geographical region to the (probable) relationship of the Southwestern cultures interpreted by a number of scholars as occupying a periphery with respect to the Mesoamerican core state societies, the discussions and debates about which we have touched on above? The application of World-Systems Theory to North America in this regard is far less well-developed outside of the Southwest. However, in this case, in a very stimulating (and controversial) article, New England-based archaeologists Dena F. Dincauze and Robert J. Hasenstab hypothesize that the cultural uniqueness of the Iroquois may be explicable in terms of a relationship that found them early-on living on the edge of the Mississippian World-System. Unlike the Algonquian-speaking peoples living around them in the Northeast, the Iroquois were semi-sedentary to sedentary farmers organized in extended matrilineal families, lineages and clans, they were highly warlike, and their religion contained “ritual elements that correspond with the religions of sedentary farmers in the continental interior as well as others than echo those of their hunter-gatherer neighbors.” The proto-Iroquois were near the Ohio Valley sites of the Mississippian system’s periphery that acted as a funnel for resources down river towards the center at Cahokia. Though these Iroquoians were not within the periphery itself, Dincauze and Hasenstab suggest that they may have acquired maize and the aforementioned cultural traits because of their proximity to the system (as did a number of other societies in the Upper Midwest who were along rivers draining into the Mississippi basin). The authors postulate that, as the Cahokian center weakened around 1300 due to climatic changes or other causes and, as the

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93 Dena F. Dincauze and Robert J. Hasenstab, “Explaining the Iroquois: Tribalization on Prehistoric Periphery” In *Centre and Periphery: Comparative Studies in Archaeology*, ed., Timothy C. Champion (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 67-87. Dincauze and Hasenstab hedge somewhat at the end of their essay by stating that they believe the formation of the Iroquois was “partly”, albeit “significantly,” influenced by these sorts of external causes stemming from contacts with the Mississippian system.
Ohio River outliers of the system consequently strengthened and expanded, the proto-
Iroquois were pressured to provide goods for the system and then became peripheralized:

Capitulation or involvement of this sort would probably have entailed intensification of maize
horticulture, in order to provide a surplus for export, or goods to exchange with more marginal groups
for hides or minerals. Alternatively, if the men were engaged in resource extraction activities at a new
level of intensity, maize horticulture might have substituted for foodstuffs no longer provided by males
to the home communities. Nucleation of settlements, horticultural intensification, and matriclans might
be expected to result from such an involvement in external exchange. The society might have seen
itself benefitting from calendrical ceremonialism and some stabilization of food supplies as a
consequence of involvement with the Mississippian system at its margins, even in the absence of
effective force to ensure that involvement.  

On the other hand, in another set of scenarios, the Iroquois may have resisted such
demands or tried to shift the burden of tribute onto other neighboring peoples, hence
developing their propensity for warlikeness and for creating broader political alliances.
Thus, they became “tribalized”. (In an influential 1975 book, anthropologist Morton Fried
argued that tribes were not some kind of “primitive” entity that arose autochthonously but
were newly created as a result of contacts with and pressures from state societies.) When
the European arrived on the scene some centuries later and the Five Nations of the Iroquois
entered into trading relations with them – and became very accomplished at it – they were
already experienced from this earlier history in “peripheral-middleman” sorts of relations
with a distant core system. As Dincauze and Hasenstab are the first to admit, this is all very
conjectural – i.e., what the Iroquois at that time might possibly have done. Any good, hard
archaeological evidence is sorely lacking or it is subject to other, perhaps more cogent forms
of explanation. Even so, Dincauze’s and Hasenstab’s notion of tribalization is certainly

94 Ibid, 76-77.

intriguing, and it ought to be taken up with an open mind by others and investigated further.

Offering up broader geographical generalizations about the “making” of Native American societies on the North America continent, Stephen Kowaleski argues that there were no fewer than three large pre-Columbian, multi-society World-Systems present. These correspond roughly to the “cultural areas” that have been identified by anthropologists – one on the Northwest Coast, one in the Southwest, and one in the Southeast. Each possessed its own characteristics. The Northwest Coast was a weakly-bounded “macroregional system held together by the flows of people. People moved about in patterned, institutional ways of intermarriage, feasting and warfare. The system had a core that typically needed labor (for fish and sea mammal processing) and a periphery that typically supplied labor.” In the Southwest system, which included the pueblo peoples and those less-sedentary peoples around them, labor recruitment, by contrast, was not as significant; the key, system-defining interaction was “the regulation of membership in and boundaries between aggregated and dispersed populations.” The Southeast system included the Mississippian area along with Plains, Florida and northern peoples like the Iroquois who were influenced by the Mississippian culture. Kowaleski sees the Southeast “from Late Woodland times on as having core-periphery relations in which the internal organizations of relatively more centralized and relatively decentralized regional societies were partly shaped through mutual, often hostile, interaction.” He claims that “the archaeological reality shows a Southeast world in Late Woodland and Mississippian times in which core-region experimentation with new, centralized organizations and new modes of production and warfare was matched by equally new (not older, Early or Middle Woodland) forms of organization of a developing periphery.” Kowaleski sees military competition among chieftains as having been the
defining characteristic of this particular system. Finally, all three areas, he says, show evidence of core-periphery-differentiation but without core-periphery domination. “These three cases were more weakly integrated than post-classic Mesoamerica, imperial China or early modern Europe, yet for long periods of time and across thousands of kilometers they maintained the properties of systems.” We will argue in this dissertation that the Northeast region, ignored by Kowaleski, also constituted a World-System with probable core-periphery traits, if not necessarily core-periphery domination, well before the arrival of the Europeans.

Looking elsewhere in the world, a number of studies by specialists in early European history and archaeology have invoked World-Systems forms of analysis – studies which may have some relevance to us here – in terms of the relationships that evolved between the commercialized Roman state and the Celtic and Germanic tribal peoples living on the Empire’s northern periphery. In these studies, wine, textiles, and exotic luxury goods introduced by Roman merchants in exchange for slaves, amber, furs and other forest products are seen to have performed a determining role in societal development, as they acquired a foothold among local elites and became more and more essential in the social reproduction processes of these societies. To get their hands on these goods, production was intensified internally beyond the needs of subsistence, and there was a step-up in wars against other tribal groupings. One of the effects of incorporation into the Roman-centered system was

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96 Stephen Kowaleski, “Corn, Clout, Copper, Core-Periphery, Culture Area in Pre-Columbian World-Systems,” ed., Peter Peregrine and Gary Feinman (Madison WI: Prehistory Press, 1996), 27-37. Kowaleski is critical of the prestige goods model we have elaborated above. Prestige goods may be important in sub-systems but prestige goods “are impotent as cause of the origins and reproduction of total regional and macroregional structure.” He argues that in these three regions, “the more prosaic institutions of labor procurement, boundary maintenance, and warfare were the root structures of macroregional integration.” Key in each case was the movement of people. Otherwise, however, Kowaleski is supportive of the World Systems approach of Christopher Chase-Dunn and Thomas D. Hall in which there are four different defining types of world system interactions. For more on the Chase-Dunn/Hall model, see below.
a tendency towards greater political centralization as certain well-positioned members of the elite or, at times, individuals coming from outside the upper ranks of the societies, were able to build up larger bodies of warriors and other clients to back them. Patrilineal forms of descent gained against matrilineal forms in company with ascendant warrior values. Among the Germans in later Roman times, communally-owned lands were turned into commodities and were owned by individuals laying the basis for the appearance of a class-society with a landed aristocracy as the ruling class. Peter Wells, one of these scholars, opines that the well-studied history of the Roman Empire in temperate Europe provides “an analytical framework that can be profitably applied to other situations of imperial relations with indigenous peoples” with the caveat that the “myriad local interactions between representatives of the empire and indigenous groups” need to be thoroughly examined.

Beyond Wallerstein and Towards a Theoretical Synthesis

The Latin Americanist, Steve J. Stern, is one of Wallerstein’s severest critics. Stern has made an careful, heavily-footnoted and in parts withering examination of the applicability or not to colonial Latin America of the materials from volumes one and two

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98Ibid, 96. In the cases he is looking at, Wells argues that the dependency of the legionaries and other Romans in the frontier zones on local sources of provisions gave the peripheral peoples a certain amount of leverage in their relationships with the representatives of the core.
of *The Modern World-System*. To test Wallerstein’s argument, Stern chooses the cases of silver and sugar, arguably the most important American export commodities in the 16th and 17th centuries. In the case of silver production, he shows convincingly that the labor systems used were not necessarily what might have been expected given Wallerstein’s assumptions about the nature of the periphery and the geographical division of labor. This is not to argue, Stern hastens to say, for the irrelevance of the World-System. After all, Europe did establish an enormous silver production sector in America on terms that provided the World-System a colonial surplus, and this accomplishment rightfully constitutes an important chapter in the history of European capitalism. To slight the World-System, or the impact of capitalism on Spanish America, is to ignore the obvious. But Stern’s point is that the World-System constituted only one of several great "motor forces" that shaped patterns of labor and economy in the periphery. It did not always constitute the decisive causal force even in sectors of high priority. In the case of silver production, any adequate explanation of the shifting labor system, or the division of the economic pie, would have to grant independent causal weight not only to the World-System and its presumptive “needs” but also to the laborers' resistance and assertion of "rights," and to the rise in America of regional and inter-regional markets and elites whose "logic" and interests did not always coincide with those of the World-System. We have, then, three great motors: the World-System, popular strategies of resistance and survival within the periphery, and the mercantile and elite interests joined to an American "center of gravity." Observe, in addition, that Western Europe's own internal divisions and competitions affected the political

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coherence and will of the "world-system," and that, within Spanish America, colonial elites and authorities pursued multiple goals and interests that sometimes divided them against themselves despite their shared general interest in silver production. Stern acknowledges that sugar production and its intimate relationship with slavery, taken in hindsight, might make for a better analytical fit with Wallerstein’s template of core, semi-periphery and periphery. But here again he points out a more complicated evolution of early labor forms and strategies in which the eventual predominance of African slaves over Europeans and Indians cannot be explained apart from local conditions – “among them, geography, disease, power, and conflict that molded the options, constraints, and opportunities faced by the ‘world-system’… In the interplay between these local conditions of production and the interests and opportunities derived from the international market lies a more powerful explanation of the rise of socioeconomic structures overwhelmingly dependent on African slavery.” In conclusion, Stern calls for a return to “the academic drawing board” where he thinks a “theoretically valid conceptualization” might be devised with elements coming from both World-Systems Theory and the neo-Marxist structuralists. In other words, he proposes a more useable synthesis of these two theoretical approaches.

On the whole, Wallerstein has been leery of finding common ground with the articulation-of-modes-of-production theorists who were already actively theorizing about the relationship of capitalism with non-capitalist societies before Wallerstein’s grand model burst onto the intellectual scene in the 1970s. In an essay about “precapitalist” societies that were prior to or outside the World-System, co-authored with another scholar of West Africa,
K. P. Moseley, Wallerstein acknowledges his awareness of their work. He even praises the neo-Marxist structuralist anthropologists for their “reworking” of the modes of production concept “to give added weight” to the relations of production as against technology and other forces of production: “This is particularly relevant to the analysis of precapitalist systems, where the relations of production tend to be extraeconomic in form.” Moseley and Wallerstein critically survey some of the “welter of new types and new interpretations” of modes of production that have come out of this school and its return to Marx’s work on pre-capitalist societies revealed with the publication of the *Grundrisse* in combination with new empirical research. They suggest that a combination of the ecological framework provided by those like the “new archaeologists” with Marxist explanations for these kinds of societies should “provide a powerful general theory.” Their main objection to the Marxist structuralists is that, while excelling at description and classification, they do not yet have a good explanation for how societal change takes place. Is it the result of internal conflict occurring at the level of the relations of production or does it come from the development of the forces of production? Their own World-Systems approach, they maintain, is superior because “although sharing many of the critical perspectives of the other two schools as well as their holism, and their basically materialist bias, places far greater emphasis on the historical specificity of theorizing and on a dialectical methodology.” That having been said, Wallerstein firmly rejects the concept of articulated modes of production.

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100K. P. Moseley and Immanuel Wallerstein, "Precapitalist Social Structures," *Annual Review of Sociology* 4 (1978): 259-290. At one point in *The Modern World-System*, volume one, Wallerstein does engage — obliquely anyhow — with the theory of articulated modes. He does so in the context of defending Andre Gunder Frank from the criticism of Ernesto Laclau (described in our Chapter One) for his insistence that colonial Latin America had a totally capitalist rather than a semi-feudal economy and society. Wallerstein emphasizes that, as he sees it, “the ‘relations of production’ that define a system are the ‘relations of production’ of the whole system and the system at this point in time is the European [capitalist] world-economy.” Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*, 1: 126-127.
production occurring within a single economic formation -- which does offer a dialectical explanation for how change might occur. And, as we have seen, he spurns the social reproduction approach from Meillassoux that offers another explanation for change. This is all very unfortunate.

Equally unfortunately, Wallerstein has responded rather tepidly to some of the World-Systems analysis being conducted by the next generation of World-System scholars, including whether or not the analysis can be applied usefully, as some would like to do, to non-capitalist societies. Regardless, an ambitious intellectual campaign to rework World-Systems Theory to render it more broadly applicable and to address some of the criticisms made of Wallerstein’s original approach has been launched by the partnership of sociologists Christopher Chase-Dunn and Thomas Hall (the latter of whom we have already met as a young scholar above). Chase-Dunn and Hall have taken the basic World-Systems theoretical approach, one that had been developed by Immanuel Wallerstein primarily in order to elucidate the rise of modern capitalism out of particular European conditions leading to its spread from there out to much of the rest of the world, and modified the approach in order to apply it – or, so they hope – to all manner of other societies at all levels of complexity, big and small, early and late. They call their new approach the “comparative world-systems perspective,” an approach which they hope to buttress by identifying generalities through

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101 “One of the major reasons I remain skeptical is that I wonder if one can take a set of concepts developed for the analysis of one historical system, consider the concepts one by one, redefine each in some more general form (of which consequently the form in the modern world-system becomes but one variant), and then recombine them for the analysis of Cahokia or Mesopotamia. This presumes a certain independence of the concepts from each other which, it seems to me, is doubtful. To be specific, the concept “core/periphery’ is not analytically dissociable from the concept “class conflict’ or the concept “interstate system’ or the concept “endless accumulation of capital.” That is to say, the set of concepts developed for a fruitful analysis of the modern world-system is a set. Dissociated, redefined (in the sense of giving different values to each), and reassembled, they may have the coherence of an awkwardly patched pottery bowl. Wallerstein, “Hold the Tiller Firm,” in The Essential Wallerstein, 153.
empirical research on particular societies – as, in fact, they have done, including on an indigenous society.

In Chase-Dunn’s and Hall’s redefinition, world-systems are “important networks of interaction that impinge upon a local society and condition social reproduction and social change. . . . Interactions must be two-way and regularized to be systemic.” Hall and Chase-Dunn believe that all sedentary societies – and possibly even nomadic societies – are located within world-systems and are subject to the same broad governing principles which they hope to elucidate. For Chase-Dunn and Hall, these systemic interactions are constituted by a total of four different but interrelated “networks of exchange.” One of these is the bulk goods network whose presence, as we have seen, for Wallerstein is always the \textit{sine qua non} of a society’s involvement, or not, in a World-System. But to it they add three more system-defining networks in their new and improved version of World-Systems Theory: a “political-military net,” a “prestige goods net” (the importance of which Wallerstein dismissed) and an “information net” (that last-mentioned being broadly defined as energy, materials, social institutions, and ideas). These “interaction networks,” a term borrowed from the archaeologist Joseph Caldwell, generally have different and distinct spatial dimensions. The latter two networks are generally more extensive in their spatial reach and extent, while the former two networks are generally smaller and are nested spatially inside of the latter. The prestige good network is in the vanguard of the system’s expansion, with it and the political-military network expanding concurrently. All four of these networks together, Chase-Dunn and Hall assert, have to be studied in order for us to be able to grasp fully a society’s character and its internal laws of motion. In addition, with respect to kin-based societies, they add the “intermarriage network” that takes place within or outside the society as a further
systemic factor that needs to be taken into analytical account. A sharp or steep “fall-off” of effects over space is used by them to locate roughly the world-system boundaries.

In yet another modification made by Chase-Dunn and Hall to the original Wallersteinian approach, the existence of center-periphery relations of differentiation or hierarchy in world-systems (Chase-Dunn and Hall use small letters) is not to be assumed. Rather, the nature and degree of inter-societal relationships has to be demonstrated empirically for each particular case, and it must be studied at each of the four aforementioned levels of interaction. And they distinguish between two types of core/periphery relations:

The first we call core/periphery differentiation, in which societies at different levels of complexity and population density are in interaction with each other within the same world-system as we defined it earlier. The second we call core/periphery hierarchy, in which political economic, or ideological domination exists among different societies with the same world-system. This includes political domination and unequal exchange as well as extraction of resources through raiding, taxation, and tribute. We are also interested in cultural definitions of superiority/inferiority and how these may interact with more objective forms of exploitation and domination.

Chase-Dunn and Hall also maintain that larger, hierarchical polities, including chiefdoms, invariably go through cycles of rise and fall in terms of the centralization of political and military power and that “all systems, including even very small and egalitarian ones, exhibit cyclical expansions and contractions in the spatial extent and intensity of exchange networks” which they term, “pulsations.”

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102 For a more comprehensive description of their theoretical approach to World-Systems Theory and how they see it as differentiated from Wallerstein’s approach, see Christopher K. Chase-Dunn and Thomas D. Hall, *Rise and Demise: Comparing World-Systems* (Boulder, Colo: Westview Press, 1997), esp. 11-56.

103 Ibid, 4.


To make sense of “system logics,” Chase-Dunn and Hall find useful a combination of Polanyi’s “modes of integration” (which, as we have seen, Wallerstein also brings into his own World-Systems analysis) with Marx’s modes of production, in ways articulated by two other prominent neo-Marxist World-System theorists, Samir Amin and Eric Wolf. “The Polanyi/ Marxist approach to transformation argues that different logics may be present in the same system, but that in most systems a single logic dominates and reshapes other institutions into forms more or less congruent with it.” From Samir Amin and Eric Wolf, they take over the typology of four different modes of production – kinship-based, tributary, capitalist and socialist – although they prefer to use the term “mode of accumulation” which they define as “the deep structural logic of production, distribution, exchange, and accumulation”). They prefer using the term “mode of accumulation” rather than “mode of production” because they say they do not want to restrict their focus “solely to the analysis of production. Instead, we want to focus on the institutional mechanisms by which labor is mobilized and social reproduction is accomplished.” In contradistinction from Wallerstein’s insistence on there being one mode per system – and in company with the French “articulationists” -- they see hybrid modes co-existing, if contradictorily, such as Marx’s “Germanic mode of production” which Marx dissected in his work constituted by an amalgam of Roman state and German tribal elements.

If we assume that each world-system has one and only one mode of production, as Wallerstein does,


how do world-systems change? It is more useful to conceptualize modes of production in terms of logical boundaries rather than spatial boundaries. This allows for the articulation between different modes, and for the competition between modes with a single-economic system. It may be the case that most spatially designated socio-economic systems have one mode of production which is dominant, but if we eliminate the possibility of the co-existence of modes, we cannot discuss situations in which modes of production may be vying with each other for domination, and thus our ability to analyze transformation is accordingly limited.\(^{108}\)

Chase-Dunn and Hall also find useful the notion developed by structuralist Marxists about “articulation” and “contradiction” between different modes within the same system. In general, they advocate, a more flexible and nuanced sense of how world-systems are bounded and organized internally with different “nestings,” levels and centers of hierarchy, etc.\(^{109}\) What then is the overall relationship between World-Systems (or world-systems with small letters) and modes of accumulation? They do not offer us a grand, unifying Theory. Chase-Dunn and Hall, who describe themselves more as “splitters” rather than as “lumpers”, favor working upwards from small systems to bigger systems and constructs. Core-periphery relations must be analyzed on a case-by-case basis, they say, and, while there may be differentiation at different levels of social complexity and population density, that does not necessarily entail relations of hierarchy or domination between societies. Nor are non-capitalist core-periphery relations necessarily organized around who produces what, with the periphery assigned the role of producing raw materials and the core producing manufactured products, as the original Wallersteinian model had said. System boundaries, exogenous versus endogenous factors and impacts, the types and shapes of the semi-peripheries – all

\(^{108}\)Christopher Chase-Dunn and Thomas D. Hall, *Rise and Demise: Comparing World-Systems* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997), 16-17. See also, *ibid*, 32. Wallerstein is quite explicit on this point. For instance, see vol. one, p. 77 where he states that all pre-existing modes are taken over by the modern world-system and thus become capitalist.

\(^{109}\)Ibid, 17.
such matters and issues, they say, ought to be approached empirically and comparatively.\textsuperscript{110}

Building upon Hall’s earlier separate theorizing with regards to the American Southwest, Chase-Dunn and Hall postulate a more graduated set of forms in a continuum from weak to strong for the incorporation of new territories where a large system engulfs a small one, firmly rejecting Wallerstein’s either/or approach. They point, by way of a salient example, to the spread of horses and horse culture among Native Americans on the Great Plains, which happened in most case before, even well before, Indians ever encountered people of European descent in the flesh or traded directly with the people from whom those horses were coming. If one were to dogmatically follow Wallerstein’s approach, the changes wrought by the introduction of the horse would be deemed beyond the boundaries of the Modern World-System and thus downplayed or disregarded in theory as being of little, if any, functional consequence for the System. As Chase-Dunn and Hall point out, even if the “backwash effects” for the World System were small, the changes for the Indians by a “weak” type of incorporation were profound and thus they need to be taken seriously.\textsuperscript{111}

How then are world-systems and their components transformed over time? Are there any general tendencies or overall laws of motion besides the one about “pulsations”? Chase-

\textsuperscript{110}Ibid, 27-40.

\textsuperscript{111}Ibid, 59-77. Chase-Dunn and Hall cite the work of Dunaway on the Cherokees and the fur trade. They apparently see her as some kind of theoretical fellow traveler. They also approvingly cite the analysis of Eric Wolf from \textit{Europe and the People without History}: “Without using the terminology of incorporation, Eric Wolf calls attention to the massive changes that the expansion of the European world-economy has had on all types of incorporated societies. When early theorists assumed that these were either exact replicas or even only close analogues of earlier forms of society, they were led to massive mistakes in what it was they sought to explain by social evolution. To assume that either fur-trading North American Indians or Central Asian pastoralists were representatives of forms of societies in the distant past conflated the results of decades, or even millennia, of interaction with pristine conditions. The effects of slight incorporation are not limited to the modern world-system. Significant social changes occurred with low levels of incorporation in precapitalist world-systems as well. To exclude the milder forms of incorporation from examination would block from study some of the most interesting types of social change caused by the expansion of earlier world-systems. Ibid, 67-68.
Dunn and Hall refer to their reworking of World-Systems Theory as an “iteration model” in which “the variables both cause and are caused by the main processes.” “The features or patterned processes that all world-systems share – technological change, demographic expansion, spatial integration, and the rise and fall of polities – are importantly modified by the nature of the logic of social production and accumulation that is predominant in each system.” Drawing in part on Leon Trotsky’s “Law of Uneven and Combined Development” with its contention that “backward” societies can sometimes leap-frog over developmental stages – Trotsky had foremost in mind the Russian Bolshevik Revolution that overthrew the feudal czarist regime to build a socialist commonwealth without going through a capitalist stage of development – Chase-Dunn and Hall argue that semi-peripheries are often “seed-beds of change” where new organizational and institutional arrangements come into being that then have broader influence through conquest by newly emergent elites. Here examples would be borderland “marcher” states and the capitalistic city-states of ancient Phoenicia and of Western Europe in the Middle Ages that were adjacent to or embedded within larger imperial structures. Europe itself was a periphery, then a semi-periphery in the pre-modern world-system before emerging as a dominant core *vis-à-vis* other peripheralized parts of the world, including the former Asiatic cores. Future hegemonic core states, like the Dutch, Britain, and the United States, began their own trajectories as semi-peripheries.  

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114 Chase-Dunn and Hall, *Rise and Demise*, 99-117 (109). Their “iteration model”, they say, is a “marriage” of the approaches developed by anthropologists Marvin Harris (cultural materialism), Mark Cohen (prehistoric food crisis) and Robert Carneiro (population growth and geographical or social circumscription) to explicate the underlying forces of societal change and development. Ibid, 101-104.
Chase-Dunn and Hall also bring into their theoretical ambit, as at least one partial explanation for societal change, Carneiro’s important, widely-applied theory of “circumscription.” This is a situation where population pressures under social or ecological conditions in locations where there is no or little possibility for people to move elsewhere may lead to the development of “new hierarchies or larger polities emerge to regulate the use of resources, and/or new technologies of production develop that allow larger numbers of people to live within a given area.”

Carneiro applied “circumscription” specifically to environmental circumstances where rivers and narrow ribbons of arable land run through deserts or mountains inimical to the expansion of settlement and agriculture, where the victors in warfare were able to impose themselves as a tributary ruling elite and from which chiefdoms and subsequently early states arose through territorial aggregation. Or, this process might occur where there is a high concentration of natural resources to be contested. Or, where populations of other adjacent peoples prevent freedom of movement elsewhere.

As we shall see, “circumscription” is a useful concept for understanding the rise of more “complex,” if not yet state societies, among indigenous peoples in parts of New England.

One might wonder at this point of our exploration of social theory: How does this “circumscription” hypothesis of Carneiro about the rise of hierarchies out of egalitarian societies, with warfare as the catalyst, fit, if it does at all, with the hypothesis that we have explored earlier concerning prestige goods and their use, and sometimes monopolization, by

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116 Robert L. Carneiro, “A Theory of the Origin of the State,” *Science* 169, no. 3948 (1970): 733-8. Carneiro uses the example of peoples stuck in the narrow mountain valleys of coastal Peru from whence a series of states originated culminating with the Incas. He contrasts their situation with that of the peoples of Amazonia, where there was an abundance of available agricultural land. The latter, by contrast, remained at the autonomous village stage of social organization.
elites in forms of social reproduction? Chase-Dunn and Hall do not speak to any relationship. But I would suggest that it is quite possible that those who were able to exert control over prestige goods, whether at the point of their production or their importation, might well have been able to use them to reward and to build up retinues of loyal warriors to carry out their bidding, apart from other civic bodies. Mao was quite right: Power over others, wherever it may come from at first, surely must be backed up with the use of violence, or by its threat.

As promised, Chase-Dunn and Hall illustrate how their theorizing might shake out in the real world in a number of comparative case-studies of specific societies at different levels of social complexity. With regards to Native Americans, in one case study turned into a small book they take up the “very small world-system” of the Wintu and neighboring small-scale, egalitarian sedentary foraging Native American “tribelets” in northern California. This kinship-based world-system and other societies of this type or mode have a “system logic” distinct from a world-system based on tributary or capitalist relations. The bulk-goods network among the Wintu was very small-scale, though persons might be “interacting intensively” in various other ways. Wintu households produced most of their own material needs and shared their products with others in the local community. Nevertheless, Chase-Dunn and Hall argue that Wallerstein’s notion of an autarchic “mini-system” must be discarded because the Wintu had numerous connections with other groups. In a shot directed at the heart of the Wallersteinian orthodoxy, they assert: “Especially for

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this case, it would be folly to define world-system boundaries exclusively in terms of a bulk-goods division of labor.” The Wintu were involved in extensive long-distance prestige-goods networks, although these were used primarily to facilitate “local complementary exchange networks” rather than being used to produce and reproduce internal hierarchies. “This provided each community with a safety net against temporary shortages and facilitated trading and kinship alliances that linked local communities.”

Trade and diplomacy were managed by village headmen – the Wintu had no Chiefs or Big Men – but acting on behalf of the group and not as stand-alone individuals. These headmen, through their polygynous kinship relations, generally had somewhat greater access to resources, but in their society no one lineage was held to be superior to any other lineage. Tendencies towards internal hierarchy were mitigated or diluted by the practices of personal wealth destruction upon a person’s death and of headmen marrying sisters, if a wife died. Moreover, populations had not increased to the extent that circumscription effects could come into play. Externally, as shown by marital exchanges, the Wintu – who were much more takers than givers of wives – had some core-peripheral differentiation with their neighbors. But these relations were only mildly hierarchical, if at all. Nor do these relations seem to have involved unequal exchange. Ritualized warfare played a role in “maintaining and changing collective territorial boundaries.” Boundaries were also set by major linguistic differences among neighboring peoples, although boundaries could be transgressed and changed through intermarriage and acculturation. It was prestige goods, in the form of European-made glass beads which arrived in the late 18th Century through down-the-line trade by means of the long-standing

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indigenous clam shell disk network connecting coastal peoples with the interior, that first put the Wintu into contact with capitalism and the Modern World-System. Ultimately, their small world-system was not so much incorporated by the Modern World-System as it was destroyed by direct contact with it and its greedy, capitalistic values and behavior patterns through the genocidal massacres of the Wintu and other indigenous peoples in California set off by the Gold Rush of 1849. We might expect to see such small world-systems elsewhere.

Besides the small-scale Wintu world-system, Chase-Dunn and Hall have also postulated the pre-contact existence of a large-scale world-system that was centered on the Powhatan chiefdom of the Chesapeake Bay and James and York Rivers. The Powhatan polity consisted of a paramount chief and some thirty local “werowances” or chiefs. The local chiefs collected maize and other food stuffs from the primary producers – who were largely self-sufficient on a family level -- from as far away as the Eastern Shore and districts on the Rappahannock and Potomac Rivers and fed them as tribute into the center of the system. These commodities and luxury items were stored in mortuary temples and “used by chiefs and paramounts to reward subalterns and for trade.” Of even greater reach and extent than this “Bulk Goods Network” was the “Prestige Goods Network.” This brought in shells and shell beads (“roanoke”) from the Atlantic, copper from west of the Blue Ridge and the Great Lakes region and antimony (used for body paint) and pearls from the northward – through down-the-line trade and perhaps, although less often, via some long-distance trading missions. Two additional overlapping and intersecting networks constituting this, as with

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other world-systems conceptualized by Hall and Chase-Dunn, were its “Political/Military Networks” – the paramount Powhatan chiefdom had been built up through wars of conquest in the late 15th Century not long before European arrival – and its “Information Network.”

Chase-Dunn and Hall estimate the former network as having approximately a 300-mile radius at its height. Not only do they see both core-periphery differentiation and core-periphery hierarchy as having existed within this system but, according to Chase-Dunn and Hall, there may also have been a semi-periphery situated along the Fall Zone between the Tidewater and the Piedmont from which the Powhatans and their eponymous leader had previously emerged out of a collection of tribes to take over the core ruling position.

Taking in a broader view, situated west of this Chesapeake World-System, as postulated by Hall and Chase-Dunn (and others), was the large aforementioned Mississippian World-System with its hierarchical, mound-building societies -- although by the time of contact in many places it was a culture heavily in decline. As shown in mortuary remains, the Adena forerunner of this system had once exerted core-periphery influences on the more egalitarian peoples of the Chesapeake. However, in the two millennia prior to European contact that followed that early period of interactivity, Hall and Chase-Dunn see only relatively limited connections and influences upon the emergence of the chiefdoms around the Chesapeake coming from either the Hopewell or Mississippian chiefly societies. They believe that, although the Mississippian religion spread widely into the Southeast from

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120 On the north shore of the Potomac lay another paramount chiefdom, the Conoy. Its emergence as a large-scale polity earlier in the fifteen century had preceded that of the Powhatan, but it was in decline by the arrival of the English settlers in 1607. Hall and Chase-Dunn see this as a case in point of their aforementioned rise-and-fall cyclical structural properties that they believe are inherent in world-systems. For an historical materialist non-world systems type of analysis of the societies just to north of the Powhatan, see Stephen R Potter, Commoners, Tribute, and Chiefs: The Development of Algonquian Culture in the Potomac Valley (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993).
Midwestern urban ceremonial centers like Cahokia and Moundville, it “did not extend into the Chesapeake region nor into New England or the northern Iroquoian territories.” Maize agriculture arrived from the outside, possibly introduced, along with new pottery styles, by waves of escapees fleeing from the Mississippian sacred chiefs and their exploitation. This immigration hypothesis is supported by how the appearance of maize in the Chesapeake seems to correlate at first – and quite unexpectedly from the standpoint of the conventional wisdom concerning how an enlarged surplus from agriculture can lead to greater hierarchy in societies where it appears -- with a more egalitarian, not less egalitarian, social structure.

Despite whatever contacts there may have been with the Mississippian culture, Chase-Dunn and Hall conclude that the Chesapeake peoples, as would appear from the archaeological evidence, developed the social complexity and social ranking witnessed and documented by the likes of John Smith in a more or less autonomous fashion. The area was not a periphery of any other world-system – that is, until the European showed up with their guns, germs and steel to make it so with respect to their own. Chiefdoms in this region had come into being as a result of mounting internal population pressures and in response to threats from the expansionist Iroquois on their northern frontier. Chase-Dunn and Hall also hypothesize that the rise of powerful chiefs (werowances) was predicated on military alliances in which the extraction of tribute was the key societal nexus and not arising out of the control and manipulation of prestige goods, either having been produced locally within the societies or obtainable through long-distance trade. Nevertheless, it would seem to me to have been the case that once elites came into power – through whatever means -- in this world-system ongoing social reproduction would necessitate a supply of prestige goods.

Finally, if any further endorsement is needed of the potential value that lies in taking
a World-System approach, one might turn to Pekka Hämäläinen’s 2009 Bancroft Prize-winning study of *The Comanche Empire*. Admittedly, Hämäläinen advocates a flexible, selective and at times even metaphorical approach to the use of this sort of theory in “doing” history. But, on the whole, this is what we propose to do here, although with some greater intention to test out the specific claims that are made for the theories by their proponents.

All these various studies, while not definitive, provide us with some inspiration and possible historical parallels. Now, armed with all this neo-Marxist theory – and examples of how the theory has been applied to various instances of non-Western, non-capitalist peoples in their relations with capitalism -- we are ready to move on to a survey of the indigenous societies in New England as they existed on their own terms, before the highly disruptive arrival of a trickle of European fishermen followed by a flood of traders, invaders and settlers. These theoretical approaches that we have reviewed are not necessarily incompatible. Not at all. At the very least, each has a different realm or scope of potential usefulness. The “articulation-of-modes-of-production” approach is apt for explaining how interactions and change over time worked on a more local level. A World-Systems Theory approach is good for showing how interactions and change over time worked more regionally and globally and for illuminating spatial relations. We have also discerned some partial areas of convergence between these two approaches and the theory of social reproduction with regards to the role of prestige goods. As we have seen, New England – for whatever reason unknown to this author – is still pretty much a “virginal” area where these theories are

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concerned.\textsuperscript{122} And, as we shall find, the application of these theories to the historical events, in a rigorous but non-doctrinaire fashion, can be richly procreative. Yes, history can be done without conscious theory. (If one’s theory is not self-conscious, it is most likely unconscious positivism.) But the skillful use of theory can lead to fresh questions – and unexpected answers. Also, testing out the claims of different theoretical approaches against the empirical reality can lead in dialectical fashion to improved theory (which then can be applied again and so on) and not only might give us better insights about what happened in the past but also better working handholds on what’s happening now and in striving for a better future.

\textsuperscript{122} The one major exception is Carolyn Merchant, \textit{Ecological Revolutions: Nature, Gender, and Science in New England} (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989). Merchant uses Meillassoux’s \textit{Maidens, Meal and Money} on social reproduction and creatively develops her own neo-Marxist structuralist theories about the transitions in political economy that took place in New England with, first, the “Colonial Ecological Revolution” and then the “Capitalist Ecological Revolution.”
Chapter Two: The Northeastern Indigenous World-System

As we have seen at the close of Chapter One, critical sociologists and post-Wallersteinian world-systems theorists Christopher Chase-Dunn and Thomas Hall have proposed the existence of a late pre-contact indigenous world-system centered on the polity of the Powhatans on the Chesapeake Bay. Another world-systems theorist, Stephen Kowalewski, has grandly postulated the existence of pre-contact world-systems among native populations in the Northwest, Southwest and Southeast. So what about the Northeast region prior to European contact and to its own consequent subsumption, piece by piece, into the overall capitalist Modern World-System? Did the people in that region ever constitute or take part in a pre-modern “interaction sphere” of their own that Chase-Dunn and Hall, if not necessarily Immanuel Wallerstein with his “mini-systems,” would understand as a world-system – along with all which that structural identification might entail? Would it match their criteria? Chase-Dunn and Hall lay out four broad defining characteristics of any world-system in general diminishing order of geographical scope and extent. The following networks have to be present and creating structural effects: (1) an Information Network; (2) a Political-Military Network; (3) a Prestige Goods Network; and (4) a Bulk Commodities Network. Outside of a world-system, there is seen a steep drop-off in such structural effects. There also need to be core-peripheries types of relationships within the world-system – although, differing from Wallerstein, not necessarily involving domination or unequal

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exchange when it comes to pre-modern world-systems. I would argue that these criteria do
indeed apply to a pre-contact indigenous World-System in the Northeast, encompassing what
became the New England colonies and states and adjoining areas of New York and Lower
Canada. Let’s take each of Chase-Dunn and Hall’s criteria one by one and see what the
historical and archaeological evidence might be able to tell us in way of support for our
hypothesis.

The Information Network

Let’s begin with a legend. The Mayflower early-comer and Pilgrim leader Edward
Winslow, based on his conversations with the native inhabitants, reported that the
Indians “affirm confidently that it [New England] is an island” divided off from the mainland
by an inlet of the sea, which the Indians called “Mohegan” and the English and the Dutch
referred to as “Hudson’s River.”

For confirmation of this their opinion is thus much; though Virginia be not above an hundred leagues
from us, yet they never heard of Powhatan, or knew that any English were planted in his country, save
only by us and Tisquantum, who went thither in an English ship; and therefore it is more probable,
because the water is not passable for them, who are very adventurous in their boats.²

This putative insular character of New England, and the Canadian Maritime
Peninsula with which it is contiguous, is very nearly true in the literal geographical sense.
A mere eight miles of land separates the Hudson from 30-mile long Lake George to the
north which empties northward through the two-mile LaChute River, an important Native
American portage spot, and thence into the 110-mile long Lake Champlain which, in turn,

² “Gov. Winslow’s Account of the Natives of New England, Annexed to His Narratives of the
empties northward through the Richelieu River into the St. Lawrence and the North Atlantic. The rest all around is salt water, including southern Quebec and the Gaspé Peninsula, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, down the east coast back to the outlet of the south-flowing Hudson, which is a tidal estuary for 150 miles to the present-day location of Troy, New York. On the northwest side, for several thousand years at the end of the Ice Ages with the ground still rebounding from the massive weight of the ice as it melted, there existed a broad intruding arm of the ocean, known to geologists today as the “Champlain Sea.” (Freshwater Lake Champlain is the remainder.) At that same time, another large body of water geologists call “Lake Albany” occupied the middle and upper Hudson Valley. So what would eventually become New England and contiguous areas of New York and Canada was truly a huge island separated from the North American mainland. And this may well still have been the case when the first Paleo-Indian hunters looking for caribou or other big game or perhaps lured by the abundant avian and fur-bearing resources of the numerous lakes and rivers swollen with glacial meltwaters had to boat their way across the Hudson River, Lake Albany or the Champlain Sea in order to reach it.\(^3\) As a result, we might offer the conjecture that this experience, probably fraught with danger, formed their earliest sense of their new homes in the Northeast— a sense transmitted to their descendants, thus accounting for the seemingly perplexing early 17th-century observation the Indians made to Winslow.\(^4\)

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The great Laurentide Ice Sheet that covered the Northeast in places a mile thick did not begin to melt back, allowing vegetation and animals to return, until about 13,000 years ago. As shown by archaeological excavations and radiocarbon dating of a major Paleo-Indian encampment at the Bull Brook Site in Ipswich, Massachusetts, humans were present in the southern parts of what became New England at least by 11,000 years ago. Paleo-Indian hunters moved widely in their search for suitable game, although periodically regrouping at places like Bull Brook with members of other small hunting bands like themselves, as modern hunting and gathering people do, in order to exchange information about the location of game and other data about the environment vital to their survival as well as communing and socializing. One important piece of information they would have needed to share would be the locations of the lithic materials used to make fluted projectile points, scrapers, and other items in their tool kits. Newcomers to the region no doubt would have brought along with them tools from their ancestral homelands. An analysis of the artifacts recovered from Bull Brook and several other New England Paleo-Indian long-term occupation sites indicates, although not conclusively, that lithic materials like Maine jasper and Nova Scotia chalcedony came subsequently from locations within the region and not from without. Such lithic materials were quite possibly accessed when smaller hunting bands headed out seasonally and were brought back by them to the southern base camps.5

Evidently, in the subsequent Archaic and Woodland periods, there were some

connections, informational or otherwise, between the Northeastern “island” and cultural centers in the Midwest. While we do not see any mound-building, Adena-like burial practices and grave goods, indicating possible influences in ritual life, are found in some locales of our region especially in the St. Lawrence River drainage during the Early Woodland period, either arriving through population movements or, more likely, by means of cultural diffusion. Moreover, the presence of some Hopewell-style platform pipes and pottery designs at a few sites in New England indicates some likely trading connections with that Ohio-based complex culture as well, although less-strongly so than formerly was the case with the Adena. However, Hopewell-style burials are absent from the archaeological record in the Northeast. The archaeologist Dean Snow concludes that the trading connections with the Hopewell mound-builders, largely passing into the region by way of what is now New York state, were never extensive and that the region remained marginal on the whole to these major developments in cultural complexity taking place in the Midwest. By the Middle Woodland period, exotic goods from the Hopewell become rare at New England archaeological sites. On the other hand, starting around one thousand years before the present, Maine archaeologist Bruce Bourque sees strong evidence for stepped-up exchange relations, particularly of attractive, high quality lithics, inside and throughout the Northeast.

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region itself. Some of these materials, and no doubt others made of materials that have not survived, flowed on rivers from north to south, facilitated, Bourque speculates, by the invention of the birchbark canoe. Indeed at the Goddard Site in coastal Maine, a Norse silver penny dating from the 11th Century has been found, indicating, along with a Dorset Eskimo artifact that turned up at the same site, a far-flung chain of exchange relations extending farther northward to Newfoundland or Labrador and maybe beyond them.8

What was it that happened around that time to orient Northeastern trade relations differently? Warlike agricultural Iroquoian-speaking peoples began moving northward from the Central Appalachians sometime before 900 CE into and through New York and occupying a vast region as far as Lake Huron on the west and the St. Lawrence River Valley on the east (where they were encountered by the French explorer, Jacques Cartier, in the 1530s at the present-day sites of Québec and Montréal). They expanded during the medieval warming period that enabled maize to be grown more readily at more northerly locations. As the Iroquoians expanded, with their matrilineal and matrilocal mode of production that muted conflicts among themselves and was geared instead to conflicts externally, they were able to displace or absorb preexisting, thinly-populated hunting and gathering societies.9 We can speculate that their arrival on the scene may well have disrupted and interdicted whatever informational, trading and other connections that existed previously between the Northeastern Algonquian-speaking Indians and the complex Algonquian-speaking chiefdoms


located at Cahokia and other Mississippian centers of the Midwest (societies that, in any case, were going heavily into decline by the 1300s). Thus, around this time, a sort of western “wall” or boundary in a societal sense seems to have come into being for an emerging Northeastern World-System – one that compelled its inhabitants to act in a more inward, if not fully insular, direction. Later, during the 17th Century, after the arrival of white fur traders and capitalist relations of exchange, the easternmost group in the Iroquois Confederation, the Mohawks (so-called by the Algonquian-speakers for whom the term was an epithet meaning “man-eaters”), were often at war with their Mahican neighbors in the Hudson River Valley pushing them back across the river and, at times, with Indians as far east as the Abenaki in Maine, attempting to interdict and steal the New England fur trade and reduce them to the status of tributaries. That people on this immense “island” and those on the adjacent American “mainland” were somewhat in touch during the Late Woodland through trade and cultural diffusion is shown not least by the arrival from the southwestward of maize kernels and information about its cultivation, along with seasonal rituals associated with it like the Green Corn Festival. The natural “boundaries” outlined above clearly did not rigidly demarcate cultural or societal boundaries: Algonquian-speaking Mahicans had villages situated west of the Hudson River until pushed east of it by Mohawk attacks in the 1620s in a struggle over access to the Dutch fur trading post at Fort Orange (Albany). Pequots and Narragansetts in southern New England readily plied the ocean waters of Long Island Sound in their large dugout log canoes making the peoples of eastern Long Island their tributaries for wampum and other products. So it would be inadvisable to make too much out of the Indian remarks about the “island” handed down by Winslow. Interactions spheres or world-systems do not come to an abrupt halt at a specific location in space. Nevertheless,
what Chase-Dunn and Hall refer to as a “fall-off” in network effects, in this instance with regards to the informational network, would seem to have been present if one had gone beyond the Mohawks on the west or farther “down east” than the lands of the Abenaki and Micmacs. One possible indicator of this informational “fall-off,” even within our putative Northeastern World-System, is that Samuel de Champlain’s Abenaki contacts spoke to him in 1605 of the Massachuset adjacent to themselves and the other peoples to the south as an undifferentiated body of people whom they referred to as the “Almouchiquois.”

The “Relations” of those prodigious 17th-century data-collectors and amateur ethnologists, the black-robed Jesuit missionaries who labored hard to save Indian souls in New France, can be used to give a rough indication of the spatial dimensions traversed by information circulating in the greater Northeast, at least around the time of more substantial contacts between Indians and whites. Indian informants at Quebec in 1627 were able to name 38 or 40 tribes, “besides those which are unknown.” Unfortunately, the Good Father who reported this information in a letter sent to France does not give us the names for any of these tribes. Another priest writing in 1640 listed tribes by name adjacent to the St. Lawrence. The Algonquian-speakers he named on the south side of the river were the Souricois (Micmacs), the Pentagouetch (Penobscots), the Etechemins (Tarrantines), the Abenaki, and the Nahiganiouetch (Mahicans). The rest of those tribes he named, where identifiable, were Iroquoian-speakers in present-day New York state and stretching beyond it to the westward. There was no mention of any of the important, complex southern coastal

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10 See Frederick Webb Hodge, *Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1907), 89. This, however, may be more a reflection of the warfare taking place then between the Abenaki and an alliance of peoples to the south.

New England groups such as the Pequots or Narragansetts. For the names of Indian tribes, the priest credited a map that he had seen that had been made by the Hurons. This lost Huron map may have been one of the sources used to make the first French map, dating from 1641 or thereabouts, that shows the names and locations of native peoples. From it, coming from an outside vantage looking in, we can get some rough sense again of the limits of a Northeastern Information Network. Notably, there are no names on the map for any native groups located east of the Hudson River or of Lake Champlain.

Ultimately, the nature and extent of the Information Network for a non-literate world-system of the past must remain highly conjectural. Unlike the other three kinds of networks, it does not leave behind many material remains – Indians did make maps but mostly, like the one above, they have been lost to posterity – and their extent can only be inferred indirectly. No doubt native peoples often possessed more geographical knowledge than they were willing to share with strangers and did not always tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Or, they obligingly gave whites what they thought they wanted to hear. Nevertheless, what the Indians told Edward Winslow has a truthful ring about it. Let’s reserve judgement and see what the other three kinds of networks can tell us about our putative world-system’s spatial extent – and the real human interactions behind it.

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The Political-Military Network

Chase-Dunn and Hall define a Political-Military Network in world-systems as “the network of regular political and military ‘exchanges,’ including warfare and statecraft.”\(^{15}\) For societies that no longer have an active presence on the planet and which left behind no written records of their own, contemporary archaeological investigations and the histories of peoples passed down orally through the generations (often dismissively called “legends”) and recorded by early white chroniclers or by themselves as they acquired literacy might be our only sources of evidence about the existence and forms of these and other kinds of network-constituting exchanges.\(^ {16}\) With whatever evidence can be collected, we might try to map it to get an overall sense of the geographical extent of warfare, diplomacy and the like and how they might have changed over time. For the Wintu, an indigenous people in northern California, this is exactly what Chase-Dunn and Kelly Marie Mann – who postulate the existence of a very small pre-contact Wintu-centered world-system – have done. Peoples and their wars were plotted against distance seeking the fall-offs in structural effects.\(^ {17}\)

Turning to our region, the anthropologist George Milner for the Eastern Woodland as a whole has analyzed the archaeological evidence of pre-contact warfare and has found a significant amount as revealed in the evidence of weapons marks left on skeletal remains.


and in the existence of defensive structures such as ditches and palisades. He concludes that a major increase of pre-contact intergroup violence occurred from the second half of the first millennium CE. Palisade-construction took a sudden leap upward in the late 11th Century. Just why this change took place is not at all clear. Milner hypothesizes population pressures, the appearance of the new military technologies (the bow and arrow), and the emergence of chiefdoms – aggravated by the deteriorating climate with the Little Ice Age. Unfortunately, Milner’s study includes little evidence about how widespread warfare might have been – or where and when warfare occurred – among peoples of the Algonquian-speaking Northeast. Little work has been performed by archaeologists in our putative Northeastern World-System bringing to light any physical evidence of Indian warfare on human remains. All the same, we do find useful evidence in the distribution of what appear to have been structures erected for defense by the Indians and in accounts of some of the early European explorers.

For the location of Indian forts mentioned in early accounts and old town histories and, in some cases, whose outlines are still partly visible on the ground, see the Google Map “layer” on the accompanying CD-ROM. These forts were typically circular or square palisades made out of the trunks of trees inserted vertically into the ground – which, when rotted, leave behind post molds visible to the trained eye as darkened material – and with

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19 One exception is H. L. Bailet, “The Purcell Site: Evidence of a Massacre on Cape Cod,” Massachusetts Archaeological Society Bulletin 35 (1974): 18-33. However, on artifactual evidence, the slaughter of four women and two children at this site seems to date from early historic times.

branches woven to fill the spaces in between and sometimes daubed with mud. Not uncommonly, they were surrounded by embankments and trenches. Often they were sited on hills near and overlooking rivers or the ocean, well-chosen spots from which to keep watch for approaching enemies and to organize a defense. The New England landscape today still retains the names of a number of these “Indian Hills,” “Fort Hills,” and “Castle Hills,” some of which were certainly locations of pre-contact or contact-era Indian forts.

The siting of the Indian forts scattered along the Atlantic coastline and estuaries and reported on by the European explorers reflects a north-south orientation of indigenous warfare in the early 17th Century between peoples, perhaps not coincidentally, with two different modes of production – between northern peoples who were predominantly or exclusively hunters and gatherers and southern peoples who were predominantly agricultural. The most northerly coastal fort – one seen and described by Champlain who explored the coast thoroughly from Maine to Cape Cod from 1604 to 1606 – was at the outlet of the Saco River. There began the “country of the Almouchiquois,” where Champlain came upon a major linguistic barrier separating people to the south from the Souriquois and Etechemins he had already met and spoken with to the north. The people at Saco were permanent dwellers, unlike the northern peoples who moved with the seasons having only temporary family camps by the sea, “and have a large cabin surrounded by palisades made of rather

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22 Indian Hills are found, among other places, in Middletown and Norwalk, Connecticut; Greenville, Maine; West Pawlet, Vermont; West Newbury, Worcester, Lynn, Medfield, Carlisle, Plymouth, Beverly, Northampton in Massachusetts. Fort Hills are found in Portland and Gorham, Maine; Nottingham, New Hampshire; Lowell and Hingham, Massachusetts; East Providence, Rhode Island and Castle Hills in Ipswich and Wakefield, Massachusetts.
large trees placed by the side of each other, in which they take refuge when their enemies make war upon them.” At this place, Champlain was able to observe for the first time on his southward voyage maize, beans and squashes being grown – having been told earlier by the Indians along the coast to the north that, except for those living in the deep interior, people who had once grown maize had stopped doing so “on account of the war they had with others, who came and took it away.”

These well-fortified people in what is now extreme southern Maine seem to have been affiliated with the powerful Massachuset complex chiefdom or confederacy centered around the great ocean bay that still bears the Massachuset name. After Champlain, other French and English visitors and settlers who came to the region provide intermittent glimpses of the course of the war between these “Almouchiquis” (and their occasional mid-coast Maine allies, the Penobscots) and the much-feared “Tarrantines” (who were probably Micmacs swooping down by sea from as far away as Nova Scotia). The Massachuset were the big losers in the fighting, their society weakened to invasion by a terrible plague in 1617 and 1618 that carried away thousands upon thousands of Indians along the coast – and, in the

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process, largely emptying the region for the Pilgrims and Puritans (who believed it to have been a propitious Act of God) to move into and rendering the surviving Indians open to an alliance with the English settlers. The Massachusetts chief sachem, Nanepashemet, having removed for greater safety from his coastal forts at Marblehead and Salem to the interior as the Tarrantines maintained their onslaught, survived the plague. But he was tracked down and killed in 1619 by Tarrantines at another fort in present-day Medford – where the site of his abandoned fort and nearby grave were discovered in 1621 by a party of explorers sent out to contact Indians for trade from Plymouth Plantation. Tarrantine attacks on remaining Massachuset villages kept up through the early 1630s but were deterred with English help.

How much farther back in time before the early 17th Century this violent antagonism went between some of the northern and southern Indians in the region is unknown. As far as I am aware, no radiocarbon dating has been done on any of these Massachuset fort sites. It has been argued by some scholars that the Tarrantine Wars were a recent, indeed modern, phenomenon, the upshot of contacts with Europeans and their capitalistic world-system. Indians in the northern Maritimes encountered European fishermen and fur traders at least by the later 16th Century, if not sooner, and were able to obtain trade goods including guns, hatchets and other modern weaponry that put them at a distinct advantage over Indians who were still relying upon stone axes and bows and arrows. Some even acquired and outfitted European-style sailboats. In this reading, the so-called “Tarrantines” were Indians who had positioned themselves as middle-men in the early decades of the European fur trade and were

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trying to eliminate their rivals and secure new sources of supply farther to the south, as their own more immediate sources of supply in the Maritime region were depleted. At the same time, the Indians to the southward were resisting being dominated by the Tarrantines and were seeking out their own direct and more lucrative European trading connections.²⁶

If these scholars are right, and it does make sense to me, this situation would resemble the better-documented case of the “Beaver Wars” in which the Iroquois starting in the 1620s moved aggressively to consolidate trade unto themselves, with their own supplies of beaver diminishing, as middlemen for the Dutch by attacking the Hurons and others to the west who were trading with the French and by attacking Indians in the other direction who were trading with the English. At that time, a whole series of forts were built by Indians in New England facing westward against the violent Mohawk threat. In 1669, under what seems to have been the traditional regional leadership of the Massachuset chief sachem, in this case led by a Christian convert named Josiah Wampatuck, an alliance of Massachuset and other Indians marched into Mohawk territory west of the Hudson on a punitive expedition. They put a Mohawk fort under siege but ended up suffering a disastrous and ignominious defeat along with the death of their sachem. Still, for the remainder of the century it was the next Massachuset sachems who continued to negotiate with the whites and deed away Indian land until there was no more land to sell.²⁷ The bottom line here in terms of the extent of a pre-contact Political-Military Network in the Northeast is that although this historical


information is suggestive of what might have been long-standing, two-way structural relationships in terms of military and diplomatic affairs – and suggestive of possible core-periphery relationships -- it is only suggestive.

This turns out to be even more the case if we look at the situation south of Massachusetts Bay. Here the coastal-dwelling Indians were likewise very hard-hit by the plague. When the Pilgrims disembarked from the “Mayflower” in 1620 and took over the disease-emptied Indian village of Patuxet for their New Plimouth, they were soon approached by the Wampanoags whose chief sachem, Massasoit, was apparently looking for a counter-weight against the Narragansetts to the west who had not yet suffered major population losses from the diseases introduced by the whites. All the same, again we do not have a sense of how far backward in time these inter-tribal antagonisms might have gone. The same is true with the warlike, fort-building Pequots in southeastern Connecticut who had sharp early-contact-era antagonisms with their Narragansett neighbors to their east. These latter antagonisms were no doubt exacerbated by competition for control over wampum, an Indian prestige good that became a key to unlocking access to European trade goods. Needed is more archaeological research to ascertain the extent of Indian warfare prior to Europeans. In any case, we do not find in any of the European accounts from that time period any mention of any inter-tribal acts of war or alliance-building being conducted outside of the bounds of our putative Northeastern World-System.

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The Prestige Goods Network

In dealing with the Prestige Goods Network or networks, we have much more ample data, both archaeological and ethnohistorical. Two items, copper ornaments and shell beads, used in a variety of ways in social reproduction are present in both kinds of sources. These two prestige goods also have the advantage to us of not being very perishable, so they show up in the archaeological record while other possible items of trade such as furs or hides would not. Moreover, it is these two items that definitely stand-out in early accounts. These items were not necessarily available locally and thus were often objects of down-the-line trade or perhaps special procurement trips made to distant sources. To some extent, these network-constituting movements can be traced scientifically by matching artifacts with their sources. First, however, before looking at these two particular items and the societal roles that they played, it is necessary to take a general look at the different modes of production and reproduction in the Native American societies of the region in which prestige goods had significant meaning and purpose. We also need to identify the varying systems of status and rank found in these societies, as revealed by the accounts of early (status-conscious) Europeans.

The French and the English, as they navigated along the coast and then invaded and occupied piece by piece the homelands of the northeastern peoples starting in the early 17th Century, met and quickly entered into dealings with particular indigenous individuals of what seemed at least somewhat greater grandness and material substance than their fellow natives. None of these societies in the Northeast encountered by the Europeans were fully egalitarian, as one might find in the Far North with the Innu and Inuit. They were all variations of ranked societies predicated on the household mode of production where families were the
main producers but in which a surplus was extracted from them in order to support the lifestyle of an elite. The titles of those Indians who came forward to greet Europeans – who sometimes misunderstood them as the counterparts of their own kings and queens – to make presentations and negotiate with them on behalf of their peoples – were rendered by them as “sachem” or “sagamore” (or, by the French, “sagamo”). These terms, meaning “one who leads or directs,” are derived from the same proto-Algonquian root, “sa:kima:wa.” “Sachem” (sachimau) comes from the Narragansett dialect and “sagamore” (sang’man) from the Pennobscot or Eastern Abenaki Algonquian language. Generally-speaking “sachem” was the preferred term from Massachusetts Bay southward, “sagamore” being favored to the northward.\(^{30}\)

This seeming congruence of nomenclature, however, is misleading. It disguises significant differences in political forms across the region at or around the time of contact. Many of the so-called “sagamores” in northern New England and adjacent Canada more properly belong to the anthropological classification of band or village headmen and “Big Men” rather than true chiefs. The status of a Big Man, as defined by anthropologists, is not

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one that is ascribed through birth. 

Rather it is contingent on some combination of their own personal expertise, ambition, speaking ability, consensus-building, physical prowess and generosity which sets them apart from their fellows. These qualities must be continually renewed in practice if a Big Man expects to hold onto their followers for very long. As one of their societal functions, Big Men might manage redistribution ceremonies, like the famed potlatches among the Indians of the Pacific Northwest, and other rituals of social reproduction for their kin-group. The lifestyle of these individuals was also not far removed from that of their presumptive followers. Big Men operate primarily on a local stage among people numbering in the hundreds. A favorable geographical location at a trading nexus, for instance, might be of help to a person who was aspiring to become a Big Man. While Big Men might try to set up broader alliances involving other groups, these relationships would tend to fall apart when the particular charismatic individual that held them together lost credibility or left the scene.

Big Men in the Northeast in the early historical period were found among the coastal foraging bands of Micmacs and Abenaki, although it is not clear whether or to what degree Big Men evolved autochthonously in these societies or may have appeared out of more egalitarian societies instead due to fur and other trading contacts with Europeans – which certainly provided plentiful new opportunities for wealth and prestige for those who were ambitious and capable and willing to seize hold of them. 

Champlain described the nomadic

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hunting and fishing way of life of these people and how he met and had dealings in gift-giving and trade with a number of their “captains” or “chiefs.” He said of them: “They have chiefs, whom they obey in matters of war, but not otherwise, and who engage in labor, and hold no higher rank than their companions. Each one has only so much land as he needs for his support.” However, as reported by the Jesuit missionaries, a Micmac sagamore might have multiple wives and that would give him somewhat greater access to productive powers than his fellow band members. The sagamore also seems to have been expected to perform a redistributive role. Champlain observed the Micmac “chief” Membertou to whom he had just given a “handsome and large” blanket, after Membertou implored him for it, turned right around and gave it to the relatives of someone who had died. It was also customary, according to one of the Jesuit Relations, for “everything that belongs to the deceased, skins, bows, utensils, wigwams, etc.” to be thrown into the fire and destroyed. Another of the Relations describes “bow, arrows shield and other insignia of war” being buried with the “chief” and their “necklaces and collars” buried with the women. The obvious upshot of these forms of social reproduction would be to necessitate the production, or the obtaining


through trade, of additional objects to remove from circulation. While it does not seem that
the Micmac sagamores had pressing need for prestige goods to indicate their status – we
don’t hear from the French sources of them being adorned any differently from anybody
else\textsuperscript{36} -- the above practices made for a possible point of articulation with newcomers
bringing in exotic goods, who were willing to let go of them for something the Indians had
in abundance, furs.

