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Germs, Pigs and Silver: King Philip's War and the Deconstruction of the Middle Ground In New England

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GERMS, PIGS AND SILVER:

KING PHILIP'S WAR AND THE DECONSTRUCTION OF THE MIDDLE GROUND IN NEW ENGLAND

A Thesis Presented

by

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ABSTRACT

GERMS, PIGS, AND SILVER;
KING PHILIP'S WAR AND THE DECONSTRUCTION OF THE MIDDLE GROUND IN NEW ENGLAND

December 2013

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Early in the seventeenth century Algonquians peoples of southern New England and English colonists built a middle ground which benefitted both groups. Trade, the existence of competition from Dutch and French colonies and powerful Algonquian tribes maintained this middle ground. However, as trade items, such as beaver pelts and wampum became rare or lost value and continued English immigration to New England weakened Dutch claims to the area, the middle ground began to crumble. As English-style farms and livestock changed the ecology of New England and the colonists sought to assert their will, Algonquians lost the ability to live as their ancestors had done for millennia, land and their places in society. The Wampanoag sachem, Metacom, or Philip, and his Native allies fought a bloody war against the English and their Native allies to force the colonists back to the middle ground. The English victory in King Philip's War (1675-76) signaled the end of the middle ground in New England and Native sovereignty in the region.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As is the case with many college undergraduates, I began my freshman year with limited knowledge regarding American Indian history. Through courses at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst I came to realize the depth of subject and the need for additional research. Historians such as Richard White, Daniel Ritcher, Jean O'Brien and Colin Calloway (among others) wrote seminal works on American Indians and have informed the direction I choose in framing my thesis.

My advisor and mentor throughout my Masters Degree process at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, Dr. Josh Reid, provided countless hours reading, revising, and advising me while I worked on my thesis and, when necessary, prodded me along during the periods that it appeared as though this would never be finished. Josh is an outstanding teacher and historian, whom I will continue to solicit advice from as I continue my academic career. Similarly, Dr. Bonnie Miller taught me to look at history in a different light and her notes most certainly improved my thesis. While, I was unfortunate enough to not attend a course with Dr. Jonathan Chu, his knowledge of colonial New England provided me with valuable information that strengthened my work.

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while his wife, Dr. Lia Martin, has offered an open ear as I navigate the PhD process. Similarly, my father supported me throughout and has integral to my competition of my Masters Degree. Of course, this thesis would not be without the unquestioned love and support of my mother, Betty, and she deserves more credit for the accomplishments for her three sons than words allow.

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CHAPTER I.
INTRODUCTION

The Puritan colonists from England and Algonquian tribes of southern New England built a middle ground that economic pressures deconstructed, culminating in the bloody and violent struggle known as King Philip's War (1675-76). Through interactions among European fishermen and explorers and Algonquians in the sixteenth century, they formulated tentative modes for interacting and trading. The 1616-18 epidemics that swept through Indian country with horrible ferocity and wrought changes in Algonquian societies, arrived on board the ships of these explorers and fishermen. Therefore when the Pilgrims arrived on the shores of Plymouth in 1620, they settled upon land left vacant as the result of epidemics. Within a year the English settlers came into contact with the Wampanoag sachem, Massasoit whose weakened position left him in search of allies. The Wampanoags, decimated by Eurasian diseases, and the sickly Pilgrims, having no knowledge or wherewithal to survive in a hostile world became in many ways dependent on one another. Out of this dependency emerged a middle ground.

Historian Richard White, introduced the middle ground concept, referring to European-Native relations in the Great Lakes region or the *pays d'en haut*. Initiated by French fur traders, Jesuit missionaries and colonists along with their Algonquian and Huron trading partners and allies in the middle of the seventeenth century, the middle

ground in this region experienced many iterations through the Seven Years War, American Revolution and the War of 1812. In White's words the middle ground: "depended on the inability of both sides to gain their ends through force. The middle ground grew according to the need of people to find a means, other than force, to gain the cooperation or consent of foreigners. To succeed, those who operated on the middle ground had, of necessity, to attempt to understand the world and the reasoning of others and to assimilate enough of that reasoning to put it to their own purposes."[1] Therefore the middle ground as White argues, rests on the inability of any entity in the region to dominate and dictate to the other. As a result the French, Algonquians, Hurons and additional Native confederacies needed to create a new language of cooperation so that both entities could extract what they needed from the other. Furthermore, the new language of cooperation was accompanied by a mutual misunderstanding of each others' cultures. Through misunderstanding and the need to interact with one another on equal footing, the French and Natives began to act as they thought their allies and trading partners would prefer them to behave. Through this mutual misunderstanding, new norms for interaction developed. Scholar Philip J. Deloria notes that these new norms were not, "acculturation" or "compromise." Rather, as he quoted White, they were "People try[ing] to persuade others who are different from themselves by appealing to what they perceive to be the values and the practices of those others. They often misinterpret and distort both the values and practices of those they deal with, but from these misunderstandings arise new meanings and through them new practices."[2] The new language and norms for

[1] Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 52.
[2] Philip J. Deloria, "What is the Middle Ground Anyway?" *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series,

interactions created by French traders or *coureurs de bois* (forest rangers) and Natives became the basis of the middle ground and that ground became an entirely new entity that existed nowhere else in the world. The middle ground did have its limits, however. Frenchmen, no matter how deep in Indian country they lived, remained Frenchmen, and Algonquians, no matter how many European goods they obtained or even if they lived amongst the French, remained Algonquians. However, the middle ground White describes did reach deeper into the individual cultures as time progressed.

Aspects of both French and Native cultures became malleable to fit within the confines of the middle ground. The term "Onontio" provides an apt example of how this occurred. An Iroquois word, Onontio means "great mountain" and is what Algonquians called the French governor of New France, whom they regarded as a father. Coming from a patriarchal society, the French at least initially understood this to mean a leader whose orders were to be followed as though they came from God. On the other hand, in Algonquian society fathers both provided for and protected their children, but did not receive unquestioning authority over his progeny. In order to keep his children happy Onontio needed to provide them food and mediate disagreements that could turn deadly if the conflicting parties did not find the outcome satisfactory. Therefore the French governor needed to keep Algonquian customs and notions of justice in his mind when adjudicating disputes between his children, or he risked alienating valuable trading and military partners.[3] When the governor made rulings regarding emigres from France, he returned to the codes of law regulating Europe. In short both the French and Algonquians

Vol. 63, No. 1 (Jan., 2006): 16.
[3] White, *The Middle Ground*, 84.

in the *pays d'en haut*, through their misunderstandings created a new language and rules for interaction that became the norm for white/Indian relationships in the region.

The middle ground in New England differed from what the French and Algonquians built in the *pays d'en haut*; however, in structure they appear similar. White reflects on the building materials required to create a sustainable middle ground: "a rough balance of power, mutual need or a desire for what the other possesses, and an inability by either side to commandeer enough force to compel the other to change. Force and violence are hardly foreign to the process of creating and maintaining a middle ground, but the critical element is mediation."[4] While Massasoit certainly had enough power to oust the Pilgrims when they landed, he did not, however, have enough power to ignore the opportunity to strengthen himself against his rivals, the Narragansetts. Furthermore, both the Pilgrims and Wampanoags possessed what the other needed: Pilgrims needed assistance surviving in the New World and trade items they could remit to England to pay down their debts, and Wampanoags desired European goods. Once the Pilgrims succeeded as a result of operating within the confines of the middle ground, even more Puritans boarded boats in 1630, headed for Massachusetts Bay. The presence of the Dutch to the southwest and the French to the north -- in concert with powerful native confederacies, such as the Pequots and Narragansetts -- forced the Puritans to the middle ground as well. The middle ground built by the Puritans and Algonquians, whom Kathleen Bragdon's research shows were called Ninnimissinouk or "the people" in Narragansett, continued to expand from 1620 until 1636, when the tensions of the middle

[4] Richard White, "Creative Misunderstandings and New Understandings," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 63, No. 1 (Jan., 2006): 10.

ground and the race for valuable trading routes sparked the Pequot War (1636-38).[5] While aspects of the middle ground remained after this war, White's critical element of mediation began to lose power in New England and the English sought to assert their perceived dominance.

Boston, the capital of New England, became a major hub of commerce within the expanding Atlantic economy and merchants looked to agricultural surpluses and natural resources such as timber for filling ships with marketable commodities that could be traded around the Atlantic basin. Reliance on farming began to change the ecology of New England in ways that threatened Ninnimissinouk lifestyles. Additional threats to Algonquian lifestyles, such as Reverend John Eliot's praying towns – and thus blows against the middle ground – added to the tensions in New England. The English continually chipped away at the middle ground after the Pequot War so that by the time the colonists moved from wampum to silver as their currency in the 1660s, so much tinder had been laid, that the smallest spark would ignite the pile and cause the middle ground to explode. Once the pile ignited, Metacom and his Native allies fought to restore the middle ground and the former places of respect within the society and the economy. However, King Philip's War (1675-76) not only marks an end to the middle ground in southern New England, but it also brought an effective end to Native sovereignty in the region.

[5] Kathleen J. Bragdon, *Native People of Southern New England, 1500-1650*. (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), xi.

CHAPTER II.
INITIAL ENCOUNTERS AND THE MIDDLE GROUND

Early in the seventeenth century, European explorers, fishermen, traders, settlers and Algonquian peoples inhabiting New England built a middle ground, a concept historian Richard White coined to describe another part of North America. Writing of the French traders and Algonquians living in the Great Lakes region from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, White argues that they met each other on and operated within the confines of a place where "The older worlds of the Algonquians and of various Europeans overlapped, and their mixture created new systems of meaning and of exchange."[1] The Indians of North America survived and thrived through the millennia by adapting their cultures, including shrinking and expanding trade networks, as the availability of resources in the environment dictated. The Algonquians, in particular, had a long and rich history surrounding the practices of trading with friends and allies. Therefore, when European ships appeared off the coast or sailed up rivers in their territory, Algonquians often enthusiastically met them, seeking to trade animal pelts in exchange for their metal wares and cloth. Realizing the value of trade with Indians, the French, English and Dutch interests raced one another to establish trading posts and forge alliances with Algonquians living near the Delaware River, along the Hudson River in present-day New York and

[1] White, *The Middle Ground,* x.

up to the Saint Lawrence River in present-day Canada. Beyond needing Native expertise to capture the desired animals and process their pelts, Europeans needed Algonquian allies to teach them how to survive in a distant and difficult land. Likewise, Algonquian confederacies, having been decimated by Eurasian illnesses such as smallpox and measles brought by the earliest traders and explorers, sought alliances with the Europeans to serve as a bulwark against their rivals and to enhance their position in the lucrative trade of metal goods and European cloth. Thus, in early seventeenth-century New England, a land of rivalries and increasing wealth, where no entity had the wherewithal to impose their will, Europeans and Algonquians formed and met each other on a middle ground.

Algonquian History Prior to European Arrival

The Native peoples of North America had a long history of utilizing trade as a part of their adaptations to climate and environmental changes. These traditions became vital to the formation of the middle ground between the Algonquians and Europeans. By analyzing ice core data, along with tree ring and lake sediment samples, one can begin to get an accurate picture of the environment during certain epochs. When these valuable data are compared to the archaeological records, one can see how Paleoindian cultures interacted with their surroundings and how their environs shaped cultures.[2]

Once people migrated out of Asia and into North America across the Bering

[2] David G. Anderson, "Climate and Culture Change in Prehistoric and Early Historic Eastern North America," *Archaeology of Eastern North America,* 29 (2001): 143-186.

Strait around 15,000 to12,900 years ago, they needed to adapt to climate change and utilize the environment to survive. Early on in their experience in North America, Native peoples hunted megafauna, using Clovis spear point technologies. According to anthropologist David Anderson, wide dispersal of sites across the North American continent containing Clovis points suggests vast trade networks of information and goods. However, the onset of the Younger Dryas, from 12,900 to 11,650 years ago, which data shows changed the climate over the course of a few years or decades, brought on a prolonged period of cold weather. The archeological record shows that people became less connected with each other and more specialized to suit their individual environments.

While experiencing climatic and environmental changes as all indigenous peoples of North America did, New England Algonquians encountered issues specific to their region and as such developed their own adaptations and traditions surrounding trade. Historian Steven F. Johnson's research has shown that the indigenous peoples who became Algonquians moved into present-day New England as early as 9000 B.C, chasing megafauna with their Clovis-tipped spears.[3] As the climate changed, the super-sized beast perished, and Paleoindians in New England needed to adapt their lifestyles and stone implements for hunting smaller game and collecting tree nuts and edible plants, which required larger territories and resulted in diverse, decentralized societies. Though decentralized, these societies remained connected through trade and, as a result developed a mutually intelligible language

[3] Steven F. Johnson, *Ninnuock (The People): The Algonkian People of New England* (Marlborough, MA: Bliss Publishing Company, 1995), 1.

that became known as Algonquian.

Living from Wisconsin to Nova Scotia and as far south as the Chesapeake Bay, Algonquian peoples established trade links and developed a language distinct from other language groups in eastern North America, such as Iroquoian, Siouan, and Muskogean.[4] Therefore, Natives who lived in the region around the western Great Lakes and along the northeastern Atlantic coast – people who spoke one of the distinct but mutually intelligible variations of this tongue -- became identified as Algonquians. Pilgrim, Indian diplomat and the periodic Governor of New Plymouth (first elected in 1633) Edward Winslow noted the connectedness of Algonquian society: "And though there be difference in a hundred miles' distance of place, both in language and manners, yet not so much but that they very well understand each other and thus much of their lives and manners."[5] Furthermore, because these peoples with a similar language lived in an area of the world with harsh winters, inter-tribal commerce that allowed them to unload surpluses of any given good for materials they needed to survive the scarcity of season played a significant role in Native societies. For Algonquians, trade occurred between friends and, as such, solidified alliances while adhering to age-old traditions surrounding commerce.

Along these centuries-old trade networks came knowledge of how to plant corn, beans and squash, which became known as the Three Sisters. Algonquians of

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[4] Daniel K. Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 5-6.

[5] Edward Winslow, "Winslow's Relation," in *Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers of the Colony Of Plymouth: From 1602-1625,* ed. Alexander Young. (Boston: Charles C. Little and James Brown, 1844), 366-7.

southern New England required large tracts of land to maintain their lifestyles. They lived in settled villages near corn-fields, which needed to be moved every eight years or so, in the late spring through the harvest in the fall, and then moved on to winter hunting villages. On the other hand, Algonquians living in northern New England had a shorter growing season and subsisted mainly on the fruits of the earth through hunting and gathering, requiring even larger tracts of land than their southern neighbors. Because Algonquians living in southern New England more often had excess stores of corn and other vegetables, while Algonquians living in the northern regions more frequently had excess meat and animal pelts, southern and northern Algonquians traded with each other to enhance food stores and established well-traveled routes of commerce. These necessary exchanges strengthened the notion in Ninnimissinouk societies that trade should be beneficial to all parties involved. Furthermore, considering the importance of trade for Algonquians, ritualistic forms of gift giving, which signified friendship, evolved around these vital exchanges. Dutch colonist, traveler and chronicler David Pietersz de Vries provided an example of how Indians in southern New England viewed gift giving and exchanges as a way of making peace and cementing ties. Writing in January of 1633, de Vries made note of how nine sachems met with him and other colonists to make peace:

> The nine [sachems] seated themselves in a circle and called us to them, saying they saw that we were afraid of them, but that they came to make a lasting peace with us, whereupon they made us a present of ten beaver-skins, which one of them gave us, with a ceremony with each skin, saying in whose name he presented it; that it was for a perpetual peace with us, and that we must banish all evil thoughts from us, for they had now thrown away all evil. I wanted to make presents to them through the interpreter, to each one an axe, adze, and pair of knives, but they refused them, declaring that they had not made us

> presents in order to receive others in return, but for the purpose of a firm peace, which we took for truth.[6]

Not knowing the protocol for making peace, de Vries had attempted to offer presents to the sachems, which they declined because it violated Algonquian norms for entering into alliances with one another. In Ninnimissinouk society trade occurred between friends and allies after presenting gifts and peace had been made between communities.

Sachems, who could be male or female, wielded great influence in Algonquian communities and played a vital role in cementing ties with neighboring tribes. Furthermore a sachem increased his or her prestige by bestowing presents on less well-off village residents. De Vries noted that, "Their government rests with the oldest, wisest, best- spoken, and bravest men, who generally resolve, and the young men and the bravest execute, but if the commonalty do not approve of the resolution, it is then submitted to the decision of the whole populace. The chiefs are generally the poorest among them, for instead of receiving anything, these Indian chiefs are made to give to the populace."[7] White settlers, unable to comprehend Native power structures, mistakenly compared a sachem's power to that of European monarchs. William Bradford, a Pilgrim and one of the earliest settlers in New England, provided evidence that colonists likened sachems to the royalty of Europe when he described their peace offering to Massasoit, sachem of the Wampanoag confederacy: "We sent

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[6] David Pietersz de Vries*, Voyages from Holland to America, A.D. 1632 to 1644,* trans. Henry C. Murphy (New York: Bodleiana, 1853), 38-9.
[7] Ibid., 139.

to the King a payre of Knives, and a Copper Chayne, with a jewell at it."[8] In light of the mistake, William Cronon observes, "Comparison might more aptly have been made to the relationships between lords and retainers in the early Middle Ages of Europe. In reality, sachems derived their power in many ways: by personal assertiveness; by marrying (if male) several wives to proliferate wealth and kin obligations; by the reciprocal exchange of gifts with followers; and especially in southern New England, by inheriting it from close kin."[9] Although sachems were respected, they could not force their will on the people, and major decisions required a consensus in which dissenters could easily move to another village. Indian superintendent Daniel Gookin noted that sachems needed to keep their people pleased to retain power, "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 princes endeavor to carry it obligingly and lovingly unto their people, lest they should desert them, and thereby their strength, power, and tribute would be diminished."[10] Algonquian sachems served their people and needed to make wise decisions that kept them fed and safe or watch them leave for another sachem who would.

Sachems often solicited the council of other wise and experienced members of the tribe to help navigate the complexities of Algonquian society. Beneath the

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[8] William Bradford & Edward Winslow, *Mourt's Relation Or Journal of the Plantation at Plymouth* (Boston: John Kimball Wiggins, 1849), 92.
[9] William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2003), 59.
[10] Daniel Gookin, *Historical collections of the Indians in New England; of their several nations, numbers, customs, manners, religion and government, before the English planted there* (Boston; Towtaid, 1970), 154.

sachems were sagamores, usually seen as heads of clans within tribes. Warriors or *pnise* formed another class that had gained respect for bravery in raids or other military actions and had a special connection to the spirit world. Edward Winslow described *pnise* as, "men of great courage and wisdom, and to those also the devil appeareth more familiarly than to others, and as we conceive, maketh covenant with them to preserve them from death by wounds with arrows, knives, hatchets, &c. or at least both themselves and especially the people think themselves to be freed from the same."[11] *Sannup* formed the largest class in any given tribe, and they were similar to the plebeians of Europe, but the fluidity of Algonquian society allowed them more ability to escape conditions they found unbearable. Powwows, the priest class of Algonquian tribes responsible for connecting to the spirit world and protecting the people from evil forces, were respected, and sachems and sagamores sought their guidance when big decisions needed to be made.[12]

Algonquian religion, in many ways, reflected their society and their interdependence on each other and the land. Rituals that connected humans to the spiritual world permeated many aspects of Algonquian society and dictated the proper actions in their lives, including hunts, warfare, trade and interpersonal relationships. Anthropologist Kathleen Bragdon summarizes the role of rituals in Algonquian society, noting, "In ritual, the beliefs and symbolic relations that made sense of the world for the Ninnimissinouk were played out in public contexts. Ritual condensed

[11] Winslow, "Winslow's Relation," 359.
[12] Bragdon, *Native People of Southern New England*, 200.

and celebrated all that was to them significant, reaffirming the social order, and society's relations with the supernatural as well."[13] Writing about a burial ceremony near present-day Manhattan, de Vries provided an example of an Algonquian ritual that cemented ties between tribes:

> It is accordingly announced in their village, that a great festival is to be held, with frolic and dancing. This festival continues ten days, during which time their friends come from other nations on all sides, in order to see it held, and the accompanying ceremonies, which are attended with great expense. Under cover of these ceremonies, dances, feasts, and meetings, they contract new alliances of friendship with their neighbours; saying, that as the bones of their ancestors and friends are together in the little bundles, so may their bones be together in the same place, and that as long as their lives shall last, they should be united in friendship and concord, as were their ancestors and friends, without being able to be separated from each other, like as the bones of the ancestors and friends of each other were mingled together.[14]

Having forged bonds over the course of the festival, these tribes could then trade freely with each other as friends who adhered to rules of reciprocity.

