

Calvinists and Indians in the Northeastern Woodlands

Stephen T. Staggs



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The publication of this book is made possible by a grant from the Netherland-America Foundation.



Cover illustration: *Visitors at Dusk*, Len F. Tantillo (2001)

Cover design: Coördesign, Leiden

Lay-out: Crius Group, Hulshout

ISBN 978 94 6372 377 0

e-ISBN 978 90 4855 552 9

DOI 10.5117/9789463723770

NUR 685

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	7
Abbreviations	9
List of Figures	13
Notes on Usage	15
Introduction	17
1. "Gentiles by Nature," 1566–1626	27
2. "So That the Fullness of the Gentiles Might Gradually Come In," 1627–1642	61
3. "A Church and Community among the Christians and the Blind Gentiles," 1642–1652	93
4. "We, with God's Help, Hope to Bring the Barbarous Tribes to Devotion," 1652–1660	131
5. "Who Gave Jacob for a Spoil and Israel to the Robbers?" 1660–1664	169
6. "A Gentile Woman, Karanondo, ... Now Called Lidia," 1664–1750	195
Conclusion	231
Appendix A	235
Dutch References to Indians: 1609–1664	
Appendix B	271
Indian Baptisms, Professions of Faith, and Marriages in the Dutch Reformed Churches of New York: 1690–1750	
List of Archival Sources	289
Bibliography	297
Index	319





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Acknowledgements

Blessed be the Creator for providing direction, encouragement, and support through a great many institutions and individuals. The History Department and Graduate College at Western Michigan University provided various kinds of academic and financial support. I also received funding from the New York State Archives Partnership Trust, the U.S. Fulbright Program, and the Netherland-America Foundation. Without this generous funding or the indefatigable efforts of the archivists and librarians at the Universiteit van Amsterdam, Stadsarchief Amsterdam, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, the Nationaal Archief and Koninklijke Bibliotheek in Den Haag, Het Utrechts Archief, Lambeth Palace Library, Brooklyn Historical Society, New York Historical Society, New York State Archives, New York State Library, First Reformed Church of Schenectady, and Archive of the Reformed Church of America, I would not have been able to complete my research. I am also grateful to the New Netherland Institute for the opportunities to share my work and network with other scholars.

To Drs. José António Brandão and James Palmitessa, my faithful advisers at Western Michigan University, you have made this a most thoughtful and rewarding journey. I would also like to thank Laura Lee Linder, Karen Moore, Thomas Staggs, Len Tantillo, Kees-Jan Waterman, and Drs. Lucianne Lavin, Fred van Lieburg, Mark Meuwese, Andrea Mosterman, John Saillant, Jason VanHorn, and Janny Venema. Their contributions improved the manuscript immeasurably. In addition, the late Dr. Martinus Bakker's exceptional instruction in the Dutch language proved most invaluable. To my parents, siblings, in-laws, friends, neighbors, and the Fulbright "Crew," thank you for your encouragement and support. Finally, I wish to acknowledge my wife, Lori, and our daughters, Emma and Kate, who carried me through these years. Thank you will never seem like enough.



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Abbreviations

AC	Amsterdam Correspondence (in NBTS)
ACA	Archive of the Classis of Amsterdam (in SA)
ARCA	Archives of the Reformed Church of America (in NBTS)
ASG	Archive of the States General (in NA)
BMRODCK	Roswell R. Hoes, trans. and ed., <i>Baptismal and Marriage Records of the Old Dutch Church of Kingston, Ulster County, New York, 1660–1809</i> (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1997)
DBSRDC	<i>Extracts from the Doop-Boek, or Baptismal Register of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church in Schenectady, N. Y.</i> (Albany: J. Munsell, 1864)
DRCHNY	John Brodhead, Edmund O’Callaghan, and Berthold Fernow, ed., <i>Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York</i> , 15 vols. (Albany: Weed, Parsons and Company, 1853–1883)
ER	Edward T. Corwin, trans. and ed., <i>Ecclesiastical Records, State of New York</i> , 7 vols. (Albany: James B. Lyon, 1901–1916)
FOCM	Charles T. Gehring, trans. and ed., <i>Fort Orange Court Minutes, 1652–1660</i> (New Netherland Document Series, vol. 16, part 2) (Syracuse: 1990)
FP	Fulham Papers (in LPL)
GA	Gelders Archief, Arnhem
HNAI	Bruce Trigger, ed., <i>Handbook of North American Indians</i> , vol. 15, <i>Northeast</i> (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1978)
JM	Albert Eekhof, <i>Jonas Michaëlius: Founder of the Church in New Netherland</i> (Leyden: A.W. Sijthoff’s Publishing Company, 1926)
JMOC	Charles T. Gehring and William A. Starna, trans. and ed., <i>A Journey into Mohawk and Oneida Country, 1634–1635: The Journal of Harmen Meyndertsz van den Bogaert</i> (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1988)
KB	Koninklijke Bibliotheek, Den Haag
LP	Charles Gehring, trans. and ed., <i>Land Papers, 1630–1664</i> (New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch,