Some Micmac sagamores in these descriptions sound as though they were part-way
to becoming true chiefs, with their power based in a lineage -- perhaps through having
leveraged their relationship with foreign suppliers of goods. Father Pierre Biard’s “Relation
of New France” tells of the sagamore being the “eldest son of some powerful family, and
consequently also its chief and leader. All the young people of the family are at his table and
in his retinue; it is also his duty to provide dogs for the chase, canoes for transportation,
provisions and reserves for bad weather and expeditions.” The followers “pay their dues and
hommage in skins and like gifts.” But a would-be sagamore had to be concerned about being
denied tribute and abandoned in favor of another contender and suffering ridicule as a
consequence. The Micmacs and Abenaki were people organized into hunting and gathering
bands. Baird describes regional networking in which the sagamores from the different ocean
bays and river valleys into which bands were divided met together as equals to talk about
“peace and war, treaties of friendship and treaties for the common good.” This also points
in the direction of a more centralized political structure, as through wars one sagamore might
emerge as paramount over his original associates. Regardless of the existence of sagamores

\textsuperscript{36} For a description of Micmac clothing, see Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., \textit{The Jesuit Relations and
Allied Documents}, vol. 3 (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers Company, 1886), 74.
among them, the Micmac were still basically egalitarian, with most of the redistribution among them taking place laterally rather than hierarchically. As primarily hunters and gatherers – some Abenaki farmed -- the productive base for a higher level of social complexity was lacking.\(^{37}\)

True chiefs must embody personal characteristics similar to those of Big Men, but they exercise power over larger regional groups, and they come into their position structurally. Although households remain the basis of economic production, chiefdoms are regional political organizations with populations typically numbering in the thousands or, for the more complex chiefdoms, in the tens of thousands. The status of chiefs is, at least in part, hereditary. Those persons who become chiefs typically belong to a highly-ranked kinship group separated off from the commoners, and they customarily intermarry among themselves or with their counterparts in some other chiefly society. The degree to which chiefdoms happen because of a need to perform indispensable managerial functions at a certain level of socio-economic development or whether the relationship is much more strictly exploitative and a matter of self-interest on the part of the chiefs is a matter of ongoing debate among anthropologists. In all likelihood it is some combination of both. In any case, in this form of social organization, chiefs often enter the realm of production, and a significant slice out of the pie of staple foods and craft goods is appropriated from the primary producers for the material support of the chiefs and for them to hand out to reward loyalty and performance among their proximate supporters. But like Big Men, as a way to

show off and validate their superior status in front of members of their group and possibly other groups, chiefs also sponsor redistributive rituals. Thus they put themselves at the center of social reproduction, another basis of their chiefly power.

Chiefdoms are not uncommonly at war with other chiefdoms. As demonstrated by Rutgers anthropologist Brian Ferguson, warfare among tribal societies may be exacerbated through contacts with, or occur over access to the goods of, European traders and colonizers. But warfare seems to be an endemic condition among chiefdoms, as the chiefs seek out new sources of revenue in land, labor and tribute by conquest. Indeed, cutting through the layers of justificatory ideology, it could be said frankly that chiefdoms (along with states to which they can be transitional) act as a sort of protection racket with the chief as the Mafia boss and his warriors as enforcers. In southern coastal New England and along some of the larger river valleys is where we can find true chiefdoms under sagamores or sachems. Whether they emerged in these areas on the basis of agricultural surpluses pursuant to the introduction of maize or, like the complex hunters and gatherers of the Pacific Northwest, on the basis of an abundance of marine resources and associated circumscription is not at all clear. But here early European explorers encountered, along with some peoples

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39 New England Indians not only exploited coastal flora and fauna extensively but, in some cases, were pursuing and taking whales with harpoons from their big log dugout canoes as well as using whales and seals that became stranded onshore. See Mary Lynne Rainey, “Maritime Resources in the Food Economy of Nantucket’s Native Americans,” *Bulletin, Archaeological Society of Connecticut* 65, no. 2003 (2003): 19-21; Scott Nixon, “Marine Resources and the Human Carrying Capacity of Coastal Ecosystems in Southern New England Before European Contact,” *Northeast Anthropology* 68 (2004): 18. Rhode Island oceanographer Nixon has observed in his meticulous review of ecological constraints (“carrying capacity”) that impacted the indigenous human populations for coastal southern New England, “the year round availability and reliability of marine fish and shellfish may have made the food security of agriculture unnecessary and the extra labor
like the Nipmucks of the central Massachusetts highlands who were primarily Big Men band types, much larger-scale hierarchical “tribes.” Longtime Puritan Indian superintendent Daniel Gookin, in his "Historical Collections of the Indians of Massachusetts" (1674), listed the five principal Indian “nations” of New England, each ruled over by a “chief sachem,” as the Pequots, the Narragansetts, the Pawtunkawkuts (Pokanokets), the Massachuset, and the Pawtucketts. Prior to their numbers being heavily depleted by epidemic diseases introduced by the Europeans, each chief sachem according to Gookin’s estimates could mobilize several thousand warriors – which meant the total populations, men, women and children, of each of their polities were likely ten thousand or more. By the time of the arrival of the Europeans, some of these were multi-layered “complex chiefdoms.” Subordinate to the chief sachems were a number of “petty sagamores” and “petty governours.” The position of sachem was inherited -- although as with European monarchs, there could be disputes about

unattractive.”

Daniel Gookin, “Historical Collections of the Indians in New England,” in Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society for the Year 1792, vol. 1 (Boston, 1792), 147-149. A sixth coastal complex chiefdom had collapsed shortly prior to the arrival of the English invaders. This was an Abenaki chieftainship located between Penobscot River and Bay on the north side to the Saco or Piscataqua Rivers on the south. Its chief sachem or sagamore, Bashaba (or Betsebes) was killed in 1615 in fighting with the “Tarrantines” (Indians from farther Down East whose identity is still disputed but probably Micmacs and who were raiding using French-acquired guns as far south as Cape Cod). With a virulent epidemic disease – one that had probably been introduced by European sailors and traders – raging in this region during the next several years, none of Bashaba’s “under-captains” was able to propel himself into the post of paramount regional leader, and a collection of smaller, more local polities emerged under various internecine warring Abenaki sachems. See “The Brief Narration of Sir Ferdinando Gorges,” in Collections of the Maine Historical Society, vol. 2 (Portland, Me., 1847), 61-62; John E. Godfrey, “Bashaba and the Tarratines,” in Collections of the Maine Historical Society, vol. 7 (Bath, Maine: E. Upton & Son, 1876), 93-102; John Wesley Hanson, History of the Old Towns, Norridgewock and Canaan, Comprising Norridgewock, Canaan, Starks, Skowhegan, and Bloomfield, From Their Early Settlement to the Year 1849; Including a Sketch of the Abnakis Indians. (Boston, 1849), 10-17; Edward Ballard, Memorial Volume of the Popham Celebration, August 29, 1862, Commemorative of the Planting of the Popham Colony on the Peninsula of Sabino, Augst 19, O. S. 1607, Establishing the Title of England to the Continent (Portland, Me.: Bailey & Noyes, 1863), 296; Francis Byron Greene, History of Boothbay, Southport and Boothbay Harbor, Maine. 1623-1905 (Portland: Loring, Short & Harmon, 1906), 35-40; Jeremy Belknap and John Farmer, The History of New-Hampshire, vol. 1 (Dover NH: S. C. Stevens and Ela & Wadleigh, 1831), 65-66.
who was the most rightful claimant. Thus Uncas split off from the Pequots to form his own sachemdom of Mohegans after his claim to succeed to the supreme Pequot sachemdom was turned down in favor of another man. Many aspects of Indian life were strange to the Europeans – their dress, food, child-rearing, etc. -- but some things about the Indians struck European observers as familiar. Having grown up in a highly hierarchical society and knowing no other kind themselves, they recognized ranked social relations when they saw them. Gookin in his account painted the political relations within these sachemdoms in familiar European-style terms:

> Their government is generally monarchical, their chief sachem or sagamore's will being their law; but yet the sachem hath some chief men, that he consults with as his special counsellors. Among some of the Indians their government is mixed, partly monarchical, and partly aristocratical; their sagamore doing not any weighty matter without the consent of his great men, or petty sagamores.

Even so, Gookin noted one characteristic indicating how Indian sachems were not really monarchs carved out in the same familiar Old World mold -- a difference reflecting the short political distance between these chiefs and Big Men and the possible weakness thereabouts of the conscription factor:

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43 Daniel Gookin, “Historical Collections of the Indians in New England,” in *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society for the Year 1792*, vol. 1 (Boston, 1792), 154. See also the observations of Roger Williams, *A Key into the Language of America* (Bedford, Mass.: Applewood Books, 1997), 140. The Narragansetts among whom Williams lived featured a dual chief sachemship with an elder overall political sachem and a younger war sachem, his nephew.
Their sachems have not their men in such subjection, but that very frequently their men will leave them upon distaste or harsh dealing, and go and live under other sachems that can protect them: so that their principal endeavour to carry it obligingly and lovingly unto their people, lest they should desert them, and thereby their strength, power, and tribute would be diminished.  

As was the case with a successful Big Man, an effective sachem in these chiefdoms had to pay attention to popular opinion and build consensus behind his leadership rather than trying to impose his will. Roger Williams observed: “The Sachims, although they have an absolute Monarchie over the people; yet they will not conclude of ought that concernes all, either Lawes, or Subsides, or warres, unto which the people are averse, and by gentle persuasione cannot be brought.” And Daniel Denton, another 17th-Century direct observer of Indians, described the decision-making process for weighty issues among the closely-related Algonquian-speaking Indians on Long Island:

When their King or Sachem sits in Council, he hath a Company of armed men to guard his Person, great respect being shewn to him by the People, which is principally manifested by their silence: After he hath declared the cause of their convention, he demands their opinion, ordering who shall begin: The person ordered to speak, after he hath declared his minde, tells them he hath done; no man ever interrupting any person in his speech, nor offering to speak, though he make never so many or long stops, till he says he hath no more to say: the Council having all declar’d their opinions, the King after some pause gives the definitive sentence, which is commonly seconded with a shout from the people, every one seeming to applaud, and manifest their Assent to what is determined.

Unlike Big Men, however, the government of these true chiefs was “successive and

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45 Roger Williams, A Key into the Language of America (Bedford, Mass.: Applewood Books, 1997), 142.

46 Daniel Denton, A Brief Description of New York (New York: William Gowans, 1845), 34.
not by choice.” And, although the disparities in wealth among persons in these New England chiefdoms were not vast, the sachem lived in a “sachimmaacommock” (wigwam or lodge) that was larger and better appointed than the average Indian dwelling. Williams said that those persons who were the “princes” might garb themselves with an especially rich display of white and black wampum beads shaped into a girdle, cap or apron. Lesser persons showed their obeisance to their sachem, Williams observed, by stroking the sachem’s shoulders and by praying aloud then for the sachem’s favor.

Moreover, sachems and perhaps other high-ranking persons were set apart in death through distinctive mortuary practices. Morton observed that Indians liked to “make some monuments over the place where the corps [sic] is interred: but they put a great difference betwene persons of noble, and of ignoble, or obscure, or inferior descent.” A sachem was buried in a wooden plank sort of chest and something “in forme of a hearse cloath” was put up over the grave. Winslow reported of the Indians he knew that “when they bury the dead, they sow up the corpse in a mat, and so put it in the earth; if the party be a sachem, they cover him with many curious mats, and bury all his riches with him, and inclose the grave with a pale.” A scouting party that was sent out from the Pilgrim Colony in the fall of 1621 to explore the area around Massachusetts Bay came upon a grave with an above-ground

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structure that was the final resting place of the Massachuset chief sachem, Nanepashemet; a pipe with a copper mouthpiece, perhaps one of the sachem’s treasured possessions, was found near the site during a 19th Century excavation. The Narragansetts, arguably the most complex of all the New England chiefdoms – and in this way not unlike some of the other more complex chiefdoms that anthropologists that have studied in other parts of the Americas and the world – seem to have had the custom of burying their “royalty,” one generation after the next, within a special burial mound set aside and apart from the graves of the ordinary members of the tribe.

It is clear that kinship relations, not terribly important in band societies, were used to organize and order these, as with other, chiefdoms. Nevertheless, because of the sketchy nature of the evidence – it does not seem that the early European reporters had a great deal of interest in these sorts of matters – kinship relations among the southern New England chiefdoms are extremely hard to pin down. There are some indications of both matrilineality and patrilineality being utilized. For instance, there is an account by Lewis Henry Morgan (who was very much interested in these matters) of his meeting up in 1862 with a “half-blood” Narragansett woman who had Pequot grandchildren who resided in Kansas. She told him that her mother had been Narragansett and thus she was a Narragansett herself since

51 Henry Martyn Dexter, ed., Mourt’s Relation or Journal of the Plantation at Plymouth (Boston: J. K. Wiggin, 1865), 127-128; Duane Hamilton Hurd, History of Middlesex County, Massachusetts, with Biographical Sketches of Many of Its Pioneers and Prominent Men, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: J. W. Lewis & Co., 1890), 6-7. See also in Mourt’s Relation, 32-34, 49-50 the descriptions of Indian graves of various degrees of above-ground sumptuousness, perhaps reflecting differences in individual rank, that were come across by the newly-arrived Pilgrims on Cape Cod.

52 Nathan B. Lewis, “The Last of the Narragansetts,” Proceedings of the Worcester Society of Antiquity (1898): 49-50. The Mohegans also had a “royal burial ground” where their sachems were buried, although this antedated white contract. Frances Manwaring Caulkins, History of Norwich, Connecticut from Its Possession by the Indians to the Year 1866 (Hartford: Case, Lockwood and Company, 1866), 262-263.
among them “descent as well as nationality follows the female line.” We also have from the 19th Century the insistence of the Methodist minister and native activist, William Apess, that he was a Pequot, regardless of tribal admixtures, based on his mother’s identity. On the other hand, there is strong evidence from genealogies that the political office of the sachem early on and subsequently was customarily passed down through the paternal line. Among the Wampanoag, the chief sachem Ossamequin (Massasoit) was succeeded by his oldest son, Wamsetta, and then, after Wamsetta died, perhaps having been poisoned by the English, by his next oldest son, Metacom. The Narragansetts had a dual chief sachemdom at contact. The two paramount leaders were the aging Canonicus and his vigorous nephew Miantonomo, but Miantonomo was Canonicus’s youngest brother Mascus’s son, not a sister’s son as might be the case if descent were matrilineal. After Miantonomo’s murder by the Mohegans at the behest of the English, the chief sachemdom among the Narragansetts passed to his brother Pessacus and then, when Pessacus was killed in fighting with the Mohawks, on to Miantonomo’s son, Canochet. There is also on record the 1668 will of the Wampanoag sachem Pamantaquash (known as the “Pond Sachem”) who leaves all of his lands first to his brother Tuspaquin (the “Black Sachem”) and then to his nephew William after the decease of Tuspaquin—although by this point in time what we may be seeing is the


imprint of English inheritance norms and probate guidelines which heavily privileged male relationships.\textsuperscript{56}

Between these sachems and their people, we certainly do find respect accorded to them but not the same degree of social distancing and awe expressed towards their counterparts, the \textit{werowances}, among the Algonquian-speaking complex chiefdoms of the Chesapeake Bay region. Nor do we hear of anything resembling Powhatan’s above-ground corn crib where he simultaneously stored and showed off his tributary maize hoard or anything like the temple, tended by priests and off-limits to commoners, where the paramount chief’s valuables in the way of prestige items, spiritual articles and ancestral remains were kept.\textsuperscript{57} The Wampanoag chief sachem Ousamenquin (Massasoit), in spite of

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\textsuperscript{56} David Pulsifer, ed., \textit{Records of the Colony of New Plymouth, in New England}, vol. 1, 8 vols. (Boston: The Press of William White, 1861), 229. A possible way to make sense out of this kinship situation was put forward by Lorraine Williams in her 1972 PhD dissertation. She hypothesized that some of the societies of southern, coastal New England at or around the time of contact were undergoing a transition from a matrilineal to a patrilineal form of kinship. Moreover, she argued this transition was proving conflictual among these societies. Lorraine Elsie Williams, “Ft. Shantok and Ft. Corchaug: A Comparative Study of Seventeenth-century Culture Contact in The Long Island Sound Area” (Ph.D., New York University, 1972), 23-30. Specifically, Williams suggests that envisaging a transition of that sort might shed some light on the factional divisions among the Pequots over control of the sachemdom, a struggle that was part of the deep background to the Pequot War of 1637. Uncas, who during the war opportunistically went over with his “Mohegan” faction and allied himself with the English and emerged from the war as one of the English’s most favored Indians, did so because he was perturbed that he and his lineage group (clan) were passed over in the selection of a new Pequot sachem, their former sachem having been murdered by the Dutch. The claim Uncas staked was through the mother’s line, whereas the claim of the successful candidate Sassacus, was through his father. Williams postulates that Uncas, in promoting his personal interests, was acting to uphold the “traditional” kinship system against innovators, whose behavior might be influenced by new European kinship norms. On the other hand, in his recent favorable biography of Uncas, Michael Oberg asserts that the Pequots and the Mohegans, although closely connected, were distinct groups that were “never a single entity.” Michael Leroy Oberg, \textit{Uncas: First of the Mohegans} (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 2003), 18.


his boasting to the English that he had command over at least thirty different places, was hard-pressed to procure even a couple of fish in season to feed his Pilgrim guests, Edward Winslow and Stephen Hopkins, along with forty other Indians who assembled, when the English turned up unexpectedly at his wigwam for a sociable visit. Apparently, Massasoit had nothing on the premises or stored out back in a pit and had to send word overnight to other Indians for provender. And he accommodated his guests on the same crude sleeping platform next to himself, his wife and two other “chief men.” Bereft of sleep and with their hunger still unsatisfied, the visitors headed straight back to Plymouth. On the other hand, the Narragansett co-chief sachems, old Canonicus and his nephew Miantonomo, “hearing of their comming,” were able to mobilize significant resources to put on a lavish and delectable multi-dish banquet for visiting emissaries from Boston, as well as for their own counselors and a great number of “subjects” who attended – after which the sachems heard the visitors’ message delivered and conferred with them in a spacious fifty-foot wide “state house” wigwam or longhouse. In this case, the English visitors were definitely impressed by their treatment, having found themselves “entertained royally.”

The hierarchies in these contact-era societies of southern coastal New England included a number of other high-ranking positions. Chief sachems surrounded themselves with large, well-built men who acted as their counselors and praetorian guards. Picked out

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58 Nathaniel Morton, New-England's Memorial, 6th ed. (Boston: Congregational Board of Publications, 1855), 359-367. Admittedly, Massasoit was not in residence and was not warned when they first arrived for their visit.

and subjected to rigorous, spartan-like training from their youth, these men called “paniesok” were courageous war captains reputed to possess spiritual powers that protected them in battle from serious injury or death. It was the *paniesok* who went out to collect the sachem’s cut of the annual maize harvest which was stacked in baskets outside his dwelling and who acted as intermediaries with the *missinnuok* (commoners) for the sachem’s expressions of gratitude. Along with the *paniesok* and the more elder counselors in his own immediate entourage, each chief sachem had under him a number of inferior or petty sachems, often related through marriage or kinship ties. These sachems paid homage to the chief sachem and ruled in particular villages or locales of the chief sachem’s overall domain and “without whose consent they made neither peace, war, nor alliances with other nations.”

Sassacus, the Pequot chief sachem, reportedly had twenty-six sachems operating under him and putting warriors into the field when called upon. Though it had other underpinnings and supports, the power of the chief sachem was predicated ultimately on how many warriors could be mobilized from their territory in conjunction with any warriors procured via alliances made with other sachems. Wars, whatever their ostensible causes might be – the Wampanoag

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chief sachem Metacom invaded Block Island to punish the inhabitants because of a report that one of them had broken the taboo of using his dead father Massasoit’s name – were, as in chiefdoms anthropologists have explored, a potent economic force in these societies. Wars brought in tribute and added new sources of labor in the form of captives, particularly women who could produce and reproduce the labor and military forces.

*Powaws* (dreamers) were men and women with special or greater-than-average access to the spiritual powers (*manitou*) that Algonquian-speaking Indians believed pervaded all things, both animate and inanimate. These shamans fulfilled many societal functions: presiding over communal rituals, entertaining and impressing by juggling and performing slightsof-hand, going into oracular trances, predicting the weather, conjuring for stolen items, setting bones, healing wounds, attending the sick and providing other medical services for a fee in wampum or goods. Sometimes, if the sachem died, the *powaw* married his widow, the “squa sachem,” and thus succeeded to a position of political power. In one

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extraordinary case, that of Passaconaway among the Pennacooks on the Merrimack River, a person holding the office of great sachem was at the same time a powaw – he supposedly could cause ice to appear out of liquid water – making him especially highly regarded and feared by the populace.\(^{64}\) Women among the New England Indians did sometimes act as sachems in their own right or as a sort of regent while their sons were in their minority. The latter was true of the wife of the aforementioned Massachuset chief sachem Nanepashemet (“New Moon”) after he was killed in 1619 during a raid on that disease-devastated tribe by the “Tarrantines” swooping down from the north. She took the powaw Webcowit as a new husband and ruled jointly with him, negotiating with the English and deeding away land to them, with her three sons as sagamores in different parts of the territory, until her death around 1650.\(^{65}\) Another of the New England “squa sachems” – “squa” is an Algonquian word for woman and was not an epithet – was Weetamoo, the widow of the Wampanoag sachem Wamsutta (Alexander) and sister-in-law of his successor Metacom, whose warriors fought against the English in the so-called King Philip’s War.\(^{66}\)

Underneath the holders of these positions were the broad numbers of the commonality holding no title or “noble” position but who had usufructory rights in some form to the tribal lands. Additionally, as another classification, there were a number of

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foreigners or strangers, who did not belong to the kin-group and thus did not enjoy the same rights but were long-time co-residents. Roger Williams notes an individual craft specialization among the ordinary Narragansetts among whom he lived: “They have some who follow onely making of Bowes, some Arrowes, some Dishes, and (the Women make all their earthen Vessells) some follow fishing, some hunting; most on the Sea-side make Money [wampum], and store up shells in Summer against Winter whereof to make their money.”

A basic gendered division of labor existed among the southern New England Indians with women not only fabricating the pottery, baskets, mats and other housewares, clothing and shoes but also making and moving the wigwams and performing the bulk of the planting, tending and harvesting of the crops while men hunted for game and, if along the seashore, going fishing in their dug-out canoes and only sometimes helping the women in the field “which they are not bound to.” Women were the main care-givers of the “papoose” (another New England Algonquian term) whom they carried around on a cradle board for their earliest years. Men might take multiple wives because the labor of wives was seen as a source of greater wealth. Strenuous and other time-consuming labors were made lighter and more pleasant by sharing the work communally. Williams noted:

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When a field is to be broken up, they have a very loving sociable speedy way to dispatch it: All the neighbors men and Women forty, fifty, a hundred &c, joyn, and come in to help freely. With friendly joyning they breake up their fields, build their Forts, hunt the Woods, stop and kill fish in the Rivers. 70

The sachems of these societies, it seems, were exempted from ordinary everyday productive labor -- although they might organize and lead hunting drives as Uncas did or spend time seasonally at fishing ponds as Metacom did -- instead living by and largely off the tribute stream and “presents” coming from the commoners and war booty. (Whether they had their own lands on which servile persons grew corn for them, as was the case among their Powhatan counterparts in Virginia, is not clear.) 71 An overview of the revenue base of sachems can be derived from observations found in a variety of early English documentary sources. Roger Williams, who dwelt for many years in close and sympathetic proximity with the Narragansetts who had welcome him as an exile, observed:

Beside their generll subjection to the highest Sachims, to whom they carry presents: They have also particular Protectors, under Sachims, to whom they also carry presents, and upon any injury received, and complaint made, these Protectors will revenge it. 72

Tribute rendered to the sachems to furnish for his table, support his family and attendants and entertain guests might consist, along with a proportion of the ordinary harvest of corn and other vegetables, fruits, berries and nuts brought in by the people, of specified items.

70 Roger Williams, A Key into the Language of America (Bedford, Mass.: Applewood Books, 1997), 99.

71 From a remark of Cotton Mather that “they had not other revenue” but these “presents,” it might be inferred that sachems did not have any lands of their own worked by others for their particular benefit. Cotton Mather, Magnalia Christi Americana, vol. 2, 2 vols. (Hartford: Silas Andrus & Son, 1853), 424. On the other hand, suggesting otherwise, we find the Agawam (Ipswich) sachem Masconomo complaining to the Massachusetts General Court in 1634 that the Puritans’ swine were doing damage “in his corn.” Nathaniel Bradstreet Shurtleff, ed., Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay, vol. 1, 5 vols. (Boston: William White, 1853), 133.

72 Roger Williams, A Key into the Language of America (Bedford, Mass.: Applewood Books, 1997), 141.
Sachems are said to have received the forequarters of each deer killed in the hunt, the skin of any deer drowned in the water (which would not have any arrow marks on it), young eagles taken from the nest and pelts of some fur-bearing animals. “Whatever was stranded on the coast, all wrecks and whales floating on the sea, and taken, were his. In war, the spoils of the enemy, and all the women and royalties of the prince conquered, belonged to him who made the conquest.” Morton reports that the tail of the beaver was presented as a culinary dish to the sachem, and Josselyn says the savory smoked tongue of the moose was fit for a sagamore. Some of these practices involving tribute turned over to the sachem persisted well after contact and the transformation of other social norms and relations. In the colony of Connecticut in 1678, a Pequot man, Cattapesutt, showed a paper to the English authorities – the Pequots, since their disastrous defeat in the war of 1637, were tributaries to the English – showing that he had inherited the lands of his father, Harmon Garret (Cassawshett). He wanted to know whether the Sunksqua, the daughter of the Niantic sachem Ninigret, must always be living on his land where whites put them. (The Niantics had been allied to the Narragansetts who had just been defeated in King Philip’s War.) If that were to be the case, he wanted her people to pay tribute of bear and white deer skins. In another recorded


75 Connecticut Archives: Indians, 1647-1789, 1: 36.
instance, at Barnstable on Cape Cod in 1679, in a quit claim deed given to the English by Job Notantico (Attuckoo), who identified himself as the son of the old sachem, Thomas Notantico, Attuckoo acknowledged a land transaction having been made by his father “many years ago” for Woods Hole Neck in which rights were reserved to cut sticks and wood in the commons and the “fins and tails, whales cast ashore to be mine.”

Those groups who were defeated in war – or who wished not to be attacked and totally subjugated -- might be compelled to pay tribute, as were the Montauk Indians on the eastern end of Long Island to the warlike Connecticut Pequots. To avoid retribution, the Carnarse Indians, on the other, closer end of Long Island, annually paid tribute to the Mohawks – who were widely feared among the Algonquians -- in the form of wampum and dried clams. Tribute was called in to help finance a war, as in the case of the Nipmucks, who wanted to stay “neuters” but eventually brought in “divers baskets of their Hokehick [parched corn meal] and chesnuts” to the Narragansett chief sachem Canonicus “towards his wars” with the Pequots. Any former tributaries of those Indians who were conquered in war– the Montausks had a number of them on Long Island -- were expected to become tributaries in turn to the conquerors. Lechford reports yet another source of revenue he observed for the sachems: Sachems took in a fathom (six-foot string) wedding gift of wampum with every one

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of their multiple marriages, marriages with other members of the “nobility” that they used
to build broader alliances with the potential of gaining more warriors and more tribute. 78

Along with providing “protection,” sachems, as a more useful if not necessarily
indispensable part of their function, administered corporal or capital justice to wrong-doers
– doing so commonly with their own hands, although sometimes a paniese would execute
the judicial decision. 79 Sachems also provided for those who fell through the kin-support
network: “Every sachem taketh care for the widow and fatherless, also for such as are aged
and any way maimed, if their friends be dead, or not able to provide for them.” 80 Sachems
played a role in weddings, consenting to the pairing and joining the couple’s hands together
in the ceremony. 81 And sachems as “ye true owners of ye land” allocated the use-rights to
land to those who grew the maize and other staple crops (and perhaps also allocated prime
spots at waterfalls, rapids and weirs for hooking, spearing or netting anadromous fish species
like salmon and alewives). Land grants might be made to “captains” as a reward for special
services rendered, as in the case of Sosa, a Pequot Indian who defected to their enemies, the

78 Thomas Lechford, Plain Dealing or News from New England, ed. J. Hammond Trumbull (Boston:
J.K. Wiggin & W. P. Lunt, 1867), 118; George Parker Winship, ed., Sailors Narratives of Voyages along the

79 “Gov. Winslows Account of the Natives of New England, Annexed to His Narratives of the
of Publications, 1855), 491; Roger Williams, A Key into the Language of America (Bedford, Mass.: Applewood

80 “Gov. Winslows Account of the Natives of New England, Annexed to His Narratives of the
of Publications, 1855), 489.

81 Benjamin Trumbull, A Complete History of Connecticut, Civil and Ecclesiastical, from the
Emigration of Its First Planters, from England, in the Year 1630, to the Year 1764; and to the Close of the
Narragansetts, after he had killed a prominent Pequot.\textsuperscript{82} As Edward Winslow observed, “Every sachem knoweth how far the bounds and limits of his own country extendeth; and that is his own proper inheritance; out of that, if any of his men desire land to set their corn, he giveth them as much as they can use, and sets them in their bounds.”\textsuperscript{83} As we shall see, this function of the sachem to distribute the land to users then carried over into early contacts with Europeans who wanted land for planting or other purposes. This distribution then turned into the selling of land as a commodity from which the sachems could benefit personally.

I can find no evidence of New England sachems, as did chiefs in societies in some other places in the world, intervening in any managerial kind of way in the processes of production itself.\textsuperscript{84} Sachem involvement over redistribution of prestige goods, however, was another matter. To show off their wealth and power, we know from a number of ethnohistorical sources that sachems, at least among the more complex better-documented chiefdoms in southern coastal New England, sponsored an assortment of ceremonial events marking seasonal events or rites of passage at which some of the tribute that came into them from various sources was redistributed – passing from the center to the periphery or being removed from circulation altogether. Williams described several forms of the \textit{Nickommo}

\textsuperscript{82} Elisha R Potter, \textit{The Early History of Narragansett; with an Appendix of Original Documents, Many of Which Are Now for the First Time Published}, vol. 3, 24 vols., \textit{Collections of the Rhode-Island Historical Society} (Providence: Marshall, Brown and Company, 1835), 263-268. Sosa was also rewarded with a bearskin bag of wampum.


feast or dance that took place periodically among the Narragansetts in which the sachems, and perhaps other high-ranking persons, validated their position and status by giving away large quantities of goods to those tribal members less fortunate than themselves:

He or she that makes this Nickommo Feast or Dance, besides the Feasting of sometimes twenty, fifty, and hundreth, yea I have seene neere a thousand persons at one of these Feasts) they give I say a great quantity of money [wampum], and all sort of their goods (according to and sometimes beyond their Estate). In severall small parcels of goods, or money, to the value of eighteen pence, two Shillings, or thereabouts to one person: and that person that receives this Gift, upon the receiving of it goes out, and hollowes thrice for the health and prosperity of the Party that gave it, the Mr. or Mistris of the Feast.  

Williams reported that the Nickommo was extremely popular, with persons eager to receive presents making the rounds inquiring about who was going to be offering a feast of that kind coming up. Williams described the harvest Nickommo that took place regularly in fat times among Narragansetts:

But their chiefest Idoll of all for sport and game, is (if their land be at peace) toward Harvest, when they set up a long house called Quneksamuck. Which signifies Long house, sometimes an hundred, sometimes two hundred foot long upon a plaine neer the Court (which they call Kittinguauc) where many thousands, men and women meet, where he that goes in danceth in the sight of all the rest; and is prepared with money [wampum], coats, small breeches, knifes, or what hee is able to reach to, and gives these things away to the poore, who yet must particularly beg and say, Covequetummous, that is, I beseech you: which word (although there is not one common beggar amongst them) yet they will often use when their richest amongst them would fain obtain ought by gift.

Around midwinter occurred another regular Nickommo on the annual Narragansett calendar, an event which Williams referred to as “their kind of Christmas feasting” when “they run

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85 Roger Williams, A Key into the Language of America (Bedford, Mass.: Applewood Books, 1997), 128-129.
86 Roger Williams, A Key into the Language of America (Bedford, Mass.: Applewood Books, 1997), 180. See also the description made by Daniel Denton in 1670 of the same sort of ceremony at harvest-time, being managed by the powaw and involving the redistribution of "money" (wampumpeage), among the closely-related Algonquian-speaking Indians of Long Island. Daniel Denton, A Brief Description of New York (New York: William Gowans, 1845), 30-31.
Finally, Williams noted yet another type of *nickommo* might be held in times of “sicknesse, or Drouth, or Warre or Famine.” Regrettably, in this case he did not provide us with any descriptive details. However, this type of *nickommo* may well be what is described by the Pilgrim founding father Edward Winslow in his account in which, among the Narragansetts in times of trouble, the multitude gathered in a “great spacious house” usually reserved for the use of the *powaws*. There they offered “almost all the riches they have to their gods, as kettles, skins, hatchets, beads, knives, etc., all which are cast by the priests into a great fire that they make in the midst of the house, and there consumed to ashes. To this offering every man bringeth freely; and the more he is known to bring, hath the better esteem of all men.” Winslow observed that “the other Indians about us [Wampanoags]” approved the ceremony because “the plague has not reigned at Narraganset as at other places about them” and “wish their Sachems would appoint the like.” As we shall see in the next chapters, these redistribution ceremonies may help to explain how Indians in our region lost much of their lands to the whites. But now, having laid the groundwork in terms of hierarchy and redistribution practices, we can turn to the two specific key items in the Prestige Good Network.

**The Prestige Goods Network: Copper**

Arguably the most important prestige material substance among Native Americans

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in the Northeast, just as it was throughout the Eastern and Midwestern regions, was native copper that had been artfully worked up into tools, ornaments and beads. Verrazano on his exploratory cruise along the New England coast in 1524 observed that wrought copper was being used for personal adornment by the Narragansett Indians whom he met. He also noted how it was esteemed by them more preciously than gold, whose yellowish color the Indians especially disliked, preferring red (as in copper) and azure.  

John Brereton’s account of Bartholomew Gosnold’s 1602 voyage to New England states concerning the mainland Indians with whom he and his associates traded for furs during their attempt to establish a permanent settlement on Cuttyhunk Island in Buzzard’s Bay:

They have also great store of Copper, some very redde, and some of a paler colour; none of them but have chaines, earings or collars of this mettall: they head some of their arrows herewith, much like our broad arrow heads, very workmanly made. Their chaines are many hollow pieces semented together, ech piece of the bignesse of one of our reeds, a finger in length, ten or twelve of them together on a string, which they weare about their necks: their collars they weare about their bodies like bandelieres a handfull broad, all hollow pieces, like the other, but somewhat shorter, foure hundred pieces in a collar, very fine and evenly set together. Besides these, they have large drinking cups, made like sculles, and other thinne plates of Copper, made much like our boare-speare blades, all which they so little esteeme, as they offered their fairest collars or chaines, for a knife or such like trifle, but we seemed little to regard it. . .

The greatest supply of native copper in North America, indeed the largest in the world, is found in rock veins and glacial drift around Lake Superior in present-day Wisconsin and Michigan where it was mined heavily from as early as 6,000 years ago. Copper

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89 Giovanni da Verrazano, “Voyage of John de Verrazano, along the Coast of North America, from Carolina to Newfoundland, A.D. 1524” (Wisconsin History Society Digital Library and Archives), http://americanjourneys.org/aj-094/, 47.


artifacts, along with such other exotic materials as cherts, galena and marine shells, begin to show up in grave goods around the Midwest by the Middle Archaic indicating the development of what would become far-flung and long-lasting trade networks eventually extending from the Great Lakes to the Gulf Coast to the Great Plains and into the East.  

Using stone tools and fire, chunks of native copper extracted from the ground were cold-hammered, annealed and made into a wide variety of projectile points, knives and of other utilitarian objects, often with sockets, by participants in what archaeologists have dubbed the “Old Copper Complex”. By 3000 years ago, a major change took place: Copper was now being turned into ornamental jewelry and used for symbolic or ritual purposes much more than it was being made into tools. Archaeologist Thomas Pleger hypothesizes that this change in usage may reflect the evolution in some of these Midwestern societies of a greater degree of social complexity with inequality and ranking and the differential access of individuals and groups to longer-distance trade networks through which prestige goods could be procured.  

Meanwhile, during the Late Archaic, utilitarian copper artifacts such as

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93 Thomas C. Pleger, “Old Copper and Red Ocher Social Complexity,” *Midcontinental Journal of Archaeology* 25, no. 2 (2000): 169-190. Specifically, Pleger compares and contrasts grave goods from a Middle Archaic Old Copper site in Wisconsin with those from a site of the Late Archaic/Early Woodland Red Ocher complex in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. At the latter site, it was the female burials that most commonly contained copper beads and other copper artifacts, perhaps indicative of relatively higher status for women because of their reproductive value or at least better access by women through trade to these kinds of objects. Pleger’s study is in part an effort to test the earlier hypothesis put forward by Binford that the change in the type of copper objects was reflective of a change from being symbols of achieved to ascribed status in these
gouges and projectiles points, although nowhere common in archaeological sites, also begin to turn up in the Middle Atlantic and in the Northeastern region.\(^{94}\)

By Adena-Hopewell times, beads, gorgets, breastplates, earspools, axes and other articles fashioned from copper had become significant inclusions in the burial mounds of that culture’s Ohio Valley heartland.\(^{95}\) Likewise, copper artifacts, both as utilitarian and ornamental objects, turn up at Early and Middle Woodland sites in the some parts of the Middle Atlantic and the Northeast including Vermont— at sites where the cultures are thought either to have been influenced at a distance by the Adena ritual practices or to represent possible Adena outliers. In the Far Northeast, such artifacts have been seen by many archaeologists as part of a whole Adena-inspired “Middlesex Mortuary Complex.” However, for the Middle Atlantic around 200/300 AD, Archaeologist Michael Stewart, notes, a steep drop off in copper artifacts and an increase in the usage of more local shell beads during the Late Woodland. Moreover, in general, he finds smaller quantities of trade goods appearing archaeologically that had come from sources in the Midwest and Ohio River Valley.\(^{96}\)

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Unfortunately, there is no exactly corresponding study of overall trade patterns externally and internally for our own region showing changes of this sort over time. But, breaking with the dominant model that assumed copper showing up at archaeological sites in the East necessarily originated from the upper Great Lakes region, Mary Ann Levine has pointed out that there were quite a few ready and closer-at-hand sources of native copper available to indigenous miners or its retrievers – from bedrock strata and glacial deposits – in Appalachia, the Middle Atlantic and Northeast, including spots in Connecticut and Massachusetts that did not necessitate Great Lakes sources. Recently, Levine and her laboratory team have been running chemical tests for signature trace elements in copper with the aim of mapping ancient artifacts with the sources of their materials. What they have found is a noticeable shifting in sourcing that took place over time from the Late Archaic to the Early Woodland, with native copper artifacts first trickling into New England from the Great Lakes Region but then, with the appearance of greater numbers of native copper artifacts at the sites, regional sources, particularly from Nova Scotia, being much more extensively utilized.  

An Early Woodland cemetery in Highgate, Vermont was found to contain numerous copper artifacts including an awl and over 6,000 beads, along with unworked lumps of native copper. Michael J. Heckenberger et al., “Early Woodland Period Mortuary Ceremonialism in the Far Northeast: A View from the Boucher Cemetery,” *Archaeology of Eastern North America* 18 (1996): 109-144. For further examples of native copper celts, sheets, beads and other artifacts discovered in the Middle Atlantic and Northeast but before the age of modern archaeology and not dated or contextualized, see Charles Conrad Abbott, *Primitive Industry: Or, Illustrations of the Handiwork, in Stone, Bone and Clay, of the Native Races of the Northern Atlantic Seaboard of America* (Salem, Mass.: George A. Bates, 1881), 411-422 and William Martin Beauchamp, *Metallic Ornaments of the New York Indians*, New York State Museum Bulletin 73 (Albany: University of the State of New York, 1903), 14-16.


resonates with two ethnohistorical sources: When Brereton quizzed his native informants about where the copper ornaments they wore had come from, they showed him by signs that it had been taken out of the ground and pointed at the mainland somewhere across from Buzzard’s Bay. Champlain was able to extract even more precise information. After persistent prying, he was able to get his Indian informants in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia to lead him to the actual mines where native copper was extracted. Pending more results from Levine’s team, we can postulate a cultural pattern that emerged in which copper tools and ornaments as utilitarian objects and/or for personal adornment came into New England and Northeast from the outside – possibly when the Northeast was part of or “peripheral” to, a larger regional system with its core located in the Midwest which held copper precious – then developing as a world-system on its own. At some point, they became prestige objects incorporated into the processes of social reproduction.


99 “yet I was desirous to understand where they had such store of this mettall, and made signes to one of them (with whom I was verie familiar) who taking a piece of Copper in his hand, made a hole with his finger in the ground, and withall, pointed to the maine from whence they came.” John Brereton, “Briefe and True Relation of the Discoverie of the North Part of Virginia, 1602,” in *Early English and French Voyages Chiefly from Hakluyt*, 1534-1608, ed. Henry S. Burrage (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1906), 337-338.


101 Michael J. Heckenberger et al., “Early Woodland Period Mortuary Ceremonialism in the Far Northeast: A View from the Boucher Cemetery,” *Archaeology of Eastern North America* 18 (1996): 109-144. These authors caution against disregarding more local causative conditions in favor of explanations invoking influences exclusively coming from outside the region. In any case, regardless of what was going on elsewhere such as in the Midwest and whatever relations existed with a larger cultural “complex” or socio-economic matrix, it seems that copper present in the Northeast was not being put to use during the Early Woodland to help enact and reproduce a system of ascribed status. From archaeological evidence, it appears that these were still egalitarian societies. At the Boucher site near Lake Champlain in Vermont, where over 63 burials have been uncovered that took place between 885 and 115 BCE, differences are apparent between juveniles and adults in burials with respect to weapons and tools, i.e., reflecting different functional uses by their owners, (some being of local provenance and some exotic). But there is little or no variation evident in burials involving different age groups over the use of copper (or shells) as ornamentation. (If anything, women tended to have
Why copper, which for Europeans—who had left their Copper Age long behind—was a base if sometimes useful metal? George Hamell in an influential essay, “Mythical Realities and European Contact in the Northeast During the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,” offers an explanation. He suggests that a common thought-world and “cosmological substructure” were shared since at least the Late Archaic by all the Northeastern Indians—Algonquians, Iroquoians and Siouans alike. Hamell believes that this outlook heavily framed the reactions of Indians to Europeans and colored their receptivity to imported European goods which, all of a sudden, by the early 16th Century began trickling and then pouring into their indigenous communities.102 (More on what Hammell says about this subsequently.) From within this thought-world, Hamell argues, colors had an important cognitive role “in categorizing and semantically charging social, antisocial, and asocial states of being, the cognitive and behavioral contexts of these states of being, and the primary material culture manifestations of these states of being.” The reddish color of native copper (and of ochre which was commonly deposited with the bodies in burials) possessed a strong symbolic association, as did the colors white and dark-blue or black. The color red was associated with the animate, emotive aspects of life while white connoted life’s cognitive aspects and black their void. (These two latter colors, white and dark-blue, also happen to be the

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been buried with more shell adornment than men.) Nor does the choice of burial modes, simple interment versus cremation of the body, seem to show any meaningful difference in terms of the inclusion of burial goods. The site’s archaeologists speculate that the two male exceptions whose bodies were interred with a lot of ornaments and other exotic burial goods—snake bones, in one case—may have been shamans for whom these items thus might have held a occupational functionality. They conclude that any variation among the burials is consistent with a “roughly egalitarian” food-foraging society.

principal colors of that other most highly prized, symbolically potent item in the social reproduction of Northeastern (and some other) Indian groups, namely beads fabricated out of particular kinds of marine shells – the famous “wampum.”) Copper was associated with certain powerful manitous that had animal avatars. The possession of copper was thought to bring good fortune, copper being shaped with designs appealing to the manitou.103

Whatever the spiritual value of copper, the ethnohistorical sources suggest that, among Late Woodland and Early Contact period Indians in the Northeast, large flashy copper objects in the form of breastplates, knives and the like were displayed and used for gifts with counterparts, if not necessarily monopolized, by persons of higher status. In the early 16th Century, Cartier sailing up the St. Lawrence for the French king a few years later, reported that a group of the Iroquoian “king” Donnacina’s people, “to cheer him in his captivity” – Cartier was taking him away for a year’s visit in France -- made him gifts of three bales of furs and “most precious perhaps of all, a knife of red copper.”104 Samuel de Champlain, who was en route in 1610 with Algonquian and other Indian allies to fight the Iroquois, was met by an Algonquian “chief” in the same region who “drew from a sack a piece of copper a foot long, which he gave me. This was very handsome and quite pure.” For the Indian sagamore, this was obviously a significant event, although Champlain from his own cultural standpoint sniffed that while he was “very glad of this present,” it was of “small value.”105 Another member of Gosnold’s 1602 voyage, Gabriel Archer, penned a narrative in which he described


Indians who came out in canoes to trade with the crew of the English ship moored near Cape Cod. “One had hanging about his neck a plate of rich copper, in length a foot, in breadth half a foot for a breastplate, the ears of all the rest had pendants of copper.” The Pilgrim leaders, perhaps having informed themselves from such narratives of earlier visits to New England or from accounts from the Virginia colony that also mentioned copper, seem to have had some sense of the value copper held among the peoples they would be encountering for affirming status and building alliances. Early in their relationship with their Indian neighbors, they sent as a gift to the Wampanoag Chief Sachem Ossamequin (Massasoit) a pair of knives and a large copper chain with a jewel to wear— which he was asked to send back with messages to them as a sure sign that they were from him.

Thus, imported copper goods were a point of articulation between the European and Native American societies in New England, although not as important as wampum. Objects like furs and hides, brought from near or far, might also have served as prestige items in these societies and been used for marking status and otherwise for social reproduction. As we have seen from early English accounts, sachems in New England sometimes reserved to themselves certain parts of animals taken in the hunt. But because of their perishable nature, the possible pre-contact usage and patterns of trade and distribution involving such items

106 Gabriel Archer, Gosnold’s Settlement at Cuttyhunk (Boston: Directors of the Old South Work, 1902).

cannot be substantiated from the archaeological record. In any case, copper and even more so the following item to be discussed, namely wampum, manage to give us a sense of a Prestige Goods Network in place for a regional pre-contact world system.

**Prestige Goods Network: Wampum**

Alongside copper, the other lasting and indisputably important prestige good among New England Indians, well-documented both archaeologically and ethnohistorically, are the shell beads often referred to by the English as “wampum” or “peage.” Wampum beads were of two varieties: “Wampumpeag” was white in color and was generally crafted out of the inner columns (columellae) left over when the outer whorls were broken off of the shell of several species of the small northern whelk mollusk (g. *Busycon*). (“Wompi” means “white” in the Narragansett language; “peag” means “strung beads.”) What remained after this was accomplished was slowly and laboriously polished, then sliced into quarter-inch cylindrical lengths, and drilled lengthwise somehow - surprisingly given its importance, there are no detailed contemporary descriptions of the processes of making wampum – from each end possibly by using sandstone awls or by twirling a wooden, reed or bone rod in combination with an abrasive material such as sand. The “suckauhock” kind of bead was black or dark purple-colored. (“Sucki” means “black.”) It was manufactured by cracking out the half-inch dark spot or “eye” where the muscle attaches in the hard-shell northern quahog clam species (*Mercinaria mercinaria*), then polishing and drilling it the same way as was done with the white beads. The beads, when finished, were then strung together on strings made out of hemp or animal sinews or they were sewn onto deerskin in the form of girdles or the famous
wampum belts used as mnemonic devices and records in diplomacy. To produce the darker beads required more time and effort, in as much as there was from each quahog shell only a single bead of the suitable color. Thus, in accordance with the labor theory of value put forward by the classical economists and endorsed later in his critique of capitalism by Marx, the value of one black bead was set at twice as much as each of the white beads. A skilled Indian hand-worker might be able to turn out no more than fifty of the beads per day.

The primary location for wampum production in the Northeast region was on the facing sides of Long Island Sound. This was the overlapping ecological zone that was home to both these two mollusk species. Whelks live as far south as Florida but no farther north along the Atlantic coast than Cape Cod above which the waters become too cold for them to tolerate. The habitat of the northern quahog at that time, before it was introduced elsewhere by whites, was between the New Jersey shore and the Maine coast. Both animals prefer the sandy or silty waters of salt-water bays and estuaries, with the adult filter-feeding quahog buried in the bottom and the whelk, which is predatory on other mollusks (including

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the quahog) or feeds as a scavenger, moving along the bottom in search of its meals. The mollusks out of which the two forms of wampum were made were easily procured by human foragers, especially at low-tide -- just as they are still being harvested by modern-day clammers -- and after the succulent innards were eaten, the shells might be worked on (or simply discarded, contributing to the many Indian shell midden heaps that are still visible in quite a few coastal locations today). It is not clear exactly where or at what point in time the practice originated of making beads as symbolic and decorative objects out of the shells of these two particular mollusks. (Clam and other mollusk shells were also widely used among the Native Americans as food utensils, knives, scrapers, hoes and other utilitarian

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112 Clams were also dried and traded or delivered as tribute inland with wampum. Native copper beads, chains and other ornamentation were also prestige items among the Indians of the Northeast. See Charles C. Willoughby, “Dress and Ornaments of the New England Indians,” American Anthropologist 7, no. 3 (1905): 506.
purposes. Indeed, as with other matters involving coastal New England dwellers, this is a matter of ongoing scholarly debate. Some archaeologists have argued that wampum is not necessarily of very ancient provenance at all. On the other hand, archaeologists have recovered shell beads, or the blanks needed for making them, at a number of sites in the Northeast dating from at least the Middle to Late Woodland (200 to 1510 CE). The presence of “proto-wampum” and bead blanks for local craftsmen at sites as far inland as western New York would seem to indicate the existence of some kind of pre-contact trading networks, although needless to say through what means it may have gotten to where it was found and the meaning and uses it may have had for those who once possessed it and placed it in burials cannot be read off directly from the archaeological evidence. Lynn Ceci has postulated that what such evidence does show is the coming into being, well before contact with Europeans and their Capitalist World System, of Wallersteinian center-periphery relationships in an “interaction sphere” linking the Hopewell and Mississippian mound-building cultures of the interior with the hunting-gathering peoples of our Northeastern coast. Perhaps so, although


114) It has been argued that the famous wampum belts of the Iroquois and others, instrumental in the conduct of diplomacy and used as mnemonic devices – belts with intricate designs consisting of thousands of beads -- may be a product solely of the early historical period and the influence of Christian missionaries. Joseph Marshall Becker, "A Wampum Belt Chronology: Origins to Modern Times." *Northeast Anthropology* no. 63 (2002): 49-70. Becker also argues that wampum as such, meaning uniformly-produced tubular beads associated with specific production centers, was not present in the Northeast until the late sixteenth or early seventeenth centuries, in other words post-contact.

much more archaeological evidence needs to be assembled and collated to substantiate such a perhaps over-eager hypothesis. Shell items found in the Midwest seem to have come mostly from Gulf Coast sources.  

What does the ethnohistorical evidence tell us about the use and circulation of wampum? “Around the neck hung a wide chain decorated with many different-colored stones,” said Verrazano of the two impressively-dressed “kings,” one older, one younger, whom he encountered near present-day Newport in 1524. What he thought were stones may well have been wampum instead. When Cartier in 1534 was making-off with the Indian chief Donaconna to France, he was presented with wampum in an attempt to conciliate him and ransom Donaconna. William Bradford observed that the peoples of the same region 

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116 Also of help in understanding these kinds of center-periphery relationships, if that is what they were, would be further chemical analysis matching up shell bead artifacts from the interior with their sources in particular coastal waters where the living animals built their shells. On this form of analysis, see Cheryl Claassen and Samuella Sigmann, “Sourcing Busycan Artifacts of the Eastern United States,” American Antiquity 58, no. 2 (April 1993): 333-347.


118 James Phinney Baxter, A Memoir of Jacques Cartier, Sieur de Limoilou: His Voyages to the St. Lawrence (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1906), 37. A similar event happened during Henry Hudson’s expedition searching for a Northwest Passage in 1609. On the upper reaches of the river named for him, friendly Indians – probably Mahicans – were invited aboard Hudson’s ship. Their elderly chief got drunk and fell unconscious and was kept on the ship, whereupon some of his people who did know how to interpret what was going on came back “and brought stropes of beads: some had sixe, seven, eight, nine, ten; and gave him. So he slept all night quietly.” Georg Michael Asher, ed., Henry Hudson the Navigator: The Original Documents (London: Printed for the Haklayt Society, 1860), 83-86.
where Verrazano had touched-in a hundred years before, specifically the Narragansetts and the Pequots who lived to the west of the New Plymouth Colony and who had not been touched as much by the epidemic diseases that had devastated the neighboring Wampanoags and Massachusetts, were the main manufacturers and suppliers of wampum and that they “grew rich and potent by it; whereas the rest, who use it not, are poor and beggerly.”

When the exiled Roger Williams living amongst the Narragansetts observed that the “Indians bring downe all sorts of Furs, which they take in the Countrey, both to the Indians and to the English for this Indian Money,” it is likely that he was observing a relationship of longstanding only accelerated by virtue of contact with the Europeans via the beaver fur trade. Relationships involving trade in shell beads between coastal peoples and interior peoples took place elsewhere on the North American continent; it indeed, seems to have been commonplace. At some point, these relationships ought to be looked at comparatively.

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121 For instance, the Chumash on the southern California coast and offshore islands have strong similarities with the New England coastal Indians. See Lynn H Gamble, *The Chumash World at European Contact: Power, Trade, and Feasting Among Complex Hunter-Gatherers* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008). The experiences of the Spaniard Cabeca de Vaca may provide some valuable hints about the characteristics of the coastal-interior shell trade among pre-contact or early contact Indians. de Vaca was a survivor of the ill-fated 1527 Narvaez expedition to Florida. During the several years de Vaca worked his way gradually back to Mexico along the Caribbean passing from one Indian group to the next. “The description of his adventures and sufferings forms one of the most remarkable early works on North America, being, indeed, the first that treats of the interior of the country and of its native population. For the latter reason it is of particular value to the ethnologist, presenting, as it does, the Indians as they were seen by the first white visitors. While he sojourned among the Charruco Indians, a tribe inhabiting the coast, he carried on the business of a trader, which, as he observes, suited him very well, because it protected him at least from starvation. The excursions undertaken in the pursuit of his trade sometimes extended as far as forty or fifty leagues from the coast into the interior of the district. His wares consisted of pieces and “hearts” of sea-shells (pedacos de caracoles de la mar y corayones de ellos), of shells employed by the Indians as cutting implements, and of a smaller kind that was used as money. These objects of trade he transported to parts distant from the sea, exchanging them there for other articles of which the coast-people were in want, such as hides, a red earth for painting their faces, stones for arrowheads, hard reeds for shafting the latter, and, finally, tufts of deer's hair dyed of a scarlet color, which were worn as head-dresses.”

Rau, Charles. "Ancient Aboriginal Trade in North
Early Europeans and quite a few latter-day scholars not uncommonly mistook wampum for money – the version among an “inferior race” of their own specie using worthless “trinkets” instead of more truly valuable and durable gold and silver.\textsuperscript{122} Money is a special kind of commodity that appears at a certain stage of economic complexity, one that acts as a universal equivalent and repository of value to mediate and facilitate the exchange of other commodities. Wampum like other articles in these Native American societies had no exchange value, only a use-value – at least until Europeans found it a handy point of “articulation” for their own self-aggrandizing purposes within the context of a spreading spiderweb of monetized relations of production and exchange. Roger Williams, who had more prolonged and intimate connection with Indians than any other 17\textsuperscript{th} Century New Englander, expressed bafflement concerning the Indians he knew who carried around with them a substantial amount of wampum but asked to borrow a knife from an impecunious Englishman when, Williams seems to have been thinking, the Indians could simply have used their store of “money” to purchase one instead.\textsuperscript{123} Williams did not comprehend well enough through his own cultural lenses what he was seeing. Sharing among friends and kin was a customary cultural behavior among Indians, and wampum was not money exchangeable for whatever desired articles that came along. Williams remarked that the


\textsuperscript{123} Roger Williams, \textit{A Key into the Language of America} (Bedford, Mass.: Applewood Books, 1997), 164.
Indians could be clever and persistent bargainers, but the idea of a monetary price on “goods” was a concept foreign to the Indians prior to their coming into contact with the Europeans. Their societies enjoyed what the economic anthropologist Karl Polanyi called “reciprocal” or “redistributive” political economies, albeit, as we have witnessed, having varying degrees of equality and hierarchy. Lewis Henry Morgan, the frequently, if not unfailingly, accurate and astute 19th Century student of the Six-Nations Iroquois and other Northeastern Indians, had this to say – quite correctly, I think, in this case -- about whether wampum was truly a form of money among the Indians or not:

Wampum has frequently been called the money of the Indian; but there is no sufficient reason for supposing that they ever made it an exclusive currency, or a currency in any sense, more than silver or other ornaments. All personal ornaments, and most other articles of personal property passed from hand to hand at a fixed value; but they appear to have had no common standard of value until they found it in our currency. If wampum had been their currency it would have had a settled value to which all other articles would have been referred. There is no doubt that it came nearest to a currency than any other species of property among them, because its uses were so general, and its transit from hand to hand so easy, that every one could be said to need it.

Yet these smooth, pretty beads were clearly more than mere “personal ornaments.” As Morgan observed, they were socially necessary. The manitou they were thought to possess was needed for social reproduction -- at least for some of the Indian groups in our region – and its usage seems to have spread after the arrival of the Europeans. Shell beads, for whatever historical, sociological and psychological reasons, became a highly-valued

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124 Ibid, 162-163.


prestige item among many if not all Native Americans including some more distantly from the coastal sources. Whether the wearing and otherwise displaying of wampum was restricted to sachems and other high-ranking Indians in the southern New England simple or complex chiefdoms is not clear. What is clear is that it was used to indicate status and rank. Lechford observed in his “Plain Dealing or News from New England” that “some of their chiefe men goe so” . . . [with] “beads of wampompeag about their necks, and a girdle of the same, wrought with blew and white wampom, after the manner of chequer work, two fingers broad, about their loynes:]. . . and pendants of wampom, and such toyes in their ears. And their women, some of the chiefe, have faire bracelets, and chaines of wampom.” Joselyn in his account of two mid-17th century voyages made to New England reported that among natives

Their merchandize are their beads, which are their money, of these there are two sorts blew Beads and white Beads, the first is their Gold, the last their Silver, these they work out of certain shells so cunningly that neither Jew nor Devil can counterfeit, they drill them and string them, and make many curious works with them to adorn the persons of their Sagamours and principle men and young women, as Belts, Girdles, Tablets, Borders for their women’s hair, Bracelets, Necklaces, and links to hang in their ears. Prince Phillip a little before I came for England coming to Boston had a Coat on and Buskins set thick with these Beads in pleasant wild works and a broad Belt of the same, his Accoutrements were valued at Twenty pounds.

Moreover, the power of sachems was vested in and gauged to a considerable extent

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127 See the comments of William Bradford: “And strange it was to see the great allteration it made in a few years amonge the Indeans them selves; for all the Indeans of these parts, and the Massachussets, had none or very little of it. but the sachems and some spatiall persons that wore a little of it for ornamente.” William Bradford, History of Plymouth Plantation, 1620–1647, vol. 2, 2 vols. (Boston: The Massachusetts Historical Society, 1912), 43.


129 John Josselyn, An Account of Two Voyages to New England, Made During the Years 1638, 1663 (Boston: William Veazie, 1865), 110-111.
by their ability to amass and display wampum and to control its redistribution in order to build up a set of loyal clients and to successfully perform other leadership functions. New sachems might be “crowned” with wampum in their investment ceremonies, and sachems and their principal female consorts commonly wore and paraded around large amounts of wampum on their persons. Mary Rowlandson in her “narrative” of her captivity during King Philip’s War described a dance party, perhaps some kind of redistribution ritual to rebuild support for the rebellion – which was then at a low ebb for the Indians -- at which her highly fashion-conscious Pokanoket “mistress” Weetamoo, the widow of Metacom’s older brother Wamsutta (Alexander), was decked out in serious bling – bracelets, necklaces and jeweled earrings plus a coat “from the loins upward” covered with wampum. (Rowlandson says that Weetamoo had been fabricating wampum girdles as her everyday work.) As the event grew into the evening, the dancers started “throwing out their wampum to the standers-by.” In the first direct meeting-up of the Pilgrims with the Wampanoag grand sachem at his seat in Pakanoket (Mount Hope), Massasoit was seen to be “little or nothing differing” from his followers in his attire aside from “a great Chaine of white bone Beades about his neck” along with a small bag of tobacco from which he drew to smoke. Maassoit’s son,

130 Edgar Mayhew Bacon, *Narragansett Bay, Its Historic and Romantic Associations and Picturesque Setting* (New York and London: G. P. Putnam’s sons, 1904), 353. The new sachem “crowning” described here, however, took place in 1770. So this ritual may well have been influenced by acculturation of the Narragansetts to English ways.


132 *Mourt's Relation, or Journal of the Plantation at Plymouth* By William Bradford, Edward Winslow (Boston, 1865), 94. See also, the description of a well-dressed sagamore with a “good store of Wampompeage begirting his loynes” etc. in William Wood’s *New England Prospect* (London, 1634), 74. Farther south, Pohawatan was described lying in state by John Smith as “richly hung with mayne Chaynes of great Pearles” and his young female attendants wearing “a great Chaine of white Beades over their shoulders.” *True Relation of Virginia*, 33-34.
Metacom (King Philip), and his successor as Wampanoag chief sachem, was said to have carried around an enormous amount of wampum wound about his head and torso. In a sense, this was his royal treasury as well as being a sign of his rank and authority – a treasury that he carried around with him on his person sort of like a money belt. Yet, it was a treasury quite unlike the English royal mint stocked with specie. Wampum might be productively employed in facilitating diplomatic efforts in making war or peace or it could be awarded for bravery in battle much like a ribbon or medal. Metacom reportedly would tear off parts of the wampum he wore to dispatch by messenger to other sachems in his efforts to pull together and hold together a pan-tribal, anti-English alliance. But, at least before the arrival of the Europeans who converted it into a kind of money to facilitate trade with the Indians and, in the absence of specie, to use among themselves, it could not be used to buy military supplies as the Europeans might ordinarily do with the monetary deposits in their treasury.

Wampum was a gift rendered in an economy based on redistribution, not a form of money.