That notion of reciprocity played an important and more general role in the Ninnimissinouk world, including in trade. Although early European observers, such as de Vries, noted that, "From religion, and all worship of God, they are entirely estranged," the truth is that spirituality determined much about Native notions of right and wrong.[15] In regards to Algonquian beliefs, historian Daniel Richter notes that, "No one could go it alone: human persons needed to band together in families, clans, and villages; they relied on animals and plants voluntarily to give themselves up to them for food."[16] Richter continues on to point out that, "All these relationships

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[13] Ibid., 217.
[14] De Vries, *Voyages from Holland to America*, 164.
[15] Ibid., 137.
[16] Richter, *Facing East,* 14.

depended on reciprocal exchanges of goods and obligations, material or ceremonial."[17] People needed to do what they could to provide for their families, and banding together in villages helped to divide labor and increased the efficacy of hunts and fishing trips. English traveler to New England and chronicler William Wood observed the role reciprocity played in Algonquian society:

> If a Tree may be judged by his fruite, and dispositions calculated by exteriour actions; then may it be concluded, that these Indians are of affable, courteous, and well disposed natures, ready to communicate the best of their wealth to the mutuall good of one another; and the lesse abundance they have, to manifest their entire friendship; so much the more perspicuous is their love, in that they are as willing to part with their Mite in poverty, as treasure in plenty. As he that kills a Deere, sends for his friends, and eates it merrily.[18]

In addition to rules of reciprocity dictating the distribution of food and goods within any given tribe, Algonquians expected that trade similarly adhered to these rules. Therefore, tribes depended upon their neighbors to unload surplus goods in exchange for materials needed to survive the tough winters. Inter-tribal commerce played such an important role in Native societies that rituals surrounding the vital practice grew into traditions that cemented the bonds of friendship. Bragdon writes of the importance of rituals in the Ninnimissinouk economy, "Through motion, sound, the creation of sacred space, and an elaborated use of symbols, ritual embodied and interpreted daily experience, and reflected cosmological principles also expressed in social and economic relations."[19] Therefore, trading forays between tribes grew to involve gift giving, negotiations and feasts that could last days and helped to bring the

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[17] Ibid.
[18] William Wood, *New-England's Prospect* (Boston: John Wilson and Son, (1865), 77.
[19] Bragdon, *Native People of Southern New England*, 217.

tribes closer to each other.

That notion permeated society. Writing about how Algonquians viewed material wealth, Richter notes, "To hoard goods when others needed them was one of the most extreme forms of antisocial behavior. In this context, status and authority went not to those who *had* the most, but those in a position to *give* the most away."[20] In Algonquian society, in other words, a friend traded fairly and generously, whereas someone who exhibited avarice, or acted disrespectfully, would earn disdain. To this end, William Wood concluded, " In a word, a friend can command his friend, his house, and whatsoever is his, (saving his Wife) and have it freely: And as they are love-linked thus in common courtesie, so are they no way sooner dis-joynted than by ingratitude; accounting an ungratefull person a double robber of a man, not onely of his courtesie, but of his thankes which he might receive of another for the same proffered, or received kindnesse."[21] De Vries observed the anger of an Indian who felt that he had been cheated: "He had just come from this house, where they had sold him brandy, into which they had put half water; that he could scoop up the water himself from the river, and had no need of buying it; that they had also stolen his beaver-coat, and he wanted to go home and get his bow and arrows, and would kill some one of the villainous Swannekens [as the Algonquians called the Dutch] who had stolen his goods."[22] In light of these beliefs, trade was a tool for improving the tribe's lot and not for the accumulation of wealth into the hands of a few.

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[20] Richter, *Facing East*, 52.
[21] Wood, *New-England's Prospect*, 77.
[22] De Vries, *Voyages from Holland to America*, 152.

Although rules of reciprocity and spirituality pervaded Ninnimissinouk life, Algonquians did not live in a world of peace, love and harmony; far from it, as raids and wars occurred frequently, and tribes entreated with friendly neighbors to enter into larger confederacies for protection against marauding enemies such as the hated Maquas, better known as the Mohawk. Algonquian confederacies consisted of numerous smaller tribes and clans that banded together to enhance their military and economic capabilities. De Vries provided an example of the need for protection when he noted how the Mohawk had subjected the Mahicans living near the Dutch in present-day Albany, New York: "This tribe of Indians was formerly a powerful nation, but they are brought into subjection, and made tributaries by the Maquas [Mohawks]."[23] Although each confederacy had a sachem who wielded the most influence, each of the tribes had its own sachem and largely lived apart from its allies. In regards to the power structures of a confederacy, Cronon observes, "Polity had less the abstract character of a monarchy, a country, or even a tribe, than of a relatively fluid set of personal relationships."[24] These personal relationships took the forms of confederacies. The Wampanoag confederacy, for example, which encompassed portions of southeastern Massachusetts, Cape Cod along with Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket included the Pokanokets, Nemaskets, Munposets, Pocassets, Sakonnet and Patuxet tribes.[25] The Wampanoag, however, as Johnson's study reveals, were only one of seven major Algonquian confederacies. The powerful Pequots occupied valuable

[23] Ibid., 135.
[24] Cronon, *Changes in the Land*, 59.
[25] Johnson, *Ninnuock: (The People),* 8.

territory along the Connecticut River in present-day central Connecticut.[26] The Narragansett confederacy held large swaths of lands in current-day Rhode Island.[27] The Massachusett confederacy, occupied villages around current-day Boston Harbor.[28] The Pocumtuck resided in lands surrounding current-day Springfield, Massachusetts.[29] People of the Pennacook confederacy inhabited villages in the Merrimack River Valley. And similarly, Abenaki tribes-people occupied large swaths of present-day Maine and southeastern Canada.[30] Johnson notes that the Nipmuck, Mahican, and Mohegan tribes remained powerful enough to stand on their own.[31] Although diverse and often dispersed, confederacies offered protection, better trade opportunities and the ability to congregate during rituals to strengthen bonds. As a people with a long history of adaption, Algonquians were prepared to adapt Europeans and their useful goods and ideas into their societies and daily lives.

Initial Encounters/Colonization

Formed during the earliest encounters, the framework for the middle ground created space for European colonists to succeed in New England while bringing goods that improved the lives of the Ninnimissinouk. By the 1520s, fishermen from the Iberian Peninsula, England and other parts of Europe had made their way into the Gulf of Maine in search of cod. As they made land-fall in current-day Maine to dry

[25] Bragdon, *Native People of Southern New England,* 10.
[26] Ibid, 4.
[27] Ibid., 10.
[28] Ibid., 14.
[29] Johnson, *Ninnuock,* 23.
[30] Ibid.

their fish and forage for supplies, they met Indians of the Abenaki confederacy willing to exchange their surplus animal pelts for something they did not have in great quantities: metal utensils, glass beads and cloth. The fishermen discovered that Indian furs brought them riches surpassing their catches and soon made annual voyages to rendezvous with their trading partners. Having no similarities in language or prior knowledge of social norms, both the Europeans and Natives tentatively opened channels for trade, initiating the middle ground. Numerous dynamics, such as rivalries among the European powers of England, France and Holland, in concert with Native rivalries and tremendous losses of life to Algonquian societies as a result of Eurasian diseases, ensured the maintenance of the middle ground from the middle of the sixteenth century to the middle of the seventeenth.

The early trading forays, in which Natives traded for objects not entirely known to them while adhering to customs alien to the Europeans, created a new system of exchange that eventually became accepted as the rules of middle ground commerce. The European fishermen, traders and explorers offered manufactured products to the Natives, which they quickly assimilated into their societies, in exchange for furs. Furthermore, the profits these furs fetched in European markets compelled governments and companies in the Old World to expand trading opportunities in New York, New England and Canada, while Algonquians actively sought additional sources of beaver pelts to obtain metal wares, cloth and glass beads from the whites.

Shortly after Jacques Cartier's exploration of the St. Lawrence River in 1534,

New France became the first European colony planted among the Ninnimissinouk, albeit at the northern edges of their land.[32] The tough winters, diseases such as scurvy and the animosity of the local Indians forced the French to abandon Cartier's trading post. The prospect of bolstering the royal coffers through the fur trade, however, convinced the French King Henry IV to issue a monopoly on the fur-trading rights in the St. Lawrence River valley to a group of wealthy Frenchmen in 1599.[33] The French businessmen established a summer trading post, Tadoussac, near the mouth of the St. Lawrence at the end of the sixteenth century and a more permanent post at Quebec further up river in 1608.[34] The French fur traders became allies with the Montagnais, Micmac tribes closer to the mouth of the St. Lawrence and members of the Huron tribe near Lake Ontario. An important aspect of the middle ground these alliances created was the obligation of traders to assist their trading partners militarily, which drew the French into inter-tribal conflicts. In 1609, for instance, the leader of New France, Samuel de Champlain, along with nine French soldiers accompanied their Algonquian allies on an assault on an Iroquois fort, in which European arms played a decisive role.[35] Through the assistance of their Algonquian allies, the French became enemies of the Iroquois and were brought into conflict with the powerful confederation numerous times.

Having a shorter growing season than even New England, New France did not

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[31] Jay Eric Dolin, *Fur, Fortune and Empire: The Epic History of the Fur Trade in America* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2010), 9.
[32] Ibid., 11.
[33] Alan Taylor, *American Colonies: The Settling of North America* (New York: Penguin Books, 2001), 100.
[34] Ibid., 101.

attract as many settlers as their rivals to the south. Rather, as Father Pierre Francois-Xavier Charlevoix wrote in his eighteenth-century letters to the Dutchess of Lesdiguieres, "The trade of Canada has been a long time solely in the fishery and skins."[36] Therefore, many of the French colonists were traders and as such lived as, "adventurers, whom they call *Coureurs de bois,* (forest rangers)."[37] In addition to becoming traders, the French committed themselves to the conversion of the Natives to Christianity. Therefore, beginning in 1615 the French sent Jesuit missionaries, and thus added to the Frenchmen peopling their colony.[38] Furthermore, the French *coureurs de bois* and missionaries worked more diligently to maintain their alliances with the neighboring Indians, which contributed to the boats filled with furs they sent back to Europe. Initial estimates of the value of beaver skins brought back from America are tough to come by, but by 1629, contemporary observers noted that traders were reaping profits of 1,000 percent.[39]

In conjunction with continued reports from explorers promising prospects for valuable trading partners, the hauls of French fur traders in Canada intrigued other European interests. Englishman George Popham tried and failed to establish a colony at the mouth of the Kennebec River in 1607, but other English explorers and traders followed. The subsequent reports of the explorers, such as John Smith, a colonist from Jamestown in current-day Virginia, which the English established in 1608,

[35] Pierre Francois-Xavier Charlevoix, *Letters to the Dutchess of Lesdiguieres giving an Account of a voyage to Canada* (London: R. Goadtey, 1763), 32.
[36] Ibid, 33.
[37] Taylor, *American Colonies*, 100.
[38] Dolin, *Fur, Fortune and Empire*, 64.

spurred additional explorers and traders to journey to the region. Published in 1624, Smith's Generall Historie of Virginia, New England and the Summer Isles (Smith who traveled to New England in 1614), lauded the region's fertile soil, ample fish and timber for the taking which convinced more people they could survive in New England.[40] In addition to writing about natural resources, Smith bragged about the inexpensive ease of profiting from trade with Natives in New England, noting that, "we got for trifles neere eleven thousand Bever skinnes, one hundred Martins, as many Otters." But Smith also included a warning that, "Eastward our commodities were not esteemed, they were so neere the French who afforded them better," evidencing competition for access to the lucrative trade.[41]

Not all the meetings between the Indians and Europeans were peaceful, however, and skirmishes ensued that claimed lives. Nauset Indians of Cape Cod, for instance, fought with and killed three of Sir Ferdinando Gorge's men in 1622.[42] Additionally, Europeans kidnapped some of the Indians they encountered. The reprehensible Thomas Hunt, for example, caused anger among the Nauset and Wampanoag Indians when in 1614 he "deceived the people, and got them under colour of trucking with them," only to kidnap twenty-seven of them and sell "them for slaves, like a wretched man that cares not what mischiefe he doth for his profit."[43] However, some of those kidnapping victims, such as Tisquantum (Wampanoag),

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[39] Ibid, 13-18.
[40] John Smith, *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New England and the Summer Isles* (New York: Macmillan Co. 1905), 4.
[41] Bradford & Winslow, *Mourt's Relation,* 86.
[42] Ibid, 86-7.

would become vital to the settlement of New England and the middle ground, as their bilingual talents helped to cement alliances between the newcomers and powerful Native confederacies.

Though often fraught with tension and misunderstandings, these early encounters set the stage for later colonization. An early historian of New England, Edward Johnson, provided an example of one such encounter in Massachusetts Bay prior to the arrival of the Pilgrims:

> the Master caused a piece of Ordnance to be fired, which stroke such feare into the poore Indians, that they hasted to shore, having their wonders exceedingly increased; but being gotten among their great multitude, they waited to see the sequell with much amazement, till the Seamen firling up their sailes came to an Anchor, manned out their long bote, and went on shore, at whose approach, the Indians fled, although now they saw they were men, who made signes to stay their flight, that they may have Trade with them, and to that end they brought certaine Copper-Kettles; the Indians by degrees made their approach nearer and nearer till they came to them, when be holding their Vessells, which they had set forth before them, the Indian knocking them were much delighted with the sound, and much more astonished to see they would not breake, being so thin.[44]

Furthermore once the channels of trade opened, the newcomers and Ninnimissinouk clumsily attempted to meet each other on the middle ground by acting as they thought their trading partner would like them too. Edward Winslow provided an example of Nauset Indians acting as they thought the English would:

> On the morrow the sachim came to their rendezvous, accompanied with many men, in a stately manner, who saluted the Captain in this wise. He thrust out his tongue, that one might see the root thereof, and therewith licked his hand from the wrist to the finger's end, withal bowing the knee, striving to imitate the English gesture, being, instructed therein formerly by Tisquantum. His men did the like, but in so rude and savage a manner, as our men could scarce forbear to break out in open laughter.[45]

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[43] Edward Johnson, *Johnson's A History of New-England, from the English planting in the Yeere 1628 untill the Yeere 1652,* ed. James J. Franklin, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910), 39-40.
[44] Winslow, "Winslow's Relation*,"* 304-5.

The initial encounters brought two disparate worlds together and a new system of exchange, intelligible to both Algonquians and Europeans, emerged.

Eager to partake in the lucrative trade with Indians, the Dutch established a presence in present-day New York and played an integral role in maintaining the middle ground. Following Henry Hudson's exploration of what became known as the Hudson River in 1609, Dutch ships sailed out of Amsterdam annually to travel up the river trading for furs with Indians from the Mohawk and Mahican tribes. By 1614, Dutch merchants had established a year-round trading post on the upper Hudson, called Fort Nassau, which was later relocated to the site of present-day Albany, New York and renamed Fort Orange in 1621.[46]

Sugar fueled the colonization of the Caribbean, and profits from tobacco financed the colonies of the Mid-Atlantic. In Canada, New England, New York and as far south as the Delaware River, the lucrative fur trade with Algonquians spurred competition and settlement. Unlike the sugar cane and tobacco plantations of the Caribbean and Mid-Atlantic, which required large tracts of land and considerable man-power to turn a profit, the fur trade industry of New England, in which Indians performed most of the labor, required some forts and trading posts and considerably fewer people. Therefore, the borders of the colonies in New York, Canada and New England were not well defined and the worlds of the Dutch, English, French and Ninnimissinouk co-mingled at the edges of European and Native settlements. Furthermore, on account of the massive profits with minimal investment, the

[45] Taylor, *American Colonies,* 102 & 251-2.

European powers of England, France and the Netherlands vied for control over the lucrative trade routes. The Dutch and French competed with one another for furs in upstate New York. Similarly, the Dutch and English jostled for access to the Hudson and Connecticut Rivers, while the English and French fought for trading posts from coastal Maine to Nova Scotia. Conversely, Algonquian confederacies competed with each other for access to valuable European goods.

The Hudson River, in particular, became hotly contested between the Dutch and English. As a result of *Englishman* Henry Hudson's discovery of the river that bears his name, but on an exploration which was funded by *Dutch* investors, both nations claimed the Hudson River. To solidify *English* claims to the region, King James issued a land charter in 1618 to the Pilgrims, to settle in "the northern parts of Virginia," which was understood to be present-day New York or New Jersey, an area near the contested river.[47] After receiving the charter to settle in northern parts of Virginia the Pilgrims needed to find investors willing to finance their trans-Atlantic venture. From their homes in the Dutch city of Leiden, Pilgrim leaders William Brewster and John Robinson spent two more years searching for financial backing. A man named Thomas Weston and a group of 70 investors fronted the money needed for supplies and a ship to cross the ocean. Weston and the investors were businessmen who expected to profit on their gamble. Bradford wrote of Weston's and the investor's goals in backing the Pilgrims: "unto which Mr. Weston, and ye cheefe among them began to incline it was best for them to goe, as for other reasons, so cheefly for ye

[46] Nick Bunker, *Making Haste From Babylon: The Mayflower Pilgrims and Their World, A New History* (New York: Alfred A. Knoff, 2010), 250.

hope of present profit to be made by ye fishing that was found in yet countrie," and continued on, "but as in all bussiness ye acting part is most difficult, espetially wher ye worke of many agents must concurr."[48] In regards to the business aspect of what became Plymouth Colony, historian Nick Bunker states, "Far from being a commune, the *Mayflower* was a common stock: the very words employed in the contract. All the land in the Plymouth Colony, its houses, its tools, and its trading profits (if they appeared) were to belong to a joint-stock company owned by the shareholders as a whole."[49] Therefore, until the Pilgrims settled their debts, everything they had belonged to the company. However, as Puritan minister, colonist and chronicler of Massachusetts Bay, Reverend William Hubbard alleged, Dutch merchants -- having caught wind of English plans to establish a colony near their river -- bribed Master Jones, captain of the *Mayflower*, to bring the Pilgrims to Cape Cod instead.[50]

As the Pilgrims planned their emigration to North America and sailed west across the Atlantic, one of the most important building blocks of the middle ground came before them in the form of microbes to which the Algonquian peoples had no resistance. Germs carried upon European ships reduced the population of Algonquians along the coast in southern New England by an estimated 75 percent from 1616 to 1618.[51] Hubbard recorded how these unspecified plagues devastated Native societies: "This contagious disease was so noisome and terrible to these naked

[47] Bradford, *History of Plimouth Plantation*, 55.
[48] Bunker, *Making Haste from Babylon*, 250.
[49] William Hubbard, *General History of New England, from the Discovery to 1680* (Cambridge: Hilliard & Metcalf, 1815), 50.
[50] Richter, *Facing East*, 60

Indians, that they in many places, left their dead unburied, as appeared by the multitude of the bones of dead carcases, that were found up and down the countries, where had been the greatest numbers of them."[52] The ravages of Eurasian disease provided the first permanent settlers in New England, the Pilgrims, with a foothold in the New World. The epidemics, Hubbard observed, allowed, "the English at Plymouth, in their weak condition, to settle peacably amongst them [Wampanoags]."[53] The staggering losses of life must have played a role in the decision by Massasoit, the Wampanoag sachem, to ally with the Puritan settlers on the middle ground, because the rival Narragansetts had been spared the worst of the epidemics.

In November of 1620 the Pilgrims, desperately needed to find a place suitable for colonization. Hubbard noted their dire condition upon their arrival to North America:

> Sicknesses and diseases increasing very much amongst them, by reason of the hard weather and many uncomfortable voyages in searching after a place wherein to settle, occasioning them to be much in the cold, with the inconveniency of the former harbours, that compelled them to wade much in the water upon every turn, by reason whereof many were seized with desperate coughs, as others with scurvy and such like diseases; that in the three next months after their landing, they lost one half if not two thirds of their company, both passengers and seamen.[54]

Their initial places of landing on Cape Cod proved to be unsuitable for habitation as the terrain was not conducive to large farms and lacked ample access to fresh water.[55]

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[51] Hubbard, *General History of New England,* 195.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid., 57.
[54] Bunker, *Making Haste from Babylon*, 53-5.