- vols. GG, HH, and II) (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1980)
- LPL Lambeth Palace Library, London
- MRSRDC Charlotte T. Luckhurst, ed., *Marriage Records of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of Schenectady, N.Y.* (1917)
- NA Nationaal Archief, Den Haag
- NBTS New Brunswick Theological Library
- NNN John Franklin Jameson, ed., *Narratives of New Netherland, 1609–1664* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909)
- NSMA Nederlands Scheepvaartmuseum Amsterdam
- NYCM New York Colonial Manuscripts (in NYSA)
- NYHM (1) Arnold J. F. van Laer, trans. and ed., *Register of the Provincial Secretary, 1638–1642* (New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch, vol. 1) (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1974)
- (2) Arnold J. F. van Laer, trans. and ed., *Register of the Provincial Secretary, 1642–1647* (New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch, vol. 2) (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1974)
- (3) Arnold J. F. van Laer, trans. and ed., *Register of the Provincial Secretary, 1648–1660* (New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch, vol. 3) (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1974)
- (4) Arnold J. F. van Laer, trans. and ed., *Council Minutes, 1638–1649* (New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch, vol. 4) (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1974)
- (5) Charles T. Gehring, trans. and ed., *Council Minutes, 1652–1654* (New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch, vol. 5) (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1983)
- (6) Charles T. Gehring, trans. and ed., *Council Minutes, 1655–1656* (New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch, vol. 6) (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1995)
- (7) Charles T. Gehring, trans. and ed., *Correspondence, 1647–1653* (New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch, vol. 11) (Syracuse: Syracuse University, Press, 2000)



	(8) Charles T. Gehring, trans. and ed., <i>Correspondence, 1654–1658</i> (New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch, vol. 12) (Syracuse: Syracuse University, Press, 2003)
NYHS	New York Historical Society, New York
NYSA	New York State Archives, Albany
NYSL	New York State Library, Albany
ORA	Oudrechterlijke archieven van het Kwartier van Veluwe, deel II Het platteland (in GA)
OSA	Oud Synodaal Archief, Den Haag
RRDCA	<i>Records of the Reformed Dutch Church of Albany, New York, 1683–1809</i> (New York: The Holland Society of New York, 1904–1906)
SA	Stadsarchief Amsterdam
SG	Archive of the States General (in NA)
VRBM	A. J. F. van Laer, trans. and ed., <i>Van Rensselaer Bowier Manuscripts, being the Letters of Kiliaen van Rensselaer, 1630–1643, and other Documents Relating to the Colony of Rensselaerswyck</i> (Albany: University of the State of New York, 1908)
VRBMs	Van Rensselaer Bowier Manuscripten (in NSMA)
VRMP	Van Rensselaer Manor Papers (in NYSL)
VWIS	Verspreide West-indische Stukken

List of Figures

Figures

1.	<i>Munsee Fishermen</i>	18
2.	The Northeastern Woodlands, ca. 1550	19
3.	The <i>Nederlanden</i> (Low Countries), ca. 1588	29
4.	<i>The Half Moon at Newburgh Bay</i> [September 1609]	32
5.	Title Page of Emmanuel van Meteren's <i>Belgische ofte Nederlantsche oorlogen ende gheschiedenissen beginnende van t'jaar 1595 tot 1611</i>	34
6.	<i>The Trading House</i>	35
7.	<i>Nieuw Nederland</i>	42
8.	<i>Pap-scan-ee</i>	44
9.	Title Page of the <i>Deux-aesbijbel</i>	50
10.	<i>Portret van Antonius Walaeus</i>	53
11.	<i>Winter in the Valley of the Mohawk</i>	73
12.	<i>'t Fort nieuw Amsterdam op de Manhatans</i>	78
13.	<i>Nova Belgica et Anglia Nova</i>	79
14.	Preliminary version of the Gospel of Matthew from the Statenvertaling	81
15.	<i>Fort Orange and the Patroon's House</i>	101
16.	Title Page of Johannes Megapolensis's <i>Een Kort Ontwerp vande Mahakvase Indianen</i>	102
17.	<i>Curiosity of the Magua</i>	105
18.	Detail of a <i>pilaarbijter</i> from <i>Nederlandse Spreekwoorden</i>	106
19.	<i>"Gelijkenis van de splinter en de balk"</i>	109
20.	<i>Fort Amsterdam</i>	110
21.	<i>Visitors at Dusk</i>	115
22.	Two colonists paddling a dugout canoe toward the shores of Manhattan	116
23.	<i>De grote zaal op het Binnenhof, Den Haag, tijdens de grote vergadering der Staten-Generaal in 1651</i>	123
24.	<i>Kaaterskill Ketch</i>	128
25.	<i>Hudson River Nocturne</i>	136
26.	<i>The Beer Wagon</i>	137
27.	Title Page of Adriaen van der Donck's <i>Beschryvinge van Nieuw-Nederland</i>	142
28.	<i>Hanover Square</i>	152
29.	<i>Redraft of the Castello Plan New Amsterdam in 1660</i>	153

30.	<i>Caerte van de haven Pharnambocque met de stadt Mouritius en het dorp Reciffe</i>	159
31.	<i>Manhattan, 1660</i>	174
32.	<i>Nieuw Amsterdam ofte nue Nieuw Jorx opt 'T.Eylant Man</i>	197
33.	<i>'Pissen tegen de maan</i>	202
34.	<i>Schenectady Town</i>	210
35.	<i>Etow Oh Koam, King of the River Nation</i>	214
36.	<i>Sa Ga Yeath Qua Pieth Tow, King of the Maquas</i>	214
37.	<i>Ho Nee Yeath Taw No Row, King of the Generethgarich</i>	215
38.	<i>Tee Yee Ho Ga Row, Emperor of the Six Nations</i>	215
39.	<i>Portret van Johannes Noordbeeck</i>	221
40.	<i>Portret van Leonard Beels</i>	221
41.	<i>Van Bergen Overmantel</i>	224
42.	<i>De doop van de Kamerling</i>	226
43.	<i>Philip Baptizing the Ethiopian Eunuch</i>	227