If wampum was to be given out, it also had to come in. In southern New England, wampum was a major form of successful sachems’ tributary income imposed on the conquered or intimidated. The Narragansetts and Pequots demanded and received wampum as tribute from the Montauks of Long Island, who were one of the principal producers. In the early 17th Century, the Mohawks made the rounds – so intimidating had the Mohawks made themselves that only a couple of old men were dispatched for the task – collecting an annual

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133 N. S., *The Present State of New-England, with Respect to the Indian War* [1675] (Boston: Josiah Drake, 1833), 28; Samuel Gardner Drake, *The Book of the Indians of North America, Book III* (Boston: Josiah Drake, 1833), 27; Samuel Gardner Drake, *Biography and History of the Indians of North America, from Its First Discovery, Book I*, (Boston: B. B. Mussey, 1851), 54-55???. King Philip kept this power signifier/transmitter, including an amazing nine inch-wide belt that reached from his shoulders to his ankles made out of“black and white wampum in various figures and flowers and pictures of many birds and beasts,” aboard his person until when he was hunted down and murdered.
wampum tribute from the Indians of the Hudson River Valley and western Connecticut.\textsuperscript{134} The intake of tributary wampum could be used by ambitious sachems to build up stronger local client base by rewarding warriors with some of the wampum in order to expand those external tributary relations through conquest to bring in more loot. The aforementioned Captain Soso received a wampum reward, as well as land, from the grateful Narragansett chief sachems. Failure to keep the wampum coming in and flowing around in all of the requisite ways needed for social reproduction could be death to the career of a sachem. At best, the sachem ran the risk of being made into some other sachem’s subordinate through the desertion of his followers. In the aftermath the Pequot War, the Narragansett grand sachem Canonicus complained anxiously to Roger Williams that “his wars keep him bare” and that he badly needed the promised share of the wampum tribute imposed on the defeated Pequots with which to reward his warriors, as the English were paying money (and dividing up captives) among their own soldiers.\textsuperscript{135}

Not only did wampum have the power to “hire,” as the English conceived it, warriors (and assassins – an attempt was made against the life of the Mohegan sachem Uncas induced by a wampum gratuity from the Narragansetts and a “hit” was put on the English authorities


\textsuperscript{135} “Roger Williams to Gov. Vane, 1637,” John Russell Bartlett, ed., Letters of Roger Williams, Publications of the Narragansett Club 6 (Providence, R.I., 1874), 26, 58.
in Hartford by ambitious Connecticut River sachem Sequassen through issuance of the same means) but wampum also served many other societal functions. Wampum served as bride-wealth among these Indians. Williams described how this worked: “Generally the husband gives these payments [fathoms of wampum] for a Dowrie, (as it was in Israel) to the Father or Mother, or guardian of the maide.” The rate seems to have started at five fathoms (thirty feet worth) with ten fathoms the amount for “some great man’s Daughter.” A poor man might receive help accumulating wampum from his friends and neighbors.\footnote{Roger Williams, \textit{A Key into the Language of America} (Bedford, Mass.: Applewood Books, 1997), 147-148.} Among the Maliseet to the north of New England in historical times, where wampum was an imported item, the young male suitor built up as large a stock of wampum as he could by trading beaver pelts. He then turned over the wampum strings to his mother who found a \textit{kinap} (brave man, warrior, protector) to act as the intermediary with the family of her son’s intended. The wampum was left by the \textit{kinap}, after volubly praising the suitor’s hunting prowess and his other marriageable talents and traits, with the girl’s father or oldest family member. A later word back on acceptance of the wampum or the return of the wampum indicated the decision, pro or con, of the family and the girl.\footnote{Herbert Milton Sylvester, \textit{Indian Wars of New England}, vol. 2, 3 vols., Library ed. (Boston: W. B. Clarke Co, 1910), 67-68.} To the south of New England, among the Lenni Lenape, a new wife showed her new status by wearing wampum-bedecked clothes during her entire first year of marriage.\footnote{“Letter from Isaack de Rasieres to Samuel Blommaert, 1628(?)” in J. Franklin Jameson, ed., \textit{Narratives of New Netherland, 1609-1664} (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909), 107; William Nelson and Charles A. Shiner, \textit{History of Paterson and Its Environs (the Silk City): Historical, Genealogical, Biographical}, vol. 1 (New York: Lewis Historical Pub. Co, 1920), 21; Francis Vincent, \textit{A History of the State of Delaware: From Its First Settlement Until the Present Time, Containing a Full Account of the First Dutch and Swedish Settlements, with a Description of Its Geography and Geology} (Philadelphia: J. Campbell, 1870), 75.} The Rev. Ezra Stiles of New
Haven, Connecticut, later president of Yale University, who was intensely curious about
Indians customs, including their sexual practices, had a Narragansett informant fill him in
about weddings that were held accordingly to the “old Indian Way.” In this case, perhaps
reflecting a different sort of kinship relations than among the above, a mutual exchange of
belts of wampum between the families, returnable if divorce ensured, was necessary to seal
the deal.\(^\text{139}\)

Frank Speck, using enthnohistorical data, drew up back in 1919 an extensive and
detailed catalogue of functions that wampum had served among Algonguian-speaking
Indians in the Northeast (though mostly drawing upon his own fieldwork conducted among
the Abenaki): “for ornamentation, as tribute, as a bribe for murder, as ransom for captives
or as a compensation for crime, as a fine, as an urger to peace or as an incentive to war, as
presents between friends, as a recompense for the services of shamans, as a means of
proposing marriage, as conciliation for bereavement, and as the insignia of chiefs.”\(^\text{140}\)
Speck’s former student, the ethnohistorian George Snyderman, updating Speck in 1954,
added that wampum with its thick symbolic values was used by the Indians as a kind of
spiritual medicine - “a sedative to be administered to the contentious and injured; a healing
agent which would enable the sick and wronged to forget injuries.”\(^\text{141}\) When King Philip

\(^{139}\) Ezra Stiles, *Extracts from the Itineraries and Other Miscellanies of Ezra Stiles, D.d., Ll.d.,
1755-1794, with a Selection from His Correspondence*, ed. Franklin Bowditch Dexter (New Haven,
Conn.: Yale University Press, 1916), 141-142, 146.

\(^{140}\) Frank G. Speck, *The Functions of Wampum Among the Eastern Algonkian* (Lancaster,
Pa: American Anthropological Association, 1919). Speck makes the dubious presumption that most of the
ceremonial functions involving wampum, basically except for its use in wedding proposals, originated with the
League of the Iroquois.

\(^{141}\) George S. Snyderman, “The Functions of Wampum,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical
Society* 98 (1954): 469-494. For more on this sort of usage, see Frank Gouldsmith Speck, “Spiritual
Significance of Wampum,” *Palacio*, no. 26 (1929): 143-144.
(Metacom) arrived at the battle scene at the key central Massachusetts town of Brookfield where the Nipmucks had just failed to destroy the town in their three-day siege due to the timely arrival of English reinforcements, he is said to have “refreshed their tired spirits” by presenting their demoralized leaders with a peck of wampum."

Wampum has been studied and written about extensively. But there is much more about wampum we would like to know to clarify its full societal role in the indigenous modes of production and reproduction. Roger Williams reported of the Indians with whom he was acquainted that “they that live upon the Sea side, generally make it [wampum], and as many make as will.” The shells, he reported in a section of his famous Key “Concerning Their Coyne,” were collected in the summer and stored up as overwintering work. Yet, as was not the case with the genderized division of labor with horticulture and hunting which he and a number of other early sources describe, we have no firm idea whether the manufacture of wampum was considered as a rule to be women’s work or men’s work or was perhaps performed by both. Williams elsewhere in the Key in a section on “Fish and Fishing,” specifically mentioned Indian women digging for clams at low tide; and, in a letter, he described one situation in which both male and female Narragansetts were clamming when

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they were violently set upon by Pequots and Mohegans. Trumbull reported that in his *History of Connecticut* that “squaws made caps of cloth, rising to a peak over the top of the head, and the fore part was beautified with wampum, curiously wrought upon them.” Yet, that description dates from well-after the arrival of the English, who introduced woven cloth to the Indians and among whom, in their own genderized division of labor, it was women who typically performed the work of spinning, weaving and sewing. Equally frustrating is that none of the ethnohistorical sources reveal anything about how the wampum in these societies was transferred from the direct producers, whoever they happened to be, and deposited into the hands and around the necks of a sachem or some other Indian worthy. For Marx, the key relationship for disentangling and making sense out of all of the other relationships in society was that between the direct producers and those who appropriated their labors. Did wampum flow from commoners to sachems as “gifts” on a regular and steady basis -- as we have seen maize to do? Did sachems set particular persons to work producing wampum for their uses. The sources I have combed can tell us nothing.

What we do in fact know, from examinations by anthropologists of other prestige

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145 Roger Williams, *A Key into the Language of America* (London, 1643), 114; John Russell Bartlett, ed., *Letters of Roger Williams, Publications of the Narragansett Club* 6 (Providence, R.I., 1874), 385. There is a bit of archaeological evidence that certain males were the persons who typically did the more skilled work of transforming the shell raw materials, perhaps collected by women as part of their food gathering work, into the finished beads. At the 17th Century Naragansett burial ground in Jamestown on Conanicut Island, Rhode Island, wampum making tools and what seems to be a whole kit for making wampum were found in a couple of male graves. See William Scranton Simmons, *Cautantowwit's House: An Indian Burial Ground on the Island of Conanicut in Narragansett Bay* (Providence: Brown University Press, 1970).

146 Benjamin Trumbull, *A Complete History of Connecticut, Civil and Ecclesiastical, from the Emigration of Its First Planters, from England, in the Year 1630, to the Year 1764; and to the Close of the Indian Wars*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (New Haven, Conn.: Maltby, Goldsmith and Co., 1818), 53. John Pynchon, the paramount English fur trader in the Connecticut River Valley, put Indian women and children to work at home stringing wampum for his trade. But this may more represent his own gender expectations. Sylvester Judd, *History of Hadley, Including the Early History of Hatfield, South Hadley, Amherst, and Granby, Massachusetts* (Springfield, Mass.: H. R. Huntting & Company, 1905), 125-126.
goods systems, is that these kinds of hierarchical systems are inherently unstable as a rule. Greater security for chiefs, as Timothy Earle points out in his Marxian *How Chiefs Come to Power: The Political Economy in Prehistory*, comes from situations where the chiefs have managed to obtain control over the basic means of production, above all land for growing foodstuffs and other necessary products. Prestige goods are nice and may be seen as important, even vital, but they are ultimately dispensable. Furthermore, while good land may be limited—“circumscribed” by nature or because of human improvements—prestige goods are hard to control monopolistically. A chief who feels he is sitting pretty may one day find all-of-a-sudden that rivals or even members of the *hoi polloi* have found their own access route to the prestige goods needed to affirm power and to enable social reproduction, circumventing and undermining the chief’s sources. Or, when the prestige items have their origins, as they quite often do, from locations far beyond the horizon providing them with the cachet of exoticism, changes that happen at those source locations, outside of awareness much less of any ability to control or modify them, may yield very weighty impacts upon the local societies. William Wood provided perhaps a hint of this insecurity in his “New England Prospect” when he related a comical anecdote about a well-accoutered and swaggering sagamore who was unlucky at gambling and had lost all of his “conceited wealth, leaving him in minde and riches equall with his naked attendants.” In that humbled condition he remained, Wood says, “till a new taxation furnish him with a fresh supplie.”147 As we shall see in the next chapter, all these various happenstances befell Indians in New England with the coming of Europeans and their new and seductive commodity-based economy. Moreover, in as much as Indian sachems had not established much, if any, control over

agricultural production or, it would seem, over the clamming grounds for wampum production, this put them in a serious bind for how to maintain their familiar power and status, especially after they ran out of the prestige goods, the beaver pelts and other furs, that the Europeans so highly desired.

Setting that aside for now, what might the circulation of wampum tell us about the dimensions of a possible pre-contact regional world-system? Did shell beads make their way to the interior from the southern New England coastal producers during the Late Woodland pre-contact period constituting part of a core-periphery type of relationship? Archaeologist James Bradley has researched the presence in the archaeological record of the marginella (Prunurn apicinurn) shell.\(^{148}\) Using it as a key marker, he traces trade networks flowing up (and presumably back down with other reciprocal items such as dressed-meat and furs) from the Chesapeake Bay and Susquehanna River into the interior as far north as the Iroquois, Neutral and Huron confederacies of central New York and southern Ontario. “Marine shell, and other exotic materials, had reached native peoples in central New York for over a thousand years by this route.” Comparing the Onondaga of the Finger Lakes region with the Pokanoket (Wampanoag) of Buzzard’s Bay and Cape Cod, he concludes that the Pokanoket “do not appear to have been involved at all in the marine shell network . . . [and] there is little evidence for the ornamental use of marine shell in this part of southern New England during either the Late Woodland or protohistoric period.”

Contrary to much of the existing literature, marine shell beads are a rare occurrence on Late Woodland and sixteenth-century Pokanoket sites. . . While it is likely that discoidally shaped shell beads were occasionally used by individuals of rank, widespread usage does not occur until the

intensification of contact and trade early in the seventeenth century. This archaeological assessment is born out by William Bradford's observation. "And strange it was to see the great alteration [the wampum trade] made in a few years among the Indians themselves; for all the Indians of these parts and the Massachusetts had none or very little of it...". For the Pokanoket, the making and using of "wampum" (in either discoidal or tubular form) was a seventeenth-century phenomenon.  

On the one hand, we might take this as a sign of the bounds of our putative Northeastern World-System. The one pre-contact exception, Bradley says “to this pattern of profound localism” for the Pokanoket, based on archaeological finds in Massachusetts and Maine, might have been an exchange network during the Middle and Late Woodland that brought native copper objects down the New England coast from Nova Scotia. On the other hand, the Wampanoag are never mentioned in the ethnographical sources as wampum-makers, and it would be premature to extend Bradley’s conclusion about the Pokanoket to those who were wampum-producers like the Narragansetts. It seems we historians of this period will have to await further work in this regard on shells and shell beads performed by the archaeologists. In any case, whether there was a pre-contact Northeastern World-System or not, the indigenous need for prestige goods, particularly wampum, would play a major role in drawing Native Americans into the economic embraces of the Modern World-System. We will return in our subsequent chapters to how these relationships using wampum developed.

The Bulk Goods Network

With bulk goods as opposed to prestige goods we are on more shaky evidentiary grounds because the perishable nature of many items that were possibly part of such trade like furs and skins, maize, meat, and fish leaves little archaeological evidence behind. Maize was only cultivatable, due to the climate, in certain areas of southern and coastal New

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149 Ibid, 41.
England and near lakes and in protected, low-lying intervales of rivers penetrating the interior.\textsuperscript{150} The Pilgrims discovered early on that they could obtain large quantities of furs to ship to England to pay off their debts to their financial backers by hauling maize in their shallop – maize that they had learned how to grow from the local Wampanoag – north to the Kennebec River country where it was welcomed by hunting and gathering natives.\textsuperscript{151} How did they know to do that? Were they piggy-backing on a preexisting indigenous trading network? We have already mentioned Roger Williams observation about furs pouring into the Narragansetts in exchange for wampum. Indians on the coast commonly smoked shellfish to sustain themselves over the winter months, and we find that the Mohawks in the early contact period would appear to demand smoked shellfish from Long Island Indians as tribute to take away home.\textsuperscript{152} Was there also a preexisting, non-coercive trade in such seafood items? We have a tantalizing report of Indians, as late as the third decade of the 19\textsuperscript{th} Century, following an old seasonal pattern of coming out of the interior – in their case all the

\textsuperscript{150} On the arrival and spread of maize cultivation in the Northeast, see: Jeffrey Bendremer and Robert E. Dewar, “The Advent of Prehistoric Maize in New England,” in Corn and Culture in the Prehistoric New World, ed. Christine A. Hastorf and Sissel Johannessen (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1994), 369-394; Elizabeth A. Little, “Kautantouwit’s Legacy: Calibrated Dates on Prehistoric Maize in New England,” American Antiquity 67 (2002): 109-18. Little hypothesizes that the speed with which maize spread in New England after 1250 A.D. was not due to appearance of new, better-adapted maize varieties but resulted instead from a superior practice of planting it symbiotically with nitrogen-fixing beans on calcareous flood-plain soils. Improving the Ph of the soil with shell materials in coastal areas was possible and may have happened but was comparatively labor-intensive. A careful analysis of climatic, soil, and other environmental constraints on the cultivation of maize in different parts of New England is David Demeritt, “Agriculture, Climate, and Cultural Adaptation in the Prehistoric Northeast,” Archaeology of Eastern North America 19 (1991): 183-202. He points to the greater variability of weather condition during the Little Ice Age as a factor that may have made reliance on maize too risky in many areas until the climate warmed and stabilized.


way from Lake Champlain – to the shore in Connecticut to stock up on supplies of fish by procuring it themselves. What did they bring with them to trade with the locals? Prestige goods? Bulk commodities? Again, we have scarcely a scintilla of useful information. There is but a single reference I have been able to find in combing the old histories -- this having interior Indians bringing down dried venison to the coastal Indians to exchange for their dried clams. Apparently, we will have to be satisfied with the confidence of Chase-Dunn and Hall that the Bulk Goods Network is small, plus not all that significant in its structural effects in pre-modern, pre-capitalist societies -- when Wallerstein takes it as his *sine qua non* for the existence and for measuring the extent of the Modern World-System. As we shall see, some Indians in our region did provide bulk goods, maize, for the white invaders at an early, critical stage of their settlement. This was an early point of economic articulation, although never as important in its systemic effects as furs were. And many of the Indians over time would become eager and increasingly dependent partakers of imported European bulk commodities, such as flour, beans and beans and textiles and clothing, along with new prestige goods, to utilize in their “traditional” forms of social reproduction.

Lithics, of course, are quite durable; and, as has been the case with things made out of native copper, there has been some success in tracing the materials in stone objects found in archaeological excavations back to their original sources as rocks before they were worked up into tools, weapons or ornaments. Given the weight involved and the concomitant costs of transport, there was an understandable tendency for local sources to be preferred, if

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available. However, in some cases, they were not. For instance, there were no sources for
good gray flint in New England. Other similar materials were substituted. But it seems that
some high-quality non-local flint was coming eastward into the Connecticut River Valley
from several quarry sites west of the Taconic in the Hudson River Valley and, in one case,
located west of the river and thus off of our geographical and conceptual “island” (but still
within the territory of other Algonquian-speaking Indians) – and also coming less commonly
from more-distant flint sources in the Mohawk Valley. These were relatively easy routes by
canoes. What looks like Hudson River Valley flint has been found at some sites as far away
as Maine, demonstrating what was probably down-the-line trade using land instead of water
routes.155 (For the locations of these and other lithic sources used by native peoples in and
around New England, see the “layer” on the Google Earth .kml file on the accompanying
CD-ROM.)

Trade interactions involving lithics from outside the region seem to have peaked
during the Late Archaic Period, which may have been a time of relative peacefulness. As we
have noted already, trade interactions then seem to have intensified and expanded during the
Early and Middle Woodland – but primarily within the region itself. Some greater influx of
exotic lithics from off the “island” may have occurred during the Late Woodland.156
However, the mapping by archaeologists of lithic finds with their sources – work that could

Archaeological Society 32, no. 3 (July 1971): 23-27. According to Fowler, artifacts made of yellow-tan flint
or “jasper” have also been found at some sites in New England which probably came into the area already
worked up, he believes, because of the lack of flakes from this stone, into projectile points from their sources
in Pennsylvania.

156 See Kenneth L. Feder, “Pots, Plants, and People: The Late Woodland Period in Connecticut,”
Times, They Were a-Changin’ (but Not That Much),” Bulletin, Archaeological Society of Connecticut 62
(1999): 155-174. Feder, however, does not say with any precision what “non-local” or “exotic” mean.
then be drawn upon to aid in finding the extent of interaction networks and the bounds of world-systems and their pulsations over time – is still scanty.\textsuperscript{157} Hence, we will have to wait for more of that kind of work to be performed and published.

**Core-Periphery Relations**

As we have attested in the preceding sections, there is evidence, especially with the Prestige Goods Network, for our hypothesis that an indigenous world-system existed in the Northeast of North America before and at the time of the arrival of the Europeans. What about relations of political domination and unequal economic exchange that would indicate not only a structure of core and periphery but hierarchical spatial relations? Can we reasonably postulate the world-system’s core being the larger, more “developed” societies having chief sachems and an internal system of ranks and vertical redistribution in southern coastal New England – the Massachuset, Wampanoags, Pequots, Narragansetts, and Pawtuckets (or Pennacook) – and the periphery of the world-system being the less complex, more egalitarian societies of the remainder of the Northeast – the Micmacs, Abenaki, Nipmucks, Quinipiacs, Podunks, Pocumtucks and so on? Were there sufficient two-way structural effects on this physical “island” that Indians apparently believed that they were living upon? The evidence is suggestive. If we map the tributary relations that we know about at or around the time of contact, we find examples of tribute flowing into that region and none flowing out. The Pequots, arguably the core of the core with their military strength,

\textsuperscript{157} Work has been done connecting six quarry sources of steatite (soapstone) in southern New England with where artifacts have been found. See W. A. Turnbaugh, S. P. Turnbaugh, and T. H. Keifer, “Characterization of Selected Soapstone Sources in Southern New England,” in *Prehistoric Quarries and Lithic Production*, ed. Jonathon E. Ericson and Barbara A. Purdy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 129-138.
were drawing tribute from the tribes along the Connecticut River as far as where Hartford is, from the more southerly Nipmucks (Quinebaugs) in northeastern Connecticut and central Massachusetts, and from the Montauk of the easternmost tip of Long Island, another probable part of the same Northeastern World-System that we are postulating here. (Eastern Long Island, following up on pre-existing Indian relationships, was initially incorporated by the Puritans as part of their colonial system until given by the Crown to New York.) According to Daniel Gookin, other subdivisions of the interior Nipmucks were subordinated and paid tribute to either the Narragansetts, the Pokanokets (Wampanoags), or the Massachuset. The Narragansetts and Wampanoags, we know, drew tribute from offshore islands, too. Moreover, these core societies were not just military powers – before European diseases depleted the number of warriors they could muster -- but were the producers and purveyors of wampum, with which they could command economic responses from those who did not have it and who needed it in various ways in order for effective internal social reproduction to take place. The caveat here is that societies along the coast were the first to make contact with the Europeans, which may have contributed to their “complexity,” as well as to their ability to dominate those who had not yet made contact.

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158 Daniel Gookin, “Historical Collections of the Indians in New England,” in *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society for the Year 1792*, vol. 1 (Boston, 1792), 147-148. These tributary relationships were conflictual and were subject to change over time. The Nipmucks, for instance, complained to the English that they were a “free people” and should not have to pay tribute to the Narragansetts. *Proceedings of the Worcester Society of Antiquity*, vol. 9 (Worcester, Mass: The Society, 1891), 54.

We will have to leave behind such thorny issues for now, pending further research. One additional window into possible cultural ties and systemic relationships -- one not investigated by Wallerstein or Chase-Dunn and Hall -- would be mapping the spread of epidemic diseases. By and large, these were not a factor before the eventful coming of the Europeans. Native Americans, long isolated from the mainstream of human development, were fortunate to suffer from very few such diseases. As we have noted already, a major devastating “plague” occurred between 1616 and 1622, once thought to have been smallpox

Hauptman and James Wherry, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990), 48-63. More recently, Ceci’s argument has been extended both northward and southward by archaeologist Marshall Joseph Becker, “Foragers in Southern New England: Correlating Social Systems, Maize Production and Wampum Use,” Archaeological Society of Connecticut Bulletin, no. 68 (2006): 75-107. Becker suggests that the largely foraging Delaware took up maize production only in the 17th Century because they needed a cash crop to trade for European goods in the absence of furs. He also suggests provocatively that population estimates for New England Indians and consequently the numbers of victims of European-brought diseases that struck down the Indians in a series of Seventeenth-Century epidemics may have to be revised downward in light of the newer notion that most of the Indians, maybe basically all of them, were primarily foragers and at best only “maize gardeners” on the side. On the other hand, another archaeologist working on Long Island, Philip Weigand, blames epidemic diseases, brought as early as Verazzano in the 1524, for depopulating Long Island villages and thus making the landscape on Long Island appear more empty and less socially “complex” that it actually had been before the arrival of Europeans. He argues, Ceci was mistaken to take seventeenth century English and Dutch accounts incautiously as her ethnographical baseline. Furthermore, a sedentary four-season settlement lifestyle had developed on coastal Long Island by c. 1000 through the “systematic exploitation of marine resources.” Stratification with the appearance of sachems, Weigand emphasizes, was indigenous – not the result of European contacts or from stepped-up wampum manufacture. Philip C. Weigand, “How Advanced Were Long Island’s Native Americans? A Challenge to the Traditional View,” Long Island Historical Journal 17, no. 1-2: 101-118.

The literature on diseases brought by Europeans to the “New World” and how they impacted native populations and cultures is an extensive and ever-growing one. Alfred W. Crosby Jr., “Virgin-Soil Epidemics as a Factor in the Aboriginal Depopulation in America,” The William and Mary Quarterly 3, 33 (April 1976): 289-299 was one of the first to call the attention of historians to the importance of this issue. Dean R. Snow and Kim M. Lanphear, “European Contact and Indian Depopulation in the Northeast: The Timing of the First Epidemics,” Ethnohistory 35 (1988): 15-33 provide a useful critical overview of possible epidemics for our region. They conclude, despite tales told by the Narragansetts of earlier ones, that there were no epidemics before the ones in the early Seventeenth Century and that those alone led to the deaths of up to 95% of the indigenous population in some localities. But there is new revisionist scholarship. Ann F. Ramenofsky, Alicia K. Wilbur, and Anne C. Stone, “Native American Disease History: Past, Present and Future Directions,” World Archaeology 35, no. 2 (October 2003): 241-257 and David S. Jones, “Virgin Soils Revisited,” in American Encounters: Natives and Newcomers from European Contact to Indian Removal, 1500-1850, ed. Peter C. Mancall and James Hart Merrell, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2007), 52-83 caution against a simplistic application of the disease factor to try to explain the ease of European conquest. Specific instances have to be studied and evaluated in their own right with regards to environmental and genetic variables.
or bubonic plague or yellow fever but now thought, based on the other symptoms reported along with the yellow discoloration of the victims, more likely to have been a virulent form of hepatitis. Hepatitis is spread through direct human-to-human contact or through the sharing of contaminated food and utensils, not communicated via an animal vector. The epidemic during those years was centered more or less around Cape Cod and Massachusetts Bay and extended north and south covering the area of peoples (Pokanoket, Massachuset, and Pawtucket) all speaking the same Massachuset dialect and possibly all being under the Massachuset chief sachem. Southward, the disease did not cross over Narragansett Bay to infect the large numbers of people living there. Northeastward, the spread of the disease seems to have stopped somewhere between the Kennebec and Penobscot rivers. And it seems to have stayed in a strip along the coast, being transmitted no more than twenty or thirty miles inland.\footnote{161} Circumstantial evidence suggests that this epidemic may have been introduced by ship-wrecked sailors from the French fishing fleet, and the ethnohistorian Neal Salisbury hypothesizes that the disease got established and spread where it did because these particular Indians were economically interdependent and had recently reorganized in response to new trading opportunities with the French appearing on the coast.\footnote{162} If correct, this would tend to go against our hypothesis of a much larger pre-contact World System. However, as far as I know there are no studies yet of the spread of diseases in other world systems.

Perhaps reflecting the enlargement of the regional interconnections brought about by


contact with the European-centered world system, the smallpox epidemic of 1633-34 spread much more widely. The disease, also spread through person-to-person contact and through the sharing of infected clothing and blankets, struck first around Boston arriving aboard one or more ships from England where smallpox was experiencing one of its periodic peaks. It afflicted only a few whites – most would have had it as a childhood disease and thus been made immune – but felled numerous Indians including the Massachuset great sachem, Chikatabut; Wonohaquaham, the sagamore around Charlestown and Chelsea; and Montowompate, the sagamore of what are now Lynn, Nahant and Saugus. This time the epidemic spread farther afield to the Narragansett Country where 700 Indians were said to have perished. This may have been carried inadvertently to them by the bark “Blessing of the Bay,” owned by Governor Winthrop, which departed Boston on a trading mission to Long Island in August, returning in October from stops made there, at the mouth of the Connecticut River and at the Dutch base in New Netherlands at the mouth of the Hudson. Or, according to a sketchy account, it may have been brought unknowingly aboard an Indian canoe from the sea as the result of an Indian’s visit to a friend among the Narragansetts. Over the winter of 1633-34, this disease wreaked havoc among Indians on the middle Connecticut River, where it could have been carried by the English exploratory party of John Oldham crossing overland from Massachusetts Bay or by Dutch traders coming up the river to set up a trading post or through Indians fleeing westward from the dangers of the infection. There the Indians, in William Bradford’s words, “dye[d] like rotten sheep,” including the local sachem and almost all of his near friends and relatives. Northward the killer disease struck
as far as the English base on the Piscataqua River. Beyond New England, smallpox came to the Mohawks by December 1634, brought up the Hudson by Dutch fur traders or through Mahican intermediaries between trade on the two river, and killed many of them, too.

This particular epidemic seems to have burned itself out. But in 1638 the “New Supply,” Robert Taylor shipmaster, once more brought in the smallpox from England to Boston. After doing some further damage locally, it spread to even remoter regions than previously. As reported in the Jesuit Relations, Kichesipirini Indians from the Ottawa River took the smallpox to Quebec from a trading trip they made to the Abenaki country in Maine where it was rampant. There it took off among the as yet untouched Indian population. Then Huron traders returning from Quebec who had “thoughtlessly mingled” with the Algonquins carried it west to their country. There in 1639-40, appearing on top of a series of other death-dealing disease outbreaks striking since 1634 of measles, strep infections, and scarlet fever

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stemming from direct or indirect contacts with the bodies of French immigrants (including newly-arrived children bearing typical European childhood diseases) on the St. Lawrence, it resulted in the decimation of their village-based populations. Total Huron losses from all of these horrible disease epidemics, one right after another, amounted to some sixty percent.\textsuperscript{166}

Evidence about what happened early on with the more northern and interior New England Indians, who were largely away from the gaze and record-keeping of whites, is more fragmentary. But, if at first they were safe from this destruction, that isolation did not last long as trade routes penetrated into their country from several directions. In June 1646, three canoes of Abenaki arrived in Quebec and reported “that a malady which caused vomiting of blood had destroyed a good part of their nation.”\textsuperscript{167} Jesuit Father Gabriel Drueilletes, who later that same year traveled down the length of the Kennebec River to its mouth and set up a mission at the invitation of the Abenaki above the Pilgrim fur trading post at Cushnoc, found plenty of sickness among them.\textsuperscript{168} Perhaps this was the “malignant fever” – probably influenza -- that Governor Winthrop reported was prevalent and killing some around Boston in the spring of 1646 and, as an “epidemical sickness,” had spread “through the country


\textsuperscript{167} Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., \textit{The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents}, vol. 28 (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers Company, 1886), 203.

among Indians and English, French and Dutch” by the following summer. The Modern World-System was not only a system of commerce and trade, of wealth accumulation, impoverishment and exploitation but also a system of death-dealing disease for those unfortunate indigenous peoples who became entangled in its spreading networks one way or another. In colonial New England, a succession of other epidemics followed every decade or so throughout the 17th and early 18th Centuries. These could all be mapped, revealing the spread not only of diseases but also of connections, directly or indirectly, with the Modern World-System. What effects did these epidemics have on the hierarchies in native societies? But we have gotten somewhat ahead of our story! Again, more research is needed on whether diseases are good indicators, if not necessarily constitutors, of underlying societal structural relations.

Regardless of whether there was a core-periphery relationship or not in an indigenous system, we have identified, from our examination of the forms of social reproduction, a number of possible points of articulation for the incoming capitalist mode of production. In the dissertation chapters that follow, we will be examining in detail how this happened with respect to the main means of production, land and labor. From persons determining their

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own destinies, (within indigenous structural enablers and constraints), the native inhabitants – in spite of their own best efforts and, at the same time, ironically quite often because of their own best efforts to fulfill “traditional” expectations – would come to be subsumed and dominated – “peripheralized” – by the powerful political, military and economic forces associated with the Modern World-System. The Northeastern World-System would be undermined and destroyed – yes, in part, through the deployment of “guns, germs, and steel” by the European invaders and settlers and through their manipulation of rivalries among various indigenous groups – but also by the Europeans playing upon the internal structural patterns and “laws of motion” that were present already within the indigenous “modes.”
Chapter Three: People “Meet Up”/Social Structures
“Articulate”

One of the principal vectors connecting the aboriginal inhabitants of the Northeast with the Modern World-System was the fur trade. Various rationales have been advanced by scholars for the eager involvement of Indians in the fur trade. Most provocatively, Calvin Martin presented a “cultural relativist” argument that Indians were able to collaborate with the Europeans in the fur trade, in which their labor was essential, because, given their cultural assumptions, they somehow came to blame the beavers and other fur-bearing animals for the destructive epidemic diseases introduced coincidentally by the Europeans. This undermined their traditional cultural respect for the animals and sustainable relationships with them, instigating them to wage an exterminationist “war against the animals” and enabled them to interact successfully with the capitalistic values of the Europeans which were foreign to their cultural mind-set. ¹ Martin’s explanation is very weak on the evidence. The late great Canadian ethnohistorian Bruce Trigger has labeled this sort of explanation “romantic” and has presented a strong “rationalist and materialist” counter-argument. He maintains that for Indians dealing with Europeans, “while cultural beliefs may have significantly influenced Indian reactions in the early stages of their encounters with Europeans, in the long run rationalist calculations came to play a preponderant role.” It is true that indigenous people did not necessarily step up production of furs in response to the higher prices offered them, as might be expected in theories of classical and neo-classical trans-cultural, self-maximizing

“economic rationalism.” But Trigger observes that nomadic hunters were limited in a practical way by the amount of goods that they could reasonably lug around with them on their treks. Thus “it made sense for native hunters to collect fewer furs when those were sufficient to satisfy their needs. Under these circumstances, minimizing effort made more sense than maximizing profits.” Trigger points out that the bulk of the items that interested the Indians in trade with the Europeans were practical objects that promised greater efficiency or ease in their existing labor processes—ones such as metal knives, hatchets and kettles—or goods that promised greater creature comfort such as woolen blankets and clothing. In short, Indians became dependent upon these goods, Trigger asserts, because of their superior usefulness, and fairly quickly these foreign-made goods came to replace many articles of their own former home production.²

My own interpretation, based on the neo-Marxist theories we explored in Chapter One, is closer to Trigger’s materialist one, but it looks at the ways human social behavior is mediated through political-economic structures rather than coming out of some kind of direct translation of material needs or drives—for eating, sex and reproducing, etc.—into social and cultural behaviors (as we might find most baldly put, for instance, in the “cultural materialism” of Marvin Harris). Another way to put this point is that societies possess different “economic rationalities,” a point well-made by substantivist anthropologists like Karl Polanyi as well as by Marxists.³ I hope to show how by taking such an updated historical


³ See Maurice Godelier, *Rationality and Irrationality in Economics* (New York,: Monthly Review Press, 1973) and Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2001). The difference between the Marxist and substantivist anthropological approaches is that the former focuses on forms of production as the key to understanding why societies are as they are while the latter focuses on forms of circulation and exchange. I see these two theoretical approaches as
materialist approach – and by building on these other scholars’ explanations -- we can achieve another, more cogent explanation for Indian involvement in the fur trade. This approach of mine is somewhat different, too, from that undertaken by Richard White in his masterly work on “The Middle Ground” where Indians and whites of various sorts found a common *modus vivendi* in the North American Midwest, in great part via the fur trade. White is conversant with dependency theory and with world-system theory’s notions of core and periphery. However, he ultimately relies upon areas of difference and congruence in systems of cultural meaning rather than on modes of production, reproduction or accumulation and their articulations as we do. Before proceeding any further, it is necessary to say a bit more about the nature of the fur trade itself and how it evolved over time, particularly in southern New England -- which we are taking as our focus because of the greater availability of records and other materials than elsewhere in the region.

Our central argument here can be summarized as follows: Two world-systems with their respective modes of production and reproduction came into contact and articulated through prestige goods. European traders and merchants obtained profitable furs – which for European consumers were prestige goods. At the same time, through their relationships with whites, Native Americans obtained and incorporated into their cultures a variety of items that complementary in many, if not all, respects.


5 A more complete historical account and theoretical analysis would necessarily have to encompass the fur trade between the French and the Dutch and the Indians, along with that of the English, and how that all fit into articulation of the periphery with the center of the Modern World-System of which these various Europeans were the early vectors in this part of the world. But to do so is beyond the scope of the present study.
improved their lives materially AND that could be plugged into “traditional” forms of social reproduction. This started out as a relationship of relative amity and equity, but over time the indigenous side became increasingly dependent upon the other (while Europeans had the option of turning to other sources of supply). With fur-bearing animals exhausted and with growing indebtedness to Europeans, Native Americans, in order to maintain “traditional” forms of social reproduction that were relying more and more upon imported goods, were increasingly forced to agree to part with the only other thing they had at hand that Europeans with their growing populations seriously wanted – their land. These land sales were performed primarily by sachems pursuant to their customary role of distributors of the land on behalf of the tribal community or lineage. In this chapter and the next, we will be looking at these historical transformations making special use of a large original database of Indian Deeds in New England and searching, among other things, for correlations between the timing of land sales and customary seasonal redistributive festivals and activities among the Indians that were managed by the sachems. This will provide corroboration, we hope, for our hypothesis and support for the value of the Marxist structural theories that have already been described and applied to New England’s native societies.

The New England Fur Trade

Though greatly overshadowed by the Pilgrims and the Puritans in most history books, the earliest English efforts at actual colonization in what became New England were not motivated by religion but by commercial interests in fish and furs -- to which we should also add lumber, masts and other wood products – along with continuing hopes to discover a
northern short-cut to the riches of China. Exploratory voyages to the northern New England coast, variously sponsored by Bristol, London and Plymouth merchant groups, were mounted during the early 1600s. Furs, sassafras (thought to be a remedy for syphilis) and other marketable and profitable commodities were shipped home. Then in 1607, contemporaneously with the colonization of Jamestown in Virginia, the Popham Colony, named for its early leader George Popham, was established on a peninsula at the mouth of Maine’s Sagadahoc (Kennebec) River in an area explored previously by George Weymouth and Martin Pring. This venture’s backers and investors were merchants and gentlemen belonging to the Virginia Company of Plymouth. Here it was hoped there would be lucrative opportunities in fishing and the fur trade. The Popham colonists dispatched an exploratory party to the interior, sailing up the big river to the head of navigation at the later-day site of Maine’s capital, Augusta, where they had an encounter with some Abenaki Indians who came speaking to them in broken English, indicating some previous contacts with fishermen on the coast. Both sides made an effort to trade but which misfired due to mutual suspicions. The Indians brought tobacco and “certayne small skynes,” while the English tempted them with “comodities of beads, knives and some copper, of which they [the Indians] seemed very fond.” Another Indian party, including a local sagamore and the brother of the Bashaba, the chief sachem of that whole region, paid a visit to the fortified colony. They all received copper beads or knives “which contented them not a little” upon their departure. The Indian leader offered a trade in furs, and a storehouse was constructed by the English for that purpose.


at their base. But the unlucky Popham Colony collapsed after the death of its major leader and the harsh experience of but a single Maine winter; back to England went the survivors.\(^8\)

If the Popham Colony had managed to survive, history in New England might have followed a very different route. Nonetheless, seasonal English fishing stations at Monhegan Island, visited by John Smith in 1614, and elsewhere kept up their operations in the Gulf of Maine. Capt. Smith and his associates used Monhegan as a base from which to explore and to conduct fur-trading with the Indians. Other similar English voyages were mounted in the decade prior to the arrival of the Pilgrims.\(^9\) By the time the thousands of Puritans poured into southern New England in the Great Migration, they found white traders with the Indians and sailors already in place and well-established (and with values not necessarily compatible with their own). Samuel Maverick had built a “Palisade House” in 1624 at Winnisimmet (now Chelsea), later removing his trading operations with the Indians to nearby Noodle’s Island (in


present-day East Boston). Around the same time, to the south of the Bay, an English trading post was set up at Mount Wollaston (present-day Quincy) which, falling under the management of Thomas Morton, was to arouse the ire of the uptight Pilgrims because of the profane and drunken merry-making that went on there including dancing around the May Pole with the Indians. The Pilgrims also found objectionable Morton’s trafficking of guns, powder and shot with the Indians for furs and ousted him as a rival in the fur trade they hope to set up and sent him packing back to England. Returning, Morton was ousted all over again, this time by the Puritans who had settled and opened government in Massachusetts Bay in the meanwhile. Thereby another possible alternative history for New England was aborted – one in which more amicable and equitable relations with the native populations, perhaps on the later Canadian model, interacting with whites who were mainly keen about the fur trade and not in seeking out land to farm and finding the Indians in their way, might have ensued.

In these early years of English invasion and settlement, the natives had at their disposal besides beaver, otter and other furs only one other significant commodity with which to attract the newcomers’ interest in trading. That commodity was maize, or as it was usually referred to by whites, “Indian corn.” In the early hungry times, Indian-grown corn saved the lives of the colonists before they could learn how to farm properly in their new environment. The Pilgrims in 1622, with, as William Bradford later recalled, no markets to go to, only the

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12 On the historical possibilities that were lost with Morton expulsion, see Frederick W. Turner, *Beyond Geography: The Western Spirit Against the Wilderness* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1992).
Indians, desperately traded whatever “English-beads (which were then good trade)” and knives they could round up for corn and beaver pelts from the neighboring Wampanoags. The Puritans, some individuals driven to stealing corn from their Indian neighbors, were forced to bring in corn from Virginia in 1631, and in 1634 they had to dispatch a shallop to the Narragansett Country which returned with a much-needed load of 500 bushels of corn. In the winter following the close of the Pequot War, which heavily disrupted English agriculture and commerce on the Connecticut River, the Puritan merchant William Pynchon, who had established at base of operations at Springfield, was commissioned by Connecticut authorities to preserve the colonists under their governance from starvation by procuring corn from the upriver Indians. The Pocumtucks at their fertile river-bottom village site in what later became colonial Deerfield happily supplied Pynchon and others with a flotilla of fifty canoe-loads out of their surplus in exchange for 12,000 strings of wampum (acquired as loot from the defeated Pequots?). Maize was also solicited by the Connecticut authorities from the rich Narragansetts. Some Indians may have stepped up production of corn, or became more

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13 William Bradford, *Bradford’s History of Plymouth Plantation, 1606-1646*, ed. William T Davis, vol. 1, 2 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1908), 139-142; Alexander Young, ed., *Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers of the Colony of Plymouth, from 1602-1625* (Boston: C. C. Little and J. Brown, 1841), 302. By 1625, however, the hard-working Pilgrims had their own surplus of corn which they used to set up a lucrative fur trade with Indians on the Kennebec River in Maine, where the cultivation of corn was marginal at best for the Indian inhabitants. Bradford, 208.


sedentary and started growing it where they had not done so before, in order to meet the
demands of the new consumers.16

This period of Indians providing corn to the settlers and a partial English dependency
on them for survival was short-lived. After the Indians taught the English how to grow maize,
which the English set out to do more efficiently with their draft animals and plows – often
doing so on former Indian fields where the array of small hummocks for planting the “three
sisters” made laboriously by the Indian women with their clam-shell hoes were still to be seen
-- the relations sometimes became reversed. Now it was the English who were sometimes a
source of corn for hungry Indians, some of whom found it easier to obtain it in that way than
to grow it themselves, while Indian men and women alike devoted their productive energies
to the booming early fur trade. The early Salem minister, Francis Higginson, was no doubt
exaggerating some about the blessed bounties of New England in order to lure more comers
from England to these shores when he reported in his account of the settlement published in
London in 1630 that certain “credible persons” had assured him that by planting thirteen
gallons of corn, worth six shilling eight pence some 364 bushels of grain could be harvested
which could then be traded to the Indians “for so much Beaver as was worth 18 shillings, and
so of this 13 Gallons of Corne, which was worth 6 shilling 8 pence, he made about 327
pounds of it the yeere following.”17 Even so, we do have some deeds in our data base of

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16 See Lynn Ceci, “Maize Cultivation in Coastal New York: The Archaeological, Agronomical, and
about such changes into the Wallersteinian World-Systems framework.

Indian deeds showing Indian grantors receiving corn for the sale of their lands. In some cases, this was just a symbolic peck or bushel delivered on an annual basis as a sort of tributary quit-rent – as we find to have been the case in some deeds with the Abenaki in northern New England, which was only partly a corn-growing area. Nevertheless, a few of the deeds involving more southerly Indians, who were definitely in New England’s “corn belt,” show them receiving bushels of corn in exchange for the permanent loss of their land, some of which was the land upon which they formerly had grown corn crops for themselves and from which some of them once had a surplus they could trade for goods with the needy newcomers.  

The fur trade proved a more enduring relationship in which, at least at first, Indians also had some substantial leverage. Both the Pilgrims and the Puritans (and other interlopers) soon opened “trucking houses” to carry on trade with the Indians and derive income – sometimes becoming colonial rivals of each other in the process. The Pilgrims were under significant pressure to earn a profit from their plantation in order to pay off their financial backers to whom they owed a large sum with interest. Given their backgrounds as artisans and farmers in England, they proved poorly prepared for and inept at the urged-on-them practice of commercial fishing. But they were more successful in the fur trade – at least once a local Indian, Squanto, had taught them about beaver pelts, which Bradford reports they had never laid eyes on before. (Squanto is also said to have taught the Pilgrims how to plant corn in the Indian manner using fish for fertilizer.) The first shipment from New Plymouth back to England in late 1621 contained clapboards and two “hoggsheds of beaver and otter skins, which they gott with a few trifling commodities brought with them at first, being altogether

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18 For details, see the Indians Deeds database on the accompanying CD-ROM.
unprovided for trade.” Unfortunately that ship was lost to the French. Still, from that faulty
start, a trans-Atlantic fur trade from New England burgeoned; other such shipments soon
followed. Building their own vessels, the Pilgrims began making trading voyages to the
Indians. To circumvent the long and often treacherous passage by sea around Cape Cod, New
Plymouth set up a year-round trading post in 1627 at Aptucxet (now Bourne, Massachusetts)
near the Buzzard’s Bay side of the Cape at the shortest carrying point across its neck and
looking southward. Having brought in a good harvest in 1625, the Pilgrims dispatched a
shipload of maize north to the Kennebec River, where corn-growing was problematic due to
the climate, and in return received an large supply of beaver pelts – a total of 700 pounds
worth! – and other furs from the Indians there.

That lucrative venture stimulated an ongoing commercial interest in the region. In
1628, the Plymouth colony established a permanent trading outpost some forty miles up at the
rapids and head of tidal navigation of the Kennebec at Cushnoc (Augusta), for whose
exclusive trading rights thereabouts they had sought and received an English patent. At that
point on the river, as with other points on the New England Fall Line, Indians were long-
accustomed to gather in the springtime to fish for migrating salmon, shad and alewives. So


20 Ibid, 157, 205-206, 223. They also shipped some codfish that they had managed to catch despite their ineptitude as fishermen.


trade that might otherwise reach the sea and be lost to others could be intercepted. The trading rights were leased by the colony to a set of eight “undertakers” among the Pilgrim Fathers. They improvised trading in home-grown corn, clothes, blankets and other sundry items acquired from visiting fishermen and in the pickings from a fortuitous French shipwreck and then shifting more and more to wampum as familiarity with that commodity increased among the northerly Indians to whom it had previously been rare or non-existent.  The monopoly did not last long; English would-be competitors to the Pilgrims arrived shortly on the Kennebec. In 1634, another trader operating on behalf of the English Puritan Lords Saye and Sele and Brooke tried to sail his boat right past their post in order to conduct his own trade by intercepting the furs at a point higher up the river. A small battle ensued in which the interloper and a Pilgrim trader were shot to death. This led the Massachusetts Bay Governor Winthrop to rue in his journal that the incident might be used as an excuse for the King to send over a “general governor” and it “besides had brought us all and the gospel under a common reproach of cutting one another’s throats for beaver.” But the fur trade had become nearly indispensable. Early on, the Pilgrim’s trading post on the Kennebec was highly

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profitable. Indeed the take from the fur trade is what, more than anything, finally enabled the
Pilgrims to settle their accounts with their anxious creditors in England. (With the founding
of the larger Puritan colony, New Plymouth achieved economic stability in the years before
its 1692 absorption into Massachusetts Bay by becoming within a regional system, the
peripheral supplier of farm products, particularly dairy and equine, for the markets and
consumers of the system’s center in Boston.) However, the Indians “warring” upon the fur-
beating animals on behalf of whites, now using more effective traps and firearms that were
available to them through trade, and the insatiable demand by Europeans led to a serious
diminishment of the supply. For that reason and because the local Indians were fearful of
raids being mounted in Maine by the Mohawks and were not eager to go out for furs and put
themselves at risk of bodily harm, the Plymouth-run Cushnoc trading post was finally
discontinued in 1661. At that point, trading and fishing rights were sold to hopeful traders
from the Massachusetts Bay colony who kept it going for a while longer – until 1675 - but
could only do so on a much reduced intake basis.

We can get a general overall sense of the progressive depletion of beavers as New
England fur trading posts started first on the coast and then pushed farther and farther into the
backcountry, generally hopscotching up rivers, sometimes bypassing their competitors,
following tributaries north and west toward the river sources. (There were both push and pull
factors involved. Beaver living farther north, where the climate was colder, also grew thicker
underfur that was more desirable material for felting into hats.) In 1621, a Pilgrim expedition
to nearby Massachusetts Bay had come back with “a good quantity of beaver. But the
situation deteriorated rapidly as Indians found out about how the newcomers would part with
all kinds of exotic articles for something so everyday among them.\textsuperscript{25} By 1631 already, an English letter writer having some unspecified relationship with the fur trade in the vicinity of Boston, in describing his new surroundings to his father in England, complained not only about the sharp dealings of Indians he was meeting in the fur trade but also “whareas we ded expect gret stor of beuer her is littell or non to be had. . .”\textsuperscript{26} Concord, the first town settled west of Boston, on a tributary of the interior-piercing Merrimack River and endowed with extensive beaver ponds and meadows, became an early successful frontier fur trading center in the early 1640s. Yet, by 1657, as beavers, etc. within reach became more scarce and trafficking in skins as a result was forced to remove farther inland, the colonial government right to trade in that area was sold to the next buyer for a mere £5 pittance.\textsuperscript{27}

The start-up fur trade entrepreneur in Concord, its principal town father Capt. Simon Willard, had by this point already moved onward to try to stay ahead of the supply exhaustion curve. Previously, while ensconced in Concord, Willard had been trading with Indians under the great sachem Passaconaway on the Merrimack itself and acting as a go-between for the religious conversion efforts thereabouts of the Rev. John Eliot. Then, in 1652, Willard was commissioned along with another surveyor by the Massachusetts General Court, to trace and map the Merrimack River to its Lake Winnipesaukee source. Willard, while on this expedition, no doubt envisioned a goodly yield of furs coming into his trading coffers from untapped sources farther north. So in 1657, Willard, who had relocated his home from


\textsuperscript{26} \textit{Winthrop Papers}, vol. 3 (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1943), 17.

\textsuperscript{27} Lemuel Shattuck, \textit{A History of the Town of Concord, Middlesex County, Massachusetts} (Boston: Russell, Odiorne, and Company, 1835), 19, 203, 387.
Concord to Chelmsford near the strategic confluence of the Concord and Merrimack Rivers, took the step of purchasing with three associates the exclusive Merrimack River fur trade concession from the General Court for £25, and, in the same year, looking in the westward direction as well, he became one of the town fathers of Lancaster, already a fur trading center on the Nashua River, another major tributary to the Merrimack. By 1667, Willard was operating a trading post at Watanic (present-day Nashua, New Hampshire). But his position on the Merrimack River drainage was soon trumped higher up the river at Pennacook (present-day Concord, New Hampshire) by another operator’s post. So within a matter of a few decades only, the beaver, otters and other marketable furbearers on this major New England watershed, at least those within reach, with which the native people for thousands of years had lived in a sustainable relationship, had been trapped or hunted out not to come back – in some cases, not to come back, if at all, until the 20th Century.  

This same tale of resource depletion, once beavers became exchange values, was repeated elsewhere in southern parts of New England. Of all the many internal waterways in New England, the 400-mile-long Connecticut River (meaning “Long Tidal River”) penetrates the interior most deeply from the ocean, reaching almost to Canada. The Dutch on the Hudson, the Pilgrims in New Plymouth, and the Puritans in both their Massachusetts and Connecticut colonies schemed and maneuvered – and sometimes threatened violence against each other -- for control of the fur trade along this corridor. Indians sachems also contended

with each other for control over the trade and access to the European goods that the trading
nexus enabled and for a while were sometimes able to play one European off against another
to their benefit. Within months of each other in 1633, both the Dutch and the Pilgrims
established trading posts on the Connecticut – each carrying a writ of permission from a
different Indian sachem from the area. The Dutch had explored the river first and, after
purchasing land from the Pequots, constructed a permanent trading post, “The House of
Hope,” at Suckiaug (“Black Earth”), the site of present-day Hartford, at a spot still known as
“Dutch Point” where the Little (or Park) River enters the Connecticut from the west. Many
Indians lived and planted corn on the rich bottom-lands near this confluence, and the Dutch
invited all the Indians thereabouts to come to their post freely and in peace to trade with
them. 29 Nevertheless, the hope of the Dutch West India Company to monopolize the rich
Connecticut River fur trade was not to be. Plymouth authorities had also conducted
exploratory expeditions to the Connecticut, and they had their own eyes set on a permanent
base “to receive ye trade when it came down out of ye inland.” Soon after the Dutch set up
shop, a party from Plymouth showed up on the river, sailed boldly past the Dutch post, and
quickly took up a position of their own by throwing up a partially prefabricated trading house
on the river ten miles to the north just below the mouth of the Tunxis or Farmington River at
Matianuck. Plymouth asserted its own claim to legitimate settlement through a purchase of
an Indian planting field made from the Sequin sachems, Sequassen and Natawanute, whom
the Pequots had evicted from their positions and forced to become tributaries and the latter

29 Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan, History of New Netherland or, New York Under the Dutch, vol. 1
and the House of Hope,” in The Memorial History of Hartford County, Connecticut, 1633-1884, ed. J.
of whom the Pilgrims brought back with them from his exile. This particular location was also well-supplied with Indian paths. The Indians hoped not only to gain trade goods from their relationship with the English but also aid in a war of revenge against the Pequots.\textsuperscript{30}

Matters became further complicated when later the same year the fur trader John Oldham with three other companions made his way overland on an exploratory trip to the Connecticut River from Massachusetts Bay, lodging along the way at Indian towns (and possibly spreading smallpox inadvertently to the Indians as they did so – although the Dutch may have been the source). This party came back with a report that reached Governor Winthrop of how they had met up with a friendly sachem who had given them a present of beaver skins. And the explorers reported they had seen an abundance of high-quality hemp growing there, a sample of which they took back to Boston along with a sample of “black lead” (graphite) seen as having commercial potential.\textsuperscript{31} Massachusetts authorities, newly-arrived on the New England scene and busy consolidating their settlement, were reluctant at first to get involved in this region. Already, in 1631, another Connecticut River sachem, Wahginnacut, had made a trip to Massachusetts Bay to entreat the Puritans for assistance through locating a settlement on his lands – he offered them corn and eighty skins of beaver yearly as an inducement – but that proposition had been declined by Governor Winthrop. Winthrop also gave a cold shoulder to a proposal from the Pilgrim authorities in Plymouth to

\textsuperscript{30} On the various Indians groups who inhabited the lower reaches of the Connecticut River at the time of the arrival of the first whites, see William DeLoss Love, The Colonial History of Hartford Gathered from the Original Records (Hartford: S. P., 1914), 81-97.

preempt the Dutch in a joint trading venture for beaver and hemp on the Connecticut, offering a number of excuses to the visiting Plymouth officials but perhaps telling himself that the Merrimack River flowing out into the territory already claimed and being occupied by the Puritans would lead their fur traders, if followed towards its source, to the mother load of the fur-bearing animals.\textsuperscript{32} Indeed, Puritan efforts in that direction would be launched in 1633 when the Governor’s eldest son, John Winthrop Jr., with twelve other Massachusetts men, was granted the new town of Agawam (Ipswich) near the Merrimack’s mouth and was granted liberty by the General Court to set up a trucking house near the land he owned.\textsuperscript{33}

Despite the apparent lack of interest from the Puritan officialdom concerning the economic potential of the Connecticut River region, some Massachusetts Bay residents, complaining of a poor choice in pasture lands and of overcrowding in their towns around Boston and being excited by the glowing reports brought back by fur traders, took the initiative and began migrating there, mostly overland by way of the Indian trails. A group from Dorchester in the Bay settled near the Plymouth trading post at Matianuck in 1635 and became the founders of a second Dorchester (renamed Windsor in 1650). Their appearance led to immediate contradictions and lingering unpleasantness between Plymouth and


\textsuperscript{33}Euphemia (Vale) Blake, \textit{History of Newburyport; from the Earliest Settlement of the Country to the Present Time} (Newburyport: Press of Damrell and Moore, 1854), 8; John Noble, \textit{Records of the Court of Assistants of the Colony of the Massachusetts Bay, 1630-1692}, vol. 1 (Boston: County of Suffolk, 1901), 35. It seems likely that nothing much if anything happened with Winthrop’s proposed trucking house on the Merrimac. Winthrop’s life took an entirely different direction with the sudden death of his wife and daughter in 1634. He went off to England and returned empowered by the Puritan noblemen Saye and Sele and Brook to help start up a new colony in Connecticut. He resided for a time in Ipswich but had numerous other business and political interests that kept him occupied. He became the first Connecticut colony governor. See Thomas Franklin Waters, \textit{A Sketch of the Life of John Winthrop, the Younger: Founder of Ipswich, Massachusetts in 1633} (Ipswich Historical Society, 1899), 8-64.
Massachusetts Bay. Frictions with the Dutch intensified the same year when migrants from Newtowne (Cambridge) in the Bay, the flock of the Rev. Thomas Hooker, claimed land and settled down cheek-and-jowl next to the Dutch trading post at Hartford. Lower down on the river at Pyguang, a new Watertown (later Wethersfield) -- probably at or near where the fur trader John Oldham had been on his exploratory trip the previous year -- was founded in 1634 by a party from Watertown in the Bay led there by Oldham. The race to settle lands was now on in earnest.

Farther up the river, Agawam (later Springfield) was scouted out in 1635 and founded the next year by settlers from Roxbury led by William Pynchon, the redoubtable treasurer of the Massachusetts Bay Company. His location trumped everybody else on the Connecticut River with regards to the fur trade of which he, and subsequently his son John, became major players (and many of whose business records have fortuitously survived). Not only did it position Pynchon well above his closest rivals and nearer to the sources of furs by water, the easiest mode of transportation, but also it was at a major nexus of well-trodden Indian paths leading in various directions. One trail led westward up the Westfield River, over the Taconic Mountains and connected up with the Hudson River near Kinderhook south of the Dutch


outpost of Fort Aurania. Leading east from Agawam was a trail connecting to the Bay. Running southeastward was a trail reaching to the Pequot and Narragansett countries of eastern Connecticut and Rhode Island. So the English availed themselves of longstanding routes utilized by the natives in their own pre-existing world-system or interaction network for travel and trade, and they made them their own as conduits in the Modern World-System.

As Francis Jennings has shown in his classic historical work and exposé of the Puritan aggressions against the Indians, _The Invasion of America_, the above events all crowding together segued into the Pequot War (Fall 1636–Spring 1637) that was precipitated when some Indians killed Oldham at Block Island. This event, for which the Pequots were held to blame by the Puritans, and the killing by the Pequots of another English fur trader, John Stone, which had happened two years earlier as a mistaken act of revenge for the Dutch murder of the Pequot sachem, Tatobem, were seized upon to wage a war of annihilation against the Pequots. What was at stake was control of the Connecticut River Valley with its newly-settled towns and furs and the coastal supply of wampum – the Pequot lands were situated strategically at the outlet for commerce on the river and additionally were one of the principle sources of wampum production – a commodity that the Europeans of all denominations in this region were finding highly useful in facilitating trade with the Indians.