They also found during an expedition from November 15 to 18 that the Nauset Indians in the area did not particularly want them there, evidenced by a hailstorm of arrows that chased the Pilgrims back onto their shallop. Not sure that the crew of the *Mayflower* would remain off the coast much longer, and with the grip of winter becoming tighter, the Pilgrims sailed into present-day Plymouth Bay on Dec. 16, 1620. William Bradford, along with John Carver and Miles Standish, had sailed upon a shallop into the Bay on the 11th, "found it a very good Harbour for our shipping, we marched also into the land," and set out to return with the rest.[56] In addition to having a harbor fit for shipping Bunker notes that, "it was the best place they could find. Dense woodlands lay behind it, and the site had flowing water. Inland they found cornfields left by the Native people, most of whom had died in the epidemics. It was also defensible thanks to Burial Hill."[57] Having found an area suitable for their habitation, the Pilgrims set out establishing a place to live, a task made easier by the fact that the land had been cleared by the Wampanoags who had died in the aforementioned epidemic. Illness and death continued to stalk the Pilgrims, making the building of the new colony even more difficult and forcing them to continue living on the squalid *Mayflower*. Bunker notes that six had died in December and another eight in January.[58] The Pilgrims toiled on, fighting the elements and illness. In addition to needing to survive in a strange land with winters tougher than they had been privy to in Europe, the Pilgrims still needed to generate a profit from their

[55] Bradford & Winslow, *Mourt's Relation*, 59.
[56] Bunker, *Making Haste from Babylon*, 279.
[58] Ibid., 287.

venture. On both counts, Algonquians became the Pilgrims' saviors.

Individuals created the mortar that helped build and expand the middle ground. In New France and New Netherlands, the traders ranging through the forests and the Indians whom they lived amongst helped build the middle ground in those colonies. In the New Plymouth colony, settled by Pilgrims with a fear of the wilderness, the middle ground was built through interpreters. Samoset, an Abenaki sagamore who had dealings with traders on Monhegan Island, Maine, and Tisquantum -- both of whom worked with the Pilgrims as interpreters -- played pivotal roles in the middle ground. Similarly Puritans such as Edward Winslow, who worked to gain a better understanding of Ninnimissinouk society also became agents of expanding the middle ground in southern New England.

Built by these individuals, the southern New England middle ground emerged on March 16, 1621, when Samoset walked into Plymouth Colony and began to tell them about the region and it inhabitants. Through his discussions with him Edward Winslow came to understand how Samoset learned English, "he had learned some broken English among the Englishmen that came to fish at Monhiggon, and knew by name the most of the captains, commanders, and masters, that usually come."[59] Samoset periodically returned with local warriors who brought skins to trade, but the interactions remained tense. While Samoset spoke English he apparently did not speak the same dialect as the local Wampanoag tribe. The true breakthrough for the Pilgrims, therefore, came six days later when Samoset returned with a man named

[59] Winslow, "Winslow's Relation," 182.

Tisquantum, or as the English called him, Squanto, and Massasoit, the Wampanoag sachem.

Massasoit, whom Winslow described as a, “a very lusty man, in his best years, an able body, grave of countenance, and spare of speech,” served at his peoples' pleasure and needed to lead them through a tumultuous and dangerous time.[60] He just had witnessed the deaths of three quarters of his tribe wrought by the 1616-18 epidemics, powerless to stop the carnage. The fact that his rivals, the Narragansetts, had not been struck down by the pestilence added to his troubles. Capitalizing on the Wampanoags' weakness, the Narragansetts encroached on Massasoit's territories. While weakened, Massasoit still had the wherewithal to wipe out the Pilgrims, evidenced by the sixty warriors that accompanied him to Plymouth.[61] Instead he sought an ally that would help him ward off the Narragansetts and enhance his tribe economically by obtaining European wares from the Pilgrims, which earned greater returns when traded with other tribes. By choosing to enter the middle ground, Massasoit strengthened himself and his tribe against the Narragansetts and gained entry into the Atlantic economy, which initially brought his people wealth. Furthermore, the presence of Tisquantum, who had an intricate knowledge of the English, certainly provided Massasoit with valuable intelligence regarding the new settlers encroaching on his lands and informed his decision to aide the sickly Pilgrims.

Tisquantum had learned English during his travels across the Atlantic as a

[60] Ibid., 194.
[61] Ibid.

kidnapped victim. After being seized by an Englishman, Captain Thomas Hunt, Tisquantum appeared in the slave market in Malaga, Spain, but he escaped and arrived in England in or around 1617.[62] Once in England, Tisquantum came to live with John Slany, an influential London merchant. He learned English and much about Englishmen and their country. As a high-ranking member of the Merchant Taylors, the largest of London's livery companies, it is likely that Slany would have been aware of the Pilgrims' exodus to the New World and probably helped Tisquantum find a ride back to his homeland. When he found the Pilgrims, Tisquantum served as a translator between southeastern Algonquians and the English colonists. Therefore, Tisquantum played an integral part in creating the middle ground formed between the settlers and Natives. William Bradford noticed his importance to the Pilgrims, writing that "Squanto continued with them and was a spetiall instrument sent of God for their good beyond their expectation. He directed them how to set their corne, wher to take fish, and procure other comodities, and was also their pilott to bring them to other unknowne places for their profit and never left them till he dyed."[63] Considering the role Tisquantum played in establishing the middle ground, which the Pilgrims relied upon for survival, it is no small wonder that Bradford thought that he was sent from God to aid them.

Therefore, on March 22, 1621, with Tisquantum interpreting, the Pilgrims and Wampanoags signed a treaty that opened the doors to new worlds for both groups.[64]

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[62] Hubbard, *General History of New England,* 38-9.
[63] Bradford, *History of Plimouth Plantation*, 116.
[64] Bunker, *Making Haste from Babylon*, 291.

Bradford recorded the points of the treaty:

> 1. That neyther he nor any of his should iniure or doe hurt to any of our people.
> 2. And is any of his did hurt to any of our, he should send the offender, that we might punish him.
> 3. That is any of our Tooles were taken away when our people were at worke, he should cause them to be restored, and if ours did any harme to any of his, wee would doe the like to them.
> 4. If any did uniustly warre against him, we would ayde him; If any did warre against us, he should ayde us.
> 5. He should send to his neighbour Confederates, to certifie them of this, that they might not wrong us, but might be likewise comprised in the conditions of Peace.
> 6. That when their men came to us, they should leave their Bowes and Arrowes behind them, as wee should doe our Peeces when we came to them.[65]

The initial foray into a mutually created society involved entering into a non-aggression pact and an alliance against enemies of both the Wampanoags and Pilgrims. The treaty gave the Pilgrims the confidence to stray beyond the colony in search of pelts and gave the Wampanoags an ally against the rival Narragansett tribe and a valuable trading partner.

Additionally, as Bradford noted earlier, Tisquantum assisted the Pilgrims in finding more trading partners, which allowed them to trade for the food they needed to survive. Even in 1622, two years after the Pilgrims landed, the English colonists were still dependent on trade with local Indians for their survival. Edward Winslow provided multiple examples of Tisquantum facilitating trade with numerous nearby tribes from which the colonists obtained much required food. In one such example, Winslow noted that Tisquantum helped Bradford trade with Indians living near Chatham: “by Tisquantum's means better persuaded, they left their jealousy, and

[65] Bradford & Winslow, *Mourt's Relation*, 93.

traded with them," and the Pilgrims obtained a "store of venison and other victuals, which they brought them in great abundance; promising to trade with them, with a seeming gladness of the occasion."[66] Although Tisquantum died of an illness during this trading junket in 1622, the Pilgrims continued to enlist the interpretation skills of another Wampanoag named Hobomock.

As the facilitators of the middle ground, Native interpreters resided almost entirely within this ground, straddling both the Indian and European worlds and keeping them connected. While indispensable to the Pilgrims, Tisquantum drew the ire of Massasoit and derision of the colonists. Winslow noted that Tisquantum used his connection to the Pilgrims to increase his prestige among neighboring Indians:

> Thus by degrees we began to discover Tisquantum, whose ends were only to make himself great in the eyes of his countrymen, by means of his nearness and favor with us; not caring who fell, so he stood. In the general, his course was to persuade them he could lead us to peace or war at his pleasure, and would oft threaten the Indians, sending them word in a private manner we were intended shortly to kill them, that thereby he might get gifts to himself, to work their peace.[67]

Winslow added that once the Pilgrims discovered Tisquantum's ulterior motives, the "the Governor [William Bradford] sharply reproved him."[68] For his involvement in implicating Massasoit in a plan to make war on the Pilgrims, the great sachem wanted the Pilgrims to kill Tisquantum. Winslow wrote, "we found Massassowat at the Plantation; who made his seeming just apology for all former matters of accusation, being much offended and enraged against Tisquantum; whom the Governor pacified

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[66] Winslow, "Winslow's Relation," 300-1.
[67] Ibid., 289.
[68] Ibid., 290.

as much as he could for the present. But not long after his departure, he sent a messenger to the Governor, entreating him to give way to the death of Tisquantum, who had so much abused him."[69] The Pilgrims denied Massasoit's request because Tisquantum played such an important role forming the middle ground between the colonists and neighboring Indians, which the Pilgrims still required to survive.

Colonist Edward Winslow played an integral part in creating the middle ground. Winslow, who had apprenticed as a printer in Leiden and helped publish travel narratives, had a keen eye for observing different landscapes and cultures. With William Bradford, he co-authored *Mourt's Relation*, a best seller in London in 1622, and had a respectful disposition toward the Algonquian peoples of New England. In light of the Pilgrims' struggles to survive in the New World, even with all their supposed technological advancements, Winslow observed the Native peoples and marveled at their ability to thrive in the environment. With his demeanor, Winslow served as the perfect diplomat to the Wampanoag confederacy and played a vital role in the creation of the middle ground. A clear indicator of the importance of that alliance is the fact that Winslow raced to Massasoit's side when word of his illness reached Plymouth in the spring of 1623.[70] As Bunker wryly notes, "Edward Winslow was not a physician, and this is just as well. An English doctor would have opened Massasoit's veins and bled him, a painful, and useless process that could have only hastened his end."[71] Instead, Winslow caringly administered soups and broths that

[69] Ibid.
[70] Winslow, "Winslow's Relation," 313.
[71] Bunker, *Making Haste from Babylon*, 326.

relieved Massasoit of his maladies. As the great sachem recovered, Winslow went to care for other Wampanoags suffering from the same ailment. Winslow's miraculous works endeared him to Massasoit, and word of his deeds spread throughout Indian country.[72]

Winslow's talents for understanding Indian cultures served the Pilgrims well on their initial forays along the coast of Maine in search of furs in 1625. The Pilgrims set up a trading post at Cushnoc, now present-day Augusta, Maine, on the Kennebec River, trading corn and European wares to the Eastern Abenaki for furs. Hubbard noted of the financial windfall reaped in Maine:

> In the year following, viz. 1625, they fell into a way of trading with the Indians more eastward, about the parts of Kennebeck; being provided of so much corn by their own industry at home, that they were able, to their no small advantage, to lend or send rather to those in other parts, who by reason of the coldness of the country used not to plant any for themselves. For what was done this year, with reference to Kennebeck, proved an inlet to a further trade that way, which was found very beneficial to the plantation afterwards.[73]

Those furs found eager buyers in Europe, and the Pilgrims began to pay down their debts. But the middle ground became more complicated before the English could become truly solvent.

The Dutch colony of New Netherland, led by twelve men in the Dutch West India Company, sought profits through trade with Indians, and therefore, made no major attempt to entice people to colonize their lands. Chartered in 1621 by the legislature of Holland, the States General, the Dutch West India Company had monopolistic rights to trade in Africa, South America, the Caribbean and North

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[72] Winslow, "Winslow's Relation," 321-3.
[73] Hubbard, *General History of New England,* 90.

America and the men in charge ran the company to be profitable, not to open up lands for colonists.[74] As writer Jay Eric Dolin observes, "the Dutch West India Company had established New Netherland as a fur-trading operation first and a colony second."[75] Therefore the company preferred men, called *boschlopers*, or runners of the woods, who could travel into Indian country to trade, and, as William Wood derisively pointed out, "live among them [Indians]."[76] Furthermore, with profit being the primary focus of the Dutch, the boschlopers trading out of Fort Orange provided the Mohawks with the commodity they desired the most: guns. The Mohawks then used these guns to raid the Huron and northern Algonquians allied with the French to obtain the pelts sought after by the Dutch. As a result many of the early Dutch traders formed positive relationships with their trading partners, but did not establish a colony that drew a significant amount of settlers from Holland. However, in light of the English claims on the Hudson River and to protect merchant ships laden with furs from marauding French and English warships the Dutch West India Company established Fort Amsterdam on present-day Manhattan, New York in 1625.[77] While the Dutch encouraged colonists to plant farms around Fort Amsterdam for the provisioning of Fort Orange and Caribbean plantations, it is clear that in the eyes of David de Vries, the company's efforts in this regard were lacking. Disgusted with company's disinterest in colonization, de Vries wrote, "On this account, our business of making colonies must be suspended in places still uninhabited; so that these

[74] Dolin, *Fur, Fortune, and Empire*, 32.
[75] Ibid., 75.
[76] Wood, *New England's Prospects*, 103.
[77] Taylor, *American Colonies*, 252.

managers at Amsterdam have done nothing else than to fight their own shadow, and to drink Rhenish wine."[78] De Vries went on to bewail the fact that the colony, rich in opportunities, did not have more people to take advantage of them: "Our Netherlander raise good wheat, rye, barley, oats, and peas, and can brew as good beer here as in our Fatherland, for good hops grow in the woods; and they can produce enough of those things which depend on labour, as everything can be grown which grows in Holland, England, or France, and they are in want of nothing but men to do the work. It is a pleasant and charming country, which should be well peopled by our nation only." Despite de Vries' lamentations, the boschlopers instead of colonists continued to build on the middle ground in Dutch held territories.

The existence of the Dutch in southern New England helped to maintain the middle ground. If the English would not meet Indians' trade demands they could bring their furs to Dutch who would and vice versa. Additionally, the strong bonds being formed by the French traders and Algonquians to the north and west provided another outlet that strengthened the middle ground. The rival European powers created competition that drove prices up and Natives profited. Furthermore, competing Old World countries in concert with Algonquian rivalries ensured that no entity had the ability to assert their will and forced all parties in southern New England to the middle ground.

Wampum, a product of whelk (white) and quahog shells (black), provides an excellent example of how the European and Indian worlds blended at the edges and

[78] De Vries, *Voyages from Holland to America*, 69.

how the middle ground created an entirely new culture. For Native peoples, wampum had spiritual significance and, when strung together in elaborate belts, served diplomatic purposes and recorded alliances. Marveling at the importance of wampum in Algonquian society, New England Indian superintendent Daniel Gookin wrote, "With this wompomeage they pay tribute, redeem captives, satisfy for murders and other wrongs, [and] purchase peace with their potent neighbors, as occasion requires."[79] Seizing on the widespread interest in obtaining wampum among the Native population, Dutch traders in the Hudson Valley introduced iron tools and standardized techniques for the manufacture of the shells to tribes on the coast of southern New England.[80] In turn, wampum became a form of currency for the Europeans. The Dutch traded European goods to their Native allies in exchange for wampum, which they traded with tribes farther in the interior for furs. Therefore Algonquians living on the coast profited from the expansion of wampum usage. English traveler William Wood noted that, "The Northerne, Easterne, and Westerne Indians fetch all their Coyne from these Southerne Mint-masters [makers of wampum]."[81] The Europeans also traded wampum with other Europeans, expanding its use as currency. A Dutch visitor to Plymouth Colony, Isaac De Rosier, traded wampum for corn, informing the Puritans that they could exchange the processed shells for furs throughout Indian country. Reverend William Hubbard wrote of the fortuitous meeting:

This year (1627) likewise began an intercourse of trade between our friends of

[79] Gookin, *Historical collections of the Indians in New England*, 12.
[80] Richter, *Facing East*, 45.
[81] Wood, *New England's Prospects*, 69.

> New Plymouth, and a plantation of the Dutch, that had a little before settled themselves upon Hudson's river, Mr. Isaac De Rosier, the Dutch Secretary, being sent to congratulate the English at Plymouth in their enterprise, desiring a mutual correspondency, in way of traffick and good neighbourhood, upon account of the propinquity of their native soil and long continued friendship between the two nations. This overture was courteously accepted, by the governour and people of New Plymouth, and was the foundation of an advantageous trade that in following years was carried on between the English in these parts, and the said plantation of the Dutch, to their mutual benefit. For it is said, they first brought our people to the knowledge of Wampampeag; and the acquaintance therewith occasioned the Indians of these parts to learn the skill to make it, by which, as by the exchange of money.[82]

After being informed of Natives' fondness for wampum, the English brought another desirable commodity of the middle ground to their Abenaki trading partners. When the Pilgrims brought wampum with them on junkets up the coast of Maine looking for furs, they began their journey to fiscal solvency, while becoming further enmeshed in the middle ground. After eight long years, the Pilgrims paid off their debts, through their relationships with the Algonquians.[83] As word of the Pilgrims' success spread, more settlers dreaming of a better life boarded ships in English ports and set sail for New England. Echoing this sentiment, Hubbard stated, "in a sense it happened with this colony of Plymouth, which was the foundation of the flourishing and prosperity that in following years was seen, in the other colonies."[84] The "flourishing and prosperity" of the Pilgrims came as a result of operating within the middle ground.

As the initial encounters expanded the middle ground, European goods proliferated across New England, while Ninnimissinouk knowledge of the ecosystem provided whites with valuable pelts and techniques for sustaining themselves.

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[82] Hubbard, *General History of New England,* 99-100.
[83] Bunker, *Making Haste from Babylon*, 326.
[84] Hubbard, *General History of New England,* 83.

Algonquian tribes, with positions close to the newly arrived colonists, carried European goods deeper into Indian country along age-old trade routes and profited by acting as middlemen in the expanding European/Indian trading commerce. William Wood observed the profits the Ninnimissinouk made by trading European wares to other tribes: “Since the English came, they have employed most of their time in catching of Beavers, Otters, and Musquashes, which they bring downe into the Bay, returning backe loaded with English commodities, of which they make a double profit.”[85] In addition to material benefits, tribes found themselves able to bolster their position by using the threat of enlisting their ally's firepower to hold their rivals at bay. Being strangers in the dangerous and foreboding New World, the Europeans needed Indians as trading partners, interpreters and allies against other tribes that wished to harm then. Beyond military and trade alliances, European settlers depended upon their aboriginal neighbors to show them how to survive the hostile winters by teaching them to plant corn and communicating other ways in which the environment offered up sustenance. In 1643 David de Vries recorded a meeting with a sachem in which he offered an example of how the Ninnimissinouk helped the earliest Dutch settlers survive: “He related also that at the beginning of our voyaging there [1609], we left our people behind with the goods to trade, until the ships should come back; they had preserved these people like the apple of their eye,” and, “He told how we first came upon their coast; that we some times had no victuals; they gave us their Turkish beans and Turkish wheat, they helped us with oysters and fish to eat.”[86] The

[85] Wood, *New England's Prospects*, 107.
[86] De Vries, *Voyages from Holland to America*, 173.

foundation of the middle ground, built through the initial encounters, provided Europeans with the knowledge to survive in New England and created relationships that profited all sides.

The French colony of New France, located primarily along the St. Lawrence River in present-day Canada, extended to the Great Lakes and down the Mississippi River to New Orleans, did not play a significant role in southern New England, but its presence helped maintain the middle ground because Natives could access trade routes extending into New France. The Dutch presence at Forts Orange and Amsterdam maintained the balance in southern New England, which prohibited any entity from exerting their will over others in the area. However, the Dutch West India Company did not make a concerted effort to people their colony of New Netherland. On the other hand, New England, colonized in 1620 by the Pilgrims who initially fled England for religious reasons, became the destination for a multitude of English colonists during the Great Migration of the early 1630s. The middle ground built by the Europeans and Algonquians in New England created a world in which mutual cooperation created a unique society.