Graphs

4.1.	Dutch References to Indians: 1609–1624	38
4.2.	Dutch References to Indians: 1624–1640	89
4.3.	Dutch References to Indians: 1640–1652	129
4.4.	Dutch References to Indians: 1652–1664	141
5.1.	Number of Indian Baptisms per Year in the Dutch Reformed Churches of New York: 1690–1725	220
5.2.	Age of Indians Baptized in the Dutch Reformed Churches of New York: 1690–1725	228
5.3.	Number of Indian Baptisms per Year in the Dutch Reformed Churches of New York: 1725–1750	229

Tables

A.1.	Dutch References to Indians: 1609–1624	236
A.2.	Dutch References to Indians: 1624–1640	237
A.3.	Dutch References to Indians: 1640–1652	240
A.4.	Dutch References to Indians: 1652–1664	247
B.1.	Indian Baptisms and Professions of Faith in the Dutch Reformed Churches of New York: 1690–1750	273
B.2.	Indian Marriages in the Dutch Reformed Churches of New York: 1690–1750	287



Notes on Usage

This work is based on a variety of original Dutch sources located in archives and special collection libraries on both sides of the Atlantic. Where I quote from Dutch-language documents that have appeared in published translation, I have relied on the existing translation unless otherwise noted. All other translations from the Dutch are mine. Most of the time I have used “Gentiles” when referring to the *heidenen* or biblical “Others” and “Indians” when referring to Native Americans. However, when I am analyzing original Dutch terms in the body of the manuscript, the original Dutch is used and italicized.

In the body I use the autonym and toponyms Native North Americans used for themselves and the places within their ancestral homelands. Certainly, there is great power in naming. In the biblical story of creation, God gave Adam the power to name the animals. As a result, the power of naming came to mean the power over creation for many Judeo-Christians. This understanding colored the encounters between Christian colonizers and the Indigenous peoples of the Americas. Christian colonizers often named geographic features and locations after European explorers or places. In addition, many of the traditional names they adopted for Native American groups derived from their enemies. For example, the exonym “Mohawk” apparently derived from a Narragensett word for “cannibal.” So, to acknowledge the sovereignty and self-determination of the original inhabitants of North America, I use autonyms and toponyms when referring to specific Indigenous peoples and places whenever possible.¹

In the notes, the first reference is to the original document, in the order of title, repository, collection, document, and page number. This is followed between parentheses by the document’s date and, when available, a reference to a published translation. The original Dutch sources from the New York State Archives have been given the English titles assigned by Edmund O’Callaghan in the *Calendar of Historical Manuscripts in the Office of the Secretary of State, Albany, N.Y.* and *Documents Relative to the Colonial History*

¹ Peter d’Errico, “Native American Indian Studies: A Note on Names,” accessed June 12, 2021, <https://www.umass.edu/legal/derrico/name.html>; Rowland Robinson, “Settler Colonialism and Native Ghosts: An Autoethnographic Account of the Imaginarium of Late Capitalist/Colonialist Storytelling” (PhD diss., University of Waterloo, 2020), xxi–xxii; Robert Manning Stevens, “From ‘Iroquois Cruelty’ to the Mohawk Warrior Society: Stereotyping and Strategic Uses of a Reputation for Violence,” in *Violence and Indigenous Communities: Confronting the Past and Engaging the Present*, eds. Susan Sleeper-Smith, Jeffrey Ostler, and Joshua L. Reid (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2021), 150.



of the State of New York. Unless explicitly stated otherwise, all the dates are in the New Style, since the new Gregorian calendar was in use in Holland, Zeeland, and *Nieuw Nederland* (New Netherland). In the rest of the Dutch Republic as well as England and the English colonies, the Julian calendar style or Old Style was used. Throughout the seventeenth century, Old Style dates were ten days behind those in the New Style.



Introduction

This work analyzes the impact of the Dutch Reformation upon the cross-cultural relations between the Indians and Europeans living in the early modern Northeastern Woodlands.¹ These interactions took place between several different Indian, African, and European peoples. Counted among the Native North Americans were autonomous *Muhheakunneuw* (Mahican) and *Lunaapeew* (Lenape) communities along the *Muhheakantuck* (Hudson River) and *Lenapewihittuck* (Delaware River); Narragansetts, Mohegan-Pequots, and other groups living in southern New England and *Suanhacky* (Long Island); and the Susquehannock and *Haudenosaunee* (Iroquois) peoples of the interior. Among the Africans were free and enslaved Creole, *Wolof*, Mandika, *Bamana* (Bambara), *Ausa* (Hausa), Akan, Aja, Yoruba, Igbo, *Bisi Kongo* (Kongo), *Ambundu* (Mbundu), Ovimbundu, and Malagasy peoples while the Europeans included Walloon, Dutch, English, Scottish, Irish, Huguenot, Jewish, German, Swedish, Italian, and Croat peoples who occupied settlements along the *Lenapewihittuck*, *Muhheakantuck*, and *Kwenitegw* (Connecticut River).²

1 Bruce M. Trigger, "Introduction," in *Handbook of North American Indians*, ed. Bruce M. Trigger (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1978), 15:1. Trigger defines the Northeastern Woodlands as a cultural area comprising the present-day Northeastern and Midwestern regions of the United States and Southeastern Canada.