After their falling out with the Dutch that cut off the Pequots from valuable items obtainable only through trade, the Pequots had sought out an alliance with the Puritans as a

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37 Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest* (Chapel Hill: Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture by the University of North Carolina Press, 1975).
substitute, sending a delegation overland to meet with Governor Winthrop in Boston. They
had offered valuable furs and wampum to the Puritans as what they presumed in their cultural
framework should be sufficient atonement for the Englishman’s death. Moreover, they invited
the English to send them a boatload of cloth and to establish a settlement in their country to
build on what had heretofore been friendly relations. Instead, the Puritans in a ploy to assert
their dominance had demanded much more tribute in wampum and peltry – an amount of
tribute Jennings estimates was the equal of nearly half of the colony’s own tax levies for that
year – and for the culprits to be turned over to them for punishment. In other words, they gave
the Pequots an offer they knew could only be refused. In the war that ensued, the Puritans
slaughtered as many as seven hundred Pequot men, women and children in a fashion that can
only be described as “genocidal” (and one that was totally shocking to the Puritans’ Indian
allies in the war, sending shock waves throughout native New England). Afterwards, they
declared Pequot land forfeit to themselves as spoils of war, took over the Pequots’ tributary
relations with other communities and even tried to stamp out from history further use of the
Pequot name.38

38 Francis Jennings, The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest (Chapel
Hill: Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture by the University of North Carolina
Press, 1975), 177-225; Ronald Dale Karr, “Why Should You Be So Furious?: The Violence of the Pequot
War,” The Journal of American History 85, no. 3 (1998): 876-909. Jennings argues that the Pequots were
innocent of killing the first fur trader, John Stone – that he had been killed by the Western Niantics, tributaries
to the Pequots. However, Alfred Cave demonstrates convincingly that the Pequots had indeed been the killers
– as they themselves admitted for what they thought were justifiable reasons. Alfred A Cave, “Who Killed John
Cave has a different explanation for the origins of the war, concluding from his study of documents in the
archives that the Puritan magistrates were inclined to accept the Pequot explanation but that the Puritans
ministers, who were asked for advice, demanded that the killers of Mason be surrendered by the Pequot to the
English for their own brand of justice. He disagrees with the claim made by Jennings and others that “the
Bay Colony’s insistence on retribution for Stone was nothing other than a hypocritical pretext for despoiling
the Pequots of land and wampum.” Cave, on the other hand, is too inclined to take the Puritan
pronouncements concerning their fears of Indian “devilry” and thus deserving of the wrath of God at face value
and not dig below the surface phenomena of ideology, rhetoric and cant into the underlying social and economic
relations. See also, Cave’s monograph, The Pequot War, Native Americans of the Northeast (Amherst:
Meanwhile, the fur trade pushed inexorably inland as beavers were exterminated in one region after another on rivers leading westward and northward. The most northerly parts of New England were closely contested between the French and Indians and the English until the middle of the 18th Century, and the fur trade could not be pushed hard there again until after the English ultimately won the imperial contest. Thus, in this “Middle Ground,” beaver and other fur-bearers lasted somewhat longer, with 19th-century town historians not uncommonly being able to specify the date of the “last beaver” killed and the location of former beaver dams that could still be seen “within recent memory.” Nevertheless, by 1723 the French Jesuit Father Rale who lived with the Abenaki on the once highly-productive Kennebec River in Maine reported that “our savages have so destroyed the game of their country that for ten years they have no longer either elks or deer” and that “Bears and Beavers have become very scarce.” In southern New England beavers had almost all been trapped out by Indians prior to King Philip’s War (a factor that may help to explain why Indians rebelled when they did, a point to which we will return). By 1700, the very last beaver holdouts were in the northern Berkshires. They, too, were totally wiped out in the 18th


Along the upper Connecticut River the fur trade persisted to some extent right up to the time of the American Revolution, but it too had peaked before King Philip’s War. The Pynchons, father William and son John, in Springfield who had paid for a fur trading monopoly licence from the Massachusetts General Court acted the role of wholesalers providing trade goods and wampum and warehousing, packing and shipping the furs but farming out much of the actual dealing in furs with the Indians to a set of lesser men. For the six years from 1652 to 1657, the Pynchon account books show shipments to England totaling nearly 9,000 beaver pelts, a level of resource extraction not long sustainable for an animal that can produce only an average of four kits per year under ideal conditions. The take fell, with the total in 1657 being not much more than half of the previous year’s. With supplies diminishing, Puritan merchants, including the Pynchons, made desperate attempts to play the same sort of gambit on the upper Hudson River as had been played on the Connecticut, trying to intercept the furs from the Mohawks and diverting them eastward away from New Amsterdam rivals. But these efforts were thwarted firmly by the Dutch until the English conquest of that colony in 1664 and after that thwarted equally firmly by the New York

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authorities.\textsuperscript{216} The fur trade there was over.

In 1670, King Charles II chartered the Hudson’s Bay Company, which tapped into new, rich far northern sources of beaver and other fur-bearers and this area, using the labor of other indigenous peoples and whites, became the next major supplier of peltry for English markets.\textsuperscript{217} In New England we find some fur trade with the Indians continuing to take place into the 1720s and 1730s farther up the Connecticut River in what is now southern Vermont and New Hampshire where beavers and other fur-bearers could still be found, but the resumption of warfare in the 1740s between the English and the French and Indians brought it there to an end.\textsuperscript{218} It never significantly returned to southern New England. Following Queen Anne’s War, the once-prosperous fur trade had shrunk so much from overhunting and warfare that a contemporary observer could state that “in New-England, beaver, other furs, and deer steins, are become so inconsiderable, they are scarce so be reckoned an article in our trade.”\textsuperscript{219} But, well before this time, the fur trade had played a fateful historical role

\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{216}] Carl Bridenbaugh and Juliette Tomlinson, eds., \textit{The Pynchon Papers}, vol. 2, \textit{Selections from the Account Books of John Pynchon, 1651-1697} (Boston: Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1985), 50-69; Arthur H. Buffington, “New England and the Western Fur Trade, 1629-1675,” \textit{Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, Transactions} 18 (1915), 176-188. Unsuccessful Puritan efforts initiated by men from the territorially-circumscribed New Haven Colony and followed-up by the Massachusetts Bay Colony were also made to penetrate the interior and secure its riches of furs circumventing the Dutch rivals on the Hudson via the Delaware River drainage system, ibid, 167-176.


\item[\textsuperscript{218}] This trade took place out of the trucking house at Fort Dummer (in present-day Brattleboro, Vermont) under the direction of Capt. Joseph Kellogg starting in 1728. It ended when hostilities resumed in 1744. Kellogg had been a captive of the French and had observed their profitable fur trade with the northern Indians and wanted to emulate it. \textit{The Acts and Resolves, Public and Private, of the Province of the Massachusetts Bay}, vol. 11 (Boston: Wright & Potter, 1903), 266, 392, 426; Benjamin Homer Hall, History of Eastern Vermont, From Its Earliest Settlement to the Close of the Eighteenth Century (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1858), 20-24.

\item[\textsuperscript{219}] William Douglass, \textit{A Summary, Historical and Political, of the First Planting, Progressive Improvements, and Present State of the British Settlements in North-America} (Boston, 1755), 538. The price of furs had also fallen by the time of Queen Anne’s War in European markets, to the dismay and perplexing
in drawing Indians into the Modern World-System and in profoundly transforming their societies.

While the New England fur trade lasted, made possible by Indian skills and energy and with a destructive power now amplified considerably by white-provided firearms, traps and metal tools for chopping into beaver lodges, considerable fortunes were made at every stage of the export commodity chain, once the animals were procured and their furs and hides were transformed into commodities suitable for the world market. Indians received goods they desired, but the relationship was one of unequal exchange in monetary terms (which were a cipher to the Indians, especially when prices fell due to market changes in far-away Europe).

The Springfield-based John Pynchon has been rightly characterized by the editors of recently-published excerpts from Pynchon’s surviving account books – account books that cover practically the entire period from 1654 to 1702 and which provide unparalleled glimpses into the workings of the early articulation processes of Indians and New Englander colonists with the Modern World System -- as “without question the foremost frontier capitalist of his time.”

Pynchon’s grand total of 13,139 pounds of beaver extracted and shipped recorded of the Indians. See Ronald Oliver MacFarlane, “The Massachusetts Bay Truck-Houses in Diplomacy with the Indians,” *The New England Quarterly* 11, no. 1 (March 1938): 54. It took a long time for period populations to recover in New England. Speaking personally, I live on “Beaver Meadow Road” in Marshfield, Vermont. This is an old town road name most likely going back to the early days of the town (founded in 1790). There is a beaver pond or meadow today, as there was apparently in earlier times when the road was named. But, according to old-timers who grew up hereabouts, there were no beavers in their memory until after the Second World War, when they began to return to the area.

274 Carl Bridenbaugh and Juliette Tomlinson, eds., *The Pynchon Papers*, vol. 2, *Selections from the Account Books of John Pynchon, 1651-1697* (Boston: Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1985), 274. Following in the footsteps of his father, William Pynchon, who founded Springfield before returning to England, “ye Worshipful Major Pynchon” had his fingers in many money-making pots besides engaging in the fur trade and land dealing and acting as the region’s main retail and wholesale merchant. He was involved, along with other colonial entrepreneurs, in iron and lead mining ventures and in efforts to establish trading links between Connecticut River stock farms and the Caribbean plantation islands. He dominated the local scene but connected this remote English-speaking periphery with the greater Atlantic and World Systems. On John Pynchon and his various economic and political activities, see Mason Arnold Green, *Springfield, 1636-1886: History of Town and City* (Springfield, Mass.: C. A. Nichols, 1888), 198-206 and Stephen Innes, *Labor in a
in his account books from 1652 to 1657 may have been worth eight to twelve shillings to the pound, depending on quality. If the beaver pelts had been worn and broken in first by the Indians, so-called “coat-beavers” or “greasy beavers,” they were worth up to 20 shillings a pound when the market was good. Pynchon also made money by subcontracting the trade to other men and providing them with the supplies that they needed from his store which he imported from eastern urban merchants. The fur trade that flowed down the Merrimack, Connecticut and other rivers was profitable not only for well-positioned colonial individuals like the Willards and Pynchons at the top of the fur trading pyramid but also for the New England colonies generally. From the fur trade, Massachusetts Bay collected annual licencing fees and taxes on certain specified trade goods and took in court fines for violations by white traders such as purveying liquor and firearms to the Indians. But from a colonial standpoint, its importance as time went by was more geopolitical. In the early 18th Century, Massachusetts substituted for licensed private enterprise its own government-run trucking houses with salaried “truck-masters” serving the unconquered and restless Eastern Indians. Rather than profit-seeking – though private operators in the fur trade who might provide competition with the plan were now to be prohibited – this plan was motivated by a desire to try to keep the Indians dependent on and friendly to the English side, through a conscious


policy of underselling the traders who were operating from New France. It was not until after the French and Indian War was over and the English were in firm control of Canada that a private fur trade, along with settlement, could resume in the more northerly areas, and some fur trapping continues up to the present day.

While never merely pawns in the game of empire, as Harold Hickerson indicates in his insightful essay, “Fur Trade Colonialism and the American Indians,” Indians were indeed enclosed more and more within a system outside of their cognizance and control. How did the fur trade impact New England Indians societies besides supplying them with a new set of interesting and useful goods? For one thing, inter-tribal warfare seems to have become more widespread and destructive, as groups vied for control over a rapidly diminishing resource base that would enable them to maintain increasingly necessary trading relations with the whites. The level of lethality in war was amplified by the European-introduced weaponry. From an intermittent, small-scale, ritualized form of revenge, recreation and proof of manhood, war began to be engaged in much more for economic ends and pursued on a sustained basis, if not necessarily an exterminationist basis as by the whites. Even before

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the Puritans began plotting and warring against them for the same objectives, the Pequots launched a successful set of military campaigns to dominate and make tributary the peoples of the Connecticut River from whence beaver and other furs continued to come, and they also expanded their tributary extractions of the wampum-producing Indians on Long Island across the Sound.281 After the destruction and dispersal of the Pequots, the River Indians were drawn into the “Beaver Wars” fought on far-flung theaters of action from the Huron Country all the way to the Maine interior waged by the fearsome Mohawks -- the first Indians to get substantial numbers of guns coming from their fur trade with the Dutch -- to subjugate their rivals and channel the fur trade unto themselves.282

Some historians, following the lead of the Marxist anthropologist Eleanor Leacock concerning the general effects of colonialism on women, have suggested that involvement in the fur trade tended to transform the economic roles of Indian women in such ways that led to the overall degrading of their societal status. Indian men were the preferred partners of European males in this and other endeavors, giving them preferential access to trade goods.


While men, as they had traditionally done, performed the now stepped-up work of hunting and trapping outside in the field, women were even more tied down to the spot as they did more onerous labor of scraping, curing and otherwise preparing – their customary part of the division of labor – all the hides for trade. Given the scanty data on the fur trade in New England, it is hard to judge whether this was indeed the case, but quite probably it was. We might also speculate about whether there was a greater burden that had to be shouldered by women in collecting shellfish and knocking out wampum among coastal Indians as a consequence of the fur trade. On the other hand, being able to trade for cloth and clothing instead of having to make it, for brass kettles in which to cook, for metal hoes with which to garden, and for metal awls and files with which to manufacture wampum may have eased women’s burdens somewhat. Feminist historian Sylvia Van Kirk has found in looking at the western Canadian fur trade that it was commonplace for white male fur traders in that regional setting to take Indian common-law wives and that these women were sometimes able to play critical and much-valued roles as cultural mediators (as indigenous women have done elsewhere in some other parts of the world in the early stages of contacts with Western colonialism). These Indian women provided their spouses with access to pre-existing, long-established Indian trading networks based on kinship ties. From the conjugal relationships

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284 See Michael S. Nassaney, “Native American Gender Politics and Material Culture in Seventeenth-Century Southeastern New England,” *Journal of Social Archaeology* 4, no. 3 (2004): 334-367. Nassaney also speculates, less plausibly, that Indian women took up smoking tobacco, previously the province of males, to try to gain closer contact to the spiritual world in response to the disruptive impact of European connections.
of these indigenous women and European men a whole new creole culture emerged. However, I have not been able to identify any similar cases for the fur trade in New England, where white-Indian miscegenation of any sort, while not banned outright by colonial law, was frowned upon and exceedingly rare. Indians and African-Americans who shared more or less the same status of servitude to whites fairly often intermarried, but there was in New England as an outgrowth of the colonial fur-trade nothing at all resembling the Métis culture of Francophone and Western Canada.

By the time the beaver population collapsed and the fur trade with it, if not much sooner, it was too late for most Indians who remained in New England to ever go back to their old ways of making things for themselves, even if they had wanted to dispense with imported manufactured goods. Some Europeans who had enriched themselves in the fur trade could move on to other sources of wealth accumulation, particularly those involving land acquisition and speculation and the production of agricultural commodities. When Simon Willard died in 1676 at the beginning of King Philip’s War – his mansion was burned by the angry Indians


286 The General Court of Massachusetts Bay Colony ruled in 1635 that “the matter of marriage betwixte Englishe & Indeans is referd to after consideracon.” However, they apparently never took up the question again. Nathaniel Bradstreet Shurtleff, ed., Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay, vol. 1, 5 vols. (Boston: William White, 1853), 140. In a 1637 letter, Roger Williams outed an employee of the Plymouth trading post on the Connecticut River, William Baker, who “is turned Indian in nakedness and cutting of hair” and who had been living in “uncleanness” with a Mohegan woman and had a child by her. Baker was arrested by the Connecticut authorities, escaped, hidden by the Indians, rearrested and then whipped for his “villainy.” John Russell Bartlett, ed., Letters of Roger Williams, vol. 6, Publications of the Narragansett Club 1 (Providence, R.I., 1874), 66-67, 85, 86, 95, 98.
-- his estate held a grand total of 1,571 acres of real estate plus other common lands not yet laid out to him. This had come to him from colonial grants and from trade debts Indians owed to him. Likewise, on the Connecticut River, the Pynchons and a number of their associates could readily evolve from being fur traders into landed gentry and exporters of farm crops. Their Indian partners, however, were increasingly out of luck, their labor services no longer much in demand by English, if at all, except possibly as scouts and warrior auxiliaries in the wars against the French and their Indian allies, a service which many did perform. A few of the Indians were able to find minor niche markets in the commodity system and performed various odd tasks for whites as a supplementary farm labor force. Rev. John Eliot praised the adaptiveness of the Praying Indians who had come under his charge:

They begin to grow industrious, and find something to sell at Market all the yeer long: all winter they sell Brooms, Staves, Elepots, Baskets, Turkies. In the Spring, Cranberries, Fish, Strawberries; in the Summer Hurtleberries, Grapes, Fish: in the Autumn they sell Cranberries, Fish, Venison, &c. and they find a good benefit by the Market, and grow more and more to make use thereof; besides sundry of them work with the English in Hay time, and Harvest, but yet it's not comparable to what they might do, if they were industrious, and old boughs must be bent a little at once; if we can set the young Twiggs in a better bent, it will bee Gods mercy.

Indeed, petty marketing by Indians after King Philip’s War was commonplace enough that regulations were put into place by the English authorities for those “Coming Dayly to


However, try as the Indians might, there was only one other thing besides furs the Indians had in their possession that whites were greatly interested in having — and that was the very land on which the Indians were living, which their ancestors had improved for thousands of years previously. We will see in the following chapter how their dependency — but not necessarily economic dependency in the most straightforward, simplistic kind of way -- was behind the loss of much of their land. Here a greater understanding must begin from looking at the whole fur trade from the Indian side and point of view and especially with regards to the indigenous political economy with which it articulated.

Just what types of goods, while the fur trade boomed, motivated the local Indian men to go out after beavers, otters and other fur-bearing creatures — or perhaps to perform other services — on behalf of the Englishmen? Archaeological excavations of several Contact Era sites in southern New England provide glimpses into what material things the Indians wanted and got as gifts or barters out of their connections with Europeans — as well as a sense of the speed of the transition in some areas of technology from self-sufficiency to dependency on foreign supplies of goods. The Fort Shantok site in Connecticut was the headquarters village of Uncas, the Mohegan chief sachem, from 1636 at the time of the Pequot War to his death around 1682. Here all sorts of metal artifacts lead in numerical importance, mainly found in old storage and refuse pits: axes and hatchets (which made constructing the surrounding palisade easier), knives, hooks, pot handles, spoons, hoe, nails, comb, needle and thimble, scissors, nails, and a jew’s harp. Some glass trade beads, European gunflints and fireflints, and a large number of imported clay tobacco pipes have been recovered, along with locally-

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made pottery (known to archaeologists as “Shantok Ware”), aboriginal lithics, and shell materials and metal drills for the manufacture of wampum. An excavation of a Narragansett graveyard on Conanicut Island in Rhode Island dating from c. 1650 shows a similar wide array of iron and brass metal products that were acquired by the Indians and deposited, at least secondarily, as grave goods. At the excavation of a 17th century Wampanoag burial ground at Burr’s Hill in Warren, Rhode Island, most of the sizeable quantities of goods that accompanied the dead into the afterlife were ones of foreign manufacture – although this should not necessarily be taken to reflect proportions of actual usage in contemporary real life situations. Reflecting longstanding beliefs among Algonquian-speaking Indians concerning that metal’s potent degree of manitou, copper pots were placed as coverings on the heads of some corpses. There were shell and glass beads, along with a large number of bottles that probably once contained wine or liquor. But many of the grave goods were ones of foreign provenance that would have been used and valued by the owners in their former occupations, such as iron replacements for stone axes, knives, and hoes, and parts of new muskets and swords.


293 Susan G. Gibson, ed., Burr’s Hill, a 17th Century Wampanoag Burial Ground in Warren, Rhode Island, Studies in Anthropology and Material Culture vol. 2 (Providence, R.I.: Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology, Brown University, 1980). Copper trade pots were also found on or next to some of the heads of the bodies in the aforementioned Narragansett graveyard excavated by Simmons in Jamestown, Rhode Island. For a comparison of the findings from these and several other early contact era native cemeteries, see Elise M. Brenner, “Sociopolitical Implications of Mortuary Ritual Remains in 17th-Century Native Southern New England,” in The Recovery of Meaning: Historical Archaeology in the Eastern United States, ed. Mark P. Leone and Parker B. Potter, Foundations of Archaeology (Clinton Corners, N.Y.: Percheron Press, 2003),
Some additional evidence about what sorts of things Indians acquired in trade is available from the factor’s inventory of articles that were on hand at the outposts of the Laconia Company when that fur trading company went belly-up and liquidated its stocks of remaining trade goods. (The Laconia Company was an endeavor in the early 1630s to use the Piscataqua River and its tributaries as a route to the interior’s presumed mother load of furs.) In these records, we get a somewhat different view that includes items that would generally not have survived long being buried in the ground and provide us archaeological evidence, except for buttons. We find a variety of coats (including “papoose cootes”), blankets and rugs, shirts and breeches, some stockings and shoes and shoe-leather, hats and caps, kettles and hatchets, fishing equipment along with an ample supply of *aqua vitae* (brandy) and wampumpeag. And there were plenty of beaver spears, firearms, ammunition and powder to expedite the procurement of the furs. Similarly, while we do find in them a few fun or frivolous trade items such as bells and jew’s harps (apparently very popular as

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294 At Newichwannock (“Place of Wigwams”) in what would become Dover, New Hampshire, the Laconia Company of Capt. John Mason and Sir Ferdinando Gorges in 1629 took over a plantation on the Piscataqua River established by others a few years earlier primarily for the salting of fish. Using that location at the head of navigation from the sea as a base of operations, fur trading, lumbering and prospecting for minerals were conducted up the river’s branches. Although their understanding of the geography was highly imprecise and no easy route was discoverable through the mountains, the company’s plan was to try to suck southward to itself some of the trade in furs reaching the French enemy along the St. Lawrence from the “Great Lake of the Iroquois” (Lake Champlain) – or flowing from there southward to the coffers of the Dutch along the Hudson River. Unfortunately, the Piscataqua and its tributaries provided no such connection with the interior. John Ward Dean, *Capt. John Mason: The Founder of New Hampshire* (Boston: John Wilson and Son, 1887), 53-85; Mary Pickering Thompson, *Landmarks in Ancient Dover, New Hampshire* (Durham NH, 1892), 156-157; George Wadleigh, *Notable Events in the History of Dover, New Hampshire from the First Settlement in 1623 to 1865* (Dover NH: The Tufts College Press, 1913), 1-12; Nathaniel Adams, *Annals of Portsmouth; Comprising a Period of Two Hundred Years from the First Settlement of the Town; with Biographical Sketches of a Few of the Most Respectable Inhabitants* (Portsmouth NH: C. Norris, Printer, 1825), 7-24.

noise or music-makers among Indians), the surviving account books kept by John Pynchon in Springfield later in the century reveal the central importance to the Connecticut River fur trade of more practical everyday objects such as kettles, knives and an occasional gun, along with various articles of cloth and clothing.\textsuperscript{296} One scholar of the New England fur trade in the 17\textsuperscript{th} Century has estimated that cloth alone, so important was it, that it constituted about half of the value of an average trader’s stock.\textsuperscript{297}

On the surface, the above records would seem to provide corroboration for Bruce Trigger’s argument, counter to those made by Calvin Martin and George Hamell, that, while the manner in which the original inhabitants perceived the newcomers and the goods proffered by them may have been constructed initially through a spiritual or mythic lens, rationality and the acquisition of practical objects soon came to predominate as the interactions broadened and deepened.\textsuperscript{298} Moreover, this notion of Indian motives being primarily that of obtaining better practical objects than those of their own make is not a recent one either. In his 1797 \textit{A Complete History of Connecticut}, Benjamin Trumbull described what he considered the motives of Indians thus sanctioning English settlement:

\begin{quote}
As the Indians in Connecticut were slaughtered and oppressed, either by the Pequots or Mohawks, they were generally friendly to the settlement of the English among them. They expected, by their means, to be defended permit the against their terrible and cruel oppressors. They also found themselves benefited by trading with them. They furnished themselves with knives, hatchets, axes, hoes, kettles and various instruments and utensils which highly contributed to their convenience. They could, with these, perform more labor in one hour or day, than they could in many days without them. Besides, they found that they could exchange an old beaver coat, or blanket, for two or three new ones of English
\end{quote}


manufacture. They found a much better market for their furs, corn, peltry, and all their vendible commodities.\textsuperscript{299}

Assuming the same basic underlying human rationality concerning the universal human needs for food, covering and shelter and that all societies have to enter into some kind of productive relationships with nature and with each other in order to provide for those needs or not survive, this kind of explanation makes a great deal of sense. Marx and Engels were onto something major when they said that these needs have to be the starting point for any serious historical analysis that hopes to make greater sense and order out of the multitude of facts that are out there. From identifying the mode of production certain other social and cultural traits acquire meaning and cross-cultural patterns can be determined. Even so, without us casting that valuable insight from traditional historical materialism aside in favor of some kind of fuzzy post-modernism hodgepodge of “differences,” the reality on the ground is more complex. For instance, how we humans choose to attire ourselves is much more than merely a means of protecting our bodies from the elements. We use clothing decoratively and to indicate cultural identity and social status.\textsuperscript{300} Many Indians in New England who had access to the imported woven woolen and cotton cloth of the English traders seem to have converted quickly to its use, even reportedly giving away the fur mantles off their own backs, if necessary, to obtain it and other trade goods. No doubt the new material stuff was more

\textsuperscript{299} Benjamin Trumbull, \textit{A Complete History of Connecticut, Civil and Ecclesiastical, from the Emigration of Its First Planters, from England, in the Year 1630, to the Year 1764; and to the Close of the Indian Wars}, vol. 1, 2 vols. (New Haven, Conn.: Maltby, Goldsmith and Co., 1818).

convenient, warmer, drier. But Indians adopted clothing and cloth in ways that made sense within the fabric of their own cultures -- and for purposes of social reproduction as well as for its practical applications.

Archaeologist Peter Thomas has astutely observed concerning the relationships which these native peoples in New England entered into with the European newcomers about how the goods they acquired from them in trade cannot be explicable exclusively in terms of the practical or utilitarian:

Trade should not be viewed merely as the transfer of industrially manufactured goods and American resources between members of Indian and Western societies. While cloth, metal, wampum, maize, pelts, etc. were disseminated through a network of reciprocal exchange, they functioned as more than simply consumable commodities. Trade items existed in a socio-cultural world - a reality in which there was a reciprocal connection between social interests and the flow of material goods. In its simplest form, exchange of commodities began and underscored social relationships. This was particularly true among segmentary tribes in which the kin group was the basic unit of production, distribution and consumption. The ease of incorporation of European articles into native cultures was directly related to endemic patterns which supported intra-societal affiliations and established new ones with foreign connections. In other words, trade goods, useful in their own right, were also means to an end; and a multiplicity of transactions surrounding distribution of such items provided avenues for intra- and inter-societal integration. 301

Europeans who catered best to the Indian trade took Indian desires, as well as needs, into account. Early on in the fur trade, specific locales in Europe came to be linked economically to the North American colonial periphery via commodity chains with cloth being produced that would specifically appeal to the needs and tastes of the Indians, including the requisites of their social reproduction. “Duffle, “Duffield cloth,” “shag” or “match-cloth” was a heavy wool cloth that was dyed red or violet blue and left longer on one side than on the other side supposedly in order to remind Indians of animal furs (whose sides they

Blue, a color which Hamell says was symbolically charged as “good to think,” seems to have been far and away the most popular cloth color among these Algonquian-speaking Indians. Indians took the broad lengths of fabric obtained in trade – this so-called “trucking-cloth” – and draped it about themselves or wore it as a sash over one shoulder knotted at the neck and cinched at the waist, wearing it much as they had previously with furs or skins. Underneath males wore a short breechclout made of the same material and held up by a deerskin belt, or, in warmer weather, they wore the breechclout only. Indian men who acquired tailored coats and ready-made shirts might make their own modifications, adding a fringe of beads, or otherwise wearing them differently than Europeans in accordance with their own cultural identities. This adoption of European cloth and clothing and its cultural reworking apparently commenced quite early-on in cross-cultural contacts. Already in 1602, the English sea captain


Bartholomew Gosnold on an exploratory trip encountered a set of six Indian men who hailed him to his surprise from a sailboat of their own off Cape Nedick, one of whom was “apparrelled with a wastcoat and breeches of blacke serdge, made after our sea-fashion, hose and shoes on his feet” and another wearing “a paire of breeches of blue cloth.” They had probably been suitably supplied by Basque or French traders long active in the North Atlantic.

Starting with the Basques in the 16th Century, certain other European manufacturers, similarly to the textile-makers and clothiers, responded with alacrity to the distant American (and West African) appetite for copper and brass kettles and other bright, sturdy metal articles. Some kettles were used for cooking, while others were used for ceremonial purposes or burial goods or were cut up into pieces to be turned into projectile points or articles of personal ornamentation. European glassmakers produced shiny glass beads in imitation of wampum for the Indian trade. Other European manufacturers made pipes to sell for the Indians to smoke their sacramental tobacco. By the middle of the 17th Century, if not sooner, long stretched-out, two-way “commodity chains” – to use the Wallersteinian terminology --


consisting partly of utilitarian items and partly of prestige goods or some mixture of both were on a regular basis linking up the profit-making engines of the Modern World-System’s core with the economic and political zones of incorporation on the distant “frontier” in Northeastern North America. As we have seen previously in this dissertation, Wallerstein himself has expressed little regard for the role of “preciosities” in world-system-constituting relationships (although others in this same theoretical discourse such as Chase-Dunn and Hall have made an effort to rectify this lacuna). For Wallerstein and those who adhere most closely to his theorizing, the most important commodity chains are those involving the production, transport and consumption of bulk commodities. And, indeed, it will not be disputed that commodities like sugar, silver and slaves – or the dried and salted fish that came early from the North Atlantic – have been more important over the longer run than ones like furs and fancy coats to the history of the Modern World-System. But these other items, too, played not inconsequential roles in capital accumulation on a world-scale, as well as being instrumental in bringing into being what was for indigenous peoples a Brave New World.

As with the Indians, for the Europeans of this time period what they put on in the way of clothing, hats and other apparel and adornments were markers of status and rank. A fine beaver hat was just such a marker for elite English and other males. Not so for Indians. However, early on, sachems and sagamores -- or those aspiring to that position in their bands

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311 On the meanings clothing held for colonial Anglo-Americans, see Linda Baumgarten, What Clothes Reveal: The Language of Clothing in Colonial and Federal America (Williamsburg, Va.: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 2002).
or tribes – seem to have made a particular effort to acquire elite European-style clothes, especially tailored coats, to distinguish themselves from their more ordinary fellows and perhaps to make manifest that they had a certain greater degree of manitou from being connected to the sources of new prestige items or more practical goods. The first Indian-to-white land transaction that we have any information about in the Massachusetts Bay Colony occurred when the peninsula of Nahant was sold in 1630 to “Farmer Dexter to be fenced in for cattle pasture by “Black William,” a Massachuset sachem’s son. The seller got a “pinned” suit of clothes, clothes he subsequently brought back and exchanged for two coats instead.312 Earlier, in April 1631, the Massachuset chief sachem Chickatabot had come to Governor Winthrop in Boston and “desired to buy some English clothes for himself.” The governor, after informing Chickatabot that “English sagamores did not use to truck,” ordered him a tailor-made suit. (This was more an effort by the sachem to cement an alliance through gifts than to “truck,” as Chickatabot had brought the governor a present of Indian corn several weeks earlier and reciprocated to the governor now on this occasion for providing him the desired suit of clothes with two large coat-beavers.)313 Other Indian sachems not infrequently expressed their desires to be bestowed with the same kind of fancy coats they knew were worn by the “English sachems,” and the English authorities often obliged these requests -- coming to see providing such coats as a good means for binding Indian sachems to them and as a sign of Christianizing influences. In a 1632 letter from Puritan colonization-backer Edward Howes


in England to John Winthrop, Jr. in Boston, Howes said he was most pleased to hear “there is great hopes of Jo: Sagamore, to be civilized and a christian.”

I conceiue it were very good, to bestowe respect and honor vnto such as he (petty kings) by giuing them a scarlet coate I meane a red coate to weare; or some other vesture in token of his place and dignitie, which other Sachems (of greater command than he) hearinge and seeinge, may thereby be allured to loue and respect the English in hope and expectation of the like, or in theire conceite more glorious clothinge and soe you may thereby discouer further into the land haue more frinds and allies, and by the blessinge of god, it may be a greate means of civilizinge the meane sorte; and after, the revealinge Christ vnto them; for it is a rule in warre, to aime to suprise and captiuate greate ones, and the lesse will soone come vnder, soe winn the hartes of the Sachems and you win all. The wise man saith; guifts blinde the wise; how much more them that are ignorante and simple, as I think all the natuies are. The more loue and respect you shewe to the Sagamore and Sachems the more loue and feare shall you gaine from the common natuies.  

A governmental policy of appealing to sachem vanity and sense of self-worth – or, as we might more properly make theoretical sense out of it, finding an “articulation” with status and ranking and the forms of social reproduction among the Indians (which in some ways were not all that different from those present among the Europeans) -- seems to have been carried through for a long time. Thus, in 1700, we find Massachusetts authorities wanting those running the official government fur trading house that had been established on the northern frontier to “Take care to provide a good suitable Coat, a Shirt, & a Hatt to be sent unto Moxis, the Sagamore at Kennebec River, and also Coats, Shirts and Hatts for Bomasin and other Indians now here with him.” And well-dressed Indian sachems might take pains to keep up with the latest changing European styles. The Mahican-Mohawk sachem Teoniahigarawe (“King Hendrick”) visited England in 1740 and received the gift from King George II of a court costume – “a green coat, set off with brussels and gold lace, and a cocked

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314 Winthrop Papers, vol. 3 (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1943), 74. Sagamore John was another Massachusetts sachem.

hat, such as was worn by the court gentry of that period” – in which the sachem had his portrait painted and wore subsequently with pride. Some years later, we are told that Hendrick was paying a visit to the manor outside of Albany of the Indian Commissioner, Sir William Johnson. Johnson had just received a beautiful new embroidered coat from abroad. Hendrick told Johnson that he had dreamed the coat should be his coat, whereupon Johnson gave it him. The *quid pro quo* in the story, perhaps apocryphal, is that the quick-witted Johnson replied to Hendrick that he likewise had a dream – one in which the Indian’s land would belong to him. Upon reflection Hendrick, too, consented – Indians believed dreams had to be fulfilled – but asked Johnson to please have no more such dreams. It seems even in dreams, there was an unequal exchange between the two cultures.

We are dwelling here on cloth because it was an important economic and cultural mediator. Sachems and other Indians not uncommonly requested coats, other articles of clothing, and lengths of cloth as part of the bargain when they turned over land to white buyers. Tacommonan, a Narragansett sachem, deeded away land in 1654 to the proprietors of Warwick, Rhode Island for £15 in wampum with the proviso that a new coat be awarded to him annually. Four Indian “kings” and two Indian “queens” in 1662 deeded away the land that became the town of Haddam, Connecticut for the consideration of thirty coats, only


reserving to themselves forty acres “together with a right to hunt and fish where they pleased, provided they did not wrong or abuse the English.” The monetary equivalent of the goods received for the land was not usually specified in these Indian deeds, but Mohegan sachem Uncas and his son Ahhadon in 1663 sold land in Guilford, Connecticut “in consideration of an Indian coat worth thirty shillings and a shirt cloth worth ten shillings.” (For other examples involving cloth, see the Indian Deeds Database on the accompanying CD-ROM.)

But whether consisting of utilitarian items or prestige goods – or of items that were some mix of both -- trade by Indians with whites did not bring into their possession articles of purely individual consumption. As we have seen in the previous chapter on indigenous political economy, Big Men and chiefs in these and similar band or tribal societies, among their other roles and responsibilities, played a redistributive function in order to win over and maintain the loyalty of their kin-group and followers and in accordance with the needs of social reproduction. While direct evidence is slight, it seems likely that some of the quantities of cloth, coats, and other goods Indians acquired in the fur trade and through other dealings with the whites were redistributed ritualistically or in some other way. Otherwise, some Indians active in the trade would have had an improbably large wardrobe in their wigwams, one far bigger than that of all but a tiny handful of contemporary Englishmen! Umpanchala,

319 David D. Field, A History of the Towns of Haddam and East-Haddam (Middletown, Conn.: Loomis and Richards, 1814), 3-5.


321 The 1654 inventory of the estate of a well-to-do Lynn planter and cooper, George Burrill, shows him having a total of four coats, including one that was part of a suit with waistcoat and breeches. The 1661 inventory of a middling Marblehead farmer, James Smith, shows in his wardrobe only two coats, one of them part of a suit with breeches. Records and Files of the Quarterly Courts of Essex County, Massachusetts, vol. 1, 1636-1656 (Salem, Mass.: Essex Institute, 1911), 352-355; Records and Files of the Quarterly Courts of Essex County, Massachusetts, vol. 2, 1656-1662 (Salem, Mass.: Essex Institute, 1912), 306.
a Norwottuck sachem involved in the Connecticut River fur trade, received from John Pynchon’s Springfield store from September 1659 to December 1660 on credit against future beaver peltry or mortgaged land an astounding total of 27 blue, red or white shag coats – one or occasionally two at a time. He also acquired during the same 15-month period two guns, a number of knives, a kettle, three pairs of breeches, a blue waistcoat, one pair of stockings, plus a great many yards of blue, red and white shag cloth and a sizeable quantity of wampum (some earmarked for his wife). Three of the coats, as Pynchon noted in his itemizing of Umpanchala’s growing indebtedness, were entrusted to Umpanchala’s brother and two coats went to another Indian named Wuteallatssun. Apart from all the coats, we can perhaps imagine Umpanchala wearing these various articles of clothing himself, using the guns and knives in his forays for beaver and other fur-bearing animals and the kettle being used for cooking by his wife. But it seems a reasonable guess that many of the textiles must have gone as gifts to other Indians of Umpanchala’s kinship-group or acquaintance.

There is but a single Indian land transaction I know, one that involved the Narragansett chief sachems, Canonicus and Miantonomo, in which explicit mention is made of goods being received for redistribution. Canonicus and Miantonomo in March 1638, “by virtue of our general command of this Bay; as also the particular subjecting of the dead sachem of Aquedneck and Kitackamuckqut themselves and lands unto us,” sold the “great island” of Aquidneck (Rhode Island) to some Boston men for “forty fathom of white beads.” Wanamataunemet, the “present sachem inhabitant of the Island,” was given five fathom more of wampum from the English purchasers for his consent, and two other named Indians

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received five fathoms each for quitting their claims to any broken up or other ground. Miantonomo was given ten coats and twenty hoes and a further twenty-three coats and thirteen hoes for the stated purpose of distributing them to the Indians who were living on the island to convince them to remove. According to the records, for his “pains and travel in removing of the natives off the Island of Aquedneck,” Miantonomo received for himself an additional ten fathom of wampumpeag and one broad cloth coat.323 No other Indian deed in our database mentions this sort of arrangement whereby goods received were redistributed, but I suspect it happened much more often and that this is one of the most important keys to understanding why Indians sold furs and then land.

How much were the Indian primary producers being taken advantage of in exchanges of goods through the fur trade? From the early stage of gift giving, did this become an “unequal exchange” characterizing a core-periphery relationship? Raw beaver prices in London fluctuated considerably, and John Pynchon’s profits, it seems, derived over the longer haul from the markup on the goods he imported and resold to other parties, whites and Indians, in western Massachusetts and not so much necessarily from his receipts in the overseas fur trade itself. We come across Pynchon in a 1657 letter importuning his recipient on the English end of the long trans-Atlantic commodity chain to make every effort, even though the “markets being somthing low with you,” to sell Pynchon’s shipment of beaver

pelts for a least the same cost, if possible, of procuring them.\textsuperscript{324} If we parse through these records, we can also spot in Pynchon’s accounting how the direct producers of the furs, the Indians, who made it all possible were the unknowing victims of Pynchon’s sharp dealings. Indians, lacking familiarity with prices in England or the economic “laws” of supply and demand to which they were increasingly being subjected, experienced a higher mark-up on goods than whites usually did. The same “Bilboe rug” that was charged to Umpanchala for twenty shillings per yard to be paid off in beaver pelts was sold by Pynchon to a white customer for ten shillings per yard. A pair of stockings cost Umpanchala six shillings on his account, more or less half of the value of one whole good beaver pelt that it might take many hours to produce, while a white customer of Pynchon’s had to pay only four shilling six pence for the same article of clothing. A white subcontractor received the discounted rate for stockings at twenty six shillings per dozen. Pynchon typically charged white customers – both his favored subcontractors in the fur trade and individual end-consumers – for basic knives in the range of five to seven shillings per dozen, but he charged Umpanchala (and not unlikely his other Indian customers) one shilling apiece. A “made coat” was fifteen shillings on account when Pynchon sold to a subcontractor; Umpanchala owed at least twenty-five shillings for each of his numerous direct coat purchases in exchange for the promised but

\textsuperscript{324} Carl Bridenbaugh and Juliette Tomlinson, eds., \textit{The Pynchon Papers}, vol. 2, \textit{Selections from the Account Books of John Pynchon, 1651-1697} (Boston: Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1985), 109. In the early 1630s, when William Pynchon helped to pioneer the fur trade on the Connecticut River, the free market price of beaver had been a lofty 20 shillings per pound but fell in the second half of the decade to 12 shillings or less, which is where it remained through the period in mid-century covered by his son, John Pynchon’s, account books, as we can see from them. William Babcock Weeden, \textit{Economic and Social History of New England, 1620-1789} (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1891), 98; William B. Weeden, “Indian Money as a Factor in New England Civilization,” in \textit{Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science}, ed. Herbert Baxter Adams, 2d ser., 8-9 (Baltimore:, N. Murray, 1884), 399.
apparently never-delivered beaver pelts.\textsuperscript{325}

Unfortunately, it is not possible to tell from Pynchon’s records what he himself was charged by his English or eastern colonial suppliers for any of the aforementioned items and how much were the associated transportation costs -- thus for us to be able to calculate what his profit margins might have been on these various wholesale and retail transactions. However, at or around this same time in the 17\textsuperscript{th} Century, we know that ordinary kitchen cutting knives in urban England were selling for approximately four pence each, skinning and other speciality knives sold for somewhat more; ordinary stockings and hose averaged at retail between three and four shillings.\textsuperscript{326} And, thanks to Margaret Spufford’s fascinating study of one aspect of the spreading English consumer society during this century, we find pedlars who did not have the overhead of running stores selling knives to dwellers in rural England at rock-bottom prices that were as low as eighteen pence per dozen and stockings for a mere twelve pence each.\textsuperscript{327} In England throughout the 17\textsuperscript{th} Century, the price of textiles figured in constant terms fell dramatically – according to Carole Shammas’s deft cliometrics, falling by about half overall – due, Shammas concludes, to intensified exploitation of rural putting-out workers. Textile prices also fell during this period in the American colonies.\textsuperscript{328} It would

\textsuperscript{325} Carl Bridenbaugh and Juliette Tomlinson, eds., \textit{The Pynchon Papers}, vol. 2, \textit{Selections from the Account Books of John Pynchon, 1651-1697} (Boston: Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1985), 74, 77, 81, 86, 87, 92, 113, 283, 287, 460, 467. In the early 1630s, when William Pynchon helped to pioneer the fur trade on the Connecticut River, Umpanchala’s accounts were charged in fathoms and hands of wampum and converted into pounds, shillings and pence.


be worthwhile trying to see whether these cost-savings merchants enjoyed with coats and trucking cloth were passed on to Indians or whether there was a worsened state of unequal exchange exacerbated, too, by the greater Indian labor costs of securing furs as the stocks of animals were depleted through intensified hunting and trapping pressures. Unfortunately, the extant records for the years of the fur trade -- basically Pynchon’s are all we’ve got – are likely too few to draw any reasonable conclusions.

Finally, in this regard, a salient point that needs to be made is that because each colony monopolized the Indian fur trade and land sales within its borders (although there could be disputes over where the colonial boundaries or jurisdictions fell leading to duplicate Indian titles), Indians were not able to get the highest prices for what they had to sell that they might have been able to obtain through a competitive marketplace. They could not easily peddle their beaver or other peltries to get the best possible bargain from their work but had to deal solely with authorized trading houses. And they would have done much better financially, if they had been able to sell land to individual white buyers in smaller farm-sized pieces rather than in huge chunks to developers, but this was an option not open to them. Moreover, while Massachusetts had a system of separate “Indian courts” to regularize and control issues among Indians who had submitted to their jurisdiction and in which Indians had some partial input as officers of the court and members of juries, the court system to which Indians might appeal debts owed to the whites or by whites to them was run exclusively by non-Indians.


330 Ann Marie Plane has tapped the records of the little-known Indian Court to gain new insights into continuities and changes in Indian marital practices and kinship relations during the colonial period in New England. Plane , Colonial Intimacies: Indian Marriage in Early New England (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000).
Plus, remembering what Mao famously said about where power ultimately comes from, the
debt collection process was backed up by the armed might of the Puritan state apparatuses.
We will look in somewhat greater detail in a subsequent chapter at the patently unequal,
discriminatory role played by the colonial state towards indigenous actors in an inequitable
economy.

**Resistance and Accommodation**

Yet, even though many Indians were increasingly subsumed within an alien political
economy in which human decisions and market determinations were made outside of their
familiar ken and the odds were often stacked against them, Indians were by no means passive
recipients or mere “bearers” of these processes. King Philip’s War is a clear-cut example of
organized resistance, and sometimes on a smaller scale, Indians took direct action to bring
rough justice to those white traders whom they felt were abusing them or not being on the up-
and-up in their commercial dealings. John Cromwell, a fur trader in Dunstable, Massachusetts
“used his foot, it is said [by the early town historian], as a pound weight in buying pelttries of
the natives; but on being detected in this iniquitous proceeding, came near to pay the penalty
with his life. A party of the Pennacook Indians whom he had thus defrauded came down the
river to wreak on him their vengeance; but on being advertised of their approach, he gathered
up his ill-gotten treasure and saved himself by flight.”331 Even more despised by the Indians
was Major Richard Waldron, the master of a trucking house on the Merrimack River at
Pennicock (Concord). Waldron dispensed liquor to his Indian customers which angered the

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local sachem since it had been a source among his people of murderous violence. Waldron was said to employ his fist as a pound counter-weight against the Indians’ furs brought to the trading counter. Worse, at the finale of King Philip’s War, he lured several hundred Indians into what he said was a sham battle while peace was being made, then turned around, pulled real guns, seized the Indians and sold many into slavery. These offenses were not forgotten. Some years later during King William’s War, Indians took revenge by entering Waldron’s dwelling house using a stratagem of their own and slaying him. First, however, it is said that they demonstratively “crossed out their accounts,” as a 19th-century historian wryly put it, with knife slashes across Waldron’s chest.\footnote{332} They had made their point about a moral economy, though whites would later call what happened an “Indian massacre.”

Along with acts of resistance and protest, we find efforts by Indians to preserve their identities and lands through partial accommodation with English religion and culture. One New England Indian of this period became a fur trader himself; he is identified in some records as being an actual “merchant.” This was Waban (“The Wind”), a Nipmuck Indian. Waban was able to work both the old and the new systems to his advantage -- for a couple of decades anyhow. Although not a sachem or otherwise of high-born status, he was able marry the daughter of the sachem of Musketaquid (Concord). The Indians near the Bay had suffered a terrible population loss from the epidemic just prior to the arrival of the Puritans, and this may have made it more possible for an ambitious survivor to get ahead in this fashion. Waban was “well-disposed” to the whites. It was at Waban’s wigwam where the Rev. John

Eliot commenced preaching to the Indians in 1646 in Nonantum (Newton), and he became one of the first coverts to Christianity. (Eliot focused his efforts on the expedient of converting sachems, but the local Massachuset sachem Cutshamekin was reluctant to convert.) Having gained the confidence of the whites, Waban accumulated moveable wealth in corn keeping the cattle of the Cambridge settlers. After the converts were settled at Natick in 1651, he became a “principle ruler” as white-appointed justice of the peace in the “praying Indian” town. Looking ahead dynastically to the next generation, he sent off his son to be educated at the English school in Dedham. When the Indians built a school for themselves at Natick, the upper story was set aside to serve as Waban’s trading storehouse.

In 1675 Waban tried to warn his white friends of the imminent launch of Metacom’s campaign to drive them out of the country. When King Philip’s War broke out he and the rest of the faithful Natick Indians were carted off to a concentration camp on Deer Island in Boston Harbor. Aged over seventy, he seems to have taken sick from that hard experience and died not long after being allowed, with the other Indian refugees, to return to his old residence. In one sense Waban had capitulated, but Waban had also succeeded, as a cultural mediator, in retaining some freedom of action for himself and his people. He had used new structural constraints as new enablers.

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To summarize where we find ourselves at this point in the historical analysis: Europeans and Indians euphemistically “encountered” each other person-to-person, group-to-group, on these shores starting in the early 16th Century. On both sides, individuals were able to make arrangements in the fur trade and in other ways that were mutually beneficial. And some individuals on both sides, based on their exceptional personal qualities that were suited for the enterprise, did well. But they were only able to do so because of economic and political structures existing apart from any particular individual. In the neo-Wallersteinian theories of Chase-Dunn and Hall, two sets of Prestige Goods Networks of two different world-systems with their own rules of operation articulated with each other. Through this articulation, English merchants obtained beaver hats for social reproduction of the upper classes in Europe – and above all for profits. Indians, particularly sachems, acquired exotic items that showed-off status and rank and found valued places in “traditional” forms of social reproduction. But this relationship was always imbalanced from the beginning – and not only in terms of the military power with each side could bring to bear. Although the fur trade helped to pay some of their bills, the Pilgrims and Puritans had other objectives besides whether King Charles and other well-dressed Englishmen could attire themselves with nice fashionable beaver hats. “Cities on a Hill” and other religious objectives aside, what was most important to them in terms of social reproduction in New England – given their high level of biological reproduction following the Biblical injunction to be fruitful and multiply and a relatively salubrious environment – was obtaining farmland for future generations. And, especially after the fur-bearing animals were depleted – with the capitalist world-system’s much larger spatial reach, sources could be found elsewhere – the Indians were no
longer a boon – at least in this part of this North American continent – but were in the way.

In the next chapter, we will explore in greater detail using Indian Deeds how this all hooks together with Indians, still trying to socially reproduce their societies as their forefathers had, losing most of their former landbase, the basis on their livelihoods and culture.
Chapter Four: From Wampum to Beaver to Indian Deeds

English and other European actors in the fur trade not only built successful businesses through providing the Indians with exotic goods for use, show and redistribution but picked up early-on how to manipulate to their own avaricious benefit a key element in the Indians’ pre-existing system of social reproduction, namely wampum. Ethnohistorian Neal Salisbury has labeled this transformation the “Wampum Revolution.”¹ As indicated in Chapter Two, it is not clear how deep and widespread the use of wampum was among New England Indians prior to European contact, although it certainly had some degree of circulation as a prestige item. Archaeologists continue to debate this question, and we historians perforce will have to wait patiently for more material data to come in that may help resolve the issue. What is indisputable, however, is that the use of wampum burgeoned in the early years following contact, as whites deployed it -- not in the manner Indians used it to build alliances, for arranging marriages, indemnifying personal injuries and deaths or restoring a healthy spirit to the forlorn and sick -- but as an “Indian money” to extract beaver and other marketable furs from the Indians. And because “the holder of wampum always compelled trade to come to him,” control of its sources became a serious bone of contention among Indians and English (and other Europeans).²

The savvy Dutch were the pioneers in the use of wampum for this objective. Ascending the great river afterwards named for him to the head of navigation in his ship “The


² This phrase, as well as the much-quoted description of wampum as a “magnet” for the fur trade, comes from William B. Weeden, “Indian Money as a Factor in New England Civilization,” in Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, ed. Herbert Baxter Adams, 2d ser., 8-9 (Baltimore: N. Murray, 1884), 383-431.
Half-Moon” in 1609, the English captain Henry Hudson sailing on behalf of the Dutch met with crowds of natives who were more than willing to trade furs for “trinkets.” Subsequently, starting in 1614, Dutch merchants followed up on Hudson’s territorial claim and established trading posts on the lower tip of the island of Manhattan and another on the river near present-day Albany. In 1621, these came under the control of the highly-capitalized Dutch-chartered West India Company (which, along with its East India counterpart, played a huge role in the history of the Modern World-System). Highly valuable peltry which was reserved exclusively to the company and its investors – in 1633 alone 15,174 skins, mostly beaver, valued at over 143,125 guilders (approximately $1.6 million in today’s dollars) – were brought in by Indian men, processed by Indian women, and exported to Europe. Dutch traders also extended their reach to the eastward as far as Cape Cod and the Narragansett country.\(^3\) As we have seen, the Dutch and the Pilgrims came into conflict with each other over control of the sources of wealth from the fur trade when both set up trading posts in 1633 on the Connecticut River conduit.\(^4\) It was the Dutch who introduced wampum (or “seawant,” as they called it) to their English competitors for a self-interested reason. In 1627, a Dutch official, Isaac DeRaasier, traveling overland from New Amsterdam to visit New Plymouth, happened upon Pilgrims at their new fur trading post on Buzzard’s Bay with a shallop built for going to trade with the Indians farther south. Not wishing to see the current Dutch monopoly of that invaluable material broken if they happened to come upon the Dutch sources of wampum, as they likely would, among the Indians on Long Island, he tried to divert the attention of the

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Pilgrim authorities northward by telling them about wampum, something unknown to the Pilgrims, and by providing them £50 worth out of his own personal wampum stock. This gambit by the Dutch to protect their fur trade secret worked for a while – the Pilgrims, as we have seen, took the wampum to the Kennebec where they used it to establish a successful fur trade – until the Massachusetts Bay colony in 1634 sent Governor Winthrop’s shallop on an exploratory mission to the southward and discovered on Long Island “store of the best wampum, white and blue.” And, in the aftermath of the Pequot War, Long Island Indians switched delivering their tributary payments of wampum, formerly made over to the Pequots in Connecticut, to the English in Boston.

Wampum was not only employed by the English in the fur trade but was also adopted by the colonists in the early decades of settlement as a circulating medium among themselves. From 1648 to 1661, by law in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, wampum at the rate of eight white or four black beads to the penny could pass for debts not exceeding 40 shillings. Other colonies had similar laws. Where Indians had access to wampum, even if their supply of fur-bearing animals was now gone, they could readily exchange it to the English for goods they wanted – and the English traders in turn could carry some of the wampum inland to exchange with other Indians for the furs that they wanted. This wampum-fur trading network grew to take in a extensive geographical range. As Roger Williams observed:

> The Indians bring downe all their sorts of Furs, which they take in the countrey, both to the Indians and to the English for this Indian Money: this Money the English, French and Dutch, trade to the Indians, six hundred miles in severall parts (North and South from New-England) for their Furres, and whatsoever they stand in need of from them: as Corne, Venison, &c.\(^5\)

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Some well-situated coastal Indians like the Pequots and Narragansetts, who already made wampum and could step-up production, in the words of William Bradford, now “grew rich and potent by it.”

But this situation would not last for very long, bringing with it the attention of the English and making them especially keen on subjugating these particular Indians to their overlordship. As we have noted already, this was an English motive behind the vicious Pequot War, launched from Boston after the Pequots had tried in good faith to establish a collaborative equal trading relationship with the English. Repeated English efforts followed to subjugate the Narragansetts politically and military or at least to force them to pay to the Puritans large amounts of wampum fines for alleged offenses.

Why was copper, which as we have seen was an important pre-contact prestige good among the New England and other Indians – indeed more pervasively so than wampum across much of the continent -- not used by whites as a “magnet” for the fur trade? As we have seen, copper items do appear in trade records and turn up archaeologically. However, unlike wampum, copper could not be so easily obtained from one set of Indians to leverage the fur trade with another set of Indians. The English had no control over the principal sources in North America (mainly around the upper Great Lakes) where Indians produced it. Manufactured copper and brass articles had to be brought in at some expense from overseas. So it is a reasonable inference that wampum, being locally-produced and, of relatively light weight, was a more cost-effective choice for the Europeans to use in facilitating the fur trade. It was something they, too, could produce locally themselves. The Dutch on the Hudson not

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only obtained wampum from Indians living on Long Island (called by the Indians, “Sewanhacky,” the “isle of shells”) but began manufacturing it themselves for trading purposes. The use of awls, lathes and other metal tools significantly reduced the labor time and cost involved and boosted profits. Fort Aurania under the Dutch, the “Beverwyck” to which came a parade of more western and northern Indians with furs to trade in the Seventeenth Century, and subsequently Albany under the control of the English, became a big center of wampum manufacture. Under white supervision, “certain poor Indian families . . . support themselves by coining this cash for the traders.” (Among the Munsee Indians, this center of the Hudson River fur trade acquired the name, “Laaphawachking,” or “place of stringing beads.”) This resulted in another form of dependency under the new political economy where wampum was increasingly becoming “money” for Indians, too, rather than a gift or tribute. Many Indian users seem to grow accustomed over time to bringing in furs in exchange for ready-made wampum now available at the trading posts, and as the volume of wampum in circulation went up, they might suffer the inexplicable to them effects of price inflation requiring ever more numbers of furs for similar goods – though, as the Dutch complained, at other times the continual removal of wampum from circulation by the Indians in social reproduction (i.e. using it in burials) could cause the price of wampum to go up.

The observant Swedish traveler Peter Kalm who paid a visit to Albany in 1748 noted how a

difference involving what “goods” were considered valuable could be leveraged by Europeans who understood the overall political economy:

A traveler, who goes to trade with the Indians, and is well stocked with them [wampum beads], may become a considerable gainer; but if he take gold coin, or bullion, he will undoubtedly be a loser; for the Indians, who live farther up the country, put little or no value upon these metals which we reckon so precious, as I have frequently observed in the course of my travels. The Indians formerly made their own wampums, though not without a deal of trouble; but at present the Europeans employ themselves that way, especially the inhabitants of Albany, who get a considerable profit by it.8

The account books of John Pynchon reveal that he, too, moved into organizing the production of wampum to expedite his Connecticut River fur trade out of Springfield during the middle 17th Century. In this way, he was following the general tendency of the Modern World-System in becoming more of a true capitalist extracting a surplus from labor rather than simply a merchant pocketing a profit by moving goods from sources where they were abundant to consumers in locations where they were scarce. Awls by the dozen were debited to the accounts of Pynchon’s subcontractor, Thomas Cooper, who was then credited on the other side of the balance sheet for stringing so many fathoms (the actual work of which was probably done by Indians).9 As best we can tell, the unstrung raw beads were obtained by Pynchon from merchant connections in more southerly locations such as New Haven and Wethersfield who presumably acquired it somehow from its actual coastal sources – most likely Indian producers in that vicinity, since we never hear about whites performing that kind of labor. Pynchon also obtained some wampum in trade from the Dutch manufacturers in

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9 Carl Bridenbaugh and Juliette Tomlinson, eds., The Pynchon Papers, vol. 2, Selections from the Account Books of John Pynchon, 1651-1697 (Boston: Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1985), 73, 90, 94.
Albany.\textsuperscript{10}

The fur trade while it lasted enabled Indians in the interior to acquire serious amounts of wampum, perhaps for the first time.\textsuperscript{11} Sachems and Big Men could use it to enhance their status. We can get a sense from Pynchon’s records of the high intake of wampum taken in trade by interior natives. The Norwottuck sachem Umpanchala’s running book account with Pynchon shows he acquired over 120 fathoms of mostly white and some black wampum for the fifteen months covered. This was picked up by him from the trading house in installments of a single fathom (six feet) to ten fathoms. Already in 1658, Umpanchala had been one of three sachems who, appearing on December 25th (not a Puritan holiday), sold a nine-mile square of land to Pynchon acting on behalf of the town-in-formation of Hadley, Massachusetts. He and the two other Indian grantors deeded away the land “in consideration of two hundred fathom of wampom [sic], and twenty fathom and one large coat of eight fathom. . . besides several small gifts, and for other good causes and considerations,” reserving only to themselves within those bounds some acres of a single cornfield.\textsuperscript{12} Where was all this new wampum going? Some Umpanchala no doubt displayed on his person. But perhaps Umpanchala was using some wampum from time to time as rewards to stimulate other Indians to bring him in furs, which he could then trade with Pynchon. Or, perhaps, since this was a time period of repeated warfare thereabouts involving the River Indians with the

\textsuperscript{10} Ibid, 81-82, 89-90. Pynchon’s occasional Wethersfield, Connecticut source of wampum was Mathias Sension. He was a sometime tavern keeper, which may give us a clue about how the wampum was obtained. Edwin Hall, \textit{The Ancient Historical Records of Norwalk, Connecticut} (Norwalk, Conn.: James Mallory & Co., 1847), 70.

\textsuperscript{11} Data from archaeological work on pre-contact sites in the Connecticut River Valley of Massachusetts that I have been able to access

\textsuperscript{12} Harry Andrew Wright, \textit{Indian Deeds of Hampden County} (Springfield, Mass.: [s.n.], 1905), 33-36.
Narragansetts, Mohegans and Mohawks, this wampum, along with other goods, was being used for diplomatic purposes and to cement military alliances.\(^\text{13}\) Perhaps it was being used in other ways to facilitate “traditional” social reproduction. Regardless, Pynchon got fewer than five fathoms worth of beaver pelts back for his recorded dealings with Umpanchala, and Umpanchala, in order to cover his 300 fathoms worth of book debts, was ultimately forced to forfeit the several parcels of prime river bottom land that he had “pawned” to Pynchon—which is quite possibly what Pynchon was most interested in obtaining anyway. Umpanchala was hooked. To pay Pynchon, by early 1662 Umpanchala had sold everything he could sell, reserving only five acres of plowed ground for the Indians (which was subsequently sold).\(^\text{14}\) Other Indians involved in the Pynchon fur trading network likewise fell victim to indebtedness and forfeited lands as a consequence. In April 1661, six Indians mortgaged their lands in Springfield to Samuel Marshfield, one of Pynchon’s factotums and sub-contractors in the fur trade, for their debts to him which they had engaged previously to pay in beaver “& we doe still ingage to doe the Same if we can gett it, any tyme this summer.” The next spring, an Indian family in Hadley mortgaged a “parcell of land” to Northampton-based Joseph Parsons, another trader who had purchased a share of Pynchon’s fur trading license, promising to turn it over to Parsons if they could not come up with “fower score Skins” of

\(^\text{13}\) During most of the 1640s and 50s, the River Indians were allied with the Narragansetts and Mohawks against Uncas’s collaborationist Mohegans to the south. Then, in the early 1660s, the River Indians turned against the Mohawks who were warring with the Abenaki to the north and east. Underlying this warfare, along with rivalries and personal antagonisms among sachems, were issues involving access to European trade goods as the numbers of beaver across southern New England diminished along with access to Narragansett and allied sources of wampum. See Richard I. Melvoin, *New England Outpost: War and Society in Colonial Deerfield*, 1st ed. (New York: Norton, 1989), 36-47

beaver before the first of September to satisfy a debt on coats and wampum Parsons had advanced to them. The situation got so tough, with the decline of the supply of furs, that a couple of Waranoke Indians in 1665 were willing to offer up their four-year daughter to the white purchasers for security that a land deal they were making with some whites was *bona fide*. The fur trade which had seemed so full of benefits to the Indians at first had become a very slippery slope.

Archaeologist Peter Thomas who worked in the Connecticut Valley region was the first, as far as I know, to suggest a causal connection between, on the one hand, the shrinkage of the fur supplies on account of resource depletion – or due to the related disruptions of inter-tribal warfare – and, on the other hand, Indians becoming more prone to alienate portions of their land to keep getting the foreign goods like woven cloth, firearms, and liquor to which they had grown accustomed.