Conclusion

The story of the first Thanksgiving serves as an appropriate example of the early cooperation between the Natives and settlers. While the Pilgrims celebrated their survival of the first year and a harvest of crops that ensured another year, Massasoit arrived at the head of ninety men to join in a feast that cemented the bonds

of friendship. Edward Winslow recorded of the feast:

> Our harvest being gotten in**,** our governour sent foure men on fowling, that so we might after a speciall manner rejoyce together, after we had gathered the fruits of our labours ; they foure in one day killed as much fowle, as with a little helpe beside, served the Company almost a weeke, at which time amongst other Recreations, we exercised our Armes, many of the Indians coming amongst us, and amongst the rest their greatest king Massasoyt, with some ninetie men, whom for three dayes we entertained and feasted, and they went out and killed five Deere, which they brought to the Plantation and bestowed on our Governour, and upon the Captaine and others. And although it be not always so plentifull, as it was at this time with us, yet by the goodness of God, we are so farre from want, that we often wish you partakers of our plentie.[87]

The contours of the middle ground become evident during the first Thanksgiving. The strengths of both cultures combined to provide a feast: the European fowling pieces, ideal for felling birds in flight provided fowl, while Native hunting prowess provided meat of the elusive deer. Furthermore, one can see that the feast adhered more to Algonquian practices than to those of the austere Pilgrims. Indian traditions called for feasts that served to wrap up negotiations and solidify the bonds created, whereas the Pilgrims tended to celebrate days of Thanksgiving with days of fasting and prayer.[88] Therefore we can see that on the first Thanksgiving, the Pilgrims spent three days participating in an Indian practice.

During this early period, both Ninnimissinouk and European colonists profited, and a peace, if an uneasy one, ensued. Europeans profited from trade with Indians and were taught how to survive in New England. Algonquians living in coastal areas became enriched by the Europeans' use of wampum as currency and European tools expedited the manufacture of beads, which allowed the sacred beads

[87] Bradford & Winslow, *Mourt's Relation,* 133.
[88] Hubbard*, General History of New England,* 645.

to travel deeper into Indian country. Similarly, Ninnimissinouk living in areas abundant in animals with desired pelts benefited as well. Furthermore the metal wares and cloth the Europeans traded for wampum and pelts at least initially brought benefits to village life as the European goods were lighter, more durable and took no time to process. As the middle ground and the peace began to crumble for a number of reasons, the English colonists sought to assert their perceived dominance. Having their ways of life threatened, lands encroached upon and place in society diminished as a result of their involvement in Europe's consumer revolution and the Atlantic economy, many Ninnimissinouk resorted to warfare in an effort to retain their traditions and restore the middle ground.

CHAPTER III.
THE ECONOMY, ECOLOGICAL CHANGES AND BREAKDOWN OF THE MIDDLE GROUND

The economic aspirations of the English colonists arriving in New England eventually stressed the middle ground and created changes in the ecology that set the stage for war. The traders and colonists who came to Canada, New York and New England from France, Holland and England left their homes behind for a plethora of reasons, but they all shared the common goal of improving their financial opportunities. Trading with Algonquians and other Native peoples for beaver pelts provided the surest avenue of economic gain. The French, English and Dutch relied heavily on trade with the indigenous communities, and through this trade, tied Natives to the Atlantic economy that spurred on the consumer revolution in Europe.

The consumer revolution occurred as the result of the expansion trade in the sixteenth century, which increased the availability of many commodities, thereby causing prices to drop. More people could then afford to purchase commodities yet profits remained high for merchants. As demand increased, so did the need for land to grow these commodities or for harvesting the natural resource. For example, sugar grown in the Caribbean became the driving force behind both the Atlantic economy and the consumer revolution it fed. The sugar cane plantations of the Caribbean connected Europe, Africa, South America and North America economically through merchant ships that ferried goods and people around the Atlantic. Therefore, the

primary engine for social advancement in seventeenth-century Europe was through involvement in the increasingly international trade, which required expanding colonies in Africa, the Caribbean, and the Americas. The connection of the fur trade in Canada, New York and New England to the Atlantic economy compelled Natives to overhunt beavers for their pelts because one Algonquian sachem told a Father Le Jeune, a French missionary, "The English have no sense; they give us twenty knives for one Beaver skin."[1] Therefore, the prospect of enhancing the wealth of one's tribe caused the Natives on the region to focus their hunts on the valuable rodent. The English, unlike the French and Dutch, began turning to shipping their agricultural surpluses around the Atlantic basin to remain connected to the Atlantic economy once beaver numbers began to decline in the 1650s. New England's involvement in the Atlantic economy created pressures on the middle ground, built by the earliest traders and settlers.

The financial ties of the emigrants to their homeland and their evangelical aspirations had a tremendous impact on the breakdown of the middle ground in New England. By1628, the Pilgrims became a fiscally solvent plantation thanks to their fur trade with the Abenaki of current-day coastal Maine.[2] Shortly thereafter English financier Mathew Craddock sponsored other Puritans such as John Winthrop and Cotton Mather in their attempt to establish another Puritan settlement at Massachusetts Bay in 1629. Therefore, the success of the Pilgrims proved to others

[1] Father Le Jeune, "Le Jeune's 1634 Relation," in *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France, 1610-1791*, ed. Ruben Gold Thwaites, Vol. 6 (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers, 1898), 298.
[2] Bunker, *Making Haste from Babylon,* 382.

that New England could produce enough sustenance to sustain the colonists and that trade with Indians would provide financial rewards, and colonists streamed into the port of Boston during the Great Migration of 1630. The colonists of New England initially relied upon the fur trade with the Ninnimissinouk to remain connected to the Atlantic economy, and Boston grew as a commercial hub. However, as pelt numbers fell as a result of over-hunting, the New English increasingly turned to agriculture, and farm produce shipped out of Boston found eager buyers in the Mid-Atlantic and Caribbean colonies and the Spanish wine islands. Increasing reliance on livestock and commercial farming, changed the ecology of New England and imperiled Algonquians' traditional lifestyles, which caused the middle ground and peace to crumble and provided tinder for the flames of war as the English colonists sought to impose their will upon the Ninnimissinouk.

Evolving Economy

The English colonists arriving in New England came from a continent undergoing vast economic changes. The socioeconomic shifts in Europe created strains on the environment that reverberated throughout the region. The nascent consumer revolution sweeping through Europe in the late-sixteenth to early-seventeenth century caused cities, such as Leiden, Holland, to become manufacturing centers. The unsanitary conditions of working-class neighborhoods in Leiden and the long hours with little pay and little opportunity for advancement convinced many to trade a life of crushing poverty for the promise of a better life in the New World. The

Pilgrims, fleeing religious prosecution in England in 1607, settled in Leiden and witnessed firsthand the squalid conditions that workers could expect to find in any of the boom towns that had grown up around Europe as a result of the consumer revolution. Nick Bunker notes that though people left their homes for various reasons, they all came to Leiden seeking employment and came in such that numbers that from 1575 to 1622, the city swelled from ten thousand inhabitants to forty-five thousand.[3] Most of those who moved to the city could expect to find, "insanitary squalor," where, "disease was yet another peril facing exiles working in the textile trade. People died far more often in the towns than in the country, and so a path of emigration to urban Europe might well be a road to nowhere."[4] Further exemplifying the intolerable conditions in workers' quarters, streets in these neighborhoods took on easily translatable names such as Stincknest and Stincksteeg.[5] The living conditions of the workers' quarters in Leiden were so unbearable that the Pilgrims decided to risk it all and settle in the New World. Pilgrim leader and chronicler, William Bradford gave three reasons for fleeing Europe. At the top of his list was what he called "the hardness of ye place": poor conditions, endless work, and a harsh diet. His second reason was the gradual weakening of morale, because the hardships of manual labor required of life in Leiden caused the Pilgrims to age prematurely. Third among Bradford's grounds for departure came the burdens inflicted upon children, which he though would cause the young to turn to crime, or choose to ship out on Dutch

[3] Bunker, *Making Haste From Babylon,* 213.
[4] Ibid., 217.
[5] Ibid., 218.

vessels bound for the East Indies.[6] The Pilgrims, religious refugees who valued hard work, found the labor too intensive and conditions too repulsive and thus decided they needed to flee the wretched poverty of the workers quarters for the shores of North America. The Pilgrims' needed to pay off debts caused them to become dependent on their Algonquian neighbors and through trade, built a middle ground that brought Algonquians into the Atlantic economy.

The economy of the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth century London had become increasingly reliant on international trade, with the resources and settlement of the New World taking on a vital role. Noted seventeenth century economist Charles D'Avenant concluded that in England:

> Trade, as it is now become the strength of the kingdom, by the supply it breeds of seamen, so it is the living fountain from whence we draw all our nourishment; it disperses that blood and spirits through all the members, by which the body politick subsists. The price of land, value of rents, and our commodities and manufacturies rise and fall, as it goes well or ill with our foreign trade.[7]

The vast sugar cane plantations in the Caribbean drove the health of foreign trade, creating the basis for what became the Atlantic economy.

Originally imported from India and the Middle East, sugar was one of the most luxurious goods to first infiltrate the European markets after the Crusades in the eleventh century. The rarity and expense of this commodity limited its use to the nobility. The climate of the Caribbean islands proved to be perfect for growing the

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[6] Bradford, *History of Plimouth Plantation,* 30-1.
[7] Charles D'Avenant, *The political and commercial works of that celebrated writer Charles D'Avenant, relating to the trade and revenue of England, the plantation trade, the East-India trade and African trade* ed. Charles Whitworth. (London: Printed for R. Horsfield in Ludgate Street, T. Becket and P.A. De Hondt, and T. Cadell in the Strand and T. Evans in King Street. 1771), 16.

lucrative cane, and Columbus brought sugar cane with him on his return trip in 1493. However, the Spanish remained focused on mining gold and silver in their colonies and attempted to enslave local Natives to work the mines. Caribbean Indians quickly escaped or succumbed to Eurasian illnesses and forced the Spanish to look elsewhere for inexpensive labor.

The need for additional slaves brought Spanish explorers to the east coast of North America. Ponce de Leone explored Florida in search of Indians to enslave and gold in 1513. A year later Pedro de Salazar sailed further up the coast and seized Natives in present-day South Carolina. Another slaving expedition returned to area in search of Indians to work the mines in 1521. While inexpensive and close by, Indian slaves captured in North America fell victim to disease just as quickly as Caribbean Natives, and the Spanish looked toward Africa for labor.[8]

Desperate for labor, the Spanish began importing African slaves and in the process initiated a key aspect of the Atlantic economy: the slave trade. From 1492 to 1550 the Spanish officially imported around 15,000 African slaves, purchased from Portuguese traders with forts along the west coast of Africa, to their colonies in the New World and another 36,300 from 1550 to 1595.[9] The Portuguese, however, began to see the value of growing sugar cane in their colony of Brazil. Although Perdro Alvares Cabral arrived in 1500, the sugar plantations did not begin to take root in

[8] David J. Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1992), 31-5.
[9] John H. Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America 1492-1830* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 2006), 100.

Brazil until the 1540s after importing 50,000 slaves from Africa.[10] By the end of the sixteenth century Brazil was the largest sugar producer in the world and the price of sugar began to drop, allowing more Europeans to purchase the sweetener. Additionally, through the Spanish and Portuguese colonies' transportation of Africans to New World settlements, the slave trade became big business by the end of the sixteenth century. The Spanish colonies began to ratchet up the importation of slaves from Africa after the Crown signed an agreement in 1595 with Pedro Gomes Reinel, a Portuguese slave trader in Angola. Following the agreement the Spanish imported between 250,000 to 300,000 slaves from 1595 to 1640.[11]

Spain and Portugal's colonies opened up the Americas to colonization and laid the groundwork for the slave trade upon which the sugar industry and ultimately the Atlantic economy of the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries would depend. Sugar, however, would not become a staple of the Atlantic economy until after the English began planting sugar cane on the islands of St. Christopher in 1624 and Barbados in 1627. With the importation of slaves from Africa – and after the best methods for growing and processing the cane arrived with Dutch settlers fleeing Brazil -- Barbados began exporting massive amounts of sugar by the 1640s.[12] As with their ventures in New York, the Dutch did not invest heavily in colonizing the Caribbean. Instead they focused on making profits through carrying objects colonists desired on their merchant ships. While the French began planting sugar cane on their Caribbean

[10] Ibid., 105.
[11] Ibid., 100.
[12] Ibid.

colonies in the 1650s, they would not become profitable until the middle of the eighteenth century.[13] The previously planted English colonies of Jamestown (1608), New Plymouth (1620), Massachusetts Bay (1629), Providence Plantation (1636) and Connecticut Colony (1636) would be drawn into the Atlantic economy that began to boom in the 1640s.

Established in 1608, Jamestown grew another important cash crop of the Atlantic economy, tobacco. Part of the Virginia Company incorporated in 1606, the settlers of Jamestown languished in the first decade, falling victim to malaria and other microbes. In 1616, the Virginia Company was in debt as their sickly colonists had sent back resources of little value. However, once they began planting tobacco that same year, the Company began shipping a valuable commodity to England.[14] By 1638 Virginia had become the primary provider of tobacco to England. However, as the tobacco plantations grew, so did the need for labor and young Europeans (mostly male) seeking to escape the growing urban poverty on the continent signed on to become indentured servants. These servants sold their labor for a predetermined stretch of time to a captain or a merchant in exchange for passage across the Atlantic who then sold that labor to a planter. After their period of labor the servants gained their freedom and, in Virginia and Maryland, fifty acres of land.[15] The prospect of earning riches in the New World caused the amount of indentured servants in the Chesapeake region to grow from about 350 in 1616 to 13,000 by 1650.[16] However,

[13] Taylor, *American Colonies*, 206.
[14] Ibid., 133-4.
[15] Ibid., 142.
[16] Ibid., 134.

slaves from Africa became the preferred choice of planters on account of the expense, the finite period of servitude, the general unruliness of the young men and the indentured servants' penchant for falling victim to malaria or other illnesses. As the colonies of the Mid-Atlantic grew and became more dependent on slave labor, New English merchants found another market for their goods.

Prospective Barbadian planters became involved in a complex financial web that stimulated economic growth, which triggered social changes and created the need for more New World resources. For example, a sugar plantation owner first needed to obtain capital to purchase a land grant and to send the required supplies for harvesting and processing the sugar to the point where it could be shipped to England. Furthermore, beginning in the 1640s, in order to remain competitive the planter needed to purchase slaves from Africa to work the in the fields or in the hot and dangerous mills for processing the sugar cane into muscovado, a brown sticky substance that could later be refined into the white granular powder. The banker, merchant, family member or group of investors who provided the capital took a percentage of value of the muscovado that had been shipped back. The unrefined sugar then needed to be processed before being re-exported to another country, or packaged and sold domestically. The refineries created numerous jobs for the lower classes of Europe and people began to migrate to the cities for that work. The jobs created provided more consumers of sugar, and as the sugar plantations grew, planters required more slaves from Africa. Historian John Elliott's research reveals that by

1660, Barbados had as many slaves as whites.[17] The expanding slave populations in Barbados and other sugar producing islands in the Caribbean required more supplies to feed and clothe the slaves, albeit however poorly. Boston merchants gladly provided these provisions.

Boston became an important center of trade within the Atlantic economy. As the city grew as a colonial port, in part due to the fur trade with Indians, the city's financial institutions grew, as it became more entwined in the Atlantic world. Merchants sailing out of Boston for the Mid-Atlantic or Caribbean needed capital to outfit a ship, man the vessel and provide provisions for the sailors. More wealthy merchants and bankers agreed to invest in other merchants' ventures and in the process grew the city's financial institutions. The well-traveled Samuel Maverick marveled at the pace of Boston's growth as a seaport from 1630 to 1633:

> And about those times also there were not within the now Great Government of the Massachusetts above three Shallops and a few Cannoes, Now it is wonderfull to see the many Vessels belonging to the Country of all sorts and seizes, from Shipps of some reasonable burthen to Skiffes and Cannoes, many other great Shipps of Burthen from 350 Tunns to 150 have been built there, and many more in time may be, And I am confident there hath not in any place out of so small a number of People been raised so many able Seamen and Commanders as there hath been.[18]

Similarly, Edward Johnson noted that by the middle of the 1630s Boston had become the, “chiefest place of resort of Shipping,” and that Bostonian merchants carried, “away all the Trade,” in New England.[19] As a result, Maverick observed that the,

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[17] Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic World,* 100.
[18] Samuel Maverick, *A Briefe Discription of New England and the Severall Townes Therein, Together with the Present Government Thereof* (Boston; David Clapp & Son. 1885), 27.
[19] Johnson, *A History of New-England,* 96.

"Towne of Boston, the Metrapolis of New England," was, "full of good shopps well furnished with all kind of Merchandize and many Artificers, and Trad's men of all sorts."[20] With the framework of a capitalist economy in place, Boston's merchants began to provide Europe and other New World colonies with agricultural provisions, along with timber and fish. Of this transition, Maverick noted that since 1633, "Many thousand Neate Beasts and Hoggs are yearly killed, and soe have been for many yeares past for Provision in the Countrey and sent abroad to supply Newfoundland, Barbados, Jamaica, & other places, As also to victuall in whole or in part most shipes which comes there."[21] In recreating London's economy in Boston, the merchants inexorably connected New England to the Atlantic world, one which relied on resources that could be marketed for profit. Therefore, in a land bereft of a cash crop, New Englanders increasingly turned to raising livestock and extracted other resources such as timber to fill merchant ships. Returning ships often contained the currency and manufactured goods that kept the colonial economy running.

The requirements of the settlers of the Caribbean and other American colonies created an industry unto itself that produced a variety of goods for consumption in the colonies. The jobs that emerged in European cities to service the Atlantic economy also created more wealth to consume the goods arriving from the New World, which fed the need for colonial produce, thereby enticing more people to venture across the ocean. The cyclical nature of the Atlantic economy became an entity that needed to be fed constantly to keep growing and adapt to the desires of the ever-expanding army of

[20] Maverick, *A Briefe Discription of New England*, 15-6.
[21] Ibid., 26.

consumers, which in turn provided fodder for the economy. The Atlantic economy, in turn, caused European port cities such as London, Amsterdam and Bordeaux to become more closely connected as merchants, bankers and insurers worked with their counterparts in these cities to share wealth and information. D'Avenant observed how the Atlantic economy required cooperation from businessmen: "trade is become so extended, and since luxury has so much obtained in the world, no nation can subsist of itself without helps and aids from other places; so that the wealth of a country now is the balance, which arises from the exchange with other places, of its natural or artificial product."[22] Knowledge of the best methods for planting and processing sugar cane into transportable muscovado traveled around the Caribbean during the1640s, while merchants, bankers and others with disposable income spread their money throughout western European financial institutions.[23] Massachusetts Bay fancier Mathew Craddock, for example, had invested in the Dutch East India Company in addition to his other trading ventures.[24] Therefore, even as the bounds of the known world became larger, the economy of Europe became closer. The voracious appetite of the Atlantic economy, and the New English settlers' very profitable involvement in it, contributed to a desire for more land and environmental degradation, both of which caused stresses to the southern New England middle ground.

Trade became an integral part of European commerce and caused shifts in the

[22] Ibid., 13.
[23] Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic World*, 105.
[24] Bunker, *Making Haste from Babylon*, 283.

international economy thereby inflating incomes, which allowed for more social mobility and created a larger demand for consumer goods. The economy of Europe was expanding, and economic historian Nuala Zahedieh attributes this to, "long-distance and, above all, Atlantic trade which was driving expansion in this period."[25] Therefore it is clear that the economy of seventeenth-century Europe became dependent on the fruits of colonization across the Atlantic.

The Atlantic economy of the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries changed the economic landscape and set Europe and their colonies on a path to the free market capitalism with which we are familiar today. The settlement of the Caribbean and the consumer goods that the tropical islands produced created the basis for the Atlantic economy, a model that became truly global in scale. Capitalism surged into continental America and as a sea star moving across the ocean floor, extruding its stomach to absorb any resource. The economy of northeast North America relied in large part upon the beaver trade with Algonquians. Seeing the traders' ravenous appetites for the luxurious pelts prompted one Algonquian named Cacagous to remark to a French missionary, "to show his kindly feelings toward the French he boasts: of his willingness to go and see the King, and to take him a present of a hundred beaver skins, proudly suggesting that in so doing he will make him richer than all his predecessors. They get this idea from the extreme covetousness and eagerness which our people display to obtain their beaver skins."[26] The wealth being

[25] Nuala Zahedieh, *Capital and the Colonies: London and the Atlantic Economy, 1660-1700* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 21.
[26] Father Bertrand, "Father Bertrand's 1610 Missive," in *The Jesuit Relations,* ed. Ruben Gold Thwaites, Vol. 1, 175.

obtained in this trade -- which French missionary Father Bertrand estimated to be "Skins amounting to seven or eight thousand livres" in one year – caused the French, English and Dutch to expand deeper into Indian country in search of beaver pelts.[27] Economists such as Defoe saw that by "enlarging the bounds of a plantation," trade increased, which in turn, expanded wealth both in London and in the colony.[28] In light of an expanding and evolving economy, port cities in Europe became centers of trade, industry and ideas, where people flocked to get their piece of the promised riches. It broke many people from the hard-scrabble life of peasantry and allowed them to rise to societal levels previously unthinkable.