2 Robert S. Grumet, *Manhattan to Minisink: American Indian Place Names in Greater New York and Vicinity* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2013), 6–7; Robert S. Grumet, *First Manhattans: A History of the Indians of Greater New York* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2011), 11, 16; William A. Starna, *From Homeland to New Land: A History of the Mahican Indians, 1600–1830* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013), xv; Paul Otto, *The Dutch–Munsee Encounter in America: The Struggle for Sovereignty in the Hudson Valley* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006), 2, 4–5; Graham Russell Hodges, *Root & Branch: African Americans in New York & East Jersey, 1613–1863* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 9, 27; John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400–1800* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 118–119, 187–196; Nathan Nunn, "Shackled to the Past: The Causes and Consequences of Africa's Slave Trades," in *Natural Experiments of History*, eds. Jared Diamond and James A. Robinson (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2010), 8; Andrea C. Mosterman, *Spaces of Enslavement: A History of Slavery and Resistance in Dutch New York* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2021), 6; Jaap Jacobs, *Een zegenrijk gewest: Nieuw-Nederland in de zeventiende eeuw* (Amsterdam: Samenwerkende



Fig. 1. *Munsee Fishermen*, Len F. Tantillo (2020).

The *Muhhekkunnew* were Eastern Algonquian-speaking peoples who occupied lands on both sides of the *Muhheakantuck* from Papscanee Island south to about northern Dutchess County, and from the eastern edge of the Catskill Mountains in the west to the Housatonic Valley and the *Sankhannek* (Roeliff Jansen Kill) in the east.³ The *Lunaapeew* were linguistically and culturally similar groups that occupied the *Lenapewihittuck* river valley and certain adjacent areas at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The *Lunaapeew* who spoke Munsee inhabited the northern part of *Lenapehoking* (homelands of the Lenape), which included what is now northern New Jersey and southeastern New York. These Munsee-speaking bands included the Navesinks, Raritans, Hackensacks, Tappans, Minisinks, Esopus, Wappingers,

Uitgeverijen Prometheus-Bert Bakker, 1999), 102–103; Jaap Jacobs, *New Netherland: A Dutch Colony in Seventeenth-Century America* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 91–92; David Steven Cohen, “How Dutch Were the Dutch of New Netherland?” *New York History* 62, no. 1 (January 1981), 43–60; Stephen P. Stanne, Roger P. Panetta, and Brian E. Forist, *The Hudson: An Illustrated Guide to the Living River* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2007), 7, 93; Joseph Laurent, *New Familiar Abenakis and English Dialogues* (Quebec: Leger Brosseau, 1884), 209. The *Muhhekkunnew* and *Lunaapeew* peoples called the river now known by many as the Hudson the *Muhheakantuck*, meaning the “river that flows two ways.” The *Wōbanakiak* (Abenaki) people referred to the river now known by many as the Connecticut the *Kwenitegw*, meaning “long river.”

³ T. J. Brassler, “Mahican,” in *HNAI*, 15:198; Starna, *Homeland to New Land*, 101–106; *Proceedings of the New York State Historical Association* (New York: New York State Historical Association, 1906), 6:47. *Sankhannek* is an Indigenous word that means “Flintstone Creek.” In Dutch a *kil* is a stream or creek.

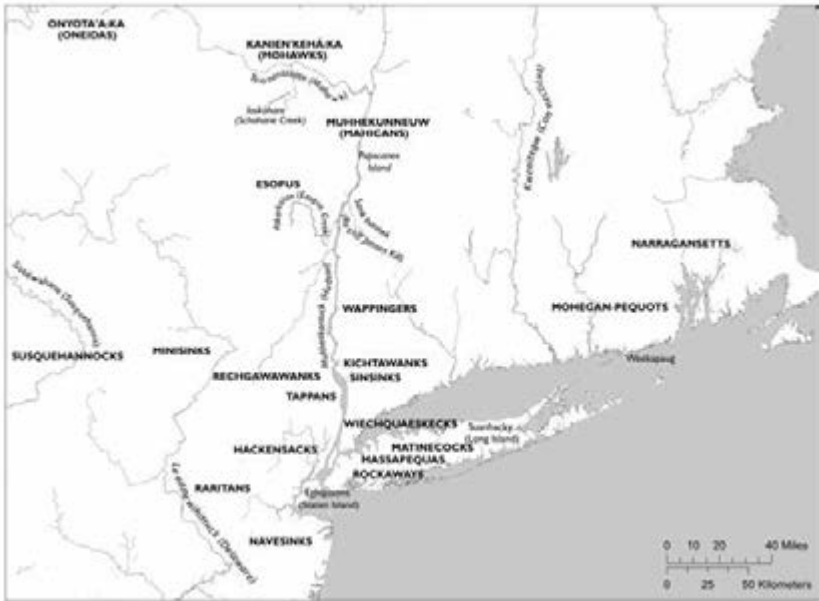


Fig. 2. The Northeastern Woodlands, ca. 1550 (Drawn by Jason Van Horn).