Beginning in the 1650s, qualitative changes in the nature and function of land sales took place. Why? In essence, land ceased to be a minor supplemental resource in the Indian-English exchange system and became a major replacement item for pelts. Between 1652 and 1657, the annual average returns of beaver amounted to 2290 pounds; whereas, between 1658 and 1663, the annual returns averaged 953 pounds, a drop of fifty-nine percent. Indian leaders who relied on the fur trade for goods to bolster their own or their kinsmen's prestige, or to obtain wampum to foster socio-political alliances between Indian

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15 Harry Andrew Wright, *Indian Deeds of Hampden County* (Springfield, Mass.: [s.n.], 1905), 46-47, 48-49, 55-56. A good chart illustrating the steep decline of Pynchon exports in beaver poundage during the 1650s and 1660s is in Peter A. Thomas, “The Fur Trade, Indian Land and the Need to Define Adequate "Environmental" Parameters,” *Ethnohistory* 28, no. 4 (Autumn 1981): 364. Thomas attributes the fluctuations of beaver returns as much to the distractions and dangers of intertribal warfare as he does to a fall in the number of beavers because of over-hunting – although it would seem that these two phenomena, if not identical, are dialectically related in as much as the decline of beavers would intensify competition leading to more warfare which, in turn, would lead to less hunting and trapping.

16 Peter A. Thomas “In the Maelstrom of Change: The Indian Trade and Cultural Process in the Middle Connecticut River Valley: 1635-1665” (Ph.D., University of Massachusetts, Amherst, 1979 and “The Fur Trade, Indian Land and the Need to Define Adequate "Environmental" Parameters,” *Ethnohistory* 28, no. 4 (Autumn 1981): 369-373. Thomas argues that the population of Indians had fallen due to disease and warfare and those remaining were not necessarily cultivating their old fields but had concentrated their settlements elsewhere. So the fields they sold may have seemed expendable, but land sales eventually led to a subsistence crisis.
communities, and who depended on this exchange as a mechanism to maintain positive communications with their English neighbors, found themselves faced with a monumental predicament. Was there an alternative resource to pelts or horticultural produce? Increasingly, land seemed to provide the answer, if only for a short while and not without the prospect of future stress.  

It seems a good presumption that the same sort of propensity to sell land may have come into being among Indians elsewhere in New England, as the fur trade waned. The other main riverine corridor in southern New England, that of the Merrimack, where there was an extensive early fur trade and where, as we have seen, trade also fell off significantly in the 1650s does indeed register a small but noticeable cluster of land sales by the Pennacocks in the late 1650s and early 1660s. (See the Indian Deeds Database on the accompanying CD-ROM.) Although we don’t have any surviving account books with tallies of Indian credits and debits for this region, it is possible in one case with the use of court records to link the decline of the fur trade to Indian debts and the loss of their land as a consequence. In 1659, Nanamocomuck, son of the Pennacock chief sachem Passaconaway, landed in Boston debtors prison as the party held responsible for his and for some other Indians’ debts – sachems were often held legally responsible by whites for everybody supposedly under them – to the fur trader John Tinker. Tinker, who may have been trying to clear up his book accounts at his Lancaster, Massachusetts trading post prior to a planned relocation to Connecticut, had taken Nanamocomuck to court. At several earlier court appearances, Tinker had been promised beaver pelts by the Indians to cover what was due to him. Because the Indians had failed to deliver on their promises – beavers perhaps already having become too scarce by that point for them to do so – Nanamocomuck was seized. As a result, his younger brother Wannalancit was forced to sell-off a sixty-acre cultivated island in the Merrimack River, his

17 Ibid, 372.
own residence as tribal sachem, to raise the £45 in payment due for expunging the debt and liberating Nanamocomuck from imprisonment.\(^{18}\)

Following Tinker’s departure for Connecticut (where he kept up his speculation in Indian lands), his replacement in the central Massachusetts hub of Indian trade became Simon Willard, who bought out Tinker’s former interest. Willard, a seasoned fur trader, land surveyor, long-time Assistant in the colonial government and a sometime Indian enforcer on behalf of the colony, seems to have played a similar cagy debt game of his own. In 1658, he had collected 500 riverside-acres in Groton and Lancaster from the Massachuset “Sagamore John” (Quancunquasit or Horawanit) for a £44 debt. By 1675, according to the inventory of his estate in 1676 and the testimony of his widow in 1681, Willard through wheeling and dealing had amassed an impressive total of £300 to £500 in “Indian debts due on book.” He was preparing to submit a petition to the General Court for permission to acquire additional lands from the Indians in exchange for these debts owing to him. But before Willard could cash-in this way, King Philip’s War broke out, and the colony was preoccupied with matters of its sheer survival with Major Willard’s military services being required. Willard’s brick mansion on his farm on the land formerly belonging to Sagamore John was chosen the first building in Groton to be burned to the ground by the Indians in their attack on March 13,

1676. Willard died soon thereafter. The land went subsequently to clear a debt Willard owed to the supplier of his Indian goods, leaving his widow to beg the General Court to compensate her family for the loss and for her husband’s many years of faithful service to the colony. This compensation was granted to the six younger Willard children in the form of a further tract of Indian land nearby, 1,000 acres being purchased from the daughter and son-in-law of Sagamore John. Sagamore John himself had taken part in the great rebellion but, as the tide turned against the Indians, had come in to the Puritan authorities under a proffered amnesty. Under close surveillance for his behavior and needing to prove his renewed loyalty, he finalized the sale of another tract of land — a huge block, including his home village of Pakachoag, that became Worcester — before he and friends took off abruptly for Canada.19

With the exhaustion of the fur trade and having no more land left to sell or to grow crops on, what then became of the sachem Umpanchala and his followers on the Connecticut? The remnants of the “Hadley Indians” took another route in the native diaspora from New England. They removed westward over the Berkshires and Taconics and became part of the “Albany Indians” who consisted of various displaced New England Indians who had

19 Joseph Willard, Willard Memoir; Or, Life and Times of Major Simon Willard (Boston: Phillips, Sampson and Company, 1858), 188-336. Alfred Sereno Hudson, The History of Concord, Massachusetts, vol. 1 (Concord, Mass.: The Erudite Press, 1904), 83; Samuel A. Green, Groton During the Indian Wars (Groton, Mass, 1883), 13; Dennis A. Conole, The Indians of the Nipmuck Country in Southern New England, 1630-1750: An Historical Geography (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & CO., 2001), 208-210; E. Smalley, The Worcester Pulpit, with Notices Historical and Biographical (Boston: Phillips, Sampson and Company, 1851), 536-537. We can follow the trail of legal documents a bit further for a sense of how much was gained by whites and lost by Indians monetarily in these transactions. Sagamore John’s Groton lands acquired by Willard and where Willard and his family lived before the war — lands called by the Indian name of “Nonacoicus” (meaning an earthen pot) — were conveyed by Willard’s estate to the estate of Willard’s Boston-based supplier of Indians trade goods to cancel out an outstanding debt of £273. The Willard estate received an additional £60. This creditor was the enormously wealthy Hezekiah Usher, a merchant, bookseller and publisher of John Eliot’s Indian Bible, who had also died in 1676. Thus, while Willard’s estate lost money uncollectible now from the Indian debtors, a small profit was earned over the original £44 owed by Sagamore John. Willard, 328-332; Edward Preston Usher, A Memorial Sketch of Roland Greene Usher, 1823-1895 (Boston: Nathan Sawyer & Son], 1895), 5-14, 143-148; Samuel A. Green, Remarks on Nonacoicus: The Indian Name of Major Willard's Farm at Groton, Mass. (Cambridge, Mass.: s.n., 1893).
regrouped and amalgamated at Schaghticoke near the confluence of the Hudson and Hoosac Rivers. However, food being scarce in the winter of 1691-92, some of them traveled back to their old hunting grounds between Deerfield and Hatfield to set up their wigwams. In 1696, a party of four of these Indians who were out hunting in the Hadley woods killed and scalped a young white hunter whom they encountered. When apprehended and forced to admit their crime, the Indians said they had been motivated to murder because Hadley men had threatened them when they tried to hunt on the east side of the Connecticut. Because of depredations by Indians coming down from Canada during King William’s War, the General Court in 1695 had prohibited any Indians whatsoever from being found within five miles easterly of the Connecticut or even within 20 miles westerly of it under pain of being captured or killed and scalped for a bounty – £50 paid for Indian men and £25 for women and children under fourteen. This was in utter violation of the terms of the 1658 deed by which Umpanchala and two other sachems had sold most of the land for the town of Hadley originally to John Pynchon. In this deed, the “libertie” to hunt, trap and fish was specifically reserved by the Indians from the land sale. Pynchon was a member of the court that convicted the Indians of murder. One of the arrested Indians was a man named “Pameconeset,” which seems as though it might have been a new or different name for Umpanchala, who had also used other names previously. This Umpanchala and another defendant turned state’s evidence and were freed but not before the execution of the other two stirred up much additional anger among the Indians. The next year the “Albany Indians,” as they were being termed by the whites, left the Hadley area never to return, moving back to Schaghticoke or joining up with other exiles.
Umpanchala and the other Indians who were his followers had been deprived of their homelands and of any residual use-rights through co-joined economic and political processes.

Admittedly, this is but a slight bit of anecdotal evidence for what might, if our conjecture is correct, have taken place more broadly across New England with involvement in the fur trade leading to growing, practically inescapable, indebtedness of the part of the Indians and the consequent loss of their lands. Indians also fell into indebtedness to whites in various other ways. There are a myriad of individual cases. A 1682 Indian deed now buried in the Suffolk County archives hints at a sad tale about which we would like to know more details. It concerns a Natick Indian, Andrew Pitamy (or Pittime), who was dead-set on ransoming an Indian woman (his relative, lover, friend?) from the clutches of a wealthy Boston merchant, importer and entrepreneur, big-time frontier Indian land speculator and son-in-law of John Winthrop, Jr., Richard Wharton. Lacking ready money with which to pay off Wharton and set her at liberty, Pitamy was obliged to make over to Wharton 500 acres, his portion of an inheritance of land in the Nipmuck Country -- after gaining the permission of Puritan authorities. The unnamed Indian woman “that spake the Maqua tongue” was probably one of the eight Indian captives on record who had been bought by Wharton for a mere one

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pound apiece during the divvying up of the Bay Colony’s captives in the aftermath of King Philip’s War. For some years Wharton had exploited her labor as a chattel. Now he had converted her body into landed property potentially worth many times over her original purchase price back in 1676. A further conjecture: Andrew Pitamy had been one of the complainants against four Concord whites tried, convicted and sentenced to death at the end of King Philip’s War for murdering three Praying Indian women and three Indian children who were picking berries in the woods. Could one of the murder victims have been Pitamy’s wife and he was looking for a spousal replacement? How would Pitamy have met and gotten to know somebody from the Mohawks, who were widely hated and feared by New England Indians? There is plenty of grist for the historical imagination but little real information to go on.21

Piecing together what we can from the archives, we find nothing else quite so poignant as the above tale of personal loss and gain. But there are certainly plenty of other accounts of Indians selling or mortgaging land piecemeal in order meet obligations and to pay off debts that they were said to have incurred to various whites. In 1728, Sarah Sampson and other Indians “Proprietors of a small Island in the County of Barnstable called Oyster Island Shewing that they are infirm of Body & considerably in Debt to Daniel Parker Esqr & others, & are in great Necessity for a present support” prayed the General Court for permission and assistance, which the Court granted, to sell the island off to the highest bidders. The appointed trustees apparently took their grand old time about it. The sale dragged on and on,
and the Indians had to go back to the General Court. Then years later, in further colonial records, there is a similar petition from them (although Zacheus Wicket instead of Sarah Sampson is the individual Indian mentioned). Ironically, we find that the Indians’ debt to Judge Parker, now owed to his heirs, had come from “defending in the law their right to the said Island.”

In other early 18th Century Indian petitions to the Massachusetts General Court asking for its authorization of land sales to pay debts, we make the brief acquaintance of Natick Indian Thomas Pegan “weaken’d & disabled in his advanced Age” from his service as a soldier and because of accidents and thus unable to support himself any longer by his own labor. Because of sickness, he “has contracted a considerable Debt.” He asked permission for some common rights at Natick to be sold “as will discharge his Debts, & purchase for him some Cattle and Tools of Husbandry.” William Thomas, also of Natick, needed lands sold on account of debts incurred due to sickness. Solomon Womsquan of Natick had contracted a debt to a surgeon “by reason of a dangerous wound he accidentally gave himself in his knee, by an ax while at work.” Patience Kewops of Pembroke, “being advanced in years,” wanted some lands sold “to discharge her debts and for her more comfortable support.” John Abraham of Grafton had “been long afflicted with the King’s Evil” [scrofula] and “had contracted a great Debt for Doctors and Medicine.” Stephen David was indebted “to sundry English people” of £200 “for sundry necessary things both for himself & Wife a great part of which was occasioned by reason of her sickness.” Jeremiah Anthony and his wife Esther, Indians of Middleboro, petitioned the General Court in 1743 to sell forty acres of land at

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Middleboro in order to make good a debt incurred to Ephraim Thomas who, when Jeremiah was “imprisoned at the suit of Samuel Thatcher in Plymouth Gaol” and “was in danger of perishing in the severe season of the winter,” had paid the debt to Thatcher and secured his release. And on and on.

That hard liquor was not uncommonly brought out by white traders, despite the fact that it was against the law to dispense it to Indians under any circumstances, to lubricate exchanges of goods and the acquisition of Indian lands is demonstrated by several recorded testimonials from whites to forestall possible future legal challenges to their titles. These testimonials state that the Indian grantor was not “in drink” when he made his mark to deed away the land. Some Indians apparently became indebted because of a drinking tab run up at the local tavern. Ossamequin’s eldest son, Wamsutta, seems to have a penchant for strong drink, and it is quite possible that this was partly what got him into debt forcing his father to bail him out through a land sale to the Pilgrims. The man to whom Wamsutta had become indebted, John Barnes, a man who became one of the grantees of the 1659 “Freeman’s Purchase” from Ossamequin and Wamsutta, ran a tavern (and was a serious drinker himself who died in a wild drunken game with a bull). The aforementioned Indian fur trader John Tinker had an vile reputation for selling illicit guns and alcohol, and this may have been the source of the debts that placed the Pennacock sachem’s son Nanamocomuck into Boston.


debtors prison until land could be sold to get him out of there. Jane Nahoman, an Indian woman of Chilmark on Martha’s Vineyard, complained to the General Court in 1736 about her son-in-law Simon Coomes in combination with two white men “for imposing on her when in Drink, and getting of her to Execute An Instrument for Conveying away her lands to the said Coomes, Contrary to her Mind when she was Sober, & in the Exercise of her Reason.”

That an Indian would object in this fashion and ask for a land transaction to be declared null and void on account of their having been in drink was unusual, although in one other bit of court testimony, the Mohegan sachem Owaneco admitted to being inebriated when he was given deeds to sign. Indians became alert to how whites would use liquor to separate Indians from their land. Indians gathered at a peace conference with the English in Maine in 1753, when presented with deeds signing away land from a previous generation – deeds which they said they had never heard about – argued that "We don't think these Deeds are false, but we apprehend you got the Indian drunk, and so took the advantage of them, when you bought the Land." Once in a while but not often, the text of an Indian Deed refers to alcoholic beverages as having been part of the actual bargain made with the Indians. For instance, in 1724, when the Mahican sachem Conkepot and nineteen other Indians sold a large chunk of


27 Herbert Milton Sylvester, Indian Wars of New England, vol. 3, 3 vols. (Boston: W.B. Clarke Company, 1910), 454-455. See also Roger Williams vociferous denials that the Narragansett sachems from whom he had gotten land for the establishment of Rhode Island had been under the influence at the time. “Statement of Roger Williams,” Bulletin of the Newport Historical Society, no. 59 (1926): 16-22.
what remained of Indian lands in the Housatonic Valley of southwestern Massachusetts to a committee appointed by the General Court for the purposes of establishing two new towns in that location, the language of the deed specified that the payment to the Indians be £460, accompanied by three barrels of cider and thirty quarts of rum. Would this vast quantity of alcohol be consumed only by those individuals who had signed the deed? I suspect not. Most likely, the Indian band as a whole held a consume-all type of event or ceremony.

Some Indians sold land more willingly to the English invaders and settlers because they felt weak and wanted to ally themselves with the English as their protector from the attacks and depredations of other Indians. This was certainly true of the Quinnipiacs whose sachem, Momauguin, and his counselors (who included a squa sachem, his sister) approved a treaty in 1638 for the original land of the New Haven Colony. Reserving conditional hunting and fishing privileges for themselves, the Indians received twelve coats of English trucking cloth, twelve alchemy spoons, twelve hatchets, twelve hoes, two dozen knives, twelve porringer and four cases of French knives and scissors. “Remembering and acknowledging the heavy taxes and eminent dangers which they lately felt and feared from the Pequots, Mohawks, and other Indians, in regard of which they durst not stay in their country, but were forced to fly and to seek shelter under the English at Connecticut, and observing the safety and ease that other Indians enjoy near the English, of which benefit they have had a comfortable

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29 For early Native American drinking practices, a very perceptive environmentalist and culturalist discussion (as opposed to the usual Indians-have-a-genetic-predisposition to alcoholism explanations) is John W. Frank, Roland S. Moore, and Genevieve M. Ames, “Historical and Cultural Roots of Drinking Problems Among American Indians,” American Journal of Public Health 90, no. 3 (March 2000): 344-351.
taste already, since the English began to build and plant at Quinnipiæ” – for which they expressed their thankfulness – the Indians asked for something else as a condition of the land transfer. This condition was that “if at any time hereafter they be affrighted in their dwellings assigned by the English unto them as before, they may repair to the English plantation for shelter and that the English will then in a just cause endeavor to defend them from wrong.”

On the upper Connecticut River, as the 19th Century town historian of Deerfield George Sheldon observed, the once-powerful Pocumtuks did not sell a single foot of land to the English until after they were sorely beaten in war by the Mohawks. Protection of the survivors from more such Mohawk attacks was most likely central to the decision.

Along with moving right in under their royal charter without asking anybody for permission or trying to buy the land first, where some of the geographical spaces appeared to be more or less vacant, the New England invaders and settlers took over many thousands of acres of Indian lands during the 17th Century through the “right of conquest” without the benefit of any such legal niceties as deeds or treaties. This happened first as a result of the Pequot War in 1637. The Pequot lands of eastern and coastal Connecticut, as well as Pequot prisoners, fell into the hands of the conquerors and were sold off to pay the costs of the war and to reward the soldiers. This happened again with King Philip’s War in 1675-76. The

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Wampanoags who had taken up arms forfeited, as spoils of war, their remaining unsold parcels of land in Rhode Island and Massachusetts, and their Narragansetts allies suffered alike. In 1696 Connecticut granted its veterans from King Philip’s War a six-mile square on conquered lands, which became the town of Voluntown, named after the “volunteers.” During the war in December 1675, Massachusetts had promised its soldiers who were embarking on an expedition against the Narragansetts that "if they played the man, took the fort, and drove the enemy out of the Narragansett country, which is their great seat, they should have a gratuity of land, besides their wages." No immediate reward in the way of land grants came to the victorious Massachusetts soldiers, but in 1728 and 1734 the Massachusetts General Court responded to petitions from lawyers acting on behalf of aged veterans and their descendants by granting seven “Narragansett Townships,” each of six-miles-square, in western and northern frontier areas claimed by the colony (three of which are now located in New Hampshire and two in Maine). The Massachusetts General Court around this time also granted nine six-mile-square frontier towns to the veterans of the ill-fated Canada


33 Wilcomb E. Washburn, ed., History of Indian-White Relations, Handbook of North American Indians 4 (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1989), 8. This war, too, led to disputes among the colonies over how to divide up the spoils in land. Even though it had stayed largely neutral in the war, Rhode Island appealed to the King disputing with the United Colonies the control of the 7000 acres of lands at King Philip’s Mount Hope. See “Address of the Governor and General Assembly of Rhode-Island to Charles II [1679],” in Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, vol. 5 (Boston: Samuel Hall, 1816), 223-226.

expedition of 1690 and granted a whole host of other towns in Maine and in the area west of the Merrimack River claimed by Massachusetts but disputed by New Hampshire. The “Narragansett Townships,” the “Canada Townships” and the other new towns were part of an overall defensive strategy, following Lovewell’s War (1722-25), to erect a barrier of settlements between French Canada and the older, more populous towns to the south. Many, perhaps most, of the Indians in this region had by this time withdrawn northward to Canada, particularly to the village of St. Francis where an amalgamated New England Indian refugee society combined with some Canadian Algonquians, including Hurons, and some Mohawks came into being. However, there is no evidence discernable in the colonial records that the authorities at any level of government had any interest in seeking out any native inhabitants to ask verbally if their take-over was alright, much less to have deeds signed, sealed and delivered. In the western part of Massachusetts, Indian deeds were still being made at this time and up through the French and Indian War, once permission for purchasing was granted by the General Court following the procedure set down in the early years of the colony, but not so where these other new towns were being created. It appears these areas were now

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considered to be *de facto* conquests or, once again, as a *vacuum domicilium*. This expansionist aspect of the political economy of the New England colonies, resembling that of ancient Rome, of rewarding soldiers with lands conquered by them or others on the frontiers, is something that ought to be investigated further.

However, as legal scholar Stuart Banner and author of a recent book, *How the Indians Lost Their Land*, has stressed, by and large Indians in New England -- and indeed Indians throughout the North America -- did not in fact lose their lands to the white invaders and settlers through violent conquest or by outright theft and fraud. For a variety of reasons that must have seemed reasonable at the time, Indians put their marks or signatures on deeds and other legal instruments with the superficial appearance at least of an entirely voluntary arrangement between two freestanding parties. Of course, as this same legal scholar hastens to remind us, such actions, however “lawful” they might be, are always embedded in varying forms of power relations, and power was shifting more and more away from the Indian side. Moreover, as Banner also reminds us that Indian and white views of the nature of property were far from being identical. Indians and whites may have had different understandings or expectations of what they were doing when the put their marks or signatures onto deeds.

From the mid-19th-Century Unitarian minister and Maine town historian, John Wesley Hanson, to today’s preeminent environmental historian, William Cronon, there have been


37 Stuart Banner, *How the Indians Lost Their Land: Law and Power on the Frontier* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005). Banner argues that, in spite of earlier differences of opinion among colonialists and their apologists, by the mid-18th Century there was a “consensus” among Anglo-Americans that the Indians owned the land in some way, shape or form and that therefore whites had to purchase it in order for their occupation to be legitimate. In my view, this is much too great a generalization. Certainly, it requires more evidence.
numerous scholars who have taken note of how the Indians and the English really had quite different conceptions of landed property and how misunderstandings and conflicts ensued as a result. Indian bands and tribes held the land in common and looked upon their land as a use-value for farming, hunting, fowling, fishing, etc. with the Indian sachems and sagamores playing an important societal role distributing it according to those who needed it and would make good use of it and in such ways as to reward their followers and to enhance their own status. Unallotted lands were available to all members for hunting, berry-picking and so forth. Land demarcated by its natural features like rivers and swamps was not alienable -- that is, until whites appeared on the scene. “Tenants in common” was an old well-used concept found in English property law. So, too, was the notion of unenclosed or common lands to which there was open access for use. Nevertheless, most of the English who came to New England wanted land in fee simple, without owing any feudal dues or services, holding the land as individual owners or co-owners and only nominally through the distant monarch.

38 John Wesley Hanson, History of the Old Towns, Norridgewock and Canaan, Comprising Norridgewock, Canaan, Starks, Skowhegan, and Bloomfield, From Their Early Settlement to the Year 1849; Including a Sketch of the Abnakis Indians (Boston: The author, 1849), 12-13; Hanson, History of Gardiner, Pittston and West Gardiner (Gardiner, Maine: W. Palmer, 1852), 9-10; William Cronon, Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England, 1st ed. (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983), 54-81. Hanson derived his views on Indian forms of property from his own observations of the Abenaki and from the Massachusetts General Courts’s investigation in 1783 into ancient land claims on the Kennebec River going back to the days of the Pilgrims and their fur trade. Their report stated: “From the history and the modes of living amongst the Indians in this country, there can be no great doubt but that they originally held their lands as tenants in common, in a state of nature; and though they have formed themselves into tribes and clans, yet the members of those tribes still retain a common and undivided right to the lands of their respective tribes; but from the respect they have constantly had for their Sachems and Chiefs, and from long usage and custom among them, the Sachem, or Chief, has acquired a right, founded in tacent consent, a kind of legal authority and power to dispose of the lands of his tribe or subjects, and especially with the consent of some of his principal subjects, or his counsellors.” See James Phinney Baxter, ed., The Baxter Manuscripts (Portland, Me.: Maine Historical Society, 1889), esp. 108-109.

39 The 1629 Charter of the Massachusetts Bay Company provided for lands to be held “in free and common socage, and not in capite or by knight service, yielding to the crown one-fifth part of all ores of gold and silver.” The same clause had appeared in the 1620 Charter of the Plymouth Company. For a solid discussion of the meaning of this legal clause and the English historical background to this form of tenure, see Emory Washburn, “The Tenure of Lands In New England,” in Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical
From the start, New England’s colonial governments marked off and made the land available to favored individuals and town proprietors in exactly this sort of fashion. Once land was transformed into an abstract form of property by placing geometrical lines on a map and once allotted to owners, it could be alienated by the property holder or holders pretty much at will — sold unrestrictedly by its owner or owners as a commodity to whomever they pleased and independent of its actual use (or non-use, in the case of speculators, except as an exchange-value). Or, it could be passed on to heirs without respect to entailment or primogeniture, English legal customs in terms of property that put family over individuals. Early New England towns often had sizeable amounts of unallotted or common lands which might be used by townspeople for cattle pasturage, releasing hogs to forage, cutting firewood and the like. But the existence of a commons was mainly a transitional phenomenon amongst the New England invaders and settlers until the land could be allotted and converted into private property – leaving behind only the small parks the grace many New England villages today.

Certainly, these kinds of conceptual differences may help to explain some of the early transactions in which sachems deeded very extensive pieces of land in their domains for a small “gratuity” (not unlike a quit-rent token of supremacy to the King for some land holdings in England and which was not uncommonly the case in colonies outside of New England). The difference between “sovereignty” and “ownership” is important here, too. It seems likely that the Indian “kings” and “queens” (as whites sometimes saw them operating within their own conceptual political framework) in early transactions – before Indians learned that whites had very different expectations of what ownership meant – were expecting to retain overall sovereignty of the land, while these strangers used the land for their particular purposes like

*Society* (Boston: The Society, 1873), 114-121.
pasturage and planting. Then it was assumed that sachems would be able to redistribute the
land to different users in the future to whomever – after all, groups of whites had come and
gone on these shores before – as was customarily the case. As the Rhode Island historian
Henry C. Dorr observed in his 1885 essay on the Narragansetts, “the chiefs may have been
ready to make grants of land, if they thought they could resume them at their will.” The goods
that they received at the time, Dorr thinks, must have been considered as the tribute
customarily due to them. That sachems -- at least in the early years before they came to
realize what the English meant (and could enforce) by the written markings on these pieces
of parchment or paper – were of the understanding that they were according use-rights to the
whites is supported by the language of some of the early deeds where particular uses of the
land are in fact specified. For instance, the Narragansett chief sachem grantors in a 1637 deed
for Aquidneck Island specified that the group of white grantees would have the privilege to
hay on some of the lesser nearby islands. Divergent understandings rooted in profound
cultural differences between Indians and whites sometimes led later on to clashes over the
meaning of these land transactions. In the above instance, the whites with their assumptions
about exclusive ownership had to go back to the sachems – and offer further compensation
– to get the Indians inhabiting Aquidneck to be removed from their property. Two much
differing interpretations were advanced by whites and Indians regarding what the Mohegan

40 Henry C. Dorr, “The Narragansetts,” in Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society, 7
(Providence, R.I.: Kellogg Printing Company, 1885), 165.

41 John Russell Bartlett, ed., Records of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in
On Indians conceptions of usufruct, see John Wesley Hanson, History of the Old Towns, Norridgewock and
Canaan, Comprising Norridgewock, Canaan, Stars, Skowhegan, and Bloomfield, From Their Early Settlement
to the Year 1849; Including a Sketch of the Abnakis Indians (Boston: The author, 1849), 10-17.
sachem Uncas had done when he had put his mark on a deed at Hartford in 1640 with the English governing authorities on the Connecticut River. The colony argued that Uncas had thereby signed away all of the lands to them in perpetuity to dispose of as they saw fit, reserving only some portions that the Indians were actually using at the time. Uncas’s descendants and heirs, backed by a few white supporters who hoped to gain, argued that it was not a deed of conveyance but a “mere right of pre-emption, by which Uncas interdicted himself from parting with his land to any but the colony, or the settlers, of Connecticut” or a cessation of jurisdiction only. Writing in the mid-nineteenth century, the historian of the Connecticut Indians wryly observed: “Which was the most reasonable of these two opinions, may be judged from the value of the gift which was made to the sachem when the deed was obtained: ‘five yards of cloth and a few pairs of stockings.’ In return for this insignificant present, hardly worth a dozen beaver skins, Uncas is said to have parted with his whole country, except that on which the Mohegans were then planting.”\(^{42}\) Also in support of the latter point of view, Uncas for the rest of his life (d. 1684) kept issuing his “paper gifts” to whites. In 1660, he made a grant of “jurisdiction power” over his lands to the colony but deeded the land itself in 1659 and 1665 to a friendly white, Major John Mason. Mason, using English legal means to try to protect it from alienation, then entailed it back to the Indians. Uncas’s son and successor as Mohegan sachem (d. 1715), Owaneco, likewise signed numerous deeds to white purchasers. With the rights to tens of thousands of acres at stake, basically the whole of eastern Connecticut, a series of royal commissions and colonial committees looked hard at the contentious issue and tried to sort it all out. The “Mohegan

Land Controversy” staggered through a series of rulings and appeals, divided the Mohegans themselves into factions under rival sachems, and was not resolved definitively until shortly before the American Revolution – against the Indian majority in favor of the colony.\textsuperscript{43} The case turned partly not only on who was the rightful sachem but also on whether the sachem himself rather than the tribe with him as its representative was owner of the lands and thus could dispose of them without the approval of his counselors or of the tribe as a whole.\textsuperscript{44}

This was obviously not a disinterested legal argument, although Connecticut’s General Court in 1680, recognizing a cultural difference, had ordered “that what land is allotted or set apart for any parcells of Indians within the bownds of any plantation, it shall be recorded to them and the same shall remayn to them and their heirs for ever ; and it shall not be in the power of any such Indian or Indians to make any alienations thereof.”\textsuperscript{44} On the whole, however, most white invaders and settlers were probably indifferent to whether the sachems held land as his own or if “parcells of Indians” held it in common and to other issues with regards to Indian land tenure. They simply wanted the land for themselves and the “savages”

\textsuperscript{43} E. Edwards Beardsley, “The Mohegan Land Controversy,” in Papers of the New Haven Colony Historical Society, vol. 5 (New Haven: Printed for the Society, 1894), 205-225; Nathaniel Harris Morgan, Harris Genealogy: A History of James Harris, of New London, Conn. and His Descendants; From 1640 to 1878 (Hartford, Conn.: Case, Lockwood & Brainard Co., 1878), 21-24; The Trumbull Papers, vol. 9, Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society 5th Series (Boston: John Wilson and Son, 1885), 79-81; “Decree of Commissioners of Review on Mohegan Case,” in Collections of the Connecticut Historical Society, vol. 11 (Hartford, Conn.: The Society, 1907), 101-111; Amy E. Den Ouden, Beyond Conquest: Native Peoples and the Struggle for History in New England (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 91-141. Ultimately, it was not the superiority of one right against another that decided the question. As the Indian preacher Samson Occum observed sadly at the time of the final decision, “”The grand Controversy which has subsisted between the Colony of Connecticut and the Mohegan Indians, above seventy years, is finally decided in favor of the Colony. I am afraid the poor Indians will never stand a good chance with the English in their land controversies, because they are very poor, they have no money. Money is almighty now-a-days, and the Indians have no learning, no art, no cunning ; the English have all.” Beardsley, op. cit., 223.


moved out of the way. And, indeed, it would not have taken very long for sachems and sagamores to recognize, as whites erected fences and walls and as courts and constables threatened and chased off any Indians trying to make use of the land as before, that the English invaders and settlers were here to stay and that they believed ownership, after going through the motions of purchasing the land from the Indians, belonged solely and exclusively to them. We can see a reflection of this dawning comprehension in the Indian deeds, as some of the Indian grantors asked to have specified in the wording the reservation of certain use-right within the stated boundaries of the land that they were trading away. Thus, in 1641, a Pawtuxet sachem, Socononoco, sold land along several fresh and saltwater rivers in Rhode Island for a “valueable consideration” but “reserving for himselfe & his heires & assignes ffree Egresse & Regresse to hunt & fish vppon any of the said Rivers & lands wch shall ly open vnimproved.” Mainly such reserve clauses involved hunting and fishing rights and the right to set traps, although sometimes prohibiting the use of traps that might endanger cattle. Sometimes a deed would reserve a bit of land on which the Indians could continue to plant crops. One deed included the “free Liberty . . . to gather walnuts chestnuts & other nuts things &c on ye Commons.” One deed reserved the right to fell a tree “now & then” for canoes, yet another the “Libertie to gett Ceder barke in the swampes.” Early deeds were often quite succinct. As time went by, so that there might be no misunderstanding of what the Indians were conveying, the English authors of the deeds sometimes inserted a whole lengthy listing of rights and privileges that the buyers had acquired with the sale. And the deeds might specify that the grantee’s new title was to be held “in free and common Soccaige after the manor of East Greenwich in the County of Kent”—that is requiring no feudal dues to the King

-- or, particularly after King Philips War, the deeds would say the lands sold by Indians would be held “in fee simple.” While Indians might not be able to make heads or tails out of the intricacies of English property law that was based on common law precedents in English history, they could certainly see the impact of these deeds. With each passing year, the Indian land base to plant, hunt and fish and visit sacred sites kept shrinking and shrinking.

While the fur trade and the “Wampum Revolution” lasted, it had wrought great changes in the political economy of indigenous societies in New England. Robert Beverley was describing Algonquians in Virginia at the time of first contact, but he could just as well have been describing Indians in New England before their lives were so heavily disrupted by the rude intrusion of the Europeans: “They valued skins and furs for use, and peake and roenoke for ornamentation.” But, when Beverley was writing in 1705, this was no longer the case anymore. A system of use-values and reciprocity had been subverted by a system of exchange-values and profit-seeking through an articulation process. Meanwhile, some Indians in our region did manage to identify another commodity to replace furs, one which they could trade with whites to obtain money and the articles upon which their lives, in many ways, had now become dependent. Resistance to the English did not end by any means with King Philip’s defeat in August 1676. Many surviving New England Indians regrouped in Canada, joining Indians there, under the protection of the French, and even between official bouts of warfare between English and French, these Indians made raids on outlying settlements at which they took vengeance for the loss of their homelands by burning white houses and carrying captives back with them to Canada. The Abenaki became specialists in this sort of

raiding activity. Whereupon, a good many of these captives – some of whom were adopted by the Indians, undertook new lives, not wishing to go back home to live among the godly elect – were ransomed for money to their relatives or the colonial authorities. Massachusetts Governor Joseph Dudley, after the raid on Deerfield that netted 109 captives, commented wryly that “the Indians had a better trade of taking Prisoners than hunting for Beavers.” But the political economy of white captives, however important a subject it might be for historians and political economists of this period, is beyond the scope of this current study.

A Brief History of Indian Deeds

Neither the lands the Pilgrims took for New Plymouth – the former Indian village of Pawtucket -- nor the lands for the earliest Puritan towns around Massachusetts Bay were purchased from the Indian possessors. And it is relatively easy to spot other counter-cases to Plymouth Governor Joshua Winslow’s self-righteous assertion in a letter written on May 1, 1676 to the other Commissioners of the United Provinces expressing bewilderment at why the Indians under King Philip were rebelling against the colonial authority: "I think I can clearly, say, that before these present troubles broke out, the English did not possess one foot of land in this colony, but what was fairly obtained by honest purchase of the Indian proprietors.” (As we shall see, Metacom had a quite different viewpoint about land issues

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and whether he and other Indians had been treated fairly or not by the whites.) Nevertheless, it is the case that both Pilgrims and Puritans got into the practice fairly early-on of seeking out Indians to affix their marks to written deeds for most major land transactions. The Massachusetts Bay Company’s leadership just as the Great Migration was getting under way in 1629 had issued explicit instructions, along with ones about keeping firearms out of the hands of the Indians, that the settlers in New England do so: “If any of the saluages pretend right of inheritance to all or any part of the lands granted in our patent, wee pray you would endeavor to purchase their tylte, that wee may avoyde the least scruple of intrusion.”

Roger Williams, in a 1633 treatise that brought down wrath upon his head from the Puritan establishment and which was one of the causes leading to his exiling from Massachusetts, chastised his fellow colonists for, among other sinful acts, failing to purchase the land from the Indians. On these grounds, he questioned the legality and morality of their title. Governor John Winthrop responded bluntly to Williams that they derived their title from the Christian King of England, as well as from God himself who must look favorably upon the Puritans in as much as the plague had killed so many natives and created a vacuum domicilium into which they could move. But, in 1633, the Massachusetts General Court passed a law prohibiting purchases of land from the Indians by individuals without its prior permission in order to prevent a potentially chaotic situation with a multitude of conflicting, overlapping deeds and


51 James D. Knowles, Memoir of Roger Williams, the Founder of the State of Rhode-Island (Boston: Lincoln, Edmands, 1834), 55-63; Winthrop Papers, vol. 3 (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1943), 146-149.
law suits springing out of them. In the meanwhile, a system of official land record-keeping had been set up. What really forced the issue of getting deeds from the Indians to a head, however, was the news that their sovereign was thinking about cracking down on the independence-minded Puritans. Over the winter of 1634-35, King Charles ordered a closer watch be made for disloyal subjects departing the kingdom for America. Moreover, it appeared increasingly likely that the suspicious King was on the verge of revoking the charter of the Massachusetts Bay Company (which the Puritans had taken with them as a protection) and appointing as royal governor for New England, Sir Ferdinando Gorges, a loyal Anglican with enormous land interests in Maine. This possibility made the Puritans tremble, both for religious and economic reasons. If such a move indeed were to be put into effect, it might mean that the validity of all land titles issued by the Massachusetts Bay Company from its inception would be called into question and possibly held worthless. In light of their own argument made against Williams, the Puritans would find themselves in a very weak legal position.

Thus, it is not coincidental that some Puritans around this time finally did start to seek out deeds from the Indians – as a back-up measure against such an exigency. The first Indian deeds on record in the Massachusetts Bay Colony date from 1636, more than six years after

52 Nathaniel Bradstreet Shurtleff, ed., *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay*, vol. 1, 5 vols. (Boston: William White, 1853), 112. In 1639 a Puritan weaver, John Bailey, who had settled on the frontier near the mouth of the Merrimack River was fined under this law unless he relinquished the land he had bought. Ibid, 266; Henry Howland Crapo, *Certain Comeoverers*, vol. 2 (New Bedford: E. Anthony & Sons, 1912), 560-564. CHECK!

the founding of the colony and by which time there were already more than a dozen towns in existence. In the fall of 1635, the General Court authorized the formation of a town six miles square at Musketequid (Concord) and gave permission for the land to be purchased from the Indians. Then sometime during the next year, prior to settlement – the original deed has been lost – the town “undertakers” paid “a parcell of wompompeag, Hatchets, Hows, Knives, Cotton Cloath & Shirts” to the Massachusett “Squa Sachem” and two male Indians, Tahattawan and “Nimrod” (Nuttunkurta) for the conveyance of the land. The Squa Sachem’s husband, Webcowet, received “a Suit of cotton cloath, an Hatt, a white linnen band, shoes, stockins & a great coat upon account of sd bargaine.” (The location was renamed Concord by the English in recognition of how the transition from the Indians to the English had taken place in a peaceable manner.) In 1637, the Squa Sachem and her associates acknowledged in court that they had received fair satisfaction for this Concord transaction, which included a fishing weir and a planting field, and were also satisfied for what they had received for land in the older town of Charlestown.\footnote{54} With respect to towns already established, the General Court in 1638 ordered the Court of Assistants to act so that the Indians “may have satisfaction for their right at Linn & at Watertowne,” and in 1640 it made its will known that the town of Cambridge ought to provide the Squa Sachem with a coat every winter.\footnote{55} But as far as we

\footnote{54} Lemuel Shattuck, \textit{A History of the Town of Concord, Middlesex County, Massachusetts} (Boston: Russell, Odiorne, and Company, 1835), 6-9; Alfred Sereno Hudson, \textit{The History of Concord, Massachusetts}, vol. 1 (Concord, Mass.: The Erudite Press, 1904), 273-276; Nathaniel Bradstreet Shurtleff, ed., \textit{Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay}, vol. 1, 5 vols. (Boston: William White, 1853), 201. During 1636, a deed was secured from the Massachusett sachem Kitchamakin for some lands within the bounds of Dorchester. \textit{Dorchester Town Records}, vol. 4, \textit{Reports of the Record Commissioners of Boston} (Boston: Rockwell and Churchill, 1896), 142-143 Indian deeds also started to be secured by the Massachusetts settlers removing around this same time to the Connecticut River Valley.

can tell from the records of land transactions, other towns did not follow suit. Fortunately for
the Puritans, they were saved from having to deal with the revocation of their charter, and
whatever else might befall them as a result, thanks to mounting domestic troubles and war that
distracted the attention of the King and his ministers and would eventually lead to his
execution by their fellow Puritans in England. The practice, however, of purchasing land
titles from Indians was now generally maintained, that is, if the General Court had given
authorization for the creation of new towns. Individuals making land dealings with Indians
on their own initiative continued to be prohibited by law (although this did happen in some
cases and the purchasers sought legal sanction after the fact).

Boston and many other older towns, however, did not move to secure any Indian deeds
or provide “satisfaction” to the Indians in some other form for a very long time – until fifty
years later when, once again, the 1629 charter of the colony and all that went with it came
under threat. After a prolonged royal investigation of Puritan misdeeds and the exhaustion
of appeals, the charter was revoked in 1684. That same year, fifty-five years after its
founding, Boston finally secured a deed for itself to show to the royal authorities, if need be,
from the young Massachuset sachem, Josiah “Son & heire of Josiah alias Wampatuck late
Sachim of the Massachusetts Country in New England.” Josiah resigned all claims to Boston
for a “valuable consideration of money.”56 In 1684, too, an anxious Town of Concord sought
sworn court testimony from surviving white and Indian witnesses who had been present way
back in 1636 stating on the record that its transaction with the Squa Sachem and her

associates had actually taken place. The same Josiah (also known as “Charles Josiah”), and sometimes joined by other Christianized Indians, also obligingly put his mark to similar quit-claims for the Massachusetts towns Hull, Dorchester, Dedham, Medfield and Marlborough and to Taunton, Bridgewater, and Hingham in Plymouth Colony over the next couple of years. Salem, a town even more ancient than Boston, finally obtained a deed in 1686 from a group of ten Natick “Praying Indians.” Unfortunately for the success of this whole sort of scheme, the King’s chosen governor for the newly-created Dominion of New England, Sir Edmund Andros, was not greatly impressed. Not long after he arrived to take over and try to bend the unruly Puritan colonials to metropolitan authority, Andros was heard to say that an Indian’s signature on a deed was worth no more than a “scratch with a bear's paw.” Andros had instructions to require all Massachusetts landowners to reapply for patents from the King


58 *Suffolk Deeds*, vol. 13 (Boston: Rockwell and Churchill Press, 1903), 235-237; Ibid, 149-151; Erastus Worthington, *The History of Dedham, From the Beginning of Its Settlement in September, 1635 to May, 1827* (Boston: Dutton and Wentworth, 1827), 19-22; “Indian Deed of Lands in Middleborough,” *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 15 (April 1861): 173-174; Henry Williams, “Was Elizabeth Pool the First Purchaser of the Territory, and Foundress, of Taunton?,” in *Collections of the Old Colony Historical Society*, vol. 2 (Taunton, Mass.: C. A. Hack & Son, 1879), 56-58; Jeremy Dupertuis Bangs, *Indian Deeds: Land Transactions in Plymouth Colony, 1620-1691* (Boston, MA: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 2008), 554-555. Who was really making the decisions for this young man to sell his rights (or collecting the “valuable considerations”)? One has to seriously wonder, in as much as Josiah’s father, the previous Massachusetts sachem, had been killed some years earlier in an ill-conceived war of New England Algonquians against the Mohawks and his “guardians” during his minority were men heavily involved in Indian land dealings elsewhere during this time period – Joseph Dudley and William Stoughton. Dudley and Stoughton were members of the Royalist faction who hoped to benefit if the Crown succeeded in asserting its power over the more hard-core Puritans in Massachusetts. In May 1686, after James II ascended to the throne, Dudley became the interim governor of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Maine and the King’s Province (Narragansett Country) in Rhode Island. Stoughton became Deputy-President of Dudley’s Council. Dudley ruled until Sir Edmund Andros arrived in December. Both men then became members of Andros’s Council. On the role of Dudley and Stoughton during this time period and on the overall history of the political struggles concerning the fate of the Massachusetts charter from the 1660s forward to the Glorious Revolution of 1688, see David S. Lovejoy, *The Glorious Revolution in America* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1987), 126-159, 179-195, 235-250.

and to pay quitrents as a symbol of their submission. Once again, however, the political
liberties of the Puritans, as well as their various land claims and dealings with Indians, were
saved just in the nick of time by a political upheaval in England, the Glorious Revolution of
1688, word of which reaching New England led to the highly popular (at least among
whites) removal of Andros. Massachusetts was able to acquire a new charter with lands
being held in the same form of tenure with all previous land grants reconfirmed regardless of
“any want or defect of Form.” As the rule, though, Indian deeds continued to be sought and
obtained, even for some towns well after the fact of their founding and settlement. The last
Indian deed which I have been able to find for colonial New England was in 1763 just after
the end of the French and Indian War. This was for two and a half acres for building a mill
at a falls in Derby, Connecticut.

For whatever reason obtained, the records from the colonial time period contain
hundreds of these deeds in which named Indians gifted or sold land to named whites, who
were sometimes acting on behalf of the General Court or proprietors of prospective frontier
towns. So far, by systematically going through published and microfilmed land records for
counties and towns or scanned ones available online, supplemented by the use of town and

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60 Andros as Governor of New York had offered Indian refugees from King Philip’s War his
protection. Indians no doubt remembered.

61 The Charter Granted by Their Majesties King William and Queen Mary, to the Inhabitants of the
Province of the Massachusetts-Bay in New-England (Boston: S. Kneeland, 1759). Just as a back-up apparently,
a number of the older towns in Essex County north of Boston obtained Indian deeds for the first time in 1700
thru 1702: Manchester, Rowley, Boxford and Bradford. The grantors were John English, Joseph English, and
John Umpee. They were the grandchildren of the Massachuset chief sachem Musquonomonit. See Darius
Francis Lamson, History of the Town of Manchester, Essex County, Massachusetts, 1645-1895 (Published by
the Town, 1895); Thomas Gage, The History of Rowley (Boston: Ferdinand Andrews, 1840), 371-382.

62 Samuel Orcutt and Ambrose Beardsley, The History of the Old Town of Derby, Connecticut,
1642-1880, with Biographies and Genealogies (Springfield, Mass.: Springfield Printing Company, 1880). The
process of acquiring land from Indians in Connecticut was different from Massachusetts, being often done in
a piece-meal fashion. For the town of Derby, for instance, I have found more than 25 different Indian deeds.
county histories and gazetteers and occasional genealogical and other secondary sources to point me in the right direction, I have been able to compile an Indian Deeds Database, which continues to grow, containing over 600 of these deeds. Many of these deeds I have transcribed and inputted into the database in their entirety, while others have been inputted at this point only in partial forms or as references in the secondary sources to the existence of deeds. Some of the deeds have been lost down through the years and cannot be recovered with further research in the archives since it is known that the original records were destroyed, and this is indicted. I have also included in the database court orders, depositions, boundary agreements and treaties bearing on Indian-related land issues, along with some relevant white-to-white land transactions. The sale of lands was almost entirely a unidirectional process. There are only four white-to-Indian deeds in all of these deeds. Finally, there are about twenty deeds -- which can be used for comparative purposes with the Indian-to-white deeds -- in which Indians deeded land to other Indians. Generally this seems to have been a practice among the more Christianized Indians, as they used white legal mechanisms to try to hold onto some remaining bits of their former land-base. Although there are still holes in the data with some counties and towns, the geographical range of the Indian Deeds Database encompasses Massachusetts Bay (and the former Plymouth Colony), Connecticut (and the former New Haven Colony), Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Maine (usually part of Massachusetts).

I don’t know why, but Indians deeds have been seriously underutilized by historians as a source of any kind. There are many insights, I am convinced, such as regarding the nature of Indian kinship relations, that I think will emerge from a closer, more prolonged inspection of this type of record – now that they can be looked at as one large data-set and parsed in various way. Herein I would like to offer a few insights pertaining to the loss of Indian lands
through the fur trade-wampum nexus and to our hypothesis about the role of social
reproduction, as Indian sachems in particular tried to use “articulation” to sustain “traditions.”

New Insights from Old Deeds

Ideally, with respect to our main hypothesis, we would have quantitative data on the
exhaustion of New England beaver and other furbearers over time and space and could then
try to discern if there had been any correlation or not with the location and tempo of Indian
land sales. Unfortunately, that is not possible; the data on the former is just not there. Even
so, looking at and thinking about Indian deeds in other ways yields sometimes unsuspected
insights into the evolution of Indian-white relationships and cultural disjunctions that
continued to exist in spite of their two political economies having become articulated through
the fur trade. For instance, let’s take a look at the forms of payment mentioned in the deeds
and how these changed over time and think about of what these changes might be indicative.
Figures One and Two below are graphs showing the year-by-year breakdown for what was
received by the Indians from the whites in exchange for the transfer of land or privileges (in
one case, the right to build a sawmill on the Praying Indians’ reservation at Natick). Figure
One covers the fifty-five-year period before King Philip’s War. Figure Two covers the period
from King Philip’s War through the end of the Seven Years War. The x-axis is the years, one
year at a time. The y-axis is the number of deeds for each year in which those particular
goods are mentioned. If a particular deed mentioned several different kinds of goods, say
wampum and coats, as payment, then that was counted as one deed for the wampum category
and one deed for the clothing category. Next, Figure Three provides two pie charts showing
at a glance what the percentages of payments were in toto before and after King Philip’s War.
(The raw data used for these graphs and charts is found on a MS-Excel file on the accompanying CD-ROM. To see what a typical Indian Deed looked like where the “consideration” was specified, along with a breakdown of other important components of the deeds, see the Appendix A.) Besides the categories of payments shown in the tables and charts, there were some other forms of payment mentioned in the deeds such as corn, land or unspecified goods, but these were relatively few in number and thus did not merit a spot on the graphs and charts. The vast majority of the transactions were conducted in wampum, money, cloth or clothing and metal tools or kettles. A number of the deeds do not indicate anything more than that the transaction was made for a “valuable consideration.” In a number of cases, no “consideration” whatsoever is stated for the sale. That being the case, those deeds were left out of the calculations that I used to generate the following graphs and charts.
Figure One: Forms of Payment in Indian Deeds Prior to King Philip's War (1638-1675)
Figure Two: Forms of Payment in Indian Deeds After King Philip’s War (1676-1763)
Figure Three: Forms of Payment in Indian Deeds Before and After King Philip’s War

1638-1675
- Wampum: 12%
- Money: 20%
- Cloth/Clothing: 24%
- Metal Tools: 5%
- Kettles: 3%
- Liquor: 36%

1676-1763
- Money: 91%
- Cloth/Clothing: 6%
- Tools: 1%
- Kettles: 1%
- Liquor: 1%
The choice was made to compare forms of payment found in the Indian deeds prior to and after King Philip’s War because of that war’s central importance in the collapse of what remained of Indian sovereignty in New England. And, indeed, as we can see, there are eye-catching differences before and after the war with regards to the forms of payment employed. Prior to the war, wampum played a major role in land sales made by the Indians to the English, appearing in some 20% of the deeds – only slightly behind the percentage of deeds (24%) mentioning cloth and clothing (although still well behind money in specie which, as we can see, gained in importance after 1650). Following the war, on the other hand, land transactions were paid for primarily in specie. Why was this the case? What changes might this indicate in the overall New England political economy? In *Manitou and Providence*, Neil Salisbury puts forward the reasonable hypothesis that the “Wampum Revolution,” which for a time rendered certain well-positioned coastal Indians richer and more powerful, collapsed when it did for two principal reasons: (1) due to the severe decline of beaver and other fur-bearing animals and (2) because of the introduction of metallic money by the New Englander colonists in place of wampum (and, in some cases, in place of beaver pelts and bushels of corn) as the legal tender.  

(Massachusetts Bay started coining its pine-tree shilling in 1652.) Consequently, after this happened, receiving money in coinage, either in colonial issuage or pounds sterling as many deeds stipulate, would be a more sensible choice for Indians, certainly if one wanted to be able to continue to avail one’s self of the array of English goods

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available for sale at the local trucking house.

Yet, while our database does indeed show an increasing use of coinage for land transactions in the several decades leading up to King Philip’s War, the appearance of wampum in deeds does not disappear, as might be expected from Salisbury’s hypothesis, once wampum was demonitized by the colonies. It continued to be requested by some Indians by way of payment for land in a number of land transactions right up to the eve of King Philip’s War in 1674. However, if we examine these transactions more closely, we see that these wampum-based ones were on the middle Connecticut River where Indians were perhaps not quite as accustomed as of yet to a money-based economy. By contrast, as we can see from the database, Metacom as the Wampanoag chief sachem from 1662 sold off large chunks of tribal lands every couple of years until 1672 when, with little left, he declared a moratorium on further sales (which did not please land-speculators in the Plymouth Colony and was one of the factors leading to what Francis Jennings calls the “Second War of Puritan Aggression”). Upon each occasion where we have the details, except for one where he received goods, Metacom took payment in shillings and pounds. Early in contact, Indians had rejected silver coins offered them by Europeans as worthless, a craziness in the heads of the strange people from over the seas. When Metacom’s father, Ossamequin (Massasoit) had sold lands to the Pilgrims during earlier decades, he had received goods except on one occasion. Apparently,

65 The last land transactions that I have been able to track down in which wampum was involved in New England are four that took place on the Connecticut River just before King Philip’s War from 1672 and 1674 involving Pocumtuck Indians and John Pynchon. The Indians received 50, 200, 180 and 80 fathoms that most likely came from the workers employed in Pynchon’s Springfield wampum manufactory. Harry Andrew Wright, Indian Deeds of Hampden County (Springfield, Mass.: s.n., 1905), 76-78, 80-81, 86-93.

66 Daniel Denton in his explanation of wampum and its function to his English readership in 1670 told of an Indian chief on the upper Hudson River who, when a Dutch clergyman tried to explain to him the value of a dollar coin, “laughed exceedingly to think the Dutch should set so high a value upon a piece of iron, as he termed the dollar.” Daniel Denton, A Brief Description of New York (New York: William Gowans, 1845), 42.
after the middle of the 17th Century, in areas of New England where “articulation” had gone on longer, coinage had become something for which Indians were showing preference in exchange in place of wampum and indeed of trade goods. And after King Philip’s War, with the Indians defeated leaving behind some dispirited remnants, perhaps the English rather than the Indians were much more able to determine what was given for the land. A further research step would be to map the payment types found in the deeds against space as well as time to see what that would reveal about how the capitalistic political economy expanded.

In a recent popular social history of the Plymouth Colony and the evolving relations between Pilgrims and Indians from 1620 forward, the author argues that Metacom was selling off Wampanoag land because he needed liquidity in order to have the wherewithal to purchase guns, powder and lead for the uprising he was planning that would drive the English out and restore sovereignty and control over the land to the Indians. He was doubling-down, as it were, and betting everything on one big last toss of the dice.67 Be that as it may – although it strikes me as a reasonable hypothesis, the historical evidence is slight – we can discern the same phenomenon as described for the Wampanoag leadership and their sales of land taking place with the leadership among the Mohegans, who were, if nothing else, steadfast collaborators with the invaders from the time of the Pequot War to King Philip’s War and during the wars of the 18th Century. Uncas, the founding sachem of the Mohegans, a Pequot split-off, also initially received payment in sets of goods for the sale of lands in eastern Connecticut. But beginning in 1659, Uncas, sometimes acting together with one or both of his two sons, was receiving money from land sales or, if receiving goods, amounts that were

denominated in their monetary value. Following King Philip’s War, Uncas’s son and successor Owaneco parceled out numerous tracts of land to whites - making a sale almost every year between 1680 and 1714 -- and, if he did not give it away to whites to whom he felt a personal obligation, as he did once in order to reward a man who had saved him from drowning – sold it for money and unspecified “valuable considerations” but not for trade goods.

Rather than being the victims of circumstances, I would suggest what this all seems to indicate is that some Indians were at least partially the agents of this transition, embracing money for the same sort of reasons more complex societies have invented it or adopted it in various other parts of the world – its durability and its clear advantage in a system of commodities providing flexibility in obtaining the variety of trade goods many of the Indians had now come to need. We certainly find rebels and freedom fighters among these New England Indians but no strong advocates or movements for going back to the old ways of doing things, as we do in some later Native American history. For these indigenous peoples, articulation with the Modern World System was more positive than not, bringing with it new goods to improve their lives (and, in the case of Big Men and sachems, or would-be Big Men and sachems, providing them with new opportunities to strengthen their power through connections with the sources of these goods). It was domination and “subsumption” which they fought back against, often embracing the system’s own technologies. The Narragansett sachem Miantonomo went into the battle against the collaborationist Mohegans wearing a suit of borrowed English armor. Metacom in his great rebellion for Indian land rights and dignity, not only took up firearms – guns, lead and powder that his forces had to obtain through selling something they had so as to be able to buy them – but he also employed an Indian blacksmith
with a forge to fix them and he used a literate Indian to write threatening notes to the English. Unfortunately, as we can see in other parts of the world where the Modern World System has intruded, the power balance is very tenuous. It is very hard to maintain a relationship of articulation without being sucked in all the way, especially when the other guys have more guns and better sources of resupply than you do and when, as in this case, the former basis of mutually-beneficial dealings, the fur trade, was no longer viable. Still, it is vital to keep in mind that it was not outright violence that induced Indians to become producers of goods for European markets or, in most cases, to sell their lands in greater numbers when the furs ran out. The relationship was one that was made by the natives as much as it was by the foreigners who arrived as “bearers” of the laws of motion of the capitalist mode of production.

Of course, it would be shortsighted to view the Indians alone as having been the main drivers behind the forms of payment taken in these early land transactions. When metallic money began to be coined by the Massachusetts Bay Colony, whites who had access to the coinage and a surplus beyond their immediate economic needs might well have preferred using it over other items in payment to the Indians. It was certainly more easily transportable to the site of the bargaining and deed-signing with the Indians than were heaps of heavy, bulky “trucking goods” such as coats, axes and hatchets or baskets laden with strings of wampum beads. One person with a definite inside track in this regard was the Massachusetts goldsmith and first mintmaster, John Hull. As recompense for his efforts running the mint, Hull was allowed to keep one shilling for every 20 shillings the mint manufactured, and he became an exceedingly wealthy man, investing extensively in Boston real estate.68 Some of Hull’s store

68 Joseph Barlow Felt, An Historical Account of Massachusetts Currency (Boston: Perkins & Marvin, 1839), 30-34; Louis Jordan, “Studies on John Hull, the Mint and the Economics of Massachusetts Coinage,” http://www.coins.nd.edu/ColCoin/ColCoinIntros/MAMintDocs.studies.html. Hull’s wealth was of legendary proportions. When his daughter married Samuel Sewell, the story circulated – picked up later by Nathaniel
of money was also used to invest in Indian land. In our database of Indian deeds, we run into Hull as a partner in speculative land dealings with the Narragansetts in 1657 and again with the Nipmucks in 1682. Hull may have been a special case, but speculators in Indian lands were generally well-connected merchants and colonial officials – in other words, those who typically had on hand a surplus of goods and, if there was any to be had, specie with which to negotiate deals. A potentially interesting further step with the Indian Deeds Database would be to trace the division and resale of former Indian lands by speculators like Hull and his partners to see what profits were made. I suspect from some preliminary work they could be quite substantial.

Hawthorne – that he had provided a dowery for his buxom daughter equal to her weight in pine-tree shillings.