That is not to say that the economy of seventeenth century England benefited all involved. A free market economy has the ability to both raise people up and crush those who exist merely to keep the cogs of commerce greased. Many workers lived in squalid conditions and hovered in the netherworld of abject poverty, scratching and clawing their way to put food on the table. No group of people, however, became so inundated by or trampled underneath the tank treads of the market economy than the indigenous peoples of North America. The opportunities provided to Englishmen by the economy allowed them to cross the ocean and bring with them the benefits and pitfalls of the free market.

As we have seen, the Pilgrims fled to New England where they profited from trade with Algonquians and built a middle ground. However, their success led to the

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[27] Ibid., 131.
[28] Daniel DeFoe, *A Plan of the English Commerce: Being a Compleat Prospect of the Trade of This Nation, As Well the Home Trade As the Foreign* (London: Rowman and Littlefeild Publishing, 1728), xi.

great migration of 1630, after which the dynamics of the middle ground became strained, as settlers poured into the Connecticut River Valley. The Puritans in Connecticut, being too numerous for the Dutch to compete with, felt less of a need to meet the Pequot on the middle ground and therefore, sought to impose their will over the powerful tribe and a bloody conflict ensued.

Pequot War

The Pequot War (1636-38) sent shock waves throughout Indian country and became a major factor in the break down of the middle ground. The Pequot tribe, with an advantageous position rich in wampum and access to beaver pelts, had grown rich and powerful by acting as middlemen within the middle ground. The dynamics of the middle ground, however, created tensions between both the European powers and Native confederacies. The River Indians, living in the area of present-day Springfield, Massachusetts, sought an alliance with the English in 1631 to protect them from depredations of the Pequots, which created competition between Plymouth and Boston who sought to benefit from the beaver skins traveling down the river. Furthermore, the Dutch also sought to establish trade on the Connecticut River during the same period, making the Connecticut River Valley hotly contested ground in the early 1630s. These tensions in the middle ground inspired the Pequot War. That conflict introduced the Ninnimissinouk to the brutality of European warfare as the Puritan forces indiscriminately massacred the inhabitants of Mystic village. Many who survived met a fate more degrading, as the colonists enslaved captured Pequots

and forced them to serve in colonists' homes or sold them to plantation owners in the Caribbean where they toiled under the tropical sun, planting and harvesting sugar cane. Therefore the specter of chattel slavery became a very real threat to Algonquian society after 1637.

Southeastern Massachusetts, never containing large beaver populations, had forced the Pilgrims north to the Kennebec River in Maine in 1625 in search of trade. The Puritans of Boston faced a similar issue and looked to the interior of Massachusetts for a source of trade. The plight of the River Indians on the Connecticut caused them to seek an alliance with the English in 1631 in an effort to gain protection from the mighty Pequots. Therefore, shortly after the River Indian delegation left, Edward Winlsow set off to explore the Connecticut River, but did not find it to be rich in pelts.[29] However, French assaults on the Plymouth trading house at Kennebec in June of 1632 in which the raiders "carried away three hundred weight of beaver," convinced the Pilgrims to seek another source of beaver pelts.[30] After a meeting with John Winthrop and other leaders of Boston in July of 1633 to discuss how to prevent the Dutch from building a trading post on the Connecticut River – and at the urging of River Indian named Natawante, whom Bradford observed desired an ally in the region so as "to be restored to their country again" -- Plymouth sent Lieutenant William Holmes with a prefabricated trading house on a ship bound for the Connecticut River.[31] Holmes sailed past a Dutch trading post, the House of Good

[29] Alfred A. Cave, *The Pequot War* (Amherst, MA : University of Massachusetts Press. 1996), 77.
[30] Hubbard, *General History of New England*, 161.
[31] Bradford, *History of Plimouth Plantation*, 312.

Hope, and established the Plymouth trading house on Connecticut River in September 1633 at a site near present-day Windsor, Connecticut.[32] The following summer, Massachusetts Bay settlers from Dorchester built the town of Windsor almost on top of the Pilgrims' trading house. The settlers of Windsor bought out the Pilgrims, effectively taking over their presence on the Connecticut River.[33] According to historian Alfred A. Cave, the authorities of Massachusetts had their own designs for settling the Connecticut River Valley, believing that the River was "key to gaining access to the fur trade of upper New York."[34] Relations between Massachusetts Bay and the Pequots had begun to sour in earlier in 1633, when a trader named John Stone was murdered on the Connecticut River and the tribe refused to hand over the perpetrators.[35] The tensions intensified in 1634 when according to historian Russell Bourne, the Pequots approached another trader named John Oldham inquiring about an alliance with the Puritans based in Boston and turned down the offer that included payment of a "gigantic annual revenue to Boston" and the opening of "their lands to settlement."[36] Despite the discord, colonists from Massachusetts set out to establish colonies in the fertile valley in 1635. As Revered Hubbard noted the mass influx of colonists spilled out of Massachusetts Bay in and out to the Connecticut River:

> The discovery of the famous river of Connecticut, known to the Dutch by the name of the Fresh river, and by them intimated to the inhabitants of New Plymouth, (possibly to make them some amends for the abuse for merly offered in supplanting them upon their first ad venturing into those parts,) hath been

[32] Cave, *The Pequot War*, 84.
[33] Ibid., 75.
[34] Ibid., 82.
[35] Ibid., 40.
[36] Russell Bourne, *The Red King's Rebellion: Racial Politics in New England 1675-1678* (New York: Antheneum, 1990), 43.

> mentioned already, where it is declared how the English about the same time happened to discover it by land, as the other had done by sea. The Dutch had only resorted thither on the account of trade with the Indians ; and if those of Plymouth had entertained any thoughts of removing thither, they spent too much time in deliberation about the matter, and so were prevented by the inhabitants of the Massachusetts, who were at that time overpressed with multitudes of new families, that daily resorted thither, so as like an hive of bees overstocked, there was a necessity that some should swarm out.[37]

From 1634 to 1635 the Puritans from Massachusetts Bay established additional towns such as Hartford and Wethersfield on the Connecticut River, and in 1636 these towns became incorporated in the Colony of Connecticut. The towns of the new colony had placed themselves near the Pequots and by virtue of that proximity, in competition with the powerful confederacy. To add to the troubles, an Indian named Uncas, who later became the sachem of the Mohegan confederacy through his connections to the English and powerful Narragansetts, began to pass on information to the colonial authorities in Hartford that the Pequots had designs against the settlers in Connecticut. Therefore, when another sailor, John Gallop, discovered Oldham's ship full of Indians off the coast of Block Island and the old trader's body hacked to pieces, leaders of Massachusetts Bay and Connecticut immediately leveled their gaze upon the Pequots and their advantageous position on the Connecticut River.

In 1636, the authorities of Massachusetts Bay chose the zealous John Endicott to command the mission to punish the Block Islanders, force the Pequots to turn over Oldham's murderers and pay a hefty tribute of one thousand fathoms of wampum. The brazen colonists failed to obtain the payment or the suspected murders. However, Endicott's decision to raze a couple of Pequot villages and destroy some corn-fields

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[37] Hubbard, *General History of New England,* 305.

on their way home did sufficiently infuriate members of the Pequot confederacy, who unleashed their anger on Lieutenant Lion Gardiner and the troops garrisoned in Fort Saybrook on the Thames River. Gardiner, an army engineer, had arrived in New England late in 1635 and set about building a fort on the mouth of the Thames River in the spring of 1636. The fort which had been built to prevent the Dutch from intruding on the English beaver trade, now protected Englishmen from the wrath of Pequot warriors thanks to Endicott's imprudence. The Pequot siege of Fort Saybrook, which started in the fall of 1636, did not subside until parties of private citizens from Boston and Hartford arrived in the spring of 1637 and chased the attackers into the forest.In light of the failure of Endicott's mission and the obvious strength of the Pequot confederacy, officials in Massachusetts and Connecticut saw the need to recruit more Native allies. Massachusetts Bay historian Thomas Hutchinson noted that in addition to Uncas' promise of support from his tiny tribe for an assault on the Pequots the colonial authorities invited the Narragansett sachem Miantinomo to Boston for peace talks. The sachem and leaders in Boston entered into an alliance against the Pequots at the end of 1636:

1. A firm and perpetual peace betwixt them and the English
2. Neither party to make peace with the Peqqods without the consent of the other.
3.That the Naragansets should not harbour any Pequods.
4. That they should put to death or deliver up any murderess of the English.
5. That they should return fugitive servants.
6. The English to give them notice when to go out against the Pequods, and the Naragansets to furnish guides.
7. Free trade to be carried on between the parties.
8. None of the Naragansets to come near the English plantation, during the war with the Pequods, without some Englishman or Indian known to the

English.[38]

This treaty assured the colonists that an attack on the Pequots would not create a larger allied Algonquian foe. By signing the treaty that freed the English to attack their enemy, the Narragansetts stood to enhance their power if the rival Pequots should be defeated. Furthermore, by virtue of treaties, the Wampanoags and Narragansetts were bound together through the English.

Strengthened through alliances with the Narragansetts and Mohegans, colonial authorities in Boston and Hartford set about drawing up plans for removing the Pequots from the Connecticut River and therefore opening up a route, free from obstruction upon which beaver skins from the interior would flow. On May 20, 1637, Massachusetts Bay Governor John Winthrop dispatched 160 soldiers under the command of Daniel Patrick, while Connecticut officials sent another 90, led by Major John Mason.[39] With one hundred more Mohegan and River Indians, Uncas accompanied Mason and his men. The forces met at Fort Saybrook and set about readying themselves for the assault on Pequot country. On morning of May 25, much to Mason's surprise, "there came to us several of Miantomo's Men, who told us, they were come to assist us in our Expedition."[40] Being reinforced by additional Native allies, Mason and his compatriots began their assault on Mystic village before the sun

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[38] Thomas Hutchinson, *The History of the Province of Massachusetts-Bay:From the First Settlement Thereof in 1628, Until its Incorporation with the Colony of Plimouth* (Boston: Thomas and John Fleet, 1828), 59-60.

[39] Bourne, *The Red King's Rebellion,* 64-5.

[40] Major John Mason, "A Brief History of The Pequot War: Especially of the Memorable Taking of their Fort at Mistick in Connecticut in 1637," in *History of the Pequot War, The Contemporary Accounts of Mason, Underhill, Vincent and Gardener,* ed. Charles Orr (Cleveland: The Helman-Taylor Company, 1897), 24.

broke. The inhabitants of the heavily fortified village put up stiff resistance until Mason decided to set some of the timbered dwellings on fire. The conflagration quickly spread throughout the village and despite their Native allies calls of, "Mach it! Mach it!" (Enough! Enough!), the colonists sat outside the village shooting and stabbing those who tried to escape.[41] Major John Mason described the carnage with great joy:

> The Fire was kindled on the North East Side to windward ; which did swiftly over-run the Fort, to the extream Amazement of the Enemy, and great Rejoycing of our selves. Some of them climbing to the Top of the Pallizado; others of them running into the very Flames; many of them gathering to windward, lay pelting at us with their Arrows ; and we repayed them with our small Shot: Others of the Stoutest issued forth, as we did guess, to the Number of Forty, who perished by the Sword.[42]

Estimates range between five and seven hundred Pequots who lost their lives in the attack. However, since the Pequot sachem Sassacus and most of his warriors were not at Mystic at the time of the assault, the annihilation of a few warriors, old men, women and children introduced Algonquians to European warfare, which their Mohegan and Narragansett allies found to be, "too furious and slays too many people."[43] English-style warfare differed significantly from that of the Natives, which Captain Underhill, a participant in the massacre of Mystic village, derisively described: "They might fight for seven years and not kill seven men."[44] Additionally, since the greater part of Pequot forces had been absent from the massacre at Mystic

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[41] Captain John Underhill, " News From America, or a late and experimental discovery of New England," in Orr, *History of the Pequot War,* 84.
[42] Mason, "A Brief History of The Pequot War," in Orr, *History of the Pequot War,* 28.
[43] Underhill, "News From America," in Orr, *History of the Pequot War,* 84.
[44] Ibid., 82.

Village, the Massachusetts Bay authorities sent Israel Stoughton to track down the remaining Pequots. Stoughton, a resident of Dorchester and a representative in the colonial government, was an ardent Puritan who later returned to England to fight against King Charles I in the English Civil War (1642-51). Describing the campaign to eliminate the Pequot tribe, Mason noted, "About a Fortnight after our Return home, which was about one Month after the Fight at Mistick, there Arrived in Pequot River several Vessels from the Massachusetts, Captain Israel Stoughton being Commander in Chief; and with him about One hundred and twenty Men; being sent by that Colony to pursue the War against the Pequots."[45] Therefore, not feeling as though the Pequot nation had been sufficiently subjugated, colonial forces, led by Stoughton, tracked down as many remaining Pequots as they could find and immediately killed the men, while enslaving the women and children. The captured and enslaved Pequots were either sent to serve in the homes and fields of families in New England or boarded ship bound for the Caribbean where they toiled alongside slaves from Africa on sugar cane plantations. The hunt for Pequots continued until they agreed to "become the English Vassals," who could "dispose of them as they pleased."[46] The English sent the remaining Pequots to live under their Native allies, the Narragansetts and Mohegans, stipulating that they shall never "be called Pequots any more."[47]

The Pequot War, a conflict to secure access to a valuable trading route, which raged from 1636 to 1638, became a bloody war of extermination. While aspects of the

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45 Mason, "A Brief History of The Pequot War," in Orr, *History of the Pequot War,* 36.
46 Ibid., 40.
47 Ibid.

middle ground remained after the war as the colonial authorities continued support of their ally Uncas attested, the brutal war of extermination waged by the English colonists for economic reasons had shown the Algonquians in southern New England how they might be treated if placed in a similar predicament.[48] Furthermore, in light of the destruction of the powerful tribe and the Dutch presence in the middle ground being diminished by the superior number of English closing in on them, the Puritans of New England gained increasing hegemony over the region and moved farther away from the middle ground.

Indian Slavery

The enslavement of Pequots following the war became yet another cause of the breakdown of the middle ground in southern New England. The captured Pequots sent to live under the Narragansetts and Mohegans usually experienced a term of servitude before being absorbed into the tribe with equal rights. The Pequots sent to serve English families in New England, however, experienced a more degrading form of bondage slavery before escaping. Pequots shipped to the Caribbean lived as chattel slaves, working long and back breaking hours in the tropical heat on plantations before succumbing to diseases such a malaria or the harsh conditions. The idea of enslaving Indians, big business in the Carolinas, found ample room to grow in the hearts and minds of the Puritan colonists after the Pequot War.[49]

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[48] Nathaniel Bradstreet Shurtleff*, Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England (SCR) Volume 2, 1642-1649,* (Boston: W. White, 1853), 117 & 137.
[49] Alan Gallay, *The Indian Slave Trade: The Rise of the English Empire in the American South 1670-1717* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 65.

The Puritans who landed in New England had in many ways found a land that offered salvation. The temperate forests did not support malaria and other maladies that struck down so many in the southern colonies and the Caribbean. Because the climate and growing season were not conducive to a cash crop, colonists grew a wider variety of crops and thus had a more diversified and healthier diet. Their exodus across the ocean, in addition, brought them farther from the congested, foul-smelling city centers of Europe, where disease ran rampant. For all these aforementioned reasons, life expectancy in New England surpassed that of the more "civilized" England. Lower infant mortality rates, in conjunction with adults living into old age, caused females to become over-worked, and farmers needed help expanding their lands. Therefore labor became both expensive and scarce causing some to seek slaves. Mason recorded that they "took about One Hundred and Eighty" Pequots captive, "whom we divided, intending to keep them as Servants."[50] Historian Michael Fickes however, puts the number of enslaved Pequots at 319.[51] Fickes also notes that seventeen captive Pequots were sold to Puritans on Providence Island off the coast of Nicaragua.[52] In light of the economic benefits received from enslaving Indians, it is not surprising, that Puritan notions of race began to harden during this time. Puritan rationalizations for enslaving Indians held that those captured in a "just war" could justifiably become someone's property, whereas Africans were deemed to be of a lower sort of humanity and thus destined to labor tirelessly. In Europe both

[50] Ibid., 39.
[51] Michael L. Fickes, "They Could Not Endure That Yoke: The Captivity of Pequot Women and Children after the War of 1637," *The New England Quarterly*, 73 (2000): 61.
[52] Ibid.

Indians and Africans were seen as savages, but on account of the initial reliance upon Native allies in North American colonies the enslavement of races was viewed in different lights. Indians captured in "just wars" could be forced into slavery, whereas Africans, a lower sort of human in the eyes of the European could be enslaved without justification.[53] Indians and Africans, in other words, were viewed as distinct sects of humanity and as such had different rights. Furthermore, as Major Mason noted, the captured Pequots "could not endure that Yoke" of slavery in New England, and because they easily escaped, the colonists actively sought out African slaves.[54] Therefore, ideas of capturing Indians, who could be used for labor or traded for African slaves, spurred some colonists, such as John Winthrop's brother-in-law, to advocate war against the Narragansetts in 1645 to meet these ends.[55] In this way, the riches available through capitalism caused some of the Puritans to see enslavement of Indians as an economic opportunity and contributed to the destruction of the middle ground in southern New England.

Ecological Changes

The economic system brought to New England by the colonists spurred changes in the environment that altered the ecology and created conditions in which Algonquians' traditional lifestyles became imperiled. Algonquian peoples had survived off the land for thousands of years, learning to reap the bounty during

[53] Gallay, *The Indian Slave Trade*, 47.
[54] Mason, "A Brief History of The Pequot War," in Orr, *History of the Pequot War,* 39.
[55] Fickes, "They Could Not Endure That Yoke," 79.

seasons of plenty, while perfecting storage techniques and other methods of surviving the frigid New England winters. Traditional Algonquian lifestyles required large tracts of land where they could grow their crops and travel in search of game. As English-style farms proliferated along with their fences, fields and livestock throughout southern New England after the colonists' victory over the Pequots, traditional indigenous lifestyles became increasingly difficult in this region. Trade with Europeans initially made life easier for Algonquians as their metal utensils were lighter and more durable than their traditional wares. Those benefits inspired Natives to over hunt beavers, which played a part in changing the ecology of the area. Beaver numbers had plummeted in the northeast as early as 1650, a fact that was becoming evident deeper into Indian Country.[56] French missionary Father Le Mercier recorded in 1652 that, "The fur trade, which had amounted to two or three hundred thousand livres annually, has been ruined; for a year, the Montreal warehouse has not bought a single Beaver-skin from the Savages."[57] Through the initial encounters, into early colonization, the middle ground reigned supreme, and both the settlers and Indians profited. While aspects of the middle ground remained intact after the Pequot War, the continued English encroachments on Native lands, the degradation of the environment and additional assaults on Algonquian traditions brought by the evangelizing preachers caused the middle ground in southern New England to give way to open warfare.

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[56] Cronon, *Changes in the Land*, 99.
[57] Father Le Mercier, "Father Le Mercier's 1652-3 Relation," in Thwaites, *The Jesuit Relations*, Vol. 40, 11.

Algonquians of New England had inhabited the region for millennia, learning the cycles of the seasons and how to subsist through the year. Native survival patterns in New England worked within the confines of the seasons, and therefore as Cronon observes, "Just as the fox's summer diet of fruit and insects shifts to rodents and birds during the winter, so too did the New England Indians seek to obtain their food wherever it was seasonally most concentrated in the New England ecosystem. Doing so required an intimate understanding of the habits and ecology of other species."[58] Ecosystems are also notoriously fragile, and the introduction of foreign species or removal of native flora and fauna can drastically impact an environment. Therefore the over hunting of beaver, an integral peg in New England's ecology, and introduction of European livestock sent shock waves through a land to which Algonquians had been adjusting their lives for centuries.