Kichtawanks, Sinsinks, Rechgawawanks, and Wiechquaeskecks. As they migrated west in the 1700s, many of these *Lunaapeew* came to be known as either Delawares or Munsees.⁴ The *Lunaapeew* groups who spoke Unami occupied the southern part of *Lenapehoking*, which included present-day southern New Jersey and a small portion of eastern Pennsylvania and northeastern Delaware.

At the time of earliest contact with Europeans in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the Indians of southern New England and *Suanhacky* shared a single cultural pattern. According to Bert Salwen, they “all spoke closely related Algonquian languages, obtained their food by combining maize-beans-squash horticulture with the collecting of land and sea fauna and wild plants, and engaged in very similar social,

4 Ives Goddard, “Delaware,” in *HNAI*, 15:213–216; Robert S. Grumet, “We Are Not So Great Fools” (PhD diss., Rutgers: The State University of New Jersey, 1979), 5–6, 24; Charles E. Stickney, “The Town of Minisink,” in *The History of Orange County, New York*, ed. Russel Headley (Middletown, NY: Van Deusen and Elms, 1908), 280–281. Long before Europeans arrived, the *Lunaapeew* settled along the *Twischsawkin* (Wallkill River). Archaeologists have uncovered evidence of their homes, clay pots, tools, and scutes (bony plates) that cover the back of sturgeons, which testify to the skills required to land fish that can grow to ten feet in length and weigh hundreds of pounds. In *Munsee Fishermen* (see figure 1), Tantillo depicts four *Lunaapeew* fishermen hauling in a 250-pound sturgeon that they caught using a fish trap.

political, and religious practices centered on the village as the basic social unit.” While the Narragansetts occupied most of present-day Rhode Island between Narragansett Bay and *Weekapaug* (now part of Westerly, Rhode Island), the Mohegan-Pequots occupied the vast majority of what is now eastern Connecticut during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.⁵

As for the Susquehannocks, Captain John Smith of England reported that, in 1608, he was visited by sixty Indians who he identified as the *Sasquesahannough* (Susquehannocks) living along the *Siskēwahane* (Susquehanna River) and its branches whereas the Dutch referred to the Susquehannocks as the *Minquaes* (Minquas). The archaeological record identifies the Susquehannocks as a culturally distinct Iroquoian people at about 1550 when they were living in scattered villages along the North Branch of the *Siskēwahane* between Wyoming Valley and present-day Binghamton, New York.⁶ The territory of the *Haudenosaunee*—the *Onöndowa’ga* (Seneca), *Gayogohó:’no* (Cayuga), *Onönda’gega’* (Onondaga), *Onyota’a:ka* (Oneida), *Kanien’kehá:ka* (Mohawk), and, after 1722, the *Skarù:re* (Tuscarora) peoples—stretched from *Ioskóhare* (Schoharie Creek) west of Schenectady to the *Čunehstí-yu* (Genesee River). After 1534, the *Haudenosaunee* expanded to include new places and peoples, establishing communities along the northern shore of *Oniatarí:io* (Lake Ontario), the *Kaniatarowanénhne* (St. Lawrence River) valley, and the Pennsylvania backcountry.⁷

As late as 2003 William Starna characterized the state of Indian–Dutch studies as one marked by “missed and missing opportunities.” Despite the availability of relevant ethnographic and ethnohistoric data and knowledgeable analyses as well as the translation of a trove of seventeenth-century Dutch records of *Nieuw Nederland* (New Netherland) by Charles Gehring and Janny Venema, the tendency to portray the Dutch as a people who, generally speaking, lacked curiosity about Indians, made no serious attempt

5 Bert Salwen, “Indians of Southern New England and Long Island,” in *HNAI*, 15:160–161, 172–173; Francis Joseph O’Brien, Jr., *American Indian Place Names in Rhode Island: Past & Present*, <https://sites.rootsweb.com/~rigenweb/IndianPlaceNames9.html#W>. According to O’Brien, *Weekapaug* is an Indigenous word that means “at the head (or end) of the pond.”

6 Francis Jennings, “Susquehannock,” in *HNAI* 15:362–363, 367.

7 William N. Fenton, “Northern Iroquoian Culture Patterns,” in *HNAI*, 15:296; Jon Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1534–1701* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2010), xi–xiv, 143, 187, 265. The *Haudenosaunee* (“People of the Longhouse”) are commonly known as the Iroquois or Six Nations. Following a bloody war with European colonists and their Indian allies in Carolina (1711–1713), the *Skarù:re*’s survivors migrated north, formally joining the *Haudenosaunee* Confederacy in 1722–1723.



to convert Indians, maintained a social distance from Indians, and were only interested in developing a commercial relationship with Indians persisted.⁸

Yet, more nuanced analyses did appear as scholars began integrating or centering Indians into the mainstream of North American history.⁹ Others