71 In 1681, Joseph Dudley and William Stoughton were appointed by the Massachusetts General Court to investigate what “what titles are pretended to by Indians or others” in the Nipmuck Country. Reporting back that parts of it were “capable of good settlement,” the next year the two men were empowered to make purchases there. The Indians were demoralized following their defeat in King Philip’s War, and in a handful of transactions, Dudley and Stoughton obtained a vast quantity of land for the colony in the southern Nipmuck Country, one tract stretching fifty miles long and twenty miles wide, from “Black James” (Walamachin), Waban, and other obliging Christianized Indians. (That “Friend of the Indians,” Dudley’s pastor in Roxbury, the Rev. John Eliot, who wanted Indians assembled in Praying Towns where he could better manage their spiritual and temporal affairs, played a mediating role. As elsewhere in the world, the Bible and the Money Sign went hand in hand.) The General Court rewarded the two men for their services with two thousand acres, and the two men got their hands on additional land by quickly buying out half the acreage that had been set aside for the Indians. By February 1683, Dudley had already managed to resell two thousand acres of land to an investor in England for £250, and Stoughton made a tidy £200 reselling to another Englishman. In August 1685, Dudley and Stoughton sold five hundred acres for £50 to two Boston area yeomen (who would soon also become two of the absentee partners in the mid-Massachusetts town-founding ventures of Hardwick and Leicester, with land acquired cheaply from the Indians in the winter of 1686/7). Dudley and Stoughton also pursued a scheme to bring in revenue by leasing 500 acres for 40 shillings per annum to a group of Huguenot refugees who were homeless after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The original purchase price Dudley and Stoughton paid-out to the Indians a few years earlier on behalf of the colony had been £20 for one purchase and £30 plus a coat for the other. They had gotten their clutches on half of the Indian reservation, some eight
Another interesting result obtained so far from parsing the Indian deeds in the database – one corroborative, I think, of our hypothesis about the role of sustaining “traditional” forms of social reproduction in leading Indians to sell their lands – is that the dates when the deeds were made, when plotted on a monthly calendar, is not a random scatter but shows an unmistakable seasonal patterning. This patterning is shown below in a pie chart and on a graph in Figure Four. After transforming the dates on the deeds from Old Style to New Style\(^2\) in order to get a more familiar sense of where the “moons” and seasons fell according to our own modern conception, we can see definite monthly peaks and valleys in terms of when Indian deeds were enacted. One might certainly expect that there would be fewer deeds signed during the winter months when the weather was poorer, traveling was harder, and Indians typically dispersed to hunting camps. One might expect that there would be a greater number of deeds signed during the spring months when Indians concentrated at anadromous fishing spots or again in the summer at their villages where they grew crops – if the Indians were agricultural – and were thus easier for whites to locate and conduct negotiations over land or other deals. (Unfortunately, the deeds rarely say at what location the land deal was thousand acres altogether, for a mere £10 outlay. Dudley and Stoughton’s profits were thus quite substantial, and the descendants of Dudley continued to benefit financially from the land robbery performed on the Nipmucks. Nathaniel Bradstreet Shurtleff, ed., *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay*, vol. 5, 5 vols. (Boston: William White, 1854), 361-368; *Suffolk Deeds*, vol. 12 (Boston: Rockwell and Churchill Press, 1902), 297-298; George Fisher Daniels, *History of the Town of Oxford, Massachusetts* (Oxford, Mass.: S.P., 1892), 4-5, 755-756; Ellen Douglas Larned, *History of Windham County, Connecticut*, vol. 1 (Worcester, Mass.: Charles Hamilton, 1874), 13-14; George Fisher Daniels, *The Huguenots in the Nipmuck Country or Oxford Prior to 1713* (Boston: Estes & Lauriat, 1880); Dennis A. Connole, *The Indians of the Nipmuck Country in Southern New England, 1630-1750: An Historical Geography* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & CO., 2001), 232-239. Connole’s book has an excellent set of maps showing these and other land transactions in the Nipmuck Country over time and how this led to the almost total loss of the Indians’ land base. The same sort of mapping needs to be done for Indian deeds in New England as a whole.

\(^2\) Converting from Old Style to New Style was done by adding 10 days to dates given on the deed before 1700 and 11 days to dates from 1700 through 1751. In 1752, England and its colonies switched from the Julian Calendar to the Gregorian Calendar. So no days were added to the dates given on the deed for 1752 and beyond.
made and signed, sealed and delivered.) Overall, as we can see from Figure Four below, that is indeed the case: There is a big deed peak in June-July. Then land sales drop off until they reach a bottom - the low spot for the whole year -- in November, which makes sense because after harvests Indians dispersed and were away in the backcountry somewhere. But what was happening in the period December through January? We see another smaller peak of land sales – not what might be expected at all from the above line of reasoning. After that, the number of deeds declines once again to a valley in February, although one not as deeply as the November low, then rising again until what may be another peak in April. But the June-July and December-January upticks in land sales stick out the most eye-catchingly in our data.
Figure Four: Seasonal Variation in Indian Deeds (1638-1763)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Total # of Deeds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure Date</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>633</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
So what was happening in June-July and December-January that might possibly be able to explain these two high points in land sales by the Indians? Could there have been some factor in common between those two periods of time? I would suggest, pending some other more cogent explanation -- and, of course, we need to take into account, if we can, white timing preferences in these matters – that in fact there was something very much in common between these two distinct periods of times. Both were time-periods, corresponding with the solstices when the sun was highest and lowest in the heavens, when an annual “Nickommo,” the redistribution rituals, took place among the New England Indians. Roger Williams describes these events among the Narragansetts (and provides us with the name, meaning “feast,” the Indians had for them). One of them that occurred in midwinter, Williams says, was “their kind of Christmas feasting” when “they run mad once a yeare.” Nowadays, the Narragansetts in Rhode Island, perhaps influenced by the mainstream holiday calendar, celebrate it as a Thanksgiving harvest type of event during the “moon of falling leaves.” However, the next-door Wampanoags still celebrate a give-away festival in December using that very same term, and the Quinnipiacs in Connecticut also hold a “Nickommo wutche utenoquomoungansh” (Feast of Dreams) that lasts for twelve days beginning each year on December 21 with ancestral societies sponsoring “dances, feasts, and actual reenactments of ancient legends dedicated to a very important clan ancestor,” the Sky-Bear, Avasuse (Big Dipper). Likewise, Nipmucks nowadays in central Massachusetts hold their own annual Nickommo in December.74 During King Philip’s War, in June 1676, the Puritan Indian fighter


and negotiator Benjamin Church happened upon a midsummer festival in full swing among the Saconnet in what is now Little Compton, Rhode Island. In Church’s narrative of the war, he described seeing “a vast company of Indians, of all ages and sexes; some on horseback running races; some at football; some catching eels and flat fish in the water; some clamming, &c. . .” This was followed by an evening dance around a huge bonfire. The Niantic sachem, Ninigret, in July 1669 excused his tardiness in responding to a summons to appear before the Connecticut authorities to answer charges against him by saying that “the Indians had had a great dance lately, which was a sort of invocation for a plentiful harvest.” Today many of the Indians tribes in New England still hold mid-summer “powwows.” So I would suggest that it was no coincidence that these two seasonal peaks in land sales were times of the year when sachems and sagamores, in order to fulfill their “traditional” responsibilities needed to acquire a stock of goods to distribute, including now foreign-produced goods.

Sachems and sagamores, it thus seems, were caught in a terrible double-bind. As the supply of beaver and other marketable furs diminished in their territories or from tributaries, what else did the sachems and sagamores, especially those in the more inland areas not producing any wampum while that was serving as a medium of trade, have on hand in order to stock up on goods for the upcoming seasonal redistributive festival besides the sale of yet another parcel of land to the whites? Even knowing full-well what the cumulative effect of these sales would be, what choice had they? We have suggested previously that the sale of land by Indians may have been connected at times with the need to obtain wampum with

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75 Benjamin Church, The History of Philip's War, Commonly Called the Great Indian War, of 1675 and 1676, 2nd ed. (Boston: T.B. Wait and Son, 1827), 89-91.

which to conduct diplomacy and prosecute wars successfully. I offer this now as an additional tentative hypothesis for consideration on why some of the Indians let go of their land.\textsuperscript{77}

Mapping of the Indian deeds, largely complete now for the Wampanoag – see the Google Earth .kml file on the accompanying CD-ROM – shows how much land had been lost in the run-up to King Philip’s War and gives us a palpable sense why Indians felt so desperate.

By 1675 Metacom was the chief sachem over a Wampanoag domain that had shrunk enormously since the coming of the Pilgrims as a cumulative result of sales by his father, Ossamequin, his older brother, Wamsutta, his brother-in-law, Tispaquin, himself, and others. Left to his people’s ownership and use was no more than Assonet Neck (Freetown, Mass.), Showamett Neck (then in Swansea, Mass.), his own home base at Montaup (or, as the English called it, Mount Hope, now in Bristol, Rhode Island) and some lands across the bay to the east in Pocasset (now Tiverton, Rhode Island) – and some lands much farther east in what is now Wareham, Massachusetts. (The last-mentioned holdings were lands that Metacom in 1668 had given permission to some other Indians to sell but which they apparently had not done so.) All these remainders of the Wampanoag sachem’s territory were then confiscated by the victorious English at the war’s end.\textsuperscript{78} (Isolated bands of Wampanoag on Cape Cod and Martha Vineyard who did not participate in the war were able to retain some land.) Further mapping of the Indian deeds, a rather tedious if interesting process involving the identification of

\textsuperscript{77} Lands were not always sold by sachems and sagamores. Particularly after King Philip’s War, it seems that whites – to go through the legal motions – sometimes sought out any obliging Indians (often Christian) with some kind of connection to the land to put their marks to a deed.

archaic descriptions of landscape features, will in time provide, I believe, a fuller picture of where and at what rates Indian lands were lost – and other insights into why it happened.

Today, from all of the numerous takings by whites since the early 17th Century, Indians living in New England are left with fewer than 240,000 acres, most of that in Maine, out of a former total land-base of over forty-six million acres. (Some of this is land that Indians have reacquired in recent years as a result of successful Federal and State Land Claims and through buying back with their own money some small portions of what was once totally their own.) This amounts to about half a percent of what the native population possessed when the whites burst onto the scene in the early 17th Century. In the 2000 U.S. Census, 35,828 persons in New England self-identified as Native Americans. This contrasts with perhaps up to 150,000 who were present here at the beginning of the Seventeenth Century before the depredations caused by European-introduced epidemic disease, intensified inter-tribal warfare and deaths in battle with whites. Two of the world’s tiniest Indian reservations are in New England: Golden Hill in Bridgeport, Connecticut with one-quarter acre and the Hassanamisco Reservation of two and one-half acres in Grafton, Massachusetts. That so many Indians in New England have managed to hold tenaciously onto a bit of their former lands and maintain a sense of their identities down through the last couple of centuries,

79 Snow and Lanphear estimate that 148,100 Algonquian-speaking Indians were living in New England at the beginning of the Seventeenth Century (including 6,400 Mahicans, many of whom were located in what is now New York State on the east side of the Hudson River). They further estimate that epidemic diseases caused the Indian population to drop by mid-century to only 18,070, or only 12% of the original population. Some Indian groups were reduced by up to 95%. Dean R. Snow and Kim M. Lanphear, “European Contact and Indian Depopulation in the Northeast: The Timing of the First Epidemics,” *Ethnohistory* (1988): 15-33. Cook starting with the very low-ball estimate by James Mooney in 1928 of the New England and southeastern New York Indian population at contact as 36,000 calculates that fully a quarter of that population was lost as a result of deaths in battle, mortal wounds, diseases and exposures, captivities and becoming permanent refugees in the Pequot War, the Dutch War against the Wappinger Confederacy, and King Philip’s War, the rest being lost to diseases and “social causes.” Sherburne F. Cook, “Interracial Warfare and Population Decline among the New England Indians,” *Ethnohistory* 20, no. 1 (1973): 1-24.
in spite of everything inflicted upon them, and that some of them have been able to rebuild their societies’ economic power in ways previously unimaginable, as the Pequots and Mohegans have done with their Connecticut casino empires, is an incredible tribute to the character and resilience of their cultures.\textsuperscript{80} Other have not been so fortunate and are still fighting for tribal recognition. (For the locations of Indian reservations, cultural centers, museums, and official historic sites in New England today, see “Places” on the Google Earth .kml file on the accompanying CD-ROM. Figure Five below shows what remains in the early 21\textsuperscript{st} Century of the Indian lands and populations in each of the New England states).

The chronicles of the Modern World-System, as it spread its profit-seeking tentacles around the world in these past five or more centuries, contain a great many tragic tales of dispossession of people from their land and of cultural and physical genocide, along with heroic resistance – from the Irish peasants and Scottish crofters to the Mayans of Chiapas and Guatemala today. Surely, what happened to Indians in New England, whatever gains by some Indians then and now, has to rank right up there as one of the worst of these episodes, although still overshadowed and whitewashed in some history books by the childish feel-good stories of the Pilgrims, Indians, and the “First Thanksgiving.” But our truth-telling of how this all came about is still incomplete. In the next chapter, we will take a look into the role of the colonial state in these same dispossession processes. Capitalism, in its full self-

reproducing sense, involves the commodification of both land and labor. So, in the final chapter, we will want to see how as a result of dispossession from the land along with legal restrictions on their former freedoms of thought and movement, some Indians who stayed in New England were transformed into proletarians as the ultimate stage of their societies’ incorporation into capitalism.
### Figure Five: Native Americans in New England Today

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reservation</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>Tribal Members *</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Golden Hills</td>
<td>Trumbull, Conn.</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashantucket Pequot</td>
<td>North Stonington, Conn.</td>
<td>1,400.00</td>
<td>785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohegan</td>
<td>Uncasville, Conn.</td>
<td>507.00</td>
<td>1700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schaghticoke</td>
<td>Kent, Conn.</td>
<td>400.00</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2,307.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narragansett</td>
<td>Charlestown, R.I.</td>
<td>2,350.02</td>
<td>2400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watuppa Wampanoag</td>
<td>Gay Head, Mass.</td>
<td>531.00</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hassanamisco Nipmuc</td>
<td>Grafton, Mass.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaubunagungamaug Nipmuc</td>
<td>Webster, Mass.</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashpee Wampanoag</td>
<td>Mashpee, Mass.</td>
<td>500.00</td>
<td>1200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,045.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micmacs -- Aroostook Band</td>
<td>Presque Isle, Maine</td>
<td>1,343.00</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maliseet -- Houlton Band</td>
<td>Houlton, Maine</td>
<td>854.00</td>
<td>869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passamaquoddy - Indian Township</td>
<td>Princeton, Maine</td>
<td>108,569.00</td>
<td>1364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passamaquoddy - Pleasant Point</td>
<td>Perry, Maine</td>
<td>331.00</td>
<td>2005</td>
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<tr>
<td>Penobscot</td>
<td>Old Town, Maine</td>
<td>123,068.00</td>
<td>2278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>234,165.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Enrolled

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Acreage</th>
<th>Indian Acreage</th>
<th>% of Population</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Indians Population</th>
<th>% of Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>3,548,160.00</td>
<td>2,307.25</td>
<td>0.07%</td>
<td>3,405,565</td>
<td>8,093</td>
<td>0.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maine</td>
<td>22,647,680.00</td>
<td>234,165.00</td>
<td>1.03%</td>
<td>1,274,923</td>
<td>7,267</td>
<td>0.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>6,755,200.00</td>
<td>1,045.50</td>
<td>0.02%</td>
<td>6,349,097</td>
<td>11,264</td>
<td>0.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Hampshire</td>
<td>5,984,640.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>1,235,786</td>
<td>2,698</td>
<td>0.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
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<td>2,350.02</td>
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<td>1,048,319</td>
<td>4,181</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vermont</td>
<td>6,153,600.00</td>
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<td>0.00%</td>
<td>608,827</td>
<td>2,325</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>239,867.77</td>
<td>0.52%</td>
<td>13,922,517</td>
<td>35,828</td>
<td>0.26%</td>
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* U.S. Census 2000
Chapter Five: The Political of the Political Economy

In the history we are retelling and theorizing, “articulation” in a neo-Marxist sense took place not only economically through the Prestige-Goods Networks but also through the respective Political-Military Networks of the two world-systems, one indigenous to Northeastern North America and the other European-based and highly aggressive and expansionist. Native leaders often initially welcomed the newcomers, both because of the enticement of prestige goods (so-called “trinkets”) and useful commodities and also because they saw the newcomers as potential allies to deploy with their metal armor, swords and deadly thunder-producing “firesticks” against their own rivals in other chiefdoms (while hoping as soon as possible to be able to acquire some of that potent military technology for themselves). Maintaining respect and power in chiefly societies was based only in part on the successful accumulation and redistribution of prestige and other goods – a structural requirement which, as we have seen, led to increasing dependency on whites and the loss of Indian lands. Ultimately, successful social reproduction in chiefdoms (as in states like that of the English) was underlain by the ability to produce, feed, and field warriors. So putting out a welcome mat for the newcomers was especially needed by those leaders of peoples like the Massachuset and Wampanoag, former great powers in their neighborhoods whose numbers of warriors had been sorely depleted – from thousands to a few hundred -- by the diseases whites introduced even before any of them had landed and settled. Also, some ambitious would-be Big Men or sachems, with their hopes for advancement blocked internally because of structural limitations in the way kinship and inheritance worked, hooked-up with the newcomers to do an end-run around the societal barriers and gain power.

By the same token, although the structural pediments were different, the Puritans and
Pilgrims, in the early stages of the invasion when they were yet few and weak, found substantial benefits in allying with certain Indians who might teach them useful things about their new, unfamiliar surroundings – as the disease-survivor and former captive who had been taken off by a sea captain to England, Tisquantum, did for the Pilgrims. The English invaders and settlers, too, could be adept at playing one Indian group against another to accomplish certain ends and to prevent the rise of a pan-Indian alliance that they feared might well cut them off. But, again, over time, the relationships that started in a more mutualistic fashion leaned more and more to the side of the newcomers. The Puritans – less-so the Pilgrims and dissidents like Roger Williams and Samuel Gorton – would not simply let the Indians be themselves (as the Indians sometimes pleaded when it came to religious beliefs and practices). Instead, a creeping foreign “governmentality” was inexorably imposed on the indigenous, ostensibly for their own good.¹ The Indians either died resisting – as a great many of them did in the Pequot War, Kings Philip’s War and various guerilla battles -- or fled to refuge in French Canada. Or, they were politically, if not necessarily ideologically, subsumed.² Once under the thumb of English colonial laws and courts and with their lands mainly lost through “voluntary” land sales – or taken away from them outright through the Puritan-launched wars of conquest -- many who remained became wage-workers producing surplus-value for white owners of the means of production or managed to eke out a living some way in the interstices

¹ “Governmentality” is a theoretical concept from one of Althusser’s student, Michel Foucault. By this, he meant “The tendency which, over a long period and throughout the West, has steadily led towards the pre-eminence over all other forms (sovereignty, discipline, etc) of this type of power which may be termed government.” See Michel Foucault, “Governmentality,” in The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality, ed. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 87-104.

of hegemonic capitalist society.

**Reducing the Indians to “Civility”**

By the time the shiploads of Pilgrims, Puritans and other English arrived to settle the land, native peoples in the New England region, at least along the coast, had more than a century of contacts with Europeans, including several abortive earlier stabs at permanent English settlement. They were no longer misidentifying the European sailing ships, as some of them apparently did at first, as “walking islands” upon which, according to one old story, they had the misapprehension they might venture out to pick strawberries – until they were disabused of that notion when the ships opened fire on them. In some places, where relations had been positive with the hairy-faced strangers in the past, Indians in canoes came out eagerly to trade whenever the ships showed up. In other places, where Indians had negative experiences with European captains like Capt. Hunt, who in 1614 had lured Indians aboard ship on the pretense of amity and trade and then taken them off to be sold as slaves in Europe, those bad memories had not been erased, and encounters with whites who came to settle could be quite touchy (as it proved to be on Cape Cod for the Pilgrims) from the get-go. Incredibly, several abducted Indians had made their ways back home from European captivity to provide first-hand accounts of what the European societies were like and of what perils might be involved from entering into relations with whites. Indians whose societies had suffered from the recent epidemic introduced by the whites might also have had good reason to be reticent.³

³ The story about ships and strawberries is in William Wood, *Wood’s New England’s Prospect* (Boston: The Prince Society, 1865), 87. Capt. Hunt’s abductions had both positive and negative ramifications for the Pilgrims when they came along a few years later. The Indians on Cape Cod, who had suffered from Hunt’s depredations, met the Pilgrims with flight and open hostility. On the other hand, Tisquantum, the only surviving inhabitant of Patuxet from the plague that struck in 1619, who befriended the Pilgrims in their hour of need, had been one of Capt. Hunt’s abductees and had learned English during his stint in Europe and thus could act as a useful go-between with the Wampanoag leadership. Dwight Heath, ed., *Mourt’s Relation: A Journal of the Pilgrims at Plymouth* (Bedford, Mass.: Applewood Books, 1986), 52; Nathaniel Morton, *New-England’s
Thus Ossamequin (“Yellow Feather”), the sachem of the Pokanokets who held the title of “Massasoit” (literally, “Big Leader”) of the Wampanoag chieftain, bided his time over the winter of 1620-21, while his spies surveilled the struggling Pilgrim settlement at Patuxet. By spring, Ossamequin, having found that the English survivors, in spite of their great hardships and losses, were not acting as if they were likely to pull up and depart anytime soon (as some other would-be settlers in Maine had done after a single winter), showed up for a visit. He was garbed in the symbol of his office, a large chain of wampum around his neck, and was accompanied by his brother and a body of armed warriors. At New Plymouth, he was welcomed, and he and his Pilgrim counterpart, Gov. John Carver exchanged signs of mutual respect and gave each other gifts. The two leaders then agreed on a “League of Peace” in which the two peoples would come to each other’s aid, if need be, in the future. With the numbers of his people and warriors considerably diminished by the recent plague, Ossamequin appears to have been hoping that an alliance with the English would provide a counter-weight against the Wampanoag’s powerful Narragansett neighbors to the west. (The Narragansetts, because of the barrier of the ocean bay, had missed being hit by the devastating epidemic and were looking to take advantage of the weaknesses of their rivals.) Ossamequin agreed to inform his new allies of the agreement and left the meeting for his journey home pleased to believe, as the Pilgrims assured him, that their own sovereign King Memorial, 6th ed. (Boston: Congregational Board of Publications, 1855), 27-46. Samuel Eliot Morrison’s The European Discovery of America, 2 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), the rank Eurocentrism of the author aside, is the still the best secondary source I know on the activities and reports of the early European navigators in North American waters, including their relations with the Indians whom they encountered.
James would “esteem him as his friend and ally.”

As Jenny Hale Pulsipher observes in her insightful book on the evolution of political relations between Indians and English in New England, this is how a number of cagy Indian sachems initially treated with the incoming settlers. Not in any position in terms of power to impose a subordinate tributary kind of relationship on the newcomers, as they might have preferred if it were possible, they tried to involve the English as co-equal partners within the Indians’ own structural expectations of how relationships could be established among different polities, employing the reciprocal gift-giving of prestige items and other goods and the promise of more goods to be had in future friendly relations. Almost as soon as the Puritans started showing up *en masse* and planting themselves in Massachuset country – an area among the worst hit by the recent plague – a small parade of Indian delegations made their way to Boston starting in the spring of 1631 apparently with that very sort of aim of establishing an alliance in mind. A Massachuset sachem, Chickatabut, was the first to arrive accompanied by his wives and retinue and bearing a hogshead of maize. He took dinner at the table of Governor Winthrop who reciprocated with the gift of some English cheese and peas, a mug and other small presents. Next along came Wahginnacut from the faraway Connecticut River country with promises of maze and beaver pelts if the English would oblige his solicitous invitation and come set up a post in his country, where he hoped that their presence would not only provide a source of goods but also be a boost against the powerful

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Pequots who had recently put many of the Connecticut River Indians, after overthrowing their sachems, under an onerous tributary relationship. Last but not least, in July of that very same year, Miantonomo, the junior partner of the dual sachemdom of the Narragansetts, probably hoping to explore a counter-weight in the new Massachusetts Bay Colony to the Plymouth-Wampanoag alliance formed against them, came to Boston for an overnight visit. Again, a ceremonial dinner was shared, followed by the gifting of prestige items from the two cultures – an animal skin brought along by the Indian sachem and a pewter pot from the governor.\textsuperscript{6}

Invariably the Indians seem to have tried to keep up their side of these newly-entered relationships cemented by the exchange of presents between the respective leaderships. Moreover, the Indians initially seem to have expected that the “English sachems” would perform certain familiar sachem-like functions. Roger Williams reported that the Narragansetts expected not only military aid against their sworn-enemy Uncas out of the English but also that they “should constantly send up contribution to their Nicommoes or Devilish Feasts.”\textsuperscript{7} But the newcomers had their own distinct agendas, which did not include becoming the agents of redistribution and social reproduction among the “pagans.” A respectful mutual relationship with the natives is not what the English invaders and settlers sought – in more than a temporary and \textit{ad hoc} kind of way when it suited them. Given their own pronounced attitudes of cultural and religious superiority as “civilized” men and Christians, what the English wanted and expected was a relationship of dominance and submission to themselves, one that was at best paternalistic. In the language of the day, the


Indians were to be “reduced to civility,” that is, brought under English laws and converted to the principles, as the Puritans conceived them, of a reformed Christianity. If kind usage did not work to accomplish these aims, then coercive means -- as had been employed extensively by the English invaders and settlers earlier with the “wild Irish” – might well be warranted with these “barbarians” and “savages.” Or, to follow the sorts of Biblical metaphors favored by the Puritans, if the Indians proved refractory they were to be treated as the Canaanites had been by Joshua and the Israelites when they finally entered their biblical Promised Land after wandering for forty years in the wilderness.\(^8\)

The pace of establishing a relationship of domination and subordination between English and Indians varied somewhat from colony to colony. In their 1621 “League of Peace,” the Wampanoags had agreed to turn over Indian offenders against the whites to the Pilgrims for judgment. (The arrangements of this sort never turned out to be reciprocal. When Ossamequin tried to get his hands on Tisquantum for stirring up trouble between the two peoples, under what he must have thought was a mutual agreement about malefactors, he and his men sent to arrest Tisquantum were turned down flatly by Governor Bradford.)\(^9\)

Nevertheless, in the early years at New Plymouth, perhaps as a result of the Pilgrim’s Separatist principles and because they were so much in need of the life-preserving aid provided by the Indians until they could get up on their feet, they did not push so hard at

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\(^8\) For a much fuller description and analysis of the English attitudes toward Indians and how it all shook out in practice in Virginia and New England, see Michael Leroy Oberg, *Dominion and Civility: English Imperialism and Native America, 1585-1685* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999). Oberg divides the English colonization leadership roughly into two camps: the “metropolitans” who believed that Indians were simply at a lower stage of civilization, perhaps like the ancient Britons themselves had been before the Roman invasion, and could be helped with kindly usage to make that transition and those of a more no-nonsense military background from the religious wars in Ireland and the continent.

imposing themselves and their political and legal system on the natives. But the Plymouth Colony did not even get around until 1640 – a full twenty years after the founding of the colony -- to enacting a law to restrict the access of the Indians to firearms that might aid the newcomers to maintain their power advantage they had over the natives. At that time it finally prohibited any “trade truck or exchange” of guns, power and shot or swords, daggers and rapiers, in addition to the mending or repair of firearms for the Indians.\textsuperscript{10} And the Pilgrims, at least during the first couple of decades of their colony, did not reach out much to enforce their own set of laws against Indians accused of wrong-doing against whites. Only several times during those early years did the Pilgrims send out parties of armed and armored men on an \textit{ad hoc} basis to rough up and intimidate Indians thought to pose a threat to the existence of the colony.\textsuperscript{11} 

We find but a single case in the court records, that in 1639 of an Indian who was “well whipt” for fornicating with a white woman (to whom worse things were meted out in the form of punishment for their joint little escapade).\textsuperscript{12} In a show of evenhandedness, though to do so was exceedingly unpopular and controversial, the Pilgrim leadership ordered four white men under their jurisdiction to be tried in 1637 -- and three of them were subsequently executed – for murdering an Indian traveler and taking his “five fadome of wampum and “three coates of wollen cloth.”\textsuperscript{13} Only a handful of other cases involving Indians pop up in

\begin{itemize}
\item Ibid, 220-223, 327-345.
\item Ibid, 96-97.
\end{itemize}
the Plymouth Courts records that I have surveyed through the 1650s and ‘60s. Mostly, what we find there are not charges against Indians but cases of white men “presented” for selling liquor or guns to the Indians or for breaking into Indians dwellings and illegally seizing property in lieu of debts owed them and cases of Indians filing complaints with the courts about livestock doing damage to their corn fields. On one occasion in 1658, Plymouth authorities sought to lay hands on an Native who was accused of murdering other Indians in Massachusetts Bay and who, it was said, was being sheltered by the Wampanoag sachems. They dispatched a body of men to “advise” the sachems that the Indian ought to be delivered to them for trial -- which they were to promise would be fair – or, if turned down, to try to apprehend the accused murderer themselves. Yet, this was an exceptional intrusion into the affairs of the local Indians, who were treated by the Pilgrims pretty much as being self-governing, if under the distant rule of the same English monarch as they were.

The situation was quite otherwise with the Puritans centered around Boston and their sanctimonious “mission in the wilderness.” A law aiming to prevent Indians from obtaining and using guns was one of the very first laws to be put on the Massachusetts Bay Colony books in September 1630. And the Puritans took steps right away to make the point that

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they were in charge by applying to the Indians in their vicinity their Old World system of jurisprudence, augmented with their own Biblical strictures, for resolving civil disputes and punishing criminal infractions. In June 1631, just a few months after the aforementioned Massachusetts sachem Chickatabut had been wined and dined by Governor Winthrop, the General Court fined the sachem a beaver skin for shooting a swine belonging to Sir Richard Saltonstall. Indians often used material compensation to settle disputes or crimes among themselves, so this may not have been such a big deal for the sachem. But then, in July 1631, enforcing English norms of private property and privacy to which the Indians were totally unaccustomed, the Court declared that the Sagamore of Agawam “is banished from coming into any English man’s house for the space of a year, under the penalty of 10 skins of beaver.”\(^\text{17}\) Soon, further humiliating acts to enforce English norms on the Indians were imposed on sachems who were being treated as the subordinate law enforcers. In 1632, Chickatabut was required to personally beat two of his men who had broken into an English house. Similarly, when three visiting Narragansetts, following Indian norms of hospitality, went into a Boston house while the occupants were gone at Sunday Meeting looking for food to sate their hunger, Massachusetts authorities tried to show who was in charge by forcing the proud sachem Miantonomo to have his men beaten for this violation.\(^\text{18}\) While restitution was understood by the Indians, corporal punishment was something not performed.

At the same time, Indians were shown that infractions by whites would be handled in much the same sort of way through the determinations of the “English sachems” in Boston.

\(^\text{17}\) Ibid, 88, 89.

In March 1631, when two Massachuset sagamores complained that two wigwams had been burned, the Court determined that a servant of Saltonstall was at fault and ordered Saltonstall, who was one of the top Puritan leaders, to make restitution, which accordingly he did by giving the Indian sagamores seven yards of cloth. In September 1631, three English offenders were convicted, punished and had to make restitution for stealing four baskets of corn from the Indians. In October 1632, in a particularly harsh sentence, Nicholas Frost was convicted for thievery committed against the Indians at the fishing island of Damarill’s Cove (Damariscove) in Maine, compounded by his acts of drunkenness and fornication. He was sentenced by the General Court to a fine and to be “seuerely whipt, & branded in the hand with a hott iron, & after banished out of this pattent, with penalty that if ever hee be found within the lymitts of the said pattent, hee shalbe putt to death.” When the Agawam sagamore complained in 1634 that Charlestown’s swine had damaged his corn, the Court appointed a colony elder, Increase Nowell, to hear the sachem’s witnesses, to assess damages and, if need be, to enforce their collection on the English settler culprits.19 While justice (of the English sort) seems to have done to the Indians in these cases, as time went by and the Puritans felt more secure in their political control, as Lyle Koehler has shown, Indians generally received harsher punishment in the courts for the same crimes as whites and when whites committed crimes against Indians, their punishments were generally less severe.20 This use of the regular

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20 Lyle Koehler, “Red-White Power Relations and Justice in the Courts of Seventeenth-Century New England,” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 3, no. 4 (1979): 1-31. Koehler finds this discrimination to have been present in both Massachusetts and Plymouth courts. On the other hand, he finds that Connecticut was somewhat more equitable in its treatment of Indian and white offenders. He attributes the difference to the fact that Connecticut had a larger Indian population and a smaller white population and thus whites could not afford to be so imperious. The true exception to the rule, Koehler finds, was Rhode Island which had hardly any law enforcement directed at the Indians.
criminal courts in Massachusetts to try Indians charged with crimes against whites or to adjudicate complaints by Indians against whites continued, at least for Indians who had “submitted” themselves within the expanding boundaries, throughout the colonial period.21

An important legal scholar of colonial New England, Yasu Kawashima, has described the aggressive approach taken by the Massachusetts Bay Colony towards the native inhabitants this way:

Toward the Indian tribes, the Massachusetts authorities consistently, though not always successfully, demanded the extension of the colonial jurisdiction over the Indian territories, except for legal matters arising among the tribal Indians themselves. As far as the legal jurisdiction was concerned, the colonial authorities treated the native tribes the same way, friendly or hostile, independent or dependent. The expansion of colonial jurisdiction was usually achieved through diplomatic negotiation of various kinds.22

On the other hand, some Indians learned, sometimes with the aid of whites who stood to gain, how to work the colonial court system to try to secure more advantageous terms when they felt they had been wrongfully treated in land transactions. The Pawtucket sachem Wenepoykin (who was referred to disdainfully by the whites as “Sagamore George No-Nose”) persisted for many years in the mid-17th Century filing lawsuit after suit in Essex County inferior court and petitioning the Massachusetts General Court for compensation for lands in Rumney Marsh (North Chelsea in present-day Boston) that he felt were unjustly taken from him which had formerly belonged to his brother when he was the sachem or at least “to

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vouchsafe him somme smalle parte parcell or proportion of his inheritane Land for himselfe & Company to plant in.”

Wenepoykin got no more than the familiar bureaucratic runaround. But sometimes Indians achieved a measure of success in the courts. Namumpum, wife of the Wampanoag sachem Wamsutta, complained to the Plymouth court that she had been left out when her husband and her father-in-law Ossamequin, had sold land to whites without her permission and without receiving the compensation she felt was due to herself. (The land in question was quite possibly from her own family’s kin group.) At the court’s order, Namumpum received from the white purchaser, John Cooke, “20 yards blew trading cloth, 2 yards red cotton, 2 paire of shooes, 2 paire stockings, 6 broade hoes and 1 axe” and said she was satisfied.

Several of the Natick Praying Indians confessed when they applied for church membership that they had converted to Christianity, at least initially, to have access to land or to keep it from being taken away by the English (or to have something to eat), rather than due to any attraction to religious doctrines. “My land” was the meaning of “Natick.” As Jean O’Brien has detailed in her carefully-researched and well-crafted work of social history, *Dispossession by Degrees* – the only community study yet of a native town in New England -- the Indians of Natick learned how to employ the mechanisms of the colonial legal system, submitting petition after petition of protest against white misdeeds and filing law suits against

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encroachments to defend the 6,000 acres of land that had been granted to them by the Massachusetts General Court in 1650. Some Indian men replaced their wigwams with English-style dwelling houses and practiced English forms of agriculture. But the conversion of land tenure in 1720 from a common form of ownership into a proprietorship and individual allotments led thereafter to the incremental loss of Indian lands, as Indians needed to raise capital for improvements or, more commonly, had to pay debts they had incurred to whites. With the loss of their land-base, the Natick Indians also lost their self-government to white settlers who, achieving a majority of the population, voted them not to be town citizens. By the time of the American Revolution, the Natick Indians were largely gone from their former area, joining the Indian diaspora to the north and west or persisting like some other New England Indians did in small low-visibility pockets here and there on the margins of white-ruled society. Thus, their minister Waban with those others whom the English regarded as “Friend Indians” at Natick, along with other Indian converts who had submitted themselves to English laws and mores for whatever reasons they thought in their own best interests and had taken on various aspects and trappings, at least outwardly, of English religion and culture, ultimately fared no better economically or politically than those who resisted the white invasion more fully and openly like those Indians who joined with the cause of Metacom and died fighting. Given our retrospective vantage point knowing the outcome, how can we fairly judge one method or the other adopted by those who had to make decisions in the moment?

As the colonies grew and expanded, time as well as space became a contested terrain. The earliest concerted effort by the newcomers to exert exclusive control over the time and space they shared with the indigenous inhabitants came in regards to the seventh day of every
week that the Puritans regarded as their Sabbath Day of Rest. In 1637, the General Court empowered Massachusetts towns to “restraine Indians from prophaning the Lords day” and, in 1644, it wrote up a more detailed set of instructions of what should and should not happen on that day and the legal consequences. All Indians were to be prohibited from coming into any English town or house, unless invited, on Sundays, except to attend worship service. Moreover, those Indians who had “subjected themselves to our government” were to be “enjoyned (and that they fayle not) to meete att such severall places of appoyntmente as shalbee most convenient on the Lords day, where they may attend such instruction as shalbee given them by those whose harts God shall stirr upp to that worke.” Perhaps the “enjoyning” part was not working as well as intended because two years later the General Court passed a new, more coercive enactment to promote Christianity among the Indians. Although the preamble to the new law foreswore any intention on the part of its makers of wanting to bring faith by the sword rather than by the Word, the law banned Indians “in any part of our jurisdiction” from having a powwow or performing “outward worship to their false gods, or to the devill.” The law also mandated, “if the times be safe,” that any “necessary and holesome lawes which may be made to reduce them to civility of life” were to be made known to the Indians by two church elders annually.27 Apparently somewhat less interested in the conversion of the Indians, Connecticut’s General Court passed its own law in 1652 simply excluding Indians from settlements on Sundays, unless they were coming to the meeting.28


1671, in the run-up to King Philip’s War, the Plymouth colony passed a law to punish Indians with a fine who “prophane[d] the Lord day, by Hunting, Fishing, Fowling, Travailing with burthens, or doing any servile work thereupon.” Needless to say, there were no reciprocal arrangements to not interfere with Indians when they were celebrating their own holidays. Indeed “powwowing” was prohibited wherever the whites thought that they had power to do so.

A recurring source of frictions between Indians and English, as they lived intermingled, while continuing to have different modes of production, involved the wayward and free-ranging livestock of the English who often did damage to the Indian cornfields. Without domesticated animals themselves, except for dogs, Indians had never before faced a need to fence in their fields. Wandering English livestock also got caught in Indian game traps. To address this problem, the Massachusetts General Court in 1640 ordered that “in all places the English shall keepe their cattle from destroying the Indians corne in any ground where they have a right to plant; and if any corne bee destroyed for want of fencing or hearding, the towne shalbe liable to make satisfaction”-- if the Indians “shall make prufe” of the damage. At the same time, the Indians were “to bee incuraged to help towards the fensing in of their corn fields.” Portending where the relationship between Indians and Puritans would be going more and more in the future, the burden of proof that damage had


been done was put upon the Indians.\textsuperscript{31} The next year, the General Court gave magistrates the power “to recover satisfaction, and the like” from Indians for harm they might have done to English cattle.\textsuperscript{32} The Massachusetts \textit{Book of the General Laws and Libertyes} adopted in 1648 incorporated the two above laws more or less verbatim and added that each town ought to provide the Indians with English help in cutting trees, making rails, digging holes for posts and setting the fences in place and should lend or sell them the necessary tools. On the other hand, if the Indians refused to fence in their corn fields, “being tendered help as aforesaid,” they would stand to lose half of whatever damages might be done by any intruding English cattle.\textsuperscript{33} The fencing in of English cattle by their owners was not given as an option, only Indians having to take steps to fence the cattle out. What this really amounted to was not just fencing in the Indians’ corn fields but fencing in the Indians themselves. It meant that Indians were not able so readily, especially as whites acquired more and more land and turned it into their private property all around them, to keep on practicing their shifting, more cooperative form of agriculture — which, although it worked quite well for them enabling land to return to fertility without the need for animal manure, whites took as an indicator of their lack of “civilization.” Many Indians fenced their fields and stopped, for fear of prosecution, shooting


\textsuperscript{33} \textit{The Book of the General Laws and Libertyes Concerning the Inhabitants of the Massachusetts [1648]} (San Marino, Calif: Huntington Library, 1975), 28-29. Indians who had been granted or sold land by the colony or a town were excepted. They had to fence their own lands and fields “at their own charge as the English doe or should doe.”
loose cattle and pigs. But that Indians did not necessarily want to abide by these fences and enclosures is clear from continuing conflicts.

**Contestation over Sovereignty and Land**

The economic processes by which Indians lost their land to whites that we have explored in the last two chapters went hand in hand with the political processes. When whites purchased Indian lands, it was automatically presumed by them that sovereignty over those lands went with those purchases – if indeed that had not already been established by some other mechanism. It was unthinkable that subjects of His Majesty the King of England would buy or otherwise obtain Indian lands and, in doing so, transfer their loyalties to an Indian sachem, as might actually have been the case if Englishmen had bought lands instead across the English Channel and removed to France. In that case, the French King would then have become their new lord and sovereign to whom they might have owed certain ongoing duties and fees. Not so here. To take one of many such examples, when a party of Antinomian refugees from Massachusetts Bay purchased the island of Aquidneck from the Narragansett sachems in 1637, they constituted themselves as their own government – they had no charter from the King, as did Massachusetts, that gave them a pretended right and title – and began almost immediately to make laws and rules not only from themselves but also for the Indians who remained on the island. They demanded that Indians stop building fires “upon our Landes” without putting them out when they left to go elsewhere or be held liable for the damages. Indians had to cease trapping deer because English cattle might also get trapped. Indians had to take care not to act in what the whites deemed an “unruly” fashion, to leave English houses “when they are bidden,” and to stop borrowing canoes from the English. For
smaller infractions, the Indians would simply be punished according to law. For “matters of greater weight” exceeding ten fathoms worth of wampum, the Narragansett chief sachem, Miantonomo, would be sent-for to watch over the trial. Otherwise, the English felt no remaining obligations to the Narragansett rulers. Indeed, the very Narragansett sachems themselves, even for smaller infractions, could be put onto trial and adjudged by an English court. The Narragansett sachems who had agreed to this arrangement may have thought they retained overall sovereignty over these lands and people. Clearly, not so the English.

Moreover, colonial authorities believed in what is called in more modern international jurisprudence the principal of “extraterritoriality.” Their subjects remained their subjects wherever they might be here. When some rebellious whites, indentured servants and others, ran off to live with the Indians and thereby submitted to indigenous government, the colonial authorities felt fully entitled to retrieve and punish them – as the Puritans did with a trucking house employee William Baker who had “turned Indian in nakednes” and was living with an Indian woman and had a child with her. Indeed, they felt entitled to require that the Indians return such runaways or face the legal consequences. Again, there was no reciprocity.

As we have noted already, the processes of occupying and taking control of the Indian


lands was aided and abetted by the introduction of a whole string of virulent European
diseases to which the Indians had no previous exposure and little resistance. This led to
demoralization, especially as Indians saw that whites were much less afflicted. English germs
were followed by English guns and steel. Likewise, politically. In the aftermath of the
destruction of the powerful Pequots which sent shockwaves throughout New England because
of the ruthlessness of the English, slaughtering even women and children though their Indian
allies begged them that they be spared, more Indian sachems, mostly from weakened groups,
voluntarily submitted themselves and their “subjects, lands and estates” to be under the
Massachusetts government. In July 1637, a Niantic sachem Aganemo came to Boston with
a present of ten fathoms of wampum, followed in July by the arrival of Uncas, the Mohegan
sachem (who would make himself a faithful lackey of the English). After an interval of a few
years, in June 1643, two sachems from the area near present-day Providence, Rhode Island;
and, in March 1644, five more sachems from the area in and around Massachusetts Bay
showed up at Boston. Submission now came with a set of strict conditions. The latter had
to agree to a set of articles laid out before them. They signed their assent to whole number
of requirements for the behavior of their people in the future: To worship the “onely true God,
who made heaven & earth, & not to blaspheme him,” not to swear falsely, not to work on the
Sabbath, “to honor their parents & all their supiors,” “To kill no man without just cause &
just authority, “ to refrain from committing a whole series of specified acts of “unclean lust,”
not to steal, to willingly allow their children be educated by the English in the word of God,

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38 “This overthrow given to the Pequods struck such a terror into all the Indians in those parts (some
of whom fcam been ill affected to the English before) that they sought our friendship, and rendered themselves
to be under our protection, which they then obtained, and have never since forfeited it any of them, till the late
rebellion of Philip...” William Hubbard, A Narrative of the Indian Wars in New-England, from the First
Planting Thereof in the Year 1607, to the Year 1677 (Brattleborough, Vermont: William Fessenden, 1814), 47.
and not to be idle (a great sin for the Puritans). Finally, in May 1644, the “great sachem” Passaconaway of the Pennacocks from the area along the Merrimack River – Passaconaway was a widely feared powaw as well as sachem who had concluded that the whites had more manitou than he could ever muster with his own most powerful magic – followed suit, applying to put his own people, too, under the overall governing authority of Massachusetts Bay.  

The next big move by the Massachusetts authorities to exert control over the bodies and minds of Indians took place in 1652. Citing certain Biblical passages (particularly Genesis 1:28), the General Court declared that Indians did indeed have legitimate title to whatever lands they had within their jurisdiction -- by possession or improvement “by subdueing of the same.” Thus, for the better “civilizinge” and Christianizing of the Indians, the General Court, having long since asserted sovereignty over all the lands of the colony under its charter from the King, would now out of its kindness grant the natives of the land

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“allottments amongst the English, according to the custome of the English in the like case.”

What came out of this law was not the distribution of plots of land to individual Indian submitters obedient to the commandments on an equal basis within existing English towns – I know of only a single anomalous case where a Massachusetts town offered citizenship to an Indian and might have allotted him some land inside its boundaries for his own use – but the creation of whole new separate Indian townships. Towns were one of the fundamental building blocks of the whole Puritan political structure from the family level to the colonial level. However, these new Indian towns, unlike all others that were lived in and run by Englishmen, would not be able to elect representatives to the General Court, and in other ways their rights and privileges were circumscribed. Yes, the Indians would enjoy a certain measure of self-government in as much as they could choose some of their own local officials to rule them but always under the overlordship of Puritan ministers and government-appointed guardians. This was really the founding in this country of ours of what would become the Indian reservation system, often little better than concentration camps for ethnic cleansing of Indians from lands that whites coveted. Apparently, nobody among the English at that time saw any wrong or irony in this kind of situation – themselves as intruders taking away the lands from its original owners and then returning some small enclaves of it to them, that is,

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41 In 1665, the Indian “Sam” who kept the cows was admitted by the town of Rehoboth “as an inhabitant, to buy or hire house or lands if he can, in case the Court allow it.” George Henry Tilton, A History of Rehoboth, Massachusetts: Its History for 275 Years, 1643-1918, in Which Is Incorporated the Vital Parts of the Original History of the Town (Boston, Mass: The author, 1918), 55. Tilton observes wryly that it was not known if the Court allowed it.

on condition if they cooperated and adhered to the rules of supposedly “civilized” behavior.

The main mover and shaker behind this whole “civilizing” effort was the Rev. John Eliot of Roxbury, the first Puritan to pay any serious attention to one of main ostensible reasons for colonization in New England, namely the conversion of the Indians to Christianity. Eliot had commenced preaching to Indians in 1646 and had some gradual success reaching them at their wigwams. But he thought he could do better if Indians were gathered into towns. At the instigation of Eliot, the General Court in 1654 gave Indians “liberty” to establish three towns “provided it doe not prejudice any former grants, nor that they shall dispose of it without leave first had and obtain'd from this Court.”

Natick, the first, and the longest lasting, of these official Indian towns, was set up under Eliot’s pastoral care and close moral supervision in 1651. Subsequently, in 1656, the Massachusetts General Court appointed a military man, Capt. Daniel Gookin, to be the supervisor of all the Indians who had submitted throughout the colony, and Gookin along with the Rev. Eliot made regular site visits for inspections and the usual sermonizing on the Gospel and exhortations to obey the Commandments. A total of seven of these “Praying Indian” towns close to Boston, plus nine additional “Praying Indian” villages that were new, farther removed, and somewhat more tenuously committed to by the Indians involved, came into existence under Eliot’s guidance --

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44 Francis Jennings provides a useful deconstruction of the ostensible religious motives of the Puritans in converting Indians to Christianity and promoting the creation of these so-called “praying Indian” towns. Jennings shows that the Puritans, in spite of their stated principal purpose for going to New England, did not bestir themselves to convert Indians for many years after they had settled, until they were challenged about the lack of it for their duplicity and hypocrisy by political rival. Francis Jennings, “Goals and Functions of Puritan Missions to the Indians,” Ethnohistory 18, no. 3 (1971): 197-212.

before King Philip’s War changed everything. (See Google Map file on accompanying CD-ROM). The way these towns worked internally was that a rigid hierarchy was set up in which some trusted Indians were given a little more responsibility to watch over and presumably set the proper Christian example for the other Indians. The main purpose of these undertakings by Eliot and the other Puritans involved in the missionary work was religious, not economic. Even so, looking for a total conversion of Indians in body as well as in soul to make them resemble the English as much as possible, Indians residents were provided with tools in what the Puritans considered the manual arts suitable for them according to the prevailing English gender norms – spinning and sewing for the females and plowing and livestock rearing for the males. However, no matter how much the Indians at these Praying Towns submitted and imitated English ways, neighboring land-hungry whites continued to nibble away at their lands for debts, and ultimately these reeducation camps for Indians were liquidated.

The prime New England case of a native individual whose ambitions were thwarted by indigenous social structures but who was able to leverage his relations with the newcomers into a considerable amount of political and economic power – and thereby save some Indian lands – would be Uncas. Uncas (“The Fox”) was a master at maneuvering and intrigue – and at bullying, blustering and dissembling when necessary – on behalf of his people and, no less

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crucially, in defense of his own interests. Uncas apparently believed that his blood lines entitled him to be considered for the position of Pequot chief sachem after the latter was murdered by the Dutch. Rejected, he turned first for refuge to the Narragansetts (who would never see him as more than a rank opportunist) and then for allies to the Puritans in Boston. When the Puritans launched their war of conquest against the Pequots in 1636, Uncas with his small retinue of followers from a possible segmentation process, fought against their own kinsmen and former comrades. When the Pequots were crushed and scattered by English colonial might and ruthlessness, Uncas built up his following at the war’s end by absorbing a good many of the Pequot captives. Also, as a result of the war, the Mohegans acquired new hunting territories and sources of tribute from the Pequots and their former tributaries. Uncas first acquiesced to the judgment of the Massachusetts authorities touching on his people as early as 1638 – agreeing to let the English arbitrate any disputes between the Mohegans and Narragansets -- and, in after years, he spent a fair amount of time appealing his case against other Indians, or about whatever might be of concern to him, to them and the Connecticut authorities and soliciting their military aid – which they provided upon occasion – to rescue him from his many Indian enemies. Until his death in 1683, Uncas continued to be a major player in southern New England political machininations and warfare. What the English

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47 A harsh, if not inaccurate, treatment of Uncas’s long career as the Mohegan sachem is Benjamin Bussey Thatcher, *Indian Biography, or An Historical Account of Those Individuals Who Have Been Distinguished among the North American Natives as Orators, Warriors, Statesmen, and Other Remarkable Characters*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1839), 184-297. Thatcher grudgingly admits that the presence of a Mohegan reservation into his own time is a living testimony to Uncas’s skills. A more recent biography that puts Uncas’s actions in a more positive light is Michael Leroy Oberg, *Uncas: First of the Mohegans* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2003). See also Laurie Weinstein-Farson, “Land Politics and Power: The Mohegan Indians in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,” *Man in the Northeast* 42 (1991): 9-16. It is not clear whether Uncas was a Pequot himself to begin with or only related to them through chiefly tribal intermarriages. Weinstein-Farson uses land records to argue the position that, although the two peoples were interrelated, the Mohegans and Pequots had been distinct for a long time prior to the arrival of Uncas on the scene. She maintains that the Pequots had conquered the Mohegans not long before the Pequot War. Oberg agrees with her.
colonists got out of their relationship with him was a reliable informant, mercenary and occasional hit-man. For instance, instead of doing the dirty deed themselves, the English had Uncas dispatch Miantonomi, the highly-competent Narragansett chief sachem the English feared as a potential “universal ruler” who might be able to unite the natives against them.⁴⁸

Uncas and his two sons who acted as sub-sachems sold away chunks of their territory, usually the more distant parts and sometimes more than once, and dispensed wampum (which he extorted or stole from other Indians) to the English, while managing to hold onto and safeguard the core Mohegan holdings along the Thames River and to fend off the Puritan missionary vultures. Uncas accomplished this in part, as avaricious land hunters circled around and took bites of land, by placing the Mohegan lands starting in 1659 under the guardianship or trusteeship of the colony’s most powerful military man and deputy governor of Connecticut from 1660 through 1668, the Indian fighter Major John Mason (ironically the man most directly responsible for the horrific slaughter of the Pequots in 1637). According to the agreements between them, Mason and his heirs could pocket one half of any and all of the profits coming from the Mohegan lands or related resources. In 1671, to try to ensure that some of their lands would be preserved in perpetuity for the Mohegans, the aging Mason in his role as Mohegan protector entailed a large tract of 20,000 acres or more back to the Mohegan sachem and his sons which, it was hoped, could never be sold or disposed of in any way. Even so, in the aftermath of King Philip’s War, the Mohegans – who had again fought on the English side to put down the rebellion -- found themselves increasingly squeezed on

⁴⁸ Ibid.
their reserved tribal lands by the adjacent towns of New London and Norwich. With his long-time white protector Mason dead and gone, Uncas in a last major effort on behalf of his people and his lineage, signed a “league of amitie” with the colony of Connecticut in 1681. Uncas pledged to be loyal to the colony and to supply it with fighting men whenever it needed. He resigned all his lands and territories to the colony for them to grant out as they saw fit and confirmed all the sales of land already made by him but pledged to sell no more without the colony’s permission. For its part, the colony pledged to provide equal justice and advice to the Mohegans and pledged that whenever Mohegan lands were sold by it, to give a fair and just price to the Indians. Also supposed to be guaranteed in this deal made by Uncas was a sufficient quantity of land for future generations of the Indians to plant upon.

After Uncas’s decease, the next Mohegan sachem, his son Owaneco, who had a partiality to alcoholic beverages and feared that he would sign away land while under the influence (which he apparently did upon occasion), set in motion a plan similar to his father’s, entrusting the Mohegan lands to members of the Mason and the related Fitch families. Owaneco and his chosen white guardians acted strongly to defend their mutual interests.


When, in 1704, the Connecticut government issued grants to form new towns (including lands granted to the Governor and other worthies) on the lands Owaneco thought of as belonging to the Mohegans, the Indians and their guardians carried their case across the sea to London to Queen Anne. In the context of the imperial rivalries in the World System and not wishing to have more Indians defect to the French in Canada, the commissioners whom the Queen appointed to investigate ruled in favor of the Mohegans – ordering Connecticut towns to return thousands of misappropriated acres and assessing legal costs. The Connecticut colony, however, was now in the hands of an anti-Mason faction of land owners and speculators, and the Atlantic Ocean was wide. As the old saying goes, these men heard the royal edict but did not obey.\textsuperscript{51}

The earnest efforts of Uncas and Owaneco were not bound to last beyond their lifetimes. When Owaneco died in 1715, the Connecticut authorities moved in for the kill, while piously pronouncing that they were acting in the Indians’ best interests. In 1718 and 1719, the legislature acted to replace the Masons with their own preferred set of “guardians” and mandated that Christianity be propagated for the “civilizing” of the Mohegans.\textsuperscript{52} (The Mohegans had managed up to then to keep the missionaries at bay and safeguard their own


\textsuperscript{52} Charles Jeremy Hoadly, ed., \textit{The Public Records of the Colony of Connecticut}, vol. 6, \textit{From May, 1717, to October, 1725, with the Council Journal from May, 1717, to April, 1726} (Hartford: Case, Lockwood & Brainard, 1872), 77-78.
religion.) In 1730, these white guardians were accorded greater powers to “inspect the
carriages and manners” of the Indians, to christianize them and to “incourage industry
amongst them,” and it was stipulated that the moneys from the lease of Indian lands would
go to the preferred sachem candidate of the authorities.53 Already in 1721, declaring that only
a quarter of the acreage of land previously entailed to the Mohegans from Mason, lands that
were now wedged or “sequestered” between two English towns, was “sufficient” for their
uses, everything else was stripped away by action of the Connecticut General Court.54 And
the new appointed “guardians” ruled in specific instances nearly always on behalf of white
claimants on Indian lands. Thereafter, the colonial (and later the state authorities) of
Connecticut intervened repeatedly in the internal affair of the Mohegans to try to make sure
that their leadership would remain a compliant one, though the Mohegans continued in
various ways to resist the white political imposition and land theft – filing further complaints
and appeals with the Crown and at one point in 1736 making as their own choice of a sachem,
a woman (who was perhaps not coincidentally named “Anne” after the former English
monarch) in repudiation of the colonially-sanctioned one who was deemed not defending
Indian rights well enough.55 To bolster their case – which they, too, appealed to the Crown
and eventually won just prior to the outbreak of the American Revolution -- the anti-Mason

53 Charles Jeremy Hoadly, ed., The Public Records of the Colony of Connecticut, vol. 7, From May,
1726, to May 1735 Inclusive (Hartford: Case, Lockwood & Brainard, 1873), 300.

54 Charles Jeremy Hoadly, ed., The Public Records of the Colony of Connecticut, vol. 6, From May,
1717, to October, 1725, with the Council Journal from May, 1717, to April, 1726 (Hartford: Case, Lockwood
& Brainard, 1872), 218, 256; Frances Manwaring Caulkins, History of Norwich, Connecticut. From its
possession by the Indians to the year 1866 (Hartford, 1874), 161; Frances Manwaring Caulkins, History of New
London, Connecticut from the First Survey of the Coast in 1612, to 1860 (New London CT: H. D. Utley, 1895),
431.

55 Amy E. Den Ouden, Beyond Conquest: Native Peoples and the Struggle for History in New England
(Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 120-141.
faction in Connecticut rewrote history to try to delegitimize the Mohegans as never having been a sovereign nation who ever aided England to any meaningful extent in its wars. They portrayed the Mohegans as being no more than naive pawns of the Masons, which was clearly far from having been the case.\(^5\)

The Narragansett sachems also tried, and for a while were successful, in leveraging the hierarchical political structures of the newcomers to preserve their territorial sovereignty. Narragansett sovereignty had been under attack since just after the Pequot War. In 1638 in the Treaty of Hartford, the Narragansetts had been forced to agree to allow Connecticut authorities to mediate disputes between them and the Mohegans. If either side refused, the English were entitled to compel whatever their decision might be against them or the Mohegans.\(^5\) The Narragansetts, eager to go to war against Uncas to avenge the Mohegan murder of their chief sachem, Miantanomo, grated under these restrictions. In 1644, at a time when other Indians sachems, Massachusett, Pawtucket and Nimpuk, one after another, were submitting themselves to the rule of the Puritans in Boston and the Narragansetts were under pressure to do likewise, the Narragansett chief sachems Pessicus and Canonicus sent a letter instead to the King in England and submitted the Narragansetts to his authority “upon condition of his Majesty’s royal protection, and righting us of in what wrong is. . . .” They then boldly informed the authorities of the Bay that they, as equals to the Puritans before the King, would not be complying with a summons to appear before them in Boston. Moreover, they informed the Puritans they were planning to go to war upon Uncas’s Mohegans regardless and

\(^{56}\) Ibid, 19-119.

that, in the words an astounded Governor Winthrop confided to his private journal, “they marvelled why we should be against it; that they had put themselves under the government and protection of the king of England, and were now become our fellow-subjects, and therefor if any difference should fall between us and them, it ought to be referred to him.” When Massachusetts emissaries were dispatched to Narragansett country to speak directly with the sachems to clarify if the letter, written by whites associated with the Gortonians, a group of Massachusetts religious exiles in Rhode Island, truly represented their views, they were made to wait and humble themselves for two hours in the rain outside of Canonicus’s wigwam.58

This smart gambit was interrupted by the Civil War in England, and it was not until after Restoration that the Narragansetts in 1663 could effectively renew their request to put themselves under the protection of the distant English monarch. King Charles II obliged them in 1665 through his commissioners who were investigating the Puritans and trying to reestablish loyalty to the Crown in New England and who met with Pessicus and other Narragansetts. The claims of Massachusetts and Connecticut to the land were rejected, and the Narragansett country was turned into the “King’s Province” under the same officials as Rhode Island. The sachems received coats and sent the King presents “as tokens of their surrender.” This situation lasted until King Philip’s War when the Narragansetts joined the rebels. By being on the losing side, they lost whatever political leverage they once held. Having once submitted to the King, they could now be branded and treated as “traitors.”59


Thereafter many of the surviving Narragansetts regrouped on the reservation of the sachem Ninigret’s closely-related Niantics – who had elected to stay neutral throughout the war (and who then took on the Narragansett name). Ninigret’s son, also named “Ninigret,” submitted himself in 1705 to Rhode Island authorities, who convinced him somehow, without compensation, to turn over to the colony all of the remaining unsold tribal holdings – some 135,000 acres altogether – except for a reserved eight-mile square which was deemed a “sufficient competency” of land for the Indians to live upon. Ninigret II was susceptible to drink and accordingly seems to have realized that quite possibly he was not necessarily the best protector for his people’s interests. So in 1717, he asked the legislature to appoint three “overseers” to lease out the Indian lands. The history from there on is painfully similar to what happened in Massachusetts and Connecticut – i.e., lands continued to leak from Indian ownership under white “guardianship.” Specifically, in Rhode Island, the extravagant personal consumption habits of several sachems (rather than their interests in redistributing goods), led to major indebtedness and, since sachems neither worked nor had an income, the necessity of selling off pieces of land. Internal factional squabbles over control of the sachemdom intensified. To try to stem the loss of reservation land, some Indians argued on behalf of tribal ownership of the land rather than by the sachem as an individual. Yet, by mid-century, the white trustees and attorneys for the Indians had ended up with some of the prime real estate on the reservation. Just prior to the Revolution, many Narragansetts, along with other New England Indians seeking a new home where they hoped they would not be molested by whites, trekked west to join the communitarian pan-Indian Brothertown project

of Mohegan minister, Samson Occum, in the Oneida Country of New York. Then, following the Revolution, the majority of the Narragansetts who had stayed behind ceded overall control of their affairs, out of desperation at the ongoing chronic tribal factionalism, to Rhode Island officials. In these ways, loss of political sovereignty also meant eventual loss of a landbase.