The arrival of Europeans and their goods initially made life easier for Algonquians in New England. Cronon states, "Brass and copper pots allowed women to cook over a fire without the risk of shattering their earthen vessels and were much more easily transported. Woven fabrics were lighter and more colorful than animal skins and nearly as warm. Iron could be sharpened and would hold an edge better than stone, so that European hatchets and knives had an advantage over Indian ones."[59] European wares, in turn, became highly sought after in Indian villages. One sure way to obtain these manufactured goods was to offer white traders a commodity they lusted after: beaver pelts. Of the importance of that exchange, an Iroquois

[58] Cronon, *Changes in the Land*, 37.
[59] Ibid, 93.

headman wryly told a French missionary in the 1630s that, "The Beaver does everything perfectly well, it makes kettles, hatchets, swords, knives, bread; and, in short, it makes everything."[60] Through trade with Europeans, Indian societies became tied up in the consumer revolution exploding throughout Europe, and tied to its economic system of capitalism. The land, subsequently, was ravaged as settlers and Indians foraged for resources that would turn into wealth.

New England Agriculture

As has been previously noted, in order to stay competitive in the Atlantic economy in a land without a cash crop, the colonists of New England turned to the provisioning trade and shipping as the main engines of economic growth. Timber and fish, along with agricultural surpluses of meat and grains, sailed out of Boston, destined for ports in the Mid-Atlantic colonies, the Caribbean and the wine islands. Ships either returned to Boston with products that could be refined further and sold to the colonists, or brought the cash crop produce of Chesapeake Bay, the Carolinas or Caribbean to England and returned with currency or European manufactured goods. Therefore, agriculture remained an integral part of the New English economy.

Farming in the rough, rocky soils of New England, with a shorter growing season than the more southerly English colonies, contributed the colonists' images of themselves and their relationship with the land. That image of themselves, people doing God's working taming the land, caused them to have an adversarial relationship

[60] Richter, *Facing East,* 50.

with the land as they set about changing the environment to better suit agriculture to the detriment of traditional Algonquian lifestyles. The individual farmer and his family, for one, owned the land they worked on, which was unique in England's colonies, as plantations in the Mid-Atlantic and Caribbean were owned by a wealthy elite, managed by a lower class of landless whites and worked by slaves. Second, Puritans believed that God would reward their hard works, and the dense forests and rocky soils provided the farmers of New England with ample amounts of hard work. Third, the mild climate, the variety of crops the farmers grew, which left them less vulnerable to crop failure, and the fact New England did not have congested cities rife with disease meant that the colonists had a higher life expectancy than anywhere else in the empire, including England. The supposed glut of land available and amount of work required to clear land, plant the crops, tend the fields and reap the harvest, prompted the colonists to seek out cheaper labor.[61]

Land ownership in New England and the rules surrounding it gave the colonists more independence than anywhere else in the English empire. Initially settled by the impoverished Pilgrims, beholden to the men who invested in their venture, New England became the destination for pious Puritans with the means to pay their own way. The Great Migration of 1630 saw an influx of the "middling sort," people who worked as artisans, owned land or worked in another profession that afforded them the luxury of selling off assets to book passage across the Atlantic. Once in the Massachusetts, they did not have the debt that saddled the Pilgrims for

[61] Taylor, *American Colonies*, 170-4.

their early years, and they owned their land out right. Furthermore, they entered a world that had, in the words of historian Alan Taylor, "the most radical government in the European world: a republic, where Puritan men elected their governor, deputy governor, and legislature (known as the General Court)."[62] Owners of their land and participants in their political destinies, the colonists set to work "improving the land," seeking God's good graces.

New English farmers needed to first secure a plot of land from the town and then set about clearing it. Taylor's research shows that town officials allotted families plots of ten to fifteen acres, but as merchants' demands grew for dried beef destined for the plantations of the Carolinas and Caribbean, farm sizes had increased to as much as two hundred acres.[63] Cronon points out that farmers needed to clear timber, which would be used for their home, fences and other out buildings. Furthermore, a farmer had numerous methods available to him for clearing land for planting and grazing. Known as *girdling,* one method included stripping bark from trees. Stripping the bark caused trees to stop producing foliage, thereby allowing more sunlight to reach the ground so that crops grew as the tree slowly died. Another more popular method saw the farmer go into the forest during the fall and fell the trees with an ax. The following May the farmer would set fire to the cleared patch, which returned nutrients to the ground, before plowing and planting.[64] Regardless of the method, clearing trees from the forests created changes in the ecosystem. The farms

[62] Ibid., 165.
[63] Taylor, *American Colonies*, 171.
[64] Cronon, *Changes in the Land*, 116-7.

established by the colonists began to change the environment of New England from the ground up.

Puritan beliefs held that they honored God through hard work and earned their salvation through dedication to their God-given occupation. In this sense the dense forests, hilly terrain and rocky soils of New England offered the Puritan farmer ample opportunities to prove his or her own salvation. Of this belief, Edward Johnson admired the tenacity with which the colonists did God's bidding: “they fall to tearing up the Roots, and Bushes with their Howes; even such men as scarce ever set hand to labour before, men of good birth and breeding, but comming through the strength of Christ to war their warfare, readily rush through all difficulties. Cutting down of the Woods, they inclose Corne fields.”[65] Furthermore, as in the Old World, beasts of burden made farming more efficient. Johnson made note of how much more land a man could tame with a couple of oxen: “with sore labour one man could Plant and tend foure Acres of Indians Graine, and now with two Oxen hee can Plant and tend 30 [Acres].”[66] Therefore with the aide of animals imported from Europe, a farmer could produce more surplus crops for market and thus increase his wealth. The riches being obtained in the Atlantic economy spurred farmers to focus more on raising livestock, which required more land and had a greater impact on the ecology. While estimates of deforestation are tough to come by in seventeenth century, it is clear that settlers of Rehoboth, Massachusetts had begun to venture outside the towns limits in search of trees by 1664, evidenced by King Philip's (Wampanoag) complaint to the Plymouth

[65] Johnson, *A History of New-England,* 85.
[66] Ibid., 154.

court that some of the English from this town had cut down trees on his land.[67]

At the same time, land was becoming the primary symbol of wealth, and as the population grew, so, did the insatiable appetite for property. As a result Indians found themselves increasing hemmed in by the colonists. As Cronon explains, "The second half of the seventeenth century saw Indians in southern New England lose most of their land. Whether seized as the spoils of war, stolen by colonial subterfuge, or simply sold by Indians to obtain trade goods, the net effect was the same: decreasing quantities of land remained for the Indians' use."[68] The defender of Fort Saybrook, Lion Gardener recorded Narraganset sachem Miantonomo's lament: "our fathers had plenty of deer and skins, our plains were full of deer, as also our woods, and of turkies, and our coves full of fish and fowl. But these English having got ten our land, they with scythes cut down the grass, and with axes fell the trees; their cows and horses eat the grass, and their hogs spoil our clam banks, and we shall all be starved."[69] Furthermore, on account of the imported livestock, the land that was available became increasingly devoid of the animals, such as deer, that the southern Algonquians had traditionally hunted and relied upon.

Pigs in general created the largest amount of consternation for Native peoples of southern New England. Omnivores with a voracious appetite and the ability to breed multiple times in the course of a year, swine competed with both fauna native to the area and Algonquians for food. Cronon notes that, "swine were the weed

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[67] David Pulsifer, *Plymouth Court Records*, (Boston: William White, 1859), Volume 2, 54.
[68] Cronon, *Changes in the Land*, 103.
[69] Gardener, "Gardener's Relation," in Orr, *History of the Pequot War*, 142.

creatures of New England, breeding so quickly that a sow might furrow twice in a year, with each litter containing four to twelve piglets."[70] The rapidly reproducing and free ranging pigs became such a problem that, as early as 1633, the Massachusetts Court declared that, "it shall be lawfull for any man to kill any swine that comes into his corne."[71] Additionally in June 1634, "Mr. Thomas Mayhewe [was] intreated by the court to examine what hurt the swyne of Charlton [Charlestown] hath done amongst the Indean barns of corne, on the north side of the Misticke, and accordingly the inhabitants of Charlton promised to give them [Indians] satisfaction."[72] Along the coastal areas, pigs dug up the shellfish and ravaged a food source vital to Algonquians living in the area. Further inland, swine rooted out the tubers Algonquians gathered, and wrought destruction to colonial and Native farms alike. A bane to both colonists and Indians, swine had a greater impact on Native ways of life, and Roger Williams made note that they referred to them as, "filthy cut throats."[73]

In addition to the ecological changes brought about by European animals, the colonists sought to remove predators from the region, an important part of the ecology. While swine with and their nasty dispositions could be expected to fend for themselves, the colonists had a great fear of wolves and the damage they could inflict upon their more valuable livestock. They set bounties on the heads of wolves and required all livestock owners to contribute to the payment of a colonist or Indian who

[70] Cronon, *Changes in the Land*, 135.
[71] Shurtleff, *SCR, Volume 1, 1628-1641*, 333.
[72] Ibid., 121.
[73] Roger Williams, *Letters of Roger Williams 1632-1682*, ed. John Russell Bartlett, (Providence RI: The Narragansett Club, 1874), 71.

brought in the head of the feared predator. A 1633 order of Plymouth colony provide evidence of the bounty: "by an ancient order 2d was allowed per head to any that should kill a wolfe throughout the colony for the incouragement of persons to seeke the destruction of those ravenous creatures."[74] In the name of protecting their property, towns also resorted to draining swamps and destroying other areas rumored to contain wolves. The anonymous 'Essay on the Ordering of Towns' in 1635 offered evidence of the drastic measures taken by colonial authorities to remove havens for wolves, by suggesting that towns hold every inhabitant responsible for clearing the "the harboring stuffe," from the "Swampes and such Rubbish waest grounds that sheltered wolves."[75] The all-out war waged upon wolves and other predators in New England left the ecosystem devoid of a crucial link, and many prey animals perished as a result of disease and starvation.

The European weeds and grasses that arrived on the shores of New England in the stomachs of livestock also wreaked havoc upon the ecosystem. Native grasses such as broomstraw, wild rye and spartinas, which had been part of the deer and other herbivores' diet, were quickly subsumed by invasive species from Europe such as bluegrass, white clover, dandelions, chickweeds, bloodworts, mulleins and stinging nettles.[76] All these grasses and weeds had evolved over the centuries to endure the pressures of pastoralism, and therefore had a leg up on their native competitors. Since

[74] Shurtleff, *SCR, Volume 1, 1628-1641*, 22.
[75] Anonymous, *The Transaction and Collections of the American Antiquarian Society*, ed. Edward Tuckerman, (Boston: The Society, 1860), Volume 4, 150-1.
[76] John Josselyn, *New England's Rarities Discovered in Birds, Beasts, Fishes, Serpents, and Plants of that Country*, ed. Edward Tucker, (Boston: William Veazie. 1866), 137-8.

the colonists recognized that their animals preferred these plants, they actively sought to plant them. The invasion was so thorough that Cronon states in "the 1640s a regular market in grass seed existed in Narragansett country, and within one or two generations, the plants had become so common that there were regarded as native."[77] Many of the invasive species quickly made their way into Indians' cornfields and made what was once a simple matter far more labor intensive as they fought to prevent weeds from overgrowing their crops. The weeds brought to New England were part of the portmanteau biota, and played a key role in replicating the European environment in their new colonial homes.[78]

Farms in New England changed the ecosystem in ways that made traditional Algonquian lifestyles increasingly impossible. The intense labor required to tame and "civilize" the New England wilderness was God's work, in the eyes of the Puritans. Once their farms began to produce revenues through the involvement of the Atlantic economy, the pious settlers saw this as proof of God's pleasure with them. Environmental changes and loss of land, in concert with the pressures of capitalism, forced many Algonquian men to find degrading work on farms, the modern-day equivalent of day laborers. The "improvements" being made by the free, land-owning class of the settlers degraded the environment in many ways that set the stage for conflict.

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[77] Cronon, *Changes in the Land*, 142-3.
[78] Alfred Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 89-90.

Praying Towns

The evangelical aspirations of the Puritans fed into their beliefs of being from a superior race with a duty to spread the gospels and civilization. While economic opportunities served as the primary motivation for the Great Migration of 1630, the colonizers' desire to convert Natives cannot be discounted. To this end, Mathew Craddock reminded John Endicott in a 1628 letter, that "We trust you will not be unmindfull of the mayne end of our plantation, by endeavoring to bring ye Indians to the knowledge of the gospell; which yet it maye be speedier & better effected, ye earnest desire of our whole company is, yet you have dilligent & watchfull eye on our owne people, that they live unblameable and without reproofe, and demeane themselves justlye and courteous towardsye Indians thereby to drawe them to affect our persons and consequentlye our religion"[79] Originally, the Puritans of Massachusetts Bay sought to win converts through their shining example. However, by 1650, in part due to the Pequot War, rampaging pigs and greedy colonists, it had become clear that Algonquians of southern New England had not been swayed into adherence to Puritan morays. John Eliot, in turn, with the financial backing of the Missionary Society, set out to change Algonquian society so that they may see the errors of their ways.

Born and educated as a minister in England, Reverend John Eliot arrived in Massachusetts Bay in 1631, where he served as a minister in Roxbury. Believing that "they [Indians] and wee are already one in save two things; God and hard work,"

[79] Shurtleff, *SCR,* Vol. 1, 384.

Eliot set out to bring the Ninnimissinouk into league with God.[80] He first set out to learn the language of the Massachuestt tribe and began preaching to Algonquians in this language by 1646.[81] Furthermore, since Eliot believed that the Natives needed to first live as Englishmen before they could become true converts, he established praying towns where the Christianized Indians could live and worship as God intended. At Eliot's urging in 1650 the General Court allowed the Indian plantation at Natick, "two thousand acres within their bounds provided they lay doune all claims in that toune elsewhere, and set no trapp in uninclosed ground."[82] Having the bounds of the town established by the General Court, Eliot needed Indian converts to come and live as Englishmen.

Faced with an uncertain and tumultuous world, some Native peoples heeded Eliot's call to convert to Christianity. Having faced epidemics that ravaged tribes, continued encroachment of settlers onto their land and a changing ecosystem that diminished their ability to live as their ancestors did, some native peoples in central Massachusetts moved to one of the fourteen praying towns established by Eliot. One major reason Indians from the Massachusett, Nipmuck and Wampanoag tribes decided to becoming praying Indians was the fact that they could stay on or at least very close to their ancestral lands. For example, a court order in 1656 strengthened the draw of these towns by ruling:

Forasmuch as there hath beene a question in this Court about the Indians' title

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[80] Jean O'Brien, "Community Dynamics in the Indian-English town of Natick Massachusetts; 1650-1790." PhD diss. University of Chicago, 1991, 41.
[81] Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), 33.
[82] Shurtleff, *SCR,* Vol., 6-1, 75.

> of lands, this Court, taking it into consideration, it is ordered and enacted by this Court and the auhtoritie thereof; What lands any of the Indians within this jurisdiction have by possession or improvement by subduing of the same, they have just right there unto. And for the further encouragement of the hopefull worke amongst them for the civilizing and helping them forward to Christianity if any of the Indians shallby brought to civility they shall be given lands amongst the English, furthermore, if a competent number of them are proven to be civil they may have a township.[83]

In light of this ruling, converting to Christianity and moving to a praying town offered protection from land-hungry settlers. Therefore by 1675, Eliot founded thirteen additional towns in Massachusetts from present-day Lowell to Nantucket.

As we have already seen, the Puritan settlers of New England believed that God desired them to tame and thus "improve" the land. Working from this belief, Eliot decided that Native peoples could not become true converts to Christianity until they broke from their formerly wicked ways of inhabiting the forest, migrating seasonally and living off the land. Eliot elucidated his beliefs in this regard in his July 19, 1652 letter to Rev. Jonathan Hanmer of Barnstaple, England: "After several years preching to them, the Lord opened their hearts to desire baptisme to seale up pardon of theire sinne, and to desire church estate, and ministry, whereby to injoy all Gods ordinances, and to injoy cohabitation unto these spiritual wayes, and mercys. In this order they have bene taught, they must have visible civility, before they can rightly injoy visible sanctitie in ecclesiastical communion."[84] Indians, he felt, needed to permanently settle in English-style houses and participate in commercial agriculture

[83] Shurtleff, *SCR,* Volume 4, 102-3.
[84] John Eliot, *John Eliot and the Indians, 1652-1657 being letters addressed to Rev. Jonathan Hanmer of Barnstaple, England, reproduced from the original manuscripts in the possession of Theodore N. Vail* ed. Wilberforcce Eames (New York: The Adams and Grace Press, 1915), 7.

while adhering to English social, economic and political institutions. Once sufficiently civilized, converted Natives could then be expected to missionize other tribes.

The rules the authorities placed on the Christianized Indians, prohibiting them from living as their ancestors did or exhibiting Native styles, evidenced the crumbling of the middle ground in southern New England. To enforce the conversion to a "civilized" state, colonial authorities levied fines against Praying Indians caught "moving from one place to another, wearing long hair, and powwowing."[85] In addition to stringent laws, praying Indians suffered discrimination in other ways. Many saw their children taken to serve as indentured servants in settlers' homes so that they could learn hard work and proper ways of behaving in a civilized society.

While viewed by some of their contemporaries as having turned their back on Algonquian traditions, many Indians who moved into one of Eliot's towns mostly did so to retain at least a semblance of their former lives in the face of traumatic and sudden changes. Historian Jean O'Brien artfully argues that the, "settlement of Natick became an appealing defensive option for Indians, who witnessed the changes of the seventeenth-century in fear and uncertainty. Indians considered life in Natick as a viable alternative, permitting the retention of many traditional values and community props."[86] In other words, the ability to live in the lands of the ancestors, while replacing powwows, or tribal spiritual leaders, with an Anglicized version (preacher), became a small price to pay for housing and food. Furthermore, outside of church,

[85] O'Brien, "Community Dynamics," 60.
[86] Ibid., 72.

many praying Indians continued wearing traditional clothes, and before King Philip's War, moved about visiting relatives in other praying towns or non-Christianized villages.[87] Despite these intentions of praying Indians, many powerful sachems saw the conversions as a threat to their power and traditional lifestyles, further fracturing the middle ground.

Conclusion

Beaver pelts and the profits they earned in Europe brought French, Dutch and English traders and settlers to the northeast of North America where they traded with Algonquians. This trade became a building block of the middle ground and brought both the whites and Algonquians wealth. However, this trade also became tied to the Atlantic economy. Most of the wealth in the Atlantic economy came from cash crops, such as sugar cane and tobacco, being grown on the backs of slaves on plantations in the Mid-Atlantic and Caribbean colonies. New English shipping made these colonies possible, and the revenues earned by Puritan merchants allowed them to thrive, without meeting Indians on the middle ground. The mechanisms of the Atlantic economy caused New Englanders to turn increasingly toward agriculture, which required vast amounts of land and changed the ecology in the region as a result.

Formed by the early settlers and Algonquians, the middle ground, in which both the white and Native populations benefited, buckled under the pressures created by the Atlantic economy and spurred the genocidal Pequot War. The ferocity with

[87] Lepore, *The Name of War*, 42-3.

which the colonial forces massacred the men, women and children of Mystic village introduced Algonquians to European-style warfare. The continued executions of Pequot males and enslavement of women and children had shown the aboriginal peoples of southern New England what they could expect if they found themselves being attacked by the Puritan forces.

John Eliot's praying towns exacerbated tensions. The towns the reverend established in Massachusetts attracted some Indians, who, having seen death and destruction in an uncertain and ever-changing land, found converting to Christianity a cheap price to pay for the right to stay on their ancestral homes. Proof of this motivation comes from Monequassun, a literate Indian who described his decision to convert: "after I heard of praying to God, and that others prayed to God, my heart did not like it, but hated it, yea and mocked at it: and after they prayed at Cohannet I still hated it, and when I heard the Word I did not like it but thought of running away, because I loved sin. But I loved the place of my dwelling, and therefore I thought I will rather pray to God."[88] These are not the words of someone who has been swayed to God by the gospels, but rather someone who desired to live in his homeland. Motives aside, Christian converts represented a threat to sachems' power and traditional Algonquian lifestyles, which added more tinder to the growing pile of tensions that would be set ablaze by the smallest spark.

[88] John Eliot and Thomas Mayhew, *Tears of Repentance: Or, A Further Narrative of the Progress of the Gospel Amongst the Indians in New England* (London: Peter Cole, 1653), 244.