8 William A. Starna, "Assessing Indian–Dutch Studies: Missed and Missing Opportunities," *New York History* 84 (2003), 8–9. See John Fiske, *Dutch and Quaker Colonies in America* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1899), i:v–vi, 294; E. B. O'Callaghan, *History of New Netherland* (New York: D. Appleton, 1845–1848), 2:319, 338; J. R. Brodhead, *History of the State of New York* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1859–1871), 1:746; Frederick J. Zwierlein, *Religion in New Netherland: A History of the Development of the Religious Conditions in the Province of New Netherland* (Rochester: John P. Smith Printing Company, 1910), 276; Jean E. Murray, "Early Fur Trade in New France and New Netherland," *Canadian Historical Review* 19 (1938): 365–377; Ellis L. Raesly, *Portrait of New Netherland* (New York: Ira J. Friedman, Inc., 1945), 7, 174, 183, 196, 332; C. R. Boxer, *The Dutch Seaborne Empire* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), 113–115, 135, 139, 140–141, 150, 153; George L. Smith, *Religion and Trade in New Netherland: Dutch Origins and American Development* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973), 236–237; Laurence M. Hauptman and Ronald G. Knapp, "Dutch–Aboriginal Interaction in New Netherland and Formosa: An Historical Geography of Empire," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 121 (1977): 169–170, 173–174, 181; Oliver A. Rink, *Holland on the Hudson: An Economic and Social History of Dutch New York* (Ithaca and Cooperstown: Cornell University Press and New York State Historical Association, 1986), 77, 215; Donna Merwick, *Possessing Albany, 1630–1710: The Dutch and English Experiences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 3, 79, 290–294; Thomas E. Burke, *Mohawk Frontier: The Dutch Community of Schenectady, New York, 1661–1710* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), xiii, 26, 151–152, 222; Denys Del  ge, *Bitter Feast: Amerindians and Europeans in Northeastern North America, 1600–64* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1993), x, 333–334; Matthew Dennis, *Cultivating a Landscape of Peace: Iroquois–European Encounters in Seventeenth Century Iroquoia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 1–2; Nan A. Rothschild, "De sociale afstand tussen Nederlandse kolonisten en inheemse Amerikanen," *'One Man's Trash is Another Man's Treasure': De metamorfose van het Europese gebruiksvoorwerp in de Nieuwe Wereld*, ed. Alexandra van Dongen (Rotterdam: Exhibit Catalog, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, 1995), 189–190, 193, 200; Jacobs, *Een zegenrijk gewest*, 272; Joyce Goodfriend, "Writing/Righting Dutch Colonial History," *New York History* 80, no. 1 (1999): 15–16; Andrew Brink, *Invading Paradise: Esopus Settlers at War with Natives, 1659, 1663* (Philadelphia: Xlibris Corporation, 2003), 13–14, 23–24, 221–223; Jacobs, *New Netherland*, 318; Donna Merwick, *The Shame and the Sorrow: Dutch–Amerindian Encounters in New Netherland* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 3, 15, 31, 36, 47, 52, 117, 168, 266–267. For a description of the New Netherland Project see Russell Shorto, "Three Conversations," *Explorers, Fortunes and Love Letters: A Window on New Netherland*, ed. Martha Dickinson Shattuck (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009), 1–9.

9 Relatively recent studies include Susannah Shaw Romney, *New Netherland Connections: Intimate Networks and Atlantic Ties in Seventeenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, 2014); Andrew Lipman, *Saltwater Frontier: Indians and the Contest for the American Coast* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015); Jean R. Soderlund, *Lenape Country: Delaware Valley Society Before William Penn* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015); Susan M. Hill, *The Clay We Are Made Of: Haudenosaunee Land Tenure on the Grand River* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2017); Paul A. Raber, ed., *The Susquehannocks: New Perspectives on Settlement and Cultural Identity* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2019); William B. Hart, "For the Good of Their Souls": *Performing Christianity in Eighteenth-Century Mohawk Country* (Amherst and Boston: University



offered social and religious analyses of the motivations and activities of the Dutch in spreading the Reformed religion overseas during the early modern period (ca. 1450–1800).¹⁰ These studies underscored the importance of examining social and religious exchanges—including the ways in which perceptions of the “Other” prefigured or shaped those exchanges—to gain a more complete understanding of relations in *Nieuw Nederland*.¹¹ In so doing, they suggested

of Massachusetts Press, 2020). Earlier studies include James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); William A. Starna, “Seventeenth-Century Dutch–Indian Trade: A Perspective from Iroquoia,” *De Halve Maen* 59, no. 3 (1986): 5–8; Charles T. Gehring and William A. Starna, “Dutch and Indians in the Hudson Valley: The Early Period,” *The Hudson Valley Regional Review: A Journal of Regional Studies* 9, no. 2 (1992): 7–39; Daniel K. Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1992); Charles T. Gehring, Dean R. Snow, and William A. Starna, eds., *In Mohawk Country: Early Narratives about a Native People* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1996); William A. Starna and José Antonio Brandão, “From the Mohawk–Mahican War to the Beaver Wars: Questioning the Pattern,” *Ethnohistory* 51, no. 4 (2004): 725–750; Otto, *Dutch–Munsee Encounter*; James Bradley, *Before Albany: An Archaeology of Native–Dutch Relations in the Capital Region 1600–1664* (Albany: New York State Museum Bulletin 509, 2007); Kees-Jan Waterman, “To Do Justice to Him and Myself”: *Evert Wendell’s Account Book of the Fur Trade with Indians in Albany, New York, 1695–1726* (Philadelphia: Lightning Rod Press, 2008); William A. Starna, “The Native–Dutch Experience in the Mohawk Valley,” *Explorers, Fortunes and Love Letters*, ed. Martha Dickinson Shattuck (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009), 27–38; Robert S. Grumet, *The Munsee Indians: A History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009); Parmenter, *Edge of the Woods*; Tom Arne Midtrød, “The Flemish Bastard and the Former Indians: Métis and Identity in Seventeenth-Century New York,” *American Indian Quarterly* 34.1 (Winter 2010): 83–108; Mark Meuwese, *Brothers in Arms, Partners in Trade: Dutch–Indigenous Alliances in the Atlantic World, 1595–1674* (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2012).