King Philip’s War was a watershed in the loss of sovereignty and the imposition of “governmentality” on the New England Indians. As we have seen in the previous chapter, there were various underlying causes to the Indian rebellion such as the growing loss of lands to the English and sachem indebtedness to whites, but the immediate cause of the outbreak of war involved questions of sovereignty. The catalyst was the arrest, trial and execution by Plymouth authorities of three Wampanoags accused of murdering the Praying Indian, John Sassamon (Wassausmon). The bilingual and literate Sassamon, who had been educated at Harvard, acted as interpreter and witness in many of the Indian land deals. (See our Indian Deeds Database on the accompanying CD-ROM). Metacom and other Wampanoags had come to believe – rightly, it seems – that Sassamon was playing his own devious, self-seeking game with the whites, taking advantage of the other Indians’ inability to read and write English. Metacom personally suspected that Sassamon had drafted the will he had asked Sassamon to draft for him in such a way as to make Sassamon its main beneficiary. Whether

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60 Paul R Campbell and Glenn W LaFantasie, “Scattered to the Winds of Heaven: Narragansett Indians, 1676-1880,” Rhode Island History 37, no. 3 (1978): 67-83; Ruth Wallis Herndon and Ella Wilcox Sekatua, “The Right to a Name: The Narragansett People and Rhode Island Officials in the Revolutionary Era,” in American Encounters: Natives and Newcomers from European Contact to Indian Removal, 1500-1850, ed. Peter C. Mancall and James Hart Merrell, 2000, 426-451; John Wood Sweet, Bodies Politic: Negotiating Race in the American North, 1730-1830 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 15-57; John Russell Bartlett, ed., Records of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, in New England, vol. 4 (Providence: Knowles, Anthony & Co, 1859), 55, 61-63, 220-221, 236. Other Narragansetts removed from Rhode Island west to Wisconsin Territory during the 1840s. The original Narragansett Reservation with 922 remaining acres was terminated by the state of Rhode Island in 1880 for the payment to the tribal council of $5,000 from the sale of the land which was divided among the tribal members. The current Narragansett Reservation of 1800 acres in Charlestown, Rhode Island, consists of lands returned to the Indians in 1978 as the result of a suit for tribal recognition and a Federal Lands Claim for lands illegally taken back in 1880.
a decision was made at the top leadership level to execute Sassamon or whether some Indians took care of him on their own initiative or whether his death – the body was found at a hole in the ice of a pond next to his fishing and fowling equipment – was accidental and thus the trial and execution of the accused murderers was a total miscarriage of justice is a matter of some uncertainty. In any event, as the legal scholar Yasuhide Kawashima has shown in his meticulous analysis of the case, Metacom a few years previously had already been subjected to an humiliating personal interrogation in front of the Plymouth authorities about whether he was loyal to them. The Pilgrim Fathers were no longer making any pretense, as they had done when they needed with Metacom’s father Ossamequin, that an Indian sachem could be a political equal of the English polity. The seizure and trials of Metacom’s subjects must have struck him as the final straw. The rebellion broke out days after the last execution. Indians throughout New England rose up in arms to take back their lost lands and to reclaim their lost sovereignty. The war was, in modern terminology, a “national liberation movement” waged against Western colonialism – one of the earliest of many to come in the centuries ahead.61

With the uprising as opportunity but arguing military necessity, Massachusetts clamped down further on Indians living within its jurisdiction. At the beginning of the war, five hundred of the Praying Indians who remained faithful and had not gone off to join up with King Philip’s forces were nonetheless forcibly rounded up and marched off to Boston by the Puritans. They were interned on desolate Deer Island in Boston harbor and ordered not

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to leave under pains of being shot. Many perished of hunger and disease before the survivors of this ordeal were allowed off the island in May 1676. Even so, there was no return to the former status quo. A law passed in May 1677, restricted all Indians, praying and pagan Indians alike, unless they happened to be apprentices or indentured servants residing in English households, to only four of the old praying towns – Natick, Punkapaug, Hassanamesit, and Wamaseit – “where they may be continually inspected.” A list was to be made of all Indian men, women and children at least once a year. The number of towns where Indians could live was reduced again to three in 1681. Any Indians who refused to relocate to those three were to be imprisoned or sent to the house of corrections until they agreed to comply. Then, in 1690, in the context of King William’s War, the space permissible for Indians to live and work in was reduced once more to the narrow dimensions of two towns only, Natick and Punkapaug. To make sure that nobody strayed from them, twice daily count-outs like in a prison were to be conducted under military orders. Other wartime enactments by the General Court mandated that Indians who were gone hunting in the woods with a gun were required to carry at all times, and had to produce whenever stopped and asked, a certificate from Gookin or one of the other top colonial military authorities attesting that they were actually “friend Indians.” Indians in plantations west of a road connecting Boston with Rehoboth were to be “removed” east of it and made to stay put. Those found still west of the road after a certain date were to “be deemed and accounted as enemies.” Finally, a sort of free-fire zone was created along the Connecticut River in a swath file miles east of

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it and twenty miles west. Indians found in that zone were to be fair game.  

The degree to which such restrictions on Indian freedom of movement could be enforced, particularly when there were still few whites, if any, at that time in whole vast areas the central and western Massachusetts, is seriously open to doubt, and the above laws generally expired once the wartime emergencies were out of the way. Still, the overall tendencies towards enclosure of the Indians within rules and regulations not of their own making and their treatment as not even second-class citizens of the Puritan commonwealths, even with the all-essential church membership, are quite clear. (Indians were not granted citizenship and voting rights in Massachusetts until 1869, an action which was no blessing, in as much as Indian lands previously held in common were turned by the same Act into holdings by individuals in fee simple and were often lost to white buyers as a consequence.)

Similarly clear within the large body of legal enactment involving Indians and the whites who had dealings with them, is the strong wish by the English authorities to maintain superiority not only in the means of violence but also economically. To keep Indians weak and dependent, not only was every effort made to control the access of Indians to firearms and their repair — the first law to that effect had preceded everything else in the way of Indian laws in 1630 and violators among the whites were brought to court and punished — but laws were also enacted in the 1650's to try to keep horses and “any boat, skiffs or any greater vessel” out

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of the hands of the Indians. The latter enactment was said to be justified by “the necessity of restraining the Indians from whatsoever may be a means to disturb our peace and quiet” but it certainly made it that much harder for any Indians to compete with whites in the fishing trade.\(^{65}\) Fearful of how they might employ such skills, Indians along with “negroes” were prohibited from taking part in town militia training days.\(^{66}\)

In spite of all these many repeated efforts at control since the 1630s, Cotton Mather expressed concern in his diary “that our Christianized Indians, need a better acquaintance with the lawes of the Province against punishable wickedness.” \(^{67}\) To remedy that perceived lack, Mather in 1705 came up with his own set of commandments for use among the Indians, twenty commandments altogether, translated into the Massachusett vernacular and called “The Hatchets, to hew down the Tree of Sin.” Murder, concealing the death of a bastard child, rape, buggery and having more than one husband or wife (not uncommon among Indian sachems) were punishable by death. Indians who committed adultery were to be punished by sitting on the gallows for an hour with a rope around their neck followed by scourging and

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\(^{66}\) A law to include Indians and blacks in the militia training had been enacted in 1652, but that was replaced with another law excluding them in 1656. Nathaniel Bradstreet Shurtleff, ed., *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay*, vol. 3, 1644-1657, 5 vols. (Boston: William White, 1854), 267-269, 397-398.

\(^{67}\) Cotton Mather, *Diary of Cotton Mather, 1681-1724*, vol. 1, 2 vols., *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society* (Boston: The Society, 1911), 511-512.
then the offender was required to wear a letter “A” in plain view on their clothing. Lesser crimes brought sentences of fines, scourging, time in service, or time sitting in the pillory.68 Whether Cotton Mather’s commandments were ever implemented is not known. But, starting in 1647, in another effort at training Indians in presumably superior, “civilized” English ways, special Indian Courts for taking up civil and criminal legal issues arising among the Indians themselves, except in capital or other important cases, had been set up in Massachusetts by the decision of the General Court. These courts were to meet quarterly in each village of Christianized Indians, with the more minor cases being delegated to monthly courts under the rule of the cooperating Indian sachems, who were coopted as justices of the peace with powers of enforcement for the decisions of both types of court. At their discretion, the sachems could appoint other Indians with police powers to serve warrants and execute judgments rendered by the courts. Courts on the county level, to which an English magistrate was added, could be constituted if necessary for purposes of hearing appeals, and decisions could then be appealed to the colonial Courts of Assistants (which was the first court of resort for capital and other more important cases involving Indians). This system of partiallyreturned Indian self-government in legal matters endured until 1694, when a governmental reorganization took place following the colony’s success in 1692 in securing a new royal charter. From that point forward until the 19th Century, white “guardians” were appointed who acted as justices of the peace over all the civil and criminal affairs pertaining to the Indians. And, as before with Gookin, there was an overall Superintendent of Indian Affairs

for the whole colony.\textsuperscript{69}

The Plymouth Colony likewise set up its own system of Indian Courts for the “better regulateing” of the Indians “and that they may be brought to live orderly soberly and diligently,” but they did not do so until 1682. Coming in the aftermath of King Philip’s War, this was a more comprehensive monitoring system. Each town where Indians lived was to have a paid person appointed by the colony as overseer of the Indians with English and Indian constables under his command. For every ten Indian males, one man was to be chosen as a “tithingman” to watch over the others and to report any violations that came to his attention. A court constituted of the overseer and the tithingmen was empowered to make rulings on any cases involving Indians and other Indians, except for capital crimes and those related to land titles, with the overseer retaining a veto (in which event, the case was remanded to the regular colonial court). Indians had to pay taxes and were not allowed to move from one place to another without gaining permission in writing from their overseer. (The latter rule was supposedly to prevent them from living in idleness and spending their time “to Noe Profitt.”) Violators discovered outside their home location without such written permission were to be fined or given a severe whipping.\textsuperscript{70} In 1685, an additional set of Plymouth enactments criminalized Indian religious observances and made it punishable, if an Indian, to be found walking about at night without a good reason. If unable to provide one, that was deemed admissible as \textit{ipso facto} evidence of culpability for any criminal activity that might have


occurred overnight in the neighborhood. Relations had come a long ways from the early
days when Tisquantum had walked into New Plymouth, situated on the Indian town of his
birth, and had succored the hapless colonists -- much to their thankfulness back at that time.

Unlike Massachusetts and Plymouth, Connecticut did not create a set of separate
Indian courts, but it did evolve its own quite extensive repertoire of restrictive Indians Laws.
Starting in the early 1640s with prohibitions against Indians entering English houses or
“be[ing] discovered by the Watch in the night within any of the Plantations of this
Jurisdiction,” Indians had their spaces of free motion curtailed piece by piece and their
“unruly” behaviors regulated. While Indians at first were not disallowed from living in
English towns, they had to be “willing to submit to the ordering and government of the
Englishe.” On the other hand, it seems some colonists were finding Indians liberties more
attractive than their own, and it was thus felt necessary by the authorities to prohibit any from
“tak[ing] up their abode with the Indeans in a prophane course of life.” In regards to issues
arising over livestock, “where any Company of Indians doe sett downe neere any English
plantacons that they shall declare whoe is their Sachem or Cheife” and the sachem was made
legally responsible himself for any damages. In 1660, Indians were excluded by law from
dwelling within a quarter mile of any English town and in 1663 from “night-walking” in
towns. In 1667, Indians were prohibited from laboring or playing on the Sabbath “within
the English limits and on the English lands,” and the lawbreakers were to be fined or

71 The Book of the General Laws of the Inhabitants of the Jurisdiction of New-Plimouth (Boston:
Samuel Green, 1685), 37-41.

72 James Hammond Trumbull, ed., The Public Records of the Colony of Connecticut, Prior to the
Union with New Haven Colony, May, 1665, vol. 1, 15 vols. (Hartford: Brown & Parsons, 1850), 19 46-47, 73,
78, 106, 139-140, 350, 408. The 1638 law was reaffirmed in the Connecticut Code of Laws in 1650 but
amended so that Indian could sue for like damages. Ibid, 529.
sentenced to sit for an hour in the stocks as a punishment. As in Massachusetts Bay and New Plymouth, Indians were either enclosed by laws and regulations not of their making or were pushed out from lands where their ancestors had lived for thousands of years.

Despite being “supervised” and more and more hedged in by the growing white population around them, the remaining organized Indian enclaves in the Massachusetts colony (which absorbed the Plymouth colony and its Indians in 1692), were able to maintain a margin of autonomy during the first decades of the 17th Century, although Indian life-ways were now often a mix of the English and the aboriginal. Along with the surviving Praying Indian towns of Natick, Hassanamisco (Grafton) and Punkapoag (Stoughton), a new six-mile-square Indian town was authorized by the General Court in the southwestern corner of the colony at Stockbridge in 1735. This, too, was the result of a white missionary effort. The core group at Stockbridge were Mahicans from the Hudson Valley, but the town became a site for Indian regroupment from around southern New England. Cape Cod, Martha’s Vineyard and Nantucket which had been little touched by King Philip’s War -- and were locations somewhat more isolated from the recurrence of epidemic diseases that proved so devastating for Indians – also retained significant Indian populations and communities. But pressures intensified in 1746, when the Massachusetts General Court passed yet one more act for “the well regulating of the Indian natives of this province in their several plantations.” Three English men were to be appointed as guardians for each of the eight remaining Indian

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communities or clusters of communities. (See Google Earth file on accompanying CD-ROM.) The guardians were now legally empowered to take over lands of which they determined the Indians were not making good use – after allotting lands “sufficient for their particular improvement” -- and lease it out to white farmers, with the proceeds supposedly going to support sick and indigent Indians. All of the above was put at the total discretion of the guardians -- without any say-so by the Indians themselves. Some guardians seem to have been reasonably well-meaning and honest and were true to the intentions of the act, but others were clearly not, running up extensive charges, squandering the natural resources on the Indian reservations for their own benefit, and facilitating the permanent loss to whites of the Indian lands. Mainly, though, Indians continued to lose their lands in a vicious cycle as a result of indebtedness as their populations aged and shrank and the enclaves became less and less self-sustaining forcing them to sell whatever land they still had remaining often for their own bare and immediate subsistence.  

The tale of the Pequots in tenaciously trying to hold onto some of their cultural identify, political sovereignty and land is a truly amazing one. Following the genocidal Pequot War, the conquering English had forbidden any further use of the Pequot name! The surviving Pequots whom the English had tried at first to put under the control of the Mohegans, Narrigansetts, and Niantics (after the English took off some captives and slaves to Boston for themselves), if they had not fled to remoter parts, managed to pull back together some significant portions of their scattered remnants within a few years time. Although harassed by some colonial authorities and settlers, some Pequots soon restablished villages at several

locations: Massatuxet (Westerly, Rhode Island) and a peninsula at Noank on the west side of
the mouth of the Mystic River. The United Colonies in 1655 recognized the Pequots at these
two locales, under conditions of their submission for being “justly conquered” and of their
becoming tributaries to the English government. The Pequots were also required to adhere
to a rigorous set of Puritan laws, including not blaspheming or profaning the Sabbath, not
practicing “witchcraft,” not committing adultery and the annual payment of tribute, and Indian
“governors” were now appointed for them. In 1661, two English “overseers” were added who
decided legal cases, except capital ones, and to whom the Indians could appeal decisions made
by the governors. Subsequently, the Pequots put in for additional lands. While waiting, they
were forced to rent some of their former lands, now occupied by whites, in order to plant corn
and for which they paid with their labor. Finally, in 1683, following the resolution of disputes
between Massachusetts and Connecticut over who now rightly controlled the land and many
other squabbles involving land speculators and foot-dragging townspeople, Connecticut
allotted the eastern Pequot band with 280 acres in Stonington, purchasing it for them from the
white landowner. In 1665, the western Pequot band had been allotted 1,737 acres of land at
Mashantucket (Groton, now Lenyard), although few chose to remove to this landlocked spot
from Noank until their rights to come back there periodically for clamming, fishing and
fowling as they were accustomed to do was confirmed in the early eighteenth century. Once
the lords of a large region of central and eastern Connecticut of more than 500 square miles
who could field 4,000 warriors and able to collect tribute over a wider region from the River
Indians on the middle Connecticut and among those Indians across the Sound on Long Island,
the Pequots were now reduced to several hundred persons living on a few hundreds acres of
not-very-good land, which they held onto as tenaciously as they could but which was not
economically viable for more than a meager subsistence. They raised crops, hunted, fished and practiced some animal husbandry but by the nineteenth century were requiring large quantities food to be brought in from outside the reservation. Liquor was also apparently in an almost unquenchable demand for some. As a consequence of their dependency on things they could not supply for themselves, quite a few Pequots had to sell their labor-power – with some males signing aboard whaling voyages, as memorialized by the name of Capt. Ahab’s ill-fated ship, “The Pequod,” in Melville’s *Moby Dick* – or with women going out to seek employment as servants in English households and raising some cash by hawking handmade baskets, brooms and woven mats to whites from village to village and at the seashore. As another form of gainful employment and to demonstrate their loyalty, some Pequots fought on the same side as the Puritans against the great pan-tribal rebellion led by Metacom, and Pequot warriors participated on the side of the British and New Englanders during the French

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and Indian War and later took part in the American Revolution as well. In 1731, the Pequots at Mashatunket, at the request of their sachem because of difficulties they were having in deflecting white encroachments and the theft by whites of their timber and firewood, were subjected to the rule of white guardians. Again, the guardians were supposed to honorably – and presumably in the best Christian manner – protect and encourage the interests of the Indians. Yet, the upshot of white guardianship was the loss of more lands from the Pequots. Still some of the Pequots managed to hold on against despite this – and threats made by the state more recently to “terminate” them – and were finally able to make a major comeback in the 20th Century.

Other native peoples who awoke to find themselves and their homes now inscribed within the boundaries of the colony of Connecticut (and the earlier colony of New Haven which Connecticut absorbed in 1662), Indians who were generally weaker than the Pequots and Mohegans, were also subsumed by the “governmentality” and Political-Military Network of the newcomers. The Quinnipiacs immediately to the west of the Pequots, their numbers severely reduced by disease and being beat-up on from time to time by the much stronger Pequots and Mohawks, ceded most of their lands to the New Haven planters right after the


Pequot War in 1638, reserving to themselves only about 1200 acres on the east side of the harbor, plus hunting and fishing privileges outside of it. (Theirs may have been the country’s very first Indian “reservation.”) The Quinnipiacs also agreed to respect the Sabbath and to follow a set of other rules when amongst the English and with regards to English-owned livestock. In return, what they hoped for was protection from their enemies – although this was not promised, except for the Quinnipiacs to take refuge in the English plantation and be defended if “they be affrighted.” The Indians coming under the authority of New Haven, where orthodox Puritans ruled, found themselves subjected to lessons in the most Old Testament forms of ritualized vengeance and punishment. In their original 1638 “Articles of Agreement,” the Quinnipiac signatories had agreed to submit Indian offenders “to the consideration, censure and punishment of the English magestrate.” A Quinnipiac was tried by the New Haven General Court at its first session in October 1639 and beheaded for murdering a white man; an Indian who tried to help him escape was severely whipped. In another case in 1646, a Quinnipiac man Pawquash was severely whipped for the offense of speaking blasphemy of Jesus – for saying that Jesus’s body had really rotted and maintaining that he had seen an Indian ascend into heaven – in addition to being fined for the earthly offense of leaving “the oyster shell field gate” open. Quinnipiac warriors, as with the Pequots and Mohegans, were enlisted to fight against King Philip and in the later imperial conflicts with the French for control of North America, but this loyal service availed them little. During the first decades of the 18th Century, the lands reserved for the Quinnipiac to use were steadily encroached upon and sold off to whites by the shrinking number of Indians. The last thirty acres of their “planting land” left their hands for good in 1773, as the last of the Quinnipiacs
removed to other places.\textsuperscript{79}

To the west of the Quinnipiacs along the coast of Long Island Sound and inland from the mouth of the Housatonic River to the area around the Housatonic’s confluence with the Naugatuck River were various bands of the Paugussetts. Several of them in the vicinity of what became the towns of Stratford and Fairfield ceded much of their lands to expansion-minded whites led by the Deputy Governor of Connecticut, Roger Ludlow, in the immediate aftermath of the Pequot War as the shock waves it created spread far and wide across the region. The English looked upon this as “conquered land” by virtue of the people having been tributaries formerly of the defeated Pequots – some of the fleeing Pequots were tracked down and killed here – and they imposed an annual tribute of furs, wampum, and corn on the Indians for protection against the Mohawks. But the Indians tried to retain some bits of land here and there, especially their cleared planting fields. The Pequonnock band complained of encroachment on their settlement at Golden Hill on the west side of the Housatonic River where they had a hundred wigwams and refused to budge. In 1659, after an investigation into the conditions of the Indian cessations of 1638 (which the Indians challenged them to prove), the General Court granted the Pequonnocks, until the tribe was extinguished, the “Golden Hill Reservation,” which constituted of a munificent eighty acres, “surrendered” to them reluctantly by the town of Stratford (who wanted adjacent Fairfield to have to bear the cost

of taking care of the Indians). The Indians (not the whites), after agreeing to reform “their former irregular carriage and misdemeanor”, had to promise to keep their reservation properly surrounded by fences in good repair because of the ever-present livestock issues. Aside from this one official reservation, the other remaining Indian lands in this vicinity were sold off to whites by the last decades of the century. Greedy local whites also wanted to get their clutches on Golden Hill, but the General Court in 1678 confirmed the right of the Indians to Golden Hill “until they should relinquish their right publicly” and, at the request of the Indians, provided two small additional tracts of lands in 1680. But the trespassing and harassment of the Indians continued unabated. In 1763, the handful of remaining residents complained to the General Court of neighboring whites entering and pulling down their wigwams. This time, the General Court pressured the Indians to agree to sell all but twelve of the 80 acres for thirty bushels of Indian corn and £3 worth of blankets and the receipt of a useless eight acre woodlot. Still some of the Indians managed to hang is spite of being under the rule of corrupt white overseers who sold what was left and pocketed much of the proceeds. Today what the Golden Hill Indians have left is a reservation of a mere one-quarter acre of land in Trumbull, Connecticut.

Rhode Island authorities also enacted laws to establish rules and bounds for Indians, but, given the influences of Roger Williams and the Quakers, these were generally less

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onerous in the earlier years – until slavery became more important to that colony’s economy. The exception was a 1659 law authorizing the sale of Indians into foreign slavery if they were found guilty of committing theft or property damage worth twenty shilling or more. Unlike the other New England colonies, there were never any laws enacted in Rhode Island to impose Christian or “civilized” standards of belief or behavior on the Indians. Moreover, as we have seen in some detail above, the situation in Rhode Island was different in as much as the sagacious Narragansett sachems, with some advice from sympathetic whites, were able to make a clever end-run appealing to the Crown around repeated efforts by the Puritans, particularly those of Massachusetts who claimed Rhode Island, to force them to submit their sovereignty to them. Still, as we have seen, the upshot was basically the same there.

The expanding Political-Military Network of the colonists and the correspondingly shrinking Political-Military Network of the indigenous peoples, which we have traced above through the imposition of “governmentality” on the Indians is most clearly visible “from the air” not through looking at the granting of new towns and buying land from the Indians – whose lands might be used for speculative purposes and which might not be settled for years – but if we map out over time the frontier forts and garrison houses constructed by the colonists – sometimes on or near the sites of former Indian forts. (See Google Earth file on CD-ROM.) As we have seen, these forts were often centers out of which peaceful trade was conducted. But they were primarily walled garrisons of soldiers to protect the frontier from “skulking” (a racist term, if there ever was one) Indians, who periodically returned from exile – many of the Indians from Maine, New Hampshire and what became Vermont withdrew to

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Canada and joined groups there like the St. Francis Indians – to their former homes to make guerilla raids on the occupiers in the long-running war for control of the region that did not end with King Philip’s War but kept on until 1763 with the conquest of New France. No matter how sincerely some of the Puritans like the good reverend Eliot tried to convert the Indians to English ways, this is a history mainly of the taking away of sovereignty through violent processes.

Thus, the Indians’ land and liberty had been taken away piece by piece, year by year, through the extension of English boundaries and legal enactments of various sorts. It should be acknowledged that behind this history, there was no overall plan or program or “conspiracy.” New England government officials concerned with the success of their vaunted City on a Hill and, as that utopian vision faded, social stability; profit-hungry investors and speculators; farmers seeking land to farm in order to achieve a “competency” for their families now and in the future; missionaries on the prowl for heathen souls to save did not invariably see eye to eye about relations with the Indians. The Crown and the Board of Trade in England also had their particular viewpoints and objectives. But the cumulative historical effects of the decisions made by all of these actors, pursuing their varied interests within certain social structures, was that the Indians were removed from most the land – that is, separated from their means of production and put at the mercy of whites. Still, the Indians could not help but remember how, not so long before, they had been sovereign over the whole extent of this land and, with the exception of some captives, had no need to work for anyone but themselves. Some still tried to exercise their freedom regardless of white-established boundaries and restrictions and within the more sharing customary world-view and mind-set that went along with the mode of production and social reproduction of their ancestors. Nearing the end of
the 18th Century, the long-term Natick minister, Rev. Stephen Badger, fielded a series of questions about Indian piety, longevity, etc. from the Corresponding Secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Mission successes, Badger admitted, had been “very small,” due in part to the “vicious manners” rather than positive examples of unscrupulous white neighbors who encouraged the Indians to get into debt in order to lay hands on their lands. Badger, who looked quite critically upon so-called Indian “indolence,” lack of regular habits of industry and widespread intemperance, further observed, “Indians are also strangely disposed and addicted to wander from place to place, and to make excursions into various parts of the country, and sometimes at no small distance from their proper homes, without any thing on hand for their support in their perambulations; for this, they depend, with unanxious concern, upon the charity and compassion of others. Some of them, after an absence of near twenty years, have returned to their native home.” Others, with sufferance from friendly whites, remained living where they had been living all along or persisted somehow outside the horizon of consciousness of most of the English. Thus some Indians still asserted their freedom.

What was the relationship of the political and the economic structures and processes? At this point, we can see some of the drawbacks of the world-system theoretical approach of Chase-Dunn and Hall. While there are some analytical advantages to identifying and looking separately at the spaces occupied by economic “networks” and political “networks” as they changed and developed over time, the economic and the political, as Marx long ago pointed out, are intimately interconnected (with the economic arguably being determinative in

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Althusser’s famous “last instance”). Wallerstein, in his actual writing-up of how the history of the Modern World-System happened, traces both the economic and political developments – albeit mainly those taking place at the upper core level – in close conjunction with each other. A state society had considerable advantages over non-state actors in terms of power at it could deploy. With the history we have been dealing with here that took place on the 17th Century cutting-edge of the Modern World-System’s expansion, we can readily see how Indians would not have lost so many of their lands to the white invaders/settlers without the intervention of the colonial state apparatus reinforced, if needed, by support and resupply from the Mother Country. These were never stand-alone economic processes. The same is true with regards to the economic transformation that turned many of the remaining Indians in New England – those who had not fled or been killed outright – from being largely self-sufficient household producers into proletarians. This is the subject our next and final chapter on the relations between Native Americans in this region of ours and the Modern World-System.
Chapter Six: Indians as “Servants” in a World Economy

Now while we sum up this subject; does it not appear that the cause of all wars, from beginning to end, was, and is for the want of good usage? That the whites have always been the aggressors, and the wars, cruelties and blood shed, is a job of their own seeking, and not the Indians? Did you ever know of Indians hurting those who was kind to them? No. We have a thousand witnesses to the contrary. Yea, every male and female declare it to be the fact. We often hear of the wars breaking out upon the frontiers, and it is because the same spirit reigns there that reigned here in New England; and wherever there are any Indians, that spirit still reigns; and at present, there is no law to stop it. What, then, is to be done; let every friend of the Indians now seize the mantle of Liberty, and throw it over those burning elements that has spread with such fearful rapidity, and at once extinguish them forever. It is true, that now and then a feeble voice has been raised in our favor. Yes, we might speak of distinguished men, but they fall so far short in the minority, that it is heard but at a small distance. We want trumpets that sound like thunder, and men to act as though they were going to war with those corrupt and degrading principles that rob one of all rights, merely because he is ignorant, and of a little different color. Let us have principles that will give every one his due; and then shall wars cease, and the weary find rest. Give the Indian his rights, and you may be assured war will cease.

William Apess, Eulogy on King Philips

According to the neo-Marxist articulation-of-modes-of-production scenario – one that had been formulated principally from West African anthropological case-studies -- capitalism in its external colonial form sometimes preserves and bends to its own uses pre-existing modes of production that it encounters. Peoples on the periphery of the Modern World-System, some of them anyhow, may also find benefits from the early stages of such a relationship. We have seen how this was definitely the case with the fur trade in colonial New England. In the longer run, however, the general tendency of the capitalist mode of production is, as Marx and Engels predicted in 1848, one of simplifying class relationships into that of two great opposing camps, an exploiting bourgeoisie and a exploited proletariat. In one part of the world after another, capitalism has been separating people living on the land from the means of production and, if they are to keep body and soul together, compelling them to labor for others, their new masters. This final chapter of the dissertation explores how those circumstances befell the indigenous population of New England, particularly their defeat
in King Philip’s War. Wallerstein’s World-Systems Theory, as we have described it in Chapter One, would argue that, in a region being peripheralized in the overall international division of labor, many people of that region would fall into coercive, not free, forms of labor. And, as we shall see, that was indeed the case in New England. A good many poor Indians, many more than is generally acknowledged in the telling of this history, having largely lost their lands, became “servants” and slaves for whites – although some Indians also became wage-workers who were nominally free to make their own choices of white masters. In either case, their lives and labors were incorporated and reshaped within the structures of the capitalist accumulation. Mainly, due to the limitations of the sources, we will be looking at the histories of these men and women in the composite. But, fortunately, here and there some aspects of their individual stories can be teased out of the sources and recovered as part of a truthful “revisionist” history that needs to be told, whether all the potential listeners want to hear it or not, about what really went into the making of colonial New England.

**Trying to Make Us into Their Servants!**

In 1657, the Rev. John Eliot, was attending a council of Puritan elders in Hartford, Connecticut where the church was rent by a rancorous theological controversy pertaining to church membership in the run-up to the Half-Way Covenant. “Pacification” had been sought. Along with ministering to his own home church in Roxbury, Eliot had been spending considerable time missionizing to the Indians west of Boston, remnants of the disease-depleted Massachuset and some Nipmucks, and he had already managed in gathering several towns of “Praying Indians” beginning with one at Natick in 1650. Always alert for souls among the heathen to whom he might bring the Light of the Gospel and not wishing to forfeit
a god-granted opportunity in a fresh locale, Eliot took time out from the high-level ministerial gathering to make an address to some of the Indians in the bands living thereabouts known to the English as “Podunks.” These Indians had been persuaded “by some of the principal inhabitants” of Hartford to give the preacher’s by now well-practiced conversion pitch a hearing. Eliot, who had been tutoring himself in the Massachuset tongue, “spoke to them in their own language, and, when he had finished, put the question whether they were willing to accept of Jesus Christ, the Savior, as he had now been presented to them.” To Eliot’s dismay, “the sachems and old men scornfully and angrily answered back, ‘No.’ The English, they said, had already taken away their land, and now they were only attempting to make the Podunks their servants.”

Whether there was ever such a premeditated plan on the part of whites, the connection was obvious to the Indians: Without land on which to grow crops, hunt and fish, they would have no other means of support than having to enter a servile position to the whites, which as they well knew from the Pequot War, some other Indians had already been forced into doing. The Podunks – the word in Algonquin refers to a marshy meadow, not an ethnicity – were one of a number of small interrelated and loosely-allied “River Indian” clans who lived at Nowass (present-day Windsor, Connecticut) around the confluence of the Farmington and Connecticut Rivers. Not long after the Puritans had arrived at Massachusetts Bay, the Podunks had solicited the English with promises of a supply of corn and riches in furs – their sachem

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Waginacut traveling all the way to Boston -- to come out to their territory and settle. In extending this invitation, the Indians were most likely hoping not only for easier access to exciting and useful exotic goods but also for allies to act as a counterweight against their more powerful Indian enemies. When some ill-prepared Bay colonists trekked to the Connecticut in 1635, the Podunks and other Indian thereabouts, even though their societies had been devastated by a horrendous smallpox epidemic, kept the newcomers alive over the harsh winter months by supplying them with "malt, and acorns, and grains." Deeds were quickly signed and sealed by the charitable Indians. In 1636, the Indians exchanged large swaths of land for coats and wampum on both sides of the river – on the western side six miles deep and some on the eastern side as far inland as a man could walk in a day. That the signers did not necessarily comprehend the exclusive nature of English property is shown by the fact that the Podunk sachem Arramament and others complained the next year to the General Court about their being excluded from their customary river-bottom planting lands at the Plymouth trading.

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2 John William De Forest, *History of the Indians of Connecticut from the Earliest Known Period to 1850* (Hartford: Wm. Jas. Hamersley, 1853), 55, 73-74; William DeLoss Love, *The Colonial History of Hartford Gathered from the Original Records* (Hartford: S. P., 1914), 91-94; Joseph Olcott Goodwin, *East Hartford: Its History and Traditions* (Hartford: Case, Lockwood & Brainard Co., 1879), 17-19; “Native Americans of Quinnehtukqut,” http://www.nativetech.org/Nipmuc/news/historicalsketch.html. For a discussion informed by anthropological theory on why these “River Indians” did not properly constitute true tribes, see Alfred A. Cave, *The Pequot War* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1996), 38-39. On the other hand, an early twentieth-century Hartford historian who had made a careful study of the primary sources argues that all these various River Indian bands belonged to the same overall tribe, Suckiaug (“black earth”), who were under a “grand sachem,” Sowheag, and later his son Sequassen. A further suggestion of the presence of a more hierarchical ranking structure is that the Dutch made their land purchase for a trading post on the future site of Hartford not from any local Indians directly but from the Pequot chief sachem on the premise that the Suckiaugs had been subdued by the Pequots through war and were thus tributary to them. William DeLoss Love, *The Colonial History of Hartford Gathered from the Original Records* (Hartford: S. P., 1914), 81-87. Another consideration is that it is quite possible that political system of these Indians was disrupted by the terrible smallpox epidemic that struck the middle Connecticut River in spring 1634, probably brought by the Dutch traders, and that this factor ought to be taken into account in assessing the structures present and active at the time of significant contact and dealings with Europeans.
Whatever the original expectations of the Podunks were for how relations would develop with the English, they soon found themselves dealing with a swelling stream of settlers occupying more and more land in the vicinity of their homes. And increasingly the Indians were being subjected to English jurisprudence. In 1653, Indians such as the Podunks who neighbored white settlements were required by the Connecticut General Court to demonstrate their “fidelity” by giving up their arms. In 1656, English authorities intervened in Indian affairs to try to arbitrate a dispute the Mohegan sachem Uncas was having with the Pondunk sachem Tontonimo. Some Pondunks had fought, as the Mohegans had done, on the side of the English against the Pequots in 1637 and had witnessed firsthand the fate that had befallen those defeated Indians – wholesale confiscation of their land and sale of the survivors into slavery. Perhaps fearing a similar future for the Podunks as landless laborers at the mercy of the whites, unless they were able to resist further physical and cultural encroachments, was what was on the minds of the Podunk elders when they so firmly rejected Eliot’s message. Thus it is not surprising that many of the Podunks would subsequently join

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Somewhat surprisingly, while there has been decent amount of attention paid by scholars and activists to the relentless and often remorseless dispossession of the Indians from their economic, cultural and spiritual land-base by the European invaders and settlers in New England and elsewhere – indeed, rightly so -- as well as attention paid to the symbiotic relations that sometimes developed and lasted for a time between the two sets of peoples via the fur trade, there was been relatively little attention given to the related transformation of many indigenous people into workers and the exploitation of their labor in various forms by the white settlers. Numerous Indians perished from diseases brought by the whites to which they had no or little resistance. Other Indians died in wars defending their homelands. Some New England Indians coming under pressure from whites removed to the West or went to Canada (much like whites whose farms were “enclosed” relocated from Scotland or Ireland to America in order to keep on with their more “traditional” ways of life) and escaped that fate, at least for the time being. However, a sizeable number of Indians remained behind in the East, including in New England, and survived at least in part by selling their labor-power, along with handicrafts, to the whites even as they struggled to maintain a toe-hold on their

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6 Ezra Stiles, *Extracts from the Itineraries and Other Miscellanies of Ezra Stiles*, ed. Franklin Bowditch Dexter (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1916), 135-136. At the time of Eliot’s visit, the Podunks still held onto some portion of their original lands. But these lands were steadily lost to land speculators. By the first decades of the eighteenth century, there was no land base left. Although a few Podunks remained in the vicinity of some of their old haunts until the 1760s, most had long removed elsewhere. Joseph Olcott Goodwin, *East Hartford: Its History and Traditions* (Hartford: Case, Lockwood & Brainard Co., 1879), 27-34; John William De Forest, *History of the Indians of Connecticut from the Earliest Known Period to 1850* (Hartford: Wm. Jas. Hamersley, 1853), 336; Royal Ralph Hinman, *A Catalogue of the Names of the Early Puritan Settlers of the Colony of Connecticut*, vol. 3 (Hartford: Case, Tiffany, 1852), 412. In an attempt to retain some measure of their former autonomy, some remnants of the Podunks seem to have merged with other remnant Connecticut River Indian groups and others to help form the Schaghticoke community at Kent, Connecticut. Some then moved on to Stockbridge, Massachusetts, some taking part in the Brotherton experiment in New York and finally ending up in Wisconsin where their descendants are living today. See Henry Reed Stiles, *The History of Ancient Windsor, Connecticut, Including East Windsor, South Windsor, and Ellington, Prior to 1768* (New York: C. B. Norton, 1859), 100-101; Joseph Olcott Goodwin, *East Hartford: Its History and Traditions* (Hartford: Case, Lockwood & Brainard Co., 1879), 37.
ever-shrinking land-base. Others were cast into outright chattel slavery. In these conditions as workers, they commonly found themselves laboring side-by-side with enslaved Africans -- whereby some fell in love and intermixing took place from which a creole sort of red-black culture came into being, a genetic and cultural heritage which is much evident with many southern New England Indians today.

The colonial records and old town histories are peppered with references to Indians in servile roles. Nevertheless, it is quite often a very challenging task for the historian to try to determine the actual status of such Indian “servants.” A certain Ben is described in the town history of Hanover, Massachusetts as an “Indian slave” of John Bailey who died May, 1756. But the use of that clear-cut term, “slave,” was a rarity. The term, “servant,” was employed much more frequently, both for those who were actual slaves and those who were not. What are we supposed to make, for instance, out of the wording in the 1724 will of Timothy Thrall of Windsor Connecticut which provides that “Margaret, my Indian girl, shall have her liberty and freedom allowed her, provided she faithfully serve my wife for the space of 13 years from this, or, in case of her prior decease, to serve the remainder of the time with my son William.” Was Margaret an indentured servant and thirteen years the remainder of her original indenture? Is that the meaning of “liberty and freedom allowed her”? Or, was Margaret Thrall’s slave? Thirteen years sounds like an improbably lengthy indenture for a servant. Thrall was a merchant and sea captain. Perhaps Margaret had been brought in by him as a slave from out of country. Is Margaret’s status really any different from “my negro girl called Pegg” whom Timothy Thrall’s son, William, willed to his mother, Sarah, in 1736? We

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have to admit, without any other evidence – which is missing in most cases -- that it is not really possible to tell.\(^8\)

The status of “servant” is easier to confirm when what is listed on an estate’s inventory is the transfer of time rather than the actual body of the human being, as we find in the inventory from 1698 of Lieut. Andrew Marsh of Braintree, Massachusetts: “To an Indian man's time 2 years” worth 3 pounds and “To an Indian boy's time 2 years,” worth 5 pounds. These two Indians, it would seem, were indentured servants.\(^9\) On the other hand, maybe not. Slaves sometimes had time leased out by their masters. As the town historian of Cohasset observed from examining the inventory of the estate of Cornelius Canterbury, the "one year's time in an Indian servant" might actually have been referring to the time of a slave who had been leased by his master for helping out in Canterbury’s cooperage.\(^10\) The 1693 will of Capt. George Denison of Stonington, Connecticut mentions two “Indian servants,” one a youth and the other a woman, whom he gave upon his death to one of his sons “together with a considerable stock of neat cattle, horses, sheep and swine.” Slaves? Certainly sounds so. To another son, Denison willed two other Indian servants, “John whom I bought of the county, and his son Job, which was born in our house.” John sounds like a slave, and what is said

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\(^10\) E. Victor Bigelow, *A Narrative History of the Town of Cohasset, Massachusetts* (Cohasset: Committee on Town History, 1898), 163.
about his son, Job, sounds like a hint, rare anywhere in the records, of a case of heredity Indian bondage. Yet, John could just as well have been an indentured servant whose time was sold by a previous owner to Denison.\footnote{Richard Anson Wheeler, *History of the Town of Stonington, County of New London, Connecticut, From Its First Settlement in 1649 to 1900, with a Genealogical Register of Stonington Families* (New London, Conn.: The Day Publishing Company, 1900), 711-714.}

While individual cases such as these may be near-impossible to classify with any degree of certainty, Indian “servants” did fall into several different and distinct categories: First, there were Indians “captivated” in wars and sold off into chattel-slavery. Indians who had submitted to English authority and then risen up, as in King Philip’s War, were deemed traitors and rebels against the colonies and the Crown, not prisoners of war, and their lives were considered forfeit to be executed or sold into slavery at the will of the governing authorities. The exception to this rule were children and sometimes adult females, who were generally put into homes under indentures. Sometimes Puritan ministers actively sought out young Indians from the wars whom they could try to turn into “red Puritans” who might be useful when grown up as missionaries and interpreters. Indian parents also sometimes voluntarily indentured their own children, or Indian adults might even indenture themselves, seeing it as beneficial to them to be in a position to absorb white language and skills. Then there were Indians who fell into debt to whites or were fined for some infraction of the law and, having no means to pay off the debt or fine, especially after their lands were sold off as we explored in previous chapters, were sentenced to a stint of some years of servitude instead. Finally, as a means to make a living with no or little land on which to plant or hunt, there were natives who sold their ability to work and their skills in various forms to white employers, both for short-term or longer-term employment. As sailors, some Indians from New England
helped to form the “motley crew” of the nascent international working class, described so beautifully by Marcus Rediker and Peter Linebaugh.

Indian Enslavement in New England

First, let’s take a look at Indians whose status was evidently that of enslaved persons and how they arrived at that condition. Enslavement of Indians in New England by Europeans of various nations began at a very early date, well before the actual invasion and settlement. We hear that Gaspar Corte-Real, sailing under the Portuguese flag in 1501, not long after Columbus’s or Cabot’s voyages, seized sixty native people from somewhere along the Northeast coast and sent them back to Lisbon to the pleasure of the Portuguese king who was already well-involved in the African slave-trade. The English sea captain Thomas Hunt kidnapped twenty-seven Indians from Cape Cod in 1614 and sold them in Spain. There are also records of various Indians taken up and brought off involuntarily to Europe to be employed as guides and translators for subsequent voyages (one of these being the Tisquantum or “Squanto” who greeted the Pilgrims in their own tongue in 1620). No doubt there were other Indians who suffered such a fate of whom we have not even these few fragmentary records.

But the enslavement of Indians in New England really got off the ground with the arrival of the Puritans. In what Francis Jennings rightly refers to as the “First War of Puritan Conquest,” otherwise known as the “Pequot War” in 1637, some seven hundred Pequots were

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12 H. P. Biggar, “The Voyages of the Cabots and of the Corte-Reals to North America and Greenland 1497-1503,” Revue Hispanique, no. 35/36 (1903): 565-586. This may have been Labrador and the Indians, Naskapi.

killed or captured. According to the Rev. Cotton Mather, who praised it as the most efficient way to handle the matter, thirty adult males who had surrendered were taken out in a boat and thrown overboard to “feed the fishes with ’em.” Forty eight of the surviving women and girls were sent to Boston; others were divided among the colonial towns or were given as a reward to the Narragansetts and Mohegans who had sided with the Puritans. Those who tried to run away were caught and branded. Fifteen boys and two women were shipped off by the Massachusetts Bay authorities to Bermuda, although ending up at the Caribbean Puritan colony of Providence Island instead, where they were sold as slaves, the proceeds helping to make up a valuable return cargo “with some cotton, tobacco, and Negroes” – in other words becoming part of the famous Atlantic Triangular Trade, the profits of which fueled Western European economic development. Further shipments of Indian prisoners from the Pequot War to the sugar plantation hell-holes of the Caribbean may have followed.  

As far as we know, the only critic of this policy of Indian enslavement among the Puritans was the dissident Roger Williams from his place of exile in Rhode Island, who asked about the captive Indians in a letter to Governor Winthrop in Massachusetts whether “after a due time of training up to labor, and restraint, they ought not to be set free.” Still, the point was how to turn them through service into Indians who could be more of use to the English and not that

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they deserved to have freedom as humans in their own right.\textsuperscript{15}

Ironically, the document called the “Body of Liberties” that Massachusetts adopted in 1641 authorized enslavement of those “lawful captives taken in just wars, and such strangers as willingly sell themselves or are sold to us.”\textsuperscript{16} The Connecticut colony likewise sanctioned Indian slavery and indeed a slave trade in Indians. In its original law code of 1650, allowance was made for the seizure and imprisonment of Indian “offenders,” along with those Indians “interteining, protecting and rescuing” them as accessories, and “and because it will be chargeable keeping Indians in prison, and if they should escape, they are like to prove more insolent and dangerous after. It was thought fitt, that uppon such seizure, the delinquent, or satisfaction bee again demanded of the Sagamore, or plantation of indians guilty, or accessory, as before; and if it bee denied, that then the magistrates of this jurissdiction, deliver up the indian seized by the partye or partyes endammaged, either to serve, or to bee shipped out and exchanged for neagers, as the case will justly beare.” The sagamores were to be given a copy of the law putting them on notice of their responsibilities in this regard.\textsuperscript{17} Not only were Indians seen as exchangeable for African bodies but also, in both of the main Puritan colonies, later laws applied the same restrictions to Indian “servants” as they did to black or mulatto


\textsuperscript{17} \textit{The Code of 1650, Being a Compilation of the Earliest Laws and Orders of the General Court of Connecticut: Also, the Constitution, or Civil Compact, Entered Into and Adopted by the Towns of Windsor, Hartford, and Wethersfield in 1638-9} (Hartford, Conn.: Andrus & Judd, 1833), 55-57. The only restriction was that women and children were “to bee sparingly seized, unless knowne to bee someway guilty.”
slaves.18

The 19th Century Massachusetts historian, the Rev. Frederick Freeman, who was openly sympathetic to the New England Indians in an age when Puritan filiopietism was much more the fashion among his peers, observed that, with the Pequot War, enslaving Indians “had become a mania with speculators” who saw profits in them to be made.19 Case in point: The success of the Pequot War in this regard seems to have given Emanuel Downing, Salem lawyer, businessman and brother-in-law of Massachusetts Governor John Winthrop, the bright idea that he made known in a 1645 letter to Winthrop that another such “just war” would not only benefit the true faith by helping Indians convert but would be an economic boon to the young, struggling colony in helping it to cope with its ever-pressing shortage of labor:

A war with the Narragansett is verie considerable to this plantation, sfor I doubt whither yt be not synne in us, having power in our hands, to suffer them to mavnteyne the worship of the devill, which their paw wawes often doe ; 2lie, if upon a Just warre the Lord should deliver them into our hands, we might easily have men, women, and children enough to exchange for Moores, which will be more gaynful pilladge for us than wee conceive, for I doe not see how wee can thrive untill wee gett into a stock of slaves sufficient to doe all our business, for our children's children will hardly see this great continent filled with people, soe that our servants will still desire freedom to plant for themselves, and will not stay but for verie great wages. And I suppose you know verey well how wee shall maynteyne 20 Moores cheaper than one Englishe servant. The ships that shall bring Moores may come home laden with salt which may beare most of the chardge, if not all of yt. But I marvayle Connecticott should any waves

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18 A 1698 Massachusetts Law prohibited persons from trading or trucking with “any Indian, molato [sic], or negro servant or slave or other known dissolute, lewd, and disorderly person, of whom there is just cause of suspicion.” A Massachusetts Law of 1703 prohibited any of the above from being abroad after nine o’clock. A 1708 Connecticut Law punished any for disturbing the peace of white people or physically threatening them. In 1730 Connecticut enacted a law punishing them for speaking “defamatory words” and passed a law requiring any and all of them to have in their possession at all times a “ticket” or pass in writing from a government official or “under the Hand of the Master or Owner of such,” otherwise to be deemed runaways and subject to arrest and return. Rhode Island passed a law in 1750 “to prevent all persons from entertaining Indian, negro or mulatto servants or slaves. John Codman Hurd, The Law of Freedom and Bondage in the United States, vol. 1 (Boston: Little, Brown, & Company, 1858), 262-263, 270-272, 276; Marion Gleason McDougall, Fugitive Slaves (1619-1865) (Boston: Ginn & Company, 1891), 100-101.

19 Frederick Freeman, Civilization and Barbarism: Illustrated by Especial Reference to Metaomet and the Extinction of His Race (Cambridge, MA: The Riverside Press, 1878), 64. Ironically-titled, this book is really an early “revisionist” history of white-Indian relations. For more on Freeman, who came himself from old Puritan “stock” but saw retribution as an inevitable outcome for the manifold injustices his ancestors had committed to the Indians, see William Thomas Davis, Plymouth Memories of an Octogenarian (Plymouth, MA: Memorial Press, 1906), 265-266.
hasard a warre without your advise, which they cannot maynteyne without your helpe.\textsuperscript{20}

Although the Puritan military forces were mobilized for war, Downing’s cynical scheme never had a chance to come to fruition because tensions abated and the anticipated showdown with the Narragansetts did not come off at that time. But this passage certainly provides some insight into how the Puritan elect viewed the relationship of performing God’s holy works and the pursuit of mammon in their “errand in the wilderness,” the two proceeding closely hand in hand.\textsuperscript{21} And Downing’s view was certainly not exclusively his own. That many Puritans saw warfare against the Indians as a potential boon is also evident from the founding document of the “United Colonies of New England” – established in 1643, largely in response to the need to coordinate a previously haphazard Indian policy among the colonies. The founding document gave specific thought to how to divide up the spoils, stating “the whole advantage of the war (if it please God so to bless their endeavours) whether it be in lands goods or persons, shall be proportionally divided among the said confederates.”\textsuperscript{22}

Subsequently, in a sort of repeat of the Pequot War, numerous Indians, including

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\textsuperscript{21} This was the same Emanuel Downing acting as agent for Massachusetts Bay at a time when it was threatened with losing its charter who had written in 1633 sanctimoniously to Secretary of State Sir John Coke in London that “This plantation and that of Virginia went not forth upon the same reasons nor for the same end, those of Virginia went only for profit . . . these went upon 2 other designes some to satisfy theire owne curiosity in poynt of conscience, others wch was more generall to transport the gospell.” Quoted in G. L. Beer, “The Early English Colonial Movement,” \textit{Political Science Quarterly} 23 (1908): 78, f6.

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Narragansetts, found themselves enslaved from coming out on the losing side of the “Second War of Puritan Conquest” (King Philip’s War). A sizeable number of them were shipped outside the country as part of the greater Atlantic Slave Trade. Early in the war, a Capt. Sprague conveyed 178 Indians to Cadiz in Spain. These included Pokanoket women and children whom King Philip had been forced to leave behind during his hurried escape from Mt. Hope and which Plymouth authorities ruled as complicit in his designs and thus ought to be sold for the colony’s benefit. In August and September 1676, Massachusetts Governor Leverett and Plymouth Governor Winslow gave a license to Thomas Smith, captain of the “Sea Flower,” to transport and sell seventy Indians, men, women and children, who had "been sentenced and condemned to perpetual servitude." Another sea captain, John Houghton, the same year, conveyed seventeen Indian men, women and children to the island of Fayal in the Portuguese Azores. These were Indians, including a sagamore and his squaw, who had been seized and carried off from Maine without official authorization by two unscrupulous fur traders, William Waldron and Henry Lauton. Two hundred captives had been marched off

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24 Joseph Barlow Felt, *The Ecclesiastical History of New England; Comprising Not Only Religious, But Also Moral, and Other Relations*, vol. 2 (Boston: Congregational Library Association, 1862), 599, 638. Interestingly, the ship captain Thomas Smith was the son-in-law of Hannah Eliot, the daughter of the “Apostle to the Indians,” John Eliot. See Anna Glover, *Glover Memorials and Genealogies: An Account of John Glover of Dorchester and His Descendants* (Boston: David Clapp & Son, 1867), 99-110. One wonders whether this ship that bore these Indians out of the country was the same “Sea Flower” under Thomas Windsor that brought the first enslaved Africans to Rhode Island in 1696.

to Boston and taken aboard ships and sold into foreign slavery, some of them apparently ending up as far away as Tangiers, from whence they appealed to the Rev. John Eliot for aid.

Eliot petitioned the General Court to save them from the evil influences of their heathen masters. After the question was thrown to the Puritan ministers for their Biblical ruling about whether or not it was legitimate to execute him, Metacom’s own nine-year-old son was likewise sold off into foreign slavery – perhaps to the English colony of Bermuda, where some people today keep alive a proud oral tradition of being descended from King Philip.

A few fortunate Indians sent out of the country did manage somehow to find their ways back home again; Massachuset “Sagamore George No-Nose” returned from enslavement in Barbados, perhaps through the help of Rev. Eliot, and lived to die a natural death under care of a relative. Yet most disappeared completely from the historical records, having been

were arrested and charged by the court with man-stealing but acquitted by the jury. John Houghton may have been one of the original proprietors of Lancaster, Massachusetts which had been destroyed by the Indians in August 1675.


This outrage was not forgotten and ultimately during King William’s War, thirteen years later, the Indians took their revenge on Major Waldron. See Jeremy Belknap and John Farmer, The History of New-Hampshire, vol. 1 (Dover NH: S. C. Stevens and Ela & Wadleigh, 1831), 125-128.


gobbled up to produce surplus-value along with other peoples reduced by civilization to slavery somewhere within the bowels of the Modern World-System. Admittedly, the main purpose of the colonial authorities in these cases was not to accumulate profit but to get rid of potential Indian rebels and, in the case of Metacom’s son, a potent Indian rallying symbol. This was not always an easy thing to accomplish; Barbados, for example, faced with its own rebellion of slaves in 1676, passed a law prohibiting the importation of Amerindian captives.29 But the removal and sale of Indians as slaves or servants, as well as serving to “clear” the land for further waves of white settlement and land speculation, was beneficial to the Puritans in helping to defray the costs of their wars of conquest. The balance sheet from King Philip’s War shows Massachusetts earning £397.13s (almost 50,000 pounds in today’s terms) from the sale of one hundred and eighty-eight of the Indian prisoners against a grand total of £13,395.10s costs.30 The sale or gift of Indian captives was also used to pay the public debt to specific individuals who had performed services in these wars.31 The wars generated land, labor and money all around.

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29 *Act to Prohibit the Bringing of Indian Slaves to this Island*: “This Act is passed to prevent the bringing of Indian slaves and as well to send away and transport those already brought to this island from New England and the adjacent colonies, being thought a people of too subtle, bloody and dangerous inclination to be and remain here......” Quoted in Patricia Penn Hilden, “Hunting North American Indians in Barbados,” *Issues in Caribbean Amerindian Studies (Occasional Papers of the Caribbean Amerindian Centrelink)* 6, no. 2 (August 2004-August 2005), http://www.centrelink.org/Hilden.html. The New England colonies wanted to have it both ways. When South Carolina tried to offload captured Indians from their Yamasee Rebellion of 1712, all the New England colonies passed laws forbidding the entry of such Indians slaves into their territories. See John Codman Hurd, *The Law of Freedom and Bondage in the United States*, vol. 1 (Boston: Little, Brown, & Company, 1858), 265, 266, 271, 276.

30 David Pulsifer, ed., *Records of the Colony of New Plymouth, in New England: Acts of the Commissioners of the United Colonies of New England*, vol. 2, 1653-1679 (Boston: The Press of William White, 1859), 400-401. The take from the sale of Indian captives covered the cost of ammunition expended during the war which was £ 393.03s. The colony also took in £36.13s more from the sale of hides, which may possibly have been confiscated from the Indians.

In 1652, Rhode Island had been the first colony in North America to enact an anti-slavery law, and, during King Philip’s War in March 1676, the Quaker-dominated Rhode Island Assembly ruled that “noe Indian in this Collony be a slave, but only to pay their debts or for their bringing up, or custody they have received, or to performe covenant as if they had been countrymen not in warr.” Even though Rhode Island remained largely neutral in the war, Rhode Island also benefit from Indian servitude. These provisions were used to turn most captured or surrendered Indians into indentured servants on fixed terms of nine years, if they were not adjudged to be executed for their “crimes” committed in taking up arms against the English. Such Indians were not to be brought in or shipped out without leave from the colonial authorities. A “parcell” of Indians who had come or been brought into Providence was sent off in two “companies” for sale in Newport, with that erstwhile friend of the Indians, Roger Williams, playing a leading role and becoming one of the financial beneficiaries. The poor Indian captives probably destined to become indentured servants were sold for an average of thirty-two shillings, some for silver money and some in exchange for a “fatt sheep,” wool, corn or other commodities. Plymouth, on the other hand, ordered that all male Indian captives from the war fourteen years of age and over, aside from a few named exceptions, were to be sold outside of the colony by a certain date or to be forfeited to the


Connecticut disposed of its “surrenderers” from King Philip’s War somewhat differently. Those adults who turned themselves in and who could not be proved “murtherers” were not to be sold out of the country but made into servants to be “well used” for ten years -- after which, if they were able to obtain a certificate of good service from their master or the council and if they observed “English fashion and lawes,” they were to have liberty to dwell in English towns and be able to work for themselves. Indians under sixteen of age were to serve until they were twenty-six. These human spoils of the war were to be apportioned equally among the counties and towns to be sold at an equal price to whomever the committee in charge “thinke most meete to eudicate and well nurture them.” Government assistants and committee members were to have one Indian servant freely “for their paynes” in performing the public’s work. It seems that not all of the Indians were happy with this arrangement of becoming indentured servants because, not long after, the General Court passed a law that those who had been shown mercy and were running away from their service could be treated as captives and sold by their masters out of the country. Other Indians were impressed to help out in recapturing them. Indians who turned in runaways would be rewarded with two yards of cloth for each, but those Indians who hid a runaway were to be

34 Francis Baylies, An Historical Memoir of the Colony of New Plymouth, vol. 2 (Boston: Hilliard, Gray, Little, and Wilkins, 1830), 188-189.

fined forty shillings or imprisoned a month.\textsuperscript{36}

Thus these war were a boon to individual Puritan soldiers and officials, who not only spied out land for possible future investment but also acquired Indian captives to take back home with them as a source of labor in their household or enterprise. From the division of the spoils in King Philip’s War, Constant Southworth, Treasurer of New Plymouth, acquired an Indian boy, and Southworth’s counterpart in Connecticut, Major John Talcott, was given a seven-year-old Indian girl as a gratuity for his “kindness” by Capt. John Stanton who had “gained much on the sales of captives.” Talcott had also somewhere along the way obtained an Indian boy. The Deputy Governor of Massachusetts, Samuel Symonds, for payment of £5, picked up a boy and a girl. Major Samuel Appleton of Ipswich, the second-in-command of the colonial military forces, purchased three captives, and Capt. John Whipple brought home to the same town an Indian boy whom he renamed “Lawrence.” While the governing and well-connected Puritans were getting their hands on Indian labor to exploit, so too were common soldiers like a certain Benjamin Mills, a young middling farmer in Dedham, Samuel Beadle, a turner who lived in Salem, and Cornelius Cooper, a cooper from Cohasset. “Goodman” Greenland, Charlestown carpenter, acquired the help of “a boy named Tom aged twelve yeares, his father named Santisho of Packachooge.”\textsuperscript{37} Both Massachusetts and


Plymouth distributed Indian children from King Philip’s War as indentured servants until when they reached the age of twenty-four years.  

An extraordinary document has survived from King Philip’s War – a list of some of these Indian children who were put out to service among English families in Massachusetts. Thirty-three boys and girls ranging in age from four to sixteen had come in to Boston with the party of Nipmuck Sachem John, the leader of the Pakachoog Praying Indian Town who had joined Metacom’s rebellion and then had redecided in July 1676 when the tide of battle turned to throw himself on the mercy of the English. Most of the children’s parents, or at least their fathers, were dead from the war. In one case, a boy’s father was no longer around to take care of him because he had been executed for the killing of an Englishman. The new masters of these kids ranged from Samuel Symonds of Ipswich who was Deputy Governor of the colony to a Cambridge tanner, a Cambridge tailor and a Boston carpenter. Daniel Gookin, the colony’s Indian commissioner and member of the committee for finding homes for the children, got a boy and a girl. Capt. Thomas Prentis, another committee member, took a boy. Puritan ministers evinced a special interest in getting their hands on captive or orphaned Indian children from these wars. At the end of the Pequot War, Hugh Peter wrote to

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Massachusetts Governor John Winthrop asking for his help in obtaining a “young woman or a girl and a boy”. Roger Williams, too, expressed a similar interest in a letter to Winthrop, telling the governor that “I haue fixed mine eye on this little one with the red about his neck, but I will not be peremptory in my choice,” leaving that up to Winthrop’s discretion. Today, we might well suspect other more sordid motives of these ministers, but what the Puritan divines were looking for was being able to acquire Indians children at an impressionable age to bring them up in their households as Christians, then to be of use among their own peoples when they attained adulthood. Daniel Weld, the school master in Roxbury, wrote to Connecticut Governor, John Winthrop, Jr. in 1665 for an “Indian boy from Pequot to be added to the number of the youths to be trained up in learning.”

Puritan leaders viewed King Philip’s War as a way to generate “likely boys”. A small number of Indian youth eventually made it to Cambridge’s Harvard College, whose original mission included training Indians for the ministry. But that effort came to naught because of the students’ extreme vulnerability to diseases and their deaths from getting sick. However, a Nipmuc known as “James the Printer,” instructed at an Indian charity school and apprenticed from a youth to learn the printing trade, helped Rev. John Eliot with his project to publish the Bible in the Massachusetts language.

Sometimes it did happen that captivated and enslaved Indians got their freedom back

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40 Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, vol. 1, 5th Series, 1871, 409.

41 Benjamin Church, The History of Philip's War, Commonly Called the Great Indian War, of 1675 and 1676, 2nd ed. (Boston: T.B. Wait and Son, 1827), 56-57.


from a more kindly master. Quaker Governor Nicholas Easton of Rhode Island, freed his “Indian squa” in his will and mandated that his “Indian child” have liberty at age 25, and in 1702 Samuel Plumer, a Newbury ferryman, gave freedom upon his decease to his Indian servant, “Kate.” Certain freed Indian servants might even be awarded at that point with a bit of money and some clothing. However, in other probate records we not uncommonly find Indians from the time period of King Philip’s War being transferred as chattel, along with other assorted pieces of personal property, to surviving spouses and from one generation to the next – not being emancipated. The aforementioned John Talcott’s inventory from 1689 shows “2 Negroes, an Indian Boy and an Indian Girle, & a Bull” lumped together worth £41.