CHAPTER IV.
WAR AND THE COLLAPSE OF THE MIDDLE GROUND

The colonists' ties to the expanding capitalist economy of the Atlantic world created many pressures and became the primary cause of King Philip's War (1675-76). As beaver populations fell by 1650 as a result of over hunting, tribes that had once profited from hunting the animals lost a source of revenue. Colonists also turned increasingly to farming as a way to stay competitive in the Atlantic economy; that, too, caused problems by making land a commodity and changed the ecology of the region to the detriment of the Ninnimissinouk. Furthermore, once merchant ships brought in enough silver, it replaced wampum as colonial currency by the 1660s and tribes lost another source of income. With Metacom (or King Philip, as the colonists knew him) serving as sachem, the Wampanoag confederacy was particularly hard-hit by the move to silver as currency. In regards to the Wampanoags' deteriorating situation in the Atlantic economy, Daniel Richter writes, "with no resources but land that the colonists wanted and few native neighbors left toward which to channel European expansionism, their turn was next. They were now 'dependents on, rather than partners in, New England's business,' one historian concludes. 'And that business was strictly land development.'"[1] With the expulsion of the Dutch from the region in 1664, the English settlers had one less reason to cooperate with Indians on the middle ground, because if Natives wanted European goods, they had to deal with the English and they were then only

[1] Richter, *Facing East*, 102. Quoted Russell Bourne, *Red King's Rebellion,* 89.

interested in land. The Atlantic economy created the pressures that cracked the middle ground. Land grabs, encroachments of livestock on Indian fields, a degraded ecosystem, religious conversions and threats of slavery became the tinder waiting for a spark that would consume southern New England in a maelstrom of fire, death and destruction. The mysterious death of praying Indian John Sassamon became the flint; the trial and execution of three people close to King Philip became the striking stone.

King Philip's War caused the once rivaled, feuding bands of colonists of New England to unite under the banner of white Puritanism to defeat their "barbarous" enemies. With economic gains serving their primary goals, the colonial authorities in Boston, Hartford, Providence and other towns had grown distrustful of one another and suspicious that the others sought to edge them out and reap the windfalls for themselves. However, as the flames of war, which started in Swansea, Massachusetts, fanned out across southern New England, the rivals banded together to quell the conflagration. Ultimately the colonists came to see Native peoples as a threat that needed to be subjugated. The initial successes of Native forces against the settlers convinced colonial authorities to adapt their military tactics to a war of attrition. The colonial forces also absorbed Native tactics that they had previously derided as a "skulking way" of fighting, which involved using small, mobile units that ranged the forests, launching ambushes and destroyed valuable supplies.[2]

[2] Increase Mather, "A Brief History of the Warr with the Indians in New-England,"(1676) ed. Paul Royster, An Online Electronic Text Edition" http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1034&context=libraryscience 45.

Root Causes

Metacom, or Philip, a name he received from the Plymouth authorities in 1660, grew up in a world governed by the middle ground.[3] Born in 1640, the son of the Wampanoag sachem, Massasoit, Metacom and his older brother Wamsutta, witnessed the benefits of the middle ground.[4] The wealth obtained by the Wampanoags through trade caused Metacom and his brother to become part of what Russell Bourne describes as, "a confident and wealthy class of Native American leaders."[5] For the Wampanoags, their coastal location with ample access to wampum became a source of wealth. In 1660 John Josselyn observed the wealth displayed by Metacom during a visit to Boston when he arrived wearing, "a coat and buckskins set thick with [wampum] beads in pleasant wild works and a broad belt of the same."[6] The wealth the young Wampanoag displayed did not last long, and Metacom would need to lead his people through the tumult of the crumbling middle ground.

Following the death of Massasoit in 1660 and then Wamsutta in 1662, Metacom became the Wampanoag sachem as economic pressures mounted and weakened the middle ground. The continued economic pressures exerted over the Indians by the colonists and changes to the land their farms caused formed the root causes of the war. Contemporary historian Samuel Drake saw that Metacom took issue with the colonists' use of the land: "it may be judged that now King Philip repents himself, seeing what Product the English have made of a Wilderness."[7] Furthermore, Boston's position as an important hub of commerce

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[3] Pulsifer, *Plymouth Court Records*, Vol. 3, 192.
[4] Richter, *Facing East*, 99.
[5] Bourne, *Red King's Rebellion*, 26.
[6] Josselyn, *John Josselyn, Colonial Traveler*, 103.
[7] Samuel Gardner Drake, *The Present State of New England with Respect to the Indian War, Wherein is an Account of the True Reason Thereof (as far as can be Judged by Men.) Together with most of the Remarkable Passages that have happened from the 20th of June, till the 10th of November, 1675* (Boston: Josiah Drake,

within the Atlantic economy meant that silver began to enter the port. Vessels from England or other Atlantic ports came to Boston to trade, get repairs, refresh provisions, or for another other host of reasons and often brought silver with them. A 1654 stop in the harbor by the British fleet, for example brought in considerable sums of sterling: "Maj. Robt. Sedgwicke and Capt. John Leverett to Richard Hutchinson, Treasurer of the Navy. These are to accompany a bill of exchenge of 646l. 14s. 4d. payable to William Barrett, for so much disbursed in New England for the service of the fleet belonging to the Commonwealth of England by Capt. Leverett out of his proper estate."[8] As stops similar to aforementioned stop by the Royal fleet continued, the amount of silver in the colony multiplied. A currency more widely accepted around the Atlantic, silver became desired by the merchants of Boston. As the colonists eschewed wampum for silver as currency in 1660s, the Wampanoags lost their once advantageous position in the economy and land became the remaining commodity that the settlers desired. For example, from March 23, 1664 to June March 3, 1666 colonists purchased at least five plots of land from Metacom in which he, "renownse[d] all former right title, interests and demand to the said land."[9] In addition to seeking Wampanoag lands, the Pilgrims sought to take advantage of their neighbor's weakened economic position by asserting their political will over their allies. Historian Yasuhide Kawashima argues, "As the Plymouth colony grew in size and power and became more independent, its friendly relations with the Wampanoags remained useful but no longer indispensable. Plymouth now began to conduct its business with Philip on its own terms, demanding of him more things in a more

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1833), 7.
[8] Calendar of State Papers Colonial, America and West Indies, 1675-1676 and Addenda 1574-1674 Vol. 32, No. 14.
[9] Jeremy Dupertuis Bangs, *Land Transactions in Plymouth Colony, 1620-1691* (Boston: New England Geneaology Society, 2002), 326-352.

aggressive manner, less respectful of the Wampanoag tradition."[10] For example, the Pilgrims' establishment of the town of Swansea in 1667 on the borders of Metacom's land, without consulting the sachem, caused the Wampanoag chief great consternation. Furthermore, when in 1667, "the Governor being informed by post letter from Rehoboth that the said Philip, though in confederation with us, had expressed himselfe in the presence of several of his men, importing his readiness to comply with French or Dutch against the English, and soe not onley to recover theire lands sold to the English, but enrich themselves with their goods," Metacom was called before the court, forced to swear allegiance to Plymouth and hand over his and his warriors' guns.[11] This episode highlights Metacom's knowledge of the middle ground, because if he had helped the Dutch regain lands they lost in 1664, English hegemony would have been weakened and the colonists would have been forced to deal with the Wampanoags on more equal terms. However, the plot never came to fruition and tensions continued to mount.

The expulsion of the Dutch, an entity integral to the maintenance of the middle ground, from the region in 1664 allowed Plymouth's truculence in chastising Metacom. As we have seen the Dutch West India Company made no major effort to people their colony in the New York region, and after the Pequot War (1636-38) English settlers continued to encroach on their land. By 1660, 5,000 Dutch settlers and traders inhabited lands along the Hudson River, whereas the English colonists in the Chesapeake Bay area numbered around 25,000 and around 33,000 in near-by New England.[12] New Netherland, run by the Dutch

[10] Yasuhide Kawashima, *Igniting King Philip's War: The John Sassamon Murder Trial* (Lawrence, K.S.: University Press of Kansas, 2001), 58.
[11] Jeremy Dupertuis Bangs, *Land Transactions,* 373-4.
[12] Taylor, *American Colonies*, 256.

West India Company, installed men they thought would enforce the rules of the company's monopoly and therefore make them money. The company appointed a governor and an advisory council of leading colonists, of which David Pietersz de Vries counted himself during his time in America, to run the colony, without input from the colonists. The governor, as de Vries noted many times, did not solicit or heed the advise of the council.[13] Therefore, as Alan Taylor points out, the colony of New Netherland was run by, "governors [who] were contentious, arbitrary, and mostly incompetent."[14] Authoritarian as their governors were, the Dutch presence in the Hudson River Valley region kept the middle ground intact.

The Dutch traders in the area around current-day Albany, New York worked closely with their Mohawk allies, a powerful tribe to whom the *boschlopers* traded guns in exchange for beaver pelts. Writing in 1659 Monsignor Francois de Laval-Montmorency noted of the power that the guns provided Mohawk warriors: "When the Dutch took possession of these regions and conceived a fondness for the beavers of the natives, some thirty years ago; and in order to secure them in greater number they furnished those people [Mohawks] with firearms, with which it was easy for them to conquer their conquerors, whom they put to rout, and filled with terror at the mere sound of their guns."[15] Strengthened with guns, Mohawk raiding parties struck at Algonquians allied with the French and English and played a pivotal role in the middle ground. Marauding Mohawks forced the English and French into closer alliances with their Algonquian trading partners because the raiders often sought beaver pelts, a commodity desired by the colonists and on that brought Algonquians wealth.

[13] De Vries, *Voyages from Holland to America*, 150.
[14] Taylor, *American Colonies*, 254.
[15] Monsignor François de Laval-Montmorency, *Jesuit Relations* ed. Thwaites, Vol. 45, 205.

Therefore, the mutual enemy strengthened the middle ground in the New England and New France.

The Dutch in New Amsterdam (present-day Manhattan) and the surrounding area, however, did not have such a trading partnership with the neighboring Algonquians and sought to exert their will in an effort to expand farms in the hopes of attracting additional settlers. In light of Algonquians killing Dutch livestock that intruded into their cornfields, the Dutch Governor Willem Kieft imposed a large annual tribute on local tribes. When the Indians refused to pay those whom they had allowed to stay on their land or hand over the suspected killers of a couple of colonists – and despite de Vries' warnings, "that no profit was to be derived from a war with the Indians," -- Kieft launched a brutal assault on Indians living around present-day New York City and Long Island in 1643.[16] The decision to make war on the Algonquians and their reprisals made New Amsterdam a dangerous place to live and discouraged large amounts of colonists. The company replaced Kieft with the more competent Peter Stuyvesant in 1647, but the continual growth of English settlements slowly strangled the Dutch colonies.[17] When the English king, Charles II, sent three warships in 1664 to claim the river discovered by fellow Englishman, Henry Hudson, the Dutch did not have the strength to resist and ceded New Netherland. While in 1673 the Dutch briefly reclaimed what became called "New York" after King Charles II's brother, the Duke of York, they ceased to play a role in the New English middle ground. Without an alternate European power to improve prices for Natives or keep land expansionism in check, the Puritans in New England moved further away from the middle ground and sought to impose their will.

[16] De Vries, *Voyages from Holland to America*, 150.
[17] Dolin, *Fur, Fortune, and Empire*, 86.

The trial and execution of three people in Metacom's inner-circle for the death of praying Indian John Sassmon served as the final straw in a long string of insults that broke the peace and the Wampanoags rose up to regain their prestige following the farcical trial. Sassamon, a praying Indian who can be compared to Alcibiades, a figure from ancient Greece famous for wearing out his welcome in one location, moved frequently and had many jobs. Puritan minister William Hubbard called Sassamon, "a very cunning and plausible Indian."[18] Sassamon's bilingual skills afforded him the ability to serve both the colonists and Indians. He came to work for Metacom as a translator and adviser; however, he became persona non grata in Metacom's home of Mount Hope Neck after trying to grant himself some of the sachem's land. Shortly thereafter, Sassamon travelled to Plymouth Colony's Governor Josiah Winslow's home in Marshfield, Massachusetts, to warn the colonists of Metacom's plans to make war upon them. Therefore, when Sassamon's body was discovered under the ice in Assawompett pond near Metacom's land, the colonial authorities in Plymouth leveled accusations against three people in the sachem's inner-circle. Using the testimony of a Christian Indian named Patuckson, who said he saw Tobias (one of Metacom's advisers), Tobias' son Mamapapaqaun and Mattachunnamo murder Sassamon, Plymouth charged the three Indians with murder. Patuckson coincidentally owed a gambling debt to Tobias, a fact the Plymouth authorities clearly chose to disregard.

Fraught with inconsistencies and bias, the trial ended with a guilty verdict and execution of Tobias, Mattachunnamo and Mamapapaqaun. Most importantly, it violated the conventions of the middle ground. The disrespectful manner in which Plymouth pursued the

[18] Hubbard, *General History of New England,* 71.

verdict, in concert with the many additional stresses imposed on the Wampanoags by the colonists' economic system, caused Metacom, as Drake observed, to become, "studied to be Revenged on the English, judging that the English Authority have nothing to do to Hang any of his Indians for killing another."[19] The middle ground created space on the periphery of the individual societies where white and Indian worlds came together and operated under the same, mutually created rules. By sending the long arm of Puritan law into Metacom's tribe to snatch the suspected murders, try, convict and execute them in an English-style court, the Plymouth authorities smashed through the middle ground and weakened Metacom's sovereignty and his ability to lead his people. Metacom had grown up in the age of the middle ground, but without another European power available to purchase his goods or staunch English growth and the power of, the Narragansetts, rivals of the Wampanoags, he was backed into a corner.

Start of the War

The war to regain the southern New England middle ground began when some of Metacom's enraged warriors looted and burned two homes in Swansea on June 20, 1675, a town that many Wampanoags viewed as an illegal land grab.[20] The fighting quickly spread across much of southern New England and into current-day Maine and New Hampshire, as tribes who had been similarly treated by the colonists joined the fray and began launching their own attacks on the settlers. Early in the war the colonists' adherence to European tactics of marching long, strung-out columns of troops in anticipation of meeting their foe face to

[19] Drake, *The Present State of New England with Respect to the Indian War,* 6.
[20] Eric B. Schultz & Michael J. Tougias, *King Philip's War: The History and Legacy of America's Forgotten Conflict* (Woodstock, VT: The Countryman Press 1999), 2.

face on a battlefield, cost them dearly fighting in the New English wilderness, and many settlers fled their vulnerable towns in western Massachusetts.

As the fighting spread, the once rival colonies needed to become more united to meet the threat. The colonies had already submitted to entrance into a twelve-point agreement of mutual defense that established the United Colonies on May 19, 1643, in light of their Puritan beliefs:

> Whereas, we all came into these parts of America with one and the same end and aim, namely, to, advance the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to enjoy the liberties of the gospel in purity with peace; and whereas in our settling, (by the wise providence of God,) we are further dispersed from the sea coast and rivers, than was at the first intended, so that we cannot according to our desire, with convenience communicate in one government and jurisdiction ; and whereas we live en compassed with people of several nations and strange languages, which hereafter may prove injurious to us and our posterity.[21]

However, the lure of financial improvement had caused the colonies to bicker over trade routes, land and religious rights and become suspicious of each others motives. However, Native success early in the war forced the colonists together. Therefore, the outbreak of war caused the New England colonies to become more cohesive in their efforts to subdue the Indian forces that sought to force the Englishmen back to the middle ground.

Despite the cohesiveness the war would create among the United Colonies, the summer and fall of 1675 proved to be a difficult period of time for the colonists. After Wampanoag Indians burned down two houses, looted others and scared off many of the residents of Swansea on June 20, 1675, Plymouth called on Bridgewater and Taunton to provide troops. On June 23, a Swansea resident shot an Indian, who later died, caught looting his father's house. The next day Wampanoags arrived to avenge their fallen warrior and

[21] Hubbard, *General History of New England*, 467-8.

killed nine colonists. William Bradford and the men from Bridgewater and Taunton arrived in Swansea to relieve the besieged colonists.

On June 26, Boston authorities amassed troops trained in European warfare to assist Plymouth in capturing Metacom, a skilled warrior with an intimate knowledge of his surroundings. On the 27th, Wampanoags assaulted the town of Taunton. From June 30 to July 1, colonial forces closed in on Metacom, only to see him escape. On July 9, warriors from the Nipmuck confederacy attacked and burned down much of Middleboro, Massachusetts, forcing most of the residents to flee. Five days later, Nipmuck warriors attacked the Massachusetts Bay town of Mendon, destroying many buildings. July 29 saw colonial forces allow Metacom to escape once again, and the next day a combined force of 265 English and Mohegans led by Uncas failed to capture Metacom and his remaining forty warriors after a bloody skirmish. The Mohegan sachem, Uncas, who had recieved his sachemship in large part due to English patronage, had sworn allegiance to the colonists. In 1638, after the Pequot War, Hubbard observed Uncas come to Boston and swear that, "'This heart,' said he, (laying his hand upon his heart,) 'is not mine, but yours; command me any difficult service, and I will do it. I have no men, but they are all yours. I will never believe any Indian against the English any more.'"[22] A product of the middle ground, Uncas, gained his power through his relationship to both the English and Narragansetts; however, as the colonists gained strength and moved away from the middle ground, Uncas followed them. Loyal to the English, Uncas served faithfully and ably in the war that demolished the middle ground and Algonquian sovereignty.

[22] Ibid., 255.

On July 25, the actions of Captain Mosely convinced many more Natives to join Metacom's cause. Mosely, a former privateer in the Caribbean, promised a group of eighty Indians their lives if they surrendered. However, as Drake's history evidences, they along with another ninety-eight Native who surrendered to colonial forces were, "Shipt on board Captain Sprague an Hundred seventy eight Indians, on the 28th of September, bound for Cales [Cadiz, Spain]."[23] Faced with the prospect of being sold into slavery and shipped out of their homelands if they surrendered, many chose Ninnimissinouk to fight on.

Colonial missteps continued on August 2, when a force led by Captains Edward Hutchinson and Thomas Wheeler that sought to entreat with the Nipmuck sachems fell under an ambush. The attack forced the colonial fighters to retreat to Brookfield where Native forces burned empty homes and besieged the residents huddled in the town garrison for two days. By August 5, Metacom and his forty warriors made it to the Nipmuck fort at Menameset and attracted other Indians inspired by the recent successes. On August 22, a Nipmuck sachem, Monoco, led an assault on the Massachusetts town of Lancaster, which cost seven settlers their lives. Other Natives who had been previously neutral joined the fight against the English because they had been threatened by or in some cases attacked by colonial forces.

In addition to mistakenly relying on military tactics more suited for the battlefields of Europe to engage an enemy that evaded direct confrontation and lured them into ambushes, colonial authorities compounded those tactical errors by using the cudgel to influence neutral tribes to swear fealty to the English colonies. One such example is the mission of Captains

[23] Drake, *The Present State of New England with Respect to the Indian War,* 12-3.

Lathrop and Beers to entreat with the Norwottock Indians near present-day Whately, Massachusetts. Marching into their territory at the head of one hundred armed men on August 24, they fell under an ambush and lost nine soldiers. Fearing further reprisals, the Norwottocks had no real alternative other than to join other tribes allied with Metacom. Another example is the fact that after Springfield fell under an Indian attack, colonial authorities demanded that the neutral Agawam Indians give up their arms. Rather than leave themselves unarmed and in an indefensible position, members of the Agawam tribe also joined the war against the English colonists.

Colonial Panic

The hysteria of the colonists, as a result of the war, caused the authorities in Boston to make additional decisions that added power to Metacom's cause. Fear of Natives permeated colonial society and therefore when eight praying Indians were brought into Boston by Captain Moseley in late August and put on trial for aiding and abetting the enemy, commoners directed their virulence at Reverend John Eliot and Captain Daniel Gookin for their speaking on the accused's' behalves.[24] Furthermore, after the court found the Indians not guilty, Drake recorded that a blood-thirsty mob appeared outside the house of Captain James Oliver's house on the night of September 10 and let him know that they desired to, "break open the Prison, and take one Indian out thence and Hang him."[25] While Captain Oliver dissuaded the crowd from carrying out their plans, the authorities saw the need to address the problem: their solutions forced more Indians to join Metacom.