¹⁰ Relatively recent studies include D. L. Noorlander, *Heaven’s Wrath: The Protestant Reformation and the Dutch West India Company in the Atlantic World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2019); Charles H. Parker, *Global Calvinism: Conversion and Commerce in the Dutch Empire, 1600–1800* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2022). Earlier studies include Leendert Jan Joosse, “*Scoone dingen sijn Swaere Dingen*”: *Een Onderzoek naar de Motieven en Activiteiten in de Nederlanden tot Verbreiding van de Gereformeerde Religie gedurende de Eerste Helft van de Zeventiende Eeuw* (Leiden: J. J. Groen en Zoon, 1992); Willem Frijhoff, *Wegen van Evert Willemsz: Een Hollands weeskind op zoek naar zichzelf, 1607–1647* (Nijmegen: Sun, 1995); Benjamin Schmidt, *Innocence Abroad: The Dutch Imagination and the New World, 1570–1670* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Mark Meuwese, “Dutch Calvinism and Native Americans: A Comparative Study of the Motivations for Protestant Conversion among the Tupis in Northeastern Brazil (1630–1651) and the Mohawks in Central New York (1690–1710),” in *The Spiritual Conversion of the Americas*, ed. James Muldoon (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004), 118–141; Willem Frijhoff, *Fulfilling God’s Mission: The Two Worlds of Dominie Everardus Bogardus, 1607–1647*, trans. Myra Heerspink Scholz (Leiden: Brill, 2007); Leendert Jan Joosse, *Geloof in de Nieuwe Wereld: Ontmoeting met Afrikanen en Indianen (1600–1700)* (Kampen: Uitgeverij Kok, 2008).

¹¹ The “Other” is a concept of difference that originated in the philosophy of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and has since been developed and widely discussed in the social sciences,



that the Dutch did have a strong desire to convert Indians to Christianity and supported the contention that the Dutch were curious about Indians and developed relatively interdependent relationships with their Indian neighbors.¹²

Still, there are certain aspects of the relationships between the peoples of the Northeastern Woodlands and the Low Countries that have still to be

including anthropology. In fact, anthropology emerged as a discipline when scholars began studying non-European cultures and developing a theory of humankind, which, critics have argued, aided Euro-American colonial expansion in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For works that address the concept of the “Other” see Jacques Lacan, *The Language of the Self: The Function of Language in Psychoanalysis*, trans. Anthony Wilden (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1968); Talal Asad, *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter* (New York: Humanities Press, 1973); Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980); Tzvetan Todorov, *Conquest of America: The Question of the Other*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1984); Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Introduction to the Philosophy of History: With Selections from The Philosophy of Right* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1988); Bernard McCrane, *Beyond Anthropology: Society and the Other* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989); Lila Abu-Lughod, “Writing Against Culture,” *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*, ed. Gabriel Fox Richard (Sante Fe: School of American Research Press, 1991), 137–162; Silvia Federici, *Enduring Western Civilization: The Construction of the Concept of Western Civilization and Its “Others”* (Westport, CT and London: Praeger, 1995); Sundar Sarukkai, “The ‘Other’ in Anthropology and Philosophy,” *Economic and Political Weekly* 32, no. 4 (June 14–20, 1997): 1406–1409; Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, eds., *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies* (London: Routledge, 1998); Gustav Jahoda, *Images of Savages: Ancient Roots of Modern Prejudice in Western Culture* (London: Routledge, 1999); Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002); Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003); Homi Bahba, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 2004); David Ross Fryer, *The Intervention of the Other: Ethical Subjectivity in Levinas and Lacan* (New York: Other Press, 2008).

¹² Allen W. Trelease, *Indian Affairs in Colonial New York: The Seventeenth Century* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 171; Hauptman and Knapp, “Dutch–Aboriginal Interaction,” 169–170, 181; Francis Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire: The Covenant Chain Confederation of Indian Tribes with English Colonies from Its Beginnings to the Lancaster Treaty of 1744* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1984), 47–57; Axtell, *Invasion Within*, 5, 72, 75, 77, 81, 85, 90; Burke, *Mohawk Frontier*, 27; Gehring and Starna, “Dutch and Indians in the Hudson Valley,” 17–18; Frijhoff, *Wegen van Evert Willemsz.*, 763–764, 779–791; Janny Venema, “The Court Case of Brant Aertsz van Slichtenhorst against Jan van Rensselaer,” *De Halve Maen* 75, no. 1 (2001): 3–8; Janny Venema, *Beverwijck: A Dutch Village on the American Frontier, 1652–1664* (Hilversum and Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), 156–174, 314; Otto, *Dutch–Munsee Encounter*, 18, 171–174, 176; Bradley, *Before Albany*, 2–3, 34–35, 39, 44, 47, 49, 83; Frijhoff, *Fulfilling God’s Mission*, 524–530; Starna, “Native–Dutch Experience,” 34–35; Joosse, *Gelooft in de Nieuwe Wereld*, 313, 320; Mark Meuwese, “From Intercolonial Messenger to ‘Christian Indian’: The Flemish Bastard and the Mohawk Struggle for Independence from New France and Colonial New York in the Eastern Great Lakes Borderland, 1647–1687,” in *Lines Drawn Upon the Water: First Nations and the Great Lakes Borders and Borderlands*, ed. Karl Scott Hele (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2008), 53–54; Midtrød, “Flemish Bastard,” 85, 97; Meuwese, *Brothers in Arms*, 263–264, 269–270, 272–273, 279, 283; Romney, *New Netherland Connections*, 30.