In 1695 Rhode Island Governor Caleb Carr, another Quaker, willed to one of his sons, Edward Carr, in addition to several parcels of land, “my Indian boy Tom; my pair of little stilliards, my wearing linen; and whatsoever I have formerly given unto him; and the chest that stands in the hall, which I had of Moses Pachech, the Jew.” Isaac Nichols, farmer and merchant of Stratford, in 1685 left his Indian servant “George” to his wife upon his decease, and Capt. Jonathan Cogswell, a merchant of Ipswich, did likewise in 1714 with his “Indian maid I have called Nell”.

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As shown by some of these scattered colonial records, although there was no New England market in Indian slaves as such, there was some internal Indian slave trading from owner to owner and place to place. In 1670, Capt. Benjamin Gibbs of Boston conveyed to his father-in-law Joshua Scottow both land and labor in a single bill of sale – some lands in Boston along with "three Negroes and one young Indian Squaw, Peggy". In January 1678, William Wodell of Portsmouth, Rhode Island, for £4.10 purchased the lifetime’s worth of work of an Indian named “Hanah” from her former owner, Adam Right of Duxbury in the Plymouth Colony (where authorities had told holders of captive Indians to expel them outside the colony or face having them confiscated). Hanah had been “Taken and Captivated by the Arms of his maj’s Subjects and Condemned by the Authority Established in his maj’s Sd Collony of New Plimoth to perpetuall Servitude and Slavery.” Right had purchased Hanah in March 1677 from the Puritan war-chieftain (and later war memoirist) Capt. Benjamin Church. (The Plymouth authorities had cut a deal during the war with Church that he and his men would get to keep half of any Indian captives, while Plymouth would receive the other half, with allied Indians allowed to collect the “loose plunder.”) Showing the murky, confusing documentation, although Hanah had been sold to Wodell, at the bottom of the bill of sale in the manner of an indentured servant’s contract, she signed indicating her own willingness to become a servant to Wodell, “his Executors administrator and assignes in maner and form above Exspresed.”


47 The Early Records of the Town of Portsmouth (Providence, R.I: E. L. Freeman & Sons, 1901), 430-434; Eli Wodell, Genealogy of a Part of the Wodell Family from 1640 to 1880, with Notices of Some Other Families, Copies of Ancient Interesting Documents and a Condensed Biography of the Author as Written by Himself; Eli Wodell, 1880 ([S.I: s.n, 1880); Daniel Strock, Jr., Pictorial History of King Philip's War (Hartford: Case, Tiffany and Company, 1851), 279-280; Frederick Freeman, Civilization and Barbarism: Illustrated by Especial Refernce to Metaomet and the Extinction of His Race (Cambridge, MA: The Riverside Press, 1878),
Another recorded case of Indian slave buying and selling in New England involved a Indian woman named “Dinah.” At age twenty-six, Dinah was sold for £60 in 1722 by Joseph Gorham of Stratford, Connecticut to Col. Ebenezer Johnson of Derby, Connecticut, “for him, the said Johnson, his heirs, executors, and assigns, to have, hold, and enjoy the said Indian woman Dinah as his and their own proper estate from henceforth forever, during the said Dinah’s life.” When Dinah’s new master passed away not long afterward, Johnson’s widow Hannah decided “for the parental love and good-will which I have towards my beloved son” to give Dinah and a feather bed – mentioned in the document’s same sentence – to her son, Timothy.48 What became of Dinah then we do not know.

The pages of 18th-Century New England newspapers not uncommonly carried advertisements for Indian “servant” runaways, along with run-away blacks or mulattos. Many of them were young people like Jonas Moses, an Indian servant boy seventeen years-old and said to be “large of his age” with a scar on his nose between his eyes and wearing a beaver hat, who ran away in 1760 from his master, Ephraim Swift, of Falmouth, Massachusetts.49

138-139. Wodell, for his part, in the contracts of indenture was required to provide the servants “Sufficient food and Rayment and other necessaries meet for Such an apprentice.” Wodell was himself the Portsmouth town treasurer and one of the overseers of the town’s poor. Hanah was not the only Indian captive acquired by Wodell to work for him in the aftermath of King Philip’s War. In April of the same year, an entire Pocasset Indian family (minus the father, who may have been lost in the fighting or perhaps sold outside the country) consisting of the mother Meequaupew (indentured for three years), a son “Peter” (for ten years), and an unnamed six-year-old daughter (for fifteen years) were apprenticed out by a Portsmouth, Rhode Island town committee to serve Wodell “well and faithfully” as their white master.

48 Samuel Orcutt and Ambrose Beardsley, The History of the Old Town of Derby, Connecticut, 1642-1880, with Biographies and Genealogies (Springfield, Mass.: Springfield Printing Company, 1880), lix-lxii. Col Johnson had acquired and sold other Indian slaves since King Philip’s War including a woman named “Sarah” who was turned over to an Indian named “Chetrensut,” along with some money, as part of a deal for some of the Indian’s land. Ibid, lxi-lxii. For another case of the sale of an Indian slave from one New England white owner to another, see Everett Schermerhorn Stackpole, History of New Hampshire, vol. 2, 4 vols. (New York: The American Historical Society, 1916), 245.

Or, to take another example, were like the “Indian girl,” Hannah Wapuck, aged about twenty years “middle sized, full fac'd, a comely Countenance, she speaks good English, not very perfect of the Indian Language” who ran away wearing English clothes in 1707 from John Otis of Barnstable, Massachusetts.\textsuperscript{50} How organized this activity might have been is unknown, but that slave catching for the reward offered in these “Look Out For” ads, often put at twenty shillings, happened sometimes in colonial New England is shown by one small evidentiary bit. A Philemon Dane took out his own ad in the \textit{Boston Gazette} in 1729 to notify Shubal Jones and Joseph Bursley of Barnstable that he had taken up their Indian servants, Solomon Wampum and Joseph Wampum, “and they are in his Majesty's Goal in Salem, ready to be delivered, agreeable to the Tenour of the Advertisement.”\textsuperscript{51} Again, we don’t know what happened. In colonial newspapers, we also find advertisements for Indians being put up for sale. The \textit{Boston News-Letter} in 1712 advertised “an Indian Boy about 12 years old Speaks English perfectly well, is very healthy & seasone’d to the Country” to be sold by Capt. Wentworth Paxton and viewable at his house.\textsuperscript{52} The same newspaper later the same year advertised “a very good Indian Servant man” to be sold by John Buchanan, a Boston baker.\textsuperscript{53} Some of these “To Be Sold” advertisement mentioned the kind of service for which the Indians were fitted: “A very likely Indian woman fit for all sorts of Houshold Work aged about Twenty one years. . .” “A Young Indian Fellow, that has serv’d his Time to a Cooper, & can work well at that Business. . .” “A Lusty Indian man Servant about 20 Years

\textsuperscript{50} \textit{Boston News-Letter}, February 27, 1707.

\textsuperscript{51} \textit{Boston Gazette}, August 18-25, 1729.

\textsuperscript{52} \textit{Boston News-Letter}, September 1, 1712.

\textsuperscript{53} \textit{Boston News-Letter}, December 22, 1712.
of Age, that Speaks very good English and fit for any Service in Town or Country. While the Indians described in these particular advertisements above seem to have been lifetime slaves – given the fact that none of them is mentioned having limited terms of labor -- the number of years that were remaining on an Indian servant’s indenture, as we can witness from another newspaper advertisement of the same time period, might also be sold from one master to another.

Complicating the job of we historians further, in addition to the above natives of the New England colonies who were captured or surrendered in wars waged by the English and then held in perpetual bondage and or put to labor in some form or other by white masters, there are also present in the colonial records the so-called “Spanish Indians.” This was the generic name for enslaved Indians who hailed from Mexico, Florida or the Caribbean who were imported unwillingly into New England through various means, usually unknown. Cotton Mather recorded in his diary in September 1696 that he had purchased a Spanish Indian some fifteen years earlier -- unfortunately, without specifying from where -- and that he had “bestowed him for a Servant, on my Father.” Then in 1693, he had himself received, as a gift from Sir William Phips, the Massachusetts Governor, a Spanish Indian for a servant. The Puritan divine had graciously permitted this man he owned to go to sea.

and being an ingenuous Fellow, I gave him an Instrument for his Freedom, if hee serv'd mee till the End of the year 1697. Two years ago, the French took him, and I lost him. The Loss occasion'd mee to make a cheerful Resignation, unto the Will of God. But I was hereupon perswaded and often expressed my Perswasion, that my Servant would bee return'd unto mee. In the Beginning of the year, an English Man of War, by taking the vessel, wherein my Servant was, retook him. Nevertheless, the Captain of the Man of War, being a Fellow, that had no Principles of Honour or Honesty in him, I could, by no means recover my servant out of his hands, who intended to make a perpetual Slave of him. So, I gave over


my Endeavours to recover him; chiefly troubled for the Condition of the poor Servant. But then, a strange Conjunction of Circumstances fell out, that the churlish Captain was compelled without any Consideration, but what I should please, to restore Him. And my Servant being so strangely returned, I sett myself to make him a Servant of the Lord.56

The English military assault out of South Carolina against the Spanish and their Indian allies in St. Augustine in 1702 and subsequent English forays into Florida in 1704 and to the gates of St. Augustine again in 1725 yielded hundreds of “Spanish Indian” prisoners, some of whom ended up their lives in New England bondage.57 As Allan Gallay has shown, the Indian slave trade became a huge profit-making activity in South Carolina, and the colony made a practice of shipping Indian slaves northward,58 particularly rebellious Indians they did not want to hold onto. These folks were not always much welcome either in their new northern habitats. Massachusetts, still reeling from a tremendous Indian rebellion of its own, passed a law in 1712 prohibiting the importation of more Indian slaves because of their “being of a malicious, surley and revengeful spirit, rude and insolent in their behaviour, and very ungovernable” and because they would be a discouragement to “white Christian servants” the colony was hoping to attract.59 The Yamasee War (1715-17) led to a new influx of enslaved


Indians from South Carolina. As the New England colonies had tried to do previously with its own Pequot War and King Philip’s War captives, the South Carolina authorities sought to rid themselves of future troublemakers, and make some money in the process, by exporting them out of the country. A worried Connecticut legislature passed a law in the summer of 1715 specifically prohibiting the importation not only of the Carolina Indians but “any Indian slaves whatsoever,” for fear that they might have a pernicious influence on Indians there. New Hampshire and Rhode Island enacted similar laws strictly forbidding Indian importation. Nevertheless, “Spanish Indians” continue to show up here and there in the New England records up through the mid-18th Century. Joshua Hempstead of New London, Connecticut took note briefly in his diary entry for February 2, 1738, along with the cold, snowy weather outside, how “Diana an old Spanish Indian Woman of Brother Starrs was buried yesterday. She died with a Consumption.” We also find James Congdon, a Quaker of South Kingston, Rhode Island disposing in his will in 1757 of a ten slaves in his estate, among whom there was a Spanish Indian slave girl named “Satira.” Satira, along with three “negro” slaves, was given to Congdon’s wife for use during her widowhood, and Congdon left four other Spanish Indian slaves, Hannah, Flora, Grace and Dinah, to his daughters Martha, Margaret, Dorcas and Elizabeth “for life” and then, as the will specifies in the cases

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60 Some Indians were brought to Rhode Island in 1715 as the slaves of Huguenot women fleeing the Yamasee War. Thomas Williams Bicknell, The History of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, vol. 1 (New York: The American Historical Society, 1920), 509.


of three of them, to belong to their children. Newspaper advertisements also featured Spanish Indians as runaways.

Whatever became of the unnamed “Spanish Indian” owned by Cotton Mather and whether he remained a “faithful servant” to the Lord is nowhere recorded. However, we are able to trace a little of the personal history of Peter Tusco, a “Spanish Indian” slave in Kensington, Connecticut. His owner, the Rev. William Burnham manumitted him in 1738. Burnham had bought Tusco many years earlier of Lt. Richard Boardman of Newington, Connecticut. When Burnham’s daughter got married to the Rev. Jeremiah Curtiss, Burnham transferred Tusco’s services to her, but she told her father that she preferred her servant to be free. Tusco as a free man remained attached to the Curtiss family, acquired some property of his own and lived until 1767 when he was able to will thirteen acres to Curtiss children. Otherwise, the lives of Spanish Indians, as with Indian slaves or servants in general, who pop up briefly in the records being willed from one generation to the next or sold like the ten-year-old “Spanish Indian” boy “Pito” from Capt. Joseph Flint, mariner, of Salem to Jonathan Rayment, of Beverly in 1705 or the sixteen-year-old “Spanish Indian” boy “Pete” by a Capt. Flynt to Capt. William Bartlett during the French and Indian War, are lost to posterity.

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65 Heman Rowlee Timlow, Ecclesiastical and Other Sketches of Southington, Conn. (Case, Lockwood and Brainard Co., 1875), 568-569. The wealthy Rev. Burnham also owned a Spanish Indian, Maria, whom he still held at death in 1650 and willed to any of his children who would provide her with support. Roderick Henry Burnham, Genealogical Records of Thomas Burnham, the Emigrant (Case, Lockwood & Brainard Co., 1884), 79, 135-136.

66 “Slavery in Essex County,” in Historical Collections of the Essex Institute, vol. 7 (Salem, Mass.: Swazey's Job Office, 1865), 73; Charles Levi Woodbury, Genealogical Sketches of the Woodbury Family: Its Intermarriages and Connections (Manchester, N.H.: John B. Clarke, 1904), 145.
can only imagine the interesting cross-cultural conversations that must have taken place between these Indians, early Hispanic arrivals in our region, and the Algonquian natives of New England, as they served together in the households or workshops of white colonists.

**Acquiring Indian Labor through Indebtedness**

Being “captivated” in war was a well-worn route into bondage, either permanent or shorter-term. But Indians could also find themselves serving a white master as a result of losing criminal legal proceedings levied against them. In 1678, three Indians were authorized by the Massachusetts General Court to be sold into slavery when they were unable to make recompense after being convicted for breaking into a house in Sandwich. Ethnohistorian Thomas Doughton has compiled the data from the Plymouth court records from 1719 to 1741 for Indians convicted – usually for petty theft of clothing or other simple household items – and then, being unable to pay the fine and court costs, bound out to service to a white master. The average time imposed was nearly four years – after which some might be given a suit of freedom clothes. Some males were sentenced to serve their term either “by sea or land.”

Falling into an unredeemable debt and the white-controlled court action that ensued was another means through which the labor of Indians could be procured for white employers. The Plymouth colony passed a law in 1673 requiring “such Indians especially young men as Run in debt to any English for thinges nessesary for them shalbe made to worke it out att reasonable rates if they have not else to discharge theire just debts.” Further elaboration was

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made the following year by the Plymouth Court: Indians in debt could be made to work for
the person to whom they owed the debt or to some other man, until the debt was satisfied, for
twelve pence a day in summertime and six pence a day in wintertime “and theire diett.”
Runaways who refused to serve could be sold. “All younge persons of the Indians as spend
their time Idlely” could be put to work. Needless to say, there were no counterparts for whites
who might run into debt with Indians. Moreover, the wages of white laborers during this
time period were considerably greater than what was credited to the Indians who were put out
to work in this compulsory fashion. Coming right before the outbreak of King Philip’s War,
we might infer that this kind of pressure being put onto Indians to work off debts to whites
was one of the factors, along with the loss of their lands and their sovereignty, contributing
to the ferocity of the rebellion that came as such a surprise to the Puritans.

Colonial whites generally viewed Indians as having a lackadaisical attitude towards
the repayment of debts, another characteristic of the Indians’ supposed all-around lack of –
and need for -- “civilizing.” Looking back on his many years of generally amicable
interactions with the Indians, Roger Williams complained about how much he had given out
to the Indians down to the frequent loaning out of his boats and pinnace with less, he felt,

69 Alden T. Vaughan and Deborah A. Rosen, eds., New England and Middle Atlantic Laws, vol. 17,
Early American Indian Documents: Treaties and Laws, 1607-1789 (Bethesda, Md.: University Publications
of America, 2004), 39, 41. The same latter Plymouth law of 1674 ordered an Indian who stole from the English
to make restitution of four-fold “either by serving it out; or some other way or be sold for his theft” leaving it
at the discretion of the magistrates. Connecticut followed a different route for dealing with this situation, in
1675 requiring any English person who “trusted” Indians with goods or commodities to do “at his owne hazard,
and not have the benefit of the law for the recovery of the same.” James Hammond Trumbull, ed., The Public
Records of the Colony of Connecticut, from 1665 to 1678, with the Journal of the Council of War, 1675-1678,

70 See Gloria L. Main, “Gender, Work, and Wages in Colonial New England,” The William and Mary

71 Whites did not necessarily do any better at paying off debts. See Henry C. Dorr, “The Narragansets,” in Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society, 7 (Providence, R.I.: Kellogg Printing
Company, 1885), 135-237.
coming back to him in return. 72 (Of course, the Narragansetts had provided him with succor when he was a lone exile in the wilderness.) But the Indians' attitude should be understood more properly as a reflection of differing cultural values deriving from a political economy where redistribution rather than one-to-one reciprocity or exchange prevailed. Williams himself had hit the nail on the head earlier in 1644 when, in part of a polemic waged against the Boston Puritan establishment, he observed that “The Indians of this Countrie have a Way calld Nanowwe, or Giving their Commodities freely, by which they get better bargaines, then if they stood stiffly on their Tearmes of Anaqushento, or or Trading.” 73 If whites were going to put themselves in the role of leaders over Indian societies, Indians were also going to insist that they perform the redistributive functions, as well as the ruler functions, associated with being a sachem. In his famous A Key into the Language of America, Williams observed disparagingly that Indians had what he considered a “subtle” self-seeking stratagem. Indians, after praising the superiority of the English and stroking their egos as “richer and wiser and valianter them themselves,” then “add[ed] Nonoue, give me this or that, a disease which they are generally infected with.” Williams misunderstood; he records elsewhere in the Key that this was much the same manner that Indians used to importune their own sachems when they met them or at redistribution ceremonies. And he notes how Indians shared whatever they had to eat with a stranger, that indeed these “barbarians” were more hospitable than many of his fellow Christians. 74 Indians often took the longer view which involved returning favors

72 John Russell Bartlett, ed., The Letters of Roger Williams, vol. 6, Publications of the Narragansett Club, Series 1 (Providence, R.I., 1874), 393, 406-408.


eventually (or the corollary of taking revenge eventually for slights or affronts). Ironically, “Indian giving” became a pejorative among whites for as a synonym for stinginess, but whites were imputing their own growing cultural notions of possessive individualism to the Indians. In any case, as with the transactions of Indians and whites involving the redistribution or sale of land, whites were increasingly able to impose their own hegemonic understanding of what constituted a “debt” and what they deemed to be the proper and reasonable response-time for repayment of said by the Indian debtors before they were hauled into a white-run court of law and made to work it off.

On Nantucket where running away from debts into the backcountry was difficult or impossible, being reduced to debt peonage, as Daniel Vickers has shown, is how Indian men were often forced into taking on the most back-breaking work on whaling expeditions – as that industry, whose capital in the form of boats and equipment was almost totally monopolized by whites, expanded in the early 18th Century. By being liberally plied with liquor and encouraged to purchase more liquor and other goods advanced to them on short-term credit, the Indians ran up insurmountable debts to traders, were sued for non-payment and then put out to service for two- or three-year stints in the whaling industry by the compliant courts. On neighboring Martha’s Vineyard, as David Silverman has shown, a very similar process took place as native people became increasingly dependent on store-bought food and clothing, with alcohol also stoking their indebtedness to whites. Silverman

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75 For a sophisticated analysis, informed by Marxism and critical theory, of the practices and discourses around “Indian giving,” see David Murray, Indian Giving: Economies of Power in Indian-White Exchanges (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000). Murray’s ideas have greatly influenced my own expressed in this paragraph.

found that native people were consistently sentenced to longer stretches of servitude than white people convicted of the same type of criminal offences and more often had their terms extended for the slightest infraction. White whalers and farmers benefitted greatly from the use of cheapened Indian labor while some impoverished native persons even had to take the sad expedient of binding-out their own children in an effort to get themselves out from under a heavy burden of indebtedness.\textsuperscript{77}

The debt-game used to ensnare Indians and put them to work for white masters seems to have become somewhat of an embarrassment to the sensibilities of some of the Puritan authorities. Several times in the early 18th Century, the Massachusetts General Court passed legislation attempting to bring its perceived abuses under control, although the blame was put largely on the Indians themselves for having an “aversion for industry and labor” and an attraction to strong drink that got them so often into indebtedness when drawn in by small gifts from whites and in a condition when they were “out of capacity to trade.” In 1718, lawsuits against Indians were made to require the joint approval of two Justices of the Peace, and in 1725 suits against Indians for debts of more than forty shillings were prohibited unless approved by the local court. Even so, these pieces of legislation were never made permanent in Massachusetts; the practice continued there, it seems, largely unabated.\textsuperscript{78} Rhode Island was the only colony to totally prohibit suits at law against Indians for debt. It required the approval

\textsuperscript{77} David J. Silverman, “The Impact of Indentured Servitude on the Society and Culture of Southern New England Indians, 1680-1810,” \textit{The New England Quarterly} 74, no. 4 (December 2001): 622-666. Indian children being put out to service was still happening in at least one place in coastal Massachusetts as late as 1807.

of two Justices of the Peace for an Indian to be bound out as an apprentice or servant.\textsuperscript{79}

The Varied Work of Indian “Servants”

From various accounts, it appears that white New Englanders looked rather askance at the use of Native Americans “servants” as a source of ready labor and much preferred enslaved Africans, if they could procure them. Thus Major John Mason, the commander of the Connecticut forces in the Pequot War, reported that he and his men had captured 180 Indians from the fight at their fort in Mystic “whom we divided intending to keep them as Servants; but they could not endure that Yoke; few of them continuing any considerable time with their masters.”\textsuperscript{80} Nevertheless, Indian servitude was still quite widespread, and its impact on Indian communities was significant going beyond the direct numbers involved:

According to [Rhode Island census] statistics, at least one-third of native children were living with the English at any given time, most under indentures that kept them in service until their late teens or early twenties. When these servants returned home as adults, they passed on what they had learned to their children, some of whom were in turn bound out to colonists. By the second half of the eighteenth century, probably nearly all native households included at least one person who had spent a significant portion of his or her childhood as a servant; thus, the cumulative influence of servitude on native work patterns was even greater than the actual number of former servants would suggest. The labor individual Indians performed eventually became central to their public identities, at least when they dealt with the English.\textsuperscript{81}

\textsuperscript{79} Acts and Laws of His Majesties Colony of Rhode-Island, and Providence-Plantations in America (Boston: John Allen, 1719), 85.

\textsuperscript{80} John Mason, A Brief History of the Pequot War (Boston, 1736), 39. See also, William C. Fowler, The Historical Status of the Negro in Connecticut (New Haven Colony Historical Society, 1900), 42. Reporting in 1874, Fowler cited “aged people” he had heard discussing the “comparative merits of Indian slaves and negro slaves; and they always gave their preference to the latter... As compared with the negroes the Indian slaves were not favorites. Their passions were stronger, though their appetites were weaker; they were equally lazy, improvident, and unprofitable.” A good comprehensive survey of the slave trade in early to mid-eighteenth-century Massachusetts including sets of various demographic and employment breakdowns, although focusing exclusively on imported African and West Indian slaves, is Robert E. Desrochers, Jr., “Slave-for-Sale Advertisements and Slavery in Massachusetts, 1704-1781,” The William and Mary Quarterly 59, no. 3, 3rd Series (July 2002): 623-664.

Based on newspaper advertisements, some Indian women seem to have acquired a wide variety of domestic skills that made them suitable for all manner of household and indoors work for whites. We find the *Boston News-Letter* of June 8, 1719 advertising “an Indian maid about 19 years of Age, brought up from a Child to all sorts of Household work, can handle her Needle very well and Sew or Flower and ingenious about her Work: To be sold on reasonable terms.” An advertisement in the same paper on January 4, 1720 offered: “An Indian Woman Aged about 30 Years fit for all manner of Household work either for Town or Country, can Sew, Wash, Brew, Bake, Spin, and Milk Cows, to be sold by Mr. Henry Hill.” Lucy Maynard Salmon, the pioneering social historian at Vasser who cited in her 1897 book on “Domestic Service,” these and other instances of female Indian servants offered for sale, commented about the prevalence of Indians used as domestic servants:

> The employment of Indians as servants grew up naturally in New England and was continued for at least a hundred years. Their presence was regarded as almost providential by the New Englanders, hard pressed for assistance in house and field. When the question of the right and wrong of the matter was suggested by the troubled conscience, an easy answer was found: was it not sin to suffer them longer to maintain the worship of the devil when they were needed so sorely as slaves?  

So much in demand did their labor in the domestic sphere and otherwise become that Indians cast in the role of servants or laborers came to be somewhat naturalized. As Silverman points out for Martha’s Vineyard, where native individuals in the records had previously been simply described as “Indians” – or “sachems,” if that were the case – by the mid-18th Century, Indians were being identified commonly in public documents by their various occupations and uses to whites – as “Indian labourer,” "Indian fisherman," "Indian

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whaleman,” “Indian sea-faring man,” and “Indian spinstress.”

As whites who had been “captivated” by Indians soon found out – an apt example being that of Mary Rowlandson taken from Lancaster, Massachusetts during King Philip’s War -- Indians themselves were not unfamiliar with the practice of putting persons obtained through warfare and raids on enemies to forced employment, if they were not to be tortured to death or adopted into the kin-group. Indians, including our Algonquians, were also not unfamiliar in their own societies with the notion of temporary servitude as a way to cover debts, such as debts incurred through gambling. Conceivably, familiarity with these practices in their own cultures may have made it easier at times for Indians, especially women and children, to surrender and submit themselves to the uncertain mercy and will of the Puritans. What was different here, however, is that there were no possibilities for them to be initiated into and join on more or less equal terms the kin group of the Puritans, as was often the case among the Indians where kinship was the overdetermining social and economic relationship – and where white captives might find themselves, with a little bit of good luck, adopted to replace a lost and mourned-for Indian grandparent, parent or child and provided with an Indian spouse. By contrast, while not proscribed by law as it was for whites with Negroes or mulattoes, intermarriage between whites and Indians was exceedingly rare in colonial New

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England. There was in New England no high profile couple sharing the marital bed as there was with Pocahontas and John Rolfe in Virginia. In French Canada, it was a widely accepted practice in both cultures for white men involved in the fur trade to take Indian wives as an integral part of the business arrangement. From these relationships, a whole mixed population and syncretic culture of Métis originated. Not so in New England. There was a deep fear by the Puritan authorities of ordinary people straying from the path of righteousness and falling to the temptation of “going Indian.” A harsh example was made out of William Baker, employee at the Plymouth trading post on the Connecticut River who, at the time of the Pequot War, was living with the Mohegans, wearing Indian clothes and an Indian haircut, had a child with one Indian woman and was cohabiting with another. He was arrested and severely whipped, escaped, recaptured and whipped again, despite the fact that the Indians had tried their best to hide and protect him.

What did come into being over time in New England instead was a mixed population of Native Americans and African-Americans. By the early 18th Century, non-whites had grown to become a majority of unfree workers in New England. Laboring together under the

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87 This practice of white traders entering into temporary or longer-term relations with Indian women was also not uncommon in the southern backcountry. See Richard Godbeer, “Eroticizing the Middle Ground: Anglo-Indian Relations along the Eighteenth-century Frontier,” in *American Sexual Histories*, ed. Elizabeth Reis, *Blackwell Readers in American Social and Cultural History* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2001), 46-64.

88 *The Winthrop Papers, Part I, Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, vol. 6, 4 (Boston: The Massachusetts Historical Society, 1885), 215, 222-223, 244-245, 247.

89 See Lawrence W. Towner, “A Good Master Well-Served: A Social History of Servitude in Massachusetts, 1620-1750” (Ph.D., Northwestern University, 1955), Appendix J.
same white masters, unwinding in their off-hours together, being criminalized alike for their “disorderly” behavior, “night-walking” and other infractions, sitting together in the same reserved church section, running away together, many blacks and Indians found one another, got legally married or entered into common-law relationships, produced offspring, and passed along some of each of their cultures to the next generation. Most commonly, because of gender imbalances in their respective communities – many Indian men were no longer around having been killed in wars like King Philip’s or gone off to fight off behalf of the English in Canada or somewhere and a greater number of African men than women were imported as slaves – this involved an Indian woman entering into a relationship of love and affection with an African man. In these Algonquian-speaking societies, kinship seems to have passed through the mother’s side, and although whites may have classified them based on skin color as “Negroes” or “mulattos”, through the generations these folks have retained their Indian self-identity. Some famous New England “persons of color” who have entered the history books were Indians. Crispus Attucks, the “mulatto” sailor killed in the Boston Massacre, was a Natick Indian from his mother’s side. (“Attucks” means “deer” in the Massachusetts

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dialect.) The renowned early 19th-century ship master and anti-slavery activist, Paul Cuffee, who carried an Ashanti surname (“born on Friday”) was the son of a Wampanoag mother and an enslaved African father. Thus, Indians and Africans, separately and together, became part of the global melange of peoples doing the hard dirty work at the bottom and economic foundation of the Modern World-System.

The legal codes of the New England colonies came to treat “any Indian, molato [sic], or negro servant or slave” more or less interchangeably in terms of the controls exercised over them. That very same phrase naming all three parties appears time and time again in the lawbooks: A 1698 Massachusetts Law prohibited persons from trading or trucking with “any Indian, molato [sic], or negro servant or slave or other known dissolute, lewd, and disorderly person, of whom there is just cause of suspicion.” A Massachusetts Law of 1703 prohibited any of the above from being abroad after nine o’clock at night. A 1708 Connecticut Law punished any for disturbing the peace of white people or physically threatening them. In 1730 Connecticut enacted a law punishing any of them for speaking “defamatory words.” It also passed a law that required any and all of them to have in their possession at all times a “ticket” or pass in writing from a government official or “under the Hand of the Master or Owner of such.” Otherwise, they were to be deemed runaways and subjected to arrest and forcible return. Rhode Island passed a law in 1750 “to prevent all persons from entertaining Indian,

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Equally subordinated, they must have developed some sense of a common class identity. We do not know much about it, unfortunately, but there is a solitary reference to a so-called “plot” in Newbury, Massachusetts in 1690 – one involving a black slave and an Indian slave having different masters who intended to take a vessel out of the dock and proceed with it to Canada to join the French. Supposedly, they were instigated by a white man from New Jersey. The runaways then proposed, it was said, to return from Canada with hundreds of other Indians to attack Newbury and neighboring towns and “save none but the negroes and Indians.”

Whether as slaves, as indentured servants, or as wage-workers, Indians were hard at work for white owners or masters or employers all over the place in southern New England by the late 17th and early 18th centuries. And we find Indian men employed in a wide variety of tasks. As we have seen, Indian women – some of whom may have been raised in English families – were performing services as maids or other domestic workers. Following the basic white division of labor by gender, Indian males are found in the records working mostly outside on farmsteads or plantations, sometimes side-by-side with white men. William Veazie scandalized his pious neighbors and was brought to accounts after he was caught out.

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94 On the other hand, Michael Guasco, “To “Doe Some Good Upon Their Countrymen”: The Paradox of Indian Slavery in Early Anglo-America,” *Journal of Social History* (Winter 2007): 389-411 makes a case that African slavery and Indian slavery were conceptually different in the minds of the English, at least early on, in as much as the enslavement of Indians was not, he claims for the purposes of extracting labor. He relies too much on intellectual evidence and, even in that regard, does not engage at all with the Downing to Winthrop letter which contradicts his thesis.

with “an Indian boy and two horses,” plowing his corn on a Thanksgiving Day. A French Huguenot refugee relocating to New England in 1687 noticed, along with the prevalence of Negro slaves in Boston, the employment of ‘savages’ to till the land, receiving a shilling and a half or eighteen pence a day, plus board for doing so. (It is not clear whether at that point in her narrative she was describing the state of affairs she observed around her entry port at Boston or at her final destination in Narragansett, Rhode Island which was becoming an area of plantation agriculture – although probably the latter.)

A year prior to King Philip’s War, Massachusetts’s longtime Indian Commissioner Daniel Gookin praised the Narragansett and Warwick Indians for being “an active, laborious and ingenious people, which is demonstrated in their labors they do for the English; of whom more are employed, especially in making stone fences and many other hard labors, than of any other Indian people or neighbors.” At the end of the war, in November 1676, Gookin reported that some of the Christian-convert Indians, who had been interned for the war’s duration on Deer Island in Boston harbor, were now at the “praying Indian” village of Nonantum (Newton) “employed to cut wood, and spin, and make stone walls.”

The notion that some of the thousands of miles of stone walls crossing New England were built by Indians – perhaps in continuity with Indian pre-contact

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accomplishments in constructing stone chambers and calendrical circles -- a topic just beginning to acquire scholarly credibility – cries out for research.\textsuperscript{100}

As farmers in the Praying Indian towns or as farm helpers for whites, male Indians were taking on a new cultural role. At the same time, the more traditional out-of-doors skills of male Indians were not only highly employable to whites in the fur trade – while it lasted – but were also put to good use in ridding the country of wolves, a standing threat to the preferred white form of agriculture, which included livestock. Wolves, not a threat to Indian-type agriculture, were common throughout New England.\textsuperscript{101} All the colonies offered bounties to Indians for the encouragement of killing wolves. Massachusetts in 1644 set out a reward by the town involved of a bushel of Indian corn or three quarts of wine for every wolf’s head brought in to the town. The following year, with the destruction by wolves of “great numbers of our cattle” and little apparent response to the incentives offered in the previous law, the General Court switched to a monetary bounty of ten shillings for each wolf to be paid out of the treasury of the colony. As an additional encouragement, Massachusetts in 1661 began offering powder and shot – a big concession given white fears -- to any successful Indian wolf hunters. In 1717, the monetary reward in Massachusetts was increased to four pounds per

\textsuperscript{100} For other evidence about Indians performing this stonewall-building work, see Mass. Historical Collections, Series 1, vol. 9 and “Most of those who learned any mechanical trade became stone masons, and found employment in the granite quarries, or in building chimneys, laying the foundations of houses and erecting stone buildings. Whether or not they took to some form of stone work from a natural affinity between the flinty rocks and their own nature, is a question I leave for the philosophic among you to determine. That they did so is a fact, and many of the more substantial buildings in the Narragansett country were largely fashioned by their hands.” Nathan B. Lewis, “The Last of the Narragansetts,” \textit{Proceedings of the Worcester Society of Antiquity} (1898): 44.

\textsuperscript{101} The extensive presence of wolves in early New England and their depredations on livestock is a topic often discussed in town and country histories. Sometimes lists are provided of bounties paid. For instance, see Duane Hamilton Hurd, \textit{History of Bristol County, Massachusetts, with Biographical Sketches of Many of the Pioneers and Prominent Men} (Philadelphia: J. W. Lewis, 1883), 757; Sylvester Judd, \textit{History of Hadley, Including the Early History of Hatfield, South Hadley, Amherst, and Granby, Massachusetts} (Springfield, Mass.: H. R. Huntting & Company, 1905), 344-345; Wilson Waters, \textit{History of Chelmsford, Massachusetts} (Lowell, Mass: Courier-Citizen Company, 1917), 429-431.
adult wolf and twenty shillings for a wolf’s whelp. The Plymouth colony passed a law in 1651 offering a coat of trading cloth for every wolf killed but subsequently in 1654, perhaps indicating the greater acclimation of Indians to a monetary economy -- altered that to a reward to be made in shillings.102

Also in line with more traditional gender roles, many Indian males in New England went off to fight on behalf of the “English sachems.” A company of Christianized Massachusetts “Friend Indian”s were used as scouts and auxiliaries early on in King Philip’s War before “popular prejudice” forced the company’s disbandment. But Massachusetts, following the successful example of Connecticut, resumed using Indian soldiers in the following year. It was an Indian warrior who killed the “traitor,” King Philip. Massachusetts raised two hundred Indian soldiers to go off with one hundred English in the continuation of the fighting against the “Eastern Indians” in Maine in 1677. Southern New England Indians took part in Phipp’s ill-fated Quebec Expedition of 1690 and in the triumphant Louisbourg Expedition in 1745. Richard R. Johnson, in his essay, “The Search for a Usable Indian,” in calling attention to the importance of Indian allies to the English in New England’s wars, estimates the Indians “formed a substantial proportion – one-seventh in 1707 and one-eighth in 1710, for example – of the colonial forces mustered for the assaults on Canada,” a remarkable number, given the steady Indian population decline in New England following

King Philip’s War. 103

The diary of Joshua Hempstead, a farmer, tradesman, and town official of New London, Connecticut shows how commonplace the employment of Indian labor was. We learn how in October 1730, Hempstead’s black slave named “Adam” and “Indian John finisht gathering & Cartg Corn” and how, in October 1745, an Indian man and a negro boy were aboard a boatload of wood being moved when tragically it “fell & Sunk.” 104 Through the years covered by his diary, Hempstead jotted down the deaths of numerous Indian servants belonging to others: “Christopher Stubbins his Indian man named ashan was buried who died Last night—Sick less yn a week.” (1712); an “Indian Woman yt lived at Mr Winthrops dead & buried” (1722); “an Indian Man Servt of Samll Harris's named Titus” (1725); “Sick not one week, an Indian man Jacob Mazeene died at Capt prenttis's. Sick but a few days.” (1731) “Sarah Wright a Molata Mongrel Indian & Negro died with the Distemper yesterday & was buried ths day. aged about 40. “(1734); “Diana an old Spanish Indian Woman of Brother Starrs was buried yesterday. She died with a Consumption” (1738); “an Indian boy of Thos Pembers Buried Died wth a Convulsion (1739); an Indian woman Late a Servt to Samll [ ] in the neck Died.” (1741); “an Indian freewoman wife to Mr Tilleys Negro Cuff Died, also an


Indian Woman yt Lived att Capt Lees died 2 or 3 days ago.” (1755). Again, in an entry in 1756, Hampstead noted the “untimely death” of an Indian woman Hannah Derrick “brot up among the English &c.” who hanged herself with a silk handkerchief from a latch or cleat of the bedroom door at the Widow Harris’s. Perhaps most extraordinarily of all such entries, Hampstead recorded the passing into eternity in 1749 of “old Indian Mary who was a Captive in the Narraganset war in 1675 Died Last night & was buried this night or Evening.” She had likely been taken up as a child and toiled all those many years.105

New England Indians as “Workers of the World”

It is daunting to think how we might quantify the contribution of the hard labors and useful skills by the native peoples in New England to the mainly family-based economies of the English settlers, much less to the accumulation of Capital on a world-scale. But their often overlooked contribution to the colonial household mode of production was clearly significant. In terms of their contribution to the latter, arguably that portion of rural New England most tied into the production of bulk commodities for the world market was the Narragansett Country of southeastern coastal Rhode Island, and there Indians (and, even more so, African) labor was of crucial importance. By the 18th Century, much of this fertile land had been engrossed by a “great landed aristocracy” some possessing estates of five, six or even ten miles square with grassland ranges or pastures holding hundreds of horses, cows, and sheep. One farm encompassed nearly 6,000 acres. Far from being exemplars of anything resembling the self-sufficient household mode of production, these were highly

105 Joshua Hempstead, *Diary of Joshua Hempstead of New London* (New London CT, 1901), 18, 123, 154, 234, 279, 330, 345, 376, 656, 675. In his capacity of Justice of the Peace, Hempstead also sentenced an Indian freeman, Water Weebucks, who had broken into a house “to make Satisfaction in Service” for the fines due for his crime. Ibid, 189.
commercialized enterprises. Large quantities of Indian corn, tobacco, cheese and wool were produced for sale at the Newport and Boston markets. Moreover, these estates were part and parcel of the Atlantic trading system, with ships departing twice-annually from nearby docks laden with meat and cheese, grain and hay, and the famous Narragansett pacer horses bound for the American South and the West Indies. The ships or others like them returned with all kinds of tropical and European treats. Guarded behind a strict slave code and high property restrictions against poorer whites in the electoral franchise, the proprietors of these rich estates enjoyed a life of luxury and ease. Much like their counterparts in the southern plantation colonies, they posed as English country gentlemen with their foxhunts and other rounds of neighborly festive occasions and dabbled occasionally in European literature and Enlightenment philosophizing. This grand lifestyle was made entirely possible by the labor and surplus value extracted from a whole host of enslaved Africans and Indian “servants.”

We can get a sense of the numbers of slaves and servants involved from two early censuses. In 1730 the population of South Kingston, the Rhode Island town with the greatest number of plantations, had 935 whites, 333 negroes and 223 Indian slaves or servants. According to the census taken in 1774, in South Kingston there were now fewer Indian


inhabitants, but there were still 210 living in town out of a total population that had grown to 2,835 (including 2,185 whites and 440 blacks). We can see from the census breakdowns that one hundred and three of these Indians resided, if not necessarily worked for a living, independently in twenty-three different households, each having an Indian head-of-household. The remaining Indians in town, more than half, were found to be residing in white-headed households, most likely employed there as servants, bound or otherwise. There were 340 white-headed households in town; 55 or 15.1% had at least one Indian living in them. Tops in the town was the household of Silas Niles, Jr., which the census enumerator found as having, along with six blacks, a grand total of ten Indians. In 1731, the philosophically-minded Anglican churchman, George Berkeley, paid a visit to this area of Rhode Island with a team from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel sent over from the England headquarters to “examine the condition and character of the Narragansett Indians.” He was greatly dismayed by what he saw there, describing it this way in his report:

The native Indians who are said to have been thousands within the compass of this colony, do not at present amount to a thousand, including every age and sect; and these are nearly all servants or labourers for the English, who have contributed more to destroy their bodies by the use of strong liquors, than by any means to improve their minds or save their souls. This slow poison jointly operating with the small-pox, and their wars, (but much more destructive than both,) has consumed the Indians, not only in our colonies but far and wide upon our confines, and having made havoc of them, is now doing the same thing by them who taught them this odious vice.

108 John R. Bartlett, ed., *Census of the Inhabitants of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, Taken by Order of the General Assembly, in the Year 1774* (Providence RI: Knowles, Anthony & Co, 1858). 119 or 35% of the white-headed households held black slaves, the top number in any one being thirteen (twice). There was but a single black-headed household in the whole town at that time. South Kingston had the largest concentration of dependent Indian and black workers but the adjacent towns of North Kingston and Charlestown also had significant numbers of both. Charlestown had by far the largest number (528) of resident Indians for any Rhode Island town—although with 413 of them being lumped together as “various” i.e., not governed in a household of any sort considered a civilized requisite by the Puritans. These were Indians on the Narragansett Reservation.

109 Wilkins Updike, *A History of the Episcopal Church in Narragansett Rhode Island, Including a History of Other Episcopal Churches in the State* (Boston: The Merrymount Press, 1907), 211-212. For background on Berkeley’s nearly three-year stint in Rhode Island, see Alexander Campbell Fraser, *Life and
Now, in the Rhode Island colony, at a bountiful location by the sea where Verrazano in 1534 found the ground thick with highly-productive people – a people who were able to trade a surplus 500 bushels of maize to help feed hungry Bostonians in 1634 -- the natives, aside from some who struggled to survive on the landlocked Narragansett “reservation” in Charlestown (abolished unilaterally by the Rhode Island legislature in 1888), had been reduced to the status of semi-proletarians or proletarians toiling for the English and contributing surplus value to local whites and the capitalist Modern World-System. At the same time, some Narragansetts, Pequots, Wampanoags and other Indians out of New England, in the roles of seamen and whalers, contributed to the emergence of the early modern multinational Atlantic working class described so well by Marcus Redikker and Peter Linebaugh.\textsuperscript{110} Going to sea – and not just for inhabitants of the islands discussed already -- was a common paying occupation for male Indians, where they worked side-by-side, and on some measure of equality in this skilled and highly dangerous work, with whites and blacks.\textsuperscript{111}


In the diaries of both Cotton Mather and Judge Samuel Sewell, we find reference to Indians working as sailors. Cotton Mather, Diary of Cotton Mather, 1681-1724, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Boston: The Society, 1911), 203; Samuel Sewall, Diary of Samuel Sewall, vol. 7, Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society 5th Series (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1882), 353.
to discover other Amerindians sometimes joining up with those egalitarian, communitarian “primitive rebels” and legendary redressers of popular wrongs, the high-seas pirates.  

Another factor that needs to be acknowledged with regards to Native American labor and the profits that accrued from it is that Indian workers, such as sailors, were still being supported in part in their “traditional” household economies. There was here an articulation of modes of production and reproduction. This resembles the situation of the migrant workers in Africa to which Meillassoux called attention in Maidens, Meal and Money where the white mine owners did not have to bear the full reproductive costs of labor and thus made higher-than-average profits because the native villages of the workers provided a social “safety net.” But we must leave this fascinating subject behind for now, which needs a fuller treatment in a comprehensive political economy of colonial New England and it relations with the Modern World-System. Within New England, what happened to Indian servitude? In Rhode Island during the Revolutionary War the patriot General Assembly in February 1778 authorized a “Black Regiment” open to “every able-bodied negro, mulatto or Indian man slave.” Those who joined were promised their immediate freedom along with the usual bounties, wages and “encouragements” for other soldiers of the Continental Army. The slave owners were to receive monetary compensation. So, for some enslaved Indians, freedom came in this way, as part of a broader struggle for independence. Otherwise, it is not

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114 Sidney Smith Rider, “The Rhode Island Black 'Regiment' of 1778,” in An Historical Inquiry Concerning the Attempt to Raise a Regiment of Slaves by Rhode Island During the War of the Revolution, Rhode Island Historical Tracts (Providence, R.I.: The Author, 1880), xxiii-86. In a few cases, it is possible with the enrollment list of the soldiers with their former masters available in this source to make an educated guess about their race or ethnicity, Cuff Gardner most likely being an African-American and Mingo Robinson
precisely clear what happened to the enslavement of Indians in what were now the New England states. The *Providence Gazette* of February 26, 1780 carried an ad for a run-away 30-year-old Indian servant named “Patience” from South Kingston who, with the themes of liberty and freedom throbbing in the air all around her, seems to have lost patience with her master and taken matters into her own hands. Her master wanted her to be returned or secured “in any of the Gaols of the United States.” Patience may have the dubious distinction of being the last person of whom we have a record in New England, where, as a side-effect of the Revolution, slavery was being abolished or phased out -- who was an enslaved Indian.

In any case, by this time the need for Indian and other coerced labor had diminished. By the late 18th century, the political economy of New England was changing profoundly. It was on its way to becoming an industrialized core of the Modern World-System. Mills to manufacture textiles and other commodities would be set up using young white farm girls as possibly being an Indian. But in most cases, a lot more work would have to be done with town, census or genealogical records to ascertain anything for certain.

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115 Some later advertisements appear for runaways described as “indented Indian servants,” who were generally young males: Newport Mercury, May 14, 1787; Western Star, February 19, 1793; Columbia Centinel, August 10, 1799; Norwich Courier, July 15, 1801; Independent Chronicle, August 30, 1804; Connecticut Gazette, July 26, 1809. In 1782, we find Ruth Waukeet, an “Indian Squaw Widow” living at Killingworth, Connecticut binding out her nine-year-old son, Adam, until the age of 21 or until May 30, 1795 to be a “family servant” with Ezra Stiles, President of Yale College. According to the indenture, Stiles agreed to teach Adam to read and to give him a Bible and a “freedom suit” when his term of service was over. Ezra Stiles, *The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles*, ed. Franklin Bowditch Dexter (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1901), 25.

the workforce on the falls of many New England rivers – rivers, as with other features of the landscape, still retaining their Algonquian names – where Indians had once gathered seasonally to fish and socialize. Meanwhile, the moving line of articulation and capitalist incorporation, with fur traders often in the vanguard followed by wars of internal conquest organized by the new republican national government — wars that would dispossess and impoverish many more Indians in order to make room for new waves of land speculators, miners and settlers – had moved westward. Before it had, however, a basic odious pattern for the whole further development of the United States of America, one combining avarice and violence with high-minded liberal rhetoric – as we have seen lately with “Operation Enduring Freedom” in Iraq -- got under way right here in colonial New England, being practiced first on the Wampanoags, Pequots, Narragansetts and other Algonquian-speaking Indian people.117

The tellers of American history have often been in denial. Can a New Day ever come to this country without us re-examining this history and doing justice to these First Peoples?

117 If there is any true “American Exceptionalism,” this is it. For an analysis of this odd relationship, see Richard Slotkin, Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860 (Middletown, Conn: Wesleyan University Press, 1973).
Concluding Observations

One of the main hopes I had for this dissertation, when setting out several years ago, was that it would help to demonstrate the value of neo-Marxist sociological and anthropology theories when creatively applied for shedding light on processes that happened in colonial New England involving Indians and their relations with the English invaders and settlers. It is now time, at long last, to assess whether this has indeed been the case. Back in Chapter One, I outlined the theories of “articulation of the modes of production” and of “social reproduction” that derived largely from a set of French anthropologists of the 1960s who worked with West and Central African societies under the impact of colonialism. Then I outlined the World-System theory (or “analysis”) of critical sociologist Immanuel Wallerstein and the more recent neo- or post-Wallersteinian World-System theory of two other radical or critical sociologists, Chase-Dunn and Hall. Wallerstein’s main focus was on the European origins of capitalism and its own behavior vis a vis the colonial world. Chase-Dunn and Hall have since sought a much broader scope for World-System theory, applying it to all known societies, including the indigenous. Although these theories have been applied to numerous other places and times, none had been applied heretofore to colonial New England. Let’s take each one of these sets of theories in turn and briefly evaluate the results of applying them to these materials.

As I think my readers of Chapters Three and Four will have found, the articulationist approach has a demonstrable usefulness. As we have seen, two different modes of production came to be articulated through the fur trade, which led to the dependency of Indians on European commodities and, in combination with the actions of a more unified state against fragmented non-state societies, the loss of most of their land and their reduction by and large
to a penurious condition of chattel and wage-slavery. This approach has enabled us to carve out a robust historical materialist explanation that does not fall either into crude utilitarianism (e.g., the new foreign goods were simply better than the goods, not to mention the weapons, the Indians had) or land us into the cultural relativist camp which, “thick descriptions” notwithstanding, basically can tell us very little about social and economic change, with each society hewing to its own set of cultural habits and rules. The related theory of social reproduction enabled us to identify and dig deeply into the key role played by prestige goods in this articulation and guided us in what to look for in the Indian Deeds.

Clearly, the histories of the West and Central African lineage-based societies and their interactions with the capitalist mode of production that have been so much studied and debated about in relationship to Marxist theory by the French anthropologists are not identical to our societies in New England. And some different factors were at play, even within a common context of incorporation by the Modern World-System. For one thing, the objects that constituted trade between “natives” and foreigners were different (although cloth came to play a major role in the slave trade as it did in the fur trade). For another, given differences in disease and warfare environments that put them at a distinct disadvantage, European traders elected to remain for a long time after contact largely on the periphery of the African continent. Land was generally not taken away from the Africans nor were strenuous efforts made to enclose Africans within the rules and regulations of Christianity and the law codes of colonial states until centuries later. The former was accomplished through a “tax game” rather than a “deed game.” A further difference is that in Africa state societies, as well as non-state societies, were involved in trading relations with Europeans. Notwithstanding these differences, the underlying structural relationships are quite similar with kinship and tributary
modes of production coming into articulation with a capitalist mode of production. Out of their trading connections with Europeans, chiefs and headmen in both places acquired prestige goods for social reproduction, goods that for a time enhanced their “traditional” powers within their societies. But, in both places growing dependency on these goods often ultimately led to the undermining and replacement of “traditional” ways of life and the subsumption of people within a capitalist political economy. Merchant capitalists in both places were quite happy to allow for the continuation of “traditional” non-capitalist forms of production by native peoples so long as they provided a ready source of profits for themselves. But once that was over and done with, the processes were set into motion for proletarianization, a transformation in New England that was similar, if not identical, to “enclosure” or “subsumption” processes that have taken place in elsewhere under the World-System.

Beyond giving us a sense of the Big Picture -- always a swell idea -- and about how larger geo-political and economic structures impact history-making on the ground level and of what sorts of economic and political characteristics we might want to keep a lookout for in different spatial zones, World-System Theory has proved rather less useful, at least in its original Wallersteinian form with its narrow focus on the production and trade in bulk commodities. Chase-Dunn and Hall’s theoretical approach is found to be somewhat more serviceable, validating the exchange of prestige goods as a vanguard of the penetration of capitalist relations of production into non-capitalist societies. And their additional political-military and ideological “networks” are useful additions, although the interrelationship of these four system-constituting networks are scarcely defined. Moreover, on the whole, World-System theorists of all sorts have one big drawback in common. Rather than building up a theoretical understanding of social structures and their change over time from the social
praxis of really existing people in their interactions with nature and each other, World-System theorists tend to reify social relations into a set of characteristics of the System as a whole and then use them to try to fit the realities on the ground level. Nor can we see in this type of theory how societies can move, as they do gradually or lurching, from one set of structural conditions to another. There is no sense of an internal dialectical. World-Systems approaches are especially problematic when we are dealing with the emergence of large-scale social structures that are not yet, as it were, set in stone economically, politically or ideologically. During these kinds of transitional periods, I believe that history is made by people much more “from the bottom up”– within all those conditions that have been inherited from the past.

Would other theoretical frameworks perhaps be useful in shedding light on these same historical materials? Without a doubt. We have already alluded to feminist theories and to the post-structuralism of Michel Foucault which bring other insights to bear on systems of power. Perhaps the future holds some kind of amalgam or synthesis of theories, if not necessarily a new overarching metanarrative. But I believe there are, as of yet, many more potential applications for these particular neo-Marxist theories in relationship to early American history, such as in regards to the so-called “transition question” about how industrial capitalism arose by the late 18th Century in New England (and some other places) out of a physical and economic landscape largely populated – the Indians having been mostly subjugated or removed – by self-sufficient white yeomen family farmers and small commodity producers. “Articulation” might help to shift the stalled discourse away from whether the economic behavior of these farmers can be characterized as either/or – either capitalist or non-capitalist. “Social reproduction” might help to provide us insights into all manner of things that are treated now as “cultural”. “World-System Theory” might also be applied to other
indigenous societies in North America. American historians, in keeping with American society, are generally a pragmatic lot. It is thus to be hoped that such tasks will be undertaken by historians who are a little more convinced that theories from other disciplines -- and these neo-Marxist theories in particular -- are valuable, if not necessarily because they are worthy of interest in and of themselves, as I do believe, but because they can be useful when applied to “real history.” In this manner, I hope this dissertation has helped to point the way forward for other scholars and engaged intellectuals in some small but definite ways here and there.

– FINIS –
Appendix A: Sample Indian Deed

Middlesex Deeds, Book 4, p. 337 - Southern Registry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indian Grantors</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Payment</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

To all people to whom this present writing shall come Know ye that Wequanomuniti alias John Tohattawans Indian and Waban the husband of Satetuss daughter of Tohattawans, and Naniskaw alias John Thomas, the husband of Nanosgr, the younger daughter of Tohattawans, Saggamore deceased, Indians, which said persons above specified being the proper & sole heirs of the said Tahattawans their father deceased and Nephew & Cassetnassett & little Jno Indians, being the next line all heirs to the said Tohattawans deceased, for & in consideration of a valuable sum of money to whom well & truly paid, by the Inhabitants of the Towne of Chelmsford, the receipt whereof the said Wequanomuniti, alia John Tohattawans and Waban the husband of Satatuse, the daughter of Tohattawans and Naniseaw, alias Jno Thomas the husband of Nanosgr, the younger daughter of Tohattawans, & Nephew, & Cassetnassett & little John Indians, do by these presents acknowledge, and there with to be fully satisfied & paid, and thereof, and of every part & parcel thereof do fully, clearly, & absolutely acquit, exonerate & discharge said Inhabitants of the Towne of Chelmsford, their heirs executors, & administrators forever, Have granted, bargained, & sold, aliened, enfeoffed, & confirmed, and by these presents do fully, clearly, and absolutely, grant bargain, & sell, alien, enfeoff, & confirm unto the said Inhabitants of the Towne of Chelmsford aforesaid in the county of Middlesex in New England, all that tract of land lying within the bounds & limits of the said Towne of Chelmsford, and is bounded Southerly, by the lands of the Town of Billerica, West Southerly, partly by the lands of the Towne of Concord, and partly by the Indian Plantacon of Nashobah, partly by the Counteys land, northerly by the lands of Mr. Edward Ting, & on the north by Mirrimack river, and on the east & north east by the Plantacon of the Indians called Patucket. To have & to hold the said granted & bargained premises, with all the privileges and appurtenances to the same apperteyning or in any wise belonging, with all rivers, Ponds, brooks, mounes and all other conveniences, being within and belonging to ye said Tract of land above specified unton them the said Inhabitants of the Town of Chelmsford, their heirs, Executors and administrators, or assignes forever, to their only proper use and behooffe. And the said Wequanomuniti, alia John Tohattawans and Waban the husband of Satatuse, ye daughter of Tohattawans, and Naniska alias John Thomas the husband of Nonasgr the younger daughter of the said Tohattawans Deced, & Nophow, & Cassetnassett, and little Jno. Indians above mentioned, their heirs, executors and admistrators do covenant promise and grant to and with the said Inhabitants
of the Town of Chlemsford, their heyres an dassignes by the prsents that they the said
Wequanomunitt alias John Tohattawans, & Waban the husband of Sahtuse & Maniscan,
Cassenossett, and little John, now are and at the ensealing hereof shall stand & be lawfully
& rightly solo seized in theirs demanenes as of fee simple, of and in the said granted and
bargined premises, of a good and indefeasable estate of Inheritance, by good right & lawful
authority, absolutely without any mannr of condiccon, mortgage, or limitacon of use or
uses to alter, change or determine the same. And that they have good right, full power, &
lawfull authority to grant, bargaine, and the same to cofirme unto them the said
Inhabitants of the said Towne of Chelmsford, their heyres and assignes forever. And that
the said Inhabitants of the said Towne of Chelmsford, their heyres and assignes forever
hereafter shall & may at all times and from tme to tme for ever hereafter peaceably &
quietly have, hold, occupy, possess, & injoy the premises in & by the presents granted,
bargained & sold, and every part & parcell thereof, without the lawfull cost, trouble,
evicon, expulcon, sute, molestacon disturbance, contradiccon of them the said
Wequanomunitt alias John Tohattawans, and Waban the husband of Sahtusq and Noniska
alias John Thomas the husband of Nanosqr Nephew, Cossenafesett, little John, or either of
them, or any other person whatsoever from fully claymeing and having any right with or
Interest therein or to any part of parcell thereof by, from or under them the said
Woquanomunitt alias John Tohattawans, and Waban the husband of Sahtusq, Naniakan
alias John Thomas the husband of Nonasqr the younger daughter of Tohattawans Nophow,
Cassenassett, little John, or either of them in by any other lawfull wayes & meanes whatso
ever. In witness whereof the said Wequanomunitt alias John Tohattawans & Waban, &
Sahtusq his wife and Nanisqua alias John Thomas & Nanasqr his wife, in
acknowledgement of their free consent to this act & deed of their husbands and Nephew,
Cassonassott and little Jno abovesaid, have hereunto put their hand and seales this twenty
sixth day of April, In the year of or Lord God one thousand six hundred & sixty five.

John Tahattawans X a seale
Waban his X marke & seale
John Thomas alias
Naniskaw X his mark & a Seale
Numphow his marke X a seale
Cassenassett hhis marke & a seale
Little John his mark X & a seale

In the prsence off
Jno Elyott
John Parker
Willm French

Acknowleded by all the Subscribers namely the Indian men to be their free act & ded. &tc.
this 26th day of Aprill 1665
Before me Daniel Gookin.

Entred, 22th of November, 1671
By Thomas Danforth Recordr
Appendix B: Guidelines to the Use of the CD-ROM

The accompanying CD-ROM contains three things. One is a file in Microsoft Access format (.mdb), which contains the Indian Deeds Database. The second is a set of related Microsoft Excel files with data from the Indian Deeds Database used to generate the graphs and pie charts found in the Figures in Chapter Four. These files can be opened offline, if the user’s computer has the Microsoft Office Suite 2007 or later version installed. The third file is a Google Earth .kml file. For this file to be opened, Google Earth needs to be installed on the user’s computer. Moreover, unlike the other files, it will not open properly if the user is offline. For all files, once software is installed there on the computer, just click to open.

Indian Deeds Database File

• Each row in the table contains the data for a separate deed or other piece of related data.
• Columns, which the user can sort, contain the following information (where available):

  1. Date of Deed (according to deed)
  2. Type of Deed
  3. Town of Deed
  4. Colony of Deed
  5. Grantor(s) (according to deed)
  6. Grantor Title (according to deed)
  7. Where Grantor From (according to deed)
  8. Tribe or Band
  9. Grantee(s) (according to deed)
 10. Grantee Title (according to deed)
 11. Where Grantee From (according to deed)
 12. Price Paid (according to deed)
 13. Deed Text (whole, partial or reference)
 14. Source

• Dates from before 1752 have been converted from “Old Style” to “New Style” – e.g., what appears on the deed as February 21, 1668 is now February 21, 1669.
• The deeds, if the user so desires, can also be browsed and worked on in a “form” format.
Excel Files

• Indian Deeds by Date
• Indian Deeds - Old Style to New Style
• Indian Deeds by Month
• Year Payments - Prewar
• Year Payments - Postwar

Google Earth Map File

• Contains folders and subfolders with “pins,” which can either be opened separately or looked at in conjunction with each other as various map overlays – e.g., Indian and English forts.
• Red pin means a Indian-related geographical location.
• Yellow pin means a English-related geographical location.
• Blue pin means a French or Dutch-related geographical location.
• ??? following a name means general vicinity of item only, specific site unknown.
• Sources from which the data was obtained are generally in the “Properties” for each pin.
• Some items are hypertexted leading to what Google Earth thinks are relevant Websites.
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Curriculum Vitae

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