Even before the outbreak of war with Metacom, authorities in Boston had drawn up

[24] Ibid., 26.
[25] Ibid., 27.

plans in March of 1675 to transfer praying Indians, "to Deer Island, Long Island, and Potuck and Brewster Islands," so as to keep the "converted" Indians more separated from their "heathen" neighbors.[26] Plans to herd praying Indians onto islands where their contact with the outside world could be further restricted by the English, evidences the crumbling of the middle ground that Metacom and his allies fought to restore. Therefore with the war in full swing, authorities put their plan into action and "ordered that all the Naticke Indians be forthwith sent for, and disposed of to Deere Island, as the place appointed for their present abode," on October 13, 1675.[27] To deter the praying Indians from leaving their place of internment the General Court issued another order on November 3, stating that, "It is ordered that none of the said Indians shall presume to go off said Islands voluntarily upon paine of death; and it shall be lawfull for the English to destory those that they finde stragling off from said places of theire confinement."[28] Despite the orders, not all praying Indians had obeyed the orders and on November 9, the General Court sent Indian Superindentent, "Captian Daniel Gookin and others to persuade the Indians to settle at Deer Island."[29] Compounding the praying Indians' difficulties the General Court issued another order later in November stipulating that the Indian being interred for, "their own and the countrey's security," could not bring their cattle or other possessions.[30] This ruling, historian Jill Lepore notes ensured that, "they languished without proper nourishment or housing."[31] The maltreatment of Indians who had pledged fealty to the English and their God convinced

[26] March 1675, General Court Order, Massachusetts State Archives (MSA), Volume 30, 195.
[27] Shurtleff, SCR, vol. 5, 57.
[28] Ibid., 64.
[29] 11/9/1675 General Court Order, MSA, Vol. 30, 190.
[30] 11/30/1675 General Court Order, MSA, Vol. 30, 185C.
[31] Lepore, *The Name of War,* 138.

many more that fighting the English was the only way to regain their position in society. The fog of war makes it impossible to state categorically which Indians fought on which side and for whom, but by in large, Mohegan and praying Indians fought with the English, and Nipmuck, Wampanoag, River Indian and other tribal warriors in the Connecticut River Valley fought against the English, while the Narragansetts remained neutral during the early stages of the war.

Fresh with new warriors drawn to their side through colonial missteps and momentum on their side, allied Native war parties struck at Massachusetts towns along the Connecticut River Valley through the fall of 1675. Winter saw a lull in the action while Algonquians sought to restock their supplies, but a February 10, 1676 assault on Lancaster, Massachusetts resulted in the capture of Mary Rowlandson along with twenty four other women and children. Rowlandson spent nearly three months as a captive, and her memoir of the ordeal, A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson (1682), was widely read. Native victories so concerned colonial authorities in Boston that a plan to evacuate the western settlements of Massachusetts to Boston, where the colonists could hide behind a massive wall, had been drawn up. The fear of Indians during this period permeated colonial thinking and permanently affected their ideas about Native peoples and cultures.

The authorities' fears prompted them to launch a preemptive assault on the mighty, yet neutral, Narragansett tribe. The United Colonies met on November second and decided to raise an army, "to be in constant readiness" because the Narragansetts were:

> deeply accesory in the present bloody outrages of the Barbarous Natives; That are in open hostilities with the English. This appearingby their harboring the actors thereof; Relieving and succoring their women and children and wounded men; and detaining them in their custody Notwithstanding the a Convenant made by their Sachems to deliver them to the English; and it is creditbly reported they have killed and taken away

many cattloe; from the English their nieghbors.[32]

In the middle of December 1675, the massacre of men, women and children by a force of more than 1,000 colonists and Mohegans at the Narragansset fort in the Great Swamp succeeded in turning the remaining warrirors and their sachem Canochet into lethal enemies. Within the destroyed walls of the Narragansett fort, which had been built by a colonial mason aptly named Stone-Wall John, some of the last vestiges of the middle ground in southern New England could be found smoldering. Colonial forces also captured a colonist named Joshua Treft. He claimed that he had been enslaved by Canochet, but Treft met his demise at the end of a hangman's noose for his supposed treachery. Colonial missteps and errors continued to swell the ranks of Metacom and his allies.[33]

Refreshed with warriors from the Narragansett confederacy, Native war parties ravaged the towns of Marlborough and Sudbury early in the spring of 1676. However, spring was also the time for Natives to plant corn and work on shoring up food supplies, and many warriors left the battlefield to tend to such duties. Additionally, a change in colonial tactics that adopted a more "skulking way" of fighting in which colonial forces worked to destroy Indian supplies in an effort to starve them out helped turn the tide of the war.

Altered Tactics

New battle plans that utilized smaller, mobile bands that sought to chase down their enemies and disrupt their supplies had a devastating effect on the Indians at war with the English. Benjamin Church, whose personal memoirs of the war, Entertaining Passages

[32] Pulsifer, *Plymouth Court Records*, Vol. 5, 357.
[33] Schultz & Tougias, *King Philip's War*, 244-269.

Relating to King Philip's War (1716), and deeds during the conflict earned him historical renown, fought closely with Indian allies and advocated for a change in colonial tactics. William Turner is another colonist who advocated for adopting asymmetrical warfare. In addition to Church and Turner, Samuel Hunting and Captain Lawrence Hunting received orders to recruit and arm, "those Indians [from Deer Island] most fit," for scouting missions led by Captain Joseph Sill in April of 1676.[34] Church and his Native allies ranged the New English forests in small groups hounding Metacom and his allies, while Turner sought to destroy Native supplies by launching a surprise attack on their winter village at present-day Turners Falls in Montague, Massachusetts. By relying more on a war of attrition, the colonists leaned on their superior numbers (some estimates hold 52,000 colonists to 20,000 Algonquians), and an undisrupted supply of rations and arms flowing into the port cities of New England.[35] Over time, the settlers weakened the Natives' ability to maintain the fight.

William Turner's battle plan greatly impeded the Indians' ability to maintain the fight. Turner, a tailor in Boston who had been imprisoned by the authorities for the crime of being a Baptist, saw that the Nimpuck and River Indians encamped in the villages along the Connecticut River were busy planting corn and gathering supplies early in the spring of 1676. Knowing that an enemy fully resupplied would be a greater threat than an enemy in need of food, Turner wrote to his superiors in Boston, imploring them to give their consent for an assault on the Algonquians encamped at Peskeompskut. Turner enlisted the help of about 150 men, and when the sun began to rise on May 19, 1676, he and his men rushed into the encampment, shooting indiscriminately and setting wigwams on fire. Although Turner

[34] General Court, MSA, Vol. 30, 201.
[35] Schultz & Tougias, *King Philip's War*, 5.

lost his life during a hasty retreat in the face of a sustained Indian counter-attack, he and his men had succeeded in massacring numerous men, women and children along with destroying food stores and forges used to repair firearms. The loss of the forges greatly reduced the Native forces' ability to repair the weapons they needed to remain a viable fighting force, and the loss of food stores meant that they needed to spend time they could have spent pressing the war against the colonists restocking rations. While Turner and his men weakened the Natives' ability to wage war, Benjamin Church, his men and Native allies stalked Metacom and his remaining warriors.

The most devastating blow to Metacom's forces, however, came at the hands of the Mohawks. Desperately seeking new allies in his struggle to force the English back to the middle ground, Metacom wintered in present-day upstate New York, hoping to recruit Mahican warriors and gain French arms. However, New York Governor Edmund Andros had already visited the Mohawks and promised them an advantageous trade position if they sided with the English, evidencing the cohesion of the English colonists. Therefore, when Metacom came to plead his case in the summer of 1676, Mohawk warriors fell upon him and his warriors, decimating his force. Low on men and arms, Metacom limped back into Massachusetts where Benjamin Church and his rangers awaited him.[36]

Weakened by the Mohawks, Metacom found his former allies eager to pursue peace. In one instance, they threatened to offer up his head in return for amnesty. On July 8, 1676, the colonial authorities in Boston promised amnesty to Algonquians who surrendered and could prove they had not participated in any attacks on the settlers.[37] However, colonial

[36] Ibid., 183-5.
[37] Mather, *A Brief History of the Warr with the Indians in New-England*, 172-3.

authorities still found many who surrendered guilty of participating in attacks on the Enlgish and executed the men and sold the women and children into slavery. While Metacom's position had become weaker, Church spent his time in southeastern Massachusetts shoring up Native allies. Church, having a knowledge of Algonquian norms and customs, successfully swayed the powerful "squaw-sachem" Awashonks to provide him with assistance. Russell Bourne notes, "with that team of adept warriors and scouts, he was able to wage a newly successful war across the woodlands and into the deepest swamps of southern New England."[38] With allies defecting and supplies running low, the colonists and their Native allies slowly encircled the warrior sachem.

Church and his rangers, which included numerous Native allies, roamed the swamps of southeastern Massachusetts and parts of northeastern Rhode Island seeking the weakened Metacom. It is not surprising, therefore, that the fatal shot that felled the great sachem came from the barrel of an Indian's gun. Alderman, a Wampanoag, whose brother was supposedly killed by Metacom, came to Church with information regarding Metacom's whereabouts. Church quickly assembled his men, encircling the sachem and his remaining forces during an August evening in 1676. Come morning Church's forces sprang their trap and Alderman shot and killed Metacom as he tried to escape. Church gave the great sachem's severed hand to Alderman, which he placed in a jar of rum and charged a viewing fee in taverns around New England. The head was sent to Plymouth where it could be seen displayed on a pike for decades. Church, along with his rangers and Native allies continued to hunt down the remants of Metacom's forces. On August 28, 1676, Church and his forces surrounded and

[38] Bourne, *The Red King's Rebellion,* 197.

captured the remainder of hostile Natives led by the old Captain Anawan, which is generally seen as the end of King Philip's War in southern New England.

Conclusion

King Philip's War brought the once feuding English colonists of Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, Rhode Island, New Haven, Connecticut and New York together with the common goal of defeating the Indians revolting against English rule. Furthermore, the war effectively brought an end to the middle ground in New England and greatly reduced Native sovereignty in the region. Even during the war, praying Indians and other Native allies came to be viewed with suspicion. When describing the colonists' indispensable ally, Uncas, influential preacher Increase Mather made sure he noted that Uncas and his men were pagans who asked a "Wizard" for rain.[39] The colonists' hardening opinions of Indians caused them to distrust Natives who had become adherents of Christianity. As a result of the fears of Indians, colonial authorities shipped many praying Indians to an internment camp on Deer Island in Boston Harbor, where they were left to languish in deplorable conditions. Furthermore, as Jill Lepore argues, "King Philip's War also marked the decline of English attempts to convert and educate the Indians. The imprisonment of Christian Indians on Deer Island in Boston for the duration of the war spoiled not only their allegiance to the English but also their links to the Puritans' religion."[40] As with many other missteps perpetrated by the colonial authorities upon Native populations, the imprisonment of praying Indians on Deer Island convinced many Native peoples that the Puritans reserved no place for them in an Anglo-Saxon

[39] Mather, *A Brief History of the Warr with the Indians in New-England*, 70.
[40] Lepore, *The Name of War,* 43.

dominated society. The colonists' fears of Natives created by the war caused them to view Indians with suspicion. In 1681, for example, an English colonist Benjamin Henden fired on (and missed) an unnamed Indian who did not obey his command to stop and be searched. The end of King Philip's War and the ensuing discrimination caused many Algonquian peoples of southern New England to move north and settle with the Abenaki or to Cape Cod and the islands, where they could live without harassment.[41]

Perhaps the longest-lasting and most important effect of King Philip's War was a growing militancy among the colonists. The influential preacher Increase Mather issued a warning in his history of the war that the remaining tribes still presented a threat;

> To *Conclude* this *History*, it is evident by the things which have been expressed, that our deliverance is not as yet perfected ; for the *Nipmuck* Indians are not yet wholly subdued : Moreover, it will be a difficult thing, either to subdue, or to come at the *River Indians*, who have many of them withdrawn themselves, and are gone far westward, and whilst they and others that have been in hostility against us, remain unconquered, we cannot enjoy such perfect peace as in the years which are past. And there seems to be a dark Cloud rising from the East, in respect of Indians [Abenaki] in those parts, yea a Cloud which streameth forth blood.[42]

Therefore it is clear Puritan fears of Natives pervaded their thinking and spurred a growth in militancy. In many ways the increased militancy of the Puritans ensured that the middle ground could never be rebuilt in southern New England. While middle grounds continued to exist and thrive in other parts of North America after King Philip's War, the continued march of the capitalism across the continent saw these too crumble under the weight of economic pressures.

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[41] Ibid., 182-3.

[42] Mather, *A Brief History of the Warr with the Indians in New-England,* 75.

CHAPTER V.
CONCLUSION

The initial New English settlers relied on trade with their Native allies to survive and a middle ground, in which the colonists and Natives dealt with each other on equal ground, emerged, much to benefit of both groups. The pestilences that struck down the Ninnimissinouk in astounding numbers, the strength of the Narragansetts and presence of the Dutch and French helped to maintain the middle ground. However, as the pressures of the Atlantic economy degraded the environment and English settlers flocked to the region, Algonquian peoples' places in Puritan society became increasingly limited. Furthermore, as the colonists began to gain wealth through their taming of the land and ties to the Atlantic economy the merchants of New England became intertwined with capitalism. Therefore, as an important cog in the Atlantic economy, merchants in Boston, needed farmers to concentrate on rearing livestock which required more land and had greater negative impacts on the New English ecosystem and created additional stresses on the middle ground.

The tensions created by the nascent capitalist economy that the colonists brought to the New World led to the outbreak of the Pequot War. The war waged against the Pequot confederacy by the colonists and their Native allies showed Algonquians the brutality of the settlers. Similarly, the enslavement of Pequot survivors provided other Natives with an example of a fate that might befall them if colonial authorities saw them

as enemies. Ecological degradation diminished the Ninnimissinouks' ability to live off the land as their ancestors had done for millennia. Additionally, as beaver pelt numbers declined and the colonists moved from wampum to silver as currency, Algonquian positions in New England continued to decline. Faced with loss of lands, the threat of slavery, or a limited life of toil on New English farms, Metacom and his allies lashed out at the colonists, seeking to regain their former stature in society.

King Philip's War united the colonists under the banner of white Puritanism and their victory over the hostile Algonquians left native peoples of southern New England in an increasingly diminished position. With the middle ground shattered and discrimination against Natives running rampant, some Algonquian peoples of southern New England moved north to live with Abenaki, where memories of past malfeasance on the part of the Puritans convinced many to side with the French and strike at British-held New England during the French and Indian War (1754-63). While others moved to uninhabited areas of Cape Cod and the islands to escape English hostilities, a smaller number of Native peoples remained at the praying Town of Natick.

The short-lived cooperation between the English colonists and Algonquians differed in many ways from the middle ground in the *pays d'en haut* described by Richard White. For one, the middle ground in the Great Lakes region, built by the French, Algonquian and Hurons spanned a longer period of time. While the middle ground in southern New England lasted about fifty years, from 1620 to about 1670, cooperation between the French and their Native allies lasted closer to two hundred years, allowing for the middle ground to become more deeply ingrained and long lasting. The ingrained

middle ground in the *pays d'en haut* meant that after the British defeated the French in the Seven Year or French and Indian War, they had to assume the role of Onontio in order the keep the peace in the region. As Onontio, the British colonial leaders closed off Native lands to settlement, a major point of contention among the colonists leading up to the American Revolution. Furthermore, even after the colonists won their independence, powerful Native confederacies, armed by the British continued to force the Americans to the middle ground. The War of 1812 and the American victory provided the nascent nation with the power to dictate to the Natives in the *pays d'en haut,* thus ending the middle ground.[1]

While the structures that maintained the equality of power that prevented any entity from asserting their will existed in both New England and the *pays d'en haut*, the makeup of these power structures differed. In New England the Dutch and French presence along with the powerful Narragansetts forced the English to the middle ground. In the *pays d'en haut* the might of the Mohawks, members of the Iroquois confederacy, and the Sioux and their continued assaults on the Hurons, Algonquians and French, forced the Natives and French into a tighter military alliance to staunch Iroquois growth. The closer military alliance brought the allies into more frequent contact with one another. Based on the nature of the enemy, the Mohawk and Iroquois confederacy, French soldiers and Native warriors developed battle plans in tandem. While the Puritans' ally, Uncas, had sworn fealty to the English, the French, Hurons and Algonquians worked on

[1] White, *The Middle Ground*, 256-484.

more equal ground to combat their common enemy.

The personal relationships between the *coureurs de bois* and Native women the in *pays d'en haut* also differed greatly between the interpersonal relations between the English and Ninnimissinouk. The Puritans of New England had an intense fear of the wilderness and of the evil they believed lurked therein, compelling them to remain close to their towns and houses of worship. Additionally, many of the English settlers brought their families with them, making the presence of single males less prevalent than in other New World colonies. On the other hand, the French traders ventured far into the untamed forests in search of trading partners and as a result, often lived close to or among the tribes they traded with. Furthermore due to a dearth of French women, many *coureurs de bois* took Algonquian women as wives or lovers. White argues, "the Frenchmen who appeared in Algonquian villages either travelled with women or had liaisons with them there. On a day-to-day basis women, did far more to weave the French into the fabric of a common Algonquian-French life."[2] *Metis*, the offspring of the Frenchmen and Algonquian women, became a literal product of middle ground. Many *metis* became integral to the middle ground of the *pays d'en haut,* working as mediators between the French and Algonquians. On the other hand, mediators of the middle ground in New England, people such as Edward Winslow and Tisquantum, did not have the familial relations that could have helped to cement the ties created a greater cultural understanding that the *metis* in the *pays d'en haut* brought to the dynamic.

[2] Ibid., 74.

Mediation, the heart of White's middle ground, ceased to exist in New England after the expulsion of the Dutch, evidenced by Plymouth Colony dictating to the Wampanoags during the trial of John Sassamon's suspected killers. The French on the other hand -- and later the English and Americans -- needed to consult with Natives in the *pays d'en haut* when attempting to adjudicate a dispute that satisfied all parties involved. While it can be argued that Benjamin Church used mediation to bring about a brief return to the middle ground in order to convince Awashonks to provide him with warriors, once the war ended, the English returned to dictating to Native peoples in New England. Meditation, rather than dictation, is another aspect that allowed the middle ground to survive longer in the *pays d'en haut*.

The evangelical aspirations of the English and French also differed from one another. While the English sought to alter Algonquian lifestyles through the creation of praying towns, the French sought converts through the travels of Jesuits, who ventured deep into Indian country, learning Native languages and spreading the Catholic gospels. The French also created missions near trading forts where Indians came to trade and seek protection from marauding Iroquois or Sioux warriors. While the French preached to and gained Native converts, they did not demand an alteration of their lifestyles before being admitted to one of these towns and the middle ground continued to exist in these settlements.

Despite these differences and the short duration of the middle ground in southern New England, cooperation between the English and Ninnimissinouk allowed the Puritans to survive and eventually thrive in New World. The breakdown of the middle ground as a

result of economic pressures caused King Philip's War. The outcome of the bloody struggle relegated Algonquians to a secondary class, subjected to discrimination. Furthermore, as a result of New English attitudes toward Native peoples, the colonial leaders no longer saw the need to work with Indians moving forward. A 1679 meeting in Albany between colonial authorities from New York and Virginia with leaders from the Iroquois nation, a meeting that New English leaders did not feel compelled to attend, evidences this sentiment.[3] These sentiments, harbored in New England since 1676, would become the norm in American/Indian relations following the War 1812 as whites continued pushing west in search of land.

Through discrimination and other hardships endured by the Ninnimissinouk stemming from the settlement of the English in their lands, they have endured and continue to inhabit New England. The casino resorts of the Mashantucket Pequots and Mohegans in Connecticut, along with the proposed Mashpee Wampanoag tribe casino, are among the better known examples of the Ninnimissinouk continued efforts to find their place in the modern capitalist society. Additionally the museums that accompany these resorts and the other economic developments that they spend their casino revenues on illustrate their desire to keep their cultures alive. In the town of Mashpee, Massachusetts, the interpersonal relationships between whites and Wampanoags contain echoes of past cooperation. At Mashpee High School in June of this year Douglas Pocknett, Jr. delivered the convocation at graduation in the language of his ancestors,

[3] Richter, *Facing East*, 137-40.

which received a rousing round of applause from his classmates.[4] Douglas is but one example of a Native person working to preserve his language and heritage. As historians continue to dig deeper and uncover additional evidence, it becomes clearer that Native communities and peoples played an integral role in the creation of the United States, and that their traditions and cultures deserve a place in the pantheon of American history.

[4] Dan Adams, "Mashpee Wampanoag graduate delivers blessing in once-lost language," *Boston Globe*, June 8, 2013

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