explored. Yet to be studied are the ways in which Reformed theologians in the Dutch Republic conceptualized Indians during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries as well as the extent to which these conceptualizations affected the interactions between the peoples living in the Northeastern Woodlands during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The directions given to Reformed *ziekentroosters* (comforters of the sick) and *predikanten* (preachers) sent overseas by the directors of the Classis of Amsterdam, the *Geotroyeerde West-Indische Compagnie* (Chartered West India Company or WIC), and the *patroons*, and the extent to which they followed these directions has not been examined in great depth either.¹³ A close study of the evolution of the perceptions Indians and colonists developed of one another has yet to be offered as well.

This work draws on the fields of anthropology, archaeology, art history, cartography, ethnography, history, linguistics, psychology, and theology. In so doing, it juxtaposes and analyzes textual, visual, and material evidence in an interdisciplinary way. The resulting insights challenge the enduring notion that Indigenous peoples and *Nieuw Nederlanders* maintained a social distance between one another, that intimacy between them proved elusive, and that Indians and Dutch Reformed clergy could not “overcome” the “exacting, exclusionary standards of membership” in the *Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk* (NGK) (Dutch Reformed Church).¹⁴ Instead, the evidence shows Indians and *Nieuw Nederlanders* (New Netherlanders) hunting, smoking, eating, and drinking together, sharing their faith while traveling in a canoe, and sleeping in each other’s bedrooms. Such details emerge in documents written by *Nieuw Nederlanders* like *Dominee* (Reverend) Johannes van Mecklenberg (Megapolensis). Author of the most accurate and nuanced account of the *Kanien'kehá:ka* by a Dutch Reformed minister, Megapolensis provides a window into the influence and limits of the Dutch Reformation upon the dynamic and multifaceted relationships that developed between the Native and European peoples living in the Northeastern Woodlands during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. So, the following narrative surveys the broad contours of his life.

The first chapter examines Megapolensis’s influences. He came of age when Dutch Reformed theologians looked to the Bible to incorporate Indians

13 *Patroons* were Dutch landholders with manorial rights to large land tracts.

14 See Trelease, *Indian Affairs*, xii; Rothschild, “De sociale afstand,” 189–190, 193; Jacobs, *Een zegenrijk gewest*, 272; Jacobs, *New Netherland*, 318; Brink, *Invading Paradise*, 13–14, 23–24, 221–223; Merwick, *Shame and the Sorrow*, 52; Romney, *New Netherland Connections*, 127, 143, 172, 188–190; Noorlander, *Heaven’s Wrath*, 183, 187.



into a Reformed worldview. In so doing, they characterized Indians as *blinde heydenen* (blind Gentiles) to whom the Dutch were being called, by God, to present the gospel through the preaching of the Bible and the Christian conduct of colonists, which of course necessitated social interaction. This characterization ultimately informed the instructions given to those heading to *Nieuw Nederland*, raised expectations among the *ziekentroosters* and *predikanten* who served in the colony, and prefigured the reciprocal, intimate relationships that developed between Indians and *Nieuw Nederlanders*.

Chapters two and three examine the period between 1627 and 1652 when *Nieuw Nederlanders* struggled to survive. It highlights the efforts, and sources of inspiration, of the leaders of the WIC and NGK in Amsterdam who consistently instructed *ziekentroosters* and *predikanten* to proselytize among the Indians. In 1642 Johannes Megapolensis accepted their call to establish a church and community “among the Christians and blind Gentiles.” He quickly realized the extent to which *Nieuw Nederlanders* relied on their Gentile Indian neighbors. Indeed, Indians secured their survival by unwittingly living out the gospel: Indians provided them with food and taught them how to clear the land, cultivate corn, fish the local waters, hunt turkeys, and construct and use canoes and snowshoes.

Chapters four and five explore the period (1652–1664) wherein Megapolensis witnessed Indians and *Nieuw Nederlanders* becoming more intimately acquainted. This was a period in which relations were marked to a greater degree than ever by interdependence and familiarity. Ironically, this familiarity bred contempt among colonial officials trying to assert their authority.

The final chapter surveys the years following the capitulation of *Nieuw Nederland* to the English in 1664. A close study of the records of the records of the Dutch Reformed colonial churches reveals that by 1698 approximately eight percent of the adult *Kanien'kehá:ka* population had become communicant members of the Dutch Reformed churches, which was no small feat given the literate nature of Protestantism and the systematic process of conversion demanded of those making profession of faith. These professions were certainly a result of the earlier groundwork laid by the *Kanien'kehá:ka* and *Nieuw Nederlanders* such as Megapolensis who established personal relationships with one another. By 1754, at least 368 Indians had been baptized; the vast majority of whom were babies born to the Indian communicant members of the Dutch Reformed Church. In the end, the examination of records that have been either ignored or underused in terms of Indian–Dutch relations shows that both sides were interested in developing both spiritual and social relationships as well as commercial relationships